



HENGQIN: MORE LAND MADE AVAILABLE TO MACAU

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POLITICAL REFORM, THE SKELETON IN THE CLOSET

Political reform was, perhaps inadvertently, the issue that dominated Sonia Chan's presentation yesterday at the AL

P3 POLICY ADDRESS



TRANSASIA TO SHUT DOWN AFTER SUFFERING LOSSES

The company is at the center of air-safety investigations for the disasters in 2014 and 2015 that killed a combined 91 passengers

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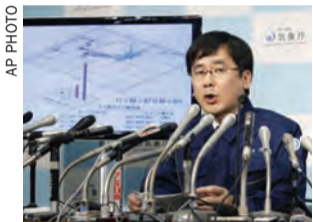
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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

WORLD BRIEFS



JAPAN's Meteorological Agency says the earthquake that struck yesterday off Fukushima was an aftershock of the massive 2011 quake. Northeastern Japan was jolted by a magnitude-7.4 earthquake. "But nothing fell from the shelves." More on p12

HONG KONG Police launched yesterday a citywide hunt for a gang of robbers after they escaped with 81 gold bars worth about HKD22.68 million "in a 20-second daylight hold-up yesterday," SCMP reported. Another 177 gold bars worth about 50 million were left at the crime scene in Fanling. The robbers struck on a street when a man was unloading bags of gold bars from a delivery van onto a trolley. It's the biggest bullion heist in five years.



HONG KONG The Walt Disney Co. and Hong Kong are launching a USD1.4 billion expansion of the southern Chinese city's Disneyland resort that includes the company's first themed areas based on the movie "Frozen" and Marvel superhero characters. More on p11

CHINA A top executive at German automaker Daimler's China operation is fired after being accused of yelling insults about Chinese people and using pepper spray in a dispute over a parking spot. More on p11

More on backpage

GAMBLING CRACKDOWN

China formally arrests Crown staff

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Chinese-made USD100 billion city near Singapore 'scares everybody'

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Bridge to reclaimed land estimated to cost MOP305m

China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) has been assigned the contract to build a bridge connecting the new reclamation project, known as the Macau New Urban Zones (Zone A), to the Macau Peninsula. The local government chose CHEC, according to a notice signed by the Chief Executive and published in the government's Official Gazette. The company will be paid MOP305 million for the project, with the final installment to be settled in 2018. According to the Transportation Infrastructure Office, the bridge will be approximately 400 meters long with six traffic lanes. It will connect the north of Zone A to the Rotunda de Amizade.

Casino staff represent one-third of problematic gamblers

The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) says that 33 percent of problematic gamblers who seek help from the IAS are employed within the gaming industry. IAS has reported that each year there are approximately 130 to 150 cases concerning casino employees. No notable increase has been registered in this year. In the first half of 2016, there were approximately 780 recorded cases of gamblers asking assistance from IAS. These people are mainly aged between 40 and 70 years old. Problematic teenage gamblers normally prefer to seek help from their friends and families, which means that gambling addiction cases within the youth population are less commonly registered.

Grade repetition below fourth grade discarded

The latest recommendation on the metric to evaluate Macau's students' performance has suggested removing grade repetition for students in year levels below the fourth grade of primary school. According to the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ), the draft states that unless the student's parents apply for the child to repeat a grade, the school can not require students to do so. The draft also points out that the repetition rate must be below 4 percent in fifth and sixth grades of primary schools, and must not exceed 8 percent in middle school. In primary school, fifth and sixth grade students would now be allowed to move to sixth grade and to graduate respectively if they fail only one subject.

Hengqin's director says more land could be made available to Macau

Julie Zhu

THE director-general of the Hengqin New Area Administrative Committee, Niu Jing, pledges that the park is not the only place Zhuhai has prepared within the scope of Guangdong-Macau cooperation. Niu Jing disclosed this information during yesterday's Guangdong-Macau Industrial Cooperation Park meeting of 2016.

"I have been saying that for years, that regarding Hengqin's lands, besides the park there are other lands prepared for Macau's projects," said Niu.

Sixteen of the first 33 investment projects of the Macau government, in 2014, with respect to Hengqin, specifically in the Guangdong-Macau Industrial Cooperation Park, have already been assigned lands in the Hengqin area. In fact, 12 of them have already initiated construction works, and are expected to be completed in two years.

Currently, there are five square kilometers of land in Hengqin which are specifically prepared for the park to operate projects jointly organized by Macau and by Guangdong Province.

Niu said that there are commercial buildings already built in Hengqin, not located in



Niu Jing

the park, which belong to Macau. The director-general said that the Hengqin government authority is currently holding discussions on several projects which will be located outside the park.

"As long as the projects are good, and as long as they can have the effect of pushing forward the diversification of Macau's industry, we are willing to provide land and resources," said Niu.

Niu also said that Hengqin is looking for high-end projects, considering that such projects can "save the land and be responsible to Macau."

"If Macau's projects need big

If Macau's projects need big pieces of land, we will supply them.

NIU JING

pieces of land, we will supply them," said Niu.

The director-general also voiced his opinion that Macau does not need to worry about having no lands in Hen-

gqin, but should be concerned about spending enough time thinking about its projects.

"Everyone should spend more time thinking about how to make their projects run well, instead of thinking whether the land is still there. The lands will be there, for sure," guaranteed Niu.

According to Niu, until the end of October of this year, 669 out of the 25,235 registered enterprises in Hengqin are Macau companies, representing an increase of 102.11 percent year on year.

Another aspect revealed to the media by the Hengqin head concerns the topic of Macau's single-plated car entering Hengqin. Niu stated, "of course," when asked whether the policy will be announced this year.

"The Prime Minister has already confirmed. We are all compelling [him] to push forward the work," said Niu.

On November 17, Guangdong's Party Standing Committee organized a meeting to discuss the topic.

"We are closely discussing it with the Macau government. We must fulfill Prime Minister Li Keqiang's promise made in Macau," said Niu.

Currently, both governments are working on the last stage of the projects, according to Niu.

IPM to organize conference on higher education

THE conference titled "The New Frontiers of Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance in Higher Education," organized by Macao Polytechnic Institute (IPM) and co-organized by the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), will be held at the institute today and tomorrow.

This two-day conference will consist of presentations of more than 20 papers by academics and experts coming from countries and regions such as the U.K., Portugal, Australia, Japan, India, Sri Lanka, mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau.

The conference themes include: theories and practices of teaching and learning

quality assurance systems, deep learning, outcome-based approach to teaching and learning, student evaluation of teachers (SET) and teacher self-evaluation (TSE), voice of students to enhance teaching effectiveness and such.

According to the institute's statement, the event is intended to be a platform for participants to learn about the latest trends of international quality assurance and best practices of international institutions, thereby promoting the advancement of the quality of higher education in the territory.

The conference will also feature a number of parallel sessions and a talk by in-



dustry experts.

The conference opening and keynote sessions will commence at 2.30 p.m. today in IPM's Wui Chi Building.

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POLICY ADDRESS | SONIA CHAN

Political reform, the skeleton in the closet



Paulo Barbosa

POLITICAL reform was, perhaps inadvertently, the issue that dominated yesterday's presentation of Sonia Chan's office's action plan for 2017. The Secretary for Administration and Justice was confronted by lengthy and repeated interventions from pro-democrat lawmakers Ng Kuok Cheong and Au Kam San.

In her initial speech, Ms Chan said that the priority would be to prepare the next Legislative Assembly (AL) election, to be held in 2017, making sure that it is characterized by "impartiality, justice, publicity and integrity." But this enumeration didn't seem to convince Ng Kuok Cheong, who claimed that "residents expect universal suffrage" and nothing was done in that regard. "The political reform is stalled," he said. Ng ironized that society now is, "harmonious and stable," hence the government should now advance with the reform, instead of waiting for more "chaotic" times.

Au Kam San contested the

ACTION PENDING COURT RULING

THE GOVERNMENT was criticized for reported inaction in the Pearl Horizon case affecting thousands of pre-sales buyers. Sonia Chan denied such claims, saying that the government is fol-

lowing the case and an inter-departmental group has been created. "However, we need to know about the court's ruling on the case, before that any stance would be unreal," she said.

official stance in Macau regarding political reform. The lawmaker disagreed with the government's claim that the reform needs to be promoted by Beijing. He noted that the Basic Law indicates that the MSAR government is entitled to present a report on reform to the NPC Permanent Committee. "The government must drop the rubber stamp election," he said.

Sonia Chan replied that changes to the way the Chief Executive is elected are not expected for now. "We are not thinking about changing the law to elect the CE, but I believe that the Electoral College has been expanded, with more 100 members," she said. Chan noted that there has been some evolution in terms of the local political system since 2013,

with amendments to the AL election law recently introduced.

Once again, the opinion of the pro-democracy lawmakers contrasted with Sonia Chan's view, with Au Kam San denying that there has been any development since 2012 regarding the "democratic component" of the AL. He added that the measure of implementing the so-called "+2+2" formula (adding two directly elected and two indirectly elected lawmakers) did not contribute to promoting democracy in Macau.

Questioned over the establishment of a municipal body holding no political power, the Secretary for Administration and Justice argued that the new body would "serve the population and provide advice to the government. The new entity would have to be "articulated" with the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM), said Chan, following speculation that IACM could be extinguished. More details will be unveiled during a public consultation that the government will "try to launch"

this year.

Ng Kuok Cheong recalled that he had previously questioned the Chief Executive over the municipal body role and had been told that a reply would be given in the second semester of this year. He said that the process seems to be moving very slow, with no significant developments. Ng also argued that the members of the future municipal body should be directly elected, which would lead to better management.

The government must drop the rubber stamp election.

AU KAM SAN

Other topics discussed yesterday included the administrative revamp, with several lawmakers questioning Sonia Chan about the next steps to be taken. One of them was Chan Meng Kam, who said that the number of civil servants has been growing significantly since the establishment of the MSAR.

Sonia Chan said that there are currently 32,800 civil servants and the number is expected to grow to 36,000. She justified the tendency mentioned by Chan Meng Kam as the result of Macau's fast development after the Handover, which necessitated the expansion of services. Now, the priorities are changing, she argued:

"The economy is stable and this is the opportunity to review the structure of public services and enhance administrative efficiency," she said, listing measures to achieve that, like "reformulating careers, improving the moral of civil servants and ensuring upwards mobility."

The administrative revamp will continue with 13 services, including the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM), the Macao Economic Services (DSE), the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), the Transportation Infrastructure Office (GIT) and the Office for the Development of the Energy Sector (GDSE).

Sonia Chan was the first to present her action plan following the chief executive's delivery of the Policy Address last week. Lawmakers today will continue to discuss Ms Chan's cabinet policies.

Rabbit lantern class next month



Albergue SCM is to organize "Traditional Chinese Lantern Workshop - Part 18 (Advance)" to be held between December 5 and 19. It will be co-organized by Círculo dos Amigos da Cultura de Macau and sponsored by the Macau Foundation. According to a statement from the organizers, a master in lantern marking has been invited to lead the program. Alfredo Ceynas will instruct participants on how to construct a traditional rabbit lantern. Albergue SCM has been holding workshops of lantern-making since 2010, providing a platform for the public to learn the traditional Chinese art and craft. The application period for the class is now open.

'Macao Tourism Data plus' introduces new indicators

The 'Macao Tourism Data plus' (MTD plus), an online platform run by the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), is now equipped with new statistical indicators for hotel industry figures. The three new indicators include: occupancy rate of operating hotel establishments, number of guests of operating hotel establishments and operating hotel establishments. Currently available in Chinese, Portuguese and English, MTD plus is equipped with an array of features including interactive data, tourism statistics tables, e-publications, distribution maps of visitor source markets as well as a tourism situation video. MGTO introduced MTD plus in late November 2015.

Police investigating Huang Shan's case

The Judiciary Police (PJ) is cooperating with the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau in regard to former Macau junket promoter Huang Shan. Huang had fled Macau after having stolen HKD10 billion from gaming investors in 2014. The 40-year-old mainland resident from the Guizhou province was found earlier in Cambodia and is allegedly being held by some of his debtors in Vietnam. PJ Director Chau Wai Kuong said that the case is still under investigation. Because Huang Shan is not a Macau resident, his return to Macau requires time and further judiciary procedures.

EASIER PAYMENTS

QUESTIONED ABOUT the implementation of the "electronic government," Sonia Chan said that there are 70 booths currently operating, providing 23 different services to residents. The secretary said that a new function would be introduced soon, allowing residents to make payments related to government services.

Zhuhai links traffic infractions and price of cars

One car worth more than RMB1 million has more infractions recorded against it than the total infractions of those worth less than RMB100,000. According to a report by Jornal Va Kio, 60 percent of the cars worth less than RMB100,000 have infraction records. Regarding cars worth between RMB100,000 to RMB200,000 patacas, 85 percent have broken the city's transportation laws. The percentage with respect to cars sold from RMB200,000 to RMB300,000, RMB300,000 to RMB400,000, and from RMB400,000 to RMB500,000 is 70 percent, 90 percent and 94 percent, respectively. When compared, cars worth more than RMB 1 million have significantly more infractions.

Observation deck completed at Small Taipa Hill

The construction of the 180-degree observation deck at the Small Taipa Hill is finished. The Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) is expecting the deck to be open to the public next month. According to a report by Macao Daily News, the deck will be opened at the beginning of next year at the latest. The public can access the deck by taking the stairs or the elevators at the Rotunda Leonel Sousa bus stop. Once they arrive at the deck, passengers will be able to see out over the southern region of the Macau Peninsula.

A dispute has emerged between the TCR International Series and Macau Grand Prix organizers following the conclusion of the racing event in the city last weekend. According to Autosport magazine, the dispute threatens to end the series' involvement in the Guia Race next year.

The argument seems to have brewed over the racing weekend with TCR executives noticeably dissatisfied by the presence of cars from the Chinese Touring Car Championship (CTCC), which adhere to different regulations than TCR.

"I think to have different regulations in the same race is difficult to manage," TCR boss Marcello Lotti told Autosport. "To open the race to cars with a different configuration, where the only points of similarity is cylinder capacity, is very dangerous," he added.

The CTCC cars underperformed in the race compared with their TCR rivals, and were blamed as the causes behind several accidents and delays.

However, the final spark that lit the fire might be linked to an entirely different scandal; the absence of TCR series credits in official press information.

Moreover, Autosport claims that timekeepers were told

MACAU GRAND PRIX

TCR dispute may threaten participation next year



Tiago Monteiro was the Guia Race winner

during the competition that the TV graphics were not allowed to contain any mention of the TCR championship points.

The dispute casts doubts over whether the Guia Race could set the stage for the World Touring Car Championship competition, as previously rumored.

It may also represent the continuation of a worrying trend in Macau of interna-

tionally-reputed institutions pulling out of locally-organized events.

In September, leading Macau Grand Prix consultant, Barry Bland, whose Motor Race Consultants company had been involved in the racing event since 1983, announced his withdrawal citing rushed developments that he claimed have become characteristic of local organizers.

Furthermore, just last week,

renowned director and festival planner, Marco Müller, announced his sudden departure from the International Film Festival & Awards Macao shortly before it is due to launch next month.

Though the full reasons behind his departure have still not been disclosed, both Müller and Macau-based organizers have stated that "differences of opinion" made the collaboration difficult. DB

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Employee turnover rate in banks drops

At the end of the third quarter of 2016, there were some 28 banks operating in Macau, according to information released by the Statistics and Census Service (DESC). Compared with the same point in 2015, the number of full-time employees increased by 144 to 6,072, with 1,672 directors and managers and 2,041 clerks (including 784 bank tellers).

In the third quarter, the banking sector hired 265 new employees with the employee recruitment rate (4.4 percent) and the employee turnover rate (3.4 percent) falling by 3.9 and 2.3 percentage points respectively year-on-year. The number of new recruits indicates that the employee population of the banking sector was relatively stable in this quarter, according to a statement from DSEC.

Meanwhile, job vacancies stood at 240 at the end of the third quarter, similar to a year ago. There were 143 vacancies for clerks and 52 for bank tellers.

In September 2016, average earnings (excluding bonuses) of full-time employees amounted to MOP25,650, up by 3 percent year-on-year. Average earnings of bank tellers increased by 5.3 percent to MOP15,470.

ECONOMY

Third quarter growth at 4pct owing to gaming rebound

The economy of Macau expanded by 4 percent year-on-year in real terms during the third quarter of 2016, according to data released yesterday by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), representing the first positive quarterly growth in the past two years.

The news comes off the back of three consecutive months of year-on-year growth in gross gaming revenues, two of which fall within the quarter.

DSEC have attributed the rise to a rebound in both exports of services and investment. "External demand showed improvement, leading to a pickup in exports of gaming services and exports of other tourism services, rising by 0.2 percent and 6.5 percent respectively year-on-year," noted DSEC in yesterday's statement.

The institution's conclusions are supported by data published earlier this week that showed that visitor spending in the territory had rebounded, representing the first signs of growth in seven consecutive quarters.



Also in the third quarter of 2016, domestic demand recovered and private consumption expenditure and investment grew by 0.3 percent and 2.3 percent respectively. The implicit deflator of GDP, which measures the overall change in prices, rose marginally

according to DSEC, by 0.2 percent year-on-year.

Private consumption expenditure rose slightly by 0.3 percent year-on-year in the third quarter, supported by a "favorable employment situation" and reduced inflationary pressures, thus ending its downtrend in the two previous quarters.

Nevertheless, expenditure on durable goods remained weak, indicating that households remain cautious about spending on non-essential items. Household final consumption expenditure in the domestic market and abroad grew by 0.5 percent and 4.5 percent respectively.

Government final consumption expenditure diminished, falling by 1.3 percent year-on-year, lower than the 6.1 percent growth in the second quarter of this year. Compensation of employees increased by 2.2 percent, while net purchases of goods and services decreased by 4.9 percent.

At the same time, investment gained momentum during the

third quarter, underpinned by an increase in private investment. Gross fixed capital formation, the gauge of investment, grew by 2.3 percent year-on-year, rebounding from a sharp decline of 20 percent in the previous quarter. Meanwhile, government investment rose by 1.8 percent, of which equipment investment grew by 17.5 percent but public construction edged down by 0.1 percent.

Decline in merchandise trade tapered off. Overall demand stabilized, with private consumption, investment and visitor spending showing modest growth. Both imports and exports of goods decreased at a slower rate, by 7.3 percent and 15.6 percent respectively year-on-year, far lower than the 17 percent and 24.7 percent declines in the second quarter.

Also aggregated in the statement was the economic growth of the MSAR for the first three quarters of 2016, which in fact contracted by 5.4 percent in real terms compared with the same period in the previous year.

Economic growth for 2014 and 2015 was revised downwards from 0.9 percent and -20.3 percent to -1.2 percent and -21.5 percent respectively. DB

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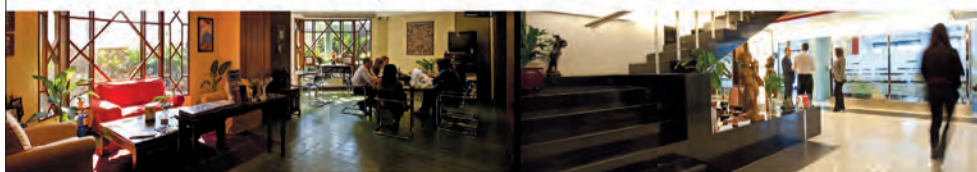
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China formally arrests Crown staff amid gambling crackdown

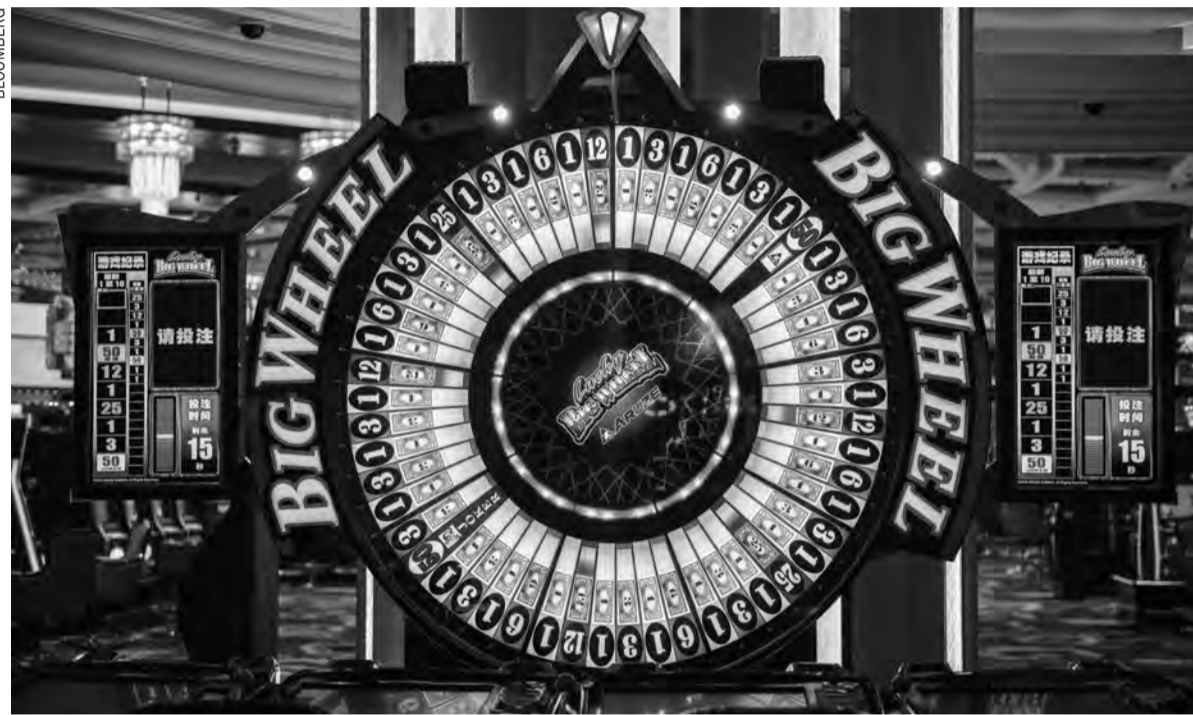
A group of Crown Resorts Ltd. employees detained in China since last month have been formally arrested for alleged gambling-related crimes, according to a lawyer, paving the way for them to be prosecuted as the government clamps down on foreign casinos that woo its citizens to gamble overseas.

The employees were arrested last Friday and will be held for another two months for investigations, which could be extended as needed, according to Zhai Jian, a Shanghai-based lawyer who said his firm, Da-cheng Law Offices, represents a group of Crown employees. Police will decide whether to prosecute the employees after the investigations conclude, he said.

The arrests signal the government in Beijing is again focusing on overseas casino operators with marketing operations in China, after arresting South Korean gaming workers last year. The rare arrests involving foreign nationals employed by a major international company also highlight a shift in the Chinese authorities' handling of overseas workers who flock to the world's second-largest economy.

"In the old days, people would insist to me that the only risk was deportation. This is no longer the case," said Steve Dickinson, a lawyer at Seattle-based Harris Moure, which produces the China Law Blog and has advised companies in the gaming sector. "Foreigners can expect to be treated exactly like Chinese nationals."

In 2014, GlaxoSmithKline Plc's British country manager in charge of its China unit, Mark Reilly, was prosecuted along with other China-based executives in a high-profile bribery case that resulted in a 3 billion yuan (USD436 million) fine for the drug giant. Last year, prosecutors accused U.S.



-based OSI Group Inc. of selling expired products to fast-food restaurants and sentenced ten employees to jail, including one Australian who was of Chinese origin.

Zhai said he represents employee Alfreed Gomez, who is of Malaysian nationality. On his LinkedIn profile, Gomez lists himself as a Crown senior vice-president in China. A China spokeswoman for Crown in Melbourne didn't respond to e-mailed questions about Zhai's comments or Gomez's position with the company.

Macau, a special administrative region, is the only Chinese city where casinos are legal. Elsewhere in the nation, it's illegal to organize people to gamble, operate a casino or make a living from such activities. The punishment is no more than three years in jail.

The arrests send a pointed message to the casino industry, said Richard Huang, a gaming analyst for Nomura International.

"The key message from the Chinese government is that it will take the policy on the gaming industry more seriously," said Huang. "The law has always been there to forbid gambling marketing. Now the government is vigorously enforcing the regulation."

The arrests haven't affected business for casino operators in Macau, the world's biggest gambling hub, so far, said Huang. Most casino operators rely on gaming promoters to bring in high-stakes players, and the industry in Macau has begun to shift away from those VIP players to attracting tourists and casual gamblers.

Of the 18 Crown employees

detained in mid-October, one – a Chinese national who Crown said was a junior employee – was released on bail earlier this month. All the detained employees who have not been

In the old days, people would insist to me that the only risk was deportation. This is no longer the case.

STEVE DICKINSON

released have been formally arrested, said Zhai, who declined to specify how many of those arrested his firm represents.

Crown's shares plunged the most on record Oct. 17 on the news that its staff, including three Australians and a Malaysian, were detained in China. Among them was Crown's head of international high-roller operations Jason O'Connor.

The shares have since recouped those losses, and rose 3.1 percent to AUD11.49, the highest level in more than a month, by the close of trading yesterday.

Australia is continuing to seek official confirmation of the status of the Crown employees within the Chinese legal system, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said in e-mailed statement Monday, while Australian Trade Minister Steven Ciobo said in a Bloomberg TV interview the country continues to offer consular support to the Crown detainees.

Chinese authorities had warned Crown last year to halt its efforts to attract high rollers from the mainland to gamble overseas, a person familiar with the government's decision to detain the Australian company's employees said last month.

Australian Financial Review reported Monday that three Australian employees of Crown Resorts, along with 13 other China-based employees of the company have been formally arrested. A fourth Australian, who is believed to work for a junket operator, was also arrested, the paper reported. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

SANDS SHOPPES HOLDS RETAIL AWARDS CEREMONY



Sands Shoppes Cotai Strip Macao hosted the second Sands Retail Awards ceremony last week at Conrad Macao, Cotai Central.

The ceremony recognized

and rewarded retailers at the Four Seasons, the Venetian, Cotai Central and the Parisian for their commitment to service excellence throughout 2016.

The event was hosted in

conjunction with the Sands Retail Academy Graduation Ceremony, said Sands China's statement.

Awards were presented for 'Best Store Performance' to winners from nine categories and ten winners were selected based on the assessment of their sales performance, overall shop presentation and customer services throughout the year.

"We also hope that the annual ceremony will serve to inspire both the retailers and their staff members to provide an even higher level of service, which will be to the benefit of Sands Retail, the retailers and their employees and of course our customers," said David Sylvester, executive vice president of Global Retail, Las Vegas Sands Corp.

CONRAD MACAO PRESENTS FESTIVE TREATS



Inspired by the Christmas season, Conrad Macao, Cotai Central will present a series of surprises for its guests this festive holiday season.

According to the resort's re-

lease, Conrad Macao chefs will offer a helping hand by presenting turkey and roast feasts along with all the trimmings to take away for either Thanksgiving or Christmas

celebrations. Between November 23, 2016 and January 2, 2017, takeaway roast packages are available at Grand Orbit, with various selections.

Guests will want to book early for the hotel's Christmas dinner with seasonal menus, as well as the hallmark Afternoon Tea in The Lounge. The innovative Bodhi Spa has also created the perfect treatment for a winter pampering.

The season would not be complete without a Christmas edition bespoke Conrad Bear and Conrad Duck. These limited-edition, stylish black and white zebra design collectibles will go on sale from December 20 exclusively at The Gift Shop, and are provided complimentary to guests staying at the hotel on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day nights.

All New Infiniti Q30



INFINITI Q30 HAS BEEN LAUNCHED

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Q30# BORNTOCHALLENGE

Taiwan airline TransAsia to shut down after suffering losses

Yu-Huay Sun, Debra Mao

TAIWANESE carrier TransAsia Airways Corp. decided to close down operations after two fatal crashes in the last two years pushed it into losses.

After a board meeting early yesterday, the Taipei-based airline said in a statement that it won't be able to repay convertible bonds due Nov. 29, but will compensate affected customers in full. The carrier was losing as much as TWD300 million (USD9.4 million) a month, Chairman Vincent Lin told reporters in the city. Shareholders will vote on the decision on Jan. 11.

"We decided to dissolve the company when we're still able to handle creditors, passengers and employees," Lin said. "It's doubtful if we would be able to do it in six months."

At the center of air-safety investigations by authorities for the disasters in 2014 and 2015 that killed a combined 91 passengers, the company has reported losses in each of the past seven quarters totaling TWD3.4 billion, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. The carrier is also being probed by regulators for alleged insider trading in the company's shares prior to disclosures that it was halting flights yesterday.

Founded in 1951 as the island's first private airline, its shares started trading on the Taiwan Stock Exchange in late 2011. With a fleet of 16 aircraft, TransAsia flies to 27 destinations. The carrier had racked up TWD\$17.1 billion of liabilities



We decided to dissolve the company when we're still able to handle creditors, passengers and employees.

VINCENT LIN
TRANSASIA CHAIRMAN

ties as of Sept. 30.

"TransAsia was not efficient enough to compete with low-

cost carriers and stimulate new traffic and did not have enough bulk to be relevant for the corporate market," said Will Horton, a senior analyst at CAPA Centre for Aviation in Hong Kong. "TransAsia's absence will not be felt significantly."

Trading in TransAsia's shares was suspended starting Tuesday, according to a company filing. The firm has \$75 million of convertible bonds due November 2018 and TWD180.4 million of outstanding local-currency convertible securities due in October 2019, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

TransAsia's stock slumped 7.1 percent to TWD5.20 on Monday before the suspension, with more than 10.7 million

shares changing hands, giving the airline a market value of TWD3.95 billion.

The Financial Supervisory Commission and the Ministry of Justice late Monday said they had initiated a probe into insider trading, while the Taiwan stock exchange earlier said it would fine the company TWD1.5 million for breaching

corporate disclosure rules.

The island's Civil Aeronautics Administration said the airline should have gotten regulatory approval for the suspensions, which will affect 84 flights and about 5,000 customers. Taiwan's cabinet has directed affected customers to seek assistance from its Consumer Protection Committee.

Taiwan's labor ministry said in a statement that the carrier must negotiate with the 1,735 workers it laid off to ensure their rights are protected and avoid disputes.

In June this year, investigators examining the causes of the 2015 crash said the fatal accident involving a twin-engine ATR 72-600 aircraft could have been prevented had the crew correctly identified a malfunction and prioritized right actions to stabilize the flight path. The crash killed 43 people. Another in July 2014 claimed 48 lives.

The company's shares have fallen about 56 percent since the first of the disasters, while the benchmark Taix index dropped 3.8 percent over the same period.

Creditors will monitor developments at the company, which has borrowed TWD11 billion in syndicated loans, Central News Agency reported, citing FSC Chairman Lee Ruey-tsang.

"We have not met your expectations and extend our apologies," Chief Executive Officer Liu Tung-ming said at a separate press conference in Taipei. **Bloomberg**

MACAU FLIGHTS SCRAPPED

IN JUNE, TransAsia Airways made a formal announcement to indicate that they would suspend their entire Taiwan-Macau services, effective from the end of October. The local airport stated that the withdrawal was

expected to be temporary and not have any significant impact on passengers. TransAsia expressed intention to resume the route in December, which was approved by the Civil Aviation Authority of Macau.

AMONG the conflict-of-interest questions swirling around U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's global business interests, Trump Tower at Century City in Manila's financial district stands out.

Century Properties Group Inc. of Manila, the company behind the USD150 million tower that's set to open next year, paid as much as \$5 million to use the Trump name, in a licensing agreement that's common for the president-elect. Trump has at least 10 similar licensing deals around the world, each of which might complicate his administration's

Trump's business partner will be Manila's man in Washington

international diplomacy, according to ethics specialists.

But in Manila, there's an extra connection: Century Properties' chief executive and controlling stakeholder, Jose E.B. Antonio, was appointed last month to serve as a special government envoy to the U.S. for Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who has vowed to expel American troops from his country and ranted against President Barack

Obama. Antonio says he sees no conflict between his public role and private partnership.

"My role is to enlarge the relationship between the two countries," he said in an interview. Of his business tie to Trump, he said: "I guess it would be an asset."

Antonio told Bloomberg News that he visited Trump Tower in New York days after the U.S. election; he didn't speak to the president-elect, Antonio

said, but he saw Trump talking with potential appointees. Asked about his account, Hope Hicks, a Trump spokeswoman said: "They did not meet."

Regardless, Antonio's dual roles as private business partner and official government envoy underscore the global scale of the potential conflicts facing Trump and his family even before he's sworn in as the 45th president. Questions have been raised in two

instances: Trump took a break from transition discussions to meet with three business partners who are building Trump-branded towers in India, according to media reports. And a spokesman for Argentine President Mauricio Macri on Monday denied a report in La Nacion newspaper that Trump had asked for help with permits for a Buenos Aires real-estate project during a post-election call with Macri.

Trump rejected concerns about his potential conflicts of interest. "Prior to the election it was well known that I have interests in properties all over the world," he posted on Twitter Monday night. "Only the crooked media makes this a big deal!"

Kellyanne Conway, a top Trump aide, told reporters Monday that while Trump's widespread business interests mean "we're in unprecedented times," he's getting advice from "various lawyers, accountants and advisers telling him what he can and can't do."

"I'm very confident he is not breaking any laws," Conway said. **Bloomberg**



PROPERTY

Chinese-made USD100 billion city near Singapore 'scares everybody'

Pooja Thakur Mahrotri
& En Han Choong

The landscaped lawns and flowering shrubs of Country Garden Holdings Co.'s huge property showroom in southern Malaysia end abruptly at a small wire fence. Beyond, a desert of dirt stretches into the distance, filled with cranes and piling towers that the Chinese developer is using to build a USD100 billion city in the sea.

While Chinese home buyers have sent prices soaring from Vancouver to Sydney, in this corner of Southeast Asia it's China's developers that are swamping the market, pushing prices lower with a glut of hundreds of thousands of new homes. They're betting that the city of Johor Bahru, bordering Singapore, will eventually become the next Shenzhen.

"These Chinese players build by the thousands at one go, and they scare the hell out of everybody," said Siva Shanker, head of investments at Axis-REIT Managers Bhd. and a former president of the Malaysian Institute of Estate Agents. "God only knows who is going to buy all these units, and when it's completed, the bigger question is, who is going to stay in them?"

The Chinese companies have come to Malaysia as growth in many of their home cities is slowing, forcing some of the world's biggest builders to look abroad to keep erecting the giant residential complexes that sprouted across China during the boom years. They found a prime spot in this special economic zone, three times the size of Singapore, on the southern tip of the Asian mainland.

The scale of the projects is dizzying. Country Garden's Forest City, on four artificial islands, will house 700,000 people on an area four times the size of New York's Central Park. It will have

office towers, parks, hotels, shopping malls and an international school, all draped with greenery. Construction began in February and about 8,000 apartments have been sold, the company said.

It's the biggest of about 60 projects in the Iskandar Malaysia zone around Johor Bahru, known as JB, that could add more than half-a-million homes. The influx has contributed to a drop of almost one-third in the value of residential sales in the state last year, with some developers offering discounts of 20 percent or more. Average resale prices per square foot for high-rise flats in JB fell 10 percent last year, according to property consultant CH Williams Talhar & Wong.

Country Garden, which has partnered with the investment arm of Johor state, launched another waterfront project down the coast in 2013 called Danga Bay, where it has sold all 9,539 apartments. China state-owned Greenland Group is building office towers, apartments and shops on 128 acres in Tebrau, about 20 minutes from the city center. Guangzhou R&F Properties Co. has begun construction on the first phase of Princess Cove, with about 3,000 homes.

Country Garden said in an e-mail it was "optimistic on the outlook of Forest City" because of the region's growing economy and location next to Singapore. R&F didn't respond to questions about the effects of so many new units and Greenland declined to comment.

"The Chinese are attracted by lower prices and the proximity to Singapore," said Alice Tan, Singapore-based head of consultancy and research at real-estate brokers Knight Frank LLP. "It remains to be seen if the upcoming supply of homes can be absorbed in the next five years."

The influx of Chinese compe-

tion has affected local developers like UEM Sunrise Bhd., Sunway Bhd. and SP Setia Bhd., who have been building projects around JB for years as part of a government plan to promote the area. First-half profit slumped 58 percent at UEM, the largest landowner in JB.

A decade ago, Malaysia decided to leverage Singapore's success by building the Iskandar zone across the causeway that connects the two countries. It was modeled on Shenzhen, the neighbor of Hong Kong that grew from a fishing village to a city of 10 million people in three decades. Malaysian sovereign fund Khazanah Nasional Bhd. unveiled a 20-year plan in 2006 that required a total investment of 383 billion ringgit (\$87 billion).

Singapore's high costs and property prices encouraged some companies to relocate to Iskandar, while JB's shopping malls and amusement parks have become a favorite for day-tripping Singaporeans. In the old city center, young Malaysians hang out in cafes and ice cream parlors on hipster street Jalan Dhoby, where the inflow of new money is refurbishing the colonial-era shophouses.

Outside the city, swathes of palm-oil plantations separate isolated gated developments like Horizon Hills, a 1,200-acre township with an 18-hole golf course.

"The Chinese developers see this as an opportunity. A lot of them say Iskandar is just like Shenzhen was 10 years ago," said Jonathan Lo, manager of valuations at CH Williams Talhar & Wong, a property broker based in Johor Bahru. "Overseas investors coming to Malaysia is a new phenomenon so it's hard to predict."

Construction soon outpaced demand. To sell the hundreds of new units being built every month, some companies took to flying

in planeloads of potential buyers from China, prompting low-cost carrier AirAsia Bhd. to start direct flights in May connecting JB with the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou.

On the first such flight, 150 of the 180 seats were taken by a subsidized tour group organized by Country Garden. Almost half of them ended up buying a residence, the developer said in an e-mail.

Buses disgorging Chinese tourists at Forest City in November were met by dozens of sales agents, with the women dressed in traditional Sarong Kebaya outfits similar to those worn by Singapore Airlines Ltd. stewardesses.

The visitors filed into a vast sales gallery where agents explained the enormity of the project using a replica of the finished town, with model buildings as tall as people. They viewed show flats with marble floors and golden-trimmed furniture, dined on a buffet spread and were encouraged to sign on the spot. A two-bedroom apartment cost as little as 1.25 million yuan (\$181,400), about one-fifth of the price of a similar-sized private apartment in central Singapore.

“God only knows who is going to buy all these units, and when it's completed, the bigger question is, who is going to stay in them?”

SIVA SHANKER
AXIS-REIT MANAGERS BHD.

But JB is not Shenzhen. The billions poured into the economic zone in southern Guangdong in the 1980s and 1990s by Hong Kong and Taiwanese firms was soon dwarfed by Chinese investment as factories sprang up all along China's coast.

In Malaysia, investment growth is slowing, slipping to 2 percent year on year in the third quarter, from more than 6 percent in the previous quarter. The value of residential sales in Malaysia fell almost 11 percent last year, while in Johor the drop was 32 percent, according to government data.

"I am very concerned because the market is joined at the hip, if Johor goes down, the rest of Malaysia would follow," said Shanker, at Axis-REIT Managers, who estimates that about half the units in Iskandar may remain empty. "If the developers stop building today, I think it would take 10 years for the condos to fill up the current supply. But they won't stop."

Developers have a pipeline of more than 350,000 private homes planned or under construction in Johor state, according to data from Malaysia's National Property Information Centre. That's more than all the privately built homes in Singapore. Forest City could add another 160,000 over its 30-year construction period, according to Bloomberg estimates, based on the projected population.

"Land is plentiful and cheap," said Alan Cheong, senior director of research & consultancy at Savills Singapore. "But buyers don't understand how real estate values play out when there is no shortage of land."

The developers haven't been helped by government measures designed to prevent overseas investors pushing up prices. In 2014, Malaysia doubled the minimum price of homes that foreigners can buy to 1 million ringgit, and raised capital gains tax to as much as 30 per cent for most properties resold by foreigners within five years.

The stream of new developments has scared away some investors, pushing developers to concentrate more on finding families who will live in the apartments, said Lo at CH Williams. Profit margins have fallen to around 20 percent, from 30 percent when land was cheap a few years ago, according to his firm.

Singapore billionaire Peter Lim's Rowsley Ltd. said last year it will no longer build homes in Iskandar and will instead turn its Vantage Bay site into a healthcare and wellness center.

"The Chinese players have deep financial resources and are building residential projects ahead of demand," Ho Kiam Kheong, managing director of real estate at Rowsley said in an interview. "If we do residential in Iskandar, we would be only a drop in the ocean. We can't compete with them on such a large scale."

Bloomberg

China says it is caring for refugees from Myanmar fighting

AP PHOTO



Myanmar regular troops patrolling the border with Bangladesh

CHINA is caring for about 3,000 refugees who have entered its territory to escape fighting in Myanmar between the government and ethnic rebels, including some who have been injured, the foreign ministry said yesterday.

China has offered "proper settlement" to those seeking shelter and hospital beds for those who need them, ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told reporters at a daily briefing.

A coalition of ethnic rebel forces on Sunday attacked government outposts in Myanmar's northern Shan State, which borders China.

The state-owned Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper reported eight dead in the attacks on military outposts, police stations and a trade center in Muse and Kutkai Townships. Killed were one soldier, three policemen, a local militiaman and three civilians.

The report blamed the Kachin Independence Army, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army for the attacks. Unlike other ethnic rebel groups, none of those have active ceasefire agreements with the government.

Statements from some of the groups acknowledged laun-

ching the attacks. They said they were in response to earlier government offensives.

The Kachin, based mainly in the northern state of the same name, have been in a mostly low-level state of war with the government since 2011. The Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army is a guerrilla force comprising members of the ethnic Chinese Kokang minority.

The area has been insecure for decades, largely because the remoteness of Kachin and northern Shan state make them difficult to control, while their location along the border with China make them lucrative for trade, both legal and illegal. **AP**

Daimler fires official accused of calling Chinese 'bastards'

A top executive at German auto-maker Daimler's China operation has been fired after being accused of yelling insults about Chinese people and using pepper spray in a dispute over a parking spot.

Rainer Gaertner, chief executive of Daimler's Chinese truck and bus division, was accused of starting an argument in an upscale Beijing neighborhood last week. A post that circulated on Chinese social media alleged that Gaertner said that he had lived in China for a year and that he believed all Chinese were "bastards."

The post alleged Gaertner, who was named CEO of Daimler Trucks and Buses China in July 2015, then used pepper spray to disperse onlookers who had confronted him.

The alleged incident was covered by several state-run and domestic media outlets, and generated hundreds of angry responses online.

Daimler issued a statement yesterday offering an apology for the incident, "irrespective of any comments alleged to have been made." It called what happened "detrimental to the standing of our company, unbecoming of a manager of our brand and prejudicial to our good name."

The company said Gaertner and the other person involved had resolved the issue privately.



Rainer Gaertner

China is the world's biggest automotive market, and Chinese consumers and media are particularly sensitive to stories about alleged Western arrogance and the perception that outside companies take advantage of Chinese consumers, a feeling rooted in the history of imperial powers carving up China for their own interests. Calls for boycotts of particular companies or even entire countries circulate frequently online in response to perceived slights to Chinese dignity, and can sometimes have a notable effect on sales.

One poster on the Chinese social network Weibo fired back with an insult directed at Germans, calling them "arrogant to the bone." The poster said he hoped that executives like Gaertner would "learn a lesson and go back in disgrace." **AP**

Hong Kong Disney gets USD1.4b expansion with Frozen theme area

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

THE Walt Disney Co. and Hong Kong are launching a USD1.4 billion expansion of the southern Chinese city's Disneyland resort that includes the company's first themed areas based on the movie "Frozen" and Marvel superhero characters.

The Hong Kong government, which owns a controlling stake in the resort, said yesterday it signed an agreement with Disney for the expansion, which also calls for renovating the park's castle and adding an attraction based on Disney's new animated film "Moana."

Work on the 10.9 billion Hong Kong dollar (USD1.4 billion) expansion is scheduled to run from 2018 to 2023.

Hong Kong is striving to improve its competitiveness as an Asian tourism destination following the June launch of Shanghai Disneyland, a \$5.5 billion resort that many had feared would siphon off mainland Chinese visitors to the Hong Kong park.

Hong Kong Disneyland lost HKD148 million in its most re-



cent financial year as attendance fell 9 percent, following three years of profit. The park, which opened in 2005, was criticized in its early years for being too small and having too few big-ticket rides.

New attractions and facilities have been added over the years. An "Iron Man" land is due to open in January followed by an Explorers Lodge hotel later in the year.

Costs will be divided according to ownership, with the Hong Kong government, which owns 53 percent of the park, contributing \$748 million. Walt Disney Co. will put in the remaining \$658 million.

Disney's board and Hong Kong's legislature must approve funding for the project. **AP**

Hyung-Jin Kim, Seoul

Defectors: North Korea would fall without capitalistic markets

HUNDREDS of capitalistic markets, each with thousands of stalls, form the glue that holds North Korea's socialist planned economy together, say defectors who sold medicinal herbs, skinny jeans, TV sets, foreign drama CDs and other goods there to make a living.

"People there say North Korean markets have everything but a cat's horn. They truly have everything there," said Cha Ri-hyuk, 31, who came to South Korea in 2013. "If North Korea shuts down markets, it will collapse too."

North Korea has tolerated — and taxed — some market activities since the country's state rationing systems crumbled amid an economic crisis and famine that killed an estimated hundreds of thousands in the mid-1990s. The economic boost the markets provide has helped leader Kim Jong Un keep a grip on power and further his nuclear ambitions, leaving the North's harsh political system and alleged human rights abuses largely untouched.

But some political analysts note that market activities are gradually infusing North Koreans with new ways of thinking that eventually could loosen the authoritarian government's hold over its 24 million people.

"It's like potential forces which can fundamentally shake the North's systems are growing," said Lim Eul Chul, a North Korea expert at South Korea's Kyungnam University.

Satellite photos and testimonies of defectors show there are now about 400 mostly outdoor markets, called "jangmadang," in the North. Recent surveys of refugees suggest most ordinary North Koreans resort to market

activities for a living as the country's public rationing systems have never been fully restored. Four defectors who talked to The Associated Press said they received no rations at all.

North Korea has periodically tried to prevent markets from growing too fast by restricting the operating hours of markets and barring young people from working there. But such measures often are later withdrawn, according to activists specializing in North Korea affairs.

The harshest measure was taken in 2009, when authorities replaced all currency and limited the amount of old bills citizens could exchange in a bid to reassert control over the economy. But no serious measures have been implemented since Kim assumed power in late 2011, after his father's death. Kim has vowed to improve public livelihood while pouring resources into weapons programs to cope with what he calls increasing U.S. military threats.

North Korea rarely allows international news organizations to conduct reporting at capitalistic-style markets. In 2004, however, the AP was given an unusual chance to film Pyongyang's crowded yet clean indoor Tongil Market, where neatly uniformed merchants sold goods including bananas, fish, vegetables, women's underwear, shoes and tennis rackets.

Defectors say the Pyongsong wholesale market, near the North's capital Pyongyang, is



North Korean defector Cha Ri-hyuk, 31, who came to South Korea in 2013, talks about the many markets that recently have opened up in North Korea

the biggest.

To work at a market, a merchant buys a stall and pays daily tax to authorities. There is no official data on how much money North Korea collects from market merchants every year.

Items sold in jangmadangs are locally produced, or imported or smuggled from China, South Korea and elsewhere. South Korean-made clothes, shoes and soap opera CDs are especially popular, though it's illegal in the North to sell goods made by its archrival.

Regular police crackdowns have not sapped demand.

"No matter how high prices for South Korean clothes I called, they were all sold out," said Lee O.P., who sold such clothes at a Musan market in the northeast before she made it to South Korea in December 2014. She requested her first name be identified only as initials due to worries about the safety of relatives left in the North.

When North Korean police find people wearing South Korean

clothes or dresses they consider too skimpy or tight, they often take them to back alleys and rip parts of their garments with razors or scissors, according to Cha and Lee.

The markets have given North Koreans a taste of foreign culture, eroded their dependence upon a government that no longer feeds them and opened up a new gap between rich and poor. There is little to suggest that the country's authoritarian rule has weakened, but at the same time, experts say, the North must take care to avoid economic policies that harm the markets. For instance, the 2009 botched currency reform reportedly triggered widespread public complaints that led to the execution of a top Workers' Party official.

There are risks in the business, whether authorities are hunting for contraband, cracking down on foreign currency or simply committing graft. Lee O.P. says she decided to flee after police officers confiscated her whole savings for unauthorized phone calls with her daughter who already defected to South Korea.

Now in South Korea, Lee O.P. said she was amazed at social welfare programs directed at her and other underprivileged people.

"For me, it's like North Korea is a capitalistic country while South Korea is a socialist country," she said. "In North Korea, if you don't have money, you'll just have to die." AP

JAPAN

Offshore quake causes tsunamis, nuclear worries in Japan

A powerful earthquake off the northeast Japanese shore yesterday sent residents fleeing to higher ground and prompted worries about the Fukushima nuclear power plant destroyed by a tsunami five years ago.

Lines of cars were seen snaking away from the coast in the pre-dawn hours after authorities issued a tsunami warning and urged residents to seek higher ground immediately. The warning was lifted nearly four hours later.

The magnitude 7.4 earthquake struck in the same region that was devastated by a tsunami in 2011, killing



Japan Meteorological Agency earthquake expert Koji Nakamura points a map of Fukushima and its surrounding prefectures

some 18,000 people.

There were reports of minor injuries and damage, Japanese broadcaster NHK said. The earthquake shook buildings in Tokyo, 240 kilometers southwest of the epicenter.

NHK also showed one person's video of water rushing up a river or canal, but well within the height of the embankment. It was eerily reminiscent of the 2011 disaster, when much larger tsunamis rushed up rivers

and overflowed, wiping away entire neighborhoods.

Yesterday, tsunami waves were recorded along the coast. The highest one was 1.4 meters in Sendai Bay. A tsunami advisory for waves of up to 1 meter remained in effect along the coast.

The operator of the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant said there were no abnormalities observed at the plant, though a swelling of the tide of up to 1 meter was detected offshore.

The plant was swamped by the 2011 tsunami, sending three reactors into meltdown and leaking radiation into the surrounding area. The plant is

being decommissioned but the situation remains serious as the utility figures out how to remove still-radioactive fuel rods and debris and what to do with the melted reactor cores.

Plant operator TEPCO said a pump that supplies cooling water to a spent fuel pool at the nearby Fukushima Dai-ni plant stopped working, but that a backup pump had been launched to restore cooling water to the pool. Both plants are run by

Tokyo-based TEPCO.

Naohiro Masuda, head of TEPCO's decommissioning unit, said he believes that the pump was shut off automatically by a safety system as the water in the pool shook.

He said decommissioning work at the destroyed Dai-ichi plant had been temporarily suspended because of the earthquake.

The U.S. Geological Survey measured the magnitude at 6.9. AP

2 STRONG QUAKES STRIKE NEW ZEALAND; NO REPORTS OF DAMAGE

TWO STRONG earthquakes rattled different parts of New Zealand yesterday but there were no initial reports of serious damage or injuries.

The first magnitude 5.6 quake struck off the coast of New Zealand's North Island at about 1:20 p.m.

It was followed about five hours later by a magnitude 5.3 quake that struck the South Island and appeared to have been an aftershock from a powerful earthquake last week.

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Elaine Kurtenbach, Tokyo

Asia laments Trump rejection of Pacific trade pact

PRESIDENT-ELECT Donald Trump says he wants to pull out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership but other Pacific Rim leaders are vowing to push market-opening efforts they say are vital for growth.

The possible decline of the 12-nation TPP could give a boost to alternative initiatives including one promoted by China in which the United States is not taking part.

Trump's message, in a brief video, was issued after President Barack Obama and other leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation group, meeting in Peru, called Sunday for fighting the backlash against trade highlighted by Trump's victory and Britain's vote to leave the European Union.

Promoters of the TPP say it is a step toward building a wider, pan-Pacific free trade zone, though critics object it would shift too much control over regulation to companies from governments and the public.

"There is very strong support among the other 11 parties to the TPP to ratify it and to seek to bring it into force," said Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

Trump described the 12-nation pact as a "potential disaster for our country." He has also said he wants to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and Mexico.

Obama has said he would give up seeking congressional approval for the TPP. He had championed it as a way for the United States to lead the creation of "gold standard" rules for 21st century trade.

"I think not moving forward would undermine our position across the region," Obama told reporters in Lima.

New Zealand Prime Minister John Key said Washington will



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

need to think about what role it wants to play in Asia and its fast-growing markets.

"The United States isn't an island. It can't just sit there and say it's not going to trade with the rest of the world," said Key after returning home. "At some point they're going to have to give some consideration to that. But naturally, we're a bit disappointed."

The TPP, signed this year in New Zealand, would take effect after it is ratified by six countries that account for 85 percent

of the combined gross domestic product of its member nations.

The United States is 60 percent of the combined GDP of that group and Japan less than 20 percent, so those conditions cannot be met without U.S. participation.

"TPP is meaningless without the United States," said Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Last week, he became the first foreign leader to meet Trump since his Nov. 8 election victory.

As Japan's most powerful leader

Trump described the 12-nation pact as a 'potential disaster for our country'

in a decade, Abe invested political capital in overcoming opposition to the TPP from farmers and the medical lobby.

His ruling Liberal Democratic Party pushed TPP ratification through the lower house of parliament and had been set to seek final approval in the upper house.

Renegotiating the agreement would "disturb the fundamental balance of benefits," said Abe, who was in Argentina following APEC.

Other TPP members include Chile, Mexico, Canada, Peru, Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Australia.

China hopes for progress on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, or RCEP, it is promoting with the 10 governments of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said.

The RCEP would require fewer market-opening concessions than TPP. Critics say that would let China shield its huge but inefficient state-owned companies from competition. The agreement would include China, India, Indonesia and South Korea but no countries from the Americas have joined.

"We would like to push the negotiation process to make headway at an early date," said the spokesman, Geng Shuang, at a regular briefing.

China also called at APEC for progress on a separate arrangement, the Free Trade Agreement of the Asia Pacific.

"We hope these free trade agreements can reinforce rather than thwart each other," said Geng. "We should prevent fragmentation of economic and trade arrangements or politicizing such agreements." AP

China tells Trump that ties with US are 'too big to fail'

THE China-U.S. relationship is "too big to fail" and President-elect Donald Trump shares an obligation to make sure ties between the world's two largest economies improve and never worsen, the Communist Party's People's Daily newspaper said.

The party's flagship newspaper said in an editorial yesterday that the importance of China's relationship with the U.S. was self-evident and any breakdown in ties could result in global "disaster." The piece reiterated President Xi Jinping's message in a post-election te-

lephone call with Trump last week that cooperation was the only correct choice for managing ties.

"It's not hard to predict that a cooperative China-U.S. relationship will bring huge benefits across the globe," the paper said. "However, if the two nations became entangled in friction, and even in confrontations, it will be a disaster to the two countries and the world."

The editorial represented China's latest effort to shore up ties with its largest trading partner in the wake of the surprise election win by Trump,

who frequently accused the country during his campaign of victimizing the U.S. The billionaire real estate developer has promised to label China a currency manipulator, bring trade complaints against the nation, and impose tariffs if it doesn't halt what he sees as unfair trading practices.

The editorial stressed common interests and noted the similarity between Trump's promise to "make America great again" and Xi's own "Chinese dream" slogan, which calls for a "great renaissance of the Chinese nation." The paper said

that agreements with the Obama administration had increased investment and "laid the foundation for future China-U.S. relations," without mentioning the climate change

The People's Daily editorial stressed common interests and noted the similarity between Trump's promise to 'make America great again' and Xi's 'Chinese dream'

deal Trump has vowed to tear up.

The paper characterized the first exchange between Xi and Trump as productive. "The two leaders had a good chat, a

positive atmosphere and reached important consensus," the paper said, adding that the conversation provided ties with a "key theme and direction."

Xi said ahead of a meeting with outgoing President Barack Obama in Lima, Peru, over the weekend that China and the U.S. were at a "juncture point." Obama had said he expected to discuss areas of disagreement at the pair's ninth encounter, including on human rights and the "creation of a more level playing field for our businesses to compete." Bloomberg

LIBYA

Authorities arrest wife of senior al-Qaida-linked militant

LIBYAN authorities said yesterday that they have arrested a wife of the one-eyed militant leader Mokhtar Belmokhtar, once considered the most dangerous man in the Sahara and a veteran al-Qaida-linked figure.

A Libyan anti-terrorism force said that one of Belmokhtar's wives, Asma Kadousi, was arrested over the weekend along with a female companion. It said she had recently given birth in the militant stronghold of Darna, in eastern Libya. It said Belmokhtar is believed to be in southern Libya.

A witness told The Associated Press earlier this month that he had seen Belmokhtar in the southern town of Sabha, where a drone attack reportedly killed a militant leader linked to Belmokhtar, along with six others, last week. The witness asked not to be named for security concerns, and it was not possible to confirm the report.

The Algerian militant, once a top figure in al-Qaida's North African affiliate, is one of the most-wanted militants in the region, with a USD5 million reward for information leading to his capture. He escaped a U.S. drone strike in eastern Libya last year.

Belmokhtar led the January 2013 attack on Algeria's Ain Amenas gas complex, in which at least 35 hostages, including three Americans, were killed. Believed to be 43 years old, he was dubbed "the one-eyed sheikh" after losing an eye in combat.

He was later named the leader of the Morabitoun, an al-Qaida-linked group that operates in northern and western Africa, according to the Long War Journal, a blog that monitors jihadi groups.

Libya has been plagued by chaos since the 2011 uprising, in which U.S. and European airstrikes helped rebels overthrow the longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

Today much of the country is controlled by a patchwork of armed groups, some of which are allied to a U.N.-backed government based in the capital, Tripoli, and others allied to authorities based in the country's far east.

The U.N.-brokered government yesterday condemned the killing of a senior religious official who was abducted in Tripoli a month ago. It was not clear who killed Nader al-Omrani, but he was a member of a religious body that is strongly opposed to Field Marshal Khalifa Hifter, who leads forces allied with the eastern government. **AP**

USA

Trump auditions Cabinet prospects high above Manhattan

AP PHOTO



Kellyanne Conway speaks to media as she arrives at Trump Tower

Jonathan Lemire, New York

DONALD Trump held court from his perch high above Manhattan yesterday [Macau time], receiving a line of former rivals, longtime allies and TV executives while overseeing a presidential transition that at times resembles a reality show like the one he once hosted.

Trump met with nearly a dozen prospective hires, all of whom were paraded in front of the cameras set up in the Trump Tower lobby as they entered an elevator to see the president-elect. Out of public view himself, he fell back on his TV star roots by filming a video that touted his legislative goals once he takes office.

Trump did not immediately announce any appointments after the meetings, which came on the heels of a two-day whirlwind of interviews at his golf course in Bedminster, New Jersey.

Unlike his predecessors, who often spoke with Cabinet candidates under a cloud of secrecy, Trump has turned the search into a very public audition process. The extraordinary exercise took on a routine feel: First, former Massachusetts Senator Scott Brown stepped off the gold-plated elevator into the marble-coated lobby after his meeting to declare to waiting reporters that he was "the best person" to become Veterans Affairs secretary.

Next, Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin, a candidate for interior secretary, did much the same,

striding off the lift to say she had "a wonderful discussion" with Trump. Former Texas Governor Rick Perry declined to speak to reporters, but he did take time for a photo with the Naked Cowboy, the underwear-sporting, guitar-strumming New York institution who is normally a fixture at Times Square but has spent recent days camped out at Trump Tower singing about the president-elect.

Democratic Hawaii Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, who resigned her post on the Democratic National Committee after endorsing Bernie Sanders over Hillary Clinton, also met with Trump but entered and exited out of sight. She later defended crossing party lines to meet with Trump about U.S. involvement in Syria, saying in a statement she would never "play politics with American and Syrian lives."

Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, a longtime Trump ally, also arrived with his wife, Callista, and told reporters that he indicated to Trump that he was interested in being a "senior planner" to coordinate long-term political efforts among the Republicans in control of all three branches of government.

Senior adviser Kellyanne Conway said of the visitors, "Not all of them will be in his Cabinet and his federal government, but they are all incredibly important in offering their points of views, their experience and certainly their vision of the country."

No one was saying whether Trump would announce more

appointments before heading to Florida for Thanksgiving. He was planning to leave today to spend the holiday at his Mar-a-Lago estate, while Vice President-elect Mike Pence will spend Thanksgiving in Mississippi, where his Marine son is stationed.

Trump has largely remained out of sight since winning the election, save for a flurry of brief public appearances over the weekend, often with Pence at his side, to flash thumbs-ups and provide quick updates on his progress in building a government. He remained in the upper floors of his skyscraper, seeking counsel on the phone and interviewing candidates all while keeping an eye on the cable news coverage of the day's events.

Unlike his predecessors, who often spoke with Cabinet candidates under a cloud of secrecy, Trump has turned the search into a very public audition process

He appeared in a two-and-a-half minute video released yesterday [Macau time] in which he pledged to the American people that he was appointing "patriots" to his administration and reiterated a number of his campaign promises, including plans to renegotiate trade deals, scrap excessive regulations and institute a five-year ban on executive officials becoming lobbyists.

The video — which made no mention of key pledges to build a border wall with Mexico or repeal the Affordable Care Act — continues the president-elect's practice of trying to go over the heads of the media and take his case directly to the American public. Since Election Day, he has twice ditched the group of reporters designated to follow his movements and has so far eschewed the traditional news conference held by the president-elect in the days after winning.

Trump has not held a full-fledged news conference since July.

But the media were clearly on his mind as he met with executives and on-air personalities from TV networks. He frequently singled out the media — declaring them "so dishonest" — for criticism during the campaign, but it's not unusual for presidents to hold off-the-record meetings with journalists when trying to promote policies or programs.

Among the attendees were NBC anchor Lester Holt and "Meet the Press" host Chuck Todd, ABC's "Good Morning America" host George Stephanopoulos and anchor David Muir, CBS' "Face the Nation" host John Dickerson, CNN's Wolf Blitzer and several executives at the networks.

None of the attendees would discuss the meeting with reporters in the lobby, though Conway said it was "very cordial, very productive, very congenial."

Those Trump met with over the weekend included former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, a former critic now being considered for secretary of state; retired Marine Corps Gen. James Mattis, who Trump dubbed an "impressive" prospect for defense secretary, and billionaire investor Wilbur Ross, who is under consideration for Commerce secretary. **AP**

what's ON



"THE WORLD IN COLOUR AND INK – COLLECTION OF FEELINGS TO HUANGSHAN AND JINGDEZHEN WORK EXHIBITION"

TIME: 7am-7pm (no admission after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: November 30, 2016

VENUE: Mount Fortress Corridor, located at Caminho dos Artilheiros, Beco dos Artilheiros, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

"MEMORIES OF MOMENTS - MACAO AND LUSOPHONE AFRICAN AND ASIAN REGIONS IN PHOTOGRAPH POSTCARDS" EXHIBITION

TIME: 10am-6pm (no admission after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: December 4, 2016

VENUE: Archives of Macau, No. 91-93, Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

ART COURSES STUDENT'S EXHIBITION OF THE MACAO MUSEUM OF ART

TIME: 10am-7pm (no admission after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: November 27, 2016

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: MOP5 (free admission on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

A SEXAGENARY REVISION - MASTERS OF THE MACAO ARTISTS SOCIETY

TIME: 10am-7pm (closed on Mondays, open on public holidays, no admission after 6:30 pm)

UNTIL: December 4, 2016

VENUE: Handover Gifts Museum of Macao, Av. Xian Xing Hai Macao

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

MACAU GIANT PANDA PAVILION

Time: 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm daily (Except Mondays, closed on the following day instead if a public holiday falls on Monday and no admission after 4:45 pm; six viewings per day)

VENUE: Seac Pai Van Park, Coloane

ADMISSION: MOP10

ENQUIRIES: Civil and Municipal Affairs Bureau (853) 2833 7676

THE ENCHANTING RED BOAT – AN EPISODE OF THE CANTONESE OPERA CULTURE

TIME: 10am-6pm (no admission after 5:30 pm), closed on Mondays (open on public holidays, Free to public on 15th of every month)

UNTIL: November 27, 2016

ADMISSION: MOP15

VENUE: Praceta do Museu de Macau 112

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

Offbeat

ROBBERY GOES AWRY IN AUSTRIA AFTER SUSPECT FINDS BANK CLOSED

This robbery failed before it began. The bank was closed. Austrian police have arrested a man who they say tried to rob a bank in Vienna – but arrived too early.

Police spokesman Patrick Maierhofer says the 45-year old suspect entered the bank foyer yesterday armed with a gas pistol and with a hood drawn over his head but 15 minutes before opening time.

He says that passers-by alerted police after the man hid his weapon under newspapers and paced nervously as he waited for the main doors to open.

The man wasn't identified in line with Austrian privacy laws. Police say his planned getaway vehicle was a stolen scooter.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:55	Debate on Administration and Justice Policy Report for 2017
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
21:30	Criminal Minds S10
22:10	Precious Pearl
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Highlights
23:50	UEFA Champions League: Sporting - Real Madrid (Repeated)
01:45	UEFA Champions League: Besiktas - Benfica (live)
03:45	RTPi Live

cinema

CINETEATRO

17 Nov - 23 Nov

YOUR NAME

ROOM 1
2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Makoto Shinkai

Language: Japanese (English and Cantonese)

Duration: 115min



FANTASTIC BEASTS & WHERE TO FIND THEM

ROOM 2
2.15, 4.45, 7.15, 9.45 pm

Director: David Yates

Starring: Katherine Waterston, Dan Fogler, Alison Sudol

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 133min



INFERNO

ROOM 3
2.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Ron Howard

Starring: Tom Hanks, Felicity Jones, Irrfan Khan

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 121min

FANTASTIC BEASTS & WHERE TO FIND THEM

ROOM 3
4.30, 7.30 pm

Director: David Yates

Starring: Katherine Waterston, Dan Fogler, Alison Sudol

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 133min

MACAU TOWER

17 Nov - 30 Nov

FANTASTIC BEASTS & WHERE TO FIND THEM

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: David Yates

Starring: Katherine Waterston, Dan Fogler, Alison Sudol

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 133min



this day in history



1978 NIGHTCLUB ORDERED TO LIFT RACE BAN

A Birmingham nightclub has been ordered to open its doors to black and Chinese people.

The year-long investigation into popular nightspot Pollyanna's was held after two separate complaints alleging the club had a racist entry policy.

It is the first non-discrimination notice issued by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) since the non-governmental body was formed to tackle racial discrimination by the 1976 Race Relations Act.

The owners, Genture Restaurants, now have to provide evidence they are complying with the order over the next two years, or face prosecution.

The first complaint was from the sales manager of a local cosmetics company who tried to book Pollyanna's for a Christmas party.

But the reservation was refused by Genture Chairman John Weston-Edwards when he discovered a large proportion of the group were black.

In the second case, the nightclub owner told a university lecturer she could not bring a group of students to Pollyanna's because they were Chinese.

The club's management said they barred both white and black people if it disapproved of their attitude or the way they were dressed.

But Mr Weston-Edwards said he would ignore the CRE notice.

He told the BBC he had to limit the numbers of ethnic minorities in his nightclub to preserve a "happy situation" and avoid aggressive confrontations.

"We'll operate as we have done for the last 10 years - I think we have to limit all sorts of people and coloured people fit into that category," he said.

CRE director Dr Peter Sanders said if Pollyanna's did not observe the law the commission would pursue a prosecution of the club.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

After monitoring the club's race equality record for another year, the CRE finally took the owners of Pollyanna's to court in 1979.

The court imposed injunctions stopping them from practising discrimination, and also ordered them to produce information to the CRE proving they had complied.

After the judgement, it emerged that there was also a no-headgear rule at the restaurant which effectively excluded Sikhs as well.

This was not covered by the original non-discrimination notice, so the CRE had to go back to court to get the notice re-worded.

An injunction was finally issued against this rule too. Pollyanna's closed in 1987 when the company which owned it, Genture Restaurants Ltd, was dissolved.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Honesty is key right now — even if it means hurting someone's feelings a little bit.

Taurus April 20-May 20 You've got to work your magic on new people today — maybe folks from far away!

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 You may have felt this good a few times in the past, but something today really reaches deep inside you and pushes the 'on' button!

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You're having a hard time getting much done today, but don't despair — it's just temporary.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You need to travel! If you're somehow out there in the world now, you're having tons of fun — but if not, you need to make plans and get going as soon as humanly possible.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You are incredibly responsible, and today highlights that quality in a big way.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You've found a new balance in your life — one that may have you feeling pretty great!

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You need to let your feelings shift and sway today — especially if you're digging up new philosophical or spiritual teachings.

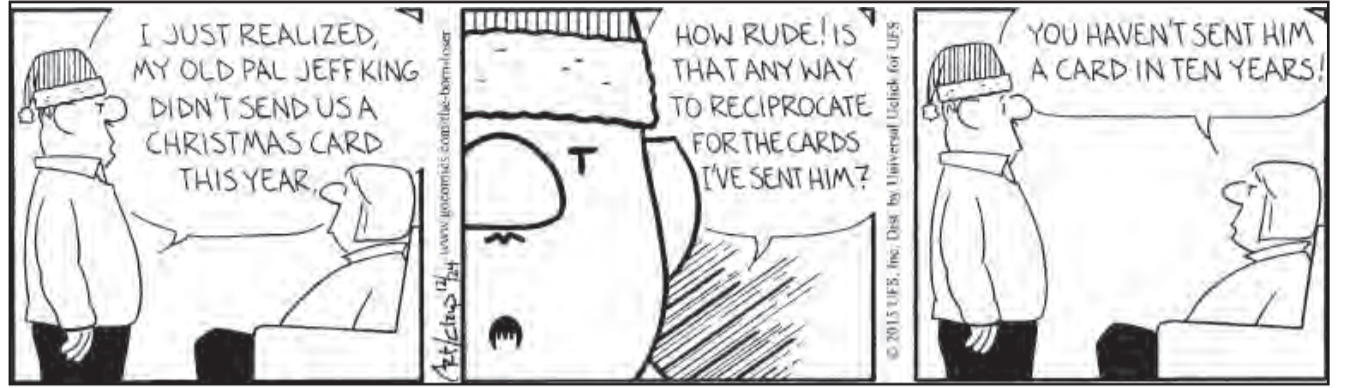
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You need to make a show of goodwill today, if only to help your people get along better.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You may fall into a bit of a black hole today, but don't despair — things are sure to get better if you just stick it out.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You need to spend time with a group of some importance to you — now is just one of those times when your organizational skills (and yes, you do have some) are much needed by your people.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You are tempted to slack off or look away when your conscience comes calling — but you've got to do what's right!

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION

CHINA

Table listing weather conditions for various Chinese cities like Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

WORLD

Table listing weather conditions for various world cities like Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, etc.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Beat it!; 5- Castle defense; 9- Domesticates; 14- ___ Alto; 15- Verge; 16- Name on a bomber; 17- Latin love; 18- Creative thought; 19- Temple leader; 20- Ice cream type; 22- Ruhr Valley city; 23- Standard for comparison; 24- Musical sounds; 28- Musing; 34- Was merciful to; 38- Musical gift; 39- Siouan tribe; 40- Unit of time; 41- Inhumanly cruel; 43- Auction off; 44- Poseidon's domain; 47- Christian festival; 48- Trickery; 51- Nautical direction; 52- Rum cakes; 57- Reef material; 61- "A Horse With No Name" band; 63- Diploma word; 64- Actress Ward; 66- Continue; 67- Bothered; 68- Gotcha; 69- Other, in Oaxaca; 70- Gift of the Magi; 71- Bangkok native; 72- Granny;

DOWN: 1- Sudden convulsion; 2- Grassy plain; 3- Audibly; 4- Leader of the Mel-Tones; 5- Chow ___; 6- Peculiarity; 7- Ripen; 8- Leaves in a bag; 9- Mother of Calcutta; 10- Collections of anecdotes; 11- Unruly crowds; 12- Hamburg's river; 13- Spahn teammate; 21- Ancient; 25- Keats work; 26- Heston's org.; 27- More spine-tingling; 29- Makes sense; 30- May honorees; 31- Let's just leave ___ that; 32- Nada; 33- Grandpa Walton portrayer; 34- Flat sound; 35- Spy; 36- Legal rights org.; 37- Drum sound; 42- Perhaps; 45- Narcissist's problem; 46- Cabinet dept.; 49- 4th letter of the Hebrew alphabet; 50- And others, in Latin; 53- Vacuum tube filler; 54- Flora and fauna; 55- Future oak; 56- Capital of Yemen; 57- A type of bake; 58- Like Cheerios; 59- Sorry sort; 60- Jewish month; 62- Biblical gift bearers; 64- Join a poker game; 65- Old English letter;

Grid for 'Yesterday's solution' crossword puzzle with words filled in.

Grid for crossword puzzle with some numbers filled in.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
Tourism 28 333 000
Airport 59 888 88



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 St. Regis Pool, Level 8, The St. Regis Macao, Cotai Central

Join us on November 26 for a UNICEF Charity event by The St. Regis Pool! Calling all kids to paint, play games and enjoy a BBQ dinner with friends and family. Talented young artists will display their "water-themed art" for a special silent auction. All proceeds will go to UNICEF to give children water that is safe for them to drink!

4 Hours
 Complimentary Self-Parking

BBQ Dinner

Grand Lucky Draw Prizes
 Hotel Accommodation

Game Booths
Art Piece Display
Face Painting

Ticket Price : Complimentary admission for children 0-3 years old, 50% discount for children 4-12 years old
MOP/HKD per person 250

Ticket Office : 9:00AM - 10:00PM
 Sheraton Fitness Center, Level 4
 St. Regis Athletic Club, Level 8

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BBAM
 澳門英國商會
 British Business Association of Macao

BBAM @ St. Regis Breakfast
 on Tuesday 6th December
Guest Speaker: Jeremy Sargent OBE
 Chair of the British Chamber of Commerce Guangdong

20 YEARS IN THE DYNAMIC PEARL RIVER DELTA.....
and what lies ahead for PRD growth

In 1998, Jeremy Sargent, a newly qualified solicitor, relocated from Hong Kong to Guangzhou with a UK City law firm tasked with opening a small representative office for the firm.

Over the past two decades, Jeremy has witnessed firsthand the greatest "industrial revolution" of the modern age". Jeremy will share his experiences of living and working through this exciting period, and share his thoughts on factors for future business success in the region.

In addition to his work as a lawyer at JS Associates, Jeremy chairs the British Chamber of Commerce Guangdong and has established a successful chain of bar/restaurants from scratch. In 2012 Jeremy was awarded an OBE for his legal work and services to British business in China.

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

Strict No-Show/Late Cancellation policy applies for this event
Vegetarian dish to be requested before Friday 2nd December

BBAM Members: Free of charge
Non-Members – MOP/HKD 180.00
RSVP to: bbam@britchammacao.org

Nesha Starcevic, Frankfurt

Thursday, 3:45am
Celtic v Barcelona
H 12, D 6.25, A 1.3

FOOTBALL | CHAMPIONS LEAGUE PREVIEW

Barcelona, Manchester City look to seal spots in last 16

LIONEL Messi is back, and that's the best news Barcelona could have ahead of its Champions League match at Celtic.

Messi practiced with the team yesterday, after missing the match against Malaga in the Spanish league because of illness. With Luis Suarez also absent through suspension, Barcelona could not manage more than a 0-0 draw. Both forwards will be in squad to face Celtic today [Thursday, 3:45am].

What Messi means for Barcelona is easy to see just by looking at numbers, even without considering the inspirational things he can do on the field.

Messi had hat tricks against Celtic and Manchester City in earlier Group C matches and has a total of 90 Champions League goals, including seven hat tricks.

Perhaps surprisingly, Barcelona still has not sealed a spot in the last 16, but could do it with one match to spare. With nine points, Barcelona needs a win or a draw to advance, depending on other results.

After winning 7-0 at home against Celtic, Barcelona may have the mental edge. But Celtic will have something to prove after its biggest European defeat.

GROUP A

First place in the group is the prize when Arsenal hosts Paris Saint-Germain in a meeting between the top two.

Both teams have 10 points and are guaranteed to advance to the knockout stage, but still to be determined is which club finishes at the top — most likely earning an easier game in the last 16.

They drew 1-1 in Paris, so the winner in the return match in



FC Barcelona's Neymar (right), duels for the ball against Malaga's Roberto Rosaes during the Spanish La Liga soccer match

London will secure first place based on their head-to-head record.

Ludogorets Razgrad is at home against FC Basel in the group's other game.

GROUP B

The group is still wide open and even last-place Dynamo Kiev can advance to the last 16, although it has only one point ahead of visiting Napoli.

Napoli's campaign has stalled with one point from the last two matches. But the Italian side will advance with a win, provided Benfica also wins.

Benfica leads the group with seven points and visits Besik-

tas, which has six. Benfica goes through with a win. Besiktas advances if it wins and Napoli doesn't.

Dynamo can only stay in contention with a win and Besiktas fails to do so. Otherwise, Dynamo cannot finish higher than fourth.

GROUP C

Yaya Toure inspired City to a 2-1 win over Crystal Palace in the Premier League on Saturday, but the former Ivory Coast midfielder will be back out of the team against Borussia Moenchengladbach because he is not a member of City's Champions League squad for the group stage.

Ilkay Gundogan is likely replace Toure in midfield after the Germany international was rested over the weekend, along with John Stones and David Silva.

City only needs a draw to pro-

gress, provided Celtic doesn't beat Barcelona. Celtic stays in contention with a win, as long as City fails to take three points. Moenchengladbach needs to win to retain a chance of reaching the knockout stage for the first time.

GROUP D

Atletico Madrid and Bayern Munich are through and Atletico will take first place in the group if it beats PSV Eindhoven at home and Bayern draws or loses in Rostov.

Atletico has beaten Bayern and has 12 points, while Bayern has nine.

Bayern slumped to its first Bundesliga defeat at Borussia Dortmund over the weekend and will be without goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, who has a calf injury. Sven Ulreich will replace him. Arjen Robben, Arturo Vidal and Javi Martinez are also absent.

Atletico was far from its best, too, going down 3-0 to Real Madrid in a repeat of last season's Champions League final that Real Madrid won on penalties.

PSV and Rostov are battling for third place in the group.

AP / Oddschecker.com

FAN STABBED IN SPAIN AHEAD OF SEVILLA-JUVENTUS MATCH

SPANISH AUTHORITIES say a man was stabbed during an altercation between fans ahead of this morning Champions League match between Sevilla and Juventus.

Seville police say the unidentified man was injured during a confrontation at a bar near the city center and hospitalized. Officials say the man is in stable condition and his injuries are not life threatening.

At least two other people sustained minor injuries in the violence late yesterday.

GOAL OF THE YEAR

Messi, Neymar, Robson-Kanu go for FIFA award

LIONEL Messi, Neymar and a Johan Cruyff-style turn from Hal Robson-Kanu are among 10 candidates to win the FIFA Puskas Award for goal of the year.

Messi has been nominated for a curling, left-footed free kick for Argentina against the United States in a Copa America Centenario semifinal match in June.

Neymar turned to volley a right-footed shot from

his own looping flick for Barcelona against Villarreal in November 2015. The Brazil forward previously won the 2011 Puskas Award for a goal scored for Santos.

Wales beat heavily favored Belgium in a European Championship quarterfinal in July, taking the lead when Robson-Kanu created space by misdirecting three defenders with a deft Cruyff turn.

FIFA said an online vote until Dec. 2 will create a shortlist of three goals. A second round of voting will decide the winner at FIFA's annual awards ceremony in Zurich on Jan. 9.

The 10 goals were scored between Sept. 30, 2015 and Sept. 30, 2016.

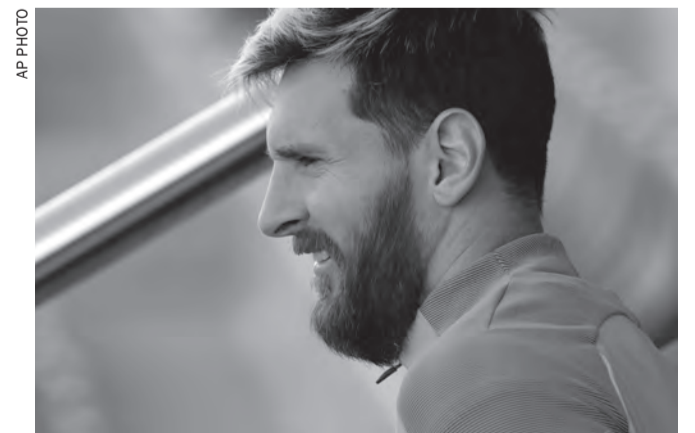
They include Saul Niguez's solo dribble for Atletico Madrid through the Bayern Munich defense in a Champions League

semifinal in April.

From inside his own half, Hlompho Kekana scored for South Africa against Cameroon in an Africa Cup of Nations qualifier in March.

A diving back-heel flick by Simon Skrabb scored in a Swedish league game for Atvidaberg against Gefle in October 2015.

The other candidates are: Mario Gaspar (for Spain vs. England, friendly, November 2015);



Lionel Messi

Marlone (for Corinthians vs. Cobresal, Copa Libertadores, April 2016); Daniuska Rodriguez (for Venezuela vs. Colombia, South American Wo-

men's Under-17 Championship, March 2016); Mohd Faiz Subri (for Penang vs. Pahang, Malaysia Super League, February 2016). AP

opinion

Views on China

Christopher Balding

IN TRUMP VERSUS CHINA, EVERYONE CAN WIN

For now, China's leaders seem to be discounting U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's threats to punish them for allegedly unfair trade practices. The fact is that if they were to let their currency float freely, the yuan would probably decline, undercutting U.S. exports. And if Trump did impose 45 percent tariffs on Chinese imports as he's vowed, China has plenty of ways to retaliate. The ensuing trade war could well hurt the U.S. more than China.

That doesn't mean a Trump administration should simply accept the status quo in trade relations with China, though. A tougher stand could be good for both sides.

China remains one of the world's most closed major economies. According to the World Bank, the U.S. maintains an average tariff on goods from "most favored" nations of only 3.4 percent. China's average is 9.9 percent - higher than Russia, South Africa, Myanmar and Colombia. Even more important than outright tariffs are the barriers China maintains against foreign direct investment. Foreign companies are blocked from a wide range of seemingly innocuous industries.

This has naturally prompted a backlash against Chinese companies, which have heeded the government's urgings to seek out their own mergers and acquisitions abroad. In the last year, outward direct investment from China grew 53 percent to USD134 billion. Critics not just in the U.S. but Australia, the U.K. and Germany have begun asking why Chinese companies should be allowed to invest in their farmland, nuclear power plants and technology companies when their own firms would have trouble doing the same in China. Even if China's ventures into Hollywood don't pose a national security threat, the fact that the country only allows 34 foreign films onto its screens every year betrays obvious hypocrisy.

China could easily end up paying a price for this widening asymmetry. A President Trump wouldn't even need to levy devastating and possibly counter-productive tariffs on Chinese goods. He could simply work to ensure the U.S. government scrutinizes deals involving Chinese buyers much more closely - and slowly; acquisition targets would quickly look elsewhere for buyers. Chinese firms looking to graduate from low value-added, copycat manufacturing desperately need the kind of talent and technology global mergers can provide. Without it, they face a much steeper and more prolonged climb up the value chain.

Arguably, China would be wiser to head off international concerns now, before the U.S., U.K. and European nations start closing off their own markets. If lowering barriers to investment would entail some loss of control, it would also unquestionably further China's own goals. As Chinese leaders from Deng Xiaoping on down have recognized, foreign companies provide not just badly needed capital but management and competitive pressures that result in greater efficiency all around.

This may sound hopelessly idealistic. But there are historical parallels. During the Reagan administration, a similar backlash built up against Japan. The White House would've found plenty of political support for retaliating against what many Americans (including Donald Trump) saw as unfair Japanese trade and investment policies. Instead, President Reagan pushed Japan to accept a variety of "voluntary" export restraints. This in turn prompted Japanese firms, looking for ways to evade the restrictions, to set up U.S. subsidiaries, thus creating American jobs. Reagan made sure the Japanese understood he could always levy stronger protectionist measures if needed, so it was in their interest to make a deal.

The parallels aren't exact. Japan is a strong U.S. ally that relies for its security on the U.S. military umbrella; its leaders have more reason to compromise than China's do. At the same time, Chinese reformers are well aware that their economy stands to benefit from opening up its markets.

These changes are politically difficult in China, which is why they haven't taken place yet. In that sense, Trump could be doing the Chinese a favor by raising the specter of an outright trade war. As his counterpart, Chinese President Xi Jinping, likes to say, there's a "win-win" solution here - if both sides are wise enough to see it.

THE POLICE SEIZE PARTY DRUG MDMA IN SYDNEY AND ARREST TWO CHINESE

An Australian police operation has seized more than 500 kilograms of the party drug MDMA in Sydney worth 60 million Australian dollars (USD44 million) and arrested two Chinese nationals, officials said yesterday.

The men, aged 38 and 34, appeared in a Sydney court on Monday on drug importation charges. They were denied bail and face poten-

tial life prison sentences if convicted.

The drug arrived in Sydney last month in a shipment of aluminum rollers. Australian Border Force officers examined the consignment and detected a crystalline substance concealed within the rollers.

Police made a controlled deliver of the rollers to a Sydney warehouse last week and the men were arrested on Sunday.

Public to vote on names for Atlanta zoo's twin panda cubs



ATLANTA'S zoo is inviting the public to vote on names for twin giant panda cubs born in September.

The twin pandas will be named on their 100th day of life, which falls on Dec. 12, in accordance with Chinese tradition, the zoo said in a news release yesterday. Panda fans can go to Zoo Atlanta's website (zooatlanta.org) to vote on names.

At all four U.S. zoos with giant pandas, the bears are on loan from China, and the seven pairs of proposed names were supplied by a panda conservation center

in Chengdu, China. The zoo says each set of names has a special connection to the cubs or their parents, Lun Lun and Yang Yang.

The names and their meanings are:

— Ba Lun and Shu Lun: Ba and Shu are ancient Sichuan names still common in China, and Ba Shu means "land of abundance;"

— Jiu Jiu and Yuan Yuan: Jiu means "longevity or "long time," while Yuan means "far distance" or "far away." When combined, they mean "longevity and permanence;"

— Lun Jia and Jia Lun: The first Jia means "addition," while the second means "good," "fine" or praise. Lun is a reference to mother Lun Lun.

— Lun Li and Lun Yu: Lun Li means "ethic" or "ethics," while Lun Yu is Confucian Analects, a collection of sayings of Confucius and a pillar of Chinese culture;

— Ya Lun and Xi Lun: Ya means "elegant," and Xi means "happy." So the names would mean, "Lun Lun's elegant and happy daughters."

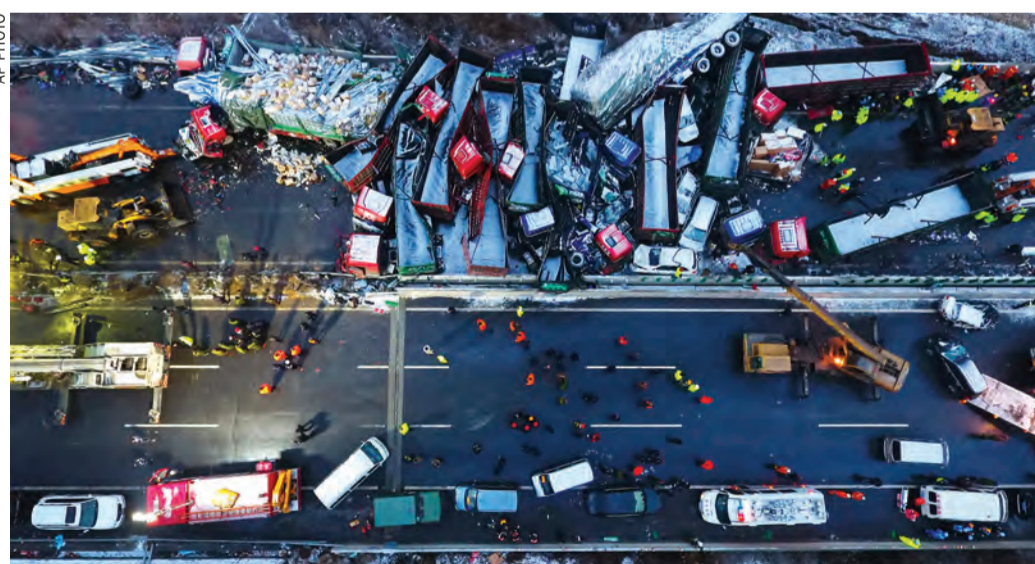
— Ya Lun and Xin Lun: Similar in origin to Ya Lun and Xi Lun, with Xin meaning "fragrant;"

— Yang Hai and Yang Gui: Yang mean "ocean" and refers to the cubs' father, Yang Yang. Hai means "sea," while Gui has many meanings, including "laurel."

Voting opens Monday and is set to run through 11 p.m. on Dec. 4. The names will be revealed at a 100 Day Naming Celebration on Dec. 12.

The cubs, which were born Sept. 3, are expected to make their public debut at Zoo Atlanta in December or January. They are the second set of twins born to 19-year-old Lun Lun. AP

Vehicle pile-up leaves 17 people dead, 37 injured



DOZENS of vehicles collided amid snowy weather in northern China, leaving 17 dead and 37 injured, state media reported yesterday.

A total of 56 vehicles were involved in the accident on a major expressway in Shanxi province under cold, slick conditions, according to the official Xinhua News Agency. It cited local authorities as saying the

injured were in stable condition.

A rescue operation was launched involving local police, firefighters, doctors and government officials.

Xinhua said an investigation into the cause of the accident is under way. Highway accidents are common in China because of high speeds, aggressive driving and a failure to leave adequate braking distance.

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

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

VIETNAM's government says the legislature has endorsed its decision to scrap plans to build the country's first two nuclear power plants. The announcement of the endorsement said cheaper renewable energy and power imports were available and that investment should be made in more urgent infrastructure needs.



NORTH KOREA Hundreds of capitalistic markets, each with thousands of stalls, form the glue that holds North Korea's socialist planned economy together, say defectors who sold medicinal herbs, skinny jeans, TV sets, foreign drama CDs and other goods there to make a living. "If North Korea shuts down the markets, it will collapse." More on p12



NEPAL A year and a half after a colossal earthquake destroyed hundreds of treasured historic sites across this mountain nation, Nepal celebrates the restoration of the first major one to be rebuilt - an iconic Buddhist monument topped in gold that towers above Kathmandu.

ASIA-TRUMP President-elect Donald Trump says he wants to pull out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership but other Pacific Rim leaders are vowing to push market-opening efforts they say are vital for growth. The possible decline of the 12-nation TPP could give a boost to alternative initiatives including one promoted by China in which the United States is not taking part. More on p14

IRELAND Government statisticians say Ireland's unemployment rate has fallen to an eight-year low of 7.5 percent, a level last seen before a banking crisis wrecked the property-driven Celtic Tiger economy. The Central Statistics Office says joblessness fell to 7.5 percent in October from 7.7 percent the previous month as the number of people with jobs also rose 2.9 percent to an eight-year high topping 2 million.