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WORLD BRIEFS

AP PHOTO



US-RUSSIA Israeli officials yesterday sought to downplay any damage caused by President Donald Trump's disclosure of classified information to senior Russian officials that was provided by Israel, and lauded the robust security cooperation with the U.S. just days before the president is due to arrive for a state visit. Israel has yet to acknowledge claims from U.S. officials that it was the source of the classified information.
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CHINA-S. KOREA A rap group backed by China's government is warning South Korea in a music video that "you're going too far" with the deployment of a U.S. missile defense system, as Beijing seeks to bring its state-supported cultural forces to bear in the international dispute.
More on p11

AP PHOTO



INDIA's top investigating agency has searched the homes of former finance minister P. Chidambaram (pictured) and his son as part of a financial misconduct investigation, stemming from allegations that the son received bribes to get foreign investment clearances for a media company while his father was in office.
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Freeman Macau has nothing to fear from regional challengers

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Residents claim change to bus route causes disruption, want line 25 back to Hac Sa

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G2E ASIA

IR brainchild was for both profitability and 'political cover,' says panelist

Daniel Beitler

THE creation of the integrated resort (IR) concept, which debuted in Las Vegas and later spread to Macau, was intended to both diversify operator offerings as a means of increasing profitability as well as provide "political cover" for what are essentially casino-hotels, said a panelist during a session yesterday at the Global Gaming Expo Asia (G2E Asia).

The remarks were made by Bob Boughner, senior partner at Global Market Advisors, during a session hosted at The Venetian Macao, titled "Future Focus: The Next Generation of IRs".

The integrated resort model, combining the traditional casino business with retail, MICE events, entertainment, nightlife activities, and recently even art galleries and museums, has proven highly successful in the world's two largest gambling jurisdictions.

Questioning the definition of what constitutes an integrated resort, Boughner contrasted two popular motivations for the model, which has been widely adopted on the Cotai Strip.

A motivation already exists for casino operators to diversify the offerings as a means of generating more revenue and becoming more profitable.

In Las Vegas, Boughner said that the proportion of non-gaming revenue out of total revenue generated by integrated resorts has risen steadily, but marginally, in the past few years. In 2014, non-gaming revenue contributed about 63.4 percent, which subsequently rose to 65.3 percent in 2015 and 65.9 percent last year.



Food and beverage continues to be a very forceful business in Las Vegas, and now in Macau.

BOB BOUGHNER

"Over time, the growth in non-gaming revenues has brought benefits to the market, [as seen by] a shift in the spending [patterns of consumers] and the ability [of operators] to charge more in Las Vegas," said Boughner.

Particularly, "food and beverage continues to be a very forceful business in Las Vegas, and now in Macau."

Still, there is nothing to suggest that a casino-hotel could not diversify its offerings without changing the name of the type of resort. Therefore, critics tend to highlight "political cover" as the reason behind the 'integrated resort', as casinos worldwide carry certain, sometimes unpopular, connotations, especially with local lawmakers.

"Is it a profit model or just political cover?" asked Boughner during yesterday's session. "I would say it's both."

"They [casino operators] really did need another way to describe their casino business," he added. "I believe the word [integrated resort] worked its way in for political reasons, but then the success of these places has meant that they really are integrated resorts. The integrated resort model has worked really well."

Boughner was joined in yesterday's session by co-panelist, Lewis Stanton. In a presentation that examined how immersive experiences attract visitors to integrated resorts and theme parks, Stanton highlighted a concept that he described as the "spectrum of engagement".

CEO of Mars World Enterprises, a company working to create a theme park based on a futuristic Martian city, Stanton said that on one side of the spectrum is the visitor as a spectator, while on the

other he or she is a participant.

Stanton said that the 'visitor-spectator' would be found in themed resorts such as The Venetian, while more immersive creations on the horizon will transform their guests into 'visitor-participants'.

Explaining the difference, Stan-

ton highlighted the example of the most integrated resort, The Venetian.

"[The Venetian's] theme is very well done and there is a lot to admire about it [...] I'm sure everyone has seen the 'Faux Venice,'" he said yesterday. "If you've never been to Venice, I guarantee that you will not stand [by the Grand Canal Shoppes] and say that you do not need to go to Venice now; this is what Venice is like."

"So it's themed," he said, "but it's not immersive [...] or transformative so that you could believe you are there."

Stanton believes that more immersive experiences may help to attract millennial visitors (born between 1980 and 1999) to integrated resorts by providing them with alternatives to traditional forms of betting on large casino floors.

The challenge will become increasingly important, he predicted, as the proportion of millennials grows in the future.

"I think they [millennials] are less interested in traditional forms of gambling [...] and less interested in going into a casino where you are not supposed to talk and have to put your mobile phone away," said Stanton. "These things aren't attractive to them, but that doesn't mean they aren't interested in gambling... we just have to change what that means to them."

DICJ HEAD TO DEEPEN AUDIT OF JUNKETS

THE DIRECTOR of the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ), Paulo Martins Chan, said yesterday on the sidelines of the Global Gaming Expo Asia that the city's gaming authority is deepening its audit responsibilities over the local junket industry. Junket operators, whether they are individuals or a firm, provide credit to high-roller gamblers in the city, primarily with the purpose of circumventing currency controls in mainland China. If loosely regulated,

junkets may present an opportunity for money laundering. Chan said yesterday that of the 120 or so licensed junkets in Macau, 40 of them have been audited. "We have done [audited] 40 junkets, some are good, some need some improvement," he said. "We have told them to improve their accounting system." The head of the DICJ also said that the 53 percent contribution made by junkets to Macau's total gaming revenue was an acceptable level.



Bob Boughner (right)

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DIRECTOR AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF_Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
MANAGING EDITOR_Paulo Barbosa paulo.barbosa@macaudailytimes.com
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS_Eric Sautedé, Leanda Lee, Severo Portela

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS_Alban Martins, Annabel Jackson, Daniel Beitler, Emilie Tran, Grace Yu, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Julie Zhu, Juliet Risdon, Lynzy Valles, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Rodrigo de Matos (cartoonist), Viviana Segui
DESIGNERS_Eva Bucho, Miguel Bandeira | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS_JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES_Associated Press, Bloomberg, Financial Times, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua | SECRETARY_Yang Dongxiao army@macaudailytimes.com

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

SECRETARY_Denise Lo denise@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS_Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR Telephone: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

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Future of gaming 'bright' in Macau

Lynzy Valles

ALTHOUGH Macau's competitors are increasing their presence in the Asian gambling sector, the president of the American Gaming Association noted this week that the region has nothing to fear as it is currently the most attractive destination for both the premium mass and the mass market.

Geoff Freeman, speaking on the sidelines of the Global Gaming Expo Asia (G2E Asia) conference, stressed to the Times that the region's integrated resorts have offerings that meet the demands of all visitors.

Commenting on the latest integrated resorts, the gaming expert said that gaming operators are growing the market instead of siphoning existing customers from their fellow competitors.

"What's great to see is that The Parisian, Wynn Palace, Studio City and others are growing the market," he told the Times. "We don't just have buildings here in Macau, we have destinations."

The expert advised however,



Geoff Freeman

is currently successful.

As Macau has posted its ninth consecutive month of year-on-year growth in its gaming receipts, factors that have contributed to the growth are its provision of seamless access to the market, via either visa conditions or transportation infrastructure.

Freeman considered the under-construction Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, development of Hengqin Island and the family-friendly aspects of Cotai as "important steps in the right direction."

"There's nothing like this else in the world. Las Vegas is great, but Las Vegas is not Macau and vice versa. The experiment that is going on here is very compelling," he said.

Questioned as to which gaming jurisdictions Macau should emulate to provide further flexibility to its investors, Freeman argued that Macau should look at the best of Asia's gaming market and continually place itself uniquely in the market and set its new standards.

He stressed that there is no

the region to constantly reinvent its offers and provide flexible jurisdiction for the industry.

"But the key is nobody can rest on their laurels. You have to constantly develop, innovate, reinvest, you have public policies that encourage flexibility. That's what's important," Freeman suggested.

Meanwhile, the expert cited his belief that there is great confidence in the future of Macau, arguing that there is no "magical target number" that will bring Macau success as it

other market that is sitting right beside the massive population in China that shares an interest in gaming, adding that there is a rising middle class in China seeking travel destinations.

“We don't just have buildings here in Macau, we have destinations.”

GEOFF FREEMAN
PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN
GAMING ASSOCIATION

With the MSAR government promoting offerings that target the mass market, the expert argued that the territory's diversification and the adjustments it has made to suit the market have helped to insulate the sector from future challengers, ensuring a "more positive future."

"The scale of development here is something that you can't find anywhere else in the world," he noted.

Freeman added that Macau has come to a stage where its visitors are likely to come back due to its wide range of offerings, citing new properties that would soon be opened including MGM Cotai and the Lisboa Palace.

Asia Gaming Awards winners announced

Two local gaming operators were recognized in the Asia Gaming Awards 2017, which were held on Tuesday at The Parisian Macao. Galaxy Entertainment Group received the Best Gaming Operators award, and its two properties, Galaxy Macau and Galaxy Starworld, were awarded the Best Integrated Resort and Best Gaming Property award respectively. Wynn Palace secured the Best Gaming Area Design award. Each of the category winners on the night were selected through a voting process within the industry in addition to input from the judging panel and members of the organizing committee. The awards also crowned MGM China as the company with the most meaningful contribution in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Other awards conferred were a total of three "Emerging Leaders" - entrepreneurs, innovators and industry shakers seen as likely to shape the industry over the years to come. Nathan Carle, VP of Slot Operations of MGM China, Long Jiawei Jace, assistant casino manager at Marina Bay Sands and Rui Proença, Partner at MdME, received the "Emerging Leaders" award.

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Bank of China Macau reports MOP1.3 billion profit

The Bank of China – Macau Branch reported a profit of MOP1.305 billion in the first quarter of 2017, according to the balance sheet recently published in the Official Gazette. The result was the outcome of MOP2.359 billion of total costs and revenues of MOP3.664 billion. In the same period of 2016, the bank reported a profit of MOP1.348 billion, due to costs of MOP2.685 billion and revenues of MOP4.034 billion, meaning that this year's result reflected a decrease of 3.2 percent. The Bank of China – Macau Branch, which is an issuing bank in the MSAR along with Banco Nacional Ultramarino (BNU), reported a profit of MOP580.69 million in 2016.

PSC industrial park launched in Guangxi

The first stone of the industrial park Beihai-Macau of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (PSC) was launched in Beihai, Guangxi province, on Monday. The park occupies a total area of 600 acres. During the first construction period, 100,000 square meters of new facilities will be completed, mainly for importing and developing high-end furniture, processing mineral resources, sea products, alcohol and fruit, among others. The park is expected to reach an accumulated trade value of RMB20 billion by 2020. It will also try to obtain three to five symbolic commercial projects from Portuguese-Speaking Countries within this year.

Zhuhai to conduct first sea economy investigation

The city of Zhuhai will launch its first sea economy investigation this year, according to a report by Jornal Va Kio. The investigation will focus on three aspects, including a complete examination of government departments and industries related to the sea. Companies and fishermen will be the target of the investigation. Currently, the sea industry in Zhuhai comprises 7,483 companies. Furthermore, a total of 11,510 companies conduct businesses related to the sea in Zhuhai. By the end of October, the city will have finished collecting all information necessary for the investigation.

Rosário says customers should assess CTM

Renato Marques

THE Secretary for Transports and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, said yesterday that it is up to CTM customers to assess if the discount announced by the telecommunications company to compensate customers for the lack of service during the latest blackout was sufficient. "It is always very subjective to say that is enough or not. It was an effort that CTM did [to compensate the customers] now it is up to the customers

to say if is enough or not." Rosário was speaking to the media on the sidelines of the ceremony commemorating the telecom day held at the Macau Tower.

CTM announced that around 5,000 customers would be compensated in their June internet bill with a discount of 15 percent. It was estimated that the blackout that occurred on April 18 affected a total of around 30,000 internet clients from the company.

Director of the Macau Post, Derby Lau, updated

journalists on the status of the investigation initiated by the telecom regulator to monitor the company's responsibility in relation to the case. "An enquiry is ongoing at the moment with a conclusion expected for the end of this month [May]," she said, adding, "and then [according to the results of the enquiry] we will have a final decision on the matter."

Yesterday, Raimundo do Rosário decided to postpone his replies on cases related to the other departments he supervises until the plenary



Derby Lau and Raimundo do Rosário

session of the Legislative Assembly (AL) that he will attend next week. Rosário was called to comment on the latest information provided by the Secretary for Administration and Justice, Sonia Chan; Chan acknowledged this week at the AL that the problems encountered in the hiring of staff for the Cultural Affairs Bureau do not happen in all government secretaries.

"Today is the telecom day and I would appreciate if you could ask questions on the telecom topic. Furthermore next week I will go to the [Legislative] Assembly as I have spoken enquiries [to reply to], so next week we will have the opportunity to talk on other topics," he said when questioned about the topic of the hiring of staff under the Secretary of Transports and Public Works.

Telecom Day celebrated under the motto 'Big Data for mega impact'

To celebrate the Telecom Day 2017, the Macau Post (DSC) held a ceremony to announce that this year the topic will be - "Big Data for mega impact". This is defined by the International Telecommunication Union as the purpose to advance and inform people on how the implementation of Big Data and use of this resource can be the "engine of development," said the director of the DSC, Derby Lau, during the opening speech.

Lau highlighted the capabilities of such data to enhance quality of life through "raising the capacity of the government and companies in taking decisions, perfecting procedures, as well as future opportunities perception."

The DSC has invited a panel of specialists from Hong Kong and Macau to address the topic, clarify areas of uncertainty and improve the exchange of information, especially between the two regions.

Ho Chio Meng's lawyer confident

ORIANA Pun, lawyer of former top prosecutor general Ho Chio Meng, reaffirmed her confidence in the possibility of winning Ho's case, according to Chinese reports.

Ho's case is close to its end following the final opening trial, which was

processed last Monday.

During an interview on Tuesday, Pun reiterated what she already mentioned in her closing arguments, saying that the prosecution side does not have compelling evidence, and that the trial process did not prove any specific facts.

Pun informed that the court might announce the date for the ruling after it finishes a close-door trial session taking place today.

Ho Chio Meng cried during Monday's trial session when he mentioned his children.

Pun, who has not seen

Ho since Monday, believes that Ho Chio Meng cried because he was moved.

"It cannot be depicted as him being unhappy," said Pun. In addition, the lawyer said that she will only know other details regarding the case and Ho, after

meeting with him.

Oriana Pun took over Ho's case in March, succeeding his previous lawyer, Leong Weng Pun.

Oriana Pun has been a lawyer since 2005 and is currently a member of the board of directors of the Macau Lawyers Association.

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Election watchdog finds irregularities with nomination committees



Tong Hio Fong (center)

THE Electoral Affairs Commission for the Legislative Assembly Election (CAEAL) announced yesterday that it has received three applications for legal status from nomination committees and consequently found two cases of individuals signing the nomination papers of more than one nomination committee.

The CAEAL chairman, Tong Hio Fong, said that the Public Security Police Force will be notified of the two cases for further investigation. Voters who endorse the nomination of several candidates may face fines.

The duplicated nominations will be excluded from the nomination committees concerned, Tong told reporters after yesterday's commission meeting.

During yesterday's meeting, the commission made a final decision to operate polling stations at 35 venues, with one of the venues containing two polling stations, thus making available a total of 36 for this year's direct elections to the Legislative Assembly.

There will be five more stations for September's election than the number of polling stations in 2013. Following the increase in the number of polling stations, each station is expected to serve approximately 11,000 voters, compared to 14,000 voters per polling station at the previous election, said Tong.

The CAEAL also disclosed that the commission plans to hold a meeting with representatives of Macau gaming concessionaires and sub-concessionaires, to explain the Legislative Assembly Election Law and electoral rules applied to gaming operators.

Qualified helmets without labels can be used

Motorbike helmets without an information label will not lead to punishment of the owners as long as helmets meet the government's requirements. A previous report by Macao Daily News informed that drivers could be fined if their helmets did not have labels. Yesterday, Chan Io Fai, department head from the Transport Bureau (DSAT), said that drivers can refer to the DSAT webpage to confirm whether their helmets are qualified. Chan also said that if someone is prosecuted for not having a helmet label on, he or she can refer to DSAT and the relevant department will receive a notice to cancel the prosecution. These new regulations on helmets for motorbike drivers will come into effect on June 30.

High technician test sees 90 pct approval rate

Ninety percent of the people who attended the government exams for public departments passed the tests, according to a report released by TDM yesterday. The exam was aimed at recruiting high technicians for a total of 183 job vacancies in different public government departments. In total, 17,040 people took the exam, with 15,433 passing it. The Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP) informed that it will subsequently issue a notice regarding the evaluation process of professional career abilities. Those who wish to attend the professional ability test should apply to the interested departments within ten days after the notice is issued.

CCAC sides with affordable housing buyers against Housing Bureau

BUYERS of affordable housing units were informed by the Housing Bureau (IH) that their pre-contract agreement would be terminated because they married in the meantime. Following complaints, the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) analyzed the case and has said that the complainants are right, since the current Affordable Housing Law "does not impose that the spouse of an applicant must be included as a household member."

"The IH should accept the applications of the economical housing applicants who get married during the waiting period for not including their spouses as household members, and should issue letters of authorization to applicants for establishing property transaction deeds when the other legal conditions are met," a CCAC statement issued yesterday reads.

The CCAC has received a total of 27 complaints from appointed buyers of affordable housing and the office of legislator Lei Cheng I. According to the complaints, the Housing Bureau rejected the applications from approved buyers of affordable housing for not including their

spouses as household members.

According to the facts established by the CCAC probe, between 2003 and 2005, the complainants submitted the applications for affordable housing flats under the old Social Housing Law. Following the approval of their applications, they were admitted to the waiting list. Around 2012, the flats were allocated to them and the pre-contract agreements were signed. Subsequently, they moved into their flats.

In April and May 2016, the complainants received letters from the IH indicating that in order to help them enter into the property transaction deeds, the IH requested they provide the latest information of their households and their marital status. Since the complainants got married during the waiting period, they filled in the "declaration of not being a household member" provided by the IH requesting not to include their spouses as household members.

In March and April 2017, the complainants received a letter from the IH informing them that according to the Economical Housing Law, their applications not to include their



spouses as household members were rejected and therefore their spouses should be considered household members. Because the spouses in question owned their residences in Macau, when they became the applicants' household members, the legal requirements for purchase of affordable housing were no longer met and the pre-contract agreement was terminated.

The complainants argued that the decision made by the IH violated not only the Housing Law but also the guidelines that it initially issued. They claim to have made inquiries to the IH when they were going to get married, and that the reply was that if "separation of assets" was chosen at the point of marriage, the spouse would not be included as one of the household members and there-

fore their qualification for the housing purchase would not be affected.

According to the CCAC, the problem arose because the IH has changed its previous stance and recently issued a new internal guideline. According to that document, the bureau began to consider that as long as there is a husband and wife relationship and they are living together, the person will automatically become the household member and the application for not including the spouse in the household will be rejected. This is unless the applicant can submit justification, such as separation from spouse.

Therefore, according to the IH interpretation, when the affordable housing applicant gets married during the waiting period, his or her spouse should necessarily be a household member, and

it is not possible not to declare this situation.

The CCAC refutes this, claiming that the law defines households from the perspective of qualifications for applying for affordable housing flats and does not stipulate that people who live together because of their kinship must be considered household members.

Stressing that public departments should act according to the law, the CCAC notes that "since February 2017, the IH has changed its stance and usual practice, rejecting the applications of the economical housing applicants who got married during the waiting period for not including their spouses as household members." According to the commission, the cause for the change "was that since some of the applicants' spouses had already owned their residences in Macau, the IH hoped to utilize the valuable public housing resources in a proper way." However, the CCAC notes, "such a decision should be made based on a specific legal basis" and in accordance with the law. And according to the CCAC, that is what the Housing Bureau failed to do.

The CCAC further suggests that the "IH should improve the current legal regime of economical housing in an opportune time in order that the public housing resources can be impartially, rationally and fully utilized."

Mainland-Macau trade decreased 16 percent quarterly

The recent statistics from the Ministry of Commerce of China show that trade between the mainland and Macau decreased 10.6 percent in the first quarter of this year. The trade value amounted to USD615 million. The mainland's imports from Macau decreased 33 percent, recording a total value of USD10 million. In the same period, 156 Macau business investment projects were approved and can now commence in the mainland, which corresponds to an increase of 10 percent year-on-year. The actual amount of Macau's capital in the mainland was USD309 million, which corresponds to a 67 percent increase year-on-year.

Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Film Fair calls for submissions

THE 2017 Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Film Production Investment and Trade Fair, which will be held this year in July, is now calling for the submission of Macau film projects, according to one of its co-organizers, the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC). Submissions from the film industry will be accepted until the deadline on June 8.

The fair, which has the aim of providing an exchange platform for film producers and investors from Guangdong Province, Macau and Hong Kong, is co-organized by the IC, the Guangdong Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television and the Hong Kong Film Development Council.

Held in the MSAR since 2014, organizers say they intend for the fair to help cultivate film professionals and promote the development of the industry in the three regions.

According to the IC, pre-

vious editions of the fair have attracted as many as 85 film projects from southern China and approximately 130 representatives of investors. The meetings have resulted in several contracts between filmmakers and production companies, as well as agreements for financial support for overseas film production.

Applicants of Macau film projects to the fair must be 18 years old or above and must be the holder of a valid Macau SAR Resident Identity Card. Each applicant may submit one unfinished film only that has been directed by the applicant, is over 20 minutes in length and has been previously screened to the public.

The adjudicating panel will select a maximum of ten film projects based on criteria such as the creativity of the story, the experience of the applicant and executive production company, and "budget rationality."

Group calls for bus line 25 to stop again in Hac Sa

Julie Zhu

A group delivered a petition to the Chief Executive (CE) yesterday requesting the restoration of bus route number 25, so that it will stop again at Hac Sa Beach.

Since May 7, getting in and out of the Hac Sa and Cheoc Van areas has become difficult due to a course adjustment to route 25, as announced in a statement by the Transport Bureau (DSAT). The amended route 25 passed all bus stops from Coloane Village until the Hac Sa Beach stop cancelled.

Led by lawmaker Leong Veng Chai and by Rita Santos, president of the General Assembly of the Macau Civil Servant's Association (ATFPM), the group visited the government headquarters at 3 p.m. yesterday to hand over their appeal to CE. Leong said that the



How come there are fewer people taking the bus?

LEONG VENG CHAI
LAWMAKER

group was representing people living around the area of Hac Sa Beach, as well as people who would go to the Hac Sa Beach for entertainment.

He further noted that the shorter route also causes inconvenience for people who need to go to that area to visit a nursing house.

In addition, Leong believes that the adjusted bus route affects the image of Macau as a tourism city, as many tourists wish to visit Hac Sa Beach.

According to the group, Transmac, the company that supplies line 25, changed the route without consulting the public.

According to Leong, the company explained that

the number of people taking that bus was small, however Leong did not accept such an excuse.

"I found it a little bit strange, since, as the weather gets warmer, many residents intend to go there to swim. How come there are fewer people taking the bus? There are more people [taking the bus]," declared Leong, noting that many residents around the area say that more people have been buying properties in the vicinity, which means an increased occupancy rate of bus line 25.

"Bus companies get much support from the government, which mainly consists of public support," said Leong, adding

that "Coloane residents have strong opinions" on the matter.

Approximately 600 people signed the petition urging the government to cooperate with the bus company to force line 25 to be extended once again to the Hac Sa Beach terminal.

Monica Teng, a spokesperson of the group and also a resident near Hac Sa Beach, indicated that the change in the bus route is inconvenient for people who work around the area.

"Hac Sa is the back garden of Macau people," said Teng, adding that stops near Cheoc Van Villa should not being cancelled as well. "It has a great impact over our quality of life," said Teng. She noted that there are approximately 26,000 people living around the Coloane village.

In conclusion, lawmaker Leong remarked that the change was not a result of public consultation nor did the transport advisory committee make any announcement about reasons for the change.

"It makes the public feel like the government do whatever they want without consulting the residents" Leong added.

Macau to host 47th Skål Asia Area Congress

MACAUI is set to host the 47th Skål Asian Area Congress in 2018, an announcement that was made at the recent 13th China Expo Forum for International Co-operation (CEFCO 2017).

Following the previous events held in 1996 and 2007, this is the third time that the region will be hosting the event.

Skål Asian Area Congress is an event recognized by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA).

Executive director of the Macau Trade and Promotion Investment Institute (IPIM), Irene Va, together with the deputy director of the Macau Government Tourism Office, Cheng Wai Tong, and the president of Skål International Macau, João Manuel Costa Antunes attended the 46th Asian Area Congress, held in Bahrain, on May 13 and 14.

During the event, Lau briefed the guests on the strengths and development of Macau's MICE industry.

According to a statement issued by IPIM, Antunes noted that the organizer has selected Macau as the venue for their

next event because the MSAR is presently committed to building "One Centre (World Tourism and Leisure Centre) and One Platform (Services Platform for Trade Co-operation between China and Portuguese-Speaking Countries)."

He stressed that the territory has unique tourism resources, and that the hosting of international conventions will help to enhance the international visibility of the region's tourism, and convention and exhibition industries.

At the same time, Macau has been promoting itself as a MICE destination and relevant hardware and software facilities have been developed quickly, bringing to the city an increasing number of merchants from Asia and other parts of the world.

Skål International, headquartered in Spain, is an international organization that brings together people from all sectors of the tourism industry.

Its objective is to promote tourism, enhance business contacts and foster relationships among the tourism sector.

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opinion**China Views**

Nisha Gopalan, Bloomberg

OFFICE RENTS IN HONG KONG JUST HIT THE DOWN BUTTON

A record bid for a car park in Hong Kong's central business district could be an indicator the city's crazy commercial property price boom is about to end.

Henderson Land Development Co. paid HKD23.3 billion (USD3 billion) for what was the first piece of commercial land to be sold by the government in the city's Central district since 1996.

Office space in Central ranks among the world's priciest, ahead of London's West End and midtown Manhattan. Vacancy rates were just 1.5 percent in the first quarter, according to a March survey by CBRE Group Inc.

The price Henderson paid signals the top of a market. Having effectively forked out HKD50,000 a square foot, Henderson would need to sell at a price of at least HKD60,000 to recover construction and development costs. The most expensive office spaces in Hong Kong are currently going for around HKD39,700 (at 9 Queen's Road, Central). The developer's shares fell as much as 2.9 percent in trading Wednesday.

Also striking was the relative absence of mainland developers, long a driving force in the city's residential market. C C Land Holdings Ltd. and Shimao Property Holdings Ltd., as part of a consortium led by local firm Sino Land Co., were the only two Chinese companies in the bidding. For the absence of mainland developers, Hong Kong firms have the central bank to thank.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority tightened limits on bank loans to property developers earlier this month, saying that from June 1, developers can only borrow up to 40 percent of a site's value, down from half currently. It also cut the cap on loans for construction costs, to 80 percent from 100 percent, while the overall limit on bank financing for an entire project was reduced to 50 percent of the expected value of the property, from 60 percent.

That's significant because it's typically the Chinese developers needing loans rather than the local ones. According to Bloomberg Intelligence analyst Patrick Wong, the average net debt-to-equity ratio of six major Hong Kong developers was 22 percent at the end of 2016, versus 110 percent for 20 firms from the mainland. Beijing has also imposed various capital controls that make it harder to get money out.

Hong Kong developers' new-found breathing space may be short-lived, however. Options outside of Hong Kong's Central district are expanding and rather than pay CBD rents, some companies are looking further afield at places like Quarry Bay in Hong Kong island's east. And while Central is full to bursting, the supply of commercial real estate overall in Hong Kong is rising: Citigroup Inc. forecasts that office completions should reach 3 million square feet this year with another 2.5 million square feet coming online next year, exceeding demand.

Hong Kong's home buyers may have to wait a while before residential prices start to fall. But it looks as if commercial real estate has already hit the down button.

Tencent results top all estimates after scoring breakout hits

Lulu Yilun Chen

TENCENT Holdings Ltd.'s investments in blockbuster video and gaming content are paying off - big-time.

China's largest internet company posted record quarterly sales and profit that topped all analysts' estimates as blockbuster titles including Honour of Kings drove a billion-plus users on WeChat and QQ to spend on game items. Chairman Pony Ma's strategy of stockpiling rights to hit anime and novels and developing shows in-house is transforming the company into a hybrid Marvel Studios-Netflix style content factory.

Soaring growth at Tencent's mobile gaming and advertisement units is buying the company time to develop new channels of revenue in finance and cloud, and bankrolling a foray into Hollywood. After backing "Kong: Skull Island," the company is helping finance the upcoming summer tent-pole "Wonder Woman." A market value that now surpasses USD300 billion underscores how China's online titans, including Alibaba Group, are outstripping traditional state sectors and defying a slowdown in the world's second-largest economy.

"It was a strong set of results," said Li Yujie, an analyst at RHB Research Institute Sdn in Hong Kong. "Tencent's mobile gaming business was the main contributor, especially Honour of Kings, which is probably generating 2-3 billion yuan of revenue a month."



Revenue climbed to 49.6 billion yuan (\$7.2 billion) in the three months ended March, the Shenzhen-based company said yesterday, surpassing the 46.4 billion yuan analysts projected on average. Net income climbed to 14.5 billion yuan, compared with the 13 billion yuan projected.

Tencent's mobile gaming business was the main contributor, especially Honour of Kings.LI YUJIE
ANALYST

The results included "net other gains" of 3.2 billion yuan, six times a year earlier, which was mainly from disposals and dividend income, it said.

Shifting from its old strategy

of relying on third-party content, Tencent has poured money into developing its own videos, a strategy that has propelled Netflix. Its Chinese TV drama "Candle in the Tomb" grossed about 2.5 billion views as of January before the show's finale, according to Tencent's news portal QQ.com.

In games, Tencent rode a strong showing from Honour of Kings. Self-developed, the hit battle title is in the same vein as the world's most popular desktop title League of Legends - also owned by Tencent. It topped both revenue and downloads in Apple Inc.'s iOS store in March, according to App Annie. Monthly active users reached 167.7 million in the quarter, Alan Hellawell, an analyst at Deutsche Bank AG, estimates.

The Chinese company's pipeline looked full for this quarter as well. It unveiled another 19 mobile titles in April including the much-anticipated JX Online III, according to JPMorgan Chase & Co. analyst Alex Yao. A majority of those were adapted from hit novels, shows or anime in hopes of appealing to an established fan base.

"Honour of Kings specifically

drove Tencent mobile games in March," Hellawell wrote before the earnings. He expects "Tencent to further maintain its leading position in the gaming sector in the long run."

The company's now also backing Twitch-like streaming sites including Wuhan Douyu Network Technology Co. and accelerating investments in Hollywood films.

While Tencent remains largely reliant on in-game spending, it's been growing an online ad business on the back of China's largest pool of social media users. Revenue from that business increased 47 percent to 6.9 billion yuan in the first quarter.

Shares of Tencent gained 37 percent this year, compared with a 41 percent rise for New York-listed rival Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. Naspers Ltd., which owns a significant stake in Tencent, was up 2.2 percent in early trade in Johannesburg.

WeChat had 937.8 million monthly active users and the mobile version of QQ had 678 million users at the end of the quarter. Revenue from Value Added Services, which includes online games and messaging, soared 41 percent to 35.1 billion yuan. Of that total, online game revenue grew 34 percent to 22.8 billion yuan.

From January, WeChat's "mini programs" began letting users access third-party services such as bike-sharing without the need to download full versions of individual apps. While nascent, that platform has the potential to side-step Apple or Android app stores and signals Tencent's longer-term ambition to keep users within its own mobile environment. WeChat could eventually integrate mini-programs into a fuller-fledged app store that sits on top of native operating systems such as iOS or Android, according to Morgan Stanley analyst Grace Chen.

Bloomberg

Amazon's streaming software powers new smart TVsAnick Jesdanun,
New York

AMAZON'S streaming TV software will appear on a new line of smart TVs designed to blend streaming TV services and over-the-air channels, but not cable packages.

The TVs from Element Electronics will be sold under the Element and Westinghouse brands and will cost more than regular smart TVs from either brand. Officials

say the TVs have better hardware for reliable streaming and aren't designed for casual viewers who buy TVs only to never hook them up to the internet.

While Samsung and LG are still developing their own smart TV systems, many other manufacturers have abandoned in-house efforts and are turning instead to streaming TV companies such as Roku, and now Amazon. The in-house efforts have largely

been weak because few streaming services bother designing apps for them, and they don't have big teams to look for security threats.

For the new TVs, Amazon's Fire TV remote is getting common TV controls such as volume, while the on-screen menu is being adapted to incorporate live TV. Besides the rows of icons for various apps and streaming content, there's now a row just for shows currently available through an

antenna. There's also a row for connected devices, such as game consoles and DVD players.

Have cable? You can hook that up to the TV, but you won't get the menu integration. You'll also have to use the cable's remote, as the Fire TV one lacks numbers for changing channels. With over-the-air broadcasts, you do that through the on-screen menu.

Though officials say cable integration may come, the decision to focus on over-the-air content reflects the growing practice of "cord-cutting" — ditching cable services in favor of online stream-



ming services, including the ones offered on the Fire TV.

Prices range from USD449 for a 43-inch TV to \$899 for 65 inches. The new TVs, called Amazon Fire TV Edition, will be capable of displaying sharper video known as 4K resolution, though most TV shows and movies are available only in high definition, the standard on TVs today. **AP**



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Ford to cut 1,400 jobs in North America, Asia

Dee-Ann Durbin, Detroit

FORD — facing heavy costs for new technology and slowing U.S. car sales — is cutting 1,400 non-factory jobs in North America and Asia Pacific this year in an effort to boost profits and rescue its sagging stock price.

The company will offer voluntary early retirement and separation packages to around 10 percent of salaried workers in departments such as sales, marketing and human resources. It expects the actions to be complete by the end of September.

The cuts are the biggest to Ford's U.S. white collar staff since 2007, when 7,200 workers took voluntary buyout packages. Ford believes it will meet its targets by voluntary means, spokesman Mike Moran said yesterday.

"We remain focused on the three strategic priorities that will create value and drive profitable growth,

which include fortifying the profit pillars in our core business, transforming traditionally underperforming areas of our core business and investing aggressively, but prudently, in emerging opportunities," Ford said in an email sent to employees yesterday. "Reducing costs and becoming as lean and efficient as possible also remain part of that work."

There was no immediate comment from President Donald Trump, who needled Ford during his campaign over its plans to build a new small car plant in Mexico. Ford canceled its Mexico plant in January, opting instead to add 700 workers to a suburban Detroit plant in 2018 to make electric and self-driving vehicles. In March, Ford announced a plan to create or retain 130 jobs at a Michigan engine plant. Trump applauded both actions.

"Car companies coming back to U.S. JOBS! JOBS! JOBS!" Trump tweeted in March.

The offer will be open to about 15,300 workers, including 9,600 in the U.S., 1,000 in Mexico, 600 in Canada and 4,141 in Asia. The Dearborn, Michigan, company says it will release more details to employees in June.

Ford isn't the only automaker looking to get leaner as U.S. demand for new vehicles slows down. Last month, General Motors Co. Chief Financial Officer Chuck Stevens said GM was considering cuts to its white collar staff in order to rein in costs.

Certain areas of the business won't be targeted, including Ford's product development and credit divisions. Factory workers and white-collar employees in Ford's plants won't be affected. Information technology workers also aren't targeted.

Ford also isn't likely to cut jobs in its emerging businesses, like its research center in Palo Alto, California. Ford said last August that it planned to hire more than 100



engineers, researchers and others in Palo Alto.

Ford has been hiring steadily since the recession as U.S. vehicle sales roared back to reach record highs. Ford hired more than 15,000 factory workers between 2011 and 2015.

But investors are clearly worried that after seven straight years of growth, U.S. sales are peaking and Ford's share of that critical market has been falling. Ford's sales in Asia have been growing — they were up 9 percent last year — but that market is volatile and far less profitable than Ford's North American business.

Investors are also unsure about Ford's heavy spending on technology with an uncertain future, like its recent investment of USD1 billion in Argo AI, an artificial inte-

ligence startup. The 114-year-old automaker has also embarked on a massive, 10-year plan to remake its Dearborn campus to attract tech-savvy young workers.

Ford's stock price has fallen nearly 40 percent in the three years since Mark Fields became CEO. Ford Executive Chairman Bill Ford told investors at the company's annual meeting last week that he's frustrated by that decline.

"We're frustrated, but our business is performing well. We're making investments for both today and tomorrow, and I believe that's the right thing to do," he said.

Ford's net income fell 35 percent to \$1.6 billion in the first quarter. It expects to earn a pretax profit of \$9 billion this year, down from \$10.4 billion in 2016. **AP**

Hong Kong sells car park to developer for record USD3b

Moxy Ying

HENDERSON Land Development Co. outbid eight other developers and will pay a record HKD23.3 billion (USD3 billion) for the first commercial land to be sold by Hong Kong's government in the Central district since 1996.

The Hong Kong company's shares fell the most in the Hang Seng Properties Index yesterday, sliding as much as 2.9 percent.

Henderson Land beat local rivals including units of Cheung Kong Property Holdings Ltd. and Wharf Holdings Ltd., the Lands Department said on Tuesday.



The firm will build an office tower on the site.

The record price for the property, currently used as a car park, underscores strong demand for office space in Central. Since MTR Corp. sold a waterfront site for the landmark International Finance Centre in 1996, no new supply has come on stream. The area's vacancy

rate was only about 1.5 percent in the first quarter of this year, according to CBRE Group Inc.

"The price surprises on the high side," said Alfred Lau, an analyst at Bocom International Holdings Co. "However, the market may not share such a bullish outlook," Lau said, adding that Henderson Land should

consider introducing a partner to share the risk.

Office space in Central is the world's most expensive, according to a CBRE survey released in March, which ranked the rents ahead of those in Beijing districts, Hong Kong's West Kowloon, London's West End, midtown Manhattan and Tokyo.

The price per square foot for the deal is about HKD50,000, according to Bloomberg calculations based on a maximum gross floor area of 465,000 square feet. That compares with HKD36,200 per square foot when China Evergrande Group paid a record for

a commercial building in 2015 HKD39,700 per square foot in March for units in 9 Queen's Road Central that are the city's most expensive office space, according to the Apple Daily newspaper.

Only one of the nine bidders was a mainland company, indicating a cooling of interest from Chinese buyers after three recent residential land auctions where at least a third of the bids were from mainland businesses. Previously, Chinese bidders such as HNA Group Co. have snapped up Hong Kong sites.

The car park building is in the heart of Central, near the iconic Bank of China

skyscraper and billionaire Li Ka-shing's Cheung Kong Center. Last year, Colliers International estimated that the property was worth HKD15.8 billion to HKD17 billion.

Henderson Land will finance the acquisition through its internal resources and bank funding, and plans to complete an office building, with some retail facilities, by 2022, the company said in a statement.

Aggressive bidding for the commercial site echoes brisk developer demand for residential plots amid record home prices in the world's least affordable housing market. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

MGM SHOWCASES 'A GOLDEN WAY OF LIFE- TRÈS'ORS'



MGM Macau is presenting the first-time exhibition "A Golden Way of Life - Très'Ors" at MGM Art Space from now until September 3, 2017.

As part of the Le French May Silver Jubilee Celebrations, the exhibition invites the public to embark on an exploration of a collection of over 250 exquisite gold creations and artifacts, including classic and contemporary art works, religious artifacts, vintage furniture pieces, fashion and accessories, watches and jewelry, and objects from every-

day life, all made between the 17th century and the modern day.

An opening ceremony was held at MGM Art Space yesterday. The ceremony was officiated by Alexis Tam, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Eric Berti, Consul General of France in Hong Kong and Macau, Pansy Ho, Co-Chairperson and Executive Director of MGM China Holdings Limited, and Grant Bowie, the Chief Executive officer and Executive Director of MGM.

"In the past ten golden years, MGM Macau has been a contributor to the city's cultural and

economic development. Through an array of art and cultural events, MGM has been bringing the world to Macau with world-class art experience, and bringing Macau to the world with MGM Art Space and its innovative programs," said Pansy Ho.

"With the opening of MGM Cotai, we will continue to pursue widespread art and cultural magnificence, connecting East and West and blending tradition with innovation."

Eric Berti, said at the ceremony: "This exhibition brought over 250 works together for the first time, from French mu-

seums and private collections, among them remarkable pieces from Musée Notre-Dame de Fourvière in Lyon, a 1930's Zadkine sculpture, jewels from the Boucheron collection, and vintage pieces by Yves Saint Laurent. This exhibition celebrates in a very unique way, the French creators and the 'savoir faire à la française' and I am very happy to present it in Macau."

MGM Art Space will open to all members of the public free of admission until September 3, 2017. The art space is open from 12 p.m. to 9 p.m. from Tuesday to Sunday, and will be closed on Mondays and public holidays.

XINJIANG

Police move to expand DNA testing in Muslim region

Matthew Brown, Beijing

CHINA appears to be laying the groundwork for the mass collection of DNA samples from residents of a restive, largely Muslim region that's been under a security crackdown, rights observers and independent experts said.

Police in western China's Xinjiang region confirmed to The Associated Press that they are in the process of purchasing at least USD8.7 million in equipment to analyze DNA samples.

Observers from Human Rights Watch said they've seen evidence of almost \$3 million in additional purchases related to DNA testing. They warned such a collection program could be used as a way for authorities to beef up their political control.

The move comes after Chinese authorities last year reportedly required Xinjiang residents to submit DNA samples, fingerprints and voice records to obtain passports or travel abroad.

Xinjiang borders several unstable Central Asian countries, including Afghanistan. It's experienced numerous bombings and vehicle and knife attacks blamed on ethnic separatists from the native Uighur Islamic minority.



In one of the most recent attacks, eight people, including three assailants, were killed in a February knife attack in southern Xinjiang's Pishan County, which borders Pakistan.

Chinese authorities seeking to counter religious extremism among the Uighurs have taken increasingly aggressive steps to quell the unrest. Those have included mandatory satellite tracking systems for vehicles in some areas,

rewards for terror-related tips and prohibitions against women wearing veils and men growing beards.

The purchases of DNA testing equipment in Xinjiang were confirmed by an official at the regional Public Security Bureau. The official, who gave only her surname, Huang, said a supplier already had been found. In Xinjiang's Sheche County, suppliers were being sought for voiceprint col-

lection systems and 3-D portrait systems, according to a security official surnamed Yin, who declined to give further details.

If used at full capacity, the new equipment could be used to profile up to 10,000 DNA samples a day and several million a year, said Yves Moreau, a computational biologist specializing in genome analysis and DNA privacy at the University of Leuven in Belgium.

The scale of the purchases raises "a legitimate concern that Chinese authorities could be planning to DNA profile a large fraction, or even all" of the Uighur people in Xinjiang, Moreau said.

Since it started collecting DNA profiles in 1989, China has amassed the unique genetic information on more than 40 million people, constituting the world's largest DNA database, according to a study last year by forensic researchers at the China Ministry of Public Security.

Unlike many other countries, China lacks legal protections to guard people's privacy and prevent their genetic information from being misused, said Helen Wallace, founder of the British group GeneWatch.

"Xinjiang is already an oppressive region with a high level of

surveillance," said Human Rights Watch researcher Maya Wang. "To collect even more information on a mass scale unrelated to criminal investigation opens the door for an even greater level of surveillance and control."

Government-sponsored DNA databases compile the genetic markers present in each individual, typically from blood, saliva or hair samples. They're used by law enforcement agencies around the globe as evidence in criminal prosecutions and to monitor prior offenders.

In the United States, where laws generally limit DNA collection to people who have been arrested, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has 12.8 million offenders in its DNA database, according to the agency. That's almost 4 percent of the total U.S. population. The United Kingdom has 5.2 million people in its database, or about 8 percent of its population, according to the British government.

China's database now covers about 3 percent of its population. It's been used by authorities to reunite abducted children with their parents. It was also used in a highly publicized case last year to help track down a serial killer who authorities said admitted to the murders of 11 women and girls over a 14-year period.

"It's clear there's a fairly large infrastructure being built for DNA collection and they're planning to expand that further," Wallace said. "I would like to see China put their legal database on clear legal footing. That includes the kinds of safeguards we see in other countries." AP

CHINA'S government increased access to its bond market through Hong Kong, opening another path for foreign investors after the central bank stemmed record capital outflows.

Authorities are seeking to counter outflows and win inclusion in global bond indexes. Foreign holdings of Chinese onshore notes rose to 830 billion yuan (USD120 billion) in March, from 815 billion yuan in February, according to central bank data.

The move is the latest step in China's efforts to open its capital markets and integrate into the global financial system. The bond connect will be the third trading link between mainland markets and the former British colony, after the start of two cross-border systems connecting stock exchanges.

"Bond connect will bring new blood into China's bond market,"

FINANCE

Bond link aims to spur foreign inflows through Hong Kong

said Liu Dongliang, a senior analyst at China Merchants Bank Co. "Given the high onshore yields, foreign investors may have strong demand if yuan is stable."

The average yield on China's AAA rated corporate bonds due in five years has jumped 106 basis points this year to 5.01 percent, around the highest since 2014.

The People's Bank of China and Hong Kong Monetary Authority said that the bond connect system would be one-way at its start, with flows only going northbound from Hong Kong to the mainland. There will be no daily quota, and the regulators didn't provide a date for when trading would begin.

Authorities in Hong Kong and the mainland will sign a memoran-

dum of understanding to coordinate supervision, the statement said. In a separate statement, the HKMA said the scope of eligible investors would include overseas central banks, sovereign wealth funds, international financial companies, and medium- to long-term institutional investors.

"Bond connect will facilitate investors' participation in the bond markets, improve the connectivity between market infrastructures and promote the healthy development of the bond markets, thereby enhancing Hong Kong's status as an international financial center and the global offshore renminbi business hub," Paul Chan, Hong Kong's financial secretary said in another statement.

The announcement follows the start of two

equity channels between Hong Kong's stock exchange and bourses in Shanghai and Shenzhen. The Shenzhen-Hong Kong link opened in December, two years after the start of the system with Shanghai. More than 1,400 mainland stocks are now available for offshore investors to trade via Hong Kong. Unlike the initial plans for bond connect, the equity programs allow mainland investors southbound access to Hong Kong securities.

"Now that the inter-bank bond market is already open, it's much easier to open the northbound first, whereas there are more infrastructure considerations before southbound can be rolled out," said Sun Binbin, an analyst at Tianfeng Securities Co. The bond connect is



another step in Hong Kong Exchanges & Clearing Ltd. Chief Executive Officer Charles Li's plan to enhance his firm's role as a conduit for global investors seeking access to Chinese securities. Li previously said that the program would be followed by further links, including ones

for commodities, exchange-traded funds and initial public offerings.

"The HKMA will work closely with PBOC and other relevant parties to finalize the arrangements and roll out bond connect as soon as possible," said Norman Chan, chief executive of HKMA. Bloomberg

Matthew Brown, Beijing

A rap group backed by China's government is warning South Korea in a music video that "you're going too far" with the deployment of a U.S. missile defense system, as Beijing seeks to bring its state-supported cultural forces to bear in the international dispute.

A member of the group CD REV said government officials worked with them on the video and helped to promote it on foreign websites, many of which are blocked in China by official censors emboldened by the ruling Communist Party's warnings against foreign "cultural infiltration."

In the song, group members chant that "about THAAD we say no, no, no," a reference to the U.S. Army's missile defense system formally known as Terminal High Altitude Area Defense.

Later in the song, they refer to South Korea, saying, "this time, kid, you're going too far" and "your big brother's annoyed," a nod to China's view of itself as the pre-eminent political and economic power in northeast Asia.

Beijing vehemently opposes the missile shield, saying its powerful radar will allow it to monitor missile launches, aircraft flights and other sensitive activities in northeastern China. South Korea and the U.S. say it is necessary to guard against North Korea's missile and nuclear weapons activities that threaten South Korea, Japan, U.S. territories and possibly even the continental United States.

CD REV's Wang Zixin told The Associated Press that the group hopes to rally Chinese worldwide against the deployment of THAAD and demonstrate China's "tough stance" on the issue.

"We would see government reports and comments, but at the same time, we see the whole event from the position of Chinese," Wang said.

In the video, the group also takes shots at what Wang referred to as "vulgar behavior" within China, such as vandalism against South Korean-made Hyundai vehicles.

The video — viewed by yesterday more than 300,000 times on Facebook and Twitter and almost 2.7 million times on the Chinese video-posting site Maiopai — represents

Rappers to Seoul: 'Big brother' opposes missile shield



the latest example of China's use of non-diplomatic channels to broadcast its displeasure with South Korea.

■ In the song, [Chinese rappers] chant that 'about THAAD we say no, no, no'

Last year, there were reports that China had stopped giving approval to performers of Korean pop music, or "K-pop," to play shows in China, on the heels of Seoul signing the agreement to host THAAD. In March, South Korean officials voiced concerns that Beijing was limiting tourism to their country as an unofficial sanction.

South Korean retailer Lotte, which provided the land for the THAAD deployment, has also been boycotted by Chinese customers and seen construction halted on an amuse-

ment park it was building in northeastern China.

Such moves underscore a willingness on the part of China's Communist Party leaders to fan the flames of anti-South Korea sentiment, said Korea expert Sung-Yoon Lee of Tufts University in Massachusetts.

"THAAD retaliation is a Chinese government-engineered project," Lee said. "It can be controlled and reversed by Beijing. [...] The Chinese public has no interest in the complexities of missile defense systems."

South Korea's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to questions about the song, and the video did not appear to garner much attention on the country's social media platforms.

During a phone call with Chinese President Xi Jinping last week, South Korea's new president, Moon Jae-in, said he was aware of Chinese worries about THAAD and asked Xi to help resolve difficulties facing South Korean businesses operating in China.

A special envoy representing Moon is due to visit China on today for talks on THAAD and the overall bilateral relationship. AP

US admiral: North Korea's actions 'recipe for disaster'



US Pacific Command Commander Adm. Harry Harris Jr.

The top American military officer in the Pacific said yesterday that North Korea's recent military actions are "a recipe for a disaster" and warned against a sense of complacency in the face of increasing tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

Adm. Harry Harris Jr. made the remarks at a lecture for a Tokyo think tank after meeting with Japanese leaders that he said focused on North Korea's missile

■ Adm. Harris criticized [Beijing] for throwing up obstacles to the freedom of navigation in the South China Sea

and nuclear programs.

North Korea test-launched a missile on Sunday that many experts believe could be its most advanced yet, flying higher and longer than any previous missile.

"Combining nuclear warheads with ballistic technology in the hands of a volatile leader like Kim Jong Un is a recipe for a disaster," Harris said. "Kim Jong Un is not afraid to fail in public and every test he makes is a success because it takes North Korea one step closer to being able to deliver a nuclear-equipped missile anywhere in the world."

The missile on Sunday was deliberately fired on a "lofted" trajectory — reaching more than 2,000 kilometers, which is higher than satellites in low Earth orbit — to test re-entry capabilities and place its "splash zone" in the open Pacific.

Harris, head of the United States Pacific Command, based in Hawaii, said North Korea is "closer to being able to deliver a nuclear-equipped missile anywhere in the world" and called for further coordination between the U.S., Japan and South Korea to deal with the threat.

He also obliquely criticized China for throwing up obstacles to the freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, where Beijing has constructed island bases in the disputed waters, saying "we should fly, be able to fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows."

While in Tokyo, Harris met Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and Defense Minister Tomomi Inada. AP

Australia considers banning laptops from airliner cabins

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

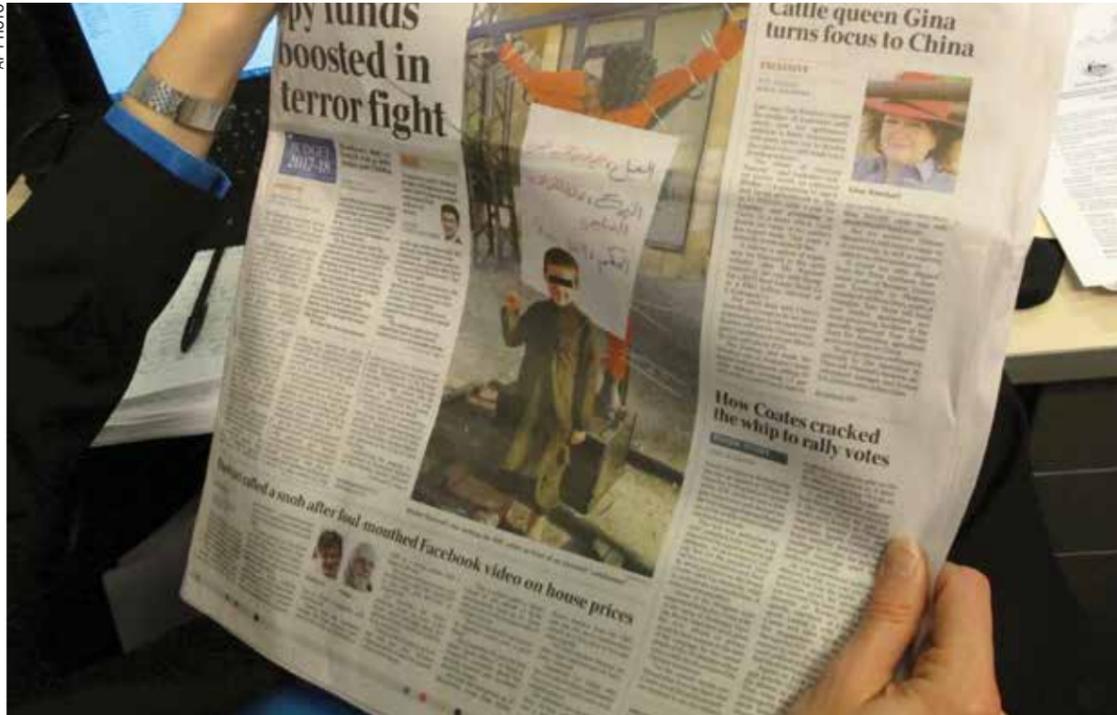
AUSTRALIA is considering following the United States and Britain in banning laptops from inbound airliner cabins, the prime minister said, but declined to explain whether the move was related to an Islamic State group threat that President Donald Trump discussed with Russian diplomats.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull revealed earlier this week that his government was "looking [...] very closely" at the bans on laptops and tablets on flights from some Middle Eastern countries announced by the U.S. and Britain in March.

Questioned by reporters yesterday, Turnbull refused to discuss the intelligence upon which a laptop ban was being considered or its source.

"As prime minister protecting our national security and the national interest, I have to be circumspect and discreet on matters of national security," Turnbull said. "My job is not to feed specu-

AP PHOTO



lative commentary in the media."

Australia would "work very closely with our partners around the world" in constantly reviewing aviation security, he said.

Trump has been criticized for divulging classified information to Russians about the laptop threat posed by the Islamic State group.

Turnbull declined to say whether

that information had also been shared with Australia, which along the U.S., Britain, Canada and New Zealand makes up the "Five Eyes" intelligence-sharing network.

"I can assure you the relationship between Australia and the United States in terms of intelligence sharing is as close as it possibly could be and we have no concerns about any other country [...] having privileged access to information we don't have," Turnbull told reporters.

The White House has defended Trump discussing with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Ambassador Sergey Kislyak last week an Islamic State group threat related to the use of laptop computers on aircraft.

Critics argue that Trump's disclosure of the highly classified information threatened to fray the U.S. intelligence partnership with Israel, which collected the information, and could be used by the Russians to find its source.

Turnbull met Trump for the first time in New York two weeks ago and hosted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Sydney in February, underscoring Australia's close ties to both countries.

The U.S. ban on laptops and tablets affects flights from Amman, Jordan; Kuwait City; Cairo; Istanbul; Jeddah and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; Casablanca, Morocco; Doha, Qatar, and Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates.

The British security rules apply to flights from Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia and Saudi Arabia. **AP**

AD



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Edith M. Lederer, United Nations

UNITED NATIONS

US envoy says North Korea is intimidating the entire world

U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley accused North Korea yesterday [Macau time] of intimidating the entire international community with its nuclear program, military ability and cyberattacks, and said any country that doesn't implement U.N. sanctions is supporting Pyongyang's actions.

"No one is immune to the threat of North Korea," she told reporters before emergency closed-door consultations by the U.N. Security Council on the North's weekend ballistic missile launch, which experts said demonstrated a significant technological jump with the rocket flying higher and for a longer period of time.

"We're not going to continue to just say go ahead and test as often as you want," Haley said, flanked by the South Korean and Japanese ambassadors. "This is a true threat to every country in the world. [...] We're going to make sure we put the pressure on them economically, diplomatically, politically and internationally."

Haley said the U.S. and China have been working on "a unified plan" on how to approach North Korea that would include stronger implementation of existing sanctions and tougher new sanctions.

She indicated Washington and Beijing had agreed they would



US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley (right) and Korean Ambassador Tae-yul Cho

take action if a new test looked to be long range and leaning toward an intercontinental ballistic missile that could reach the United States.

The latest launch appeared to fulfill both criteria, Haley said,

"so I believe that China will stay true to that, and that we'll come together on how we're going to do that."

The Security Council, which has imposed six rounds of sanctions on the North, discussed possib-

le further action at the meeting. Haley previously indicated that new sanctions could target oil, a critical import for North Korea mainly from China, and she said the U.S. also wants sanctions on organizations and businesses in third countries that are helping Pyongyang.

Uruguayan Ambassador Elbio Rosselli, the current council president, said after the meeting that members are united in condemning the latest missile launch as "a serious threat to international peace." He said the council is exploring many different avenues to proceed and "clearly sanctions are a way to go," but also diplomacy.

Council diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity because the consultations were private, said China never mentioned working with the U.S. on a new sanctions resolution, and both China and Russia said they support a negotiated solution through dialogue.

Haley was asked about comments by Russian President Vla-

dimir Putin in Beijing on Monday who called North Korea's nuclear and missile tests "unacceptable" but also said the United States should stop intimidating Pyongyang.

"We need to return to dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, stop intimidating it and find ways to solve these problems peacefully," Putin was quoted as saying, using North Korea's official name. "Is it possible or not? I think it is possible."

Haley answered Putin and others who have made similar comments about the United States: "What about North Korea intimidating us? They're intimidating the entire international community. They're trying to strengthen their muscle with no cause. There is no reason for North Korea to be having these actions outside of the fact they just choose to do so."

Haley noted that this weekend's missile came within 60 miles of Russia's border and said Russia is "all wrong." AP

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Wednesday, 24/05/2017

France's Presidential Election: Prospects for Europe & China

Speaker: **Mr Eric Sautédé**, French Political Scientist

FMBA Breakfast Meeting

MARINE *Présidente*

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Introduction: French political scientist, **Eric Sautédé**, will review the consequences of the French Presidential election for Europe & China based on candidates "promises during the campaign".

Date: **Wednesday, 24th May 2017**

Time: **9:00-10:30 am** (Reception: 8:45am)

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WANNACRY

What we currently know about the global cyberattack

Anick Jesdanun, New York

THE danger from a global cyber-attack that spread to some 150 nations continues to fade, and that's only some of the good news.

After two security researchers greatly slowed down that attack, which effectively held people's documents, photos and other digital files hostage, hard-hit organizations such as the U.K.'s National Health Service seem to be bouncing back. While it's a crude measure of the impact, it also appears that relatively few of those affected were desperate enough to actually pay the ransom demanded by the attackers.

On the other hand, the attack has served as a live demonstration of a new type of global threat, one that could encourage future hackers.

Here's what we currently know about the ransomware known as WannaCry, which locked up digital photos, documents and other files to hold them for ransom.

WHERE IT CAME FROM

Researchers are still puzzling out how WannaCry got started. Figuring that out could yield important clues to the identity of its authors.

The malware spread rapidly inside computer networks by taking advantage of vulnerabilities in mostly older versions of Microsoft Windows. That weakness was purportedly identified and stockpiled for use by the U.S. National Security Agency; it was subsequently stolen and published on the internet.

But it remains unclear how WannaCry got onto computers in the first place. Experts said its rapid global spread suggests it did not rely on phishing, in which fake emails tempt the unwary to click on infected documents or links. Analysts at the European Union cybersecurity agency said the hackers likely scanned the internet for systems that were vulnerable to infection and exploited those computers remotely.

Once established, WannaCry encrypted computer files and displayed a message demanding USD300 to \$600 worth of the digital currency bitcoin to release them. Failure to pay would leave the data scrambled and likely beyond repair unless users had unaffected backup copies.

RANSOM PAYMENTS

Investigators are closely watching three bitcoin accounts associated with WannaCry, where its victims were directed to send ransom payments. The digital currency is anonymized, but it's possible to track funds as they move from place to place until they end up with an identifiable person.



So far, there have been no withdrawals from those accounts.

Given the scope of the attack, relatively few people appear to have actually paid the ransom. According to a Twitter account that monitors those accounts, they've received only about 250 payments worth a total of slightly more than \$72,000.

NORTH KOREA

Several sets of investigators have now reported tentative findings that suggest hackers linked to North Korea might have been involved with WannaCry. But they could

all be drawing conclusions from a very small set of clues.

On Monday, the Russian security firm Kaspersky Lab said portions of the WannaCry program use the same code as malware previously distributed by the Lazarus Group, a hacker collective behind the 2014 Sony hack. Another security company, Symantec, related the same findings, which it characterized as intriguing but "weak" associations, since the code could have been copied from the Lazarus malware.

Two law enforcement officials likewise said U.S. investigators suspect North Korea based on

code similarities; the officials called that finding preliminary. The officials spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they aren't authorized to speak publicly about an ongoing investigation.

But WannaCry remains a puzzle, in part because some of its elements seemed amateurish. Salim Neino, CEO of the Los Angeles-based security firm Kryptos Logic, said the WannaCry worm was "poorly designed" — patched together and consisting of a "sum of different parts" with an unsophisticated payment system.

Surfer worked from bedroom to beat malware

As a vast "ransomware" attack raced from computer to computer, infecting tens of thousands around the world, a young tech expert worked from his bedroom in England to bring the rampage to a halt.

But Marcus Hutchins doesn't consider himself a hero.

The 22-year-old credited with cracking the WannaCry cyberattack told The Associated Press he fights malware because "it's the right thing to do."

In his first face-to-face interview, Hutchins, who works for Los Angeles-based Kryptos Logic, said late Monday that hundreds of computer experts worked throughout the weekend to fight the virus, which paralyzed computers in some 150 countries.

"I'm definitely not a hero," he said. "I'm just someone doing my bit to stop botnets."

In the first hours after the virus struck Friday, the computer whiz and surfing enthusiast who lives with his family in a small seaside town in southwest England discovered a so-called "kill switch" that slowed the unprecedented outbreak. He then spent the next three days fighting the worm that crippled Britain's hospital network as well as factories, government agencies, banks and other businesses around the world.

Hutchins said he came across the solution when he was analyzing a sample of the malicious code and noticed it was linked to an unregistered web address. He promptly registered the domain, something he regularly does to discover ways to track or stop cyber threats, and found that stopped the worm from spreading.

Kryptos Logic chief executive Salim Neino said Hutchins' quick work allowed him to slow the virus on Friday afternoon European time, before it could fully affect the United States.

"Marcus, with the program he runs at Kryptos Logic, not only saved the United States but also prevented further damage to the rest of the world," Neino said in an interview from Venice, Italy. "Within a few moments, we were able to validate that there was indeed a kill switch. It was a very exciting moment."

Neino said the worm was "poorly designed" — patched together and a "sum of different parts" with an unsophisticated payment system.

Kryptos Logic is one of hundreds of companies working to combat online threats for companies, government agencies and individuals around the world. Hutchins himself is part of a global community that constantly watches for attacks and works to thwart

Typical ransomware also generates a unique bitcoin account for each payment to make tracing difficult. That wasn't done here.

DIGGING OUT

One of the organizations hardest hit by WannaCry — the U.K.'s National Health Service — appears to be recovering. On Friday, many NHS hospitals had to turn away patients after WannaCry locked up computers, forcing the closure of wards and emergency rooms.

NHS Digital, the body that oversees cybersecurity in Britain's health system, said that as of now, it has "no evidence that patient data has been compromised." The agency told hospitals to disconnect all infected computers, apply a Microsoft patch that closes the vulnerability, then "roll back" the infected computers and restore them from backed-up files.

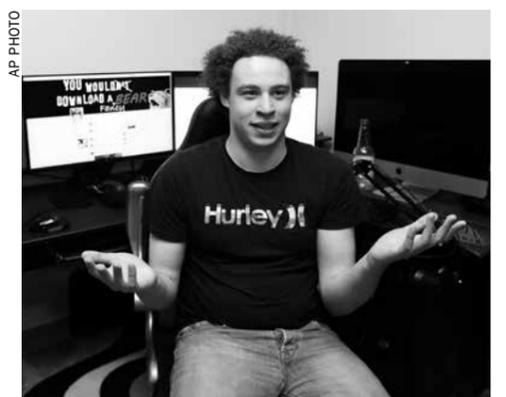
U.K. hospitals are supposed to back up data frequently and at multiple locations. It's possible that some data that wasn't backed up could be lost.

SIGN OF HACKS TO COME

WannaCry could also serve as a kind of template for future cyberattacks.

Neino of Kryptos Logic, for instance, said the leak of the NSA hacking tools have significantly narrowed the gap between nations and individuals or cyber gangs.

"The concern has always been, when are the real bad guys, the ones that don't care about rules of engagement, the ones who are really out to hurt us, will they become cyber-capable?" he said in an interview Monday night with The Associated Press. "I think today we found out that those who really want to hurt us have begun to, because they became cyber-capable the moment that the NSA cybertools were released." AP



British IT expert Marcus Hutchins

them, often sharing information on Twitter.

It's not uncommon for members to use aliases, to protect from retaliatory attacks and ensure privacy, and Hutchins has long tweeted under the handle MalwareTech, which features a profile photo of a pouty-faced cat wearing enormous sunglasses.

But he realizes his newfound fame will mean an end to the anonymity.

"I don't think I'm ever going back to the MalwareTech that everyone knew," said the curly-haired young man, shrugging and flashing a winning smile. AP

RUSSIANGATE

Israel lauds US security ties following Trump disclosures

Aron Heller, Jerusalem

ISRAELI officials yesterday sought to downplay any damage caused by President Donald Trump's disclosure of classified information to senior Russian officials that was provided by Israel, and lauded the robust security cooperation with the United States just days before the president is due to arrive for a state visit.

Despite fears that the leak could endanger a valuable Israeli intelligence asset within the Islamic State group, officials stressed that nothing would change as a result of the extraordinary breach.

"The security relationship between Israel and our great ally the United States is deep, meaningful and unprecedented in its scope and contribution to our strength," Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman tweeted. "That is how it has been and that is how it will continue to be."



AP PHOTO

Israel has yet to acknowledge claims from U.S. officials that it was the source of the highly classified information about an Islamic State plot that Trump divulged to Russian diplomats.

Trump appears to have shared the information without

Israel's consent, which would mark a severe violation of the confidentiality of their intelligence-sharing agreement. Even more remarkable is that Trump chose to confide in representatives of an adversary, who could relay the information to its allies Iran and Syria,

bitter enemies of Israel, and potentially find the source.

Trump is due to arrive in Israel next week as part of his first overseas trip as president. Israel has looked to Trump as a close ally but there has been growing apprehension over his unpredictability.

Trump has already walked back on some campaign promises that were favored by the Israeli government. He has expressed interest in brokering a peace deal with the Palestinians since becoming president, but it's unclear what kind of demands he could make on Israel, if any, during his daylong visit next week. Conflicting comments from administration officials regarding Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem's Western Wall have only added to the concerns.

The intelligence breach is the latest drama leading up to the visit. American officials say Trump shared details about an Islamic State terror threat related to the use of laptop

computers on aircraft with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Ambassador to the U.S. Sergey Kislyak. The disclosure apparently came as Trump boasted about his access to classified intelligence.

Avi Dichter, a lawmaker in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party and a former head of the Shin Bet security service, said that even if what was reported was true it did not deliver a damaging blow.

"The current president has been serving for slightly over 100 days. This is not enough time to accumulate experience that is as bad as it is described by the media," he told Israel's Army Radio.

"I am familiar with a few other cases over the years in other countries where they made use of materials — perhaps even in a more scandalous manner than was described by the media in this case."

Israeli Intelligence Minister Yisrael Katz said he had complete confidence in the American intelligence community. "Intelligence cooperation between Israel and the United States regarding the threats posed by Iran and its proxies and ISIS and its affiliates will continue and deepen," he said, using an acronym for the IS group. **AP**

AD

SATURDAY SUPER STACK

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what's ON



A BONSAI OF MY DREAM — ON THE PATH TO THE INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION - LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

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

UNTIL: December 12, 2017

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

MACAO ARTIST SOCIETY YOUTH COMMITTEE MEMBER'S EXHIBITION 2017

TIME: 11am-10pm

UNTIL: June 25, 2107

VENUE: Lakeside Gallery - S1 Room, Anim' Arte Nam Van

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

MONKEY KING

TIME: 8pm daily (no performances on Thursdays)

VENUE: Sands Cotai Theatre

ADMISSION: MOP420, MOP520, MOP780, MOP1080, MOP1580

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2882 8818

AD LIB- RECENT WORKS BY KONSTANTIN BESSMERTNY

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

UNTIL: May 28, 2017

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

ADMISSION: MOP5 (free on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

THRILLER

TIME: 8pm (Tuesdays to Friday)

2pm & 8pm (Saturdays)

2pm & 6pm (Sundays)

UNTIL: September 3, 2017

VENUE: Sands Cotai Theatre

ADMISSION: MOP420, MOP520, MOP780, MOP1080, MOP1580

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2882 8818

Offbeat

SOCIAL MEDIA ABUZZ AS FLYING INSECTS SWARM PART OF LONDON



Social media users in London are buzzing about an apparent swarm of flying insects that has descended on one part of the city.

Videos posted to Twitter this week show people ducking as the insects descend on Greenwich in southeast London. It's not clear what the bugs were or why they appeared in unusual numbers. Some say they're bees, but others describe them as wasps.

Transport for London, which oversees public transport in the capital, posted a picture from a traffic camera showing large numbers of the insects collecting on a traffic light, and warned drivers that a pedestrian crossing was "partially obstructed by bees." It warned: "Please approach with caution."

London police didn't immediately return a request for comment on whether they've received reports on the insects.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
17:40	Revenge Sr 2
18:20	Now Generation (Repeated)
19:10	Non-Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:30	Castle Sr 6
22:10	Now Generation
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:10	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:45	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

18 - 24 MAY

ALIEN: COVENANT

ROOM 1

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

Director: Ridley Scott

Starring: Michael Fassbender, Katherine Waterston

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 122min



KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD

ROOM 2

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

Director: Guy Ritchie

Starring: Charlie Hunnam, Jude Law, Berges-Frisbey

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 126min

GIFTED

ROOM 2

7:30pm

Director: Marc Webb

Starring: Chris Evans, Octavia Spencer, Mckenna Grace

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 101min

THE CIRCLE

ROOM 3

2:30, 4:30, 9:30pm

Director: James Ponsoldt

Starring: Tom Hanks, Emma Watson, John Boyega

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 110min

29 + 1

ROOM 3

7:30pm

Director: Kearen Pang

Starring: Chrissie Chau, Joyce Cheng, Ben Yeung

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 100min

MACAU TOWER

11 MAY - 29 MAY



ALIEN: COVENANT

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

Director: Ridley Scott

Starring: Michael Fassbender, Katherine Waterston

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 122min

this day in history



Helen Sharman

1991 SHARMAN BECOMES FIRST BRITON IN SPACE

Britain's first astronaut, 27-year-old Helen Sharman from Sheffield, has blasted into orbit.

The Soviet Soyuz TM-12 space capsule made a textbook launch from the Baikonur cosmodrome in the Soviet republic of Kazakhstan at 1350 BST carrying Miss Sharman and fellow cosmonauts Anatoly Artyebartsky and Sergei Krikalyov.

Her parents and sister watched from a viewing stand one kilometre away and saw their daughter smile and wave to the onboard camera.

She carries with her a photograph of the Queen, a butterfly brooch given to her by her father and a "space passport" in case her spacecraft is forced to land outside the Soviet Union.

Miss Sharman, a former chemist for the Mars chocolate company, had won her place in space in 1989 after answering an advertisement she heard on the car radio - "Astronaut wanted. No experience necessary."

She was eventually selected from over 13,000 applicants to be the British member of the Russian scientific space mission, Project Juno.

The USSR has already taken a Mongolian, an Afghan, a Cuban, a Syrian and a Japanese journalist to space.

She spent 18 gruelling months training in Star City, 30km north-east of Moscow and now speaks fluent Russian. She has become known among her comrades for her remarkably calm and unruffled nature. She has trained alongside her British back-up Major Tim Mace.

Tomorrow, the Soyuz is due to dock with the Mir space station which has been occupied by two crew members for the last six months.

The British element of the Juno project has had trouble raising funds and the only sponsors to come forward are Interflora, a watch manufacturer and a cassette tape company.

During her eight days in space, Miss Sharman will carry out a series of medical and agricultural experiments.

She will also take part in a radio-ham test with British schools, take photos of the British Isles and see how pansies grow in weightless conditions.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Seven days later, Helen Sharman came back to Earth in her Soyuz TM11 capsule which parachuted into Kazakhstan. With her was Commander Musa Manarov who held the record for the longest time in space at 541 days.

When she emerged from the capsule she said: "The air is very fresh. Smell the flowers, they are wonderful."

She was awarded an OBE in 1993.

She has since become a lecturer and broadcaster on science education.

After 15 years in space, the Mir space station was decommissioned and disintegrated in the Earth's atmosphere on 23 March 2001.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Your straightforward side may be sidetracked now while your mind - or possibly your heart - indulges in some fantastical stuff. Not that there's anything wrong with fantasy, mind you.

Taurus April 20-May 20 Before you open up and let the world know what's on your mind, be sure you're not betraying a confidence. You know how seriously you take the issue of loyalty?

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 If there's nothing pressing at work you have to do, think about taking a 'mental health' day - and don't let yourself feel guilty about it. Whether you switch shifts with someone or just promise to work extra hard tomorrow, do it.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 There's a difference between gossip and conversation - and up until late tonight, you'll definitely be in the mood for gossip. Not that you want to run anyone into the ground, of course, but exchanging a few choice tidbits.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 For some reason, individuals of a certain type seem to be gravitating toward you. You've just about had it with listening to sad stories, pleas for redemption and promises to do better next time.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 The heavens will offer you a mixed bag of energies today, but that kind of energetic potpourri suits you just fine. You're ready for anything at this point. You've been positively chomping at the bit for weeks.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 All of a sudden, you're determined to win, no matter what the cost, and you're thinking twice before you open your mouth and let your true feelings slide out. No, it's certainly not typical, but it's not exactly out of character, either.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Still focused on that object that's the perfect gift for a dear one? Or are you now officially ready to admit you're obsessed with it? For you, there's a fine line between those two sentiments.

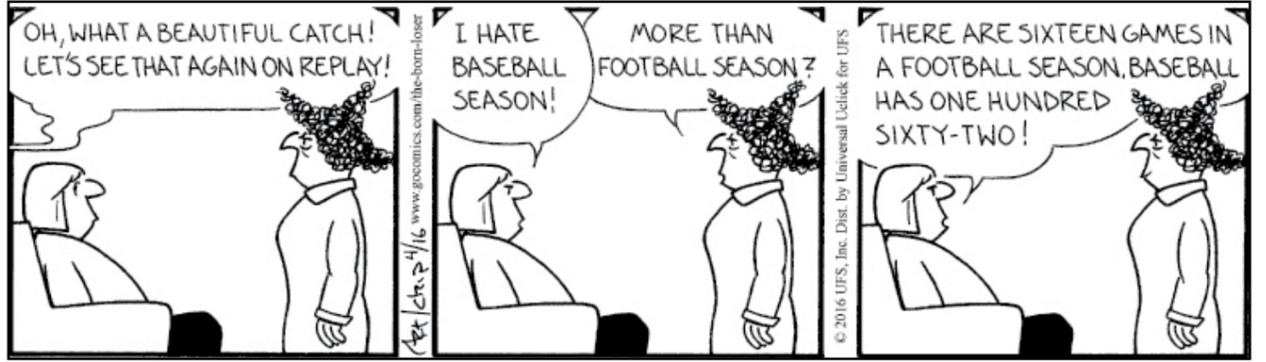
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You've always been famous for jumping on the moment - for taking advantage of whatever the universe has tossed your way and being happy with however it ends up.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You'll be exhibiting some very peculiar characteristics today: nostalgia, sentimentality and a desire to return to the past. No, that doesn't sound at all like you.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You may be feeling a bit rebellious - okay, a bit more rebellious - but you've certainly earned it. So when a dear one comes to you, expecting you to back down just because they say so, try not to laugh out loud.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Play your cards right, and you'll end up with an instant replay of last night's fun. Then again, play them any way at all, and you'll probably get the same effect. So what's the hold up?

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

Table with columns: CHINA, MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Rows include Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, Urumqi, Xi'an, Lhasa, Chengdu, Chongqing, Kunming, Nanjing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Hangzhou, Taipei, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, WORLD, Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, London, New York.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- PDQ; 5- "West Side Story" song; 10- How sweet ___; 14- Prison; 15- Representative; 16- Take a meal; 17- On ___ with; 18- Sherpa's home; 19- Able was ___; 20- Actress Loren; 22- Captivated; 24- Tire feature; 25- Edible pale-bluish mushroom; 26- Game played on horseback; 28- They get high twice a day; 32- Sgts., e.g.; 35- Santa ___. California; 37- One engraving; 38- Tin; 39- Unit just above a yard; 41- ... man ___ mouse?; 42- Ring of color; 45- Yale student; 46- Ark groupings; 47- Bahamian island; 48- Flying start?; 50- Dorsal; 54- Uneven, as if gnawed away; 58- Large wine bottle; 61- Uncomfortably stiff; 62- Yemeni, for one; 63- "The dog ate my homework," e.g.; 65- Uh-uh; 66- Capital of Italy; 67- Cobb, e.g.; 68- Barbershop request; 69- Fly; 70- Twice, a comforting comment; 71- Anthem starter;

DOWN: 1- With ___ of thousands!; 2- Flavor; 3- Wide open; 4- Possibly; 5- "Give that ___ cigar!"; 6- Ripen; 7- Drive away; 8- Mindlessly stupid; 9- Attorney follower; 10- Stupid; 11- Stadium level; 12- As to; 13- Highly ranked competitor in sporting events; 21- Promising words; 23- Catcher's glove; 25- Marrow host; 27- Tibetan monk; 29- Arab sailing vessel; 30- Eiel Saarinen's son; 31- Ladies of Sp.; 32- Final Four org.; 33- Low-___ diet; 34- Ripe for drafting; 36- Devoured; 37- Pennsylvania port; 40- Airline to Tel Aviv; 43- Tenth month of the year; 44- "Stay" singer Lisa; 46- Capital of Ontario; 49- Rock's ___ Speedwagon; 51- Way to cook; 52- Australian cockatoo; 53- Miss by ___; 55- Smells; 56- Photographic tone; 57- Foe; 58- Jolts; 59- Switch ending; 60- ___ Lama Ding Dong; 61- Broad; 64- Ingot;



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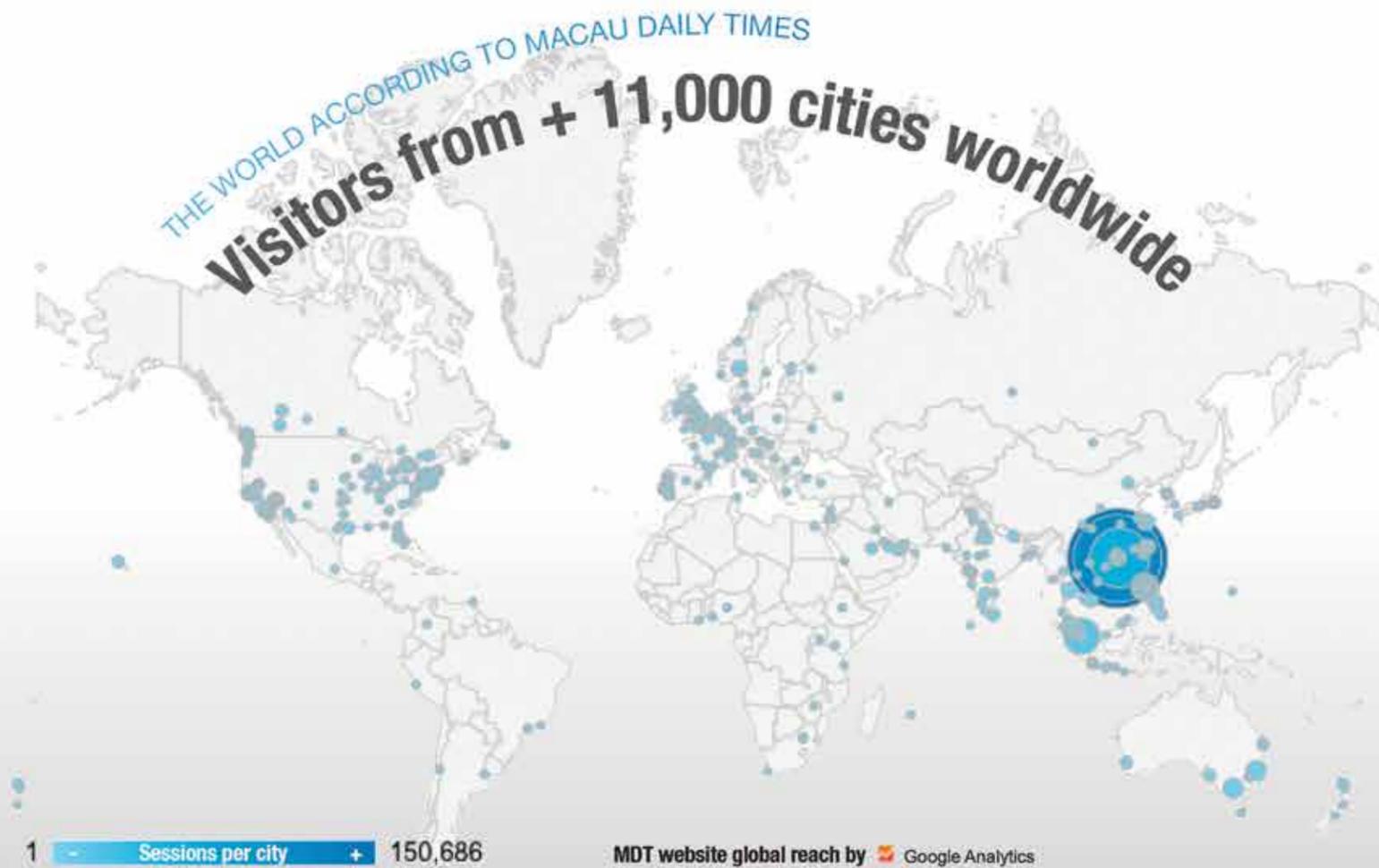
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“ THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’ ”

Danica Kirka, London

THE Two-Hour Marathon. For distance runners, it's a mystical goal equivalent to the four-minute mile that Roger Bannister broke in 1954; a test so difficult some have estimated it may be 50 years or more before anyone achieves it.

Now the USD270 billion market for athletic shoes and apparel is fueling an assault on the mark.

Nike and Adidas have announced separate plans to attack the barrier, with both introducing shoe lines linked to the effort. Wireless tech giant Vodafone last month said it was backing a third bid, hoping data gleaned from the quest will translate into wearable technology.

The leader so far is Nike, which came within a whisper of the barrier with a time of 2:00:25 in a run with top athletes on May 6. But Yannis Pitsiladis, a professor of sport and exercise science at the University of Brighton, England, may be the tortoise in this race with Nike's hare. He says running a 2-hour marathon will require a coordinated scientific effort and aims to raise \$30 million for a project that will increase the understanding of the limits of human performance. Vodafone is backing Pitsiladis.

"Nike are doing this because they realized, 'Wow, I can sell more shoes,'" he said. "For me, this is not marketing. It's what humans can do when they work together. It's about human ambition, human legacy. It's like a journey to Mars."

Nike, which built its brand on the exploits of Michael Jordan and legions of runners wearing Nike's trademark Swoosh, is already selling shoes developed as part of its Breaking2 project. The Nike Zoom VaporFly 4% model features an aerodynamic heel and carbon fiber plate, which Nike says will make runners 4 percent more efficient than its previous top-line marathon shoe. The price: \$250 a pair.

"Breaking2 is a quest to fully measure the extent of what the body is capable of," the company said by email. "Nike is looking to push the limits of human potential through product innovation, smarter training and an optimized environment — helping our athletes run what has never been run before."

The publicity generated by Nike's recent attempt, which was streamed live on the internet from a course festooned with red-and-white Swooshes, may have already helped the company reach millions of fitness fanatics and weekend athletes.

Running gear accounts for about 45 percent of the sporting goods market, according to the market research firm Mintel.

AP PHOTO



Olympic marathon champion Eliud Kipchoge crosses the finish line of a marathon race at the Monza Formula One racetrack

ATHLETICS

Billion dollar race to break 2-hour marathon mark is afoot

"The running market is huge," said Samantha Dover, a retail analyst at Mintel. Runners "like to have goals, to measure performance, to record it for future motivation. The aspiration element is helping to drive the market."

And it's not just shoes. It's fabrics that wick sweat from your skin, fitness tracking apps and wristbands that monitor your speed. Millennials in particular are looking for gadgets that push the boundaries of wearable technology.

"Utilizing emerging technologies to enhance elite athlete performance in areas such as nutrition and training will unlock opportunities for these technologies to enter additional compelling markets, whether they be a broad consumer market or even one like the military," said David Carter, executive director of the Sports Business Institute and professor at the University of Southern California Marshall Business School.

Nike says it started the Breaking2 program three years ago.

First it selected three top athletes based on their oxygen use, energy consumption and ability to sustain speed over long distance. Initially, the program worked to refine their training by monitoring performance with GPS watches and heart monitors. Then it went

a step further, measuring skin temperatures to determine the perfect race conditions and sweat rates to develop personalized hydration mixtures.

Finally, Nike took over the Monza racetrack in Italy for what was essentially a 26.2-mile experiment rather than a race.

The flat Formula One course with gentle curves provided ideal conditions for the three marathoners, who were supported by 32 other athletes who ran in groups of six to form a wind-breaking wedge and keep them on pace. Moped riders delivered their specially formulated drinks: No scrambling at the drink table at this race.

Eliud Kipchoge came agonizingly close to the goal, finishing in 2:00:25. One second a mile faster and he would have made history.

■ Nike and Adidas have announced separate plans to attack the barrier, with both introducing shoe lines linked to the effort

Although Kipchoge beat Dennis Kimetto's world record of 2:02:57, his time won't be recognized because the event wasn't sanctioned by track and field's governing body.

Critics say the Monza run may actually have shown how far humans are from running two hours in a sanctioned race. If some of the world's best athletes can't do it under ideal conditions, how long will it be before someone who has to contend with the vagaries of running through city streets in unpredictable weather breaks the barrier?

If the sub-two-hour marathon is the Mount Everest of human endurance, Kipchoge "has reached the ledge just beneath its summit," said Ross Tucker, the head scientist for World Rugby who writes for the Science of Sport blog. Creating perfect conditions just helped him get really close.

"It is, to finish the analogy, like getting so close to the summit with the benefit of extra oxygen," he said.

Pitsiladis, an anti-doping expert for the International Olympic Committee, is definitely not giving up. His star runner, Kenenisa Bekele, holds the second-best marathon time in history and finished second in this year's London Marathon.

Although Pitsiladis launched

his SUB2 project in November 2014 with support from institutions such as Southern Methodist University, funding has been harder to come by because the effort was focused more on science than commerce. Pitsiladis says he has paid for some of the research with his own money, maxing out his credit card and mortgaging his house.

Vodafone recently became his first big name corporate supporter, offering technology to help runners and coaches track performance.

"A lot of people thought I was crazy," Pitsiladis said. "They're not saying this now."

Santiago Tenorio, Vodafone's head of network strategy and architecture, said the company's interest in SUB2 stems from previous advances it made working with high-end sports. The company once partnered with McLaren's Formula One team, and applied the technology it developed to serving its customers on highways. It wants to do the same with running.

He ticks off the things Vodafone will work on to help athletes, like offering real-time weather data or sensors that measure speed, pace, skin temperature and sweat composition.

"If we can help an athlete break the two-hour marathon," he says, "imagine what we can do with you." AP

opinion

Girl About Globe
Linda Kennedy



MAKING UP IS HARD TO DO

I'm going to make eyes at you. Better ones than ever before – because of a pencil pilfered from a Macau hotel room.

There it was, positioned diagonally across the small jotter that's still provided in swanky hotels. It was a room in a Cotai Strip resort that shall be nameless, and I could almost hear the echoes of children of previous occupants.

'Daddy, what's this?'
'A pencil. It was for writing, in the old days.'
'Why did people use it?'
'Um, it rubs out. Whatever you write, you can make vanish.'

'Oh, like Snapchat.'
I took the pencil, after an assessment of the legality of this act – anything not electronically attached to the minibar has invitation written all over it, right? – and started writing. That's when I realized I needed pencil practice. How did one hold it? Chopsticks seemed easy in comparison. How much weight did one apply? Pressure! But I'm an old hand at pencils, so my skills returned.

History is written by men, and generally excludes women's experience. So, you may have heard this is a purely digital age, when writing utensils have no place. To which I say: poppycock. Women use pencils every day: eyeliner, brow liner, lip liner if we're in a fancy mood. But, I concede, our growing tendency to tap and swipe has led to a diminution in writing competence, and that has a knock on effect in make up application. That wonky upper lid you had to redraw yesterday? Pencil inproficiency. If we don't write, it affects the steadiness of the hand.

But we're a crossover generation. We at least remember using pencils at school. What will happen to future generations of young women if they never put pencil to paper, women to whom a pencil will just be a skirt shape? Badly drawn eyes? Smudges? Kohl crises? I worry. Yes, that's an actual frown, not a pencil line.

Yet future females will need pencils. Unless there is to be SmartLiner where you open an app, stare into the camera and your 3-D printer via Bluetooth propels makeup on your eyelids, actual pencil-wielding skills will be required.

Women of the near future, open your eyes. Hone your HB skills. Pencil it up when you can. Make notes in pencil, not on your phone. Then you too will experience the sheer joy of pencils. You can chew them – no calories. Upend one and you can rub things out. You will wish you could do that with some experiences in life. Oh yes.

Meantime, another type of jotting on the wider experience of a Macau high-end hotel. It's life at a different level. Solicitude. Concierges catering to whims. Apologies from staff that the lift is taking a while. A bathroom that is bigger than most Hong Kong flats.

Given Macau's expertness at building these vast complexes, how about a hotel called the HongKongerMacau? A spacious and mannerly haven, where the walls of corridors are painted to depict Hong Kong shop fronts but there are neither crowds nor construction clangs and bangs. Where the humidity is low. Where there is a hotel MTR train to take you to rooms furthest out on the wings, to which a staff member escorts you and says 'here is your carriage, madam. Can I get you a drink to help you enjoy your journey?' Where the rooms offer no acoustic evidence of your neighbours' every action. Slogan: 'The HongKongerMacau: Hong Kong as you wish it could be.'

I wrote all this on the ferry, in pencil. This week, my eyeliner will be better. Hong Kong will be the same.

THE BUZZ AFTER MISSILE TESTS, NORTH KOREA'S ASIAN CUP QUALIFIER POSTPONED

North Korea's match against Malaysia in 2019 Asian Cup qualifying has been postponed a second time amid new missile tests by the host nation.

The Asian Football Confederation says the June 8 game, itself postponed from March 28, could be played on Oct. 5.

Still, the AFC did not commit to playing in Pyongyang. A neutral venue could be ordered.

The Asian soccer body cited security risks caused by "geo-political tension on the Korean Peninsula" for the latest postponement.

The first delay followed an investigation into the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's estranged half-brother in Kuala Lumpur.

The teams are in a four-nation Asian Cup qualifying group that also includes Lebanon and Hong Kong.

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	65-95 Moderate	☹️
High Density Residential Area	65-95 Moderate	☹️
Ambient	65-95 Moderate	☹️

SOURCE: DSI/MG

Japan's Princess Mako to marry ocean-loving legal assistant

Yuri Kageyama, Tokyo

PRINCESS Mako, the granddaughter of Japan's emperor, will marry an ocean-loving legal assistant who can ski, play the violin and cook.

Japanese nuptials tend to be highly ritualized, especially for a royal family member, and the buildup to the wedding is likely to take time. A public announcement would come first, then a wedding date would be set and then the couple will make a formal report to the emperor and empress.

Quasi-public NHK TV reported the news late Tuesday and the Imperial Household Agency confirmed the report to Japanese media who belong to an exclusive "press club" system. But the agency declined comment to The Associated Press.

The man who won the princess' heart spoke to reporters yesterday, and his comments dominated national TV coverage though he gave few details.

Kei Komuro said he works as a legal assistant and had just spoken over the phone with Mako, who had been a fellow student at International Christian University in Tokyo.

"When the right time comes, I'd like to talk about it," he told reporters, bowing



Princess Mako and the lucky guy, Kei Komuro, in the news

repeatedly, wearing a suit and tie.

The couple, who are both 25, met at a restaurant in Tokyo's Shibuya about five years ago at a party to talk about studying abroad, and they have been dating several times a month recently, NHK said.

Komuro was once tapped as "Prince of the Sea" to promote tourism to the beaches of Shonan in Kanagawa prefecture, a facet of his profile highlighted by local media.

Women can't succeed to the Chrysanthemum Throne. Mako's father and her younger brother are in line to succeed Emperor Akihito, but after her uncle Crown Prince Naruhito, who is first in line.

Once she marries, Mako

will no longer be a princess and will become a commoner.

NHK said Mako has already introduced Komuro to her parents, and they approve. A formal announcement could come as soon as next month, Japanese media said.

Unlike royalty in Great Britain and other European countries, the emperor and his family tend to be cloistered, although they travel abroad and appear at cultural events.

Akihito, 83, is the son of Hirohito, Japan's emperor during World War II.

Akihito expressed his desire to abdicate last year, and Japan has been preparing legislation especially for him so he can. **AP**

WORLD BRIEFS



IRAN'S presidential election is seen as a referendum on Hassan Rouhani's outreach to Western nations and the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, which lifted crippling international sanctions. However, the average Iranian has yet to see benefits from the deal, making Rouhani vulnerable in his bid for another four-year term.

KUWAIT A new investigation into claims that Kuwaiti leaders of the Olympic Council of Asia bribed the region's soccer officials has been opened by the Asian Football Confederation.



BRITAIN Food giant Nestle yesterday lost a bid to trademark the distinctive four-fingered shape of the KitKat chocolate bar in Britain, the latest round in a courtroom battle with rival candy-maker Cadbury, on the basis of insufficient evidence that consumers rely on the shape to identify the chocolate bar.

BRAZIL A survey by a major Brazilian newspaper says that one person is either killed or wounded by a stray bullet every two days in Rio de Janeiro. It says that nearly all of the victims were struck in one of Rio's shantytown slums or in low-income districts.

CANADA plans to apologize to Canadians who have faced injustice because of their sexuality. A special adviser to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on LGBT issues said yesterday the government will acknowledge the role legislation and policies have played in the discrimination.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Photo by Arthur Mola/Invision/AP



Cannes secure. The Palais De Festival prior to the start of the 70th international film festival, Cannes, southern France. The festival runs from today until May 29, amid heavy security.