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Assembly resumes with Sou setting agenda

P4 AL PLENARY



RENATO MARQUES

WORLD BRIEFS



SPAIN Catalonia's regional parliament will hold a debate this week on Spain's plan to take direct control of the northeastern region — a session many fear could become a cover for a vote on declaring independence. The Spanish government says no dialogue is possible with independence on the table and is maneuvering to fire all Catalan top officials and call an early regional election.

INDONESIA Three days of clashes between Indonesian police and gunmen near a U.S.-owned gold and copper mine in easternmost Papua province have killed one officer and wounded six others.

PHILIPPINES Soldiers have captured a building where pro-Islamic State group militants made their final stand in southern Marawi city and found about 40 bodies of suspected gunmen inside, two security officials told The Associated Press yesterday.

More on backpage

STOCK SALE ANNOUNCED

13 Holdings market value plunged by almost half yesterday

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BLOOMBERG

Social housing application requirements eased

The Chief Executive has signed a notice to relax the income and asset ceilings of social housing applicants by about 1.4 to 1.9 percent, effective today. The total income required per person was raised from MOP9,560 to MOP11,470. The monthly income for a family of two persons was increased to MOP17,360, with the total assets now fixed at MOP375,000. The monthly income for families of three and four are now MOP23,430 and MOP25,680, respectively. The total assets of these two types of families are now limited to MOP506,100 and MOP554,700, respectively.

Many Canidrome dogs to be sent back to owners

Lawmaker Angela Leong, the executive director of the Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome Co. Ltd, said that the Canidrome has held internal discussions and kept in touch with the greyhounds' owners regarding their dogs' futures, following the news of the Canidrome's closure next year. According to a report by Macao Daily News, Leong's company has already proposed new arrangements for the greyhounds, such as sending many of the dogs back to their owners or other places of origin, including Australia and New Zealand. Leong also questioned the motivations of animal rights association Anima over its show of interest in adopting the dogs.

Court of First Instance welcomes new judges

Leong Fong Meng has been appointed as the presiding judge of the Court of First Instance (TJB), according to a notice published yesterday in the Official Gazette. Prior to his appointment, Leong had served as a judge at the TJB. Another eight TJB judges have also been appointed on the proposal of the independent commission responsible for nominating judges. These eight judges are Ho Chong In, Chong Chi Wai, Rong Qi, Lam Ka Heng, Chang Sin I, Chu Ka Sin, Chan Ka Man, and Xu Teng.



Martí Sánchez-Fibla (left) and Christine Hong Barbosa



Carlos Sena Caires

Exhibition aims to bring foreign and local artworks together

Lynzy Valles

THE exhibition "Barcelona x Macao Art of Illustration Exhibition" is showcasing 20 artworks from Macao and Spain – including artworks by 10 local artists – at Rui Cunha Foundation until October 29.

Organized by Yunyi Arts & Cultural Communications Association, the exhibition aims to create a network of new and established artists on a platform that allows them to exchange information on new art developments.

Speaking to the press, director of Yunyi Arts & Cultural Communications Association Christine Hong Barbosa stressed that the group has always focused on promoting local and international artists alike, in order to encourage the sharing of ideas between different cultures.

"My angle is [to] always try to look for general cities that have a

strong cultural influence, [which] will reflect in some of the artists' work," said Barbosa, explaining why the association has chosen to work with Spanish artists.

Although Barbosa admitted that it remains challenging to find new artists to participate in the event every year, she noted that "there are new artists everywhere" in the city.

For next year's edition, the association director revealed that there are plans to hold the exhibition in Stockholm, Sweden, to bring the local art scene to the European city. "One of my main goals is to bring local artists' work to different corners of the world," said Barbosa.

"Whenever you are in other countries, then people will start to look at where Macau is and [be aware] of local artists and their styles and inspirations."

The director added that through these kinds of exhibitions,

art enthusiasts from around the globe will be more aware of local talent.

Although there are still no concrete plans for next year, Barbosa hoped that the association will be able to conduct dialogues with Swedish artists and exhibition venues in Stockholm for Macao artists to develop their networks.

"There [are] plenty of good artists in Macau," she said. "Their works are worth exhibiting. It's an opportunity for these artists to come out and showcase their pieces."

Meanwhile, locally-based professor and researcher at the University of Saint Joseph, Carlos Sena Caires, is displaying two of his illustrations in the exhibition – his first participation in a local exhibition.

With the current technology available to artists, including digital drawing tablets, Caires noted that artists' creativity has

expanded.

"With this technology, you can erase, withdraw and delete and change the colors and background, everything. The most difficult part is to decide when it's done," he said.

Caires further added that exhibitions such as "Barcelona x Macao Art of Illustration Exhibition" are significant to the growth of the local art scene, as they create a platform for local and foreign artists to exhibit their work.

Curator for the works of the Spanish artists, Martí Sánchez-Fibla, said that the illustrations portray similar styles and techniques complementing each other's works.

"You can put them together and see similarities [because] there are no rules on producing this exhibition," he said, adding that some works are done digitally, whilst some are created using traditional ink.

HEALTH

4,000 dementia patients diagnosed in Macau

MORE than 4,000 people in Macau have been diagnosed with dementia, according to Lo Iek Long, a coordinator at the Dementia Medical Center of the Health Bureau (SSM).

From January to Sep-

tember this year, SSM assessed the cognitive functions of 1,037 residents. The number of residents assessed was double that of the same period last year.

The rate of diagnosis increased from 37.5 percent last year to 45 per-

cent this year.

Lo added that the number of newly diagnosed dementia patients registered at the Dementia Medical Center increased by 188 percent year on year, with more than 300 new patients confirmed.

Alexis Tam, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, recently stated at a dementia-related event that the Macau government is keen to improve the prevention of dementia, which is an important part of the government's ten-

year plan for the elderly.

Tam added that the Macau government is setting up a system for dementia treatment which will consist of five main stages: prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment and support.

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“ THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’ ”

Renato Marques

THE first plenary session of the sixth Macau legislature – effectively initiating the group of newly elected and appointed lawmakers – was marked by several queries regarding the procedures of the Legislative Assembly (AL) yesterday afternoon.

Addressing the first query even before the scheduled period for spoken enquiries, AL president Ho Iat Seng commented on a letter of complaint presented to the AL board by lawmaker Sulu Sou on October 19 regarding the plenary's deliberation over the constitution, members and designations of the AL's Standing Committees.

The lawmaker questioned the choice of committee members as well as what actions they proposed to take in their positions. Ho said the board had refused to address the topic at the plenary. "In the end of July we changed some of the rules of the AL [and have now established] a timing in advance for the lawmakers to present their proposals before the agenda speeches," he said.

He said the measure was to allow AL staff to translate documents in both official languages for lawmakers and media representatives. "Those that failed to comply with such [a] rule today will not have the opportunity to address the plenary before the agenda [...] their interventions [will be] postponed and [take] priority for the upcoming session."

The procedure matters started right before the first interven-

AL resumes with Sulu Sou setting the agenda



tions of the day, and followed the first point of the agenda where lawmakers discussed and voted on the composition of the Committee for Regulations and Mandates of the AL.

Sou was again the loudest critic, followed by Au Kam San, Pereira Coutinho and Ng Kuok Cheong. All four called for greater trans-

parency in the works of the committees and demanded to know whether the seven lawmakers being appointed to the Committee for Regulations and Mandates would address certain issues. These included the possibility of opening AL meetings to the media and whether one lawmaker could be represented in multiple

committees.

"The distribution was done according to the convenience [form of election]. We are going to have three [lawmakers] directly elected and three from indirect elections and I think this is a balanced solution," Ho said.

Sou suggested that the AL board should question all lawmakers before deciding on the members of a list, "in case there are others that want to participate." Au agreed with Sou, and Pereira Coutinho reiterated that this had always been one of his main battles, saying that he was also very curious about the matter.

Ho's response was that the regime "is very clear regarding this matter. There is no rule that restricts the participation of other [lawmakers in the committees] but this is a matter that should

not be presented to the plenary since it's a matter of the committee."

He added that the members could not speak "because they were not elected yet."

Ng voiced his agreement with the idea that "committees can be open to [the] public", to which Ho replied that "this decision can be taken in the committee. That's what the regime states. It's a decision from the Committees."

Several lawmakers called for greater transparency in the works of the committees

Pereira Coutinho suggested that the current rule could be "inverted," leaving the Committees "open by default and in special cases [the meetings could be held] behind closed doors, just in very particular cases that can raise panic [in the society] or similar."

Vong Hin Fai intervened, reaffirming the rule that allows nomination by secret vote in the event the list proposed by the Board is not accepted.

This ended the debate and the AL proceeded to vote on the proposal, which was approved with 30 votes in favor and only two against (from Sulu Sou and Pereira Coutinho).

The second and third points of the agenda – pertaining to the constitution, members and composition of the Standing and Follow up Committees – were approved unanimously with 32 votes in favor.

For the last item on the agenda, lawmaker Angela Leong was elected as the representative in the Administration Council with a majority of 24 votes. Two votes were blank, while the rest of the opposing votes belonged to several other lawmakers.

Public officials' accountability in the spotlight following Hato

THE consequences of Typhoon Hato and their connection to the accountability of high-ranked public officials was a topic on which several lawmakers focused before the meeting began in earnest.

Si Ka Lon was the first to address the topic in the plenary, urging the government members to "assume their duties."

Quoting Chinese Premier Xi Jinping during the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Si said, "The State needs to continue to implement criteria in order to have good staff; in other words, select government members that have strong convictions, that serve the people, that are hard workers and pragmatists, that assume their responsibilities and are incorruptible."

He cited public opinion that many of the government members are "unqualified" and do not "assume their duties and responsibilities."

Without mentioning Typhoon Hato, Si urged the government to "define criteria related to the accountability regime and, at the same time [...] improve the inspection works." He continued to say that when the inspections uncovered a "disease" they should "treat" it immediately.

In an unprecedented plenary address spoken entirely in Mandarin, appointed lawmaker Lei Chan U noted the "inoperativeness and low efficiency" of the administration. He called these



Si Ka Lon (center)

"endemic problems" and entreated the government to "perfect" the mentioned regime.

Leong Sun Iok, a new face at the AL, also addressed the topic: "Society wants a perfect regime for the accountability of high-ranked officials."

Leong noted that the "non-timely communication of information to the society by the SMG (Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau) before the passage of Typhoon Hato is one of the reasons that justify the significant losses, both in human lives and in property damage." He accused government officials of developing a "passive attitude."

Sulu Sou stands for young Macau people

IN his first address to a Legislative Assembly plenary session, New Macau Association lawmaker Sulu Sou thanked voters for the trust placed in him and said that his "spike-covered" chair represents "the hope of survival" for his supporters. Sou remarked that he has always taken the initiative to speak out in the presence of injustice, "while others didn't for being restrained by 'hidden rules'."

In a speech laying out his position, Sou said the because of the faith placed in him, "society will change, and even if it just slightly changes, there will be none to regret it."

Housing and jobs were two of the issues highlighted in the speech. He said, "when housing and jobs are difficult, it is natural that youngsters become [divided]. They work and save money to go abroad," noting that in this way, "young people that love this land and want to live all their lives in this city are labeled as having [low ambition] and fear to go out to the Greater Bay [area], the Belt and Road and Portuguese-speaking countries."

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Economist: EU has fresh opportunity after British 'imperialists' leave

Daniel Beitleer

A well-known Spanish economist and politician last night described the British people as "more or less imperialists" in the context of the country's 2016 decision to part with the European Union.

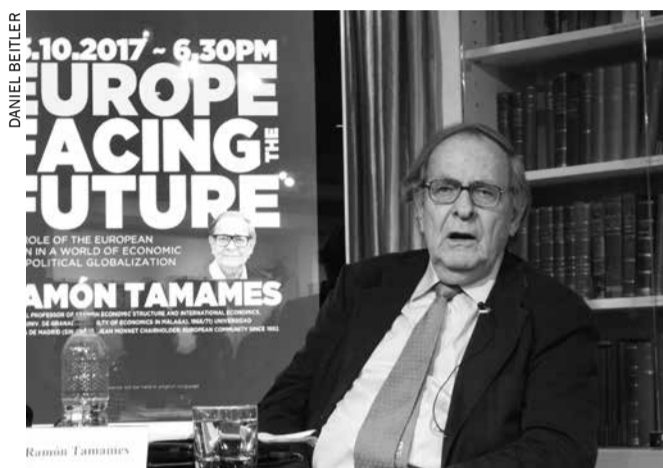
The 83-year-old Professor Ramón Tamames was speaking at the Rui Cunha Foundation in Macau, where he was invited last night to present his thoughts on the future of the European Union.

The scholar-cum-politician said that the EU has survived the economic crisis between 2008 and 2013, but now has a new problem on its hands, "and that problem is called 'Brexit'."

"The United Kingdom has decided to separate from the European Union. That appears [initially] to be a fiasco in the European Union, but it is [actually] a fiasco of the British people," said Tamames.

"People in the United Kingdom, they are more or less imperialists," he considered, adding that the British, much as they have been for centuries, are preoccupied with the former British Empire, the prosperity of the monarchy and "good business" above all.

"We can see that all the institutions of the British Empire were the real protagonists of the victory [behind] Brexit," concluded



Ramón Tamames

Tamames.

But the speaker also feels that there is an opportunity in Britain's departure.

"I am not celebrating that the country [is leaving] the project, but rather that the project can now continue [towards its federation goal]," he said.

The UK has long been seen by some EU member states as an unwilling partner in the European project, resisting closer integration and insisting on opt-out clauses.

However, it is not the only EU country to resist integration. Denmark, the Netherlands, Poland and Hungary have often found mutual ground with Britain within the politicking of the European Union, and Brexit may not have the expediting effect many pro-federalists are hoping to see.

Yesterday's talk did not give rise to such aspects, instead focusing on the rise of populism as the chief concern for Europe in the

coming years. Also notably absent from Tamames's presentation were the issues of national identity and the so-called 'European Migrant Crisis'.

"After the economic crisis [in Europe, there] emerged apostles with very simple solutions to our problems, claiming to solve everything within a few months," he said. "In Austria they are in a very good position, even nearly in [the Netherlands], but also Poland and Hungary."

Tamames, who has held prestigious posts at notable academic institutions and international organizations, has long been affiliated with the Spanish hard left, having joining the Communist Party of Spain in 1956 and the United Left from 1986.

His lecture yesterday was titled "Europe Facing the Future: The role of the European Union in a world of economic and political globalization," and served as a

rallying call for a European-led, "Marshall Plan-style project" for the economic rejuvenation of the African continent.

The Marshall Plan was a U.S. initiative to rebuild Western Europe after the devastation of the Second World War. Involving the channeling of more than USD13 billion in economic aid (\$132 billion in today's terms), it was also designed to deter the countries of Europe from considering Soviet-style communism as an economic alternative to free market capitalism.

Tamames's argument stems from growth projections of Africa's youthful populace combined with its high birth rates, which he predicts will cause the continent's population to swell to four billion in the near future.

The scholar argued that the European Union can play a critical role in financing the infrastructure needed to support this growth, while – presumably – advancing its international influence.

"Do you know of anyone who favors the Chinese model [of economic development]?" he asked yesterday's attendees. "Even in Africa, there is nobody, because it [the model] lacks liberty for the individual. [...] What we need in Europe are new targets. We are striving for a new distribution of power, with the contribution of all countries."



Fanny Vong (left), Alexis Tam and Ana Costa Freitas

EDUCATION

IFT signs cooperation agreement with Évora University

THE Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) and Évora University signed a cooperation agreement yesterday in Macau. The agreement was signed by IFT president Fanny Vong and Évora University rector Ana Costa Freitas.

Through the cooperation with the Portuguese university, IFT hopes to promote faculty and student exchanges, internship placements, joint research and other forms of institutional collaboration in postgraduate studies.

The announcement follows a visit to Portugal by a Macau delegation led by Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Alexis Tam, which took place between September 17 and 25. During the

trip, the Tertiary Education Services Office arranged for a group from Macau's higher education sector to visit the Portuguese Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, as well as universities, laboratories and incubation centers.

Established in Portugal in 1559, Évora University is a renowned institution with a long history. According to an IFT statement issued yesterday, Évora University "engages in a lot of research and projects on cultural heritage conservation and restoration, as well as [...] the identification of the material and structure of cultural relics."

The university offers a postgraduate program in cultural heritage.

corporate bits

MGM WINS ACCOLADES AT HR INNOVATION AWARDS 2017



Gaming operator MGM won one Gold and two Bronze Awards at the HR Innovation Awards 2017 organized by Human Resources Magazine, one of Asia's leading publications on human resources (HR).

This also marks the second year in a row that MGM has been recognized for its continuous efforts in driving HR innovation and creating an engaging work environment. This year's HR Innovation Awards Ceremony & Gala

Dinner took place in Hong Kong on October 19, bringing industry leaders together to celebrate excellence within the HR profession.

The award attracted 112 entries from companies across different sectors. MGM was shortlisted as a top five finalist in eight different categories, and took home three awards: Excellence in Retention Strategy (Gold), Excellence in Employee Development (Bronze) and Excellence in Leadership Development (Bronze).

"With the opening of MGM Cotai [...] we will increase our efforts to roll out creative HR initiatives, supporting the career and personal growth of our staff," said Grant Bowie, chief executive officer and executive director of MGM China, in a press release.

CONRAD MACAO RAISES OVER MOP84,000 FOR BREAST CANCER RESEARCH



Marcus Kwok (left), Tove Vine and Bede Barry at Conrad Macao's charity lunch

For the fourth consecutive year, Conrad Macao, Cotai Central has partnered with the International Ladies Club of Macao to host a charity lunch

as part of the hotel's 2017 "PINK Inspired" October campaign, which aims to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer research.

This year's event raised over MOP 84,000 for the campaign with the support of its major retail sponsors, according to a statement issued by Conrad.

Special guests at the lunch included Gloria di Parma, one of the lead dancers from Crazy Horse Paris' Forever Crazy show; Hong Kong television actor and doctor Marcus Kwok, who acted as MC; and guest speaker Tove Vine, author and founder of 'Miss Tove's English Schools in China'.

The lunch was attended by more than 250 guests dressed in various shades of pink. They dined on a special pink-themed, three-course lunch created by the talented chefs at Conrad Macao, which included a glass of pink Veuve Clicquot champagne and a gift bag.

Disciplinary procedures announced to assess Fong and SMG

The Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, has ordered the commencement of disciplinary procedures to assess the internal workings of the Macau Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) as well as the conduct of its former director, Fong Soi Kun. The announcement follows the investigation report issued by the Commission Against Corruption last week, which blamed Fong for faulty typhoon forecasting procedures. The report stated that SMG relied on the personal judgments and decisions of its former director when making typhoon forecasts and issuing warning signals for the tropical cyclones. Fong resigned after residents and lawmakers criticized the bureau's failure to raise timely warning signals on August 23, when Typhoon Hato struck.

IC: Repairs ongoing at temples and churches

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) is continuing repair works on temples and churches affected by the passage of Typhoon Hato. In a press release issued last week, the IC said it had contacted the managers of 17 churches and 44 temples to discuss and coordinate maintenance works. These include the removal of debris from 18 affected sites. The IC said that repair and cleaning works in another 28 sites have mostly been concluded, but that some other buildings require refurbishment by specialized personnel.

HEALTH

15 residents affected by HIV

HIV was detected in 15 patients in Macau from January to September this year and two of these patients have died. The 13 remaining patients are undergoing treatment, including one abroad. Ten of the 15 patients are local residents.

HIV is a disease that can be transmitted sexually or through the unsafe use of needles. According to the Health Bureau, seven of the patients are in homosexual relationships, another seven are in bisexual relationships and the sexual orientation of one patient remains undetermined.

Lam Chong, director of the Health Bureau's Center for Disease Control and Prevention, discussed the data at a press conference yesterday.

Thirty HIV cases were detected in 2016, of which 15 cases developed into AIDS.

The infection caused three deaths last year.

Chong said that the bureau's promotion of rapid test awareness was a significant factor in the decrease in HIV cases this year, explaining that there were more residents and fo-



reigners who took rapid tests in 2016.

Last year, 26,000 people underwent a rapid test, a surge of more than 100 percent compared to 2015.

However, as of last month, only 18,000 residents have taken the test this year.

"I think because last year, we made promotions of rapid tests so many people had rapid tests last year," he said.

"Many infection cases had already been detected [last

year] so this year, although we continue to promote the test [...] the numbers decreased a bit," the official added.

Chong said there had been 696 cases of HIV in Macau since 1986, of which 269 were local residents. 51 of these cases were fatal.

The official added that the number of local HIV patients had increased significantly in the past ten years. He correlated the rise in infections with the prevalence of unsafe sex.

Chong added that the bureau is in talks with the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) regarding the possibility of integrating sex education into local schools' curriculum.

In line with World AIDS Day on December 1, the bureau will hold a series of activities next month to promote safe sex and HIV awareness, including a contest which will be held on social media platforms such as WeChat and Facebook. LV

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JAPAN

Corporate winners and losers after Abe's landslide win

Dave McCombs

THE landslide victory in Japan for the party behind Abenomics is likely to be good news for industries from nuclear power to defense, while posing challenges to others such as retailers.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ruling coalition retained its two-thirds majority in the lower house in Sunday's election, paving the way for more ultra-easy monetary policy that has boosted Japanese stocks to the highest level in two decades and helped Asia's second-biggest economy expand for six straight quarters. At the same time, pressure is growing for Abe to increase stagnant wage growth and overhaul the labor market to replenish a rapidly aging workforce.

"Corporate Japan is determined to play a role in rebuilding our economy and is cooperating with the Abe administration's strategy," Sadayuki Sakakibara, chairman of Japan's main business lobby Keidanren, said in a statement.

The Nikkei 225 Stock Average yesterday capped its longest winning streak on record, gaining for a 15th straight day amid expectations corporate earnings will benefit from the continuation of ultra-easy monetary policy.

Here's what the election results mean for key industries and companies:



Attendees wave Japanese national flags in support of Shinzo Abe

LARGE EXPORTERS

Abe won office in 2012 with a central bank policy of massive quantitative easing that pushed the yen lower. The currency has weakened from a 2011 peak and provided a tailwind for many of the countries' biggest manufacturers such as Toyota Motor Corp.

Corporate profits have been boosted by a resurgence in Japanese exports, which have shown double-digit gains in the past three months. Some of the companies that stand to gain the most from a depreciating yen include Fanuc Corp., Canon Inc. and Nintendo Co., as most of their sales come from overseas.

The question going forward is how long the government will continue its stimulus plans. With inflation still weak and wage growth still sluggish, Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda has been staying the course with its massive monetary easing program.

CONSUMER GOODS

Abe also billed the snap election as a chance to test public opinion on an increase in the national sales tax. When he raised the levy in 2014, the economy tipped into recession. Abe has twice since put it off but recent signs of growth make it hard to justify a further delay.

In the election campaign, Abe linked an envisioned increase in the levy to 10 percent from 8 percent in October 2019 to planned spending on education and support for young families. That may help companies including education-related publisher Benesse Holdings Inc. and cram-school operator Gakken Holdings Co.

Retail and consumer giants such as Seven & i Holdings Co., Aeon Co. and Kirin Holdings Co. may suffer as higher taxes undermine consumer spending.

DEFENSE

Abe campaigned on his administration's record in res-

ponding to missile tests and militant rhetoric from North Korea. This has prompted expectations his administration intends to maintain increases in spending on weapons made by companies including Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd., Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd., Toshiba Corp. and IHI Corp.

NUCLEAR POWER

Abe has vowed to restart more reactors after the nation's atomic fleet was idled for safety checks following the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that caused a triple meltdown at the Fukushima Dai-Ichi nuclear power station. Abe's win on Sunday came against the party of Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike, who has said she backs eliminating nuclear power and increasing the use of renewable energy sources.

Kansai Electric Power Co. and Kyushu Electric Power Co. re-

main the most dependent on nuclear power, while industrial conglomerates such as Hitachi Ltd. and Mitsubishi Heavy are major suppliers to the industry.

TOBACCO

Abe's party has said it is considering raising taxes on electronic tobacco products, while leaving levies on conventional cigarettes at current levels. Former monopoly Japan Tobacco Inc. has lost ground to overseas rivals Philip Morris International Inc. and British American Tobacco Plc, which have taken the lead in Japan's fast-growing market for heat-not-burn smoking.

Meanwhile, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party has so far balked at proposals to ban smoking indoors ahead of the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

CASINO LEGISLATION

An Abe victory is good news for companies like Las Vegas Sands Corp. and Melco Resorts & Entertainment Ltd., which are jostling for position as the government moves toward allowing casino resorts in Japan. The prime minister has supported the initiative as a means to boost the domestic economy. A substantial loss of seats in the election to the opposition could have emboldened critics of the casino plan, which surveys show is unpopular with voters.

The election itself has delayed until next year the submission of legislation laying out rules for gambling resorts. Legislators will probably hold off on submitting the bill until May or June, a government official with knowledge of the plans said last month. Casinos in Japan aren't likely to open before 2023, according to Bloomberg Intelligence. **Bloomberg**

SINGAPORE

Game startup Sea raised USD884 million in New York IPO

Yoolim Lee, Alex Barinka

SINGAPORE'S Sea Ltd., Southeast Asia's most valuable startup, raised about USD884 million in its initial public offering in New York.

The company sold 59 million American depositary shares for \$15 apiece, according to a statement Friday, offering more shares and pricing them above its initial range of \$12 to \$14 each. The total amount may be more than \$1 billion if an option to sell additional shares is exercised, according to a

person familiar with the matter, asking not to be identified because the matter is private.

The games company is backed by Tencent Holdings Ltd. and has benefited from the Chinese company's support. Sea licenses games from Tencent, which also holds a stake of about 40 percent in the smaller company. Investors are scooping up Sea's shares despite rising losses at the company as it diversifies into e-commerce and payments. Sea had a net loss of \$165.2 million in the first half of the year

on revenue of \$195.5 million.

It was valued at \$3.75 billion in its 2016 fundraising and will surpass \$4 billion with the IPO.

"Sea is a future-looking investment," Kai-Fu Lee, founder of Beijing-based Sinovation Ventures, said before the offering. "Investors are betting that it can become the 800-pound gorilla that will make all the money it may have lost."

Sea was founded by Forrest Li as an online gaming company in 2009 and originally named

Garena. He rebranded the company to reflect its regional ambition and diversification. Sea branched out with a digital payments service called AirPay in 2014 and the mobile shopping business Shopee in 2015.

Sea's games business, which retained the Garena name, still accounts for more than 90 percent of total revenue. Like Tencent, the company offers games for free, then collects money when players buy virtual items like armor, weapons or special skills. It makes money in



Employees play pool during their lunch break in the pantry at the Garena Interactive Holding Ltd. headquarters in Singapore

e-commerce from commissions and advertising, while collecting fees from payments.

With Tencent's support, the startup has attracted marquee backers. They include the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, Malaysia's sovereign wealth fund and several Asian

billionaires. Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Morgan Stanley and Credit Suisse Group AG are leading the public offering.

The American depositary shares are set to begin trading on the New York Stock Exchange Friday under the ticker symbol SE, the company said. **Bloomberg**

Beijing defends its trade with North Korea as permitted by UN



A crane loads off the Russian food aid to North Korea at Nampho port in Nampho city, North Korea, in December 2014

CHINA yesterday defended its growing trade with North Korea as permitted by U.N. Security Council sanctions that say they should avoid hurting "humanitarian needs."

China, the North's main trading partner, "strictly implements" sanctions aimed at stopping the North's pursuit of nuclear and missile technology, said a foreign ministry spokesman, Geng Shuang.

Customs data show Chinese exports to North Korea rose 31.4 percent in August from a year earlier, while imports fell 9.5 percent. Beijing has pointed out the sanctions don't prohibit food sales and argued against measures that might harm the North Korean public.

The Security Council barred member governments on Aug.

5 from buying North Korean coal and seafood. Those penalties were expanded Sept. 11 to ban supplying the North with natural gas or buying its textiles after Pyongyang's sixth and strongest nuclear test explosion.

"The Security Council pointed out that the relevant resolutions should not inflict negative impacts on the livelihood and humanitarian needs of North Korea," Geng said at a regular briefing.

China, long North Korea's diplomatic protector, has gone along with the sanctions out of growing frustration with leader Kim Jong Un's government.

Beijing also has cut into Pyongyang's foreign revenue by ordering North Korean-owned restaurants and other businesses and ventures with Chinese partners to close.

One of five permanent Security Council members with veto power over U.N. actions, China doesn't want to push North Korea too hard out of fear Kim's government might collapse. AP

WADA investigating claims of systematic doping in China

THE World Anti-Doping Agency is looking into allegations made by a German broadcaster that Chinese athletes benefited from systematic doping in the 1980s and 90s.

"The allegations were brought forward by former Chinese physician, Xue Yinxian, who is said

to have looked after several national teams in China during the decades in question," WADA said yesterday.

Xue, who recently arrived in Germany and is seeking political asylum with her son, told broadcaster ARD that more than 10,000 athletes were affected, some as

young as 11, and that anyone who was against doping was considered "a danger to the country. And anyone who endangered the country is now in prison."

The 79-year-old Xue said she lost her job with the national gymnastics team after refusing to treat an athlete with do-

ping substances before the 1988 Seoul Olympics. She said she had not felt safe in her home city of Beijing since 2012, when she first made her allegations of doping. She first started working with China's national teams in the 1970s.

"In the 1980s and 90s, Chinese athletes on the

national teams made extensive use of doping substances," she told ARD. "Medals were showered in doping. Gold, silver and bronze. All international medals should be withdrawn."

WADA said it will examine "whether such a system may have prevailed beyond these decades."

The first step, WADA said, was for its "independent intelligence and investigations team to initiate an investigative process in order to col-

lect and analyze available information in coordination with external partners."

Xue, who continued to work at lower levels after being dismissed from the national team in 1988, said she was only approached afterward when athletes developed problems because of the substances they were given.

"One trainer came to me and said, 'Doctor Xue, the boys' breasts keep getting bigger,'" Xue said. "These boys were about 13 to 14 years old." AP

IT wasn't just the dark-suited delegates in Beijing who were listening intently last week as Chinese President Xi Jinping outlined his grand ambitions to launch a twice-a-decade Communist Party congress.

On China's peripheries there was apprehension and optimism as Xi, China's strongest leader in decades, reasserted his authority over semiautonomous Hong Kong and self-governing Taiwan.

Xi declared that Hong Kong, where residents are increasingly divided over Beijing's rule of the former British colony, and Taiwan, where voters elected an independence-leaning president last year amid rising alienation from the mainland, are part of a "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" led by the Communist Party.

Hopes and fears in Hong Kong, Taiwan

Here's a look at what people on the two islands told The Associated Press about the party congress:

THE ANXIOUS BUSINESSMAN

Businessman Ringo Lee believes President Xi Jinping must talk with Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-Wen to encourage better ties across the Taiwan Strait.

Companies like his travel agency depend on it. The company brings mainland Chinese tourists to Taiwan and also sends Taiwanese tourists to the mainland.

Travel and tourism-related companies need good "cross-strait" relations, Lee said. But because of strai-

ned ties in recent years, "the number of Chinese tourists coming to Taiwan has dropped," said Lee, 45.

"Xi Jinping's task in his second term is to make Taiwanese people feel that China is a friendly nation," Lee said.

THE ACTIVIST

Christophe Chan feels Xi has done little over the past five years to improve relations with Taiwan, a democracy that Beijing views as a renegade province.

Like many younger residents, he believes Beijing should give up on its claim that Taiwan is part of Chinese territory.

"Taiwan and China are two different countries.

This is a political fact that must not be neglected," said Chan, a supporter of 2014's student-led Sunflower Movement protests that opposed a trade agreement with Beijing and closer ties with the mainland.

Only when China has "faced the truth about Taiwan, and recognizes it as a democratic and sovereign entity," can "both countries engage in friendly dialogue and exchange," said Chan, 38.

Chan disapproves of the Communist Party's hard-line governance under Xi. "We are used to calling China a superpower, or even a great country," but the party's policies in recent years suggest otherwise, he said.

"China is cracking down

on human rights," Chan said.

THE PRO-BEIJING RETIREE

For retiree Fan Li, the most important thing is whether China's leaders can improve the livelihoods of people in Hong Kong.

"In the last 10 years, China's leaders — Hu Jintao, Jiang Zemin and Xi Jinping — have all introduced different policies to support the development of Hong Kong," said Li, 70.

Li believes China's leaders will successfully steer the city's future economic development as they have done for the mainland.

He cited Beijing's big projects like the "One Belt, One

Road" infrastructure project, which aims to better connect China, Europe and Africa, and another aimed at helping Hong Kong's integration with the wealthy, industrialized neighboring mainland province of Guangdong.

He believes that Hong Kong's pro-democracy lawmakers hindered the city's economic development.

"When some people constantly oppose policies for the sake of opposition, they delay progress," he said.

"Take Shenzhen," Li said, referring the mainland boomtown next door to Hong Kong. "In the last 20 to 30 years, it has grown rapidly from a small village to the large, vibrant city that

David Tweed

19TH PARTY CONGRESS

What we learned on day six

SPECULATION is mounting over which officials will replace the five members of China's top decision making body who are expected to retire this week.

Here is what we learned on day six of the Communist Party's twice-a-decade congress.

Citing sources it did not identify, the South China Morning Post reported that Li Zhanshu, Han Zheng, Zhao Leji, Wang Yang and Wang Huning - high-ranking party officials - will join President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang on the powerful Politburo Standing Committee. All are in their 60s and ineligible to carry out a two-term presidency from 2022, if current unwritten retirement rules hold. Such a scenario would raise questions about whether Xi might retain some sort of formal role after his second term ends five years from now.

BANKING HURDLES

Gadfly columnists Nisha Gopalan and Matthew Brooker outlined the hurdles foreign banks face doing business in China, even though the market was opened in 2006 as part of an agreement struck when the country joined the World Trade Organization five years earlier. The share of global financial institutions in China has been small and shrinking for some time, declining to 1.38 percent of total banking assets in 2015 from 1.93 percent in 2011. Lengthy approval procedures for branch openings and working capital requirements keep a brake on expansion.

ILLEGAL STEEL PLANTS

China will prevent shuttered or illegal steel plants from resuming operations, according to an official at the nation's top economic planning body. The world's biggest steel producer has ordered illegal mills to close, both to reduce overcapacity and clean up the environment, in a campaign that has increased prices. Officials plan further output cuts at remaining plants over the winter in key production centers, Ning Jizhe, vice



chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission, said at a weekend briefing.

TODAY HIGHLIGHTS

Delegates will decide whether to officially adopt in the party's charter Xi's thoughts on adapting Mar-

xism to China's context. If that happens, and his name is embedded in the constitution, it will further cement his influence. No party leader since Mao Zedong has put his stamp on guiding ideology in the charter before retirement. The congress officially ends to-

day when the party selects a new Central Committee with around 200 members. At its first plenum meeting on tomorrow, that group will choose the Politburo - currently 25 members - and its supreme Standing Committee, now seven members. **Bloomberg**

an amid CPC congress

it is today." Hong Kong's development has stalled in comparison, he believes, because of "internal problems."

THE DISILLUSIONED STUDENT

College student Lee Chan, 21, believes the party's policies have done little to address problems faced by Hong Kong's young.

Disillusioned about their chances of social mobility and struggling to find affordable housing, many have given up on their dreams, he said.

But an even greater worry is the Communist Party's increasing encroachment on political liberties like freedom of speech. "Many

people will complain about economic problems such as high property prices, or the rising cost of chicken and vegetables," he said, "but are unaware that our political freedoms are gradually eroding."

Hong Kong's prosperity as an international finance hub is underpinned by these freedoms, which are now being compromised, he said.

"Booksellers have been detained and sent back to the mainland via illegal means," he said. "Hong Kong people face greater threats, in particular when it comes to their political rights."

His outlook is bleak. "Maybe one day, we will

not be able to organize on the streets, express our viewpoints, publish books, criticize the government, or express what we believe to be right and just," said Lee. "The values that define Hong Kong will no longer exist."

THE OPTIMISTIC STUDENT

Jackel Wan, 19, is optimistic about relations between Hong Kong and the mainland and thinks the good atmosphere will continue under Xi's leadership.

Beijing's policies haven't significantly touched Kui's personal life and he believes the freedoms he enjoys remain intact.

"I can still study freely. I



In this combination of images, from left to right: Taiwan's Christophe Chan; Ringo Lee; and Hong Kong's Fan Li; Lee Chan; and Jackel Wan are interviewed by the Associated Press in Taipei City

still have freedom of speech. Hong Kong is still under the framework of 'One Country, Two Systems,' and still under the Basic Law," he said, referring to a special formula and mini-constitution Beijing promised after the 1997 handover from Britain. They guarantee the

city's wide autonomy and civil liberties unseen on the mainland.

Kui believes Beijing's tough line on rising dissent in the city is appropriate, a stance at odds with many other young people, including those who helped spearhead huge 2014 pro-

democracy protests. He said calls for Hong Kong independence by a small but vocal minority on college campuses and elsewhere are unrealistic.

"They are doing the right thing to keep the situation under control," Kui said of China. **AP**

KIM JONG NAM MURDER TRIAL

Who killed Kim's half brother? Here's what we know

Eric Talmadge, Kuala Lumpur

EIGHT months after the audacious assassination of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's estranged half brother, a Malaysian court is trying to unweave a complicated web of deception, political intrigue and cold-blooded brutality — a scheme allegedly cooked up by a network of North Koreans who have never, and almost certainly never will, set foot in the courthouse.

WAS IT THE PERFECT CRIME?

After Kim Jong Nam was killed in a crowded Kuala Lumpur airport budget terminal, the Internet broadcast the attack to millions of people around the world. Security camera footage showed Kim, who had been jumped by two mysterious women, gesturing for help, his face covered with an obscure but exceedingly potent poison. By the time he got to a hospital, he was dead.

But the viral videos merely scratched the surface.

Today, members of the court hearing the case will go to the airport crime scene for the first time as the prosecution steps up its case against the only suspects actually facing punishment — two young Southeast Asian women whose lives are on the line, but who claim they were tricked into carrying out what they thought was a harmless prank.

Here's a recap of who Kim Jong Nam was and what's come out at the trial so far about the suspects, their defense and the case against them.

THE MARK

When Kim Jong Nam checked in for his AirAsia flight bound for Macau on Feb. 13, his passport read Kim Chol, aged 46.

If it was an attempt to fool anyone, it was a feeble one — Kim Chol is the North Korean equivalent of John Doe — and despite some quick and seemingly pro forma protests and denials from North Korean officials in the days afterward, it became apparent almost immediately that this victim wasn't just any paunchy middle-aged traveler.

Kim Jong Nam, who was 45 or 46, was the eldest son of the late North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.

He had been seen as a potential heir to the country's dynastic leadership until he very publicly fell from grace when

AP PHOTO



Kim Jong Nam

he was caught trying to enter Japan in 1998 to visit Tokyo Disneyland. What ensued was a chain of events that would leave him in de facto exile, spending most of his time in Macau.

Malaysian officials have never officially accused Pyongyang of involvement [and] they do not want the trial to be politicized

It's not clear if Kim Jong Nam and Kim Jong Un, born of a different mother, had ever met. But by 2010, when Kim Jong Un was revealed as the heir apparent, Kim Jong Nam was regarded — when he was regarded at all — as a luxury-hungry, tattoo-covered playboy well out of the North Korean political power picture.

On the fringes, he continued to nevertheless be something of a potential threat. His ability to stay in Macau indicated he had at least some Chinese support and, because of his pedigree, was seen by some as a viable replacement if Kim Jong Un were to ever be removed from power.

Rumors have it there were at least two previous attempts on his life in the past several years. According to authorities, Kim was carrying USD100,000 in cash at the time of his death, which a prominent Japanese newspaper reported was a payoff for a meeting he had just prior to the attack with an agent connected to the CIA.

Such mysteries aren't likely to get much of an airing in court.

Malaysian officials have never officially accused Pyongyang of involvement. And they have made it clear they do not want the trial to be politicized.

THE 'LIZARD TAILS'

The young women who face the death penalty if convicted are Siti Aisyah, who is Indonesian, and Doan Thi Huong, who is Vietnamese.

Huong wore a T-shirt emblazoned with "LOL" — laugh out loud — when she lunged for Kim at the airport. Both women now wear bullet-proof vests and handcuffs when going in and out of their court appearances.

Under Malaysian law, the women can't be sentenced to die if they didn't have intent to kill. And that, essentially, is their defense.

Both claim they were "lizard tails," the unwitting and expendable victims of an elaborate plot orchestrated by several men who convinced them they were taking part in a reality TV show, a comedy in which they would wipe lotion on the faces of unsuspecting marks. While the men recorded their actions on cellphones, the women practiced the "pranks" on several occasions. A man known as "James" was the first to enlist Aisyah, followed by another man she knew as "Chang."

Authorities suspect several other North Korean men played a role in the attack. But four of them left Malaysia that same day. James, who has since been identified as Ri Ji U,

left later after holing up at the North Korean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur.

Prosecutors contend the women knew they were handling poison — the banned nerve agent VX, which is very hard to concoct by civilians and is better known in military contexts as a potential weapon of mass destruction.

Police officer Wan Azirul Nizam Che Wan Aziz testified that Huong's manner was "aggressive" when she attacked Kim, and that she didn't apologize to him, as she had done to another person she approached in a similar manner at the airport two days earlier. A video of that encounter was also shown to the court.

The prosecution also contends the women very deliberately rushed to wash their hands after the attack, indicating they were fully aware of the danger from the VX. Security camera footage shows both holding their hands away from their bodies as they rush to separate restrooms.

THE MISSING NORTH KOREANS

No one seriously believes Aisyah and Huong acted alone.

Not only did North Koreans recruit the two, according to the prosecution, but they supplied the poison.

Prosecutors have argued that Kim Jong Nam was killed with the VX nerve agent. How the women avoided poisoning themselves remains a question mark. There is a VX variant — VX2 — that can be divided into two component parts that are relatively safe until mixed together on the target. But an expert witness has testified that requires high temperatures and was not a practical option.

Investigators say a third suspect, "Mr. Y," who was videoed wearing a black baseball cap and carrying a backpack as he walked with Huong at the airport the morning of the attack, applied one half of the VX2 to her hand. Chang, who was taped meeting Aisyah in a cafe not too far from the check-in kiosk where Kim was attacked, allegedly did the same for the Indonesian woman.

Chang has since been identified as Hong Song Hak, and Malaysian investigators say they have yet another North Korean suspect, "Hanamori."

But they are all long gone.

The North Korean Embassy where James was holed up is open, but operating without an ambassador in residence. Malaysia has recalled its diplomatic staff from Pyongyang as well. The killing of Kim, and North Korea's repeated accusations of misconduct by the Malaysian authorities, sank what had been a relatively friendly relationship between the two countries. **AP**

Mari Yamaguchi, Tokyo

JAPAN

After election win, Abe prioritizes North Korea, aging population

FRESH off a decisive election victory, Japan's leader pledged yesterday to tackle what he called Japan's two national crises: the military threat from North Korea and an aging and shrinking population.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said at a news conference that he is committed to protect the Japanese people's prosperity and peace from any contingency. He also referred to Japanese people who were abducted years ago and are believed to still be held by North Korea.

"I will pursue decisive and strong diplomacy to tackle North Korea's missile, nuclear and abduction issues and put further pressure to get it to change its policy," he said.

His ruling coalition was returned to power in elections for Japan's more powerful lower house Sunday.

Abe said Japan's decreasing population and aging is "the biggest challenge" for his Abenomics policy aimed at Japan's economic recovery from deflation. "The problem is progressing by the minute, and we cannot afford waiting around."

He promised a comprehensive package by the end of the year to deal with Japan's demographic challenges, including investments in education, productivity improvements and pension system reform.

Abe's Liberal Democratic Party and a small coalition partner together secured at least 313 seats in the 465-member lower house, passing the 310-barrier for a two-thirds majority. Three seats remained undecided.

Abe said the result showed "strong support" from the people and thanked them for backing stability and his government's policies.

The victory boosts Abe's chances of winning another three-year term next September as leader of the Liberal Democratic Party. That could extend his premiership to 2021, giving him more time to try to win a reluctant public over to his longtime goal of revising Japan's pacifist



constitution.

In the immediate term, the win likely means a continuation of the policies Abe has pursued since he took office in December 2012 — a hard line on North Korea, close ties with Washington, including defense, as well as a super-loose monetary policy and push for nuclear energy. Stocks rose in Tokyo yesterday morning.

Abe said he will have "deep discussion" on North Korean policies with President Donald Trump during his planned Nov. 5-7 visit in Japan. Abe said he will call a special parliamentary session to be re-elected as prime minister and install his new Cabinet, which is expected to retain most of its current members.

Abe's ruling coalition already has a two-thirds majority in the less powerful upper house. Ha-

ving a so-called supermajority in both houses gives them virtually a free hand to push even divisive policies and legislation.

That would also increase Abe's chances for achieving a constitutional revision, a goal his party and its nationalist supporters have advocated for years. They view the 1947 constitution as the legacy of Japan's defeat in World War II and an imposition of the victor's world order and values. The charter renounces the use of force in international conflicts and limits Japan's troops to self-defense, although Japan has a well-equipped modern military that works closely with the U.S.

Any change to Japan's constitution, which has never been amended, requires approval first by two-thirds of parliament, and then in a public referendum. Polls indicate that the Japanese

public remains opposed to amendment.

The win indicates Abe has bounced back from the summer, when support ratings for his Cabinet plunged to 30 percent after

accusations of government favoritism to people connected to him. For the first time since he took office nearly five years ago, he appeared vulnerable as both party leader and prime minister.

The ruling coalition's victory reflects as much the lack of viable alternatives as support for Abe. Turnout was just 54 percent, as typhoon rains lashed much of the country and delaying final results.

Abe dissolved the lower house less than a month ago, forcing the snap election. Analysts saw it as an attempt to solidify his political standing at a time when the opposition was in disarray and his support ratings had improved somewhat.

His plan was briefly upstaged by the launch of a new opposition party by populist Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike. But initial excitement faded, and the Party of Hope took only 49 seats. Another new party, the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, won 55 seats and looks to be the biggest opposition grouping. It is liberal-leaning, while both the Party of Hope and Abe's Liberal Democratic Party are more conservative. **AP**

TRUMP, ABE SET GOLF DATE FOR START OF US LEADER'S ASIA TOUR

DONALD TRUMP will start his first trip to Asia as president next month in somewhat predictable fashion: with a round of golf. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told Trump in a phone call yesterday that a joint outing with Japanese pro Hideki Matsuyama has been set up for Nov. 5, according to a Japanese Foreign Ministry summary of the call. Japan is the first stop for Trump on a trip that will also take him to South Korea, China, Vietnam and the Philippines. He will visit Hawaii as well. During the 30-minute

phone call, Trump congratulated Abe on his party's decisive victory in parliamentary elections Sunday. Trump told Abe that he is really looking forward to visiting Japan, the Japanese summary said. Trump is an avid and competitive golfer, whose weekend outings have gotten attention in the U.S. media. Abe also likes to golf. He presented Trump with a top-level driver by Japanese maker Honma soon after Trump won the presidency last November, and the two golfed together in Florida in February.

MALAYSIA

Toll rises in landslide; 11 dead mostly foreigners

TWO more bodies buried by a landslide in a construction site in northern Malaysia were recovered yesterday, bringing the death toll to 11, mostly foreign workers.

Fire and rescue official Mohamad Rizuan Ramli said the bodies of a Bangladeshi and a Malaysian trapped deep under the rubble were finally re-

trieved early yesterday.

A hillside crashed down early Saturday at the site where two 49-story condominiums are being built in northern Penang state, a popular tourist destination.

Three of the 14 workers buried by the landslide survived. The other victims were from China, Pakistan, Indonesia, Myanmar and Bangla-

desh.

The condominium project is now under scrutiny after authorities said it didn't obtain approval as it was too close to a granite quarry.

The Department of Environment said it had rejected the application for planning approval as the area was not safe for people to live in. Residents and activists were

riled by the revelation, saying yesterday in a statement that the Penang state government must explain why they ignored the environment department's advice and allowed the project to go through.

The state government has halted the project and said it would form a taskforce to investigate the tragedy. **AP**



Malaysian rescuers carry the body of a victim after he was pulled out from the debris of the landslide in Penang

Michael Hill, Rochester (N.Y.)

USA

As far right rises, LGBTQ gun group hits firing line in NY

THE former pacifist pumped a shotgun at the firing line.

Lore McSpadden never touched a gun before the Trigger Warning Queer & Trans Gun Club started this past year. Now McSpadden is among the shooters routinely yelling, "Pull!" and blasting at clay pigeons angling over a mowed field near Rochester.

Trigger Warning members are anxious about armed and organized extremists who seem increasingly emboldened. Their response has a touch of symmetry to it: They started a club to teach members how to take up arms.

"It's a way to assert our strength," said Jake Allen, 27, who helped form the group. "Often, queer people are thought of as being weak, as being defenseless, and I think in many ways this pushes back against that. And I want white supremacists and neo-Nazis to know that queer people are taking steps necessary to protect themselves."

Trigger Warning members meet once a month to shoot still targets and duces-saucer-shaped pigeons. The 18 dues-paying members are all LGBTQ, many just learning about guns.

"I identified as a pacifist really through most of my life," said McSpadden, 37, who has attended a self-defense seminar and now owns a 20-gauge shotgun.

On a recent evening, their instructor showed novices how to pull a .22-caliber rifle snugly to their shoulders and how to aim slightly ahead of a moving target. Members cheered when shooters shattered a pigeon or hit a bull's-eye.

The light mood belies the apprehension that led to group's creation this past winter amid a year marked by politically tinged violence ranging from scuffles at



AP PHOTO
Jon Dumont reloads and shoots a shotgun during a training session for the Trigger Warning Queer & Trans Gun Club in Victor,

protests to a violent clash of white supremacists and counter-protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Zora Gussow recalls a dismal time earlier this year when she began talking to Allen about taking on "the gaping hole in the knowledge of people on the left" about firearms.

"I grew up afraid of guns," Gussow said. "The first time I was near a gun in a house, it was of one of my friend's, and I basically jumped back. And that feels dangerous to me in a society where there are so many guns."

A dozen shooters in a field in upstate New York does not exactly represent a vanguard of a newly armed left. But the group is not alone. Allen said there is another Trigger Warning chap-

ter in Atlanta and he has received inquiries from people in about 10 other cities.

Membership in the Pittsburgh chapter of the Pink Pistols, an LGBTQ-oriented gun group with chapters nationwide, bumped up

■ **A dozen shooters in a field in upstate New York does not exactly represent a vanguard of a newly armed left**

after the presidential election and then after a white supremacist killed a counter-protester in Charlottesville this summer.

The National African-American Gun Association gained 500 new members within two days after Charlottesville. Association president Philip Smith said the group went from four chapters to 45 in the past year. The Liberal Gun Club, a national organization, has seen its paid membership roughly double since the election to about 5,500, said Lara Smith of the group's California chapter.

So-called leftists see the country differently now than the days of Occupy Wall street six years ago, said Mark Bray, author of "Antifa: The Anti-Fascist Handbook" and a visiting scholar at Dartmouth

College. Trump's victory emboldened white supremacists, he said, and the threat is felt not just by the LGBTQ community, but people of color, immigrants, Jews and Muslims.

"Back then we were sitting in parks, twinkling our fingers and talking about economic inequality," he said. "Now we're talking about firearms and self-defense."

Some other groups are more provocative.

Black-clad radicals affiliated with the anti-fascist movement have tangled physically with conservative demonstrators at some public events. In August, members of the anti-racist group Redneck Revolt stood outside a raucous Trump rally with long guns.

These more radical groups stand out in a movement with a long history of nonviolent protests. Still, even the act of taking up arms for defense is enough to worry some veteran activists.

"Is an arms race what we really want?" asked Scott Fearing, executive director of Rochester's Out Alliance. "What we know in any arms race is that it's never good for anybody, and death and destruction and harm and hurt can come when so many people have arms and weapons."

Trigger Warning members stress they are about empowerment and self-defense, not offense. Members say it also gives them a sense of community — even if it comes on a firing line in the middle of farm country. **AP**

SYRIA

At least 67 civilians found dead in town taken from IS

THE bodies of at least 67 Syrian civilians, many summarily killed by the Islamic State group, have been discovered in a central town in Syria retaken from IS by government troops over the weekend, activists said yesterday.

The news of the gruesome find in the town of Qaryatayn, in Homs province, began to emerge first early yesterday [Macau time]. The number of bodies was likely to climb.

Some were shot in the street as IS militants retreated from the town, gunned down because they were suspected of working with the governments, according to activists. At least 35 of the casualties were found shot and their bodies

dumped in a shaft.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said it had documented the killings of at least 128 people killed in Qaryatayn during the last days of IS control of the town.

On Saturday, Syrian troops and allied militias regained control of the town, which was held by IS for three weeks. The government-run Syrian Central Military Media at the time said the Syrian army and its allies restored security and stability to Qaryatayn after clearing the town of IS fighters.

The head of the Observatory, Rami Abdurrahman, said that what happened in the town was a "massacre."

The activist-run Palmyra

Coordination Committee published the names of 67 civilians confirmed killed and also said the number was likely to rise. It said at least 35 were found shot and dumped into a deep shaft.

The activist-run group said other bodies were also found in the town streets — apparently of people shot by pro-government forces and suspected of working with IS. The Observatory also said it documented at least 12 killed at the hands of pro-government troops after they regained control of the town.

IS militants first seized Qaryatayn in August 2015, and relied on the strategically located town to defend another of their bastions, the historic city of Palmyra.

At the time, thousands of the town's Christian residents fled, fearing the extremist group's brutality.

With Russian backing, Syrian troops regained control of the town in April 2016. But IS, facing major setbacks around Syria and Iraq, launched a new attack on the town in late September and recaptured it.

At the time, Russia accused the United States, which is battling the Islamic State group, of looking the other way and allowing IS to attack Qaryatayn.

Most of the IS militants who were involved in attacks on the town were local residents. Pro-government media blamed the loss of Qaryatayn for the second time on what it described as



AP PHOTO
Map locates Qaryatayn in Syria, where civilian bodies were found after government forces retook town from IS

militant "sleeper cells."

There was no immediate comment from the gover-

ment in Damascus on the find of the civilian bodies in Qaryatayn. **AP**



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what's ON



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TIME: 8pm (Tuesday - Friday)
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ADMISSION: MOP180, MOP380, MOP480, MOP680

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COLLECTION - 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY

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

UNTIL: December 10, 2017

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

EXHIBITION OF LAM IOK HOI

TIME: 11am-6pm (Closed on Mondays and public holidays)

UNTIL: November 8, 2017

VENUE: 10 Fantasia, No. 10, Calçada da Igreja de S. Lázaro

ADMISSION: Free

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2ND MACAU LANTERN FESTIVAL

TIME: 24 hours

UNTIL: October 31, 2017

VENUE: Anim'Arte NAM VAN and Promenade of One Central Macau

ADMISSION: Free

AH CHUNG'S COLLECTION EXHIBITION

TIME: 12pm-6pm (Closed on Mondays, open on public holidays)

UNTIL: October 31, 2017

VENUE: Macpro Art Space, No.11, Rua da Felicidade

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2833 7828

EXHIBITION OF CHAN HIN IO

TIME: 9am-7pm (Open on public holidays)

VENUE: Chun Chou Tong Pavilion of Lou Lim Ioc Garden, No. 10, Estrada de Adolfo Loureiro

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2872 7066

Offbeat



KFC TWITTER FOLLOWS 11 HERBS AND SPICES, INTRIGUES INTERNET

A Twitter user has earned kudos online for discovering a subtle message on KFC's account.

The KFC account follows just 11 users; five of them are former members of the Spice Girls and the other six are men named Herb, including Green Bay Packers cornerback Herb Waters and music legend Herb Alpert. It adds up to 11 herbs and spices, part of the famous secret recipe KFC founder Colonel Harland Sanders touted for his fried chicken.

The connection was noticed on Twitter by a user who goes by "Edge." His tweet about it has been shared hundreds of thousands of times on the platform.

KFC tells The Associated Press it has been following the 11 Herbs and Spices for about a month.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	RTPi Live
15:00	Miscellaneous
16:20	The Legendary Tiger Man
16:30	NOS League: Sporting x Chaves (Repeated)
18:10	Brazilian Mini Serie (Repeated)
18:40	TDM Sports (Repeated)
19:50	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Interview
21:30	Grimm Sr.1
22:10	Brazilian Mini Serie
22:40	Miscellaneous
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:05	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:40	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

19 - 25 Oct



GEOSTORM

ROOM 1
2:30, 4:30, 7:30, 9:30pm

Director: Dean Devlin

Starring: Gerard Butler, Jim Sturgess, Abbie Cornish, Daniel Wu

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 109 min



SKY HUNTER

ROOM 2
2:30, 6:45, 7:30pm

Director: Chen Li

Starring: Chen Li, Bingbing Fan, Qianyuan Wang, Jiahang Li

Language: Putonghua (Chinese & English)

Duration: 115min



WIND RIVER

ROOM 2
9:45pm

ROOM 3

4:00, 7:45pm

Director: Taylor Sheridan

Starring: Jeremy Renner, Elizabeth Olsen

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 107 min

this day in history



1945 UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION IS BORN

The United Nations Organisation has been formally inaugurated during a short ceremony at the US State Department in Washington.

A total of 29 countries ratified the United Nations Charter that was signed by 50 nations on 26 June in San Francisco. US Secretary of State James Byrnes signed the protocol and proclaimed the charter was "now a part of the law of nations".

He said it was a historic day for peace-loving nations of the world. But he warned peace was not based on documents but depended on the will of people to maintain it.

He added the USA would do its best to promote international co-operation.

The world security organisation aims to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and maintain international peace and security.

The UN Charter upholds human rights and proposes that nations should work together to overcome social, economic, humanitarian and cultural challenges.

The name "United Nations" was coined by US President Franklin D Roosevelt, and was first used in the Declaration of United Nations of 1 January 1942 when representatives of 26 nations pledged to continue fighting together against the Axis Powers.

Further proposals for an international security organisation were discussed in August 1944 at Dumbarton Oaks, in the District of Columbia, USA. The final charter was then signed in June in San Francisco and ratified today.

The UN's predecessor, the League of Nations, was established after the 1914-18 World War. It aimed to prevent another global conflict, but it failed to prevent the devastating world war that has just ended.

Much of the league's structure and many of its aims have been adopted by its successor.

The organisation will consist of six organs:

- a General Assembly of all members;
- a Security Council with five permanent members - China, France, Russia, the UK and the US - and six temporary members;
- an Economic and Social Council;
- a Trusteeship Council to supervise administration of colonies, former mandates of the League of Nations and territories taken from defeated nations;
- an International Court of Justice to be based at The Hague in the Netherlands;
- a Secretariat.

A Military Staff Committee will be charged with security and may take control of weapons such as the atomic bomb.

The permanent headquarters of the UNO will be in the US although it has been revealed that France, the UK and the Netherlands voted against this decision.

A preparatory commission will gather in London next month to prepare for the UNO's first General Assembly meeting in the British capital early next year expected to bring 2,000 people to the city.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

United Nations Day is celebrated on 24 October each year.

The United Nations Organisation became known simply as the United Nations and by 2005 comprised 191 member states.

Its numbers were swollen as colonies became independent and the Soviet Union disintegrated.

The Vatican and Taiwan remain non-members.

Most members have permanent missions at the UN's main headquarters in New York. This was built in 1952 on land beside the East River donated by US millionaire John D Rockefeller.

Fourteen independent agencies make up the "UN System" alongside many of the organisation's own programmes and agencies.

These include the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Health Organisation.

Frictions between the Western nations and the Soviet Bloc during the Cold War dominated much of the organisation's first four decades and hampered the functioning of the Security Council.

Since the 1990s the UN has taken on an increasingly interventionist approach.

Despite some successes in the peacekeeping arena, operations in Bosnia, Rwanda and Somalia were flawed, failing to prevent massacres and even genocide.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
For now, the top of your priority list belongs to the ones you love - but you'd never admit to it! They know how you feel, though, and that's really all that counts.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
You've been dealing with an awful lot lately, especially when it comes to secrets and those who keep them. You're done trying to keep anything inessential under wraps at this point.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
You've recovered from an old or recent trauma, but it wasn't easy, and you don't want to go through anything like it ever again. Fortunately, events like those that took place then are quite rare in your world.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Your talent for making nice with everyone is legendary. You can keep the peace, even when you're not sure whose side you're on. That trait comes in handy today.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You've never been short on charm, and you know exactly how to use that gift of yours to the utmost. Today, when a loved one pops up and silently asks you to help them out in some new way, you do it without uttering a word.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
For most of us, anything that even comes close to balancing the checkbook or getting our finances in order is so stressful or boring that we'd prefer having neck surgery.

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22
You may be trying not to let your feelings show at the moment, but there's only one way for you to pull it off: Try putting some serious distance between you and whomever you want to avoid oversharing with.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
You're famous for your love of discovering new (and old) secrets, it's you - in most, if not all, circumstances. At the moment, your intensifying investigation is even more appealing to you.

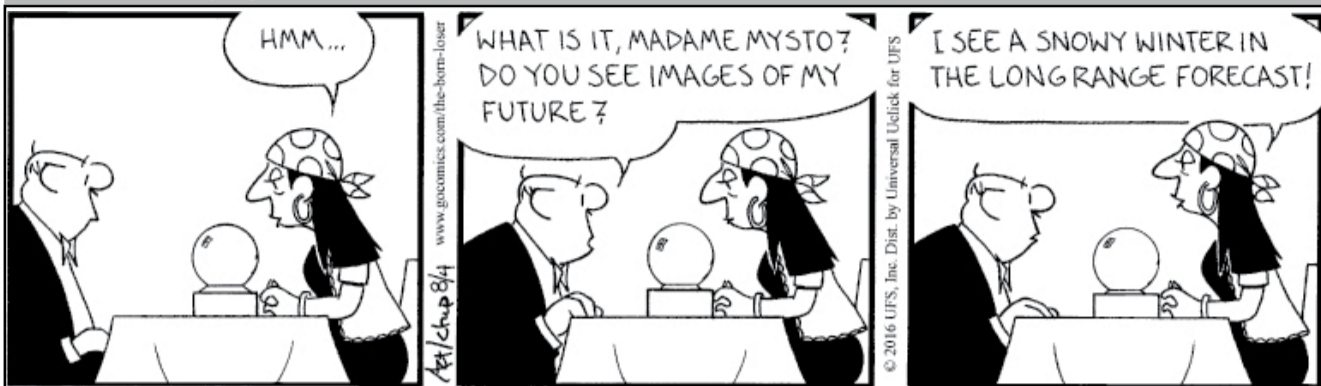
Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
When someone close needs a charismatic, well-spoken ally, they immediately think of you - as well they should! Your gift of gab is shining brightly right now.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You're famous for your work ethic, so if you're under extra pressure right now to get a big job done quickly, not to worry - nobody else is! The tricky part might be getting others to work with you.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
If you have any doubts about a loved one right now, don't let anyone talk you into letting those doubts slide. You have remarkably good instincts, especially when it comes to those closest to you.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20
You're one of the most sensitive people in your world, so when something seems to be a bit off today, you're the first to know. One tiny, inconvenient little fact that's out of place may be bothering you.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	5	18	clear
Harbin	-3	13	clear
Tianjin	8	18	clear
Urumqi	5	14	clear
Xi'an	13	20	cloudy
Lhasa	2	19	clear/cloudy
Chengdu	11	17	drizzle
Chongqing	14	19	overcast
Kunming	13	17	drizzle
Nanjing	10	19	cloudy/clear
Shanghai	13	20	cloudy/clear
Wuhan	12	21	clear
Hangzhou	11	21	cloudy/clear
Taipei	20	27	cloudy/drizzle
Guangzhou	17	26	clear
Hong Kong	22	27	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-2	6	clear/drizzle
Frankfurt	7	15	drizzle
Paris	8	17	drizzle
London	9	17	drizzle
New York	16	22	drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- High times?; 6- Low in pitch; 10- Ad word; 14- Moral principle; 15- Hebrew month; 16- Lendl of tennis; 17- Blacksmith, at times; 18- Kemo ___; 19- Low-cal; 20- Puccini classic; 21- Sweetheart; 23- Australian bird; 25- Road with a no.; 26- Optical device; 29- Workers' rights org.; 32- ___ once; 37- Environmental prefix; 38- Later!; 39- Maestro Toscanini; 40- In spite of; 43- Demented; 44- Slips up; 45- Actress Scala; 46- Gallows loop; 47- Golfer Aoki; 48- Contends; 49- Pop's partner; 51- Cpl., for one; 53- Nickname for New York City; 58- Automaton; 62- Large marine food fish; 63- Adolescent; 64- A Bell for ___; 65- Molecular component; 66- Corm of the taro; 67- Office solution; 68- Sicilian sight; 69- Distribute cards; 70- Red fluorescent dye;

DOWN: 1- Resting place; 2- Roman emperor after Galba; 3- Cries of discovery; 4- Sisters' daughters; 5- Beat it!; 6- Of the highest quality; 7- Controversial orchard spray; 8- District adjacent to a city; 9- Driving hazard; 10- Structure for storing grain; 11- Tel ___; 12- Not punctual; 13- Vane dir.; 22- Discovers; 24- Bring together; 26- Bolshevik leader; 27- Low-budget prefix; 28- Au contraire!; 30- Well, ___-dahl!; 31- Thorny flowers; 33- Old Ford; 34- Playwright Pirandello; 35- Golfer Palmer, to his army; 36- Roman garments; 38- Picture theater; 39- Homerun king Hank; 41- Has been; 42- Lilt syllable; 47- Retard in movement; 48- Black magic; 50- Made a choice; 52- Slatted wooden box; 53- Push with the head; 54- Party to; 55- Explorer Vasco da ___; 56- Mother of Helen of Troy; 57- Hydroxyl compound; 59- Prohibits; 60- Dedicated to the ___ Love; 61- Ripped; 62- ___ kwon do;

Yesterday's solution

O	A	H	U	A	R	C	H	M	O	C	H	A	
R	C	A	S	E	A	T	A	T	E	A	M		
E	T	R	E	M	I	T	T	R	A	N	T	O	
V	A	I	L	B	A	G	P	S	A	L	T	E	R
T	E	A	R	N	S	L	L	U	G				
O	D	E	S	S	A	C	A	U	D	I	L	L	O
W	A	I	S	T	E	R	R	S	A	E	O	N	
L	I	D	E	A	R	A	C	H	E	A	D	S	
L	E	E	S	E	T	S	B	A	R	G	E		
T	Y	R	A	N	N	I	C	O	N	N	E	T	
R	U	E	H	O	L	L	I						
E	N	S	N	A	R	L	B	E	A	T	I	N	G
L	E	T	I	N	A	L	E	E	I	T	E	M	
B	R	O	N	C	R	A	S	P	M	A	R	E	
A	D	A	G	E	A	C	E	Y					
E	L	O	N										

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GOLF

Ji fires 65 to win Taiwan Championship

EUN-HEE Ji fired a 7-under-par 65 to win the Taiwan Championship over the weekend for her first LPGA title since the 2009 U.S. Women's Open.

Ji, who had a six-stroke lead heading into the final round, carded seven birdies to finish at 17-under 271, six strokes ahead of Lydia Ko, who also closed with a 65.

"I'm so happy and excited because I haven't won for the past eight years," said Ji. "So I was waiting for this moment for so long, so I'm super happy right now."

Ji's six-stroke margin of victory ties the largest of the 2017 season, joining the previous mark set by Mirim Lee at the Kia Classic.

Ko birdied her last two holes.

"I'll still take a birdie on the finishing hole," said Ko. "When I was on 17 tee I said I want to finish with two birdies, and I was able to do that. I played really solid today."

Top-ranked So Yeon Ryu also



Eun-Hee Ji

shot a bogey-free 65 to move into a tie for third place with Lizette Salas and Carlota Ciganda.

Sung Hyun Park, the U.S. LPGA Tour rookie of the year, shot a 71 to finish well back at 5 over while defending champion Ha Na Jang

was a further stroke behind after closing with a 68.

LPGA Tour veteran Jenny Shin, who started the final round tied for second, struggled with the conditions and fell into a tie for 14th after a 73. **AP**

BOXING

Murata beats N'Dam to win WBA middleweight title

JAPANESE boxer Ryota Murata defeated France's Hassan N'Dam by technical knockout to win the WBA middleweight title.

Murata stopped N'Dam after seven rounds to become the first middleweight champion from Japan in 22 at Tokyo's Ryogoku Kokugikan. He stunned N'Dam with a series of combinations before the bout was stopped after the seventh round when N'Dam's corner threw in the towel.

"This victory was for everyone," Murata said. "I'm not going to rest just because I won the belt. It was the same with the Olympics. Getting there was the easy part, moving forward after that is the difficult part."

Sunday's fight was a rematch of a bout in May when



N'Dam won on points despite being sent to the canvas several times by London Olympic gold medalist Murata.

WBA President Gilberto Mendoza called for the rematch and apologized for the decision. Two judges were suspended as a result.

AD

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WINTER OLYMPICS 2018

South Korean organizers downplay concern over North

Nicholas Paphitis, Ancient Olympia

SOUTH Korea's Olympic organizers played down concern over ongoing tensions with North Korea yesterday and also said that work has been completed on all venues for the 2018 Pyeongchang Games.

Lee Hee-beom, president of the Pyeongchang organizing committee, said the International Olympic Committee has made it very clear that the Feb. 9-25 games will go ahead as scheduled.

"There is no Plan B," Lee said, speaking at the birthplace of the ancient Olympics shortly after the last rehearsal for today's official flame-lighting ceremony.

"We know that the world is watching the current geopolitical situation on the Korean peninsula," he said. "We continue to work



Actress Katerina Lehou as high priestess, passes the Olympic Flame onto a Pyeongchang torch bearer after it was lit from the sun's rays, during the final dress rehearsal for the lighting of the Olympic flame at Ancient Olympia, Greece, yesterday

very closely with all the relevant authorities and stakeholders to ensure we can deliver a safe and secure games for everyone involved."

Lee said that all competition and non-competition venues are

complete. He said infrastructure works, including high-speed rail and highways, are already done and will be fully operational by December.

Lee added that his main concern for the games is the weather.

In the rehearsal among the ruined temples and sports facilities of Ancient Olympia in southern Greece, a Greek actress playing the part of an ancient priestess offered a token prayer to the old pagan gods of the site.

It was the traditional appeal for fire from heaven to light the Olympic flame, using a bowl-shaped mirror to focus the sun's rays on her torch.

For a few fraught minutes, it looked as if Apollo and Zeus would not oblige. The priestess shifted position, walked around the mirror and tried again. On the third attempt, the sun slipped out from behind clouds for long enough to light the torch, which will serve as a back-up if today's ceremony is overcast, as forecast.

Lee was delighted, saying that Pyeongchang also won the games on its third bid, and said he isn't really concerned whether it rains today.

"Lighting the torch is important, the date is not so much important," he said.

to day's first torchbearer will be Greek skier Apostolos Aggelis. He will then pass the torch to former Manchester United soccer player Park Ji-sung, a South Korean. The flame will be carried around Greece before reaching South Korea on Nov. 1.

The South Korean leg of the relay will involve 7,500 torch-bearers, who will cover a total 2,018 kilometers. **AP**

FOOTBALL

Everton fires manager Ronald Koeman with team in drop zone

RONALD Koeman paid the price for Everton's poor start to the season, losing his job yesterday with the team in the Premier League relegation zone despite spending about USD200 million on new players.

The Dutchman was dismissed two months into his second season in charge following a 5-2 loss to Arsenal this weekend. That left Everton without a win in its last five matches in all competitions.

The team has eight points so far in the league and is faring no better in Europe, sitting last in its Europa League group with one point from three games.

Everton returned to continental competition by finishing seventh in the Premier League last season and Koeman benefited from about 150 million pounds (\$198 million) in spending to strengthen the squad in the offseason to take the club to new highs.

Gylfi Sigurdsson and

Davy Klaassen cost almost 70 million pounds between them and striker Wayne Rooney was brought back from Old Trafford on a high-profile free transfer. But Everton didn't adequately replace Romelu Lukaku, who was sold to Manchester United for 75 million pounds, and has struggled for goals this season, netting only six in the league.

Another 55 million pounds was spent on goalkeeper Jordan Pickford and

defender Michael Keane, yet Everton has conceded 18 goals in nine league games and only last-place Crystal Palace has a worse goal difference. Now Everton is searching for a new manager to steer the club out of the drop zone.

"Chairman Bill Kenwright, the board of directors and major shareholder Farhad Moshiri would all like to express their gratitude to Ronald for the service he has given to the club over the past 16 mon-



Ronald Koeman

ths and for guiding the club to seventh place in last season's Premier League campaign," Everton said in a statement.

Koeman, a former Barcelona player who joined

Everton after impressing as Southampton manager, is the third Premier League coach to lose his job this season after Frank de Boer at Palace and Craig Shakespeare at Leicester. **AP**

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DATES: NOVEMBER 25, NOVEMBER 27 to DECEMBER 2, 2017 (21 hours, 7days)
AFTERNOON CLASS: 14:30 - 17:30 / EVENING CLASS: 18:30 - 21:30 (Sat 9:30 - 12:30)
VENUE: CREATIVE MACAU - Center for Creative Industries - G/F Macao Cultural Centre Building
LANGUAGE: English / MAXIMUM: 15 pax / class (12+ Years)
INSTRUCTOR: COKE RIOBOO
REGISTRATION IS EFFECTIVE UPON PAYMENT
A CERTIFICATE WILL BE ISSUED WITH 85% ATTENDANCE

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: 27 OCTOBER
Tel: (853) 2875 3282
Opening Hours: 14:00-19:00 mon-sat (except public holidays)
www.creativemacau.org.mo



AD

opinion

Our Desk

Linzy Valles



ENTERTAINED BY 'BEG-PACKERS'

I have seen a number of Western backpackers who claim to be touring the world but ask locals for money to help them fund their travels in Southeast Asia.

These backpackers come prepared, ready to showcase talents that include playing electric instruments, complete with mini amplifiers; some sell photographs they took during their recent travels.

These travelers sit or stand behind a cardboard sign that says "I am from *insert a Western country name here*, please support my travel around the world."

Macau is not the only place where these travelers come to ask for funds, but it is more commonplace in other Southeast Asian countries like Thailand, Vietnam and even Singapore.

Southeast Asia remains an attractive destination for people in the West, and some of these backpackers are smart enough to fund their way across all 11 countries in the region.

Although I have not witnessed locals rage about these backpackers' bizarre activities to earn funds, a number of netizens have slammed the travelers, noting that it is not a normal activity to be conducted in Asia.

Reports have said that Thailand is cracking down on "beg-packers," a term used for the Western backpackers who ask locals for money on the streets. The crackdown reflected the disapproval and offense felt by the Thai authorities and population.

While these backpackers have their own ways of funding their trips around the world, other aspiring travelers have also started crowdfunding projects to raise money for their trips.

Apparently, these kinds of activities online no longer shock internet users – it has become shamelessly normal.

The strong desire to travel is being spread by social media; excessive amounts of inspiration are filed under #wanderlust culture and #travelgoals and these hashtags and constantly fueling younger generations' tendency to be obsessed with travel.

In general millennials are the group guilty of increasing the value placed on travel. It has become a necessity, and the need to 'experience other cultures' has become an obligation.

Going back to the initial topic, Macau locals seem to approve of these backpackers' activities in Leal Senado and in Rua do Campo. We support them by stopping by and listening to their music, or purchasing photographs of scenery on the other side of the world.

Maybe this is because it gives the city some sort of a new culture, or a different atmosphere.

These Western 'musicians' play their own music in the city, attracting passers-by to watch them strum their instruments and ultimately drop a pink bill into a small box on the floor.

Last year, street performances were said to bring the arts closer to people.

The authorities previously highlighted that "this form of presenting performing arts to the public has advantages to both artists and the public in general" and is being conducted in different cities and regions, namely in Europe.

However, a permit is required to engage in such activities and I doubt these Western backpackers went to the trouble of acquiring a permit.

In Macau we are becoming more keen to experience something new and witness unique and artistic street performances. Evidently, this has become one of them.

We seemed to be very impressed when such performances are held on the streets – despite their being a normal activity in other countries – and at this point we do not see the 'beg-packers' as offensive or odd.

THE PROMINENT JOURNALIST AT RADIO BUZZ STATION STABBED IN MOSCOW

Russia's leading news radio station says its deputy editor-in-chief has been stabbed by an unknown attacker.

Ekho Moskvyy, which has often been described as Russia's only independent news radio station, said on its website yesterday that the assailant burst into its studios and stabbed Tatyana Felgenhauer. She is best known for co-hosting a popular morning show.

ning show.

The station's editor-in-chief, Alexei Venediktov, tweeted that Felgenhauer has been taken to hospital and her life is not in danger. He said the man has been detained.

Ekho Moskvyy's searing criticism has irked many in the Russian government, and its hosts and journalists have reported death threats previously.

Italy's two richest regions claim victory in autonomy votes



Colleen Barry, Milan

THE presidents of Italy's wealthy northern regions of Veneto and Lombardy yesterday [Macau time] claimed victory in autonomy referendums that seek to grab additional powers and tax revenue from Rome, riding a global tide of self-determination that has swamped Spain's Catalonia region.

The votes were nonbinding, but the leaders of the neighboring regions hope to leverage strong turnout in talks with Italy's center-left government. As leading members of the anti-migrant, anti-EU Northern League, they want to keep more tax revenue and have autonomy over such policy areas as immigration, security, education and environment.

"This is the big bang of institutional reform," Veneto President Luca Zaia said in Venice. "We are convinced, and I hope Rome understands, that this is not the wish of a political party. These are the wishes of the people."

In Milan, his counterpart in Lombardy, Roberto Maroni, said that with the votes, the two regions "can unify our forces so we can do the battle of the century."

The two leaders say they will meet with their regional councils to finalize their requests before going to Rome to meet with Premier Paolo Gentiloni.

Unlike in Catalonia, the referendums do not seek independence and were approved

by Italy's constitutional court. Still, the autonomy drive is a powerful threat to Rome's authority. Together, Veneto and Lombardy account for 30 percent of Italy's GDP and nearly one-quarter of the nation's electorate.

Maroni said an overwhelming 95 percent of his region's vote went to "yes," with turnout above 40 percent of Lombardy's 8 million voters. That far exceeded the bar for success that he set at 34 percent, which was the turnout for a national referendum on constitutional reform in 2001.

Independence-minded Veneto easily met a turnout threshold to validate the vote set by Zaia, with some 60 percent of the region's 4 million voters casting ballots. According to early returns, 98 percent voted "yes."

The Democratic Party, which leads the national government in Rome, had criticized the referendums, saying the non-binding votes carried no legal weight, were not needed to trigger autonomy negotiations and were a costly waste of resources.

Such arguments played into the hands of the "yes" campaigners, who consider those put-downs to be part of the anti-democratic, centrist decision-making in Rome. Those sentiments have been echoed in the Catalan independence drive in Spain, in the U.S. election of Donald Trump as president and in Britain's vote to leave the 28-nation European Union.

The victory raises the Northern League's profile ahead of national elections next year. But it also has the power to create a wedge between the rich north and the poor south just as Northern League leader Matteo Salvini, who supports autonomy, has pushed for a more national profile for the once-northern party.

The referendum campaign drove hard on the theme that too much northern tax revenues were going to the less-efficient southern regions.

The Northern League was founded with the goal of secession for the wealthier, more productive northern regions, but it gave that up when it joined the national government under then-Premier Silvio Berlusconi in the 1990s. During that period, it pushed for federalism, which lost steam during Italy's long economic crisis. Autonomy has become the new expression of the party's identity politics.

Also supporting the referendums were the populist 5-Star Party and former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia.

The referendum victory is just the first step as the regions seek greater autonomy. Some of the policy issues they are seeking can be won with a new law. But many of the more emotional issues – including greater fiscal control, immigration and security issues – would require difficult-to-achieve constitutional changes. **AP**

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	95-125 Moderate	
High Density Residential Area	85-115 Moderate	
Ambient	100-130 Bad	

WORLD BRIEFS

SYRIA The bodies of at least 67 Syrian civilians, many summarily killed by the Islamic State group, have been discovered in a central town in Syria that government forces retook from the extremists over the weekend. *More on p14*

EGYPT-LIBYA Egypt's military targeted an arms convoy crossing the border from Libya, destroying vehicles loaded with weapons and explosives, and killing militants, a military spokesman said yesterday.



MALTA Several thousand Maltese citizens rallied Sunday to honor an investigative journalist killed by a car bomb, but the prime minister and opposition leader who were chief targets of Daphne Caruana Galizia's reporting did not attend. Participants at the rally in Malta's capital, Valletta, placed flowers at a memorial to the journalist.

BRITAIN Prime Minister Theresa May says she has "a degree of confidence" that Brexit talks will be able to move to their decisive second phase by December.



US-AFGHANISTAN U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said yesterday there is a place for moderate elements of the Taliban in Afghanistan's government as long as they renounce violence and terrorism. Speaking on an unannounced trip to Afghanistan, Tillerson said the Taliban must understand that they will never win a military victory and should prepare to negotiate with the government.

BRAZIL Military police say officers killed a Spanish tourist when the vehicle she was traveling in came under fire after ignoring a police checkpoint. The incident followed a firefight between police officers and suspected drug traffickers yesterday in Rocinha, one of Brazil's largest slums.