



LEONG PRAISES NEW ATM WITHDRAWAL RULES
The Secretary for Economy and Finance claims that the new ATM withdrawal rules will help maintain Macau's monetary stability

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'SISTERHOOD' WORLD PREMIERE
The only local film that entered the competition at the International Film Festival & Awards – Macao was screened yesterday

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HONG KONG'S FINANCE CHIEF RESIGNS

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS

AP PHOTO



UNITED NATIONS
Former Portuguese prime minister Antonio Guterres has been sworn in as Secretary-General of the United Nations, taking over from Ban Ki-moon at the end of the month. The 67-year-old Guterres becomes the ninth U.N. chief in the world body's 71-year history.

HONG KONG arrested 29 current and former staff of five financial institutions, including four banks, for alleged bribery connected with obtaining confidential customer information to market personal loans, the city's anti-graft agency said, in an operation named "Mirabilis." More on p10

US-VIETNAM The United States has called on Vietnam to refrain from reclamation and militarization activities in contested South China Sea waters following reports that Hanoi has carried out dredging in the area.

AP PHOTO



PHILIPPINES President Rodrigo Duterte has decided to accept an arms deal being offered by China under concessional terms, in the latest sign of cozying relations between the once-hostile neighbors.

SOUTH KOREA Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn, who had a largely ceremonial job until President Park Geun-hye's impeachment last week, now must face off against North Korea and deal with edgy relations with Japan as the country's interim leader. More on p13

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BEIJING OUTRAGED

Trump questions One-China policy

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AP PHOTO



TRIAL

Ho Chio Meng: Hiring family members happens because Macau is small

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Registration for Nam Van Lake Craft Market is open



The Nam Van Lake Craft Market will be held from January 1 until June 30, 2017, on Saturdays and Sundays in Anim'Arte Nam Van. Registration for the market in the months of January and February of 2017 is now open until December 23. Organized by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), the market features 25 stalls operating from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Original music performances and handcraft workshops will be held, though they will not be held at scheduled times. The IC welcomes all interested entities and individuals to register for the market. It will then select the stall operators based on their originality and the quality of their products.

CCAC commissioner encourages public to report

André Cheong, the Commissioner Against Corruption, denied claims that his department does not spend time combating corruption that occurs amid high-ranking governmental officials. Cheong's answer was in response to a media question on whether the Commission Against Corruption has been spending too much time investigating less influential people or incidents rather than investigating high officials. Cheong explained that CCAC is not only responsible for anti-corruption, but also has an ombudsman role, reacting to cases where the public considers to have found an unfair situation within the government's administration. Cheong claims that in the eye of society, some of these cases might be deemed as less important. However, he noted that in some cases, CCAC might spot evidence of corruption or criminal activity after conducting deep investigations. "The public does need to worry about it. Come to report when [it is] needed to be reported, CCAC will follow up the case for sure," guaranteed Cheong.

Fire in junkyard burnt five cars

A fire in a junkyard located at the Estrada Marginal da Ilha Verde burnt five cars on Sunday. One truck, three motorbikes and one private car were burnt down during the fire. No injuries were reported. The Fire Services Bureau (CB) said that the incident was reported by the managers of the junkyard, who told CB that the fire was initially spotted on a truck which had been parked at the same place since an hour before the fire was first noticed. CB considers that the incident might have been deliberate, and it has forwarded the case to the Judiciary Police.

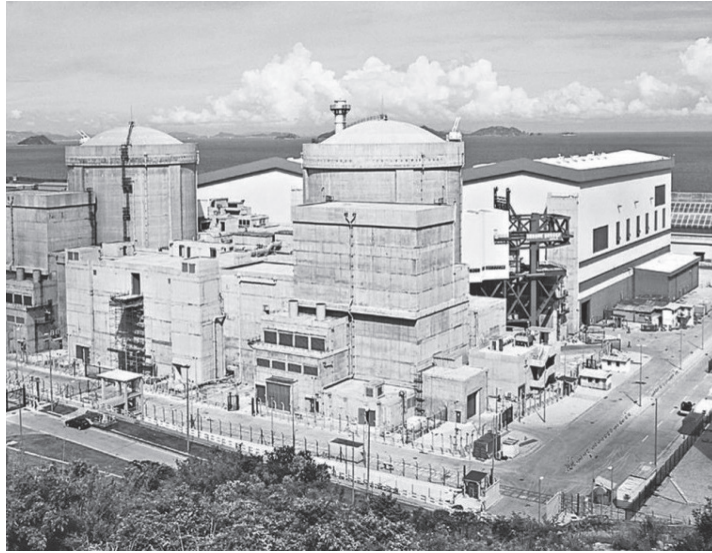
No leak at Daya Bay Nuclear Power Plant, Wong says

MANY Chinese news agencies have lately reported that the Daya Bay Nuclear Power Plant, located in Shenzhen, Guangdong, has experienced a leak.

The Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak, commented on this news last Sunday, saying that he had contacted the department of the Chinese central government which is responsible for regulations over nuclear safety issues. However, in his understanding, no leak had occurred.

When asked about whether the mainland had been late in clarifying the incident this time, Wong said "I can't comment [on that], because, at the moment, I am not aware of the situation," according to a report by All About Macau.

Wong claims that, since there was no leak, the mainland is not obliged to declare the non-occurrence to Macau. He hopes that, in the



Daya Bay Nuclear Power Plant

future, when similar news is available, the related department could give timely clarification with regard to what may or may not have happened.

Hong Kong Nuclear Investment Co. Ltd (HKNIC), one of the investors of Daya Bay Nuclear Power Plant,

issued a clarification on December 10, stating that no leak had occurred at the plant.

According to an announcement published by the Government Information Bureau, the local government is working closely with relevant ministries and depart-

ments of the central government in order to establish a Guangdong-Macau nuclear safety reporting mechanism.

Wong also said that four separate bodies linked to the central government had already given their approval for the establishment of such a reporting mechanism. Currently, the Guangdong Government is going through the necessary procedures in order to set up the mechanism.

The government pays great attention to the public's interest in safety issues regarding the nuclear facility in Taishan Prefecture, Guangdong Province. Macau is 67 kilometres away from Taishan. According to the authorities in Macau and mainland China, this distance means that no evacuation measures would be necessary even if an incident of the most serious type were to occur.

Patane Library inaugurated



THE Patane Library was inaugurated on Friday during a ceremony officiated by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, and the President of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), Ung Vai Meng, among others.

The Patane Library is comprised of a group of seven buildings with a history going back more than 80 years. Built in the 1930s, the buildings are typical arcade structures along the coast of the Inner Harbor. Arcade buildings feature an architectural form that combines features from both European and Southeast Asian architectural traditions.

The renovated library aims to provide more reading space to local residents,

according to an IC statement, as well as imbuing "special value and significance in the [local] urban development," transforming the buildings "into a place for the transmission of culture and knowledge."

According to the statement issued by the IC, after the opening ceremony, Ung exchanged views with the first batch of readers in the library, some of which are elderly residents living in the Patane district.

The three-story Patane Library covers an area of around 1,130 square meters and provides approximately 150 seats for readers. In addition to the provision of newspapers and magazines, the library

will also offer other basic services such as access to the general collection of texts on Macau and a children's collection.

However, according to the IC, the primary focus of the library will be film and music. The area will feature a multimedia zone for regular film screenings, concerts and other activities.

It is currently home to some 20,000 volumes, 7,000 audiovisual materials, 80 types of newspapers and 600 types of magazines.

The library, located at No. 69-81, Rua da Ribeira do Patane, is open from 9:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. from Tuesdays to Sundays, and from 2 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Mondays, except on public holidays.

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Ho Chio Meng

Ho defends hiring of family members

DURING the second session of the trial of the former prosecutor general, Ho Chio Meng defended the hiring of family members by denying that it was a case of nepotism and maintaining that it was simply the result of the small population of the territory.

Ho refuted prosecutors' allegations that he had organized and awarded public contracts to family members by claiming that he was unaware his relatives were contractors of the Public Prosecutions Office (MP).

Another of the charges levied yesterday against the former prosecutor general concerned alleged

unauthorized family trips to Europe, amounting to around MOP220,000 of illicit public funding.

In one instance Ho was accused of bringing his wife and child to the Netherlands after a business trip to Denmark. Ho defended the decision by claiming that his wife had been invited to attend the event and their child was not old enough to be left unaccompanied. The trip was also approved by the then-chief executive, Edmund Ho, according to Ho Chio Meng.

In response to claims made during the first session that Ho had set up a guesthouse in Cheoc Van on behalf of the MP but actually

for his personal use, the former prosecutor argued the site was used exclusively to host meetings with officials from Macau and mainland China. Among the guests were top prosecutors from the mainland and members of the chief executive's electoral committee, claimed Ho.

He is being accused of having abused his power to gain effective ownership of the site, which included entertainment facilities such as a sauna and a karaoke machine. Personal belongings of Ho were also discovered at the guesthouse, it has been revealed.

The next session of his trial will be held tomorrow. **DB**

Leong: New ATM withdrawal limit to have no negative impact

SECRETARY for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, claimed that the new measure to limit cash withdrawals per ATM transaction in Macau would not have a negative impact on the city's gaming industry.

According to the new rules in place since last week, mainland China-issued ATM cardholders will only be able to withdraw MOP5,000 (USD626) or HKD5,000 (\$644) at a time. However, the daily limit on withdrawals remains the same at 10,000 yuan (\$1,450).

According to statements made by Leong this week, the measure will contribute to maintaining the region's monetary stability and would have a positive effect on managing capital flows. The measure would not bring any negative impact to daily cash withdrawals by Macau residents and tourists, said Leong.

The mainland's State Administration of Foreign Exchange has set an annual cap – in force since January – on overseas cash withdrawals for mainland bank cardholders at 100,000 yuan per card, in addition to a 10,000 yuan daily cap.

A statement issued yesterday by the Government Information Bureau noted that local authorities are "committed to [making] use of all measures that can help further stabilize Macau's economy and effectively combat any forms of money-laundering and illicit capital flows."

AD



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REAL ESTATE

Decrease of approved mortgage loans in October

STATISTICS released yesterday by the Monetary Authority of Macao showed that new approvals of residential mortgage loans (RMLs) and commercial real estate loans (CRELs) both decreased in October.

The total of the new RMLs approved by Macau banks decreased by 46.5 percent month-to-month to MOP2.9 billion. Of these, new RMLs to residents, accounting for 97.9 percent of the total, fell by 47 percent from the previous month to MOP2.8 billion.

The non-resident component also dropped by 5.2 percent, noted the statement.

When compared with the same period of 2015, new approvals of RMLs increased by 16.3 percent.

New RMLs collateralized by uncompleted units – which is equitable mortgage – increased by 6.6 percent from the preceding month to MOP269.5 million.



The equitable mortgage extended to residents, which accounted for 97.5 percent of the total, increased by 3.9 percent from the previous month.

On an annual basis, the number of new, equitable and approved mortgages dropped by 14.4 percent.

Meanwhile new CRELs dropped by 31.3 percent from a higher comparison base in the previous month to MOP6.2 billion; and new approvals of CRELs declined by 32.6 per-

cent when compared with last year.

As at end-October 2016, the outstanding value of RMLs was MOP178.6 billion, virtually unchanged from the previous month but up by 4.9 percent from a year ago.

The outstanding value of CRELs was MOP171.5 billion, up by 1 percent month-to-month or 7.3 percent when compared with a year ago.

Residents accounted for 89.1 percent of the loans.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Police departments to undergo revamp

THE Executive Council (ExCo) has finished discussions on the government's draft amendment of three legal bills regarding the police force, post and communication bureau and regulations on car emission control.

The proposal was announced in a press release last week, and divides a number of responsibilities between two police departments, the Unitary Police Service (SPU) and the Security Forces Coordination Office.

The Security Forces Coordination Office is currently responsible for drawing up a civil protection plan and for coordinating actions that raise the public's awareness of civil protection.

The amendment suggests incorporating the administration responsible for civil protection into the SPU. The bill also recommends revoking the Security Forces Coordination Office, and accords the SPU the responsibilities of providing technological and administrative assistance to the city's Safety Committee.

Another government proposal analyzed by the ExCo is the merging of the Bureau of Telecommunication Regulation with Macau Post. After the restructuring, the new bureau is expected to employ 560 people in total, with 468 from the current Macau Post and the remaining 92 from the current Bureau of Telecommunication Regulation.

The ExCo has also analyzed a proposal on limiting vehicle emissions and how to measure these. Under the proposed bill, vehicles such as taxis, coaches, tourism and school buses must conduct mandatory emission tests yearly.

Heavy motorbikes and light buses must undergo emissions testing every eight and 10 years, respectively, after their first test. Light motorbikes must undergo mandatory tests five, eight and 10 years after their first test. Before the end of the 10-year period, light and heavy motorbikes may have to take an emissions test if the Transport Bureau (DSAT) considers it necessary. **JZ**

AD

Sam, I left a copy of my ID documents and itinerary with the family. I've also prepared a list of emergency contacts.

Ann, and I've prepared enough cash, credit cards and took care of the travel insurance too!

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Julie Zhu

SURVEY

Social media becomes locals top choice to follow news

THE Faculty of Humanities and Arts from Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST), along with the Sun Yat-Sen University's School of Communication and Design, have finished a survey on Macau residents searching habits when using new media.

The researchers conducted the survey between October and November of this year, collecting 1,061 valid questionnaires from interviewees on their routines when using three new media platforms: WeChat, Facebook, and web browsers.

Around 79 percent of the interviewees said that they often read news from local websites. 61.7 and 51.2 percent noted that they have been reading news from Facebook and WeChat, respectively.

Seventy percent frequently visited governmental websites. In turn, 4.1 percent often read education-related information through websites, while the percentage of Facebook and WeChat users searching for the aforementioned news is at 31.3 percent and 21 percent, respectively.



The logo of the Sina Weibo microblog service

According to reports from mainland China, 90 percent of the interviewed mainland university students use internet more than two hours per day. Around 50 percent of the surveyed students

do not read from a printed newspaper on a daily basis.

Around 88.3, 84.9, and 60.7 percent of mainland students use QQ, WeChat, and Weibo, respectively, every day, while

only 2.6 percent use Twitter.

The report shows that 62.3, 60.7, and 58.8 percent of the students use WeChat or Weibo for social activities, entertainment, and reading news, respectively.

A 23-year-old female local teacher, surnamed Chan, told the Times that she never browses local media's websites, and has never visited the government's websites either.

Chan said that she rarely uses WeChat to read news. "I read news on Facebook when they pop up," said Chan. While she admits to seldom reading news about the government, she pays more attention to government news which is related to social welfare.

Another interviewee, surnamed Siew, a 54-year-old female accountant, told the Times that she is very much

focused on government news, especially those related to livelihood. Siew does not read printed newspapers, but she often browses Chinese news agency's websites, and she does not use Facebook to read news. Siew also says she visits Hong Kong's news websites frequently.

A third interviewee, a 30-year-old wholesaler surnamed Kong, said that he resorts to Facebook, WeChat, and to browsers to read news. Kong explained that 50 percent of the times he uses Facebook to read news, and that 30 percent of the time he reads news through WeChat. "[I read] mainly local news," said Kong, who also noted that he closely follows news that is related to the government. Kong never reads printed newspapers either.

ART

Military Club exhibition depicts city's unique history

THE Macau Military Club is organizing an exhibition of works by Macau artists to be held in the organization's Galeria Ho Yin between December 16 (this Friday) and January 6 next year.

The event is part of the celebratory activities commemorating the 17th anniversary of the Macau SAR, presenting an

overview of the painting, drawing and calligraphy activities in the region.

A total of 36 works will be on display, created by 36 different artists. According to a statement of the curators, the selection reflects the works of renowned artists as well as aspiring young artists in the territory, with their birth dates spanning the

period 1940 to 1995.

According to the statement, the works are "set well within the Western and Chinese art canons and [...] [are] befitting to the unique history of our city."

The collection is "both vibrant and confusing – as art should be," notes the Military Club statement, "challenging our perceptions and always

renewing our understanding of the world."

The exhibition is produced and curated by APAC – Cultural Events Promotion Association. It is the third in a series entitled "Pontes de Encontro," promoted by the Military Club with the support of the Macao Foundation, SJM, the Sam Lei Group and Comendador

RENATO MARQUES



Military Club

Ng Fok.

An inauguration ceremony will be held for club members and guests on December 16 at 6

p.m. The exhibition will then be open to the public from December 17 to January 6, every day, between 12 p.m. and 8 p.m.

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Lynzy Valles

IFFAM

Homosexuality not anymore a taboo matter, says director

THE only film produced by a local team that entered the competition at the International Film Festival & Awards – Macao (IFFAM) was screened yesterday at the Cultural Center, subtly portraying a controversial kind of love.

“Sisterhood” is a 97-minute film directed by Macau filmmaker Tracy Choi. The movie is her feature directorial debut.

Set to be distributed in 2017, the film tells the story of four best friends who work at a massage parlor.

Seiya, portrayed by Hong Kong actresses Fish Liew and Gigi Leung, developed a strong bond of friendship with Kay, a role depicted by Jennifer Yu.

The duo work together as masseuses in Macau during the ‘90s when the small city was not yet a conglomerate of casinos.

As the date of the region’s handover neared, the two inseparable friends part ways and later on, Seiya realizes the kind of love they had for each other.

In a conference held yesterday at the Cultural Center, the Macau director told the press that the story came to her several years ago, noting that some of the scenes in the movie depicted real occurrences in the region some 15 years ago.

It is hoped that “Sisterhood,” which has a budget of approximately HKD5 million, will be screened outside Hong Kong and Macau. Choi hoped that the movie would also be screened in Taiwan, as the territory has been discussing issues around same-sex marriage.

“We’re trying to now maybe join some festivals in Europe or other places,” she said, “I want [the film] to screen in Taiwan since I studied [at] college in Taiwan [...] and since they are now talking about equal marriage. I think that may be the right time for [the] movie to go there.”

Although the movie, which acquired MOP1.5 million in support from the Cultural Affairs Bureau, is not directly portraying lesbianism, Choi explained that the film depicted love and the equal right to love regardless of gender.

When questioned by the Times on whether citizens still feel that homosexuality is a taboo topic in the region, Choi answered, “not anymore.”

The Macau filmmaker cited her belief that there still needs to be much change before the region will be in favor of equal rights for same-sex couples. Choi may be hinting at the fact that same-sex couples are excluded from the region’s domestic violence bill.

“I think it’s way too far to go for Macau because even if we talk about equal law in Macau, [it’s] not even close. We want Macau people to be more aware



Gigi Leung (left) and Tracy Choi

of this kind of issue but I think it’s a long way to go,” she explained.

The Macau filmmaker hopes that the audience sees the significant changes Macau has gone through but said that at its

The city has changed a lot but people are still the same, still very friendly.

GIGI LEUNG

core the film depicted human relationships, which are more essential for the audience.

Speaking on her future prospects, Choi said she is working on projects that are also Macau-related, many of which are related to gender. She also added that she is in negotiations with different companies about forthcoming projects, particularly a potential film about children in the MSAR.

In terms of the organization of the IFFAM, the director suggested that it would be beneficial for the public to purchase tickets on-site, noting how important it is for the local audience to view different kinds of films.

Meanwhile, Hong Kong Cantopop singer and actress Gigi Leung expressed her gratitude

to the director yesterday at the press conference. Leung, who shot the film after she had given birth, said that she believes such films are the kinds of productions that are important and that she has not received many opportunities to work in these kinds of productions lately.

As the movie portrayed major changes that Macau went through before and after the territory’s handover, Leung noted that the transformation of the region also generated different emotions from Hong Kong audiences.

She says that she personally empathizes with the characters and the love story, as they are both authentic.

“After giving birth to my child, I have a lot of understanding about love and I think the film is about caring, love and sisterhood. I think we have different interpretations of love [...] but love is universal,” she remarked.

Leung supposed that the message of the movie is: “express love before it’s too late.”

The Hong Kong actress is impressed with the production team’s professionalism. Commenting on the changes Macau went through, Leung said she finds something different in the city every time she visits the region.

“I still like Macau even though it has [greatly] changed. I always believe that the city has changed a lot but people are still the same, still very friendly [and] very helpful,” she said.

Commenting on the IFFAM, Leung noted that it is still too early to tell but remarked that it is “quite good” and “very professional.”

Further, Eliz Lao, an actress raised in Macau who also took part in the movie as one of the

four sisters, remarked that there are significant emotional attachments to some of the region’s historical locations. As the film featured several historic sites in the region, Lao implied that such scenes could make one nostalgic.

‘El Invierno’ depicts isolated life in Patagonia

ARGINIAN Film “El Invierno” made its Asian premier in the International Film Festival & Awards – Macao (IFFAM) yesterday at the Macau Tower.

The film has obtained a number of Argentinian and international film awards.

Directed by Emiliano Torres, the movie tells the story of a man who has been working his whole life on an isolated ranch in Patagonia. The old foreman Evans is forced to retire, replaced by Jara, a younger man who plans to set up there with his wife and kids.

But as the region is cut off by snow, it is no longer a matter of working, but of surviving the harsh conditions.

During yesterday’s press conference attended by the director, scriptwriter, producer and cast, the director revealed the challenges faced by the production team in shooting in Patagonia.

Torres noted that it took him quite a while to decide on directing the film as it challenged him to reach the standards of his previous movies.

“It is never easy being a director of a movie [that has] no big stars,” he told the press.

As only a small part of Patagonia was featured in the film, Torres said that he wanted to focus on the residents rather than on the landscape.

According to the director, it was not his initial objective to rely on image and feelings rather than words. This changed when he witnessed that the residents of Patagonia only communicate when necessary. “It’s who they are. They don’t talk,” he added. The independent movie, which has a budget of USD500,000, is part of the film competition in the IFFAM. LV

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Justin Bachman

WHEN you think of Singapore Airlines Ltd., visions appear of cushy premium cabins, bespoke leather seats, and free-flowing Champagne poured by the carrier's throwback "Singapore girls" flight attendants.

It's all that, yes. But the luxury carrier is working hard to diversify with budget airlines under its corporate banner. It owns low-cost carrier Scoot; 49 percent of Vistara, a joint venture in India with Tata Sons Ltd.; and NokScoot, a low-cost Thai airline Singapore owns in a joint venture with Nok Airlines Co. Ltd. This collection of airlines—plus a new "ultra long range" Airbus A350 variant scheduled to arrive in 2018—enables Singapore to explore a range of expansion plans, many of which are currently focused on North America.

It's no coincidence that the region continues to be the runaway success story of airline profitability. It will provide roughly two-thirds of the industry's projected USD29 billion net income next year, according to estimates released Dec. 8 by the International Air Transport Association.

Singapore's portfolio of carriers offers "a lot more nimbleness and flexibility in addressing the needs of the markets," Chief Executive Officer Goh Choon Phong said during an interview Dec. 6 in New York.

Last month, Singapore reported a 70 percent drop in net income and warned that 2017 could be challenging as well. The airline has struggled amid the expansion of low-cost carriers in its home region, and moves by a trio of Middle East-based full-service airlines to encroach on its core franchise of premium business travelers.

"It's not going to be business as usual," said Goh, an M.I.T.-trained engineer in computer science who chose an airline career over academia. "These are structural changes; these are changes that are not going to go away."

Into this environment, the CEO has prescribed a diversification of revenue, a renewed focus on cabin comforts for big spenders, and new markets.

A chief pillar of the company's expansion rests on further long-haul expansion, driven by firm orders for 67 new Airbus A350s and 30 of Boeing Co.'s largest 787 variant, the -10. The newest 787 is scheduled to enter commercial service in 2018. Of its A350s, Singapore will take seven from Airbus in an "ultra long range" configuration, which includes software changes and modest

Singapore Airlines wants to be a budget carrier, too



Goh Choon Phong, CEO of Singapore Airlines Ltd., sits for a photograph after an interview at the Andaz Hotel in New York

modifications to the landing gear. Other A350-900s can be altered to the ULR version, which is able to fly 8,700 nautical miles.

"We have called it a game changer for us and there's a reason for that," Goh said, alluding to the growth oppor-

■ Last month, Singapore reported a 70 percent drop in net income and warned that 2017 could be challenging as well

tunities the A350 affords.

With these new, more fuel-efficient planes, Singapore executives have been keen to resume the nonstop flights from the city state to New York and Los Angeles, which operated for nine years before ending in 2013 because of the route's extreme fuel costs. The

airline is also considering the potential for new U.S. destinations, having for years studied traffic flows in places like Boston, Chicago, and Miami, Goh said. Many weren't feasible, given the mix of large seat counts and the range limits of its existing aircraft. But the new, more fuel-miserly A350 may well change the math for such an expansion. (In March, for example, Singapore is swapping the 777 it flies to Houston with an A350.)

"The U.S. is an important market for us," Goh said, but technological limitations required a stop between American cities and Singapore. No more.

The airline is envisioning a day when the new fleet allows its hub at Singapore's Changi Airport to become a connection for U.S. and Canadian corporate travelers bound for places such as India, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. It sees a precedent in the operations Emirates Airlines and Qatar Airways Ltd. have built at their hubs in the Persian Gulf, particularly for traffic to and from India.

Yet beyond the moneyed travelers who want frills on

long flights, Singapore's Scoot budget airline is also keen to expand. In June, Scoot will commence its longest flight to date, to Athens, a city where Singapore has ended service with its flagship. Scoot is increasing its all-787 fleet to 20 over the next few years, and is likely to look to markets where premium-cabin traffic is insufficient for flights by the flagship Singapore brand, Goh said.

"Scoot might also look to some kind of operation to the U.S.," Goh said. "At some point in time they will look at the U.S. to see if it makes sense."

On the premium side of their house, Singapore executives have been cagey about the cabin configuration for the A350-ULRs to be deployed on the new U.S. nonstops to Los Angeles and New York. The latter will reclaim its title as the world's longest route, at 19 hours or more, depending on winds. The airline plans a two-class service, but has declined to reveal the cabin mix or how many seats the planes will carry. They will have fewer than the 253 seats now on the three-cabin aircraft Singapore currently flies, with a stop in

Asia, en route to Singapore, Goh said.

"The beauty of it is that this aircraft is not too big," he said. "We can size it to best fit the traffic number that makes sense."

Beyond the U.S., Singapore has identified India as a top priority in terms of greater market access. Within a decade, the nation is projected to become the No. 3 international travel market after China and America. Singapore's Vistara venture will benefit from the Indian government's recently altered "5-20" regulation that required local carriers to fly at least 20 aircraft for five years before they could offer international service. The change abolished the five-year flight period, and should help Vistara expand internationally sooner. It now has 13 Airbus A320s, with plans to reach 20 by 2018.

Some day, if it makes sense for Vistara, Goh says, the airline may acquire long-haul aircraft and set out for Europe and North America with nonstop routes. That's a proposition that Emirates, Qatar, and Etihad can't offer. "Logically speaking," Goh says, "you can imagine Vistara should have a lot of potential for growth." **Bloomberg**

HONG KONG

Finance chief resigns, signaling run at top job



Financial Secretary John Tsang

David Tweed

HONG Kong's financial chief John Tsang resigned, signaling that he'll run to become the city's chief executive in the first leadership contest since mass pro-democracy protests two years ago.

Chief Executive Leung Chun-

ying said yesterday that he received Tsang's resignation and submitted it to authorities in Beijing. Tsang, whose office didn't immediately respond to a request for comment, planned to address the media at 6:30 p.m. local time. K C Chan, secretary for financial services and the treasury, will be acting

financial secretary when Tsang goes on leave today, the statement said.

Leung unexpectedly announced last week that he wouldn't seek a second term because of pressure on his family. His departure cleared the field for rivals who might have been reluctant to challenge the incum-

bent chief executive in March, when a committee of political insiders meets to select his successor.

Leung's tenure has been marred by escalating protests against China's stewardship over the Asian financial hub, which guaranteed independent courts and a free press under a "one country, two systems" framework. In recent weeks, Leung outraged democracy advocates by successfully suing to oust two elected pro-independence advocates from the city's legislature and moving to purge four more in a campaign supported by Beijing.

Tsang, 65, has served as finance secretary since 2007. He has long enjoyed the highest approval ratings among the city's top officials, scoring 63.1 out of 100 according to a Dec. 7 survey by the University of Hong Kong's Public Opinion Program.

In recent comments on his blog, Tsang said values such as freedom, openness, diversity and rule of law were the foundation of Hong Kong's success and should be defended. He called on Hongkongers to bridge escalating social and political divisions.

John Tsang, 65, has served as finance secretary since 2007. He has long enjoyed the highest approval ratings among the city's top officials

"If we have a peaceful atmosphere and a harmonious environment, we can seek common ground while reserving differences on the basis of mutual trust and honesty," he wrote.

The chief executive will be selected by a committee of 1,200 electors, who themselves were elected from various industries and interest groups on Sunday. Pro-democracy groups won a quarter of the seats - a record amount - with the remainder going to pro-establishment candidates, according to the South China Morning Post. The winner of the chief executive election in March will be subject to approval by the National People's Congress in China.

Other potential candidates include Carrie Lam, Leung's chief deputy, who said Saturday she would reconsider her decision to retire when her current term ends in June. Her office wasn't immediately available for comment.

Regina Ip, a lawmaker who more than a decade ago led a failed effort to pass a strict national security law, is expected to announce her candidacy Thursday. Former judge Woo Kwok-hing, 70, threw his hat into the ring in October.

Lam actively campaigned to get China's electoral reform package through the Legislative Council in 2014, a move that would've earned her goodwill in Beijing despite its failure to pass, according to Danny Gittings, an associate law professor at HKU Space and author of "Introduction to the Hong Kong Basic Law." Her refusal to consider running while Leung was weighing his decision showed her loyalty, he said.

"She would be China's favorite because she is perceived as being tough but also reasonably popular, whereas John Tsang might be popular, but not considered hard line enough," Gittings said. **Bloomberg**

HONG Kong arrested 29 current and former staff of five financial institutions, including four banks, for alleged bribery connected with obtaining confidential customer information to market personal loans, the city's anti-graft agency said.

Operation "Mirabilis" began last week and led to the arrests of three managers and 18 serving and former direct sales representatives of a bank, the Independent Commission Against Corruption said in a statement yesterday.

A manager and five current and former em-

ICAC arrests 29 in corruption probe linked to four banks



ployees of three other banks, and two employees of a finance company were also detained, the agency said. It didn't name the institutions.

The statement came after DBS Group Holdings Ltd. said on Friday that it had alerted authorities after discovering irregularities. The Singapore-based bank commented after Hong Kong's Apple Daily newspaper repor-

ted that client data was leaked to a telemarketing center in China.

Bank managers may have accepted bribes as rewards for divulging confidential customer information, the ICAC said, adding that the companies involved had given their "full assistance" in the probe.

All those arrested are on bail, the agency said, adding that inquiries are continuing. **Bloomberg**

WAR OF WORDS

Beijing says Trump's comments cause 'serious concern'



AP PHOTO



Donald Trump (left), Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen

Nomaan Merchant, Beijing

CHINA said that it had "serious concern" about President-elect Donald Trump's most recent comments about Taiwan, and warned that any changes to how America deals with the self-governing island could damage diplomatic ties between Washington and Beijing.

China's comments came a day after Trump said in a television interview that he didn't feel "bound by a one-China policy."

Geng Shuang, a spokesman for China's foreign ministry, said that established policy is the "political foundation" of any diplomatic relationship between China and the U.S., and that any damage to it could render cooperation "out of the question."

"We urge the new U.S. leader and government to fully understand the seriousness of the Taiwan issue, and to continue to stick to the one-China policy," Geng said.

Since recognizing the People's Republic of China in 1979, the U.S. has adhered to the one-China policy, recognizing Beijing as the capital of China and maintaining only unofficial relations with Taiwan. American law, however, requires the U.S. to ensure that Taiwan has the means

to defend itself and to treat all threats to the island as matters of serious concern.

China split from Taiwan amid civil war in 1949 and continues to regard the island as a breakaway province to be reunified with the mainland, by force if necessary.

Geng's comments are the strongest public condemnation China has made of Trump's criticisms of current American policy toward Taiwan.

Beijing was already angered by Trump's Dec. 2 phone call with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen, the first time an American president or president-elect has publicly spoken to a Taiwanese leader in nearly four decades. China considers any reference to a separate Taiwanese head of state to be a grave insult.

Trump followed the call with two tweets accusing China of manipulating its currency, unfairly taxing American imports and provoking tensions in the South China Sea.

Over the weekend, he told "Fox News Sunday" that he wouldn't feel "bound by a one-China policy unless we make a deal with China having to do with other things, including trade."

Trump said his call with Tsai was "very nice" and strictly meant to congratulate him on his winning the presidential election.

“We urge the new US leader [...] to fully understand the seriousness of the Taiwan issue, and to continue to stick to the one-China policy.”

GENG SHUANG
CHINA'S FOREIGN MINISTRY

"Why should some other nation be able to say I can't take a call?" he said. "I think it actually would've been very disrespectful, to be honest with you, not taking it."

Hours after the interview aired, China's Communist Party-controlled Global Times published a Chinese-language editorial headlined: "Trump, please listen clearly: 'One China' cannot be traded."

"China needs to launch a resolute struggle with him," the editorial said. "Only after he's hit some obstacles and

truly understands that China and the rest of the world are not to be bullied will he gain some perception."

"Many people might be surprised at how the new U.S. leader is truly a 'businessman' through-and-through," the paper said, referring to Trump's suggestion of using the one-China policy as a bargaining chip. "But in the field of diplomacy, he is as ignorant as a child."

The Global Times, which is published by the party mouthpiece People's Daily, often runs commentaries that target nationalistic sentiment with provocative language.

Chinese officials have been more restrained so far. They may be still trying to learn how to make their positions clear to Trump without feeding a "vicious circle" of insults and heightened tensions, said Dali Yang, a political science professor at the University of Chicago.

However, Trump's suggestion that he could negotiate on Taiwan likely went too far for China, Yang said.

"He expected for China to bargain again for the one-China position, perhaps by giving up something on trade or something of that nature," Yang said. "This is actually the foundation of the U.S.-China relationship, rather than something to be bargained over." AP

Japan denies Chinese claim of dangerous fighter-jet conduct



AP PHOTO

JAPAN protested to China yesterday about what it says are groundless accusations that Japanese fighter jets had fired "jamming shells" as six Chinese military planes flew over waters between Japan's southern Okinawa and Miyako islands.

"It is extremely regrettable that the Chinese military is making announcements that are clearly factually wrong," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters. "It also hurts the effort to improve our relations, so we lodged a strong protest."

Japan scrambled fighters on Saturday as Chinese planes flew over the Miyako Strait. Taiwan's defense ministry said four Chinese planes also flew over the nearby Bashi Channel between Taiwan and the Philippines. The waterways and airspace are two of the connections between the contested South and East China seas and the Pacific Ocean.

China said two Japanese fighters launched "jamming shells" that endangered the safety of Chinese aircraft and crew. Such decoy flares are typically used by a pilot to draw away an incoming missile.

Suga denied the Japan did anything that posed a danger to the Chinese. Japan regularly scrambles jets to track Chinese military planes entering the area.

Separately, three Chinese ships patrolled waters around disputed islands in the East China Sea on Sunday. The uninhabited Senkaku islands are controlled by Japan but also claimed by China, which calls them the Diaoyu.

The Chinese exercises came shortly after the Taiwanese president spoke to U.S. President-elect Donald Trump in a call strongly denounced by China, which considers Taiwan to be Chinese territory. AP

Joe Freeman & Aung Naing Soe,
Katha

MYANMAR

Town wants the secret out: George Orwell slept here

IN the 1990s, Nyo Ko Naing noticed that the handful of foreign tourists who made it to his remote hometown were carrying their own maps and looked like they were searching for something. Someone, it turns out, by the name of George Orwell.

Katha was Eric Blair's last posting in the Imperial Police before he sailed back to England in 1927, adopted the nom de plume Orwell and launched a writing career that would produce powerful novels and commentary. Seven years after leaving the sleepy town on the Irrawaddy River, he immortalized it as the setting of his first novel, the vehemently anti-colonial "Burmese Days," though he called it not Katha but "Kyauktada."

The British Club, where much of the novel's scheming, fighting, drinking and sweating takes place, still stands, as do other sites mentioned including a tennis court, a pagoda and a prison. A house believed to have been Orwell's home in Katha remains in use.

Nyo Ko Naing, a graphic designer and cartoonist, didn't know much about "Burmese Days" at first, but soon grasped how important it was to the future of the town.

He has since become the town's preservationist, in-house historian, amateur Orwell scholar and literary tour guide, keen to market Katha as a tourist destination. He's helping to renovate the 19th-century house of the former British commissioner for use as a museum that is expected to open next year.

"It is not easy to get attention from the world," the 45-year-old said in a recent interview. "So it's like Katha won the lottery."

Orwell-related tourism has grown in Myanmar, also known as Burma, since a half-century of military rule ended in 2011, though numbers remain small. Nyo Ko Naing estimates that Katha sees 300 to 400 such visitors per month.

In 2012, he founded the Katha Heritage Trust and mounted a campaign through the media to save the commissioner's house from a local businessman who wanted to turn the property into a skating rink.

The first floor is now full of archival photos, including one of Orwell as a young policeman, and several portraits of the writer painted recently by local artists.

"We're collecting materials for the museum right now, such as photos, data and other heritage of Katha. And we're also renovating that house by maintaining its own original style. That's why it takes time," he said.

"Now we have spent 4 million

AP PHOTO



(From left) Kyal Ni, Nyo Ko Naing, caretaker

kyats (USD3,000) and some tourists have donated," he added. "We will renovate more whenever we get money."

The museum will also focus on Katha's history, with information about nearby battles during World War II and other aspects of the area deemed significant.

Nyo Ko Naing hopes Orwell will be a magnet for foreign tourists who will linger for other attractions, such as Katha's traditional elephant camps, which the government is exploring turning into eco-tourism des-

■ **Seven years after leaving the sleepy town on the Irrawaddy River, [Orwell] immortalized it as the setting of his first novel, "Burmese Days"**

tinations amid a wide-ranging ban on logging.

A 12-hour train ride from Mandalay, Katha is a small, idyllic town in the Sagaing region. The atmosphere is as tranquil as the flowing Irrawaddy. As the sun sets, visitors and families stroll along the promenade as mountains darken in the distance.

In the past five years, Myanmar has been rapidly modernizing, and Katha is no exception. There are shiny new bank branches and new hotels. Mobile phone shops proliferate. Many colonial buildings have been left alone, giving the place a timeless feel, though many structures are dilapidated.

Both the tennis court and the prison are still in use. The British Club is now a local business cooperative.

The Hotel Katha, which opened last year, has seized on the Orwell connection. Built to resemble a red-brick colonial home, it offers brochures at the front desk with maps guiding visitors to key sites from the novel. Guests can read copies of "Burmese Days" and Orwell's essays in the lobby or dine at the Kyauktada Cafe & Restau-

rant. Meeting rooms are named "Flory," "Elizabeth," and "Macgregor," after three of the book's characters.

"I want visitors to feel like they are in the book," said the owner, Bran Aung, in a phone interview. "I want to add more about Orwell. I am still collecting."

Best known for "1984" and "Animal Farm," Orwell is also admired for his condemnation of colonialism in "Burmese Days," depicting the British denizens of Kyauktada largely as racist exploiters. Yet the novel was more read and celebrated abroad than in Burma.

Censorship was lifted in 2012. A year later, Maung Myint Kywe won the government's most prestigious literary award for his Burmese translation of "Burmese Days."

"He told me that his translation had been sleeping in the hands of the publisher for more than 30 years," Thurein Win, who has translated Orwell's essays, wrote in an email interview. Maung Myint Kywe died in 2014.

Orwell wrote darkly about British and Burmese alike. "Some

Burmese don't like him for his provocative words, but others love his writing," Thurein Win said.

Nyo Ko Naing's most impressive Orwellian work may be tracking down the author's house, which he had previously confused with the commissioner's. He used a colonial-era map to pinpoint the residence as a two-story teak home on the main road, not far from the Katha Hotel.

In a twist that might amuse Orwell, it is still occupied by a police officer.

"My colleagues said that the house you are going to stay in belongs to the English writer George Orwell," said Police Chief Myint Aung, who was recently transferred to Katha. He didn't know anything about the writer, but he is embracing the former resident.

Although the home isn't officially open to tourists, he lets curious visitors poke around, and he has allowed the trust to hang a banner on the porch explaining some basic history.

"The town of George Orwell is lovely as well as interesting," the sign says. AP

NEW ZEALAND

New PM Bill English is steady, not flashy

Nick Perry, Wellington

THERE'S nothing flashy about Bill English. Critics say the former finance minister and farmer who became New Zealand's prime minister yesterday is downright boring. But English hopes his steadiness and experience in handling the economy will prove reassuring when New Zealanders go to the polls next year.

For the past eight years, the 54-year-old has played the role of dependable deputy to the more charismatic John Key. And it seemed it would stay that way heading into the 2017 election, until Key shocked the nation last week by resigning.

English was chosen as the new leader by the conservative National Party caucus after two other candidates for the job withdrew last week.

A practicing Roman Catholic, English is more conservative than Key on social issues. He is opposed to abortion and euthanasia, although he said that he's changed his mind on gay marriage, which he voted against when it was legalized in New Zealand three years ago.

"Just seeing the impact it's had with couples, I think it doesn't



Bill English

erode marriage," he said. "In some ways, it's an affirmation of the concept."

English said he won't use his new role to try to influence policy on such issues, which are often left to the conscience of individual lawmakers rather than voted on by party affiliation.

In some ways, English embodies the qualities that many New Zealanders value, casting himself as a down-to-earth rural bloke, a father-of-six who believes in hard work and steps into the limelight with some reluctance.

But his history is more com-

plicated. He studied commerce and then literature at university, graduating with an honors degree. He did work briefly as a farmer but has been a politician for most of his career, after he was first elected to Parliament 26 years ago.

He rose to become leader of his party in 2001 and led them to a disastrous defeat in an election the following year. The National Party gained just 21 percent of the vote, its worst-ever showing.

After he was replaced as leader in 2003, it seemed his star had faded. But he learned from that defeat, he said.

This time, he has his economic record to highlight. After becoming finance minister in 2008, English helped the nation weather the global downturn and has since helped return annual GDP growth to more than 3 percent and unemployment to below 5 percent.

He's put a lot of emphasis on getting the government books into shape and has managed to return small budget surpluses over the past couple of years. His economic platform remains more prudent than exciting.

"In the coming months and years we will focus on building the roads, public transport, schools and houses needed to support a strong economy and a growing population," English said. "We'll also focus on better incomes for households, safer communities, and smarter government support for the most vulnerable."

One of his biggest challenges will be curbing runaway house prices which have made it diffi-

cult for working families to buy homes, especially in the biggest city, Auckland.

English will also find it hard to emulate his predecessor's ability to charm other leaders and elevate New Zealand's role in world affairs. Key played golf with President Barack Obama and helped New Zealand secure a temporary seat on the U.N. Security Council.

"We've had a period of a good relationship between John Key and President Obama, and that's now changed," English said. "As a small country, we have to do all of the work."

Key, who said he wanted to leave while he was on top of his game and spend more time with his family, said he didn't expect English would travel much next year as he focused domestically on the election. But Key said English would build relationships over time and already had a good international reputation as finance minister.

Key departed with his party doing far better in opinion polls than the main opposition, the liberal Labour Party. But his opponents have been buoyed by Key's resignation.

Labour Party leader Andrew Little said English had "basked in John Key's fame and glory" and doesn't represent the change that New Zealanders want or need.

"It's not right in a country like New Zealand that thousands of young couples can't afford to buy their first home," he said. "It's not right that thousands of elderly people who need hospital care turn up to their hospital and get told the hospital can't afford to treat them." AP

SOUTH Korean Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn, who had a largely ceremonial job until President Park Geun-hye's impeachment last week, now must face off against North Korea and deal with edgy relations with Japan as the country's interim leader.

Hwang visited the Joint Chiefs of Staff and told fellow Cabinet members yesterday that there are no unusual security or economic developments. But he will soon face a slew of thorny issues that will test his leadership while the Constitutional Court reviews whether to endorse Park's impeachment to formally end her rule.

NORTH KOREA

Hwang's first move as interim leader was to tell his defense minister to bolster readiness for any possible provocation by North Korea.

North Korea hasn't

made international headlines since its fifth and biggest-ever nuclear test in September. That could be in line with its nuclear development timetable, but given that Park and North Korea had terrible relations, the North might want to avoid doing anything that could unite conservatives in South Korea behind her.

In a sign of the ongoing tensions, North Korea's state media on Sunday released photos of its smiling leader, Kim Jong Un, watching a practice attack on a replica of Park's presidential Blue House. A team of commandoes parachuted, shot at the Blue House model with rifles, leaving it engulfed in flames and black smoke.

HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

It's probably the first major, hot-button issue that Hwang will face.

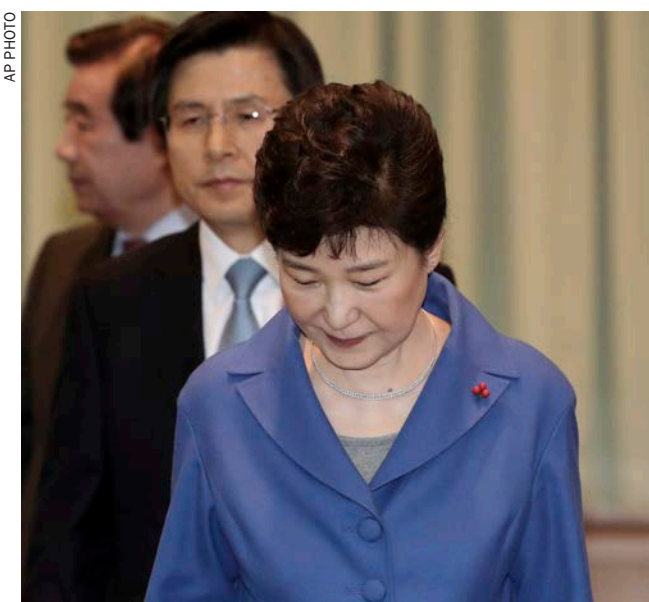
Park's government had been pushing to require

SOUTH KOREA

Interim leader faces thorny issues

schools to use state-authored history textbooks starting next year, saying current textbooks published by private companies are too left-leaning and sympathize with North Korea. But in the wake of the massive anti-government protests touched off by a political scandal involving Park's longtime confidante, the government took a step back, saying it wants to hear various opinions by Dec. 23 before making a final decision.

The liberal opposition is pressuring the government to scrap the textbook plan, calling it a move to beautify past authoritarian leaders, including Park's late father, Park Chung-hee. The elder Park is a deeply divisive figure, with critics calling him a horrible human ri-



South Korean President Park Geun-hye

ghts abuser who imprisoned and tortured dissidents, while supporters call him a national hero who guided the country out of poverty.

JAPAN DEALS

The opposition also wants to scrap two key agreements Park signed with Japan, calling them diplomatic fiascoes.

One settled a decades-long impasse over Korean women forced to be sex slaves in Japanese military-run brothels during World War II, with an apology from Japan's prime minister and a pledge of more than USD8 million in compensation. The other is about sharing military intelligence with Japan to better cope with North Korea.

The 2015 sex slave deal triggered criticism in South Korea because it was announced without getting approval from victims. The intelligence-sharing pact went into effect last month, and liberal critics accuse the Park government of trying to use the agreement to divert attention from the political scandal. AP

Jeff Horwitz, Washington

USA

Top contender to lead State known to back free trade, Russia

THE top contender to lead U.S. foreign policy under Donald Trump is known for his longstanding support of free trade, international law and an expansive presence in the Middle East that doesn't fit with Trump's pitch to supporters.

Exxon Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson also is known for his Russia connections and would be the Trump's most concrete outreach yet to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Success in Russia required aligning the company's interests with those of the Russian government, mettle and good relations with Putin. Exxon steadily expanded its Russian business even as its rivals faced expropriation and regulatory obstacles, and in 2013 Putin bestowed the Order of Friendship on Tillerson.

"He's a world-class player," Trump said on "Fox News Sunday." "To me, a great advantage is he knows many of the players and he knows them well. He does massive deals in Russia, he does massive deals, not for himself, for the company."

Trump's own relationship with Russia was an issue through much of the campaign. The CIA has concluded with "high confidence" that Russia sought to influence the U.S. election on behalf of the Republican, an assessment Trump has rejected.

Trump called that assessment "ridiculous."

A native of Wichita Falls, Texas, Tillerson came to Exxon Mobil Corp. as a production engineer straight out of the University of Texas at Austin in 1975 and never left. Groomed for an executive position, Tiller-



Rex Tillerson

son came up in the rough-and-tumble world of oil production, holding posts in the company's central United States, Yemen and Russian operations.

In 2006, Tillerson won the battle to succeed former Exxon CEO Lee Raymond. Under the Texan's leadership, oil prices broke records and Exxon's profits helped make it the most valuable public company in the world, with a security force totaling thousands of employees, direct channels with governments worldwide and a strong aversion to American sanctions or limitations on where it could operate.

Tillerson has used Exxon's enormous profits to explore new regions for oil and gas and to invest in new acquisitions

like XTO Resources, a company that had helped pioneer drilling for natural gas in formations of shale in the United States. But over the years oil has become more difficult and expensive to find as large, easy-to-tap reservoirs in stable countries were slowly depleted. Exxon and other giant oil corporations found it ever more difficult to replace the oil they sold every day with new resources, and they were forced to look in every more difficult and hostile regions for oil and gas.

"Energy made in America is not as important as energy simply made wherever it is most economic," he said in 2007 in a speech to the Council on Foreign Relations. "We are free-

market, free-trade advocates," he said in another speech to the group five years later, declaring that the greatest boon for American energy security would be support for oil production and trading worldwide.

While Tillerson advocates for a hands-off approach to markets, he's backed continued American engagement in the Middle East. After the Iraq war, Exxon agreed to develop a large project in still-unstable southern Iraq at terms that less favorable to Exxon than most deals. In 2011, Tillerson announced an expansive relationship with Russia's Rosneft that will spend years and billions of dollars developing technology to explore and produce oil and gas in icy waters in the Russian Arctic.

While the revolutionary gains from shale fracking have poised the U.S. to supply far more of its own energy, Tillerson has said it would be a mistake to step back.

"The question you have to ask is, 'Well then, who steps into that void,'" he said, suggesting it would be a "large consuming country" such as China.

While his predecessor was a firm skeptic about the link between fossil fuel combustion and climate change, Tillerson has softened the company's position on the issue, even if he's

unconvinced by the most dire predictions of the consequences.

At an industry conference in 2007, Tillerson acknowledged Earth's climate is changing, the average temperature is rising and greenhouse gas emissions are increasing. He also noted that climate remains a complex area of scientific study. Exxon remains under fire for its past efforts to undercut climate change — even as recently exposed internal documents show the company's own scientists recognized climate change's legitimacy as early as the 1970s.

But he said it's clear the risks of climate change to society and ecosystems could be significant, and it's prudent to develop and implement "sensible strategies that address these risks while not reducing our ability to progress other global priorities such as economic development, poverty eradication and public health."

Tillerson was slated to retire in March at age 65 under the company's mandatory retirement policy. Paid USD27.3 million last year, Tillerson has accumulated roughly \$160 million in Exxon stock along with \$149 million of unvested stock options, according a proxy statement the company filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. **AP**

Iran seals deal with Boeing to buy 80 planes worth USD16.6 billion

Iran's flag carrier finalized a major deal with U.S. plane maker Boeing Co. to buy USD16.6 billion worth of passenger planes in one of the most tangible benefits yet for the Islamic Republic from last year's landmark nuclear agreement.

Iran Air's deal for 80 jetliners is the biggest agreement Iran has struck with an American company since the 1979 revolution and U.S. Embassy takeover. It has the potential to transform Iran's creaking and accident-prone aviation industry, which has been hobbled by years of sanctions.

Those curbs have prevented the country from



Boeing 747 of Iran's national airline

buying new planes from Chicago-based Boeing and European rival Airbus, and in many cases made it difficult for Iranian airlines to secure much-needed spare parts.

The deal covers 50 single-aisle 737 Max 8s, a

soon-to-be-introduced version of Boeing's existing narrow-body 737 line.

It also includes 30 777s, a wide-body, twin-engine plane typically used on long-haul routes that is popular with other Per-

sian Gulf carriers such as Dubai-based Emirates. Half of the order will cover the 777-300ER version, while the rest will be of the 777-9 model still under development.

Iran's state-run IRNA news agency said the planes would be delivered over the next decade. The first will start to arrive in 2018, Boeing said.

In September, Washington granted permission to Boeing and Toulouse, France-based Airbus to sell billions of dollars' worth of aircraft to Iran. Airbus needed U.S. approval because at least 10 percent of its planes' components are of American origin.

The U.S. and other world powers agreed last year to lift crippling sanctions on Iran in exchange for it curbing its nuclear activities. The U.S. still maintains extensive sanctions on Iran for activities unrelated to its nuclear program.

President-elect Donald Trump and several Republican lawmakers have criticized the nuclear deal, but it's unclear whether they would scrap the agreement, which was reached with Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China.

Iranian Transport Minister Abbas Akhoundi, who attended the signing ceremony, said it was a "historic" day for Iranian aviation and that the deal would create 8,000 jobs for Iranians.

"The deal has a clear message for the world: we support peace and security as well as the growth of Iran based on

a win-win policy," he was quoted as saying. "We hope that despite changes in the U.S. administration, the country will remain loyal to its commitments."

The Republican-led House of Representatives last month voted to bar commercial aircraft sales to Iran in a move that could block the Boeing deal. That legislation must still pass the Senate, where it will likely face opposition from Democrats. U.S. President Barack Obama has said he will veto the bill if it reaches his desk before he leaves office on Jan. 20.

Boeing made a point of saying it worked closely with the U.S. government throughout the deal-making process and will continue to "follow all license requirements." The Iran Air deal "will support tens of thousands of U.S. jobs" linked to the 777s alone, it said. **AP**

Robert Burns, Tel Aviv

US defense secretary in Israel as country gets F-35 jets

U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter was visiting Israel as it prepared to receive today the first two next-generation F-35 fighter jets that will help preserve the country's military edge in the volatile Mideast.

The F-35 is the Pentagon's most expensive weapons program, with an estimated cost of nearly USD400 billion. Israel is among a small number of allies to get the plane, with the first expected later in the day.

Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman said the fighter jets "present another component in maintaining air superiority in our region" and expressed gratitude to Carter, who was welcomed with a military honor guard at a Tel Aviv army base.

The deputy commander of the Nevatim Air Force base in southern Israel said the new fighters will give Israel an upper hand over its neighbors for years to come.

"We are going to be very strong for a long time, having these airplanes. And Israel has to be strong in this region for its existen-



ce," said Col. Asaf, who could be identified only by his first name in line with military regulations. "It's a message for everybody that Israel will keep on holding the high-end technology in this area."

The purchase of the F35 elevates the entire Israeli air force to a higher level, the colonel said, adding that four Israeli pilots have been trained to fly the F-35 and more pilots will be shown how to use the war system.

"This specific airplane is going to be a very good one for the next decades," he said, lauding the F-35's capabilities, including stealth and other high-tech technologies.

In recent years, Israel has reportedly carried out long-range airstrikes as far away as Sudan, and is believed to have struck Hezbollah-bound weapons' shipments in neighboring Syria.

Israel has also hinted in

the past at making plans to strike Iran, some 1,000 kilometers (625 miles) away, if the Islamic Republic presses forward with a nuclear program it considers suspect. The threat of Israeli action in Iran has dropped following the international community's deal with Tehran last year to curb its nuclear program.

The Pentagon's F-35 program has been criticized by members of the U.S. Congress over testing problems, delays and cost overruns. International buyers include Britain, South Korea, Israel, Italy, Australia, Canada, Turkey and Japan.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office announced last month that his Security Cabinet approved the purchase of 17 additional F-35s. In all, it said, the acquisition will bring the number of planes the air force will get to 50. **AP**

AD

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what's ON

ONLOOKERS - WORKS BY ALLEN WONG
TIME: 10am-7pm, (Mondays to Fridays, Closed on Public Holidays)
VENUE: 4th Floor, Art Garden, Avenida Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues N. 265, Macau
DATE: December 18, 2016
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6064

EXHIBITION OF LUSH VALLEY
TIME: 11:30am-6:30pm (Closed on Mondays and Public holidays)
UNTIL: December 31, 2016
VENUE: Macau Lush valley creative space, Calçada da Igreja de S. Lázaro 25A and Rua de Sanches de Miranda 18
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 6288 0893

ON THE VERGE - PIGB SOLO EXHIBITION
TIME: 12pm-8pm (closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: January 8, 2017
VENUE: Taipa Village Art Space / Taipa Village Art Space, 10 Rua dos Clerigos, Taipa
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 6656 8631

Offbeat

'PEOPLE V. O.J.,' 'NIGHT MANAGER,' LEAD GLOBES TV NODS

FX's "The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story" has claimed the lead in Golden Globes television nominations with five nods, followed by another miniseries, AMC's "The Night Manager," with four.

The Globes nominations, announced yesterday, include among the year's best comedies FX's freshman "Atlanta" as well as the established series ABC's "black-ish," HBO's "Veep" and Amazon's "Mozart in the Jungle" and "Transparent."

Best drama nominations include HBO juggernaut "Game of Thrones" plus a crop of new arrivals: HBO's "Westworld," Netflix's "The Crown" and "Stranger Things," and NBC's "This Is Us." "This Is Us," a gentle family drama that proved to be an instant sensation this fall, also has scored two supporting-actress Globes nominations, for Chrissy Metz and Mandy Moore.

With the Globes generally favoring edgier cable fare, "This Is Us" and "black-ish" are tied for most nominations among all series on traditional broadcast TV, with three apiece.

Among networks overall, HBO leads with 14 nominations, while FX is runner-up with nine. AMC, Amazon and Netflix are joined by ABC with five nominations apiece.

The big under-performer: Showtime, with just one nomination. Best limited series or TV movie nominees include "The Night Manager," "The People v. O.J. Simpson," HBO's "The Night Of," ABC's "American Crime" and Starz' "The Dresser."

FX's spy drama "The Americans," completely overlooked by the Globes in its previous three seasons, has landed a double whammy this year: nominations for both its stars, Keri Russell and Matthew Rhys.

Along with Russell, best drama actress nominees include Caitriona Balfe (Starz' "Outlander"), Claire Foy ("The Crown"), Winona Ryder ("Stranger Things"), and Evan Rachel Wood ("Westworld").

Joining Rhys in the best dramatic actor category are Rami Malek (USA's "Mr. Robot"), Bob Odenkirk (AMC's "Better Call Saul"), Liev Schreiber (Showtime's "Ray Donovan") and Billy Bob Thornton (Amazon's "Goliath").

Seemingly a permanent fixture in the comedy actress category, "Veep" star Julia Louis-Dreyfus this year is joined by Sarah Jessica Parker (for her new HBO series "Divorce"), Tracee Ellis Ross ("black-ish"), plus Gina Rodriguez ("Jane the Virgin") and Rachel Bloom ("Crazy Ex-Girlfriend") — scoring the CW network's lone pair of nominations — and Issa Rae (HBO's new "Insecure").

In the best comedy actors category, "Atlanta" star Donald Glover and veteran Nick Nolte (Epix's "Graves") represent their respective new series along with Anthony Anderson ("black-ish"), Gael Garcia Bernal ("Mozart in the Jungle") and Jeffrey Tambor ("Transparent").

Among the Globes surprises is the inclusion of Riley Keough among actresses nominated for a limited series or TV movie. She gives a solid performance as a female escort in the Starz miniseries "The Girlfriend Experience," but as a relative unknown, she stands out in a field that otherwise includes high-profile stars Felicity Huffman (ABC's "American Crime"), Sarah Paulson ("The People v. O.J. Simpson"), Charlotte Rampling (BBC America's "London Spy") and Kerry Washington (HBO's "Confirmation").

Among the Globes' snubs: the relative lack of love for "Game of Thrones," which remains red-hot among viewers and critics but landed just two nominations: for best drama series and best supporting actress, Lena Headey. **AP**

TV canal macau

| | |
|-------|--|
| 13:00 | TDM News (Repeated) |
| 13:30 | News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast |
| 14:45 | RTPi Live |
| 16:00 | Nos League: Feirense vs FC Porto (Repeated) |
| 17:40 | Precious Pearl (Repeated) |
| 18:30 | TDM Sport (Repeated) |
| 19:30 | Soap Opera |
| 20:30 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report |
| 21:00 | Miscellaneous |
| 21:10 | TDM Interview |
| 21:40 | Once Upon A Time S1 |
| 22:10 | Precious Pearl |
| 23:00 | TDM News |
| 23:30 | Miscellaneous |
| 00:05 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated) |
| 00:40 | RTPi Live |

cinema

CINETEATRO

08 DEC - 14 DEC

MY ANNOYING BROTHER

ROOM 1
2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm
Director: Kwon Soo-kyung
Language: Korean (English and Cantonese)
Duration: 90min

YOUR NAME

ROOM 1
4.00, 7.45 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



THE YOUNG MESSIAH

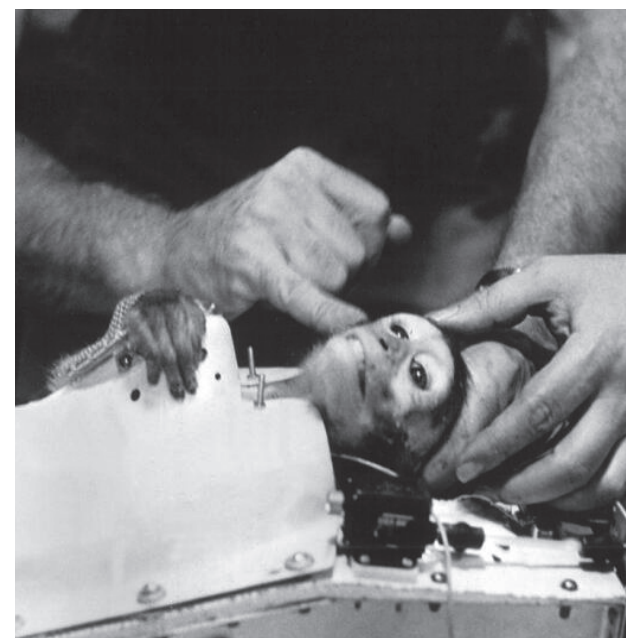
ROOM 3
2.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm
Director: Cyrus Nowrasteh
Starring: Adam Greaves-Neal, Sara Lazzaro, Vincent Walsh
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 111min



SING

ROOM 3
4.30 pm
Director: Garth Jennings
Starring: Matthew McConaughey, Reese Witherspoon, Seth MacFarlane
Language: Cantonese (English)
Duration: 108min

this day in history



1958 MONKEY LOST AFTER SPACE FLIGHT

The search for a small bushy-tailed monkey fired into space in the nose cone of a Jupiter rocket has been called off.

The squirrel monkey named Gordo survived a 300-mile journey into space and then travelled more than 1,500 miles in the rocket until it dropped in the South Atlantic.

A technical problem with the recovery gear meant a parachute failed to open and the nose-cone sank taking Gordo with it. The US Army abandoned the search after six hours.

Gordo's condition was monitored by the Pentagon, which said the monkey suffered no significant adverse physical effects during the time it was weightless.

The 50 ton Jupiter AM-13, which usually carries intermediate-range missiles, was fired by the army from Cape Canaveral in Florida this morning. The flight lasted 15 minutes.

Gordo, a South American breed of monkey about one foot (30cm) tall and weighing between two and three pounds (1-1.5kg), was chosen because it has a similar anatomical make-up to man and is also very sensitive to changes in temperature.

US defence officials say the breathing of the monkey slowed down after take-off and its pulse became slightly irregular, but both quickened as the missile gained speed and once the nose-cone was beyond the pull of Earth's gravity they returned to normal.

Gordo wore a leather-lined plastic helmet. He was strapped on a moulded rubber bed with his knees drawn up to resist the strains of gravity.

The monkey was insulated against temperature changes with foil and fibre glass. He had a thermometer under his armpit, a microphone listened to his heartbeat and other instruments detected his breathing.

There have been angry protests from animal rights groups about the decision to send Gordo into space.

The American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals said only inanimate objects should be used for such tests. The British Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals also expressed "grave concern and apprehension".

But the US Defense Department insists the experiment was an invaluable step in preparing for man's first venture into space. They say the monkey's make-up is so similar to man's there is now no reason humans cannot undertake similar flights in future.

Gordo is not the first animal to have ventured into space, but he is the first primate to have flown so high.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

In May 1959, the United States sent a pair of monkeys, Able and Baker, into space on a Jupiter missile. They were the first living creatures to be successfully recovered after a trip into space.

Although Able died in June 1959, monkey Baker survived until 1984. Later in 1959 and in early 1960 there were further experiments involving a pair of monkeys named Sam and Miss Sam.

Soviet scientists decided against using monkeys for test flights. Their scientific research - published in September 1958 - suggested the monkeys would have to be anaesthetised and the anaesthetic would interfere with test results.

They had already launched a dog, Laika, into space in November 1957. At the time, Russian scientists claimed the dog had survived a week in orbit but later reports show it died shortly after take-off from overheating and panic.

But it was the Russians who won the race to launch the first man into space. Major Yuri Alexeyevich Gagarin orbited the Earth for nearly two hours on 12 April 1961.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
The universe is challenging you right now to be more tolerant. This may feel like your patience is being tried by forces -- or people -- beyond your control, and this can be mighty annoying.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
Something way, way out there could happen in your world right about now, and your knee-jerk reaction might be to lose a bit of your cool. It's likely that no one else will even notice.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
Escaping to your own little world certainly has its appeal right now; you're just not feeling like your usual social butterfly self. Let your nearest and dearest know that this is just a little vacation into inner space.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
That elusive balance between thinking and feeling has been extra difficult to strike lately, finding you in either extra-emotional mode or (less frequently) an ultra-logical state.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Your generous heart -- in addition to your desire to look like you're keeping it all together -- has you going the extra mile in all areas right now. Home, work, relationships, not to mention extracurricular activities.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Identifying what you want is the first step toward getting it, so think it over and get the specifics fixed in your mind. Go ahead and think big; let your vision of your perfect world percolate.

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22
Outside factors are encroaching on your workday, and keeping everything in its separate compartment may prove difficult at the moment. You might make a sensible plan to deal with these conflicts.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
The dividing line between fantasy and reality is a wavering, permeable one at the moment, providing you with some unprecedented opportunities -- especially in the realm of romance.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You're not usually an acquisitive type. Right now, though, shopping with a friend might sound like it's just your speed. Knowing you, you'll find yourself in a tiny shop full of hidden treasures.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Talk may sometimes be cheap, but right now the way you're communicating is totally on target. If there's a presentation to be given at work, you're the right person for the job.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
If you've been letting your bank statements pile up unopened, you may want to take a gander at the numbers therein. Mistakes do happen, and maybe, you will be rewarded by finding an error in your favor.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20
You have enough good fortune going that you can afford to share the proverbial wealth - and there's little you enjoy more than giving. Taking some friends out and picking up the tab is one way to go.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 3 | | | 7 | | | | 4 |
| | | | 5 | | | | 7 | 3 |
| | | 2 | 8 | 4 | | | | |
| | 9 | 6 | | 1 | | | | 7 |
| | | 3 | | | | 4 | | |
| 1 | | | | 8 | | 5 | 6 | |
| | | | 2 | | 8 | 1 | | |
| 2 | 5 | | | | 9 | | | |
| 3 | | 7 | | | | | 5 | 6 |

Easy+

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | | 4 | | 7 | | 6 | | |
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| | 8 | | | | | 4 | 5 | |
| | | | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 |
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| 3 | 8 | | 6 | | | | | |
| | 5 | 3 | | | | | | 9 |
| | | 6 | 3 | | | | 8 | |
| | 1 | 8 | | 2 | | | | 6 |

Medium

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| 8 | | 2 | 1 | | | | | 7 |
| | 2 | | | | | | | 5 |
| 3 | | | | 8 | | | | 6 |
| | | 9 | 3 | | 4 | | | 5 |
| 4 | 1 | | | | | 6 | | 9 |
| 7 | | | 6 | | 1 | 8 | | |
| 9 | | | | 7 | | | | 2 |
| | 1 | | | | | | | 8 |
| 2 | | | | 6 | 3 | | | 4 |

Hard

| | | | | | | | | |
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| | 1 | 7 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | 8 | 2 |
| 2 | | 8 | 1 | | | | | |
| | | | 5 | | | 7 | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | |
| | 5 | | | | 3 | 1 | | |
| | | | | | 4 | | 5 | |
| 6 | | | | 2 | | | | |

WEATHER

| | MIN | MAX | CONDITION |
|--|-----|-----|-----------|
|--|-----|-----|-----------|

CHINA

| | | | |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----------------|
| Beijing | -2 | 3 | smog/cloudy |
| Harbin | -21 | -14 | cloudy |
| Tianjin | -1 | 3 | overcast/cloudy |
| Urumqi | -6 | -1 | foggy/cloudy |
| Xi'an | 0 | 9 | smog |
| Lhasa | -6 | 14 | clear |
| Chengdu | 6 | 14 | clear/overcast |
| Chongqing | 10 | 15 | overcast |
| Kunming | 4 | 19 | overcast |
| Nanjing | 8 | 11 | drizzle |
| Shanghai | 1 | 4 | drizzle |
| Wuhan | 7 | 12 | drizzle/cloudy |
| Hangzhou | 10 | 14 | drizzle |
| Taipei | 16 | 25 | clear |
| Guangzhou | 17 | 25 | cloudy |
| Hong Kong | 20 | 25 | cloudy |

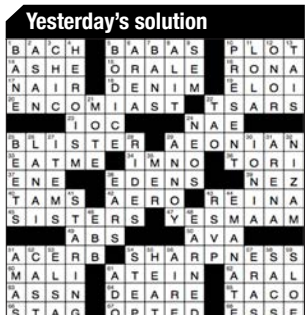
WORLD

| | | | |
|-----------|-----|----|------------------|
| Moscow | -12 | -7 | flurry |
| Frankfurt | 3 | 8 | drizzle |
| Paris | 3 | 5 | drizzle |
| London | 9 | 12 | overcast/drizzle |
| New York | 1 | 7 | drizzle/clear |

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Takes advantage of; 5- 1972 Kentucky Derby winner ___ Ridge; 9- Steak order; 14- Takes home; 15- Blue dye source; 16- More healthy; 17- ___ ex machina; 18- Quick look; 19- Capri and Man; 20- Put to a wrong use; 23- Become firm; 24- Pompous person; 25- Roman general; 29- Breathe hard; 31- Radical '60s grp.; 34- Violinist Zimbalist; 35- Auctioneer's cry; 36- Home furnishings chain; 37- In spite of; 40- Very, in Versailles; 41- Civil rights leader Parks; 42- Creepy; 43- His, to Henri; 44- Record with a VCR; 45- Kingdoms; 46- Passbook abbr.; 47- A Kennedy; 48- Comprehensible; 56- Land's end?; 57- Drug-yielding plant; 58- Drum sound; 60- Fortuneteller's card; 61- Like Cheerios; 62- Kansas city; 63- Narrow mountain ridge; 64- Dagger; 65- Acceptable;

DOWN: 1- Sturm ___ Drang; 2- Appear; 3- Ornamental case; 4- Flat sound; 5- Knocker of a door; 6- All thumbs; 7- Contender; 8- Iams alternative; 9- Need for liquid; 10- Foundation; 11- ___ podrida; 12- Nair rival; 13- Gaelic language of Ireland or Scotland; 21- Me too; 22- White-and-black bearlike mammal; 25- Pennies; 26- Preceding, poetically; 27- Some Art Deco works; 28- Uses a Singer; 29- Deputised group; 30- Neighbor of Sask.; 31- Sound of a bagpipe; 32- Strong blue cotton fabric; 33- Wise ones; 35- Retail store; 36- Think tank output; 38- Snares; 39- ___ lift?; 44- Cylindrical; 45- Night flight; 46- Bus station; 47- Govt. security; 48- Court org.; 49- Tenn. neighbor; 50- Challenge; 51- Town near Santa Fe; 52- Space pioneer Shepard; 53- Gusto; 54- Watch; 55- Ms. Fitzgerald; 59- Put down;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- 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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- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
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Ref: 16095501

Happy Valley
Taipa
Studio Apartment
Cozy Furnished
HKD 7,000 / 503 sq ft
Ref: 16050580

Taipa Car Park
Taipa
0 sq ft / HKD 1.48M
HKD 0sq ft
Undercover on 2nd Floor
Ref: 16095495

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D Unit, Coloane
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Car Park Included
HKD 14,500 / 1,663 sq ft
Ref: 16100623

Iau Lei Garden
Taipa
1,015 sq ft / HKD 6.8M
HKD 6,699sq ft
Views Across Taipa
Ref: 16105501

Jardim De Wa Bao
Taipa
1 Bedroom Apartment
View to Macau Stadium
HKD 12,000 / 900 sq ft
Ref: 16100621

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2. Satisfactory medical examinations.



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13 December 2016 - 20 January 2017

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Rob Harris, London

FOOTBALL

English FA faces lawmakers' no-confidence vote, reforms

THE English Football Association is facing a no-confidence vote in the House of Commons and the enforced overhaul of decision-making functions dominated by "elderly men." British legislators made the announcement after being told by former FA leaders that the governing body's failure to challenge the financial might of the Premier League contributes to the England team's "embarrassing failures."

In a letter to the parliamentary committee overseeing sport, five ex-FA executives called for the appointment of a football regulator to modernize their former employer and make it more representative of modern society. The committee's head said he is planning to introduce legislation to impose governance reforms on the FA.

The FA is coming under attack from former executives and legislators while trying to grapple with the biggest crisis in its 153-year history over past sexual abuse of youth team players. The FA's limited response when allegations first surfaced against coaches and clubs in the 1990s is subject of an internal review, while police forces across the country have opened investigations.

The England national team has also gone through a year of turmoil, with a loss to unfancied Iceland in the round of 16 at the European Championship leading to the departure of manager Roy Hodgson. Successor Sam Allardyce was



Tottenham Hotspur's Harry Winks, (left), is closed down by Manchester United's Matteo Darmian during the Premier League soccer match

then forced out after one game over unguarded comments to journalists posing as businessmen, and Gareth Southgate was hired in the continuing quest to produce the country's first trophy since the 1966 World Cup.

The lack of success on the international stage is in part a result of governance failings within the FA, according to Greg Dyke, David Bernstein and David Triesman, the past three FA chairmen, ex-general secretary Alex Horne and for-

mer executive director David Davies.

In their letter to legislators, the quintet expressed hope that the "woeful lack of English players or managers and the embarrassing failures of our national team for the past 50 years" is redressed by changes to decision-making bodies.

They complain that the Premier League holds too much sway over English football "due to their financial might and the way financial contributions are wielded at every

turn to assert beneficial positions." The FA has little oversight of the world's richest soccer competition, which was the result of a 1992 breakaway from the Football League by leading clubs.

"It is little wonder that English football is out of balance," wrote Dyke, Bernstein, Triesman, Horne and Davies. "The FA has neither the modernity of approach nor independence required to counter the EPL juggernaut, or to modernize its own governance."

They highlight how those in senior positions in FA structures are by "a significant majority, white, elderly men" and "collectively unrepresentative of English society and English football in 2016."

Those concerns are shared by Damian Collins, chairman of the culture, media and sport committee, who said he wants the FA Council to have a more inclusive membership and term limits of 10 years.

"There is currently no effective governing body for football in England that is capable of responding to the challenges that face the modern game," Collins said, outlining plans for a parliamentary vote expressing "no confidence" in the FA.

"The committee is working with the parliamentary authorities to prepare a draft bill to deliver the necessary reform to the structure of the FA."

Such a move could flout FIFA's rules banning "any form of political interference" in federations.

The FA insisted that it was "currently working on governance reforms." In a sign of the tensions within the English game, the Premier League said the FA had "failed to deliver" reforms and trumpeted its own investment in facilities. **AP**

EPL

Mkhitaryan scores, gets hurt as Man United beats Spurs 1-0

HENRIKH Mkhitaryan underlined his growing importance to Manchester United by scoring in a 1-0 win over Tottenham this weekend, sealing the team's third Premier League victory since August.

In the biggest win for United manager Jose Mourinho since his arrival at Old Trafford, Mkhitaryan raced onto Ander Herrera's through-ball and drove home a rising shot in the 29th minute.

The Armenia international's match ended prematurely when he was carried off on a stretcher in the 85th with an apparent left ankle injury



Manchester United's Henrikh Mkhitaryan celebrates scoring their first goal with teammate Ander Herrera

following a foul by Danny Rose, but United managed to close out the game — something the team has struggled to do this

season. Sixth-place United moved three points behind Spurs and six behind Manchester City, which

occupies the fourth and final Champions League qualification berth after 15 games.

Mkhitaryan has been

slowly integrated into United's first team since his move from Borussia Dortmund last summer, with Mourinho keen to ease the Armenian into the demands of English soccer.

Now he is settled, Mkhitaryan is looking the part. And the pace and quick-thinking he showed for his goal was something United has been lacking.

As soon as Herrera pounced on a wayward pass from Harry Kane in the center of the field, Mkhitaryan was off, running in behind Spurs center back Jan Vertonghen with left back Rose stranded upfield. Herrera's pass was perfect and Mkhitaryan took it on before unleashing a fierce shot that flew past Lloris.

In his last four games, Mkhitaryan has scored two goals and set up two others. His injury may set him back once again, however.

Meanwhile, the Premier League has now seen players from 96 different nationalities score goals since its inception in 1992.

It was a big win for United and Mourinho, whose record against the so-called heavyweights of the Premier League has been poor since arriving at Old Trafford.

United had the better of the chances in both halves, with Paul Pogba particularly lively in crashing a free kick against the crossbar and having two shots well saved by Lloris.

Christian Eriksen was Tottenham's best player and from one of his free kicks, an unmarked Victor Wanyama misdirected a header from the edge of the six-yard box in the 55th.

Spurs didn't have a more clear-cut opening for the rest of the match **AP**

opinion

Our Desk

Julie Zhu



ONLY GOOD BEFORE 18

For the sixth time, Macau participated in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), whereby the effectiveness of basic education for all 15-year-old secondary students in the MSAR was examined.

Macau ranked sixth in Scientific Literacy, 12th in Reading Literacy, and third in mathematical literacy.

According to the official report by the OECD, more than one in four students in Beijing-Shanghai-Jiangsu-Guangdong (China), Hong Kong, Singapore and Chinese Taipei are top-performing students in mathematics, a higher share than anywhere else in the world.

If we take a look at a map presented on the OCED's website, mainland China, Canada, Estonia, Hong Kong, Finland, Macau, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Singapore are the greenest (the best) regions, which indicates that students in these regions have attained the best performance in mathematics across the entire planet.

Should this figure make the community in this specific region proud for its intelligence and educational accomplishments?

Now take a look at several awards for mathematicians, such as the International Medals for Outstanding Discoveries in Mathematics, Wolf Prize in Mathematics, Abel Prize, or even the celebrated Fields Medal and notice how difficult it is for us to find one mathematician coming from the greater China region.

Most noticeably, in the case of the Fields Medal, the only recipient of the prestigious award born in China was not even affiliated with a Chinese university.

It is important to stress that scientific awards are completely trustworthy, as opposed to prizes for 'humanitarian causes,' for which some might argue that these prizes only exist to honour a cultural preference or appreciation.

In other words, mathematics is a universal language that knows no barriers, whereby it is easier to reward major contributions regardless of their origins.

Even when we find some Chinese mathematician award-holders, they normally have strong educational backgrounds built outside China.

Hence, a question arises: what has made students from the greater China great at math at an early age, but then vanish from the math world, or related worlds, at an older age?

Many opinions stress that Chinese students use root memorization and repetition-based techniques while studying. This is completely true in regards to my personal experience and that of any individual student from Macau and mainland China that I personally know.

This is an opinion that has been repeated over and over again whenever a similar topic is brought to the table for discussion, having already come out almost everyone's mouth.

We make memorization and repetition sound like a poor learning method. But it is definitely not, and it is definitely not what makes Chinese students less creative.

This problem has become such a long-term headache in the Chinese community that many teachers, parents, and others keep reviewing and rethinking education.

However, they still fail to understand why their students were so good at school when they were young and then become less adept when they grow older.

Maybe it is just a coincidence, or maybe all of the potential is worn out by several years of continuous and intense studying that discourages students to further their studies in a subject that has been a constant source of nightmares.

Maybe set them free and allow them to try what is not lectured by teachers or written in the textbooks.

THE BUZZ UBER ANNOUNCES CASH PAYMENT OPTION

Uber in Macau has announced that it is rolling out a new option for its customers to pay drivers in cash. The new payment method will allow Uber users to select a cash payment option before requesting a ride. Customers can then settle the fare with the driver directly at the ride's conclusion. According to the Uber announcement, the option will be rolled out gradually in Macau over the next few weeks and as such the selection may not be immediately

available.

Uber commenced operations in Macau in October last year. After having served the territory for less than a year, the company announced in August 2016 that it would withdraw from the territory. In explaining this move, Uber stated that they had received more than MOP10 million in driver fines. However, local support for its continued operation saw Uber executives reverse their decision in September 2016.

| Station | Air quality |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Roadside | 30-50 Good |
| High Density Residential Area | 45-65 Good |
| Ambient | 45-65 Good |

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

INDIA A cyclone slammed into India's southeastern coast yesterday, killing at least two people and causing authorities to evacuate thousands of people from low-lying areas. Schools and offices were closed and state authorities were on alert in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh states as Cyclone Vardah hit the coast.



AFGHANISTAN Officials say at least two civilians were killed when their motorcycle struck a roadside bomb in southern Zabul province while a policeman died in another roadside bombing elsewhere in the same province.

TURKEY's police rounded up more than 200 people, mostly Kurds, as the country yesterday mourned the dozens killed in a bombing attack near an Istanbul soccer stadium.

KENYA President Uhuru Kenyatta yesterday criticized the International Criminal Court as "not impartial," saying his government "will give serious thought" to its membership of the court.

GERMANY Chancellor Angela Merkel says that her country, Europe's biggest economic power, won't be changing its policy on China and Taiwan after President-elect Donald Trump raised questions about the future U.S. stance.



BRAZIL Tens of thousands of people have celebrated at Rio de Janeiro's annual gay pride parade at Copacabana beach. Organizers said this year's parade was focusing on passing legislation in Brazil that would allow adults to legally change their gender on identity documents.

Pope urges new culture of nonviolence for world politics

AP PHOTO



Nicole Winfield, Vatican City

POPE Francis is calling for a renewed culture of nonviolence to inform global politics today, saying military responses to conflicts only breed more violence.

Francis cited Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. as models of nonviolent peacemakers in his annual message for the Catholic Church's World Day of Peace, which is celebrated each Jan. 1.

"Violence is not the cure for our broken world," read the message released yesterday. "Countering violence with violence leads at best to forced migrations and enormous suffering."

Earlier this year, the Vatican hosted a conference of peace activists who called on the Catholic Church to renounce its "just war" doctrine, which

condones the use of force to stop an unjust aggression if certain conditions are met. The activists urged a new peacemaking framework based on Gospel-mandated nonviolence, arguing that too often the "just war" doctrine had been used to justify and endorse military action rather than prevent it.

They called for Francis to develop an encyclical on "active nonviolence."

At a news conference launching the message yesterday, Francis' point-man on justice and peace issues, Cardinal Peter Turkson, said he couldn't rule out a possible encyclical or a special gathering of bishops on the theme of nonviolence. He said the church's current "just war" theory was no longer adequate for today's world.

Francis, named after the peace-loving St. Francis of

Assisi, has echoed his predecessors in condemning wars and promoting peace. But he has also endorsed military action to stave off the Islamic State group's attacks on Christians in Iraq and Syria.

That said, yesterday he sent a letter to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and the international community urging an end to the Syrian conflict. In the letter, Francis condemned all forms of "extremism and terrorism from whatever quarter they may come, and [appealed] to the president to ensure that international humanitarian law is fully respected with regard to the protection of the civilians and access to humanitarian aid," the Vatican said.

In his world peace message, Francis repeated the Vatican's call for the prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons, and added: "I plead with equal urgency for an end to domestic violence and to the abuse of women and children."

In fact, he said, women are often the leaders in nonviolence, citing Nobel Peace Prize winner Leymah Gbowee of Liberia. He praised her and the thousands of other Liberian women whose non-violent protests helped end Liberia's civil war. **AP**

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Xinhua/Yang Zhen



Soldiers of pro-government militia fire at rebel-held areas in Aleppo, Syria. According to the media arm of the Syrian military, the government army and allied fighters are now in control of about 98 percent of the rebel-held areas in Aleppo.

AP PHOTO