



SINGAPORE ATTRACTS BIG SPENDERS

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FOOD SAFETY COOPERATION

The Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau and the Portuguese Food and Economic Safety Authority are meeting in Macau

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VEGAS ON A WINNING STREAK

After the recession hit, companies and tourists shunned Las Vegas. Now, the city is on a winning streak

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



US-RUSSIA President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin will speak by phone today [Macau time], their first known conversation since the U.S. missile strikes on a Syrian air base that sparked new tensions between Washington and Moscow.

CHINA A former vice governor of a province is dismissed from public office for alleged superstitious activities and trading power for sex and money. [More on p11](#)



KOREAS TENSION China urges the United States and North Korea to re-establish contact "as soon as possible" to avoid further escalation of tensions over the North's nuclear program. Meanwhile, President Donald Trump opened the door to a future meeting with North Korea's Kim Jong Un. [More on p10,12-13](#)



JAPAN Asia needs all the help it can get in fighting poverty as both wealthy and poor nations grapple with widening inequality, Bank of Japan Gov. Haruhiko Kuroda [pictured] says. Kuroda welcomes China's push to support regional growth through the Beijing-backed Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, which has been viewed as a rival. [More on p11](#)

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Gaming revenue grows 16 percent in April

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Labor Day protests put spotlight on non-labor issues

P2 MDT REPORT



Wages of construction workers increases

The average daily wage of construction workers increased by 1.8 percent quarter-to-quarter to MOP830 in the first quarter of 2017. According to information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), the average daily wage of non-resident construction workers (MOP750) rose by 4 percent quarter-to-quarter, and that of resident construction workers (MOP1,045) edged up by 0.4 percent. Regarding construction materials, the average price of concrete fell by 5 percent quarter-to-quarter to MOP783 per cubic meter, while that of spiral and round reinforcing steel bars rose by 1.9 percent to MOP4,590 per tonne.

More illegal workers in first quarter

The Public Security Police Force (PSP) announced yesterday that 67 illegal workers were found in March this year. During this month the PSP, along with the Labor Affairs Bureau (DSAL) and other departments have co-organized actions to combat the influx of illegal workers. The departments inspected 472 locations, including construction plots, private buildings, commercial and industrial locations, among other places. Last February, the departments inspected 386 locations, which resulted in the identification of 47 illegal workers. Prior to last January, only 21 illegal workers were found from the 557 locations the departments inspected. The first three months of 2017 saw 135 illegal workers arrested. In the first quarter of 2016, the departments found 106 illegal workers, and inspected 1,175 locations.

Parking lot temporarily closed at airport

The Macau International Airport announced that its north car park is temporarily closed for public use from May 5 to May 10 due to security purposes. Passengers who are planning to come to the airport by private cars during the above-mentioned period, shall be aware that limited parking lots for public use are available at the South car park. Nonetheless, extra time may be required when queuing at the airport car park. The airport would like to remind passengers to consider using the nearby car park located in the Pac On Ferry Terminal.

May Day protests dominated by non-labor issues

Renato Marques

The demonstrations that took place on May 1 (Labor Day) this year were dominated by protesters demanding solutions from the government on non-labor related issues. The majority of those taking to the streets to voice their concerns were doing so regarding the "Pearl Horizon" case.

According to the Public Security Police Force (PSP) there were, in the several demonstrations, a total of around 2,600 people. The PSP noted that the protests went off without disturbance or any problems being registered.

A group of Pearl Horizon project homeowners accounted for a significant number of those participating in the protest. They took this opportunity to once more express their discontent for the non-resolution of the case.

Speaking to TDM, the leader of the demonstrating group and head of the Pearl Horizon Condominium Owners United Association, Kou Meng Pok said that the decision to march on May 1 had nothing to do with the upcoming visit of the chairman of the Standing Committee of National People's Congress, Zhang Dejiang, to Macau.

"Let's say, Zhang's visit is separate from our demands. I was told that we should take some action during his visit, but we think it's unnecessary," he said, adding, "we should exercise caution when Chinese leaders are in town. Sometimes you just have to give it some time and patience."

Another group protesting on the day was the one from the Macau Family Reunion Association that continued to urge the government to address their demands of granting MSAR citizenship to their major descendants.

In small number, groups of workers also took the opportunity to continue to petition for policies that further restricted the hiring of imported



Kou Meng Pok (center) marches along with Pearl Horizon protesters

labor as a way to protect resident workers' jobs, which they think are being threatened by the imported workers.

This year, the traditional "May Day" demonstration gathered less participants and many of the associations and groups that usually take the streets on the day to voice their demands were absent. Protests were centered on the Pearl Horizon case, which is not linked to the demands that are usually voiced on Labor Day.

The pan-democratic side seems to be facing an internal conflict.

LARRY SO

According to sociologist Larry So, "the Pearl Horizon topic is of a major concern, especially for the [home] owners but at the same time, and due to the recent issue regarding the public housing that involves at least 61 families [which risk to lose the house they bought] by a contract cancellation from the government. And this kind of affects people and there is a sense that if they pressure harder the government will do

something," he noted saying that this affinity with the topic might lead more people to join in this kind of event.

"On top of that May 1 is known to be a day where associations and groups can demonstrate and show their force [strength] so it is common that they will join together to look larger to pressure the government to solve the problem," So told the Times, adding that the lack of groups protesting on direct labor issues might have to do with the fact that, "employment rate is very good and I would risk to say that people do not consider this a primary problem in Macau society." Still according to So, the only remaining issue to be addressed is related to "the foreigner workers that are feared to be occupying the jobs of locals." He thinks that this is the only labor issue and that it is only drawing the attention of some people.

So also mentioned that, apart from all these issues, "the pan-democratic side seems to be facing an internal conflict. They do have issues they need to resolve internally before they launch any kind of campaign. Seems like the young generations and the older ones are not looking each other in the eyes and in term way they do not have a united position that they can take outside." So also added, "Trade Unions [that could have interests on the matter] since day

one showed they have no interest in marching in the streets and they are more interested in carnivals and other kind of events," the sociologist concluded.

On the side of the pan-democrats, Scott Chiang, president of the New Macau Association (ANM), told the Times that he understands the trouble of the Pearl Horizon buyers and that he can understand why they are protesting and acknowledged their right to do it. He qualified his understanding by saying that the topic is already a bit wasted and that potential solutions had already been mentioned for the case.

"Of course I feel sympathy for them as they put their money on something and they feel to have been deceived. But I think they should keep their options open [regarding getting a monetary compensation] since it may be too optimistic to think they will get a house [unit]," Chiang said. "I think that's the only problem we should be talking about," remarking, "we should talk more on labor rights and working conditions but I guess we are in 2017 [election year] so I guess everybody is a little concerned in deciding what to do."

Adding to the issues already mentioned, Chiang adds, "people are getting too sensitive in Macau," he said mentioning that many people are getting afraid to participate in demonstrations and becoming associated with a certain group, "I think many people are thinking about these things and that's why this year not many people are trying to advocate on the labor right topics." Chiang added, "it is toxic to address labor rights (and) especially to foreign worker labor rights in Macau."

Regarding the ANM, Chiang said, "it was historic that New Macau didn't participate although we did deliver a list of problems we detected and want to see solved regarding labor rights."

The president of Macau Civil Servants Association (AT-FPM), Pereira Coutinho, also did not participate in the demonstrations - in lieu Coutinho said the association has chosen to spend the day in activities with its members and listening to their concerns. "For us, all days are worker's days and we had the opportunity recently to voice out our concerns regarding the hike on several fees," he said.

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Lawrence Ho sees gaming returning to 2013 peak

MACAU, the world's largest gaming center, will return to its peak within the next five years, said Melco Resorts & Entertainment Ltd.'s billionaire Chairman Lawrence Ho.



Lawrence Ho

Ho, who is also vying for a casino license in Japan, is "extremely bullish" on Macau, he said in an interview on Bloomberg Television with Haslinda Amin. "Definitely within the next five years, it will grow back to the USD45 billion gaming market," said Ho, who also serves as chief executive officer. "And that's just the gaming alone, because the non-gaming part is significant."

Ho's projection is one of the most upbeat for Macau's gaming industry, which reached its highest annual peak in 2013. The industry then struggled as high-stakes players stayed away from China's sole gaming hub amid Beijing's corruption crackdown.

Ho was also optimistic about the prospects of entering the Japanese market.

Ho forecast it could "easily" be a \$20 billion market if cities such as Osaka or Yokohama had one or two casino resorts.

"If it's \$20 billion divided by two or three or four operators, that would be very significant," he said.

Given Japan's potential, Ho said Melco "will do whatever it takes" to get a Japan casino license. Earlier this year, Ho pledged to spend "whatever it takes" to win a casino license in the country.

"We don't want to put a dollar figure on it because ultimately, the opportunity is priceless," he said. **MDT/Bloomberg**

GAMING

Revenue gains for ninth month with VIP rebound



AP PHOTO

three consecutive months of double-digit gains. The recovery has been boosted by a shift to attract casual gamblers and families as casinos including Las Vegas Sands Corp. and Wynn Resorts Ltd. opened new resorts. This quarter, revenue from VIP players surged as they returned to the tables.

Revenue from high rollers likely grew as much as 25 percent in March while earnings from casual gamblers grew about 14 percent, according to analyst Grant Govertsen with Union Gaming Group LLC.

The Bloomberg Intelligence index of Macau gaming shares increased 8.4 percent in April compared with a 2.1 percent gain in the benchmark Hang Seng Index.

"We have become incrementally more bullish with the sustainability of ongoing VIP trends over recent weeks," Govertsen said before the release. "In the short term, VIP is going to be the biggest driver." **Bloomberg**

MACAU'S casino revenue in April grew for a ninth month as the return of high-stakes players to the region gained momentum.

Gross gaming receipts rose 16.3 percent to MOP20.2 billion (USD2.5 billion), according to data released by Macau's Gaming Inspection and Coordi-

nation Bureau this week. That follows an 18.1 percent jump in March and compares with the median estimate for a 15 percent increase in a Bloomberg survey of eight analysts.

Macau's gaming industry, which faced a two-year slump as high-stakes players stayed away amid China's corruption crackdown, has found stability with



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Chicken transport to Macau decided by farms

The Director of the Zhuhai Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau (ZHCIQ), Li Qingxiang, said, in regard to the city shortening the quarantine process for frozen chicken transported to Macau, that it will be decided by the farms, frozen markets, wholesalers and other involved parties. According to a report by TDM, Li said that chicken can preserve its fresh flavor when it is frozen within eight to 10 hours. Earlier, Macau's Civil and Municipal Affairs Bureau expressed their hope that Macau's imported frozen chicken providers could transport their product to Macau more quickly.

Gongbei recorded highest daily crossing

The Gongbei border gate recorded approximately 425,000 crossings last Sunday, a number that marks a new high at this specific border point. The record was set during the second day of the Labor Day holiday. According to the Public Security Police Force, on the 2016 Labor Day holiday, (until 9 p.m. of last May 1), all of Macau's border checkpoints registered 419,000 crossings, of which nearly 300,000 were recorded at Gongbei. On the first day of the holiday, until 5 p.m., Macau recorded 344,000 passages across all borders.

16-year-old girl may have committed suicide

A 16-year-old middle school girl was found dead at home and at this point it is believed that she committed suicide, according to a report by TDM. The incident was reported by Chinese media yesterday morning. The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) expressed condolences and sorrow for the death of the student. DSEJ says that Secretary for Culture and Social Affairs Alexis Tam already ordered DSEJ to investigate the circumstances that led to the suicide. DSEJ also contacted a consultation organization and the late girl's school, where it sent members of its staff to assist the school.

REPORT

Singapore is top Asia-Pacific destination for total expenditure

Lynzy Valles

SINGAPORE, Bangkok and Tokyo are the top three Asia Pacific destinations that have received the highest total expenditure from international tourists.

Singapore claimed the top spot for total expenditure at USD15.4 billion, followed by Bangkok at USD12.7 billion and USD11.1 billion in Tokyo, as indicated by

MasterCard in a report that was released last week.

Taipei and Seoul came in fourth and fifth with total expenditures at USD9.9 billion and USD9.4 billion respectively. Macau is amongst the top 20 destinations for tourists from Taiwan. Recent statistics show that package tour visitors from Taiwan rose by 11.2 percent year-on-year.

The report, which listed the top 20 destinations according to total spending by international tourists, indicated that five of the destinations commanded more than USD200 per day expenditure including Hong Kong, a city requiring some USD211 per day.

China is again the top source of tourists to Asia Pacific, increasing its share to 16.2 percent in 2016.

The country has become the top source of tourists to Asia Pacific since 2012 – where it contributed 9.9 percent of overnight arrivals.

Five of the top 20 origin markets are increasing by over 10 percent a year - Compound Annual Growth Rate basis (CAGR) - in terms of outbound growth rates to Asia Pacific destinations between 2009 and 2016.

In 2016, Asia Pacific's top origin market for tourists, China, contributed 55 million overnight international arrivals, a 16.2 percent share of all tourists to the 171 destinations, the report revealed.

The country also contributed the highest number of total nights – 17.1 percent of that total – and expenditures that is 17.7 percent of the total to Asia Pacific.

Figures of outbound Chinese



Tulip exhibition at Gardens by the Bay, Singapore

tourists to Asia Pacific has grown by 25.8 percent per year for the last seven years (CAGR basis) propelling it from the fifth most important contributor to Asia Pacific tourists in 2009 to the most important by 2012 where it has since retained its lead.

Meanwhile Singapore has overtaken its long-time competition Hong Kong, who ranked 10th in the MasterCard report in the category of "total expenditure by international tourists."

David Scowsill, CEO of the World Travel and Tourism Council told CNBC, "the center of the universe is moving to Asia," citing growing figures in the region.

"A lot of this [growth] is driven by China. The Chinese market has gone from 58 million (outbound trips) in 2010 to 135 million now," the CEO recalled.

"I think the secret for both loca-

tions is they have to continue to reinvent themselves with new products so that visitors, particularly on the leisure side, come not once, not twice, but continually visit the location every three or four years," Scowsill said.

The number of mainland Chinese tourists entering Hong Kong decreased by seven percent in February 2017. Yet Allan Zeman, chairman of Lan Kwai Fong group is optimistic about the territory's tourism numbers.

"I think that [tourism] seems to have bottomed out in Hong Kong at the moment [...] but it is rising a bit," Zeman said, adding that the under construction bridge between Hong Kong, Zhuhai and Macau would attract and connect more visitors.

Meanwhile, the Singapore Tourism Board is ensuring that it organizes a series of events throughout

the year with a view to form strategic partnerships.

The board partners with Changi Airport and Singapore Airlines, allowing the authorities to market its city in a robust way.

"Partnerships with Changi Airport and Singapore Airlines allow us to go into the international marketing space in a much more concerted way and effective way," Lionel Yeo, CEO of the Singapore Tourism Board, told the American media outlet.

"We also have very good partnerships with JTB in Japan and Flight Centre in Australia, and that's helping us to drive tourists from those destinations as well," Yeo added.

Changi Airport – which welcomes some 58.7 million passengers yearly – has been ranked the world's best for five consecutive years.

This year, sporting events such as an international football champions cup will be held in the city for the first time, and mixed-martial arts showdown UFC Fight Night will be held in June.

The board is working to bring in such events – a move that Hong Kong chose not to make.

Although Hong Kong holds the annual Rugby Sevens that attracts a significant number of tourists, Zeman has stressed that the territory needs more such events. "I think we need to look at having an event a month, and if we can, become the event capital of Asia," he said.

Macau's tourism strategic plan

THE region's tourism board has been working on its master plan for the tourism sector and is aiming to finalize its Macau Tourism Industry Development Master Plan by July.

The Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) had previously announced that enhancing destination promotion is one of its four main focal points.

The Office has set a target to increase promotion in order to attract more tourists from mid-haul markets such as Malaysia and Indonesia this year,

as announced by the bureau's head Helena de Sena Fernandes earlier this year.

Just last month, MGTO held a tourism promotion event at Kuala Lumpur, showcasing Macau's offerings.

In a bid to place the region on the map of world tourism, MGTO will seek to host major tourism-related conferences and exhibitions, such as the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Travel Mart that will be held in the territory this September. The budget for 2017 will total MOP1.44 billion.

HEALTH

Clinic prescribes ointment containing unlabeled ingredients

ONE private clinic located in the vicinity of Areia Preta has been reported by the Health Bureau (SSM) for prescribing a self-made eczema ointment for children, which contains steroids, according to a statement by SSM released last week.

The story was originally

reported by Chinese media Macau Concealers.

According to the report, a parent of a child diagnosed with eczema said that the medicine was claimed to contain no steroids, even though its side effects were "seriously obvious."

"I have a friend who is a nurse, she thought that

the medicine was really magical; the eczema on the baby turned better after applying it twice or three times. However, if I stop using it, the eczema comes back again, which is very similar to the behavior of steroids."

At home, the parent then tested the medicine to determine whether or

not it contained steroids and obtained positive results.

When questioned by the parent, the clinic denied his test results.

SSM have stated that it has sent staff to the clinic and collected samples of the medicine for further observations.

SSM confirmed that

"evidences show that the clinic is suspected of providing patients ointment containing unlabeled ingredients."

SSM also says that if there is any evidence indicating that the incident was prompted by criminal behavior, SSM will report the case and forward it to other departments.

Association calls election watchdog to set binding rules for casinos

THE Macau Civil Servants Association (ATFPM) has urged the Electoral Affairs Commission for the Legislative Assembly Election (CAEAL) to issue clear and binding rules to all gaming concessionaires and similar entities, in order to disallow them to advertise, lead or influence the vote of the citizens in a specific candidate or list for the upcoming Legislative Assembly (AL) elections.

The letter, addressed to the CAEAL by Chairman of the General Assembly of ATFPM Rita Santos, calls for the full respect of Article 10 of the Electoral Law in order to "assure the neutrality and impartiality in the elections."



CAEAL president Tong Hio Fong

The ATFPM also requested the matter be addressed in an upcoming plenary meeting of the CAEAL, where a formal reply to the matter should be given.

Santos recalls that between 2005 and 2013, "several high officials from gaming con-

cessionaires and VIP casinos [rooms] have interfered directly in the electoral campaign 'forcing,' 'coercing' and promising several advantages such as salary raises and other benefits in case their workers decide to vote for a particular list running for the direct elections."

She added that in 2013, "lea-

flets of some contesting lists were distributed in the casinos' staff canteens and in the locker areas" in addition to other illegal acts that occurred without any action or intervention of the CAEAL. These acts, according to Santos, "were also not yet adequately addressed in order to not be repeated."

The issue was discussed on at least two previous occasions, the first being the April 12 meeting that the CAEAL organized with the lawmakers at the AL. The second occasion was the ceremony that officially initiated procedures for the AL election candidacy which was questioned by the lawmaker Pereira Coutinho.

On both occasions, CAEAL representatives stated that gaming concessionaires are not allowed to promote or advertise candidates and lists on the premises of the gaming operators, and called on them to fully comply with the law.

In the latter event, CAEAL president Tong Hio Fong, noted that "besides the fact that it's not possible to do electoral campaigns in the casinos, all the campaign materials should be submitted to CAEAL in advance for approval."

Tong noted that the use of any unapproved materials is illegal and that offending promoters would incur penalties. **RM**



Exhibition introduces Venice Biennale participation

Starting this month, the Macao Museum of Art is participating in the "International Art Exhibition - La Biennale Di Venezia" for the sixth time. Established in 1895, the "International Art Exhibition - La Biennale Di Venezia" is one of the world's most significant contemporary art events. In order to promote the event to the public, the museum is hosting a related exhibition from 28 April to 12 November. The promotional exhibition will introduce the history of the Biennale, as well as works featured in the exhibition "A Bonsai of My Dreams - Works by Wong Cheng Pou." The exhibition is also featuring most of the maquettes from the exhibition that Macau is showcasing in Venice. Macau was first invited to participate in the Biennale in 2007. For its 57th edition, the exhibition features 17 artworks, including paintings and sculptures, by local artist Wong Cheng Pou.

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3 Support private healthcare institutions

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IACM cooperates with Food and Economic Safety Authority of Portugal

To implement cooperation on food safety between Macau and Portugal, the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) and Food and Economic Safety Authority (ASAE) of Portugal held their first working meeting in Macau yesterday.

Both sides conducted discussions related to safeguarding food safety. The discussions covered topics such as the establishment of a notification method for food safety information and the establishment of more opportunities for Macau to participate in food safety workshops and meetings in the European Union with Portugal serving as Macau's channel in the European Union. The Macau side also intends to grasp the methods and equipment required to test food imported from Portugal, to achieve consistency in test standards in Macau and Portugal.

In October last year, the MSAR government signed a cooperation agreement on surveillance and monitoring of food activities with Portugal. In accordance with the content of the agreement, the working teams of both sides take



José Tavares (left) and Pedro Portugal Gaspar

turns to convene a working meeting each year and conduct technical and operational exchanges in areas such as laboratory tests, research and studies.

To implement the content of the concerned agreement, José Tavares, chairman of Administration Committee of IACM and Pedro Portugal Gaspar, General Inspector of ASAE of Portugal, held the first bilateral working meeting yesterday.

According to a statement issued by IACM, Tavares said that the

meeting "would help to further understand the skills, supervision and technique of food production in both places, strengthening the confidence in food trade activities between Macau and Portugal and promoting the food safety in Macau to attain international level."

After the meeting, ASAE of Portugal will conduct a three week training for practitioners in food safety work in Macau, which will cover law, tests and inspection, and food safety.

Macau's application for UNESCO 'Gastronomic City' moving ahead

THE Macau government's application to the UNESCO Network of Creative Cities (UNCC) to be included on the list of "Gastronomic City," is advancing through the application process. Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Alexis Tam gave the update on its status at the first meeting of the year of the Cultural Industries Council (CIC).

Tam mentioned that this would be one of the government's important jobs in this field as "the gastronomic culture comprises innovation, creativity, promoting the integration of cultural creativity and gastronomic culture."

The secretary believes that the inclusion in the list may help to show the world Macau's cultural diversity. In this sense it was proposed that the Council should form a Task Force to address this matter and to make recommendations.

The meeting also served for the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) to present promotional works in the field of culture and creativity.

At the meeting, the Macao Polytechnic Institute (IPM) presented a strategy for developing talents in culture and creativity through its School of Arts and the Pedagogical and Scientific Center for Cultural and Creative Industries. The two learning institutions will work together on the creation of a talent development model that will integrate creativity, population and several other sectors. The IPM will pay special attention to the training of individuals with different skills in the creative industry and other industries.

One of the members addressed the need to also pay attention to the development of talents in writing to boost industries that rely on creative written expression, such as story writing and storytelling.

A Literature Museum that could contribute to and promote the development of the literary panorama in Macau was also mentioned as a way to support young writers. RM

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Christopher Palmeri

AFTER the recession hit, companies and tourists shunned the country's largest gambling hub. Now Las Vegas is on a winning streak.

MGM Resorts International's stock surged to a eight-year high last week after the casino giant showed resurgent sales growth in its home market, lifting earnings above Wall Street estimates. The results followed strong reports from Las Vegas Sands Corp. and Wynn Resorts Ltd., suggesting Vegas's comeback is here to stay -- with some help from non-bettors.

Big conventions have returned and tourists are flocking to the Strip's new nightclubs and restaurants, as hotel operators rebrand and refresh old Vegas landmarks to attract new cash-paying crowds.

While the number of new casinos and hotels under construction remains well below historical norms, the city continues to invest in non-gambling attractions, unders-

Big conventions return, Vegas is on a winning streak

cored by the planned move of the Oakland Raiders football team to Las Vegas.

"Entertainment continues to be a key driver for our company and the primary reason people visit our resorts," MGM Chief Executive Officer James Murren said on a conference call. He pointed to the year-old T-Mobile Arena, which will soon host the city's first professional hockey team, and a new theater being built for esports.

Sands Chairman Sheldon Adelson said his Las Vegas casinos reported their highest quarterly profit since 2008. Wynn founder Steve Wynn said his hotel rooms in the city generated the best revenue in the history of his company, with the 75-year-old executive announcing plans to spend \$400



The Las Vegas Strip

million to \$500 million building a lake and meeting center behind his Las Vegas casinos.

"This town is a real safe bet," Wynn told investors.

Executives have also learned to operate their businesses more efficiently. Wynn Resorts has rejiggered its casino floor, putting

higher-yielding games in more prominent positions and moving destination games like craps into secondary locations. MGM is benefiting from a multi-year efficiency push that has all its Las Vegas hotels working together to book conventions and meetings.

But with Easter falling later this

year, MGM expects fewer conventions, leading to flat second-quarter revenue on the Las Vegas Strip, Murren said. Full-year revenue should still rise in low to mid-single-digit percentages.

Vegas tourism, at 42.9 million visitors in 2016, has been setting records for the past three years. Convention attendance was up 3.4 percent in the first quarter due to large events like the Conexpo in March, which drew 140,000 attendees from the construction industry. Hotel room rates rose 8.3 percent in the first quarter to an average of \$140 a night, according to the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority.

Gambling revenue on the Las Vegas Strip, a weak spot in recent years as casinos proliferate across the U.S., rose 5.5 percent in the first quarter to \$1.68 billion. That result was largely driven by baccarat, a favorite game of Chinese tourists, resuming its growth, according to Brian Egger, a Bloomberg Intelligence analyst. **Bloomberg**

Alitalia starts bankruptcy proceedings



ALITALIA SpA started bankruptcy proceedings for the second time in a decade, throwing the survival of Italy's flag carrier in doubt after workers rejected job cuts and concessions linked to a 2 billion-euro (USD2.2 billion) refinancing plan.

Shareholders voted unanimously to file for insolvency administration, the carrier said in a statement following a meeting yesterday. Under Italian law, the government will appoint supervisors to turn around the company or order its liquidation, and may

provide stop-gap funds to maintain operations.

Alitalia, which was mainly backed by Abu-Dhabi based Etihad Airways PJSC, last week said it had exhausted all options to stay solvent after workers nixed a plan involving 1,600 job losses. The cuts to its workforce of 12,500 employees may be even deeper under administration, as a rescue appears unlikely. Etihad, which owns 49 percent of the carrier, said it won't extend additional funding.

"It is clear this business requires fundamental and

far-reaching restructuring to survive and grow in future," Etihad Chief Executive Officer James Hogan said in a statement. "Without the support of all stakeholders for that restructuring, we are not prepared to continue to invest."

Alitalia, which missed out on a round of consolidation that shored up other European flag carriers, has seen its standing further eroded since a previous bankruptcy in 2008. Etihad's stake purchase, part of a 1.76 billion-euro rescue of Alitalia in 2014, was a major chance as the Gulf carrier sought to transform the struggling carrier into a five-star airline.

The plans never panned out as budget rivals Ryanair and EasyJet further ate into its position in Italy, and a wave of terror attacks in Europe hurt tou-

risms in the region. With the insolvency filing, Alitalia's board of directors "acknowledged the serious economic and financial situation of the company," the airline said in the statement.

The administrators will take over the business and present a new strategy that may entail asset sales, reduced operations and job cuts aimed at making the airline viable within two years. If a turnaround isn't possible, the administrators may order the carrier to be liquidated. The Italian government has already ruled out a bailout.

While Etihad withdrew financial support, the Gulf carrier said it's ready to work with Alitalia as a "commercial partner," which effectively means that codeshare agreements continue. Etihad passengers booked on Alitalia flights can proceed with travel plans as normal, it said. **Bloomberg**

Guangzhou Rural Bank said to seek IPO approval

GUANGZHOU Rural Commercial Bank Co. plans to seek approval from the Hong Kong stock exchange this week for an initial public offering, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

The share sale could raise about USD1 billion, said the people, who asked not to be identified because the information is private. An IPO of that size would be the largest from a lender in Hong Kong since Postal Savings Bank of China Co.'s \$7.6 billion offering in September, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

The lender is among Chinese regional banks, including Bank of Jiujiang Co., that are seeking Hong Kong listings as a way to boost their profile and raise capital for expansion. The Asia hub

has hosted \$20.8 billion of first-time share sales from the finance sector since the beginning of last year, the data show.

The sector, which includes banks and brokerages, accounts for about 70 percent of the fundraising from the city's new listings over the period, according to the data.

The lender had 592.5 billion yuan (\$85.9 billion) of assets at the end of September, 56 percent more than at the end of 2013, according to a preliminary prospectus filed to the Hong Kong stock exchange.

China International Capital Corp., China Merchants Securities Co., CCB International Holdings Ltd. and ABC International Holdings Ltd. are joint sponsors for the offering, the prospectus shows. **Bloomberg**

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CITY OF DREAMS LAUNCHES "TRAVEL WITHOUT LIMITS" CAMPAIGN



Macau casino resort City of Dreams is now offering guests an opportunity to travel anywhere in the world, 365 days a year, with the "Travel Without Limits" campaign. Running from April 28 to

July 22, 2017, the offer gives all guests the chance to win special prizes including a 365-day unlimited flight pass, a round-the-world flight pass, and return flight tickets to a wide range of destinations.

The lucky draw for a 365-day unlimited flight pass takes place at 8pm three times a week (Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays) during the campaign period, while guests can also win daily prizes of return tickets to up to 10 cities around the globe.

Winners of the 365-day unlimited flight pass will be able to travel to every destination they have dreamt of, all in one incredible year.

Guests, who want a shot at living this enviable lifestyle, have a wealth of options at City of Dreams, where one entry to the draw is granted for every MOP1,000 (or more) spent.

CTM INTRODUCES HANDSETS PURCHASE DONATIONS SCHEME



This year for Mother's Day, CTM has introduced a "That little more" handset purchase donations scheme. The telecom operator will donate MOP 50 for each purchased iPhone 7 and the money will be given to Caritas Macau

to help vulnerable families in the community.

Apart from the donation scheme, the CTM volunteer team will invite over 200 benefited family members from Macau Caritas in the afternoon of May 13 to

have a tea party in the Pousada Marina Infante Hotel to celebrate Mother's Day. During the party, a cheque presenting ceremony will be held to deliver the money from the donation scheme to Caritas Macau.

Beijing: US, N.Korea should establish contact, defuse crisis



Beijing: A man walks past a board displaying United States and North Korea national flags

CHINA urged the United States and North Korea yesterday to make contact "as soon as possible" and ease tensions amid rising belligerence from the two sides over the North's nuclear weapons program.

The call for negotiations from China's Foreign Ministry came after President Donald Trump opened the door to a possible future meeting with North Korea's Kim Jong Un.

Trump told Bloomberg News during an interview that he would be honored to meet with Kim at an unspecified future date "if it would be appropriate."

In response, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said Washington and Pyongyang need to take concrete steps toward peace and avoid further escalating a crisis that has quickly spiraled into a top global security concern.

China has been pushing for the two sides to back down following a string of missile tests by North Korea and a massive live-fire artillery drill last week that was described as its largest ever.

Across the border, South Korea on Tuesday said a U.S.-sponsored missile defense system is now operational — over China's strong objections. U.S. and South Korean troops conducted joint exercises last month along the North's border.

Against that backdrop, Geng said China has taken note of the more diplomatic messages sent by the Trump administration and considers them constructive.

"Both sides should reach a political resolution as soon as possible," Geng said. "The most effective way of attaining an improvement is to seek ways to re-establish dialogue and contact."



MDT FACT CHECK

Some truth, more exaggeration on China

PRESIDENT Donald Trump has presented two arguments about why he's letting China off the hook from his campaign promise to label it a currency manipulator, an action that would have set the stage for a possible trade war if he had done it.

One is based on realpolitik — the idea that it makes no strategic sense to punish China when it seems to be helping to rein in North Korea's military ambitions. Many lawmakers and foreign-policy people agree with that.

The other is based on abracadabra — his magic-wand contention that China stopped manipulating its currency when he won the election. That's not true, or even close. China stopped artificially devaluing the yuan before he ran for president. In fact, the yuan has dropped in value since Trump took office, quite the opposite of what he says has been going on.

"As soon as I got elected, they stopped," he said in a CBS interview broadcast Sunday. "It's not going down anymore, their currency."

A weak yuan helps Chinese exports because it makes them cheaper to buy. It disad-

vantages goods from the U.S. and other countries because they are more expensive to get in China. Currencies fluctuate constantly, a natural part of the trade equation. But when a country keeps its currency artificially low against the U.S. dollar, as China once did, it may be considered an unfair trade advantage. Even so, being put on a currency manipulation blacklist has limited effect, setting off a year of negotiation before any action is taken.

A brief modern history of the yuan and Trump's pledges to act against China on his first day as president:

—China was labeled a currency manipulator from 1992 to 1994 under a U.S. law that provides for investigation of foreign exchange-rate policies, and negotiations if a country is found to be using those policies to gain an unfair advantage.

—China continued to peg the yuan to a fixed value against the U.S. dollar until mid-2005, when it announced that would stop. The yuan began to rise in value relative to the dollar, according to exchange rates tracked by markets data provider FactSet. A U.S.

dollar had been consistently worth more than 8 yuan. It then began a roughly nine-year trend toward 6 yuan to the dollar.

—The value of the yuan peaked in early 2014, when the Chinese economy began to slow after years of torrid growth. The yuan then began to fall relative to the dollar, but not because Chinese officials returned to their old policy. China was actually selling off its foreign holdings to keep the yuan from losing even more of its value.

—In a Wall Street Journal opinion article in November 2015, Trump the Republican primary candidate wrote that the greatest of China's economic "sins" was its "wanton manipulation of China's currency, robbing Americans of billions of dollars of capital and millions of jobs... On day one of a Trump administration, the U.S. Treasury Department will designate China a currency manipulator."

—In June 2016 speaking in Monessen, Pennsylvania, Trump said "I am going to instruct my treasury secretary to label China a currency manipulator. Any country that devalues their currency in order

to take unfair advantage of the United States will be met with sharply, and that includes tariffs and taxes."

—In July, accepting the Republican presidential nomination, he said "We are going to enforce all trade violations against any country that cheats. This includes stopping China's outrageous theft of intellectual property, along with their illegal product dumping, and their devastating currency manipulation."

—During the first presidential debate in September, he said "They're devaluing their currency, and there's nobody in our government to fight them."

—In October, issuing his "contract" with voters in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, Trump wrote that "I will direct my Secretary of the Treasury to label China a currency manipulator."

—On Election Day, Nov. 8, there were 6.78 yuan to a dollar. The yuan has since weakened to 6.88 to a dollar.

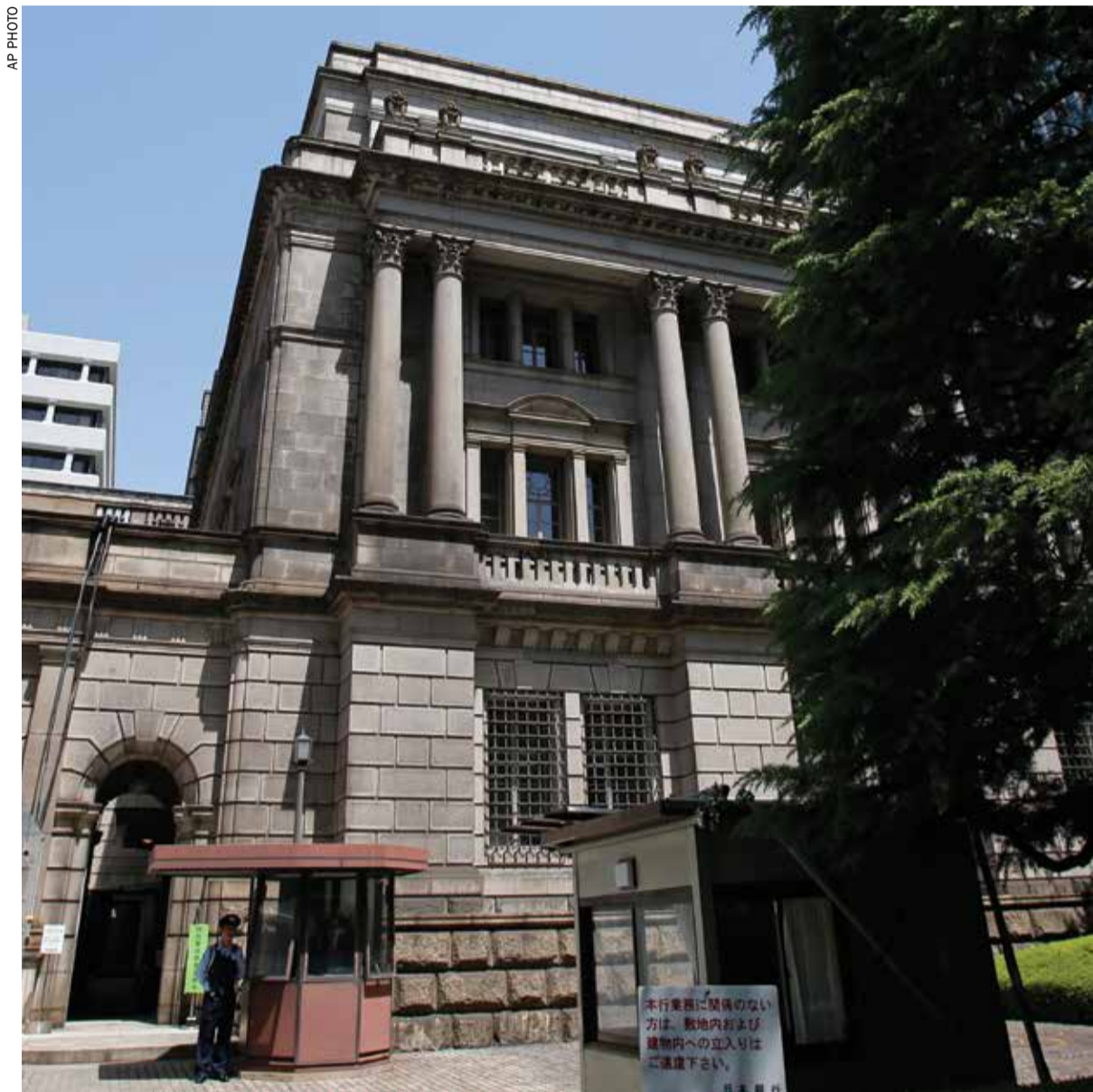
—This year, in an April 2 interview with the Financial Times, he said, "When you talk about currency manipulation, when you talk about devaluations, they are world champions. And our country hasn't had a clue, they haven't had a clue."

—Ten days later, the switch came in a Wall Street Journal interview: "They're not currency manipulators," Trump said, further explaining that China hadn't been manipulating its currency for months. Actually China had been intervening in markets to prop up its currency, not push it lower, for several years.

—Trump expanded on that assertion in an April 21 Associated Press interview, referring to China's president, Xi Jinping: "From the time I took office, he has not, they have not been currency manipulators. Because there's a certain respect because he knew I would do something or whatever. But more importantly than him not being a currency manipulator the bigger picture, bigger than even currency manipulation, if he's helping us with North Korea, with nuclear and all of the things that go along with it, who would call, what am I going to do, say, 'By the way, would you help us with North Korea? And also, you're a currency manipulator.' It doesn't work that way."

—Then again on April 30, in a CBS interview: "When they talk about currency manipulation, and I did say I would call China, if they were, a currency manipulator, early in my tenure. And then I get there. Number one, they — as soon as I got elected, they stopped. They're not — it's not going down anymore, their currency." **MDT/AP**

Kuroda: China-led lender's help needed to support growth



Bank of Japan in Tokyo

Elaine Kurtenbach, Tokyo

ASIA needs all the help it can get in fighting poverty as both wealthy and poor nations grapple with widening inequality, Bank of Japan Gov. Haruhiko Kuroda said yesterday.

Kuroda welcomed China's push to support regional growth through the Beijing-backed Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, which has been viewed as a rival to traditional lenders like the Asian Development Bank.

The China-led AIIB brings welcome help in the effort to raise trillions of dollars in financing, said Kuroda, a former president of the Manila, Philippines-based ADB.

Kuroda was speaking at a conference on the sidelines of the ADB's annual meeting, which begins tomorrow in Yokohama, near Tokyo.

The ADB, which has been led by Japan and the U.S. since its founding in 1966, has estimated more than USD26 trillion will be needed by 2030 to build roads, ports and other infrastructure required to support growth, combat poverty and cope with the repercussions of climate change.

"It's simply not possible for

the ADB and the World Bank to fill the gap completely," Kuroda said when asked about the China-led bank.

The two development banks have begun co-financing on some projects, such as a highway project in Pakistan announced last year.

Kuroda, who led the ADB from 2005-2013, applauded the region's progress but pointed to a "considerable burden" of poverty despite rapid growth in the past five decades.

■ The China-led AIIB brings help in the effort to raise trillions of dollars in financing, said Kuroda

That half-century has seen Asia's share in global commerce more than double to nearly a third of the total in 2015. Meanwhile, average lifespans have grown to 74 years in East Asia and the Pacific and to 68 in South Asia, from 49 years and 45 years, respectively.

But about 60 percent of the 1.5 billion people living in extreme poverty, on less than \$1.90 a day, are in Asia, he said.

Education, financial support for small businesses and enabling the poor to access banking services were crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty, he added.

CORRUPTION

Commission removes official over 'superstitious' activities

A former vice governor of a province has been dismissed from public office for superstitious activities and trading power for sex and money, China's anti-corruption watchdog announced yesterday.

Chen Shulong had long abused his power to seek "huge profits," the ruling Communist Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) said in a statement. It didn't give a sum or explain what "superstitious activities" he had alle-

gely been involved in. It said his illegal gains will be confiscated and his case transferred to the judiciary.

Chen was also expelled from the Communist Party, which nominally espouses atheism. He had been the vice governor of eastern China's Anhui province and had been under investigation since November, the statement said.

"As a high-level official, Chen was politically clinging to power, economically insatiable and morally bankrupt. Even

after the 18th CPC National Congress, he still showed no sign of restraint and [his wrongdoings] were of a grave nature," said the statement quoted by the official Xinhua news agency.

Chen will not serve as a delegate to the Party's 18th National Congress. Sanctions against Chen have been approved by the CPC Central Committee.

Chen's illegal gains will be confiscated and his case transferred to the judiciary, according to the note. He was put

under investigation for "serious discipline breaches" by the CCDI on April 7

Chinese President Xi Jinping has made fighting corruption a hallmark of his administration since being appointed head of the party in late 2012. More than 1 million party members have been punished in the campaign, which has brought down two former top generals and a past member of the Politburo Standing Committee, the apex of political power.

MDT/Agencies



President Donald Trump, flanked by Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, left,

Envoy pick pledges to confront Beijing on human rights

THE Midwestern governor President Donald Trump picked to be his ambassador to China says if confirmed for the post he will confront Beijing on human rights issues and would welcome meetings with Chinese activists.

Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad says during his Senate confirmation hearing yesterday that he intends to travel to every province in China just as he's traveled to every county in his state.

Branstad boasts a decades-long relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping (shee jihn-peeng). The two met in 1985 when Xi led an agricultural trade delegation to Iowa.

Branstad says he hopes his longtime ties to Xi can lead China to play a greater role in defusing North Korea's nuclear weapons program. He calls Pyongyang's push for nuclear weapons a "threat to all of humankind."

ANALYSIS

What on Earth might a Trump-Kim Jong



PRESIDENT Donald Trump opened the door to a future meeting with North Korea's Kim Jong Un, offering unusual praise for the globally ostracized leader at a time of surging nuclear tensions.

Although the White House played down near-term prospects for such a meeting, Trump's conciliatory comments yesterday [Macau time] marked a departure from his more unforgiving tone toward the North in recent weeks. It marked the latest fluctuation as Trump's administration struggles to articulate its policy for addressing the growing threat from North Korea's nuclear program.

"If it would be appropriate for me to meet with him, I would absolutely, I would be honored to do it," Trump told Bloomberg News.

Clearly aware of the power of his declaration, he added: "We have breaking news."

As a presidential candidate, Trump suggested he was open to meeting Kim, but hadn't repeated the line sin-

ce taking office. Fresh missile tests by the North and its progress toward developing a nuclear weapon capable of hitting the United States have made the isolated communist dictatorship one of America's top national security concerns.

Deeming President Barack Obama's "strategic patience" with North Korea a total failure, Trump and his aides say they're taking a more aggressive approach, at times warning of potential military confrontation if the North doesn't change course. The U.S. has even raised the possibility of a pre-emptive strike if Pyongyang conducts another nuclear test.

Yet on other occasions, Trump's administration has dangled carrots. It has spoken of restarting negotiations with the North and even suggested resuming food aid to North Korea once it starts dismantling its nuclear and missile programs.

On one point, at least, Trump and his team have been consistently clear: A solution requires involvement

by China, the North's biggest economic partner. Trump is hoping China can pressure the North into a peaceful denuclearization. The administration of President Barack Obama unsuccessfully sought the same objective for years.

There were these words from Trump: 'Obviously, he's a pretty smart cookie.'

In one corner: the unpredictable dictator, the third-generation family ruler whose nation has a seven-decade reputation of being erratic, quick to take umbrage and insistent that it is powerful enough to upend the planet. In the other corner: a sandpaper-tongued American president like no other, barely past his first 100 days as leader of the free world, liab-

le to say just about anything — including a handful of conciliatory words at the most unexpected of moments.

Yesterday [Macau time], those conciliatory words from the mouth of Donald Trump included some extraordinary ones about North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, long an object of American scorn and suspicion.

There were these words from Trump: "Obviously, he's a pretty smart cookie."

Wow, says an astonished world: What if?

In the annals of diplomatic history, such a tete-a-tete, unlikely as it is, would tumble into a category that offers few possible comparisons.

There are the ones that never happened — Roosevelt sitting down with Hitler during World War II, George Bush (whichever one) facing Saddam Hussein while in office. And there are those that did: Kennedy meeting Khrushchev in Vienna, Nixon arriving in Beijing at the dawn of the U.S.-China thaw and immediately heading to a meeting with Mao.

Even those, however, were before many things we take for granted today — perhaps most notably the internet, live television and the instantaneous social-media pipelines that Trump knows and uses so fluidly.

The notion of a substantive sit-down between two of the most gazed-upon figures of this moment in the planet's history is a staggering prospect — and a potential logistical nightmare if the two countries ever tried to make it happen.

Presuming that such a trial balloon is to be taken seriously, what, in fact, would it take to pull off? The loose contours of it could play out as follows:

THE VENUE

Possible locations could include the DMZ, which would be about as cinematic a piece of drama as human geopolitics could offer up, with a room featuring negotiation tables that sit halfway in the North and halfway in the South.

The benefit of this location would be the presence of

Un meeting look like?

existing security. It's already the nucleus of one of the most tense patches of the planet, and it's effectively already wired for such an event. Somewhere in China would be a possible, though highly unlikely, location as well.

But could it be elsewhere? Perhaps famously neutral Switzerland, where the now-infrequent world traveler Kim Jong Un almost certainly spent part of his upbringing attending school? Could it possibly even be the White House, where Trump has already caused uproars by hosting the president of Egypt and by calling the president of Turkey, both perceived in the West as hardly the most robust upholders of American values. That would be highly controversial and even more unlikely — just getting Kim a visa would be an interesting proposition — but stranger things have happened.

Or perhaps, gaming it out, things might take place in an unexpected or even unknown place. In 1989, George H.W. Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev met on a ship off Malta to discuss the changes taking place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and it propelled the tiny Mediterranean island into notoriety for several years. Malta was itself a follow-up in some ways to the fabled Yalta conference, in which Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin met in Crimea in early 1945 to plot out Europe's postwar configurations.

The United States has been the site of such sensitive meetings, too, with Camp David being the most notable locale for its Carter-administration peace talks between Israel's Menachem Begin and Egypt's Anwar Sadat. The history of such things is lengthy; in 1905, Theodore Roosevelt helped broker peace between the warring nations of Japan and Russia in the unlikely locale of a small New England town. More recently, the unlikely venue of Dayton, Ohio, became the site in 1995 of peace accords to end the Bosnian war. But those were other nations in conflict, not the United States itself.

And what about Pyongyang? There would be precedent for that — from U.S. envoys like Madeleine Albright to a previous Japanese prime minister to faded basketball star Dennis Rodman — and the Kims are not known for their

love of foreign travel, which carries them away from turf and situations they can completely control.

Whatever the case, barring it taking place at the DMZ, such a high-stakes, high-security Trump-Kim meeting would change a place for a long time, if not forever.

THE TOPICS

Nuclear disarmament — North Korea's — would be first on the table. You'd think. But with two such unpredictable rulers, no one could be absolutely certain.

Given Trump's style so far, time might be given to developing some sort of rapport between the two men before any negotiations began. But major topics would surely emerge before too long.

Among them: Aid to the North, which has played the brinkmanship game many times before with an eye toward getting assistance for its poor, sometimes hungry populace. Relations with the South. And weapons tests — missile and in particular nuclear, which make the United States and China, not to mention the South, very uncomfortable.

THE REACTION

The wildcards here would be South Korea, Russia, and, of course, China — the North's patron for many decades and, of late, its increasingly wary and irritated neighbor.

In South Korea's case, such a meeting would be an existential event. Most agree that Kim's arsenal has enough accuracy and firepower to devastate the South, and so a meeting between the United States, South Korea's military protector, and the North would have serious security implications for Seoul even if virtually nothing of substance was discussed.

China is wary of any U.S. involvement in its sphere of influence, and is already at odds with Washington about territorial claims in the South China Sea, while the perennial issue of Taiwan's autonomy always lurks in the background. Beijing has courted South Korea in recent years more than before, with Chinese President Xi Jinping visiting Seoul in 2014 in what was seen as a hint to the North. (Recent Chinese trepidations over THAAD, the U.S.-made missile system being set up in South Korea, have restored some of the tension with Beijing.)

Against this backdrop, any

Trump-Kim sit-down would, using conventional wisdom, have to involve China and the pressure it can exert on the North — something the Trump White House has always said was necessary. But protocol does not always seem to be the order of the day, as Trump's unexpected, pre-inauguration call to Taiwan's new president underscored.

Finally, Russia and its leader, Vladimir Putin, would watch from afar with great wariness and probable dismay. Such a meeting could alter Moscow's relationships with both Beijing and Washington, and probably Pyongyang as well.

Oh, and let's not forget the media reaction. Obviously any such meeting would be THE visual of the year for news organizations. Setting it up as a media event would draw hundreds if not thousands of news outlets. That would mean a major infrastructure setup that's on par with a summit meeting of leaders or an Olympics.

THE ALLURE

Whatever the political implications, this much is certain: Any meeting with Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un, anywhere in the world, would be — if it ever actually happened — one of the most dramatic events of the 21st century thus far.

It would encompass three major global narratives at once: The United States under Donald Trump, and what his administration means; the Kim family and the unique, mercurial way they have ruled North Korea and projected themselves to the world; and the regional security and defense of East Asia, one of the most strategically pivotal regions in the world.

It would be big. It would be loud. It would be momentous, somewhat surreal and entirely unexpected. All things quite familiar to the worlds of two singular, bound-to-change-the-world men named Kim Jong Un and Donald J. Trump.

Then again, you might not want to hold your breath. This came in Tuesday afternoon from the official news agency for North Korea, which goes by the formal name Democratic People's Republic of Korea: "The Trump administration that newly took office in the U.S. is provoking the DPRK with no reason, not knowing what rival it stands against." **MDT/AP**



Feb. 21, 1972: Chinese communist party leader Mao Zedong, left, and U.S. President Richard Nixon shake hands as they meet in Beijing



June 3, 1961: Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev walks with U.S. President John F. Kennedy at the residence of the U.S. ambassador in Vienna, Austria



Aug. 6, 2007: U.S. Navy and Marine personnel salute during a meeting between U.S. President George W. Bush and Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai at Camp David

USA | MAY DAY

Dozens arrested as marches turn violent in Northwest

Gillian Flaccus & Amy Taxin, Portland

MAY DAY protests turned violent in the Pacific Northwest as demonstrators in Portland, Oregon, threw smoke bombs and Molotov cocktails at police while elsewhere thousands of people peacefully marched against President Donald Trump's immigration and labor policies.

From New England to the Midwest to the West Coast people chanted and picketed against Trump along with the traditional May Day labor rallies. Protesters flooded streets in Chicago. At the White House gates, they demanded "Donald Trump has got to go!"

In Portland, Oregon, police shut down a protest they said had become a riot and arrested more than two dozen people. Police in Olympia, Washington, said nine people were taken into custody after several officers were injured by thrown rocks and windows were broken at businesses in Washington's capital city.

In Seattle, five people were arrested during downtown protests and in Oakland, California, at least four were arrested after creating a human chain to block a county building where demonstrators demanded that county law enforcement refuse to collaborate with federal immigration agents.

"It is sad to see that now being an



A protester, left, confronts a supporter of President Donald Trump, right, during a May Day protest

immigrant is equivalent to almost being a criminal," said Mary Quezada, a 58-year-old North Carolina woman who joined those marching on Washington.

She offered a pointed message to Trump: "Stop bullying immigrants."

The demonstrations on May Day, celebrated as International Workers' Day, follow similar actions worldwide in which protesters from the Philippines to Paris demanded better working conditions. But the widespread protests in the United States were aimed directly at the new Republican president, who has followed aggressive anti-immigrant rhetoric on the campaign trail with aggressive action in the White House.

Trump, in his first 100 days, has intensified immigration enforce-

ment, including executive orders for a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and a ban on travelers from six predominantly Muslim countries. The government has arrested thousands of immigrants in the country illegally and threatened to withhold funding from jurisdictions that limit cooperation between local and federal immigration authorities.

In Chicago, 28-year-old Brenda Burciaga was among thousands of people who marched through the streets to push back against the new administration.

"Everyone deserves dignity," said Burciaga, whose mother is set to be deported after living in the U.S. for about 20 years. "I hope at least they listen. We are hardworking people."

In Shemanski Park in Portland, Oregon, before the violence broke out hundreds of people, including some families with children, gathered and watched dancers in bright feathered headdresses perform to the beat of drums.

Friends Marian Drake and Martin Anderson watched from a nearby park bench as they held balloons supporting the International Workers Union.

"Things are so screwed up in this country. You've got a city right here that's full of homeless people and you've got a president ... whose budget is going to cut 40 percent to the EPA and end Meals on Wheels. We don't like those kinds of things," Anderson said.

In cities large and small, the protests intensified throughout the day.

Teachers working without contracts opened the day by picketing outside schools in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Activists in Phoenix petitioned state legislators to support immigrant families.

In a Los Angeles park, several thousand people waved American flags and signs reading "love not hate."

Selvin Martinez, an immigrant from Honduras with an American flag draped around his shoulders, took the day off from his job waxing casino floors to protest. "We hope to get to be respected

as people, because we are not animals, we are human beings," said Martinez, who moved to Los Angeles 14 years ago fleeing violence in his country.

The White House did not respond to requests for a response to the May Day demonstrations.

Several protesters, like 39-year-old Mario Quintero, outed themselves as being in the country illegally to help make their point.

"I'm an undocumented immigrant, so I suffer in my own experience with my family," said Quintero at a Lansing, Michigan, rally. "That's why I am here, to support not only myself but my entire community."

In Miami, Alberto and Maribel Resendiz closed their juice bar, losing an estimated revenue of \$3,000, to join a rally.

"This is the day where people can see how much we contribute," said Alberto Resendiz, who previously worked as a migrant worker in fields as far away as Michigan. "This country will crumble down without us."

He added, "We deserve a better treatment."

In Oakland at a later march, more than 1,000 people marched peacefully representing labor groups along with Mexican, Vietnamese, Chinese, Filipino and other immigrants.

While union members traditionally march on May 1 for workers' rights around the world, the day has become a rallying point for immigrants in the U.S. since massive demonstrations were held on the date in 2006 against a proposed immigration enforcement bill.

In recent years, immigrant rights protests shrank as groups diverged and shifted their focus on voter registration and lobbying. **AP**

LABOR

With visas tight, US resorts struggle to find seasonal help

INNKEEPERS, restaurateurs and landscapers around the U.S. say they are struggling to find seasonal help and turning down business in some cases because the government tightened up on visas for temporary foreign workers.

"There's going to be a lot of businesses that just can't function on a full-time basis, and some might not even open at all," said Mac Hay, who co-owns Mac's Seafood on Cape Cod and has organized seasonal businesses to lobby Congress.

At issue are H-2B temporary visas, which are issued for workers holding down seasonal, nonagricultural jobs.

The U.S. caps the number at 66,000 per fiscal year. Some workers return year after year, and Congress has let them do so in the past without being counted toward

the limit. No such exception was passed for 2017 at the end of last year, after the presidential election.

Lawmakers this week unveiled a government spending bill that would allow the homeland security secretary to increase the number of H-2B visas this fiscal year to almost 130,000.

But there is concern that even if the measure passes, it will take weeks for visas to be processed, meaning many workers probably won't arrive in time for Memorial Day and maybe not until after the Fourth of July.

Many resorts rely heavily on foreigners on H-2B visas to work as housekeepers, cooks, dishwashers and the like, saying they cannot find enough Americans willing to take such jobs. President Donald Trump himself has hired seasonal workers at



his Mar-a-Lago resort in this way.

Each visa typically costs at least USD1,000 in government fees, travel and other expenses, paid by employers.

At the Beachmere Inn in Ogunquit, Maine, owner Sarah Mace Diment said she cut back on the number of rooms available during New England's spring vacation week in April because she is short eight housekeepers, who are paid \$10 to \$12.50 an hour. None of her visa requests

were granted, she said.

Critics say that bringing in cheap foreign labor undercuts U.S. workers and drives down wages and that employers aren't trying hard enough to hire Americans. Under the H-2B rules, employers must advertise for U.S. workers first.

Diment said she hires housekeepers from Jamaica because there aren't enough people in rural, southern Maine looking for seasonal work. Maine is at its lowest unemployment on record, 3 percent. She has hired U.S.

college students, but they go back to school in August, well before the season ends in October.

"I'm always going to hire an American first. I'm always going to hire someone locally first," Diment said. "We're not using this program because it's easy. It's not. It's very difficult and expensive, but we're using it because we have no other options."

Landscapers are the biggest users of the H-2B program. Stephen Faulkner, who owns a landscaping and nursery business in Hooksett, New Hampshire, said he expects to turn away hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of work this season because he could not get visas for any of the six Mexican landscapers who have been with him for a decade.

He said he is considering

giving up the landscape division.

"My company is being devastated by not having my returning workers," he said. "I'm running out of energy and fortitude, and American jobs might be lost because of it."

The AFL-CIO says the H-2B program enables discrimination and exploitation of workers and hurts efforts to raise wages and improve working conditions. And U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders has questioned whether willing Americans truly are unavailable for these jobs.

"We supposedly live in a supply-and-demand economy, and if employers can't find workers to fill their jobs, they might want to raise wages," the Vermont independent recently told The Burlington Free Press. **AP**

FRANCE

Plagiarism or a 'wink'? Le Pen's copied speech targets right



Supporters of French presidential hopeful Francois Fillon watch TV as he concedes defeat at his headquarters in Paris

Lori Hinnant, Paris

MARINE Le Pen deliberately plagiarized verbatim parts of an address from a former presidential candidate, as a "wink" to him and the voters she hopes to peel away in a runoff, her spokesmen said yesterday.

Francois Fillon, the former Republicans candidate, first delivered the speech on France's role in Europe and the world on April 15 — just two weeks before Le Pen's discourse this week.

The subject is at the heart of Le Pen's campaign. She promises to pull France out of the European Union and return to the franc currency, and has denounced globalization's effects on the French economy and culture.

Three separate spokesmen for Le Pen used the word "wink" to describe the extracts copied word for word from Fillon. At no point in the speech did she cite Fillon or acknowledge the source of the extracts.

"I think with part of the right, we have exactly the same vision on the national identity and independence," Louis Aliot, Front National vice president, told LCI television Tuesday.

Immediately after being eliminated in the first-round vote, Fillon called for his supporters to back her centrist rival, Emmanuel Macron.

Both Macron and Le Pen are going after the voters of the 9 other candidates knocked out

in that vote, in which France's two main parties both failed to make it to the second round for the first time in the country's modern history.

Macron is promising an ethics bill that will block office-holders from conflicts of interest, nepotism and other ethical issues that have infuriated voters.

Macron, who started his own political movement just a year ago, also promised he could get a legislative majority to pass the measure and others he says France needs to pull itself from the economic doldrums.

Legislative elections are in June, and whoever is president will depend on lawmakers to implement an agenda. Macron, who has pulled support from the right and the left, said Tuesday candidates will have to quit their parties to run in his movement. **AP**

Warsaw denounces Macron for comparing Polish leader to Putin

POLAND'S Foreign Ministry said yesterday that French presidential candidate Emmanuel Macron made an "unacceptable" comparison when he likened Poland's government to the "regimes" of Russia's Vladimir Putin and Hungary's Viktor Orban.

Macron made his remarks at a Paris rally while campaigning for the Sunday runoff election between himself and far-right nationalist candidate Marine Le Pen.

"You know the friends and allies of Mrs. Le Pen. These are the regimes of Orban, Kaczynski and Putin. They are not open and free democracies. Every day, freedoms and rules are violated there along with our principles," he said.

Jaroslaw Kaczynski is the chairman of Poland's


ruling conservative Law and Justice party and the country's most powerful politician.

The ministry said it noted Macron's words with "regret" and that the centrist candidate used "unacceptable comparisons and mental shortcuts that lead to errors in public opinion." It also denied that Poland is an ally of Le Pen's.

"Let us stress that anyone who knows Poland's history and its internal political scene does not have the right to accuse the Polish people of warm feelings toward imperial Russia," the ministry said.

Hungary's government did not respond to Macron's comments, but Orban earlier this year said he supported the French conservative candidate Francois Fillon, who was eliminated from the presidential race in the first round.

AD



BBAM
澳門英國商會
British Business Association of Macao

BBAM @ St. Regis Breakfast
on Thursday, 11th May 2017
Guest Speaker: Grant Govertsen
Managing Director - Head of Asia Equity Research, Macau
Union Gaming Securities Asia (Macau)

*Getting Macau back on track,
a closer look at the gaming industry
and how it can thrive in the face of regional changes*

- * Post-mortem of the last three years
- * New casino resort supply, what works and what doesn't
- * Forecasting through the end of the decade
- * Beyond Macau, what's next for gaming in Asia

Grant Govertsen co-founded Union Gaming in 2009 after spending 12 years on Wall Street predominantly in equity research covering the gaming sector.
Mr. Govertsen was responsible for establishing and developing the company's presence in Asia in 2011, and today remains the only gaming analyst based in Macau.

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

*Strict No-Show/Late Cancellation policy applies for this event
Vegetarian option to be requested before Monday 8th May*

BBAM Members: Complimentary
Non-Members - MOP/HKD 180.00

RSVP to: bbam@britchammao.org



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what's ON

SEARCH FOR OUR SPIRITUAL HOME II -
INSTALLATION BY YEN-HUA LEE

TIME: 8pm daily

TIME: 12pm-7pm (Closed on Tuesdays)

UNTIL: May 7, 2017

VENUE: Intersection of Av. do Coronel Mesquita
and Av. do Almirante Lacerda

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2853 0026

MACAO ARTS WINDOW 2017: UNTITLED
TRAVEL - WORKS OF LIN GETIME: 10am-7pm (Last admission at 6:30pm,
closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: May 14, 2017

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

ARTISTIC CRAFTSMANSHIP OF OUR ANCESTORS
- EXHIBITION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RELICS OF
TAIPA AND COLOANETIME: 10am-6am daily (Last admission at 5:30pm,
closed on Mondays)

ADDRESS: Rua Correia da Silva, Taipa

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

PHOTOGRAPHS OF OLD TEMPLES IN MACAU

TIME: 10am-7pm (Last admission at 6:30pm,
closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: July 16, 2017

VENUE: Macao Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai,
s/n, NAPEMUSEUM ADMISSION: MOP5 (Free on Sundays
and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

LOVE OF MACAO - PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEE
KUNG KIMTIME: 10am-7pm (Last admission at 6:30pm,
closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: July 9, 2017

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

ARTEFACTS OF EXCELLENCE - SEAL CARVINGS
BY LUO SHUZHONG FROM THE MAM
COLLECTIONTIME: 10am-7pm (Last admission at 6:30pm,
closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: July 2, 2017

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

Offbeat

COURT REJECTS GERMAN WOMAN'S
DEMAND FOR HOTEL TO ID LOVER

A court in Munich has rejected a woman's legal bid to obtain the name of a man she spent three nights in a hotel with seven years ago.

The woman gave birth to a son nine months after the encounter in Halle, eastern Germany, and sought to force the hotel to reveal her lover's full identity.

She wanted the man, who she knew only by the first name Martin, to pay child support.

Judges rejected her request, arguing that it could unduly breach the privacy of four men with that name who were registered at the hotel during the period.

The case was first published yesterday [Macau time] by news website Spiegel Online. The woman was not identified.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	Monstor University
16:30	Documentary Serie
17:00	Revenge S1
17:40	Once Upon A Time Sr.2 (Repeated)
18:20	Now Generation (Repeated)
19:10	TDM Interview (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
21:30	Drama
22:10	Now Generation
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Highlights
00:40	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:15	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

03 MAY



SHOCK WAVE

ROOM 1

2:30, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30pm

Director: Herman Yau

Starring: Andy Lau, Jiang Wu, Philip Keung Ron Ng

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 97min

THE BOSS BABY

ROOM 2

2:30, 4:30pm

Director: Tom McGrath

Starring: Alec Baldwin, Steve Buscemi, Jimmy Kimmel

Language: Cantonese (English)

Duration: 97min

THIS IS NOT WHAT I EXPECTED

ROOM 2

7:15pm

Director: Derek Hui

Starring: Takeshi Kaneshiro, Zhou Dongyu, Sun Yizhou

Language: Putonghua (Chinese & English)

Duration: 106min

FAST & FURIOUS 8

ROOM 2

9:15pm

Director: F. Gary Gray

Starring: Vin Diesel, Jason Statham, Dwayne Johnson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 136min

BRAIN ON FIRE

ROOM 3

2:30, 7:30, 9:30pm

Director: Gerard Barrett

Starring: Chloe Grace Moretz, Thomas Mann

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 95min

GIFTED

ROOM 3

4:30pm

Director: Marc Webb

Starring: Chris Evans, Octavia Spencer, Mckenna Grace

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 101min

MACAU TOWER

27 APR - 10 MAY

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY VOL.2

2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30pm

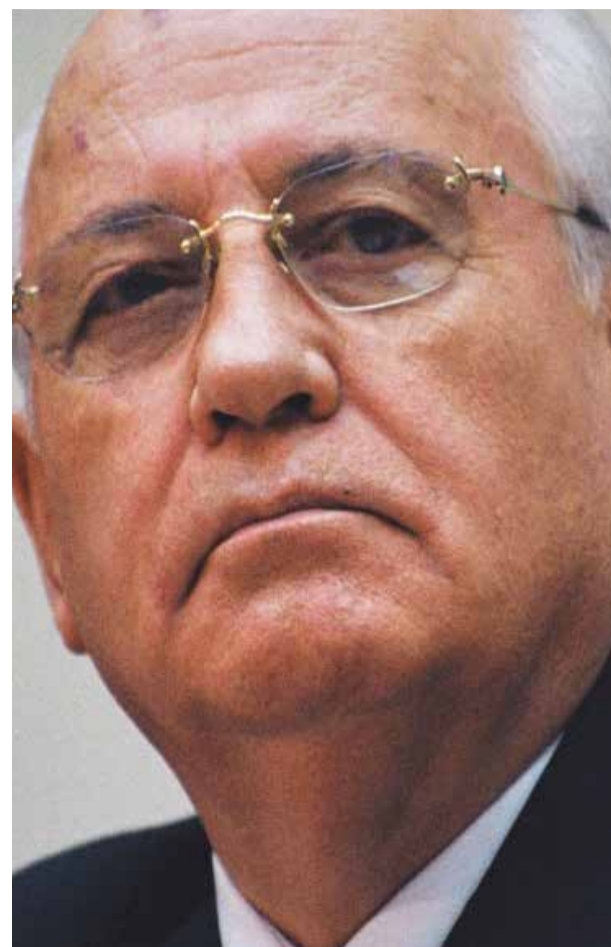
Director: James Gunn

Starring: Chris Pratt, Zoe Saldana, Dave Bautista

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 136min

this day in history



USSR's President Mikhail Gorbachev

1990 LATVIA TO DECLARE INDEPENDENCE

Members of the new parliament of the Soviet republic of Latvia have met to discuss independence from Moscow.

Leaders of the Latvian Popular Front are confident they can muster the majority they need to change the constitution.

In March this year, neighbouring Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to pass a unilateral declaration of independence. In retaliation, the Kremlin shut off supplies of crude oil and natural gas.

Latvia is hoping to avoid a similar confrontation with the USSR's President Mikhail Gorbachev by calling for a transition period before full independence takes effect.

Nikolai Neiland, head of the Independent Communist Party

This morning, their elected representatives led a procession to a memorial in the capital, Riga, dedicated to those who fought and died for Latvian independence after World War 1.

The Lithuanian president, a guest at today's opening of parliament, had this advice for the Latvians - "Courage!"

One strategy put forward was to adopt parts of the Soviet constitution to avoid being accused of breaking the law.

"We have to avoid any confrontation because it would be useless, unproductive," said Nikolai Neiland, head of the Independent Communist Party.

Russian demonstrators outside the parliament building held up banners reminding politicians inside that almost half of Latvia's population is ethnically Russian and that independence might provoke a backlash.

Also out on the streets of Riga were groups of Soviet paratroops. They say they are here for a parade but nationalists believe their presence is a crude reminder of Soviet power.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The following day the Latvian parliament declared "de jure" independence of Republic of Latvia. President Gorbachev could not resist pressure from hardliners in Moscow determined to prevent the break-up of the Soviet Union, and he issued a decree annulling the declaration.

Then in January 1991 Soviet special troops stormed and took over Latvia's Interior Ministry building.

The occupation continued until the failed Moscow coup in August that year, when the Latvian parliament voted for full independence and banned the Communist Party.

A few weeks later, on 7 September, Russia's President Boris Yeltsin recognized the independence of Latvia and its Baltic neighbours Estonia and Lithuania. All three were admitted into the United Nations the same month.

Moscow hardliners were particularly concerned for the large numbers of ethnic Russians and other migrants who live in the Baltic states.

In fact, tough legislation was soon introduced making it very difficult for Russians to gain Latvian citizenship.

But the law was eventually modified after international criticism.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 If you want to address some heavy stuff, that's your prerogative. Before you get into it, though, make sure you have what you want to say crystal-clear in your head - thinking it through one extra time wouldn't hurt.

Taurus April 20-May 20 Indecision may not be your usual state of being, but you can definitely make it look good on you. Spin it as an impulsive, exciting mindset in which anything goes - the odder and newer, the better.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Expect lots of motion in your world right now - backward, forward, lateral, even exciting loop-dee-loop-type maneuvers. While it can be a bit chaotic, you're just the type who thrives amid chaos.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Between the internal discussion you have going on and all the input you're getting from the outside - not to mention a pending deadline or project - you may be feeling a bit overwhelmed.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 It's time for party season to shift into high gear, and you're definitely at the fore of the festivities. Any social event you grace with your presence is lucky to have you; you're polite, funny and smart.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You're good with the details now, and any logic problems are a total snap. When it comes to looking at the overall scenario - at work, in a relationship, financially - you're not quite as on top of it at the moment.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 A light-hearted chat may suddenly take a deeper turn now. You're in a sharing mode, and that includes some emotions you don't generally talk to anyone about. Whom you share with could be rather surprising as well.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 A little part of the big picture you're not taking into consideration right now could really trip you up. Read the fine print, watch out for hidden fees, check carefully between the lines and be hyper vigilant.

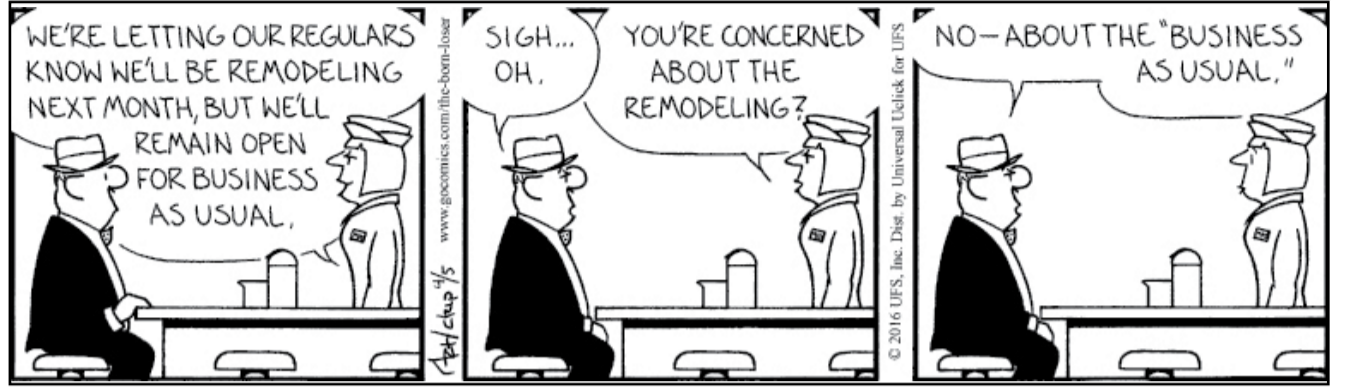
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 A ghost from the past may make an appearance, just as you're getting comfortable with things. Adding your own collision of emotions on top of it equals a fairly overwhelming situation.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Most people respond to a tragic situation by looking at the bright side. You're smart enough to know when it makes more sense to face reality. Get rid of the things that are muddying the waters and clouding your thoughts.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You're all over the map right now: socializing, errand running, and in all likelihood, some rather interesting romantic developments. Losing your head is one response.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Being at home nesting probably sounds better to you than going out and tangling with the hustle and bustle, and you should definitely heed your instincts.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Rows include CHINA (Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.) and WORLD (Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, etc.)

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Concorde; 5- Grocery lane; 10- Departs; 14- Zhivago's love; 15- Welcome; 16- Shoppe sign word; 17- Not "fer"; 18- Columbus's birthplace; 19- "Roots" author Haley; 20- Section of an orchestra; 22- Pisa place; 23- Family diagram; 24- Able was...; 26- Video game pioneer; 29- According; 33- German submarine; 34- Like non-oyster months; 35- Fail to tell the truth; 36- Hiker's snack; 37- Nick of "Lorenzo's Oil"; 38- Trig function; 39- Tolkien tree creature; 40- Actress Shire; 41- Leguminous plants; 42- Legible; 44- Color anew; 45- "quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 46- Pleased; 48- Refreshment stand; 51- Wet weather wear; 55- Not working; 56- Unit of energy; 58- Mogul capital until 1658; 59- Back; 60- Atlas feature; 61- Narrow strip of wood; 62- "Critique of Pure Reason" author; 63- 1980 Dom DeLuise film; 64- Slippery swimmers;

DOWN: 1- Cabbage salad; 2- Palm starch; 3- Small jazz combo; 4- Golf hazard; 5- Texas A&M player; 6- "Goodnight" girl; 7- Transmit; 8- Summer sign; 9- Greek letter; 10- Beard type; 11- Leaf with Sanscrit writing?; 12- Pulitzer-winning biographer Leon; 13- Alluring; 21- Court order; 22- Angers; 24- Kick Out of You; 25- Scottish Gaelic; 26- Boring tool; 27- Steak order; 28- Main artery; 29- Kate & ___; 30- Troy story; 31- Simpleton; 32- Swan-like aquatic birds; 34- Esther of "Good Times"; 37- Apprehends; 38- Pericarp; 40- Assignment; 41- Fiber source; 43- Baren place; 46- Strong winds; 47- Mislead; 48- "Star Trek" captain; 49- Brainchild; 50- Pearl Buck heroine; 51- Corrosion; 52- Give the eye; 53- Shrinking Asian sea; 54- Makes lace; 56- Peanut butter brand; 57- ___ roll;

Monday's solution

Grid with crossword solution words: POTTERY, WEAKEST, INERTIA, ANCIILLA, LENIENT, RAATTEEN, STATS, AORTA, VEG, NINE, AGREE, NAPE, EMT, ETHAN, LETON, RESIDUAL, REGENT, TERN, BETE, SOLEMN, SALIVATE, ANERA, SOREN, CAM, PEAS, SMITE, ROLE, LST, SNELL, LINER, ETHICAL, ERODING, SEETOIT, TONETTE, SPRAWLS, TIGRESS

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

FOOTBALL

Monaco soon facing dilemma of whether to sell rising stars

Jerome Pugmire, Monaco

TO sell or not to sell is the question soon facing Monaco.

Monaco has a summer of tough decision-making ahead — even more so if it wins the Champions League. The 2004 runner-up faces Juventus in the first leg of the semifinals today [Thursday, 2:45am]: the toughest test of a thrilling season that has seen Monaco score 146 goals in all competitions.

Monaco's young players have made such an impression — particularly striker Kylian Mbappe — that offers will be flooding in when the transfer window reopens. In the Principality famed for its casino, Monaco will have to choose whether or not to cash in its chips this summer and rake in a huge amount.

"We don't need to sell, our budget is stable," Monaco's vice president Vadim Vasilyev recently told football show Telefoot. "For the time being, no player has said he wants to leave. Ahead of the 2018 World Cup, neither Thomas (Lemar), Kylian or perhaps Bernardo Silva wants to leave ... We'll do everything to keep them."

It sounds like reassuring news, but any club wishing to sign the 18-year-old Mbappe will need to make a massive offer. The newly-capped France forward's estimated value is already at 100 million euros (USD110 million) and it's not hard to see why.

At the age of 18 years and four months, he is the youngest to reach 15 league goals in Europe's top five leagues since former Golden



Benjamin Mendy, left



Monaco's Bernardo Silva blocks a Dortmund player during the Champions League quarterfinal second leg soccer match

Ball winner Michael Owen for Liverpool in 1998; the youngest to have reached five goals in the Champions League, and the first player to score in each of the first four Champions League knockout rounds he played in.

Mbappe has netted 24 goals this season, including 18 in his last 18 — and he was playing in the reserves until November. His powerful running, skill, sheer pace, and cool finishing make him a mix between Thierry Henry and Brazil great Ronaldo.

In fact, he is so popular in France that even opposing fans from Lyon and Caen applauded him off the field when he played there.

Only a few clubs can realistically afford him: Barcelona, Real Madrid, Manchester City, United and Juventus.

It puts Monaco in a precarious position, and one they have been in before for different reasons.

In the summer of 2015, because of former Financial Fair Play rules designed to control club finances, Monaco needed to raise money

and sold the heart of its team.

Forward Anthony Martial joined Manchester United in a deal rising to 80 million euros (\$88 million), while midfielder Geoffrey Kondogbia, winger Yannick Ferreira Carrasco, center half Aymen Kurzawa were all sold — raising about 200 million euros (\$220 million) altogether. This followed the sale of Colombia's star forward James Rodriguez to Real Madrid for around 80 million euros the previous summer.

Monaco's finances are far better now and the club will likely not sell more than one or two players this summer. This increases the chances of Mbappe staying as the main striker next season, should Radmael Falcao leave after turning down three offers from Chinese clubs in January.

Here is a look at some of Monaco's other sought-after players.

THOMAS LEMAR

The fleet-footed attacking midfielder has 13 goals this season,

including fine strikes home and away against Tottenham in the Champions League group stage.

Along with excellent technical ability, the 21-year-old Lemar also has pace and is an intelligent passer.

While Bernardo Silva roams down the right, Lemar marauds down the left, making it doubly hard for teams to defend the flanks.

Barcelona is among the clubs reportedly interested in signing the France international.

Estimated market value: 40 million euros (\$44 million).

BENJAMIN MENDY

A powerful, athletic left back, Mendy is also dangerous going forward and especially with first-time crosses into the penalty area at pace.

Although the 22-year-old Mendy rarely scores, the way he combines with Lemar down the left is one of Monaco's biggest strengths.

Mendy's speed and strength already makes him hard to stop.

But in addition, he has excellent technique for a defender.

Estimated market value: 30 million euros (\$33 million).

BERNARDO SILVA

Silva is a playmaker, a scorer, a tireless runner and a tricky winger rolled into one. No wonder he is among the most coveted young attacking midfielders in Europe.

With his lithe frame, nippy speed and wide passing range, Silva is a menace wherever he receives the ball. When he drifts in from the right to take up a more central position, he becomes a probing No. 10 and his eye for a subtle threaded pass perfectly suits the cunning runs of Falcao and the direct runs of Mbappe.

The 22-year-old Portugal international has nine goals this season, including two in the group stages. But he sometimes pays the price for being so unselfish and hasn't scored since Feb. 17 — a run of 17 matches.

He will be keen to end that lean spell against Juventus.

Estimated market value: 60 million euros (\$66 million).

TIEMOUE BAKAYOKO

One of Monaco's most consistent players, Bakayoko is a pillar in front of a sometimes vulnerable defense.

The 22-year-old defensive midfielder is also an astute reader of the game and keeps Monaco ticking with his quick passing out from the back: making him the ideal launch pad for their attacks and the perfect safety net should those attacks break down.

Bakayoko is a threat from set pieces, too, sending Monaco through to the quarterfinals with a towering late header in the return leg against Manchester City.

His immense physical strength and energetic running makes him ideally suited to the Premier League, with Manchester United among his many admirers.

Estimated market value: 30 million euros. **AP**

RUGBY

Crusaders captain Whitelock banned for 2 games



ALL Blacks lock and Crusaders captain Sam Whitelock has been suspended for two matches after being found guilty of striking during a Super Rugby match against the Cheetahs on Saturday.

Whitelock was shown a yellow card in the 71st minute of the match at Bloemfontein for elbowing Cheetahs prop Charles Marais. The Crusaders won 48-21.

A SANZAAR judicial committee ruled that Whitelock's offense merited a red card and could have carried a four-match suspension. The penalty was reduced to two matches after his previous

disciplinary record was taken into account.

Whitelock will miss Crusaders matches against the Bulls and Hurricanes.

Sunwolves fullback Jamie-Jerry Taulagi has been banned for five weeks for a dangerous tackle on Chiefs winger Shaun Stevenson.

Radradra to continue NRL career after charges dropped

Meanwhile, Fiji-born Australia winger Semi Radradra is expected to finish the National Rugby League season with Parramatta before moving to France to fulfill a rugby union contract with Toulon after domestic violence

charges against him were dropped.

The charges were dropped at the prosecutor's request yesterday at Parramatta Local Court after cross examination of Radradra's former partner.

Radradra was cut from Australia's national team, the Kangaroos, in April last year after the charges were laid and he faced the prospect of a significant ban from the NRL if he was convicted. He has remained with Parramatta in the meantime but had been barred from representative selection pending the legal proceedings.

He signed a contract with French Top 14 powerhouse Toulon last year.

"That's where his future lies but for the next few months he will be with Parramatta Eels and hopefully win a premiership on his way out," Radradra's manager, George Christodoulou, said. "Semi loves rugby league and loves the Eels. But in the end he had to take care of business."

Christodoulou said the case had taken a toll on Radradra, adding that he was "relieved and grateful" the charges were dropped.

Parramatta Eels chief executive Bernie Gurr said the club would continue to provide welfare services to Radradra and his family and was "delighted he can now put his focus and energy on the 2017 season." **MDT/AP**

opinion

World Views

Albert R. Hunt, Bloomberg

THE TRUMP TAX PLAN'S DEVILISH DETAILS

The Trump tax plan, unveiled in one sketchy page last week, is like a bottle of bad wine: It's not aging well.

Central questions remain unanswered. The White House says it will fill in the important details later, in the meantime pushing dubious and duplicitous claims.

Three illustrations make the point. Administration officials won't say whether the personal exemption would be eliminated, hardly an arcane detail. They falsely suggest that the plan will increase taxes on some wealthy investors by eliminating a tax loophole used by executives of hedge funds and private-equity firms known as "carried interest." And they rely on the dubious assumption that Congress will no longer allow state and local taxes to be deducted from federal taxes.

As more phony claims and higher costs emerge, the already tough task of reforming the tax system becomes even more difficult. President Donald Trump's proposal favors more affluent taxpayers and would add considerably to the federal deficit.

The White House trumpets its proposal to almost double the standard deduction, from a maximum of USD12,600 to \$24,000. This would benefit many middle-income taxpayers and simplify the code by encouraging more people not to take itemized deductions.

But some of these families actually would face higher taxes if, as with earlier Trump and Republican plans, it also eliminates the personal exemption, currently \$4,050 per person. It's difficult to be precise since the plan lacks specifics on tax brackets where various rates would kick in.

Think of a middle-class couple with three kids. With the personal exemption gone, they'd have to add \$20,250 to their taxable income. That's nearly double the new "benefit" they'd get from the increase in their standard deduction of \$11,400.

The personal exemption costs the government somewhere between \$1.6 trillion and \$1.9 trillion over 10 years, based on estimates of previous Trump and congressional Republican tax plans. That's money that could offset other cuts if eliminated, or contribute to higher deficits if left in place.

Trump advisers insist that big cuts in tax rates would pay for themselves by generating strong economic growth, a highly speculative claim, to put it gently. They also claim they'd add revenue by eliminating most tax deductions, though not the politically popular write-offs for charitable contributions and home mortgage interest. But the plan doesn't specify which deductions would go, citing only the ones for state and local taxes paid.

Don't hold your breath. There are 35 Republican congressmen from the high-tax states of California, New York, New Jersey and Illinois, and some of them are already balking. With a 22-vote margin in the House of Representatives and with no Democratic support, Republican leaders will be dealing with some brutal arithmetic when it comes to eliminating state and local tax deductions.

Buy some more red ink.

The idea of ending the carried-interest loophole was pushed hard by Trump during the 2016 presidential campaign as he sought to establish his populist credentials. His advisers have run with that theme since last week, claiming they're ready to end that special tax break, which lets hedge-fund and private-equity executives pay lower capital-gains rates instead of the regular rates on ordinary income.

But the Trump proposal would reduce the top corporate rate to 15 percent from 35 percent, meaning it would be lower than the maximum capital-gains rate. Since many hedge funds and private-equity firms are partnerships, their executives would qualify for the corporate rate under the administration plan. So ultimately their taxes on carried interest would be cut, not increased.

So much for populism.

THE BUZZ BOX OFFICE TOP 20: 'FURIOUS' TAKES A VICTORY LAP

Before the arrival of "Guardians and the Galaxy Vol. 2," "The Fate of the Furious" took one more victory lap at the North American box office, leading all movies in ticket sales for the third straight week.

The film, which has passed USD1 billion globally, grossed \$19.9 million domestically over the weekend, according to final box office figures from comScore yesterday. The reign of the "Furious"

sequel, however, is sure to end this weekend when "Guardians" kicks off the summer season.

In the lull between blockbusters, several smaller films did strong business. The Eugenio Derbez comedy "How to Be a Latin Lover," opened in second with \$12.2 million. It drew an 89 percent Latino audience. And the South Indian film "Baahubali 2: The Conclusion" came in third with \$10.4 million despite playing on only 420 screens.

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	20-40 Good	😊
High Density Residential Area	25-45 Good	😊
Ambient	30-50 Good	😊

SOURCE: DSMG

Eminem song composer: New Zealand ad is 'blatant rip-off'

Nick Perry, Wellington

THE composer of the opening guitar riff for Eminem's "Lose Yourself" says the soundtrack of a New Zealand political ad is a "blatant rip-off."

Jeff Bass told the High Court in Wellington yesterday that the song titled "Eminem Esque" that was used by the ruling National Party during its 2014 election campaign sounds like "Lose Yourself Lite."

But, he added, "It doesn't taste so good, though."

Eminem's music publishers Eight Mile Style sued the National Party over its use of the song. The judge-only copyright infringement case started Monday and is expected to last about six days.

The party has previously said it purchased the soundtrack for its TV ad from an Australian-based music supplier and doesn't believe it has infringed anyone's copyright.

Bass, who lives near Detroit and traveled to New Zealand to testify, picked up an acoustic guitar and strummed the famous riff that opens the Oscar-winning 2002 song in front of eight lawyers and a judge in the courtroom.

He said he wrote the song with Eminem and Luis Resto over 18 months.

"I picked up a guitar and



Music composer Jeff Bass leaves a courtroom yesterday, in Wellington

started playing that opening guitar chord," he said. "At that time, I didn't know if it was a song or not."

He said Eminem, aka Marshall Mathers III, put together a drum track but then they got stuck.

"It took him a number of months to author the perfect lyrics that were just right for the beat," Bass said.

He said they finished as Eminem completed work on his film "8 Mile."

"It really developed in a little studio we had set up in his trailer," Bass said. He said Resto replaced some of the guitar elements with keyboards in order to remove some of the rock feel of the song without losing the hip hop tone.

Defense lawyers argue the musical composition of the song isn't particularly original. One of them asked Bass if he considered the soundtrack

Eminem Esque to be musically inferior.

"Being that it's a blatant rip-off, yes," Bass responded.

The lawyer asked if it was weaker because it was different. "It doesn't feel like 'Lose Yourself'?" the lawyer asked.

"It doesn't feel like me playing 'Lose Yourself,'" Bass said.

The lawyer asked Bass if he'd agree that the Led Zepplin song "Kashmir" has a similar chord pattern.

"No. None whatsoever," Bass responded.

Judge Helen Cull asked Bass if the guitar strum he'd performed in the courtroom was common.

Bass said that while he'd heard those chords played before, he'd never heard them in that particular rhythm. He said that by putting an accent on the third beat it was as if he was playing guitar and drums at the same time.

WORLD BRIEFS



THAILAND Immigration authorities say the heir to the Red Bull energy drink fortune, Vorayuth "Boss" Yoovidhya, 32, who is wanted on deadly hit-and-run charges flew to Singapore two days before he was due to appear before prosecutors. And airport authorities in Singapore confirm his private plane is still there.



SYRIA IS militants staged a surprise attack in northeastern Syria, killing at least 30 people, most of them civilians who had fled fighting in areas of Syria and Iraq held by the extremist group. The pre-dawn attack took place after militants sneaked into the village of Rajm Sleibi, located along a front line that separates the Kurdish-controlled Hasakeh province and IS-held areas further south.

AFGHANISTAN An Afghan official says a Taliban attack in a northern province has killed five policemen and wounded four.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Xinhua/Liu Dawei



A gigantic crane, which was transformed from a tanker, hoists a 6,000-ton key structure of the world's longest cross-sea bridge linking Hong Kong, Zhuhai and Macao. The wedge, 12-meter-long and weighing more than 25 Airbus A380 jets, was lowered yesterday to connect the immersed tubes of the underground tunnel of the bridge. The 55-kilometer infrastructure includes a 22.9-km bridge and 6.7-km underground tunnel.

HOLIDAY TIMES

Macau Daily Times will not be published tomorrow. The Times will be back on the stands on Friday, May 5. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times.