



FINTECH INDUSTRY GROWTH

Chinese companies remain the driving force behind the continuous growth of the financial technology industry

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ROYAL DRAGON CASINO OPENS

Chan Meng Kam's new addition to the local gaming industry opened with 20 relocated tables

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FREE PRESS, HOWEVER CONSTRAINTS REMAIN

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

WORLD BRIEFS



IRAQ The Kurdish referendum on independence from Iraq was approved by more than 92 percent of voters, officials said yesterday, as Iraq's prime minister vowed to keep his country united without resorting to the use of force. Even with the strong support, the non-binding vote is unlikely to lead to formal independence. Virtually the entire international community is opposed to any redrawing of the map. More on p13

PHILIPPINES

President Rodrigo Duterte respects a reported investigation into allegations that he has undeclared wealth hidden in bank accounts, his spokesman said yesterday, adding "the president has nothing to hide."



BANGLADESH At least 163 people have been killed and 91 others have gone missing over the past year in attacks carried out by Rohingya Muslim militants in Myanmar's restive Rakhine state, Myanmar government officials claimed.

SRI LANKA A group led by Buddhist monks mobbed a United Nations-run safe house for Rohingya Muslims, claiming that they were terrorists and demanding they be sent back to Myanmar, prompting police to relocate them.

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Six newcomers among appointed lawmakers

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Former Thai Prime Minister sentenced in absentia to 5 years in prison

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Tighter competition in FinTech industry

Lynzy Valles

CHINESE tech companies remain the driving force behind the continuous growth of the financial technology (FinTech) industry, says Head Content Strategist (Asia Pacific) of NexChange, Andrew Work.

With the emerging popularity of alternative Chinese payment methods through non-bank firms such as Alibaba's WePay and Tencent's Tenpay, even giant banking institutions have been threatened by the increasing use of these methods, particularly in China.

Recent figures from JPMorgan Chase show that its QuickPay processes 94 million payments every year, but Tencent processed 46 billion payments in just five days during the last Lunar New Year.

In contrast, as the user base of alternative payment methods in China grows, American tech giants are just beginning to tip-toe into FinTech.

Speaking at the French Macau Business Association (FMBA) talk, Andrew Work described the move as a defensive one as these American companies are seeing Chinese tech giants ready to take their businesses outside their country while American firms are not ready to compete with these entities.

"Chinese tech companies went to finance big time and they're doing a fantastic job. They're competing heavily with each other and a lot of this is because of the use of a leapfrogging technique," Work explained.

Significant populations in China were inadequately served by financial institutions compared to individuals in Western societies, creating an increased



Andrew Work

market for mobile finance and consumer-driven FinTech.

Currently, there is still a massive drive in China to invest in technology, as exemplified by the moves of Chinese insurance titan Ping An, who was awarded a USD40 billion venture fund to become one of China's top tech companies – along with Alibaba, Tencent and Baidu.

"[These firms are] reinvesting everything in Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, insurance [and such]. It's a stunning amount of money that they want to deploy to become a technology company," the expert shared.

Although Chinese tech giants are the leaders in the FinTech industry, there is ongoing debates as to whether China has an advantage in this sector.

Chinese firms are better able to coordinate with government policies, financial institutions and technology companies, whereas in America's adversarial system, regulators and regulations may

have deterred American companies from entering the sector.

"They see that financial institutions are constantly at war with regulators and getting hammered with giant fines. They don't want to have to go there and deal with that because they see it as a big risk," the expert explained.

The great thing about Fintech in a lot of areas is that it's so much easier for people with low-income levels to be involved.

ANDREW WORK

"In China, tech companies work closely with the government and the government recognizes the power of these companies in terms of collecting data, so they collect financial data on people. The motivation is different," he added.

With the growing number of Chinese tourists, tourist hotspots regions such as the US or Europe also accommodate payments made through mobile apps such as WePay or Alipay.

The travel industry has also significantly benefited from FinTech, enabling them to instantly transact online, along with the availability of insurance which can be made through ATMs, particularly in Hong Kong International Airport.

Meanwhile, as banks remain a tough competitor against popular Chinese payment apps, the expert said that the transition of conservative financial institutions to FinTech is slow. How-

ever, Work noted that some institutions have already established standards of innovation.

"It's like watching a large ship turn itself in a different direction, it's slow.

But once it gets going, they're going to go [all out]," he said.

These institutions deploy old technologies but will also invest in the next technological wave, whether it is in AI, robot advisers, and related innovations, and will start to put capital into quantum computing.

Regarding cryptocurrency, Work noted that regulators in Singapore, Hong Kong and the US have pushed people into the token sale model.

The expert said that traditional finance institutions, as represented by banks, regulators, and the government, have become inaccessible for people seeking to invest or participate in an initial public offering (IPO).

There are high fees associated with banking, along with tougher regulations, thus Work noted that investors are turning to alternative forms of investment such as cryptocurrency – which require little capital.

"The great thing about FinTech in a lot of areas is that it's so much easier for people with low-income levels to be involved," he said.

Using equity crowd funding as an example, he continued, "I don't need to have a large amount to invest but I can get in the game. In traditional finance, you can't do that," Work added.

Although cryptocurrency investors do not need a large amount of capital, these investors do need to acquire a base level of technical know-how.

SURVEY

Cross-border couples in HK eye Greater Bay Area home

A majority of cross-border couples polled recently in Hong Kong have indicated that they are considering moving to other cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay

Area, a Hong Kong-based think tank told Xinhua yesterday.

In a survey by the Hong Kong Ideas Center that covered over 800 people involved in marriages between residents of the

Chinese mainland and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), 55 percent of the respondents said that they were considering moving to other "Greater Bay cities" such

as Shenzhen because of relatively lower cost of living and bigger living space.

The Greater Bay Area will include the HKSAR, Macau, and nine cities in south China's Guang-

dong Province, namely, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Dongguan, Huizhou, Zhongshan, Foshan, Zhaoqing and Jiangmen.

The survey also found that the number of Hong Kong women marrying with men from the mainland has been growing over the past 20 years from 2,190 in 1997 to over 7,600 in 2016.

Over 70 percent of the respondents agreed that

cross-border marriages "have a positive impact on the integration of the two places."

The center's executive director Anna Lai said she hoped the survey would help Hong Kong society realize the change in social structure and the fact that "cross-border couples and their children have become important stakeholders in Hong Kong's economy and society." Xinhua

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INSPECTORS from the Department of Sewerage and Urban Roads of the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) have allegedly made things difficult for construction companies undertaking underground piping projects and have reportedly solicited advantages from them.

The Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) found that a serving inspector and a former inspector of IACM allegedly committed a range of similar offences, including abuse of office, document forgery, high-value fraud, abuse of trust, money laundering and intentionally making false declarations of assets.

According to a statement issued by the CCAC, the cases have been referred to the Public Prosecutions Office.

Applications for excavation permits must be made to the IACM in advance in cases of trench excavations in public streets for infrastructure construction and pipe connections, whether they are to be carried out by private entities or public utility companies.

The inspectors of the Division of Public Roads under the Department of Sewerage and Urban Roads of the IACM are responsible for site supervision during excavation periods, in addition to handling project delays.

According to the anti-graft watchdog's investigation, an inspector from the Division of Public Roads allegedly abused his supervisory power to illegally ob-

Former IACM inspectors allegedly abused their power

tain advantages at a roadworks site.

As such, the quality of roadworks under his supervision could not be ensured, and extra time for the roadworks was arbitrarily granted, leading to repeated schedule delays.

An IACM worker surnamed Kou was an inspector working under the trench excavations monitoring group.

Knowing that there would be contractors carrying out underground piping works, Kou abused his inspectorate position by attempting to contact the contractors and ask them to sub-contract the works to his friend's company.

Kou also pretended to be the representative of his friend's company and accepted the projects.

He sub-contracted the projects again to other companies for implementation at prices lower than that offered by the original contractors in order to obtain profit.

Once the fees from the contractors were received, Kou kept the majority of the proceeds for himself and defaulted payments to the subcontracting companies which were carrying out the works.



Kou also forged his friend's company chop, quotation letters and invoices so that he could get the projects and receive payments.

Kou has defrauded projects from several construction companies by similar means in the past three years, which involved an amount of fraudulently obtained money approximating MOP550,000. He has allegedly committed abuse of office, document forgery, high-value fraud and money laundering.

CCAC added that Kou abused his power by requesting the contractors of piping works to sub-

contract them to the companies he introduced.

After receiving payment from the contractors, Kou obtained financial advantage in the form of the contractual price difference, constituting the crimes of abuse of office and abuse of trust.

Moreover, using the excuse that he had successfully bid for a lunar New Year firecracker vending booth, Kou requested that owners of the piping works companies buy firecrackers and fireworks at a price higher than market value.

The owners who refused to make purchases were given

a hard time and punished by Kou without valid reason the following year.

From that point, they purchased firecrackers from Kou at a price set by him every year. Those who purchased firecrackers from Kou no longer experienced difficulties in sewage works for which they were responsible, and those projects were supervised with more relaxed standards.

Such acts constituted an abuse of office, the CCAC reiterated.

The bureau found that Kou has been addicted to gambling for a long time, having both a betting account in a lottery company and being a frequenter of slot parlors for gambling.

The CCAC also found that Wong, another inspector of the Division of Public Roads who resigned in February this year, formed a works company with his friends in the name of his elder brother when he was working for the IACM.

Taking advantage of his duty to supervise underground piping works, Wong obtained contracts of some piping projects through the company he controlled. Moreover, he was still engaged in the supervision of the projects conducted by the company and relaxed the supervision standards so that the company could escape punishment despite several irregularities in its works.

Between 2014 and 2016, Wong was responsible for the supervision of more than 30 piping projects done by the company, which have also been found to constitute an abuse of office.

CCAC PROBE FOLLOWS AUDIT REPORT

THE CCAC findings follow a report issued in May by the Commission of Audit (CA) criticizing the "Road Works Coordination Group." The IACM president, José Tavares, reacted to the CA report revealing that

"four inspectors who did not do their work carefully, back in the years of 2014 and 2015, have already been removed from their positions." He said that IACM had started disciplinary processes against them.

THE BOY FROM MACAU

Journalist, author Luís Andrade de Sá dies at 58



Luís Andrade de Sá in Macau (May 2015)

JOURNALIST and researcher, Luís Andrade de Sá, died early yesterday (Macau time) in his birthplace, Setúbal, from prolonged cancer illness. He was 58.

Born on the banks of the Sado River on December 31, 1958, Andrade de Sá studied journalism at a Lisbon university before starting his career in 1984. He worked in Macau from then until 2000, and was part of the initial teams at TDM-TV, where he participated in several innovative shows at the newly-created TV station, ultimately reaching an editor position. Sá left the local broadcaster in 1993 to

join the now-extinct daily newspaper, Futuro de Macau.

Luís Andrade de Sá was one of the most prolific Macau correspondents, working for O Público – one of the top newspapers in Portugal, penning hundreds of features during the critical years of the late Transition Period until the handover on December 20, 1999.

Sá eventually moved to Lisbon in the early 2000s to become a staff journalist at the Lusa news agency where he held several positions over 17 years. He was the managing editor (chefe de redacção) of the Portuguese

news agency between 2007 and 2011, after returning from his first 2-year stint as Lusa chief correspondent in Maputo, Mozambique. He would then return in 2011 to the former Portuguese colony in Africa for another three years at this job.

In 2014, Luís Sá decided to come back to "his" Macau – "the place I was once happy," he told me – to join a new media project, the Plataforma bilingual newspaper.

An avid reader, researcher, and writer, Luís Andrade de Sá penned several books on Macau's contemporary history, most notably, "The Boys From Macau," a pio-

neering insight into the Portuguese/Macanese community of Hong Kong and the Far East.

A traveler at heart, Sá's first title to be published was "A História na Bagagem" (History in the Luggage), a prelude to his seminal works on Hotel Bela Vista and the history of aviation in Macau.

The journalist was hospitalized at a clinic in Setúbal in February after being diagnosed with cancer around two years ago in Macau. Luís Andrade de Sá is survived by his children Daniel and Luísa, and his wife Isadora Ataíde, who is also a journalist, and a scholar. **PC**

Three UM scholars among seven appointed lawmakers

THE Chief Executive (CE), Chui Sai On, has appointed seven members to the Legislative Assembly.

Only one of the lawmakers – Ma Chi Seng –remains from the seven he originally appointed by Chui back in 2013. Ma Chi Seng is the grandson of legendary entrepreneur Ma Man-kei, who is considered one of the most influential people in Macau.

Chui Sai On appointed three professors from Macau University – Davis Fong (Associate Professor in International Resort Management and Director of the Institute for the Study of Commercial Gaming), Iau Ten Pio (Assistant Dean of Faculty of Law and Coordinator of the Bachelor of Law in Chinese Language Program), and Lao Chi Ngai (Research Manager of the Centre for Macau Studies).

Chui also appointed Pang Chuan (Director of the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management at the Macau University of Science and Technology), Chan Wa Keong (a lawyer) and Wu Chou Kit (a civil engineer).

No member of the Macanese



The CE casts his vote for the legislative election

community was appointed, although there was speculation that such an appointment could occur following lawyer Leonel Alves' voluntary retirement.

The Legislative Assembly is made up of 33 members, of whom 14 are directly elected, 12 are indirectly elected, and seven are appointed.

Article Two of the Legislative Assembly Election Law prescribes that the Chief Executive will appoint seven lawmakers via an executive order within 15 days upon receiving the vote audit of the Legislative Assembly election.

The new legislature, Macau's sixth since 1999, will hold its first session on October 16.



World Tourism Day celebrated with various activities

WORLD Tourism Day was once more celebrated in Macau with various activities, from greeting the Lucky Tourist, to the traditional Tray Race and a celebratory dinner.

Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) officials arrived at the Outer Harbor Ferry Terminal this morning to present welcome souvenirs to the "Lucky Tourist" on World Tourism Day, while more souvenirs were distributed to visitors at MGTO's Tourist Information counters throughout the day. The "Lucky Tourists" this year were a married couple, surnamed Arakawa, from Japan who are staying one night for their first vacation in Macau.

The celebrations followed by the traditional Tray Race. Organized by the Macau Government Tou-

risms Office (MGTO) as part of the day's celebrations, the race attracted a total of 160 participants who were categorized according to gender to represent over 20 local hotels and restaurants. The fastest tray racer was female – Wu Min Yi (Future Bright Group), while the winner of the male section was He Fuxing (Wynn Palace). Each received prize money of MOP3,888. This year, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) announced the theme of World Tourism Day to be "Sustainable Tourism – a Tool for Development". According to a statement by MGTO, "in Macau, tourism contributes not only as a powerful driver for moderate economic diversification but also as a major force that leads to improvement in the quality of local people's lives."

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Royal Dragon Casino kicks off with 20 relocated tables

Renato Marques

BUSINESSMAN Chan Meng Kam's new addition to the local gaming industry - Royal Dragon Casino - opened late yesterday morning in the ZAPE area.

In addition to a small three-star hotel component, the casino began operations immediately with players filling almost all of the at least 20

gaming tables that were relocated from other casinos owned by Chan. These include Casino Golden Dragon and other casinos under SJM Holdings, according to Chan at the opening ceremony.

During a visit to the venue yesterday, the Times noticed that the license holder (SJM Holdings) logo was widely present in the gaming room signage. Connected by a long escalator

and occupying two separate areas in both the ground floor and upper floor, the casino area is able to hold up to 25 gaming tables. Regarding the final number of tables, the casino owner also said that adjustments would be done at a later stage, as the main goal was "to open first."

Chan took the opportunity to reveal that the total investment in the project

has reached approximately MOP1.5 billion.

Despite the red-carpet opening ceremony and immediate opening of the new gaming venue, the director of the Gaming Inspection, and Coordination Bureau (DICJ), Paulo Martins Chan, revealed at a press conference on Tuesday that the bureau has yet to finalize the grant of a license for the casino to operate.

Unemployment rate remains at 2 percent

The general unemployment rate for June-August 2017 remained stable at 2 percent from the previous period (May-July 2017), according to the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). The unemployment rate of residents was 2.7 percent, down by 0.1 percent. Meanwhile, the underemployment rate was 0.5 percent, up by 0.1 percent. The total number of participants in the labor force was 392,100 and the labor force participation rate stood at 71.5 percent. Total employment was 384,200 while employed residents totaled 283,800, up by 100 and 1,200 respectively from the previous period. The number of unemployed residents was 7,900, down by 100 from the previous period.

Mainland, Macau negotiate CEPA upgrade

The negotiation between mainland China and Macau on comprehensively upgrading the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangements (CEPA) has entered its final stage, with an upgraded version expected to be signed at the end of this year. A meeting held on Tuesday between representatives from China's Ministry of Commerce and the Economy and Finance of the local government to negotiate the terms and conditions of the upgraded version of CEPA, which includes two new agreements on investment as well as economic and technical cooperation. The mainland and Macau signed CEPA in 2003 to forge closer ties. In 2014 and 2015, two new agreements were signed under the framework of CEPA to further liberalize trade in services.

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AIPIM: Portuguese, English journalists think freedom of press well established

Daniel Beittler

THE vast majority of Portuguese- and English-speaking journalists in Macau consider the level of press freedom in the territory to be satisfactory, a new study released by the Macau Portuguese and English Press Association (AIPIM) shows.

Some 80 percent of the survey respondents said that they thought freedom of the press was well established in the MSAR, though most of them also highlighted the existence of “[media] constraints induced by access to sources.” Less than 10 percent of respondents said that freedom of the press did not exist in Macau.

The survey, which was distributed to non-Chinese media outlets between July and November last year, asked respondents to answer six questions about freedom of the press, violations that they had personally experienced or heard about from others, and the ease of access to information from government sources.

A subsequent report was assembled by Frederico Rato, José Manuel Simões and Rui Flores and presented yesterday at a press conference organized by AIPIM.

The report found that the major problem faced by the journalistic community in Macau is access to sources, particularly concerning “information that should be public but is concealed.”

“As a Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China, Macau seems not to be immune to a certain secretive culture, which has been entrenched in the way some public entities perform their duties,” the authors of the report argued.

The authors of the document point out the consequences of not disclosing or facilitating in a timely manner information to the press: “At the end of the day, the authorities don’t communicate ‘only’ to and with the journalists. In truth, they communicate to the citizens through the journalists.”

“The principle of an open and transparent public administration is not fully observed when

answers to journalists’ questions take days or weeks or when authorities turn a deaf ear on the reporters’ enquiries. To communicate by fax or email makes the whole procedure lengthy and the spontaneity of the reply is also a factor to be taken into account to assess the pertinence of the questions raised,” the report reads.

Generally, however, journalists in Macau face few restrictions, the report indicates. The MSAR government does not attempt to limit access to the internet and there have been no reports of threats to the physical or ethical integrity of journalists.

Nevertheless, about 20 percent of the survey respondents recalled at least one instance of having their freedom of the press rights violated. Three of the nine respondents that reported violations argued that “the unhindered access to sources is an inherent part of freedom of the press,” according to the AIPIM report.

“**Since the end of the survey period, we have witnessed several disturbing incidents.**”

JOSÉ CARLOS MATIAS
AIPIM PRESIDENT

As the surveys were distributed and completed last year, there is a striking absence of recent cases involving press interference by Macau immigration authorities and the Electoral Affairs Commission for the Legislative Assembly election (CAEAL).

Since Typhoon Hato swept into the city on August 23, at least 15 Hong Kong journalists have been barred from entering Macau. The media personnel were reportedly traveling to the MSAR to either cover the after-

took part in this survey, the answers are significant,” the report notes. However, the results are likely to be subject to a wide margin of error, due to the small number of respondents. AIPIM president José Carlos Matias said that he thinks 44 is enough to attain a “partial understanding” of how non-Chinese journalists regard freedom of the press in Macau. “We are satisfied with the level of participation, but of course we would like to see more,” he said.



Frederico Rato (right), José Carlos Matias (center) and José Manuel Simões

math of the typhoon or the Legislative Assembly election on September 17.

The CAEAL was also the subject of widespread criticism after it forced Portuguese newspaper Plataforma Macau to pull an ar-

ticle during the election blackout period, when Legislative Assembly candidates are forbidden from engaging in electoral propaganda. “Since the end of the survey period, we have witnessed several disturbing incidents,” AIPIM

president José Carlos Matias said yesterday. “These are worrying signals of course. [...] We hope that the authorities will soon realize that to continue on this path is not only unfair, but also unwise.”

PORTUGUESE is not being given the respect it deserves as an official language of the Macau SAR, the president of the Macau Portuguese and English Press Association advanced during yesterday’s press conference, and this is impairing the ability of non-Chinese-speaking journalists to fully comprehend issues discussed in the legislative branch of government.

Citing the claims of several journalists that not everything discussed in Legislative Assembly meetings is being accurately translated from Chinese to Portuguese, the AIPIM report argued that language issues in Macau constrict access to information.

Macau’s two official languages are Chinese and Portuguese, and public sector entities – including the legislature – are required to provide information in both.

However, on the basis of claims made by survey respondents, the AIPIM report noted that “not everything stated in the discussions is translated, namely side remarks and vulgarisms, which limits the capacity of journalists to unequivocally understand the tone of the discourse.”

English, which does not hold the legal status of being an official language but is widely spoken in Macau to varying de-

Lost in translation



grees of proficiency, is also problematic, according to some journalists.

“The ever-frequent use of English in communicating with journalists in a region where Chinese and Portuguese are the official languages is another problem identified by media workers as not conducive to facilitating access to information,” noted the report.

English is used more extensively than Portuguese in the private sector, but it has also found a way to supplant the latter in the case of public concessionaires such as utility companies and gaming operators.

AIPIM president José Carlos Matias believes that the encroachment of English and Portuguese in the territory does not represent a zero-sum game with respect to either language. Speaking on behalf of the organization he heads, Matias

argued that both deserve a place in Macau.

“I don’t regard this as a zero-sum game,” said Matias. “We never look at things as Portuguese at the expense of English, or vice versa.”

“What we want, first of all, is for Portuguese to be fully respected as an official language of the Macau SAR – because we all know that it’s not. So we are lobbying for that, especially in the different branches of power, but also for the public service concessions, which often fail to provide information in Portuguese.”

At the same time, Matias recognizes a growing need for English in Macau.

“The share of the population who don’t speak Portuguese or Chinese is increasing by the day,” he said, “and it is important is to make them feel that they are part of Macau.” **DB**

AIPIM: SAMPLE SIZE WAS SATISFACTORY

THE REPORT is based on the responses of 44 non-Chinese-speaking journalists in Macau, who were surveyed between July and November 2016. It is estimated that some 70 to 80 journalists in Macau are employed by non-Chinese media, though a definitive number is not known. “Considering that it was carried out on a voluntary basis and taking into account that a sizeable share of the Portuguese- and English-speaking journalistic community



寶雅座 AUX BEAUX ARTS

SHARING MENU DEBUTS

MGM MACAU's famous French restaurant Aux Beaux Arts has unveiled a decadent new option for date nights and gatherings: a sharing menu

The brasserie's latest list of specials – titled à partager, which means "to share" in French – offer up a medley of seafood and steaks. According to the Aux Beaux Arts chefs, one of the new menu showstoppers is the MOP1,050 côte de boeuf (beef rib) which clocks in at a whopping full kilogram. Another highlight is the MOP650 surf-and-turf combination of ribeye and Boston lobster, served with garlic butter or mornay. Chefs say the signature dover sole à la meuniere with sautéed spinach and lemon, priced at a more wallet-friendly MOP430, is also not to be missed.

The other half of the sharing menu is just as tempting. For MOP980, diners can get a perfectly prepared rock lobster weighing in at a generous 850 grams, again with a side of garlic butter or mornay. MOP750 will buy the assorted grill: a hefty platter of chicken breast, beef, lamb chops, smoked ham and sausage designed to appeal to meat lovers all over Macau. Also on the list is the MOP500 seafood flambé: an array of delicacies ranging from a hearty Boston lobster and Alaskan crab legs to the smaller, but equally delicious sea prawns, mussels and scallops. All items on the new sharing menu are served with a complimentary side dish or accompagnement, as Aux Beaux Arts describes it.

Celebrated for its traditional French cuisine, fresh seafood, and world-class wines, the award-winning Aux Beaux Arts is loved by locals and travellers for its authentic cooking, impeccable service and intimate atmosphere. Decorated with dark wood panelling and chandeliers, the restaurant's warm and elegant interior calls to mind a 1930s Parisian bistro. Those in the mood for al fresco dining can sit under the dome of MGM MACAU's vast Grande Praça and take in the ambiance of the resort's central aquarium.



Aux Beaux Arts is open daily from 6:00 pm to midnight.
Brunch is available from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm during weekends,
followed by high tea from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm.



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The Tiguan 2 is a great all-grown-up SUV with distinctive styling which redefines its class and confidently points the way to the future. The new generation Tiguan is the first sport utility vehicle to be based on the modular transverse matrix (MQB), and it sets new standards in design, comfort and functionality. In doing so it of course remains capable of off-road, with a rugged all-wheel drive system that includes premium class technology for use on and off the highway. The Tiguan 2 is, then, both more SUV and more than an SUV.



Volkswagen

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Alstom, Siemens forget high-speed-rail feud amid Asian onslaught

Christopher Jasper

ALSTOM SA's merger with the train-making arm of Siemens AG will mark the end of a bitter rivalry as the European rail industry's biggest adversaries unite in an effort to fend off the challenge from China and Japan.

The ill-tempered contest between Alstom and Siemens has been a feature of the sector for decades and reached boiling point in 2011, when the pair engaged in a public spat over the safety of competing high-speed models they were pitching to Channel Tunnel express operator Eurostar International Ltd.

Now the French and German companies are set to join forces in a business with 15 billion euros (USD18 billion) in combined sales as they seek to halt the advance of Asian giants including Beijing-based CRRC Corp. and Hitachi Ltd. of Japan. That seemed a very distant prospect at the height of the confrontation over the 600 million-euro Channel Tunnel tender.

As the supplier of Eurostar's original fleet, Alstom had seemed to be in prime position to win the order with a modified version of its iconic TGV. Instead, the deal went to the Siemens Velaro e320, prompting the French company to suggest that the multiple engines powering the German train would

pose a serious fire risk in the confines of the 30-mile under-sea tunnel.

Siemens emerged victorious after France accepted a ruling from the European Union's rail-safety body saying the Velaro presented no more of a danger than the TGV. The defeat in its home nation came as a body blow to Alstom, which had been regarded as rail royalty since the original Train à Grande Vitesse snatched the world speed record from the Japanese Shinkansen in the 1980s.

While the TGV was still the fastest railed vehicle after a 357.2 mile per hour run in 2007, the loss confirmed the pressure facing Alstom not just in the shape of Siemens but also from increasingly export-oriented Asian manufacturers and Canada's Bombardier Inc., which had become the largest western train-maker following the 2001 purchase of Daimler AG's Germany-based Adtranz arm.

The critical move in propelling Alstom toward a tie-up with Siemens came with the sale of the French group's power-generation business to General Electric Co. in 2015, according to Maria Leenen, chief executive officer of German rail consultancy SCI Verkehr. While the French company gained GE's signalling unit, giving it critical mass in one of the most profitable areas of rail technology, the transaction ultimately left it wi-

CRRC has yet to penetrate the most lucrative Western markets, but already dominates sales to cost-sensitive economies in Africa

thout the heft to fund expensive new train and engineering projects, Leenan told Bloomberg.

Though Alstom is of a similar size to the rail division of Munich-based Siemens, with annual sales of more than 7 billion euros, the German business is part of a group that ranks as Europe's largest manufacturer with almost 80 billion euros in revenue and a product range spanning power grids and building controls to medical scanners, washing machines and wind turbines.

Yet Siemens, too, had seen the writing on the wall as overcapacity in Europe ate into rail margins, accentuated by the entry of Shinkansen partner Hitachi, which established its global headquarters and a



major factory in the U.K. after winning a 5.7 billion-pound (\$7.7 billion) express-train contract there. The Tokyo-based group followed up by purchasing the signaling business of Italy's Finmeccanica SpA in its largest-ever overseas deal.

All the while, European train-makers were facing growing competition from China, where train output began to eclipse Bombardier, Alstom and Siemens from 2011. The threat was ratcheted up in 2015 when a government-led merger of China CNR Corp. and CSR Corp. - formerly competing groups based in the north and south of the country - created a new global No. 1 in CRRC.

The Chinese giant has yet to penetrate the most lucrative Western markets, but already dominates sales to cost-sensitive economies in Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America and Southeast Asia. CRRC can build a high-speed train for about 20 million euros, half the price of a European model.

Siemens had sought to head off the GE-Alstom deal in 2014 with a proposal that would have

handed its rail operations to the French company in exchange for the power business.

The failed intervention created resentment between Siemens CEO Joe Kaeser and his then opposite number Patrick Kron, with the German company turning to Bombardier in its bid to stem the Asian tide through proposed joint ventures in train manufacturing and signaling. While that plan, which until this month seemed set to go ahead, would have helped to restructure rail capacity in Germany, it would have fallen short of creating a European champion capable of assuming a "quality-leadership role" in the global market, Leenan said.

The surprise Alstom transaction will do just that, though a test will come when the new company has to rationalize its lineup and production base for the next generation of rolling stock, she said. For now the overlapping ranges of subway trains, trams and commuter and express models is likely to survive, with the TGV and Velaro making the unlikeliest of stablemates. **Bloomberg**

Singapore home prices have bottomed, Hong Kong 'crazy,' BNP says

Pooja Thakur,
Chanyaporn Chanjaroen

SINGAPORE home prices have reached a bottom and will rebound, while Hong Kong's "crazy" housing market will continue to defy gravity, according to BNP Paribas SA.

"Very significant" income growth will drive the first leg of a recovery in home prices in Singapore, where property ownership as a proportion of household assets is near a record low, BNP's Asia-Pacific head of research for financial institutions and property Wee Liat Lee said in



an interview while visiting the city-state. That will boost prices by 10 percent to 15 percent over the next 12 to 15 months, in turn luring foreign buyers, espe-

cially from China, Lee said.

Singapore property prices have declined for 15 quarters - the longest slide since data was first published in 1975 - as the

government rolled out a series of curbs. Home values have dropped 12 percent from their 2013 peak, while Hong Kong prices reached record highs earlier this year.

"Hong Kong has been a crazy market, prices will never come down," Lee said.

With China's government stemming capital outflows, money has become stuck in Hong Kong, he said. "If you're in a country where the physical amount of investable assets is really small, then the liquidity will squeeze the asset price very quickly."

Still, Lee doesn't see a

property bubble developing in Hong Kong, where he is based. While prices are elevated and affordability has wor-

Hong Kong has been a crazy market, prices will never come down.

WEE LIAT LEE
BNP'S ASIA-PACIFIC HEAD OF RESEARCH

sened, most payments are in cash, limiting the amount of debt propping up prices, he said. Price growth may also slow as the government takes steps to avert a bubble in the world's most-expensive housing market.

Singapore also ranks better on affordability. The house price-to-income ratio has declined to 10 times from 12 times in the past decade, while in Hong Kong it has climbed to 15 times from about 11 times, Lee said.

"All asset prices in the world in the next 10 years are going to be priced according to Chinese liquidity," Lee said. "Especially in markets where the stocks of such assets are small, that's going to squeeze the asset price very substantially. **Bloomberg**

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

HONG KONG

Commerce chief says US to tackle 'bigger' China trade issues

U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said yesterday that the Trump administration's priorities as it prepares to tackle "bigger" and "more difficult" trade issues with China are better market access, less protectionism and protecting intellectual property rights.

Ross spoke to reporters in Hong Kong after visiting Beijing, where he said he made it clear to Chinese officials that "we do need major change" in the U.S.-China trade relationship, which he said "is too lopsided."

Ross met Premier Li Keqiang, China's top economic official, in Beijing as part of preparations for President Donald Trump's visit to the country in November. He will also lead a senior trade mission to China that month, the Commerce Department announced earlier this week.

Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping met when Xi visited the U.S. in April, in a meeting where they agreed on a 100-day plan for trade talks to address Trump's complaints about China's swollen trade surpluses.

Ross said that while those talks have yielded some progress, such as a deal to let U.S. beef into China, "we're looking for bigger things and more difficult things than what we had in the first 100 days."

He didn't elaborate on specific issues, saying only that at the top of the list is "better market access both for companies operating there physically and for companies exporting there."

The U.S. also wants less protectionism and more respect for intellectual property rights from China, Ross said.

"The U.S. is actually the least protectionist of any major country and China is one of the most protectionist," he said, while adding that the "frankness and an openness" he saw on his visit to Beijing made him optimistic about the negotiations.

Trump has slammed China's



U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross

large trade surpluses with the United States and ordered an investigation into whether Beijing improperly pressures companies to hand over their technology

The US is the least protectionist of any major country and China is one of the most protectionist.

WILBUR ROSS

in exchange for market access. Last year, the U.S. ran up a \$347 billion trade deficit in goods with China — accounting for nearly half the total.

Xi, who took power in 2012, and other Chinese leaders have vowed to let market forces have a bigger role, give equal treatment to foreign and Chinese companies and roll back state industry's dominance. But reform advocates complain little has been done to fulfill those pledges.

Ross raised concerns about Chinese government support measures aimed at helping develop key industries like robotics inadvertently leading to overcapacity.

China has been making a big push into robotics as communist leaders seek to take an early lead

in emerging industries. Out of about 400 robotics companies in China, Ross said "people in the industry tell me their estimate is that 360 of those are in it to get subsidies and tax breaks and are

not really that serious about the products."

On North Korean sanctions, Ross said the U.S. would keep them up as part of efforts aimed at denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.

"We've been trying to go step by step gradually increasing the economic pressure on North Korea," Ross said. "If nothing else happens in terms of other alternative solutions, you can bet the U.S. will increase the pressure as best we can."

Ross also commented on a Commerce Department decision that Canadian plane maker Bombardier should be hit with tariffs on its C Series aircraft in a dispute with Boeing, saying it was part of playing fair.

"It's not out of any anti-Canadian or any anti-U.K. or certainly any anti-Northern Ireland sentiment, but even with your friends and even with your allies, you must obey the rules," Ross said, adding that the decision was preliminary and a final ruling is expected in months. "The consequences are what they will be." AP

SECRETARY OF STATE TILLERSON TO TRAVEL TO BEIJING THIS WEEK

SECRETARY OF State Rex Tillerson will visit China this week to discuss President Donald Trump's planned travel to the region and North Korea. The State Department says Tillerson heads to Beijing today. His talks with senior Chinese leaders will also cover trade and investment. It will be Tillerson's second visit to China and comes

amid escalating tensions between the U.S. and North Korea. Tillerson went for the first time to Beijing in March. The department says that the visit reaffirms the Trump administration's commitment to enhance U.S. economic and security interests in the Asia-Pacific region. Trump is expected to travel to the region this fall.

HONG KONG

UK banker to appeal court convictions in women's murders

A British banker serving a life sentence in Hong Kong for murdering two Indonesian women, including one he spent days torturing while on cocaine, is seeking to appeal his conviction, his lawyer said yesterday.

Rurik Jutting is appealing on the grounds of "certain aspects of the deputy judge's directions to the jury,"

Michael Vidler said, without being more specific.

Cambridge University-educated Jutting was convicted by a nine-member jury last year in the 2014 killings of Sumarti Ningsih and Seneng Mujasih.

Jutting initially attempted to plead guilty to manslaughter but the judge rejected it, though he told jurors that

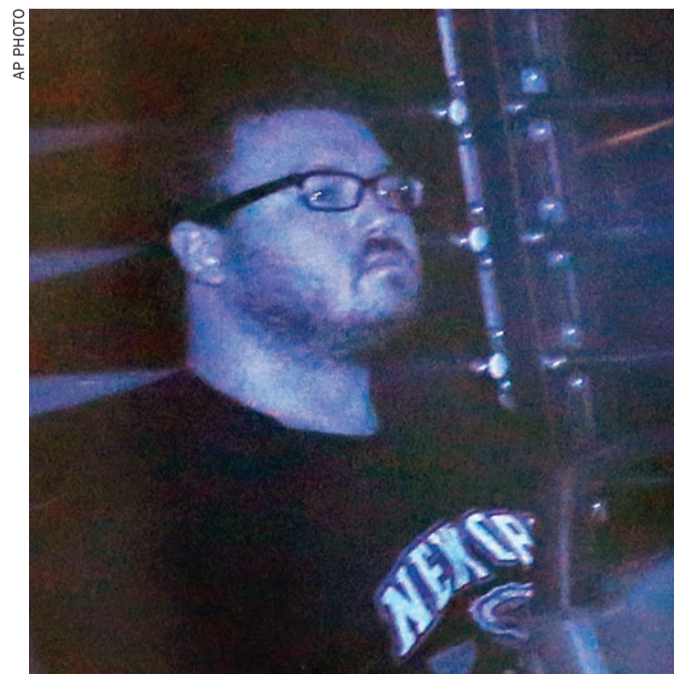
they could still decide on their own between finding him guilty of murder or manslaughter.

The case shocked residents of Hong Kong, a Chinese financial center with a reputation for safety, while also highlighting significant inequality and seedy aspects usually hidden from view.

Jutting worked for

Bank of America-Merrill Lynch while Sumarti, 23, and Seneng, 26, came to Hong Kong as foreign maids but ended up as sex workers. Jurors viewed graphic video evidence Jutting shot on his iPhone of him torturing Sumarti and snorting drugs.

Vidler said arguments will be heard on Dec. 12 at Hong Kong's Court of Appeal. AP



Rurik Jutting, a British banker, is escorted in a prison bus

TAIWAN

Wife of activist detained in China asks for visit

Johnson Lai, Taipei

THE wife of a Taiwanese pro-democracy activist put on trial in China for subverting state power is asking for a visit with her husband amid tense relations between Beijing and Taipei.

Lee Ching-yu told reporters that China had no right to deprive her of the right to visit her husband, Lee Ming-che, and accused Beijing of denying her husband and family members basic legal guarantees.

Lee Ming-che's detention is "not in compliance with any law or procedure and violates human right conventions. (Chinese authorities) failed to notify family members, denied them the right to visit, and ignored the requests of a civilized society," Lee said.

Lee Ming-che conducted online lectures on Taiwan's democratization and managed a fund for families of political prisoners in China. He was detained upon crossing the border in southern China on March 19 and was put on trial earlier this month. No verdict has been announced.

No matter from which aspect, Taiwan is a sovereign country.

WILLIAM LAI
TAIWANESE PREMIER

At a news conference yesterday, a Chinese Cabinet spokesman did not comment directly on Lee's case, but said recognition of Taiwan as a part of China was becoming a global trend. A former Japanese province, Taiwan split from China amid civil war in 1949 and Beijing cut off contacts with the administration of Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen last year after she refused to endorse Beijing's position that Taiwan is a part of China's territory.

"We oppose various forms of Taiwan Independence activities and are willing to continue to expand cross-strait communications, promote cross-strait economic and social integration and enhance support and close relations between the cross-strait compatriots," Taiwan Affairs Offi-



Lee Ching-yu, center

ce spokesman Ma Xiaoguang said.

In response, newly appointed Taiwanese Premier William Lai reiterated that the self-governing island democracy of 23 million encompassed all the attributes of a sovereign nation, although it has yet to declare itself formally independent from mainland China.

"No matter from which aspect, Taiwan is a sovereign country," Lai said.

Lee's detention has raised concerns about the security of the hundreds of thousands of Taiwanese

who reside in China or travel there on a regular basis for business, education or cultural exchanges. His prosecution is viewed not only as a warning to would-be overseas democracy activists, but also as part of Beijing's campaign of increasing diplomatic and economic pressure on Tsai's administration to compel her to acquiesce to its political demands.

Tsai has called on her Cabinet to explore ways of restoring contacts with Beijing, but has made no moves toward embracing China's "one-China principle."

Syngenta settles US farmer lawsuits corn trade case

SWISS agribusiness giant Syngenta said it has agreed to settle tens of thousands of U.S. lawsuits by farmers over the company's rollout of a genetically engineered corn seed variety before China approved it for imports.

Terms weren't disclosed. Syngenta said in a statement that the settlement would establish a fund to pay claims by farmers and others who contracted to price corn or corn byproducts after Sept. 14, 2013. Details will be announced after the agreement is submitted for court approval later this year, it said.

Syngenta began selling Vipitera to U.S. farmers for the 2011 growing season with U.S. government approval. But China didn't approve it until December 2014. The dispute escalated into lawsuits on behalf of tens of thousands of farmers in state and federal courts alleging that Syngenta's move wrecked China as an increasingly important export market for U.S. corn and resulted in price drops that hurt all producers.

Syngenta contended that larger market forces, not China's rejection of Vipitera, drove corn prices down, and that China wasn't a big corn importer when it launched Vipitera. The company also said China should not have effective veto power over the varieties U.S. farmers choose



The suburban Minneapolis headquarters of Syngenta in Minnetonka, Minn.

to plant.

The number of U.S. growers who will benefit has yet to be determined, Syngenta spokesman Paul Minehart said.

The proposed settlement doesn't constitute an admission by either side over the merits of the cases, the company's statement said.

"Syngenta firmly maintains that its actions were appropriate and continues to believe that American farmers should have access to the latest U.S.-approved technologies to help them increase their productivity and crop yield," Minehart said.

The settlement does not include exporters such as Cargill and ADM that are also suing Syngenta, he said, nor does it include Canadian litigation.

"Syngenta will continue to vigorously defend those cases," Minehart said.

The announcement came three weeks into a jury trial

in state court in Minneapolis that was the second "bellwether" test case to go to trial. The first ended in June with a federal jury in Kansas awarding nearly USD218 million to more than 7,000 growers from that state. The two trials were meant to provide guidance to attorneys and the courts for how the complex web of litigation in state and federal courts in Minnesota, Kansas and Illinois could be resolved.

Law Remele, the lead attorney for farmers in the Minnesota case, said the two sides had settlement discussions before and after the Kansas verdict.

"Finally when we were in the middle of this trial things started to warm up and we were able to reach a deal," he said. "We're definitely pleased. Our intent was to get some money back to farmers and I think this is going to accomplish that." AP

Beijing warns WhatsApp to stop spread of 'illegal information'

CHINA has hit out at Facebook Inc.'s WhatsApp, saying the messaging service should act to stop the spread of "illegal information" as the country seeks greater scrutiny over the internet in the run-up to its once-in-five years Communist Party congress.

WhatsApp should take proactive measures to intercept information to do with violence and terror, the Cyberspace Administration of China said in a statement in response to questions from Bloomberg News. China has the authority to tell institutions to take these measures, said the agency, without specifying details of content it considered illegal.

"A country's cyberspace sovereignty should be protected," it added.

A spokesman for WhatsApp declined to comment.

The response comes as China is seen to be tightening the screws on Whats



App, which has until recently been one of the only remaining major messaging services to operate unfettered in the country.

Beijing has been employing cutting-edge surveillance technology to disrupt the messaging service as part of a longer-term online crackdown, according to Nadim Kobeissi, a cryptographer at Paris-based online security firm Symbolic Software. The interference - which saw WhatsApp's service interrupted across China at the weekend before it was resumed - marks a step up from July, when local users began experiencing sporadic issues sending ima-

ges and voice messages.

The government has slapped fines on media and technology companies for failing to screen content, shuttered celebrity gossip sites, and punished chat-group administrators on Tencent Holdings Ltd.'s WeChat service for hosting sensitive content. The congress, which is due to get under way on Oct. 18, will see a twice-a-decade reshuffle of the party leadership.

"China's Internet is fully open," the administration said. "We welcome internet companies from various countries to provide Chinese internet users with good information services." Bloomberg

THAILAND

Ex-leader sentenced in absentia to five years in prison

Kaweewit Kaewjinda, Bangkok

A Thai court yesterday sentenced former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, whose government was ousted in a 2014 military coup, to five years in prison in absentia for alleged negligence in a money-losing rice subsidy program.

Yingluck, who has said the charges are politically motivated, is believed to have fled the country last month before the verdict originally was to have been delivered. Her lawyers said that they have no idea where she is.

Yingluck's conviction had been widely expected, as the military remains firmly in charge and the courts have a record of antipathy toward her politically influential family.

Thailand's military government has doggedly pursued Yingluck in court. In an earlier, separate administrative ruling that froze her bank accounts, she was held responsible for about USD1 billion of the losses from the rice subsidy program — an astounding personal penalty that prosecutors argued she deserved because she ignored warnings of corruption but continued the program anyway.

Yingluck and her supporters say she is innocent and was prosecuted as part of an effort to dismantle the political machine of her brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, a telecommunications tycoon.

Thaksin was toppled from power by a 2006 military coup



Former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra (August 1, 2017)

after being accused of abuse of power, corruption and disrespect for the monarchy. He is living in self-imposed exile to avoid serving a prison term from a 2008 conviction on a conflict of interest charge.

Yingluck, who inherited the leadership of Thaksin's political machine and was elected prime minister in 2011, became a proxy target for his enemies as well.

Despite her absence yesterday, scores of supporters turned up at court but were outnumbered by police.

"We can only accept the court's decision," said Pattana Meethai, 63, one of the supporters. "I'm

not surprised. I'm quite used to the courts ruling in this fashion."

The rice subsidy scheme was a flagship policy that helped Yingluck's Pheu Thai Party win the 2011 general election. The government paid farmers about 50 percent above what they would have received on the world market, with the intention of driving up prices by warehousing the grain.

Instead, other rice-producing countries captured the market by selling at competitive prices. Vietnam as a result replaced Thailand as the world's leading rice exporter.

Prosecutors argued that Yin-

gluck was guilty of dereliction of duty. Her critics describe the overriding motive of the rice subsidy program as political, an effort to buy the loyalty of rural voters with state funds.

A co-defendant, her commerce minister, received a 42-year prison sentence for concocting a false government-to-government rice sale, which was one of the allegations cited by the court in its verdict against Yingluck.

Up until Aug. 25, Yingluck had vowed to remain in the country and fight any charges against her, which posed a potential threat to the ruling junta. Acquitting Yingluck risked alienating

people who took part in protest movements in late 2013 and early 2014 and seized government buildings and disrupted snap elections, setting the stage for the military coup.

Jailing Yingluck, on the other hand, threatened to turn her into a martyr and pave the way for a new era of upheavals. That led to speculation that the junta may have been aware of Yingluck's intention to flee and allowed it to happen, though the junta has denied it.

Yingluck was held responsible for about USD1b of the losses from the rice subsidy program

Thaksin's mostly rural supporters, who delivered him unprecedented electoral victories, believe his only offense was challenging the power of the country's traditional elite, led by monarchists and the military, and supported by the urban middle class.

They believe his appeal, earned from populist policies benefiting the less well-off rural majority, threatened the traditional ruling class' privilege.

The junta that took power in 2014 has pushed through reforms ostensibly to curb corruption and money politics by limiting the power of elected politicians, but are clearly aimed at keeping Thaksin from power. It has delayed holding new elections as long as the possibility exists that Thaksin's political machine could stage a comeback. AP

AUSTRALIA

First refugees held in Pacific camps head to US

THE first 52 refugees to be accepted for resettlement in the United States under a contentious agreement with Australia have left Pacific island camps where they have languished for years, a refugee advocate said yesterday.

The first 25 refugees from a male-only camp on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island had flown out of the national capital Port Moresby on Tuesday for the United States via the Philippines and Qatar, Refugee Action Coalition spokesman Ian Rintoul said.

Another 27 refugees flew to Port Moresby from a

camp in Nauru, he said.

Their journey would end in Los Angeles via the Philippines, Qatar and Chicago, Rintoul said.

The U.S. State Department said it expected 54 refugees from Nauru and Papua New Guinea to arrive in the United States in the coming days. The origin of the journey for the two additional refugees was not clear. Australian officials declined to comment.

The refugees are Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar, Afghans, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Tamils from Sri Lanka, Iranians, Somalis and Sudanese, Rintoul said.

The first 25 who left Port Moresby on Tuesday would settle in U.S. population centers including Atlanta, Sydney's The Daily Telegraph newspaper reported. Rintoul said he did not know the specific locations where they were headed.

Former President Barack Obama's administration agreed to accept up to 1,250 of Australia's refugees — mostly from Iran, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka — in a deal some saw as repayment for Australia agreeing to accept Honduran and Salvadoran refugees under a U.S.-led resettlement program from a camp in Costa Rica.

President Donald Trump described the deal as "dumb" but has agreed to honor it subject to "extreme vetting" of refugees.

Rintoul said there was no indication how many of the more than 2,000 asylum seekers on Papua New Guinea and Nauru would be left behind.

"People (in the camps) are happy that these people have gone, but the big question is what happens to the rest," Rintoul said.

"It raises the level of anxiety and uncertainty and that's been magnified by the fact that U.S. officials have indicated that while they expect that there will be other groups being

processed, it could take as long to process the next group of people as it has to process this one which is several months," he said.

"There is no transparency, no time lines, no numbers, no certainty except the fact that there will be hundreds left behind," he added.

Officials say U.S. security is paramount. All refugees approved for travel to the United States from Nauru and Papua New Guinea have passed the same stringent vetting processes that apply to all refugees considered for admission to the United States, and any individual

not deemed to have met U.S. vetting requirements would not be admitted.

Australia will not settle any refugees who try to arrive by boat — a policy that the government says dissuades asylum seekers from attempting the dangerous and occasionally deadly ocean crossing from Indonesia.

Australia instead pays Papua New Guinea and Nauru to house asylum seekers in camps that have been plagued by reports of abuse and draconian conditions. Some of more than 2,000 asylum seekers have been in the island camps for more than four years. AP

Susannah George, Irbil

THE Kurdish referendum on independence from Iraq was approved by more than 92 percent of voters, officials said yesterday, as Iraq's prime minister vowed to keep his country united without resorting to the use of force.

Even with the strong support, the non-binding vote is unlikely to lead to formal independence, but it has escalated long-running tensions with Baghdad, which has moved to block flights in and out of the Kurds' autonomous region. Iraq and its neighbors, along with virtually the entire international community, are opposed to any redrawing of the map.

Hendrin Mohammed, the head of the Kurdish region's election commission, announced the official results at a press conference, saying the referendum passed with 92.73 percent support and turnout of more than 72 percent.

The vote was held across the autonomous Kurdish region's three provinces as well as in some disputed territories controlled by Kurdish forces but claimed by Baghdad.

Mohammed said the counting of votes was complete and that the results would be considered final once they are certified by the Kurdish region's department of justice.

The commission did not comment on turnout in the disputed territories, which could serve as an indicator of how many people in those areas prefer Kurdish rule.



A Kurdish flag hangs in the Irbil International Airport in Iraq yesterday

IRAQ

Kurds say 92pct voted in favor of independence

Mohammed told The Associated Press those numbers would be released by local authorities, without elaborating.

Iraq's Arab-dominated parliament has given Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi the mandate to deploy troops in the disputed territories, including the oil-rich city of

Kirkuk, but al-Abadi said he doesn't want a "fight between the Iraqi citizens."

At a meeting with lawmakers, he instead vowed to "enforce the rule of the federal authority in the Kurdish region with the power of the constitution."

Parliament has demanded that Baghdad refrain from

taking part in any dialogue with the Kurds until the results of Monday's vote are cancelled. It also called on the government to bring those behind the vote, including Kurdish regional president Masoud Barzani, to justice. The demands are non-binding.

Al-Abadi has ordered the

Kurdish region to hand over control of its airports to federal authorities by Friday, threatening a flight ban if they refuse. Iraq's Transport Ministry has ordered international airlines to halt service to Irbil, the Kurdish regional capital, and Sulaimaniyah, its second city, beginning Friday evening.

Middle East Airlines, the flagship carrier of Lebanon, and EgyptAir have announced that they will comply, cancelling all flights after Friday. Low-cost airline Fly-Dubai says its flights to Irbil are in question from Saturday on.

Turkey has warned its citizens that flight service to the Kurdish region will be suspended as of 6:00 p.m. Friday [11p.m. Macau time]. A statement posted on the Turkish Consulate's website in Irbil said flights by Turkish Airlines, AtlasGlobal and Pegasus "won't be possible" after Friday evening. It added that authorities were working to increase flights until then.

The transport minister for Iraq's Kurdish region said yesterday the region's international airports have not violated any laws that would warrant their closure.

Mawlood Bawa Murad told reporters his ministry is ready to negotiate with Baghdad "if they want to implement the law and show that Iraq has one air space."

He added that the flight ban would affect, "one way or another, the military aviation that operates from Irbil international airport," which is used for the campaign against the Islamic State group. **AP**

SAUDI ARABIA

Women will be allowed to drive, but hurdles remain

WOMEN in Saudi Arabia will be able to get behind the wheel as of next summer, following a landmark royal decree allowing women to drive — but they are still likely to be told to get a man's permission to buy a car.

Here is a look at some of the hurdles women still face in the ultraconservative Muslim kingdom:

GUARDIANSHIP

Under Saudi Arabia's interpretation of Islamic law, a male guardianship system bars women from traveling abroad, obtaining a passport, marrying or even leaving prison without the consent of a male relative. This consent is also often demanded whenever a wo-

man tries to do any number of things, including rent an apartment, buy a car, undergo a medical procedure, open a bank account or take a job. As a result, women are practically consigned to the status of minors for their entire lives. No other Muslim country enforces such strict guardianship measures.

GOV'T POSITIONS

There are no women in charge of government ministries in Saudi Arabia and there has been no woman ruler since the kingdom's founding in 1932. Saudi women can, however, run and vote in local elections though ultimate power resides with the

throne. The same day as the driving decree, Saudi Arabia also announced its first spokeswoman for its embassy in Washington, a high-profile role.

SEX SEGREGATION

Saudi Arabia's enforcement of gender segregation means women cannot attend sporting matches or sit in restaurants that do not have separate "family" sections. These rules also impact the ability of some employers to hire women where segregated office spaces are not available. Privately, the segregation rules often relegate women to the home unless a male relative, such as a father or brother, is available to escort them outside. Many

conservative families also bar male cousins from seeing their female cousins past childhood age.

WEAR RULES

Women in Saudi Arabia must wear long, loose robes known as abayas in public. Most also cover their hair and face with a black veil, though exceptions are made for visiting dignitaries.

DIVORCE

If a woman divorces her husband, she cannot travel abroad with their children without the permission of the father, who remains the children's legal guardian. Women cannot provide consent for their daughters to marry, or



pass their nationality to their children. Women also are not afforded equal inheritance rights nor are they guaranteed custody of children after the age of seven or eight years old. **AP**

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USA

Trump plans to slash refugee admissions

Josh Lederman & Matthew Lee, Washington

THE Trump administration will allow no more than 45,000 refugees into the United States next year, officials said yesterday [Macau time], in what would be the lowest admissions level in more than a decade.

President Donald Trump is expected to announce the cap on refugee admissions following a lengthy debate within his administration about whether to go higher or lower. The figure represents the maximum number of refugees the U.S. would be willing to accept. The actual number of refugees who move to the United States could actually be much lower.

The administration had been considering a ceiling somewhere between 40,000, which the Homeland Security Department recommended, and 50,000, the State Department's preferred level, according to officials. The new figure appears to be a compromise that Cabinet officials felt

would be palatable to the president.

Still, Trump's stated hostility to accepting refugees and opposition among others in his administration mean the U.S. may not intend to fill all 45,000 slots in the 2018 fiscal year that starts Sunday. The U.S. hasn't taken in so few refugees in a single year since 2006, when 41,223 were allowed entry.

All of the officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss internal deliberations. They said no decision was final until formally announced by the president. The State Department declined to comment on potential figures ahead of a presidential announcement.

Trump has until Sunday to determine how many refugees to admit. The U.S. welcomed 84,995 in fiscal year 2016, and former President Barack Obama had wanted to raise that number to 110,000 in 2017.

Worldwide, there were some 22.5 million refugees last year, according to the U.N. High Com-

missioner for Refugees, with many more people internally displaced within their home countries. The strong preference among aid groups and governments has been to seek conditions so refugees can return to their homes, rather than being permanently resettled in host countries.

Trump has made limiting immigration the centerpiece of his policy agenda. He temporarily banned visitors from a handful of Muslim-majority nations, has rescinded an Obama-era executive action protecting young immigrants from deportation and insisted he'll build a wall along the southern border with Mexico.

During his campaign, Trump pledged to "stop the massive inflow of refugees" and warned of terrorists smuggling themselves into naive countries by posing as refugees fleeing war-torn Syria. He said last October that "thousands of refugees are being admitted with no way to screen them and are instantly made eligible for welfare and free health



care," even as American military veterans can't get such care.

Trump has advocated keeping refugees closer to their homes.

In a speech to the United Nations last week, he thanked Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon for taking in hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Syrian conflict, and described the United States as a "compassionate nation" that has spent "billions and billions of dollars in helping to

support this effort."

"We seek an approach to refugee resettlement that is designed to help these horribly treated people, and which enables their eventual return to their home countries to be part of the rebuilding process," Trump said.

For the cost of resettling one refugee in the United States, he said, the U.S. can assist more than 10 migrants in their home regions. AP

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what's ON



CONSTELLATION - WORKS BY NICOLAS DELAROCHE
 TIME: 10am-9pm
 UNTIL: October 8, 2017
 VENUE: Tap Seac Gallery
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

A PROMENADE IN THE SMALL CITY: AN ILLUSTRATION EXHIBITION OF THE MACAU CULTURAL AND CREATIVE MAP
 TIME: 11am-10pm
 UNTIL: December 31, 2017
 VENUE: Lakeside Gallery, Anim'Arte
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

BRAND STORY - POP-UP SHOP
 TIME: 10am-8pm
 UNTIL: October 1, 2017
 VENUE: Macau Fashion Gallery
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 3341

TREASURE OF SACRED ART OF ST. JOSEPH'S SEMINARY
 TIME: 10am-5pm (Closed on Wednesdays, open on public holidays)
 VENUE: St. Joseph's Seminary and Church, Rua do Seminário
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

THE RECULTIVATION OF CULTURE: AN EXHIBITION OF CREATIVE SCRIPT HAND LETTERING
 TIME: 9am-10pm daily
 UNTIL: October 31, 2017
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 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 8598 1489

Offbeat



NEW ALASKA HIGHWAY STRIPES ARE CROOKED, PAINT STAINING CARS

New yellow painted highway lines in the Alaska's Panhandle city of Ketchikan are crooked and the paint that's been used by state transportation officials has stained cars, officials said.

Among those affected was Ketchikan Gateway Borough Mayor David Landis, whose car ended up with yellow paint on it. "You come to expect having highway striping like that to be straight and have orderly looking lines and be professionally applied," Landis said. "Something was clearly wrong with the equipment or the operation of that equipment to have so many things wrong all at once."

The problems emerged after the state Department of Transportation tried out a new line painting system on the Tongass Highway, The Ketchikan Daily News reported (bit.ly/2fqSsle) Saturday.

Department spokeswoman Meadow Bailey said the paint is "not drying as quickly as it should due to humidity in southeast Alaska."

Bob Sivertson, a Ketchikan city council member, called it the poorest line painting work he's seen.

Bailey said the state will not repaint the yellow lines.

She said people with cars that got paint on them should have the vehicles pressure washed.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	RTPi Live
15:00	Miscellaneous
17:10	CTT League: Sporting - Barcelona (Repeated)
18:50	The Cariocas (Repeated)
19:15	Non-daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:50	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:40	Yes, Chef!
22:10	Brazilian Mini Serie
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:40	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:15	RTPi Live
03:05	European League: Braga - Istanbul Basaksehir (live)

cinema



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28 SEP - 04 OCT



AMERICAN ASSASSIN

ROOM 1 / 3

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

Director: Michael Cuesta

Starring: Dylan O'Brien, Michael Keaton, Sanaa Lathan

Language: English

Duration: 112 min



KINGSMAN: THE GOLDEN CIRCLE

ROOM 1

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

Director: Mathew Vaughn

Starring: Colin Firth, Julianne Moore, Halle Berry

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 141min



THE LEGO NINJAGO MOVIE

ROOM 3

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

Director: Charlie Bean

Starring: Jackie Chan, Dave Franco, Fred Armisen

Language: Chinese

Duration: 101 min

this day in history



1995 PALESTINIAN SELF-RULE IN WEST BANK AGREED

The Israeli prime minister and the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation have signed a deal in Washington giving Palestinians control over much of the West Bank.

Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat put their names to the 400-page agreement in a low-key ceremony in the East Room of the White House.

They were watched by US President Bill Clinton, Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak and King Hussein of Jordan.

The leaders of Syria and Lebanon were conspicuous by their absence. Mr Rabin and the US president both called on the two Arab nations to resume peace talks with Israel.

The event, which President Clinton hailed as "a new chapter" for the Middle East, was almost derailed by a last-minute disagreement between Mr Rabin and Mr Arafat over policing arrangements in the West Bank town of Hebron. It was resolved just hours before the signing ceremony.

Mr Rabin urged the PLO to resist "the evil angels of death by terrorism" determined to destroy the peace process.

Israel's foreign minister, Shimon Perez, welcomed the deal saying, "Once implemented, no longer will the Palestinians reside under our domination. They shall self-rule and we shall return to our heritage."

Mr Arafat declared there had been "enough killing of innocent people" calling the deal a "peace of the brave" - but he acknowledged it would be opposed by many.

Following the landmark Oslo agreement of September 1993, also brokered by the Clinton administration, Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho were handed over to Palestinian rule.

But suicide bombings in Israel by Hamas extremists have continued and after each attack Israel closes its borders to Arabs living in Gaza and the West Bank.

Migrant labour is the backbone of the Gaza economy and every closure is a severe financial blow to Palestinians - and the credibility of Mr Arafat as a leader in the eyes of his people.

For this reason Palestinians are not enthusiastic about the new deal, known as Oslo 2, and are sceptical of the chances for long-lasting peace.

From his side, Mr Rabin faces strong opposition from the right-wing Likud party and from Jewish settlers, especially those who live in or near Hebron.

The settlers believe the West Bank - occupied by Israel since the 1967 war - is part of territory handed to Abraham and the Jews by God.

It is expected that the agreement will be passed by a narrow majority in the Israeli parliament (Knesset) next week.

[Abridged]

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Just over a month later Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by a Jewish extremist on 4 November 1995.

Shimon Peres pushed on with Mr Rabin's efforts to make peace with the Palestinians.

But in the 1996 election he lost to Binyamin Netanyahu who campaigned against the Rabin-Peres peace programme.

Suicide bomb attacks against Israelis and military counterattacks in Palestinian strongholds heightened tensions between the two sides again and peace talks kept stalling.

In February 2000 Yasser Arafat turned down a peace deal offered at Camp David by President Clinton and Israeli PM Ehud Barak.

Israel ended its involvement in Lebanon in May 2000. But in September that year, opposition leader Ariel Sharon made a controversial visit to the Al Aqsa mosque compound in east Jerusalem, a site which is also holy to Jews.

Critics say Mr Sharon knew the visit would trigger the ensuing violence between Palestinians and Israeli forces and gambled on the Israeli public turning to a tough leader like him who would know how to handle it firmly.

On 6 February 2001 he won a landslide victory, pledging to achieve "security and true peace" while insisting he would not be bound by previous negotiations with the Palestinians.

In June 2002 following a series of suicide bombings, work began on building a security wall, 640 km (440 miles) long, between Israel and the West Bank.

An effort to revive the peace process resulted in the publication of a new roadmap for peace in April 2003.

Mr Arafat died in November 2004.

In August 2005 Israel began implementing a Disengagement Plan by evicting all settlers from Gaza and some areas of the West Bank.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 It feels like you should know something that is perhaps eluding your grasp. Now, what could it be? If you can't come up with an answer right away, maybe you should take a few moments somewhere quiet.

Taurus April 20-May 20 You're about to make a huge splash. No one can remake, reinvent and redo themselves quite like you can. Right now, especially, you have a really big change up your sleeve.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 There's a wealth of knowledge and experience you can tap into for your benefit, but you have to be willing to go deep into your own psyche. You're both the teacher and the student

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Hmm. Perhaps you're starting to realize how nice it would be to come home to a certain someone every day. Now, don't pinch yourself, or do anything drastic, you're not dreaming.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Your feelings are taking center stage, but you're in no mood to share the inner workings of your emotional life with an audience right now. Concentrate on being useful to others in any way possible.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 What's going on in your life that may look a little bit like a mess on the surface, but actually contains hidden riches? It may not be obvious at first, but it is there.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 If you've been bitten by the drama bug, it's time to find the antidote -- stat! Yes, usually your nearest and dearest love to see you and your latest performance, but right now you might want to dial it back.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 If an old friend or significant other has been on your mind lately, there could be a good reason for that. Might there be some unfinished business from the past that it's time to tackle?

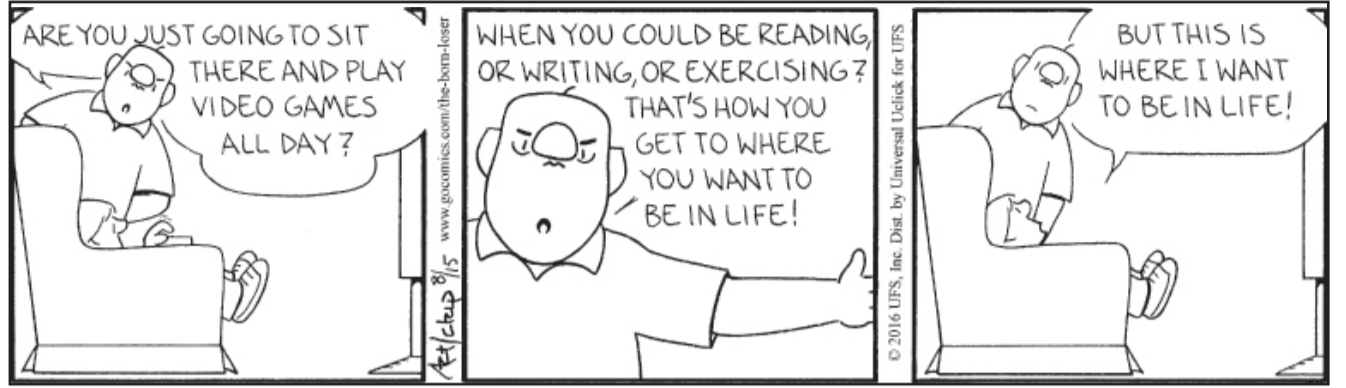
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Sixth sense? Puh-leeze. With you, it's more like a seventh, eighth and ninth sense. If someone tries to placate you with some facile conversation, you're canny enough to spot the larger issues.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Sometimes if you're involved in a tug-of-war and both sides are equally matched, the only thing to do is... let go. No, really. You get a good giggle at seeing your opponent go flying.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You're cuter than a box of kittens and more playful than a passel of puppies these days. Everyone wants to stop and pet you on the head and give you a treat -- such is the general affect.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Plant your feet and ask for what's rightfully yours. Work matters become crystal clear when you realize that the only way to get your just rewards is to demand them.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

5x5 grid with numbers 1-5. Row 1: 5, 3, 2. Row 2: 1, 5, 9, 8, 6, 5. Row 3: 8, 9, 1, 6. Row 4: 3, 6, 4, 9. Row 5: 2, 3, 7, 5. Row 6: 2, 6, 1. Row 7: 7, 6, 8. Row 8: 6, 3, 5.

Easy+

5x5 grid with numbers 1-9. Row 1: 3, 1, 2, 9. Row 2: 4, 8, 5, 1. Row 3: 2, 3, 1, 8. Row 4: 3, 5, 2, 9, 1, 7, 8. Row 5: 7, 6, 2. Row 6: 9, 4, 6. Row 7: 8, 4, 7. Row 8: 2, 3.

Medium

5x5 grid with numbers 1-9. Row 1: 8, 1, 6, 2. Row 2: 7, 9, 4. Row 3: 1, 9, 5, 8. Row 4: 7, 3, 9, 1, 4. Row 5: 6, 2. Row 6: 3, 6, 7, 6, 8, 3. Row 7: 9, 1, 3, 7.

Hard

5x5 grid with numbers 1-9. Row 1: 3, 2, 7. Row 2: 8, 9. Row 3: 2, 9, 4, 5. Row 4: 6, 3. Row 5: 4, 5, 1, 8, 1. Row 6: 3.

WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION

CHINA

Table listing weather for various Chinese cities: Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, Urumqi, Xi'an, Lhasa, Chengdu, Chongqing, Kunming, Nanjing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Hangzhou, Taipei, Guangzhou, Hong Kong.

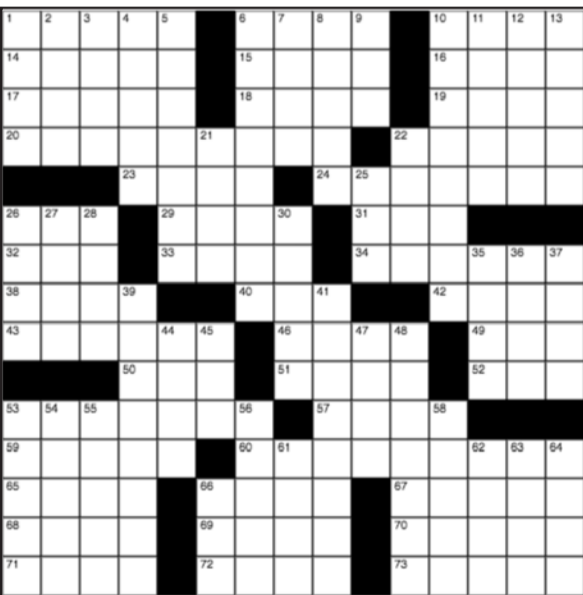
WORLD

Table listing weather for various world cities: Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, London, New York.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Beethoven's 'Solemnis'; 6- Group of tents; 10- Vincent Lopez's theme song; 14- Razzle-dazzle; 15- Lewd look; 16- Indigo source; 17- Browned sliced bread; 18- Woody Guthrie's son; 19- River to the Ubangi; 20- Immediate; 22- Continental identity of a Chinese person; 23- I'd hate to break up; 24- Absence of sound; 26- Lawyers' org.; 29- Salts; 31- Sportage maker; 32- Norse goddess; 33- High-five, for one; 34- Dines at home; 38- Shake (hurry); 40- Animal foot; 42- Drachma replacement; 43- Sound investment?; 46- Back talk; 49- Arctic explorer John; 50- Go astray; 51- Queue before Q; 52- Pothook shape; 53- Abilities; 57- June 6, 1944; 59- 'Golden Boy' playwright; 60- Disposal sale; 65- Hindu mother goddess; 66- Neet rival; 67- 'Silas Marner' author; 68- Pearl Buck heroine; 69- Commedia dell'; 70- Kick off; 71- Puppeteer Tony; 72- Watchful one; 73- Flavor;

DOWN 1- Take your leader; 2- Desktop picture; 3- Narrow strip of wood; 4- Figure skater Cohen; 5- Certifies; 6- Empty language; 7- Dynamic introduction?; 8- Thaws; 9- Debate side; 10- Sicken; 11- million; 12- Pale purple; 13- Coeur d'; 21- Marine mammal, secure something; 22- Inter; 25- Tina's ex; 26- Cries of discovery; 27- Waist band; 28- Nautically sheltered; 30- Muscle contraction; 35- Certain; 36- Some nest eggs; 37- Turndowns; 39- Salutation; 41- Nomad; 44- Sea birds; 45- Table scrap; 47- Bubbly drink; 48- Least lavish; 53- Flaps; 54- Writer Rogers St. Johns; 55- Burton of 'Roots'; 56- Fearsome; 58- Seaport in the Crimea; 61- Low-cal; 62- Long and Peeples; 63- Bud of 'Harold and Maude'; 64- Kitchen add-on?; 66- Dundee denial;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
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Ronaldo surprised by increasing criticism

Tales Azzoni, Madrid

Cristiano Ronaldo says criticism against him is getting worse, and he doesn't think it's fair.

Ronaldo made his comments after scoring twice in Real Madrid's 3-1 win at Borussia Dortmund in the Champions League group stage on Tuesday.

"It seems that match after match I have to show who I am," Ronaldo said. "I'm surprised by the public opinion about me. Again, the numbers speak for themselves."

Ronaldo also scored twice in Madrid's Champions League opener this season, a 3-0 win against APOEL. But he was criticized by many after a poor performance in a 1-0 home loss against Real Betis in the Spanish league. The Portuguese missed several chances in that game, including clear opportunities in front of goal.

"I'm happy because I know that when everything is normal, that when I'm well and the opportunities appear, I will score," Ronaldo said. "Sometimes the goalkeepers will make saves, or the woodwork will stop me, but this is part of football."

"I always work the same way,"

Ronaldo said. "I'm an example as a professional. I never become desperate, although some people may think that I do. I'm always with a healthy mind, a clear mind, prepared for great challenges and for the criticism, which is getting worse."

I'm surprised by the public opinion about me. Again, the numbers speak for themselves.

CRISTIANO RONALDO

This is not the first — or likely last — time that Ronaldo has complained about criticism against him. But Ronaldo reiterated that he is happy playing in Madrid and that he never said he wanted to leave, as widely reported after a tax-fraud investigation in Spain earlier this year.

"You didn't hear that from me," Ronaldo said. "People talk about Cristiano every day, everywhere

AP PHOTO



Ronaldo (right) and Bale (rear) gesture during a Champions League match

in the world. If I had to answer to all the people who talk about me, I would only do that, and it can't be that way. I live for football and for my family, the rest is secondary. Everything that involves the name of Cristiano is news everywhere in the world, it's normal. When you are a big name, people will always talk about you."

Ronaldo dismissed questions

about a possible new contract with Madrid, saying that's for club president Florentino Perez to talk about.

But Ronaldo also said he doesn't feel Madrid depends on him to succeed.

"When Cristiano is not playing, Real Madrid remains the same," he said. "I see Real Madrid strong, with a great team, a great squad. It's not about individual players."

The game against Dortmund marked Ronaldo's 400th appearance with Real Madrid since his debut in 2009. He is the club's all-time scoring leader with 412 goals.

Ronaldo's season got off to a slow start after a five-match suspension for shoving a referee in the Spanish Super Cup final. He has scored five goals in six games so far. **AP**

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4 coaches, Adidas executive charged in college bribe scheme

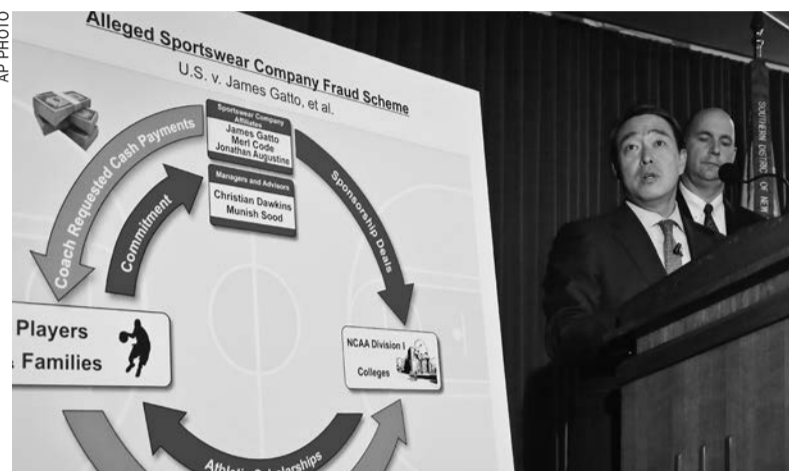
IN one of the biggest crack-downs on the corrupting role of money in college basketball, 10 men — including a top Adidas executive and four assistant coaches — were charged Tuesday with using hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes to influence star athletes' choice of schools, shoe sponsors, agents, even tailors.

Some of the most explosive allegations appeared to involve Louisville, one of college basketball's biggest powerhouses, which is already on NCAA probation over a sex scandal.

Federal prosecutors said at least three top high school recruits were promised payments of as much as USD150,000, using money supplied by Adidas, to attend two universities sponsored by the athletic shoe company. Court papers didn't name the schools but contained enough details to identify them as Louisville and Miami.

"The picture of college basketball painted by the charges is not a pretty one," said acting U.S. Attorney Joon H. Kim, adding that the defendants were "circling blue-chip prospects like coyotes" and exploited them to enrich themselves.

Prosecutors said that while some of the bribe money went to athletes and their families, some went to coaches, to get them to use their influence over their potentially NBA-bound players.



Joon H. Kim (second from right) and FBI Assistant Director William Sweeney, Jr. (right) hold a press conference to announce the arrest of four coaches

The coaches charged are Chuck Person of Auburn, Emanuel Richardson of Arizona, Tony Bland of Southern California and Lamont Evans of Oklahoma State. Person and Evans were suspended, and Bland was placed on administrative leave.

Bland appeared in court in Tampa, Florida, wearing handcuffs and ankle chains. He said little during a brief hearing other than to answer the judge's questions

and did not enter a plea. Richardson appeared in court in Tucson, Arizona, where he was set for release on \$50,000 bond. His lawyer declined to comment.

Those charged also include James Gatto, director of global sports marketing for basketball at Adidas; Rashan Michel, a maker of custom suits for some of the NBA's biggest stars; and various financial advisers and managers.

NCAA President Mark Emmert

condemned the alleged misconduct, saying, "Coaches hold a unique position of trust with student-athletes and their families, and these bribery allegations, if true, suggest an extraordinary and despicable breach of that trust."

Since 2015, the FBI has been investigating the influence of money on coaches and players in the NCAA. Kim noted a special FBI hotline was set up and asked anyone aware of additional corruption to come forward.

Prosecutors said the coaches took bribes to use their "enormous influence" to steer players toward certain financial advisers and agents.

Most if not all of the 10 defendants were under arrest. Lawyers for Gatto and two of the coaches did not immediately respond to requests for comment. It was unclear whether Evans had an attorney.

Adidas said it was unaware of any misconduct by an employee and vowed to fully cooperate with authorities.

Gatto and others are accused of funneling \$100,000 to the family

of a high school athlete to gain his commitment to play at Louisville and to sign with Adidas once he became a professional. Louisville and Adidas announced a 10-year, \$160 million extension of their sponsorship deal over the summer.

The player's name was not released, but details in the criminal complaint make it clear investigators were referring to Brian Bowen, who did not return messages seeking comment.

Louisville coach Rick Pitino said the allegations "come as a complete shock to me." The development comes as Louisville is appealing a four-year NCAA probation over a scandal involving escorts hired for players and recruits. The scandal could cost the school its 2013 national championship.

In court papers Tuesday, the FBI said it recorded a July meeting at which an assistant coach at Louisville was briefed on a plan to funnel thousands of dollars to a potential high school recruit. The participants in the meeting noted they had to be careful because Louisville was on probation. **AP**

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

opinion

Insight
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POST-ELECTION CARD FROM A CONCERNED RESIDENT

Dear Mr. Chairman,

I would like to commend you for the massive work undertaken by the commission that you wisely head, in order to ensure the fairness of the legislative election. However, I take the liberty of making some proposals in order to magnify the efficiency of the electoral affairs department.

Your Excellency raised the issue of the pre-campaign interviews, which really was a nuisance. We don't want our innocent electors to get influenced and the candidates must not take advantage of their financial resources to stain a permeable media landscape. Perhaps there is the need to be harsher to those who fail to grasp the reach of your sagaciousness. Besides the Official Gazette and similar publications, why not order the suspension of local newspapers, in tandem with a radio and TV blackout? At first sight, this may seem like hindering the freedom of speech protected by our irrefragable Basic Law. That is a wrong judgement, because in fact the measure would protect the concerned citizens' basic rights. And people watch too much TV anyway, hence putting a stop to that is only healthy.

Given that the display of numbers close to polling stations may affect the voters' will, you reasonably decided that those numbers should be covered. But that alone won't do. Buses, on the day of elections, should have letters instead of numbers and the polling stations should not be numbered. In sport games, player's shirts without numbers would avoid any malicious influence.

Last but not the least, my most forward-thinking proposal reflects the need to consider the abolition of the electoral campaign. This is a sensitive measure, given that the Macau residents by now have become used to the habit of elections and electoral campaigns. And, your Excellency, you know as well as I do how it is hard to break a habit. To exemplify, I prefer not to think what would happen if, tomorrow, our Chief Executive declares that there are no more cash handouts...

Anyway, this is not such a drastic measure, although I suppose it needs to go through some public consultation stages before it would be implemented around mid-century. And what is the reasoning behind this suggestion, your eminency rightfully asks. Well, the way I see it is simple: Campaigns are simply not honest. Therefore, the regulation you sagaciously implemented in our MSAR during the pre-campaign should be extended to the campaign period. Any message or information designed to encourage voters – in an explicit or implicit way – to vote or not vote for a particular candidate should be prohibited.

I'm an apologist of Max Groucho's saying: "I don't care to belong to any club that will have me as a member." That is the honest way for any man or woman to conduct themselves. It takes a lot of chutzpah for someone to ask for a vote in... himself. And so I say: Let's shut down this vaudevillian act and go back to the good old mandarinic ways. Like it always has been around here, let the wise sifu pick the right persons to govern the fabulous city of Macau.

As your Excellency gathered by now, ideas are something I'm not short of, so I hereby propose myself to be a member of one of the think tanks which scientifically advise you and others at the top level, provided it is appropriately remunerated, because I have a family to feed, including a dog and a parrot (you know the story).

Notwithstanding, I leave one last piece of free advice: If the above-mentioned arrangement doesn't work, I would offer my services to help with setting up a patriotic front as a way to vet possible candidates. Henceforward, the only acceptable candidates would need to belong to this benevolent front, which would bring winds of development to our floating-casino/SAR - instead of typhoon winds, so to speak.

Yours truly,
A concerned resident

THE GREEK CORONER: BRITISH HIKER
BUZZ ATTACKED, DEVoured BY WOLVES

A Greek coroner says a missing British hiker whose dismembered, fleshless remains were found in the hills of northern Greece was probably attacked, torn apart and devoured by wolves.

Nikos Kifnidis told The Associated Press the ferocity of the animals was such that both the woman's thigh bones had been cracked open by bites and large sections of her body are still

missing. He said a vet at yesterday's autopsy confirmed that no dog could have administered such bites.

The remains were found Saturday near the village of Petrota in Thrace, 285 kilometers east of the city of Thessaloniki. Near them, authorities found a passport for Celia Lois Hollingworth, 63, whom the British embassy in Athens reported missing in the area on Friday.

UK 'bitterly disappointed' as US trade ruling threatens jobs

Danica Kirka, London

U.K. Prime Minister Theresa May said she was "bitterly disappointed" with the U.S. government's decision to slap duties of almost 220 percent on Bombardier's C series aircraft, which threatens more than 4,000 jobs in Northern Ireland.

May took to Twitter to vow she'll work with the Montreal-based company to protect jobs. The prime minister had previously lobbied President Donald Trump after U.S. aircraft maker Boeing alleged that Bombardier used unfair government subsidies to sell planes at artificially low prices. May has a key alliance with Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party to support her minority government in Parliament.

Defense Secretary Michael Fallon warned Boeing that its behavior "could jeopardize" future U.K. defense contracts.

But unions accused the prime minister of failing to protect workers. Ross Murdoch, the GMB union's national officer, said the ruling was a "hammer blow" to Belfast, where Bombardier makes aircraft wings and fuselages.

"Theresa May has been asleep at the wheel when she could and should have been fighting to protect these workers," Murdoch said. "It's



high time she woke up."

The U.S. Commerce Department yesterday [Macau time] ruled in favor of Boeing, saying "the subsidization of goods by foreign governments is something that the Trump Administration takes very seriously." The department is scheduled to issue a final ruling in the case on Dec. 12.

Boeing alleges that Bombardier received at least USD3 billion in subsidies from the governments of Britain, Canada and the province of Quebec, allowing it to sell planes to U.S.-based Delta Air Lines for less than the cost of production. The Chicago-based aircraft maker asked the Commerce Department and the U.S. International Trade Commission to investigate what it called "predatory pricing."

Delta last year agreed to buy 75 of Bombardier's new CAD100 aircraft, with an option for as many as 50 more. Bombardier valued the firm order at \$5.6 billion based on the list price of the aircraft.

Delta says Boeing doesn't even make the 100-seat planes it needs for short- to medium-range trips.

Bombardier called the decision "absurd," and accused Boeing of trying to stifle competition.

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, on a visit to Hong Kong, told reporters that part of the problem was Bombardier's lack of cooperation with the investigation.

"It's not out of any anti-Canadian or any anti-U.K. or certainly any anti-Northern Ireland sentiment, but even with your friends and even with your allies, you must obey the rules," he said.

British Liberal Democrat leader Vince Cable urged May to stand up to the United States, as her Canadian counterpart Justin Trudeau has done. And the leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, Arlene Foster, said she would use the party's influence with the government to press the issue. "Unfortunately, it's not a surprise," Foster told Sky News. AP

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	70-100 Moderate	☹️
High Density Residential Area	65-95 Moderate	☹️
Ambient	70-100 Moderate	☹️

WORLD BRIEFS



SAUDI ARABIA Women in Saudi Arabia will be able to get behind the wheel as of next summer, following a landmark royal decree allowing women to drive – but they are still likely to be told to get a man's permission to buy a car. More on p13

EGYPT's government says it has approved draft legislation to create a national space agency. A statement yesterday says the proposed agency will aim to build and launch satellites from Egypt to serve "development objectives."

EUROPE Climate researchers are warning that Europeans should prepare for the return of "Lucifer," saying the hellishly named heat wave that hit parts of the continent this summer could become a regular occurrence due to man-made climate change.

IRELAND's prime minister says the country will hold a referendum on lifting its constitutional ban on abortion in May or June. If successful, the vote will mark the eighth amendment to the Irish constitution.



US-MEXICO Federal contractors have begun building prototypes of President Donald Trump's proposed border wall with Mexico, hitting a milestone toward a key campaign pledge. As agents prepared for the news conference, a Mexican man breached the fence, cut his hand and was arrested.

GUATEMALA Authorities say the country's former ambassador to the United States has been arrested in Spain on an international warrant for alleged campaign finance violations.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

MDT/Paulo Coutinho



Golden sunset. Downtown Macau, on the way to San Malo, Tuesday, September 26. The street has a golden lining under the Sun. Or, when we reconcile with Macau.