



### 30 PERCENT OF MACAU OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE

The Health Bureau published the findings of the Macau Health Survey 2016 yesterday

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### LAS VEGAS' STRANGEST CASINO

Even in Vegas, the land of faux pirate battles and Elvis-themed wedding chapels, the Stratosphere is something of an oddball

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

## WORLD BRIEFS



**VIETNAM** The scenic Vietnamese city of Hoi An rushed to dig itself out of mud and debris yesterday after major flooding just days ahead of a regional summit in the nearby city of Danang.

**INDONESIA**'s top court has overturned a law that denied recognition and legal rights to followers of indigenous faiths in a surprise advance for religious freedom in the world's most populous Muslim nation.



**SRI LANKA** Raped, branded or beaten repeatedly, more than 50 men from the Tamil ethnic minority seeking political asylum in Europe say they were abducted and tortured under Sri Lanka's current government, according to an investigative report by The Associated Press. Sri Lankan authorities deny the allegations.

**IRAN-SAUDI ARABIA** Iran's President Hassan Rouhani criticized Saudi Arabia yesterday over what he called "unprecedented" interference in Lebanese affairs, adding his voice to those who suspect the Gulf kingdom forced Lebanon's prime minister to resign.

**TANZANIA** An official says at least five children have been killed and 24 others injured in a bomb explosion at a primary school in Tanzania. Police in the East African nation are investigating the source of the bomb.

# Trump in China 'having a great time'

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RENATO MARQUES



## Public housing rush

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**T**HE Health Bureau (SSM) published the findings of the Macau Health Survey 2016 yesterday, showing that more than one-third of men and almost 28 percent of women in Macau were considered overweight or obese last year. The average for both sexes was just over 30 percent, according to an accompanying report.

According to the report, an average of 34 percent of the surveyed men qualified as overweight or obese, with the highest rate of prevalence (44 percent) in the age category of 45 to 59. Meanwhile, the highest rate of prevalence for women (40.6 percent) occurred in the category for people older than 75.

Around 30 percent of men in the survey said that they smoked, while just 4.4 percent of the women surveyed said they were smokers. The biggest age bracket for female smokers (7.3 percent) was the 30-44 category.

As for alcohol consumption, some 12.5 percent of male respondents said that they drank alcohol more than three times per week, while only 1.7 percent of women said the same. More than 20 percent of men aged 45 to 59 drink at least three times per week.

On the other hand, according

# Health Survey finds 30 percent of Macau overweight



More than half of the respondents indicated that they are not consuming enough fruit and vegetables

Health Survey are to uncover the prevalence of risk behavior in the territory, such as tobacco smoking, the consumption of alcohol, prevalence of obesity, as well as the presence of chronic diseases like diabetes, obesity and hyperlipidemia.

Some 2,800 people participated in the survey, of which 56.7 percent were female. Analyzed by age, about 38 percent of the respondents (both male and female) were younger than 45, while over 35 percent were between the ages of 45 and 59.

to the same survey, the proportion of respondents who said they consumed on average more than 5 units of alcohol per day was about 13 percent for men and about 2.5 percent for women. Five units of al-

cohol is approximately equal to two pints (568ml) of beer or cider, or two medium glasses (175ml) of wine.

As for diet, more than half of male and female respondents indicated that they are

not consuming enough fruit and vegetables, while 50 percent of men and 35 percent of women had an excess of red meat intake.

According to the SSM report, the objectives of the Macau

## Four smoking inspectors attacked

**F**OUR smoking control inspectors from the Health Bureau (SSM) received medical treatment in the hospital after being assaulted by a man who was illegally smoking in the "Triangle Garden" in the Area Pre-ta area.

According to a statement from the Bureau, the assault occurred on November 7 when the inspectors were performing their duties during a routine operation.

The inspectors witnessed the man illegally smoking in the garden and, acting in accordance to the established procedures, they approached the offender to issue the note of infringement.

The inspectors' intervention triggered a reaction from a group



of people who were also gathered in the garden. The members of the group repeatedly refused to present identification documents. The inspectors were assaulted as the man attempted to flee from the scene.

This reaction led the

inspectors to seek help from police authorities. During the chaos that ensued, one of the inspectors was pushed in the chest and fell while the other three were also violently pushed and injured.

The SSM remarked that

none of the inspectors reacted in a retaliatory manner to the assault and they all showed commendable self-control. The situation was only controlled with the presence of police officers. As a consequence of the assault, the four inspectors were sent to the hospital for physical examination. Those responsible for the assault will be charged for the crimes of disobedience, assault, resistance and coercion.

In the same statement, the SSM strongly condemned such acts of violence and reaffirmed that they will not tolerate such conduct, reminding citizens that any person who assaults a law enforcer in the performance of his duties is in breach of the law.

## New wholesale market concession to last until 2022

**D**ETAILS of the concession giving exclusive operation rights of the Macau's new wholesale market to Sociedade do Mercado Abastecedor de Macau Nam Yue, Limitada, were published in the government's Official Gazette yesterday, announcing that the concession will last until April 15, 2022.

The government holds the right to terminate the concession on the ground of public interest.

The Nam Yue wholesale market has been relocated to Ilha Verde, occupying a space twice the size of the old premises.

The market is a 12-story building, including three stories for parking lots located underground.

The Nam Yue group will operate and manage the wholesale activities from the ground floor up to the third floor.

The rest of the building will be within the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau's (IACM) administration.

Earlier, the Chief Executive signed an order announcing that the Nam Yue group was exempted of opening public tenders for this concession.

According to IACM's president José Tavares, the new market has the capacity for approximately 235 stalls.

The concession also stipulates that Nam Yue shall not restrict or obstruct any source of products illegally imported to Macau from entering the wholesale market.

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Times

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# News At Hand



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“ THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’ ”

# Housing Bureau opens public housing tender to allocate 1,300 or more units

Renato Marques

**T**HE news that the new tender allowing residents to apply for public housing units has been opened was published yesterday in the Macau government's Official Gazette by the Housing Bureau (IH). The tender that has been urged by several lawmakers at the Legislative Assembly (AL) for a long time, started as of yesterday and will run for a period of three months (until February 7, 2018). It aims to allocate at least 1,300 public housing units to the residents currently earning lower incomes.

According to the Chief of the Department of Public Housing of IH, Chan Wa Keong, the number of housing units available on this tender is not very precise and could vary due to several factors. The factors include the fact that some houses are currently under construction and every year the IH gets back many units previously rented to other tenants.

"We don't have an exact number for this tender, we have around 1,300 but there might be more as every year we receive back around 400 units for several reasons, some [tenants] do not want to continue to rent social housing units anymore and others do not want to continue to live with their family and also there are some cases of death [of the tenant]," explained Chan.

The housing units are distributed across several buildings in the Macau peninsula, as well as in Taipa and Coloane, with Chan saying that there are some, "in Coloane; we have [some] in the Lok Kuan Building (Seac Pai Van) in Taipa, we also have the Taipa Social housing neighborhood (across

RENA TO MARQUES



Taipa Municipal Market) and Iat Seng Building; and in Macau we have [many units in] different buildings and areas".

Questioned also by the media during a press conference held yesterday morning at the IH headquarters, Chan noted that the new rules passed at the AL on Tuesday were related to the amendment for the public housing regime, which sets different rules and requirements for these applications and will not interfere in any way with

the current tender, which will follow the same rules as those previously held in 2013.

"The new tender of today [yesterday] is not affected because the minimum age is of 18 years," Chan said, noting the new rules are not yet fully approved and not in place, and will only be able to affect future tenders but not the current one.

According to the IH chief, back in 2013, the Bureau received "around 6,100 application forms which resulted in around 3,800 admitted candidates. From those over 2,500 are lodged in social housing units," noting that it took about 18 months to complete the allocations of that tender.

During the presentation of the new tender, the chief of the section of public housing from the IH, Chan Kuan Kit, clarified that, "the minimum age for the representative of the household is 18 years old and we

have updated both the values of the income and assets [of the household]."

The income and assets are now divided in seven different levels, which will also correspond to several different housing unit typologies, from the minimum of MOP11,470 of monthly income for a household composed by a single person, to a maximum of MOP33,630 for a household of seven or more people. The criteria for eligibility are that the applicants must be Macau permanent residents, who have lived in the region for at least seven years and that none of the household members should have possessed any private property in the last three years (counting from the deadline of the tender). These criteria are in addition to the other rules from the 2013 tender.

Chan reminded the public that there was no need to rush to the IH locations to obtain the

forms or even to deliver them back, as it was not a factor that would impact the allocation of housing units. He noted that this year, the staff at IH will be available to help applicants to complete forms so as to avoid mistakes in the applications.

He also informed that people could get the forms at the IH headquarters, in Taipa office or in any of the 40 distribution points. The form and instructions can also be accessed on the IH website and there is a special function that allows applicants to book the most convenient day and time to deliver the application. Such advance booking can be done by phone or through the dedicated webpage, [booking.ihm.gov.mo](http://booking.ihm.gov.mo).

The chief of the section of public housing from the IH also recalled that when delivering the form to the IH, all the members of the household need to be physically present and must sign the form.

## Crowds rush to apply for public housing

**A**S the new round of applications for public housing began, thousands rushed to the door of the bureau in the early hours of yesterday, queuing up for their turn to collect the forms and instruction leaflets that were being distributed. There were queues at the Housing Bureau headquarters despite the Bureau saying that there was no need to rush to collect the forms. According to the Chief of the Department of Public Housing of IH, Chan Wa Keong, between 9 and 10.30 a.m., the Bureau staff distributed over 1,400 application forms, just at the IH headquarters. However, it was impossible for Chan to provide the exact numbers as he mentioned, "forms are being distributed in more than 40 different locations and also can be downloaded from our website so it's difficult to know how many were in fact distributed until now."

### MAXIMUM MONTHLY INCOME & ASSETS FOR PUBLIC HOUSING ELIGIBILITY

Number of applicant(s)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 or more
Maximum monthly income (patacas)	11,470	17,360	23,430	25,680	27,310	32,000	33,630
Maximum value of assets (patacas)	247,800	375,000	506,100	554,700	589,900	691,200	726,500

All figures expressed in MOP

# Punishment for drug users is not heavy, IFNGO president says

Julie Zhu

**A**UGUSTO Nogueira, new president of the International Federation of Non-Government Organizations for the Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse (IFNGO), does not think that the Macau government is enforcing heavy punishment for drug users.

Nogueira is also the president of the Association of Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers of Macau (ARTM) and a member of the MSAR Government's Narcotics Control Commission and was this year's president-elect of the 27th IFNGO World Conference, which concluded yesterday.

Talking to the Times on the sidelines of the closing ceremony of the 27th IFNGO World Conference yesterday, Nogueira said: "It's not heavy. It's only three months to one year in prison, and only if they are caught for the second or third time. Of course we want zero, [we want] nobody with drug consumption to go to prison. Of course we prefer them to be referred



Augusto Nogueira

to treatment centers. The drug law was approved one year ago, [we are still waiting] for the evaluation of the results."

Nogueira thinks that the drug decriminalization policy is working effectively in Portugal, where drug use is not criminalized (only drug trafficking is) and believes that "what is ha-

ppening in Portugal can be successful in other countries."

"Each country has its own reality, but, I am sure that what is happening in Portugal can be implemented in many other countries."

Commenting on whether drug decriminalization can be implemented in Macau, Nogueira

said: "I do think that we can have some similar [outcomes] in Macau. [...] The new law has been approved, now we have to see and to wait."

Nogueira remarked that Macau's current drug consumption situation is "ok and is stable."

"Of course there is a small increase, but nothing special. There is a trend of going to the ice within the young generation, so we are working on that as well, not only prevention [...]. We can say that we are controlling the increase," he added.

Nogueira stated that Macau has a "good capacity of drug rehabilitation centers."

"During this conference, the guests and the participants had the opportunity to visit [the drug rehabilitation centers] and they are very impressed with our facilities that we have in Macau. [...] Thanks to the Macau government that has invested a lot in supporting NGOs."

Regarding his suggestions to the Macau government of improving the consumption of

drugs in the region, Nogueira said "Macau's drug consumption has been improving for 17 years."

"We just hope that we can continue working. Of course, there are small things that we need to improve. [...] But these are small things and technical things that we are all working [on] together."

The ARTM president thinks that currently there is no urgent issue that needs to be improved regarding the consumption of drugs in Macau.

"Currently, we have to first see the results of our new drug law," said Nogueira.

As the new president of the IFNGO, Nogueira wants to "improve the IFNGO, aiming to make it a credible association again and to be a new strong voice here in Asia."

"IFNGO has existed for many years, it's activity has been slightly down in the last years. [...] We have a lot of contact with Macau social affairs. [...] We have to work to see what we can improve," said Nogueira.

The 27th IFNGO World Conference – International Drug Policy Consortium which closed at Sheraton Grand Macao Hotel yesterday, had invited international representatives to discuss drug prevention methods, treatments, addictions, harm reduction and general drug policies.

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# Macau to host 'Asia's 50 Best Restaurants' for the next two years

Lynzy Valles

**M**ACAU is expected to host both the 2018 and 2019 editions of Asia's 50 Best Restaurants awards and the associated event programs.

Some of the region's most respected chefs and influential restaurateurs will gather at Wynn Palace Cotai on March 27, 2018, for the announcement of the Asia's 50 Best Restaurants 2018 list and special awards.

The organizers of Asia's 50 Best Restaurants have chosen to bring this gourmet platform to the city in a bid to showcase Macau's growing gastronomic portfolio, as well as celebrate talent from across Asia.

In 2017, the annual list saw 12 different countries represented, including ten new entries in total. The festivities came to a crescendo with Bangkok restaurant, Gaggan named The Best Restaurant in Asia for a successive record-breaking third time.

The 2018 program will include a new edition of #50BestTalks, a one-day forum to be held on March 26, that will bring together Asia's most influential chefs and culinary leaders to discuss regional gastronomy and emerging food trends.

Tim Brook-Web, managing director of The World's 50 Best Restaurants recalled that the group's initial aim was to create a device that gave more prominence to the region and this was achieved through the Asia's 50 Best Restaurants list.

"I think we were inspired by a need to show the world what's going on in Asia and for the rest of the world to understand more



From left: William Drew, group editor of Asia's 50 Best Restaurants, Tim Brook-Web, Helena de Senna Fernandes, Richard Ekkebus, culinary director of Amber, listed as No. 3 in 50 best

about Asian gastronomy," Brook-Web told the press on the sidelines of the press conference held yesterday at Wynn Palace.

Currently two local restaurants namely Jade Dragon and The Tasting Room by Galliot are listed in Asia's 50 Best Restaurants as number 32 and number 39 respectively.

Brook-Web is confident that the number of local restaurants to be included in the list will increase in the future.

"I don't think we'd be here if we didn't think Macau has a very good chance. But it's top quality restaurants with some top quality chefs; and I think it's incumbent to us all to show the world what's going on here," Brook-Web said in a statement.

Visiting Macau for the third time, the managing director noted that the quality of food and chefs in the city is a "well kept secret," adding, "Macau deserves more than that."

Attending the event was the director of Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, who mentioned the city's designation as a UNES-

CO Creative City of Gastronomy – which was announced last week.

The director also revealed that MGTO invested MOP4 million in the event.

Fernandes noted that the event will be an excellent occasion to celebrate Macau's inclusion in UNESCO's Creative Cities Network in the field of gastronomy.

Apart from aiming to attract a growing number of tourists to Macau, she noted that they are also aiming to provide the local gastronomy sector with the chance to meet international professionals.

"Our [aim] is to [also] give the restaurant scene and the entire gastronomy landscape different opportunities to have an interchange with different people around the world, to learn from them, and to raise the international profile of the city," said Fernandes.

She also expressed that they are looking at enhancing creativity in the city's gastronomy sector and in the continuation and conservation of the old traditions of Macau.

Meanwhile, the director hoped that long distance travelers would also be attracted to the event, adding the advantages of the upcoming Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge.

"This will also allow us to be able to tap into long-haul visitors flying into Hong Kong and that will be another possibility for us to open the long-haul market," the MGTO head expressed.

The 2017 list of Asia's 50 Best Restaurants featured ten new entries and included special awards such as Asia's Best Pastry Chef, Chefs' Choice Award, the Diners Club Lifetime Achievement Award and Asia's Best Female Chef.



GAMING

## MGM China announces 5pct revenue growth

**M**GM China Holdings yesterday announced its selected, unaudited financial data for the three months ending September 30, during which time it recorded a total revenue of HKD3,679 million, an increase of 5 percent from the second quarter of this year. For the same period, Adjusted EBITDA grew 3 percent quarter-to-quarter to HKD1,049 million.

According to a statement from the company, the group "saw sequential improvement in all gaming segments," with about 80 percent of its profit generated by the main floor. Main floor table games win increased by 2 percent, while slot win grew 14 percent and VIP win increased by 9 percent.

The MGM Macau property saw market share improve each month within the third quarter, which the company says it regards as "a reflection of stability and resilience in the Peninsula market which attracts quality players."

It said it would continue to invest in the main floor at MGM Macau, adding additional retail space in

the future to create diversified tourism options for guests.

The company reaffirmed its planned January 29, 2018 opening date for its second property, MGM Cotai, which has been delayed on several occasions.

It said that the new property, MGM China's second in the MSAR, will "redefine the way people experience art and entertainment," through housing a collection of more than 300 pieces of contemporary art "with the themes of bridging East and West, tradition and technology."

Grant Bowie, chief executive officer and executive director of MGM China said that he remains confident in Macau's long-term prospects.

"We will continue contributing to [Macau's] evolution into a World Center of Tourism and Leisure with the opening of our second integrated resort, MGM Cotai, in January next year. We look forward to expanding our presence and capturing the growth opportunities in this dynamic market," he said, according to the statement.

### corporate bits

#### LEON LAI TO PERFORM AT THE VENETIAN



One of Hong Kong's stars, Leon Lai will be bringing his 'Leon Random

Run 2017 Concert' to The Venetian Macao's Cotai Arena on December 16,

Sands China announced in a statement.

Lai has held around 400 concerts worldwide.

He toured his current concert across China last year before, where he performed his classic hits, including "Summer of Love", "Silly and Infatuated", "There's Not One Day I Don't Think of You".

ICBC Sands Lifestyle Mastercard cardholders have enjoyed priority booking from November 7 to 8 via Cotai Ticketing. They can also redeem points earned, through shopping or travelling anywhere in the world, within Sands Resorts Macao's integrated resorts.

Tickets go on sale today at all Cotai Ticketing box offices.

#### BNU CAMPUS WORKSHOPS HELD AT LOCAL UNIVERSITIES



BNU Campus Workshops for Youth Entrepreneurship were held at the Institute for Tourism Studies' (IFT) Taipa campus on November 1 and at the Macau University of Science and Technology on November 7. Organized by The Industry and Commerce

Association of Macau, the workshops were held to share knowledge and experience of starting a business.

Workshop discussions covered the preparations for entrepreneurship and experience sharing of e-commerce, heat supply and catering,

bringing out the message that entrepreneurship should be based on solid industrial knowledge rather than following the trend blindly.

"[The] banking industry provides a different kind of support for local SMEs, such as financing for purchasing equipment, overdraft for working capital and property financing. Also, basic accounting skills will benefit entrepreneurs [in their] business operations," Sou, deputy head of Corporate Banking Division of BNU, said during the workshops.

From October to November, BNU campus workshops for Youth Entrepreneurship will carry out 14 visits to secondary schools and universities, including University of Macau, Macao Polytechnic Institute and Kiang Wu Nursing College of Macau.

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Christopher Palmeri

## GAMING

**E**VEN in Las Vegas, the land of faux pirate battles and Elvis-themed wedding chapels, the Stratosphere is something of an oddball.

Conceived by poker pro Bob Stupak, the Space Needle-shaped hotel-casino featured a roller coaster and other attractions at its summit when it opened in 1996. Its location on the lightly trafficked north end of the Strip proved too much of a handicap, however, and the casino declared bankruptcy months after its debut. It remained open, and for awhile it was owned by Carl Icahn.

Two decades later, the Stratosphere is providing a thrill ride of sorts for shareholders of Golden Entertainment Inc., the Las Vegas-based casino owner that bought the property and three others last month from a Goldman Sachs Group Inc. real estate fund. Since the USD850 million deal was announced in June, Golden shares have risen 56 percent on hopes that Chief Executive Officer Blake Sartini can apply the same magic at Stratosphere that he did with Golden's main business—operating slot machines in convenience stores, bars and other locations.

"Nobody goes there but to bungee jump," Chad Beynon, an analyst at Macquarie Group Ltd. in New York, said of the casino, which still features amusement-park rides on its roof. "If they can fix that, earnings will go up significantly."

Sartini, 58, is a Las Vegas native who got his start in the business



A helicopter flies past the Stratosphere Casino, Hotel &amp; Tower

working the 25-cent craps table at the El Cortez Hotel downtown. In 1983, he married Delise Fertitta, whose family owned casinos catering to Las Vegas residents. Sartini joined the business, then called Station Casinos, the following year and rose to become chief operating officer.

In 2001, Sartini decided he wanted to go out on his own. He convinced his brothers-in-law, Frank and Lorenzo Fertitta, to sell him the company's slot machine routes, which serviced 900 machines in the Las Vegas area, for \$14 million. Delise Fertitta cashed out her stake in Station when the company, now called

Red Rock Resorts Inc., went private in a 2007 buyout.

In 2015, Sartini merged his company with publicly traded Lakes Entertainment. Since the deal closed in August 2015, shares of the renamed Golden Entertainment have almost tripled.

Sartini began applying tools of the traditional casino business to what he calls "distributed" gambling, such as offering frequent-player cards that reward returning customers. He began buying or opening pubs with slot machines for Las Vegas residents in a sort of hyper-local version of what Station had been doing. Unlike most casinos, where slot

# The hottest CEO in Vegas just bought the city's strangest casino

players are older, 73 percent of Golden's gaming revenue in the bars comes from players age 55 or younger.

The company now operates 10,000 slot machines in Nevada and Montana taverns and stores, and Sartini is expanding in Illinois, where it recently got licensed, and is eyeing Pennsylvania, which last month approved gambling devices in truck stops.

■ Some one million people a year visit the Stratosphere to enjoy the view from its Top of the World restaurant or ride Insanity

Still, it will be Stratosphere that most investors focus on. "It was a transformative transaction for them," said John Decree, an analyst at Union Gaming in Las Vegas. "It's now on the radar of a lot institutional investors."

The deal more than doubled

Golden's revenue—to a projected \$847 million this year—and the company now forecasts \$180 million in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization for 2017. Debt has also soared, to \$1.1 billion from \$171 million before.

Some one million people a year visit the Stratosphere to enjoy the view from its Top of the World restaurant or ride Insanity, which propels thrill-seekers over the edge of the tower, spinning at 40 miles an hour. Sartini said he's still evaluating some of the investments he'll make to the property, such as adding meeting space, and remodeling the 2,427 hotel rooms that sometimes sell for under \$30 a night.

His end of the Strip, which lies between more familiar properties such as Caesars Palace and the city's downtown casinos, is starting to perk up. The SLS Hotel opened in 2014 and Genting Bhd. is building Resorts World nearby. Sartini plans to remodel the interior and exterior of Stratosphere.

"That property is iconic in terms of any skyline photo or rendering you see of the Las Vegas Strip," Sartini said. "It's more appreciated now than it was 20 years ago." **Bloomberg**

## LUXURY RETAIL

## Dior chief is said to step aside as LVMH shuffles leadership

Robert Williams

**S**IDNEY Toledano will step aside as head of LVMH's Christian Dior, ending an almost 20-year tenure at the helm of one of the world's top fashion houses as the luxury conglomerate rejuvenates its executive ranks, according to people familiar with the matter.

Pietro Beccari, the chief executive officer of LVMH-owned fashion brand Fendi, will replace Toledano as CEO of Christian Dior Couture, according to one of the people, who asked not to be identified because the appointment hasn't been made public. The Dior chief will move to a supervisory role as chief of the LVMH Fashion Group, overseeing smaller brands

including Kenzo and Celine, another person said.

The shift ends an era for Dior and its parent, after two decades in which Toledano acted as a steady hand as designers like John Galliano grabbed headlines for their creations and, sometimes, their behavior. The 66-year-old Dior chief presided over the rapid growth and transformation of a fashion house known for dressing Grace Kelly and Marlene Dietrich, relaunching its menswear line under Hedi Slimane.

Across the fashion industry, new blood is stepping into the executive ranks amid the rise of online shopping and a sales rebound in China, with traditional markets like the U.S. and Europe lagging

behind. Recent executive changes have included the planned departure of Burberry Group Plc creative head Christopher Bailey, while three of LVMH CEO Bernard Arnault's children have assumed senior management jobs at the French luxury giant.

Beccari, 50, transformed Fendi from a fur specialist into a brand with more than 1 billion euros in sales. Leaving in place designers Silvia Fendi and Karl Lagerfeld, he reinvigorated the label with eye-popping store renovations and pushed it upmarket by discontinuing logo-printed handbags in favor of luxury models like the USD3,200 Peekaboo and \$5,550 Baguette.

He'll take over Dior at a time when it's more impor-

tant than ever to its parent company, whose full name is LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE. LVMH this year bought Christian Dior Couture for 6.5 billion euros (\$7.5 billion), bringing the brand's fashion and accessories business under the same umbrella as the LVMH-owned perfume business for the first time since the 1960s.

LVMH laid the groundwork this year for Toledano's succession with several executive changes. Among them, Nicola Brandolese, who most recently served as president of retail at Italian eyewear retailer Luxottica Group SpA, joined the maker of Louis Vuitton bags and Dom Perignon Champagne for an unspecified role on June 1. He began by



Pietro Beccari (pictured) will replace Toledano as CEO of Christian Dior Couture

shadowing Beccari at Fendi, people familiar with the situation said in July.

Toledano joined Dior in 1994 and became CEO in 1998. In 2011, he fired Galliano after the head designer was filmed uttering anti-Semitic comments in a Paris cafe. The Dior chief maintained growth amid the successive departures of Slimane and Galliano, as well as Raf Simons, the Belgian designer who left in 2015 after three and a half years.

The Dior merger created a mega-brand with combined sales of more than 5 billion euros a year, accor-

ding to Exane BNP Paribas analyst Luca Solca. The project is known internally as "One Dior."

Arnault, 68, has yet to detail his own succession plan. Eldest daughter Delphine, 42, climbed the ranks at Dior before becoming director and executive vice president at Louis Vuitton, while son Antoine, 40, is CEO of Berluti and president of Loro Piana. Alexandre was named co-CEO of the Rimowa suitcase brand last year at the age of 24. LVMH brands including Celine, Loro Piana and Loewe recently named new heads. **Bloomberg**

## SOUTH CHINA SEA

# Philippines backs down in disputed waters after Beijing protest

Jim Gomez, Manila

**P**HILIPPINE President Rodrigo Duterte stopped construction work on a newly formed sandbar in the disputed South China Sea after China protested, the defense chief said yesterday, disclosing details of the territorial spat for the first time.

The dispute over a string of sandbars called Sandy Cay emerged in August and prompted China and the Philippines to consider negotiating some sort of arrangement to prevent such incidents from spiraling out of control, Lorenzana said.

The rift over the tiny sandbar, where Filipinos planned to erect fishermen's shelters, in the group near Philippine-occupied Thitu island in the Spratlys archipelago remains unresolved but both sides pledged not to occupy any new territory, he said.

China's claims to most of the South China Sea overlap those of the Philippines and four other governments. Despite that, tensions have eased since Duterte took over as president last year and took steps to thaw once-frosty relations with Beijing.

Duterte has courted Chinese trade and assistance and taken a nonconfrontational approach to their territorial disputes. He has refused to immediately take up with China a ruling by a U.N.-linked tribunal that invalidated Beijing's sprawling claims in the South China Sea, sparking criticism from nationalists and left-wing groups, which wanted him to demand immediate Chinese compliance with the landmark decision.

"We tried to put some structures in one of the sandbars near our island and the Chinese reacted," Lorenzana told a diplomatic and security forum in Manila, adding that Duterte later ordered, "Let's pull out."

Duterte made the decision after Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano advised him of an agreement involving



The Philippine-claimed Thitu Island off the disputed South China Sea in western Philippines

China and the Philippines for a halt on new construction in the disputed waters, Lorenzana later told a news conference.

"We brought up people there to occupy, to put up structures for our fishermen," Lorenzana said. He said the Chinese "complained that we are occupying a new feature."

Philippine foreign affairs and military officials refused to divulge details of the dispute at Sandy Cay in August.

A government security report seen by the AP in August said three Chinese navy ships, a Chinese coast guard ship and 10 Chinese fishing vessels took positions off Sandy Cay after spotting the Filipinos on the barren sandbar. The nearest sandbar in Sandy Cay is about 4.6 kilometers from Philippine-occupied Thitu Island.

On Aug. 15, a blue Chinese helicopter flew low off Thitu's southwest coast, the report said.

The Chinese military presence off Sandy Cay sparked concerns in Manila.

Philippine Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio, who has studied the disputes extensively, said then that the Chinese navy ships and other vessels encroached in the Philippine island's 22-kilometer territorial waters. "In short, Sandy Cay is a Phil-

ippine land territory that is being seized, to put it mildly, or being invaded, to put it frankly, by China," Carpio said.

The long-unresolved disputes are among issues expected to get the spotlight at an annual summit of Southeast Asian nations and their Asian and Western counterparts in Manila next week.

China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which includes four governments involved in the sea feud, agreed earlier this year on a framework for a long-proposed nonaggression pact in the disputed waters. The framework is to serve as a roadmap for negotiations on a so-called code of conduct in the often-volatile waterway.

ASEAN, currently led by the Philippines, has come under criticism for failing to take more effective steps to rein in aggressive behavior in the disputed waters, including China's transformation of seven disputed reefs into islands with landfill. Many of the 10-nation bloc's members depend largely on China for trade, investment and aid.

"If ASEAN pursues an over-abundance of caution, it risks becoming only a bystander to the events within its own region," former Philippine Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario told the Manila forum. **AP**

## Taiwanese fighter jet goes missing above East China Sea

**A**Taiwanese fighter jet has gone missing while flying above the East China Sea north of Taiwan during a routine training exercise, the air force said yesterday.

The Mirage-2000 disappeared from radar screens just over a half-hour after taking off Tuesday evening from an air base in Hsinchu, south of the capital, Taipei, according to an air force statement.

Navy and coast guard ships and more than a dozen aircraft have been dispatched to search the area but with no result as yesterday afternoon, the air force said. It said the pilot, Ho Tzu-yu, joined the air force more than a decade ago and had 227 hours of flight time in Mirages.

Air Force Deputy Commander Lt. Gen. Chang Che-ping told reporters there had been no

abnormal transmissions from Ho's plane before it dropped off the radar screen at 6:43 p.m. Tuesday while flying at an altitude of 1,585 meters. He said there was no indication Ho had ejected.

"The military will continue searching day and night until the person is safely rescued. There is no so-called 'golden 72-hour' limit," Chang said, referring to the time frame after

which finding a pilot alive becomes increasingly unlikely.

Taiwan purchased 60 Mirage-2000 jets from France during the 1990s, despite stiff opposition from China, which claims the island as its own territory and threatens to use military force to bring it under its control.

The planes have experienced mechanical problems in the past due to the harsh environment and high usage rates, but those problems were believed to have been largely overcome through technical upgrades. **AP**



## Soldiers, jumping children greet Trump at Beijing airport

**C**HINA pulled out all the stops for President Donald Trump's Beijing airport arrival: honor guard, marching band, jumping children.

The ceremony accompanying Trump's arrival yesterday afternoon was elaborate even by China's lavish standards. Heads of state are usually given a low-key reception at the airport, with the real pomp and circumstance reserved for his or her arrival at the Great Hall of the People in the center of Beijing.

As they exited Air Force One, Trump and first lady Melania Trump were met by Chinese and American dignitaries, soldiers standing stiffly at attention, a band playing martial music and smartly attired children waving miniature Chinese and American flags while chanting, "Welcome, welcome."

The president and first lady appeared pleased, smiling and accepting flower bouquets, with Trump at one point throwing his arms open and appearing to exclaim, "Wow."

As Trump's motorcade pulled away, the tempo increased, with children jumping up and down while they waved and chanted.

Protocol is extremely important in Chinese governance and diplomacy, and such events are always carefully choreographed down to the smallest detail. Spontaneous interactions between visiting leaders and ordinary Chinese are rare, although visiting U.S. presidents have in the past been permitted to deliver speeches and meet with university students.

Welcoming ceremonies have grown increasingly elaborate under Chinese President Xi Jinping, who has lavished more time and energy on advancing China's diplomatic agenda than any of his predecessors.

That's included devoting hundreds of hours a year to welcoming ceremonies, meetings and receptions, in addition to hosting major multilateral events such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders meeting and the G-20 summit.

# Trump to push Xi on trade, North Korea during 2-day visit

Jonathan Lemire & Jill Colvin, Beijing

**W**ELCOMED to China with an outsized dose of pomp and pageantry, President Donald Trump pronounced himself wowed by Beijing's lavish greeting yesterday at the start of a two-day visit in which he aims to employ flattery, scolding and cajolery to press the rising Asian power on trade and North Korea.

Trump, saddled with consistently low approval ratings at home, is dueling with a newly emboldened Chinese President Xi Jinping, who recently consolidated power. The American president's every utterance will be studied by allies anxious to see if his inward-looking "America First" mantra could cede power in the region to China.

A visit sure to include tough negotiations on multiple policy fronts began a full-on display of diplomatic niceties: The president and first lady Melania Trump were greeted at the airport by dozens of children who waved U.S. and Chinese flags and jumped up and down. The couple sipped tea with Xi and his wife, Peng Liyuan, received a private tour of the historic Forbidden City, Beijing's ancient imperial palace, including a performance by young opera students before dinner.

Trump said afterward that he's "having a great time" in China and at one point threw open his arms and appeared to exclaim "wow."

Before arriving in Beijing, Trump used an address to the National Assembly in Seoul, South Korea, to deliver a stern message to China, North Korea's biggest trade partner. Trump urged "responsible nations" to unite and stop supporting North Korea.

"You cannot support, you cannot supply, you cannot accept," he said, calling on "every nation, including China and Russia," to fully implement recent U.N. Security Council resolutions on North Korea.

Trump is expected to demand that China curtail its dealings with Pyongyang and expel North Korean workers. Trump has praised China for taking some steps against Pyongyang but urged them to do more, as administration officials believe the border between China and North Korea remains a trade corridor.

"I want to just say that President Xi — where we will be tomorrow, China — has been very



U.S. President Donald Trump, first lady Melania Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan (right) stand together as they tour the Forbidden City

helpful. We'll find out how helpful soon," Trump said Tuesday night in Seoul. "But he really has been very, very helpful. So China is out trying very hard to solve the problem with North Korea."

The White House is banking on Trump's personal rapport with Xi to drive the negotiations. Trump has frequently showered praise on Xi, who recently became the nation's most powerful leader in decades, including with a trip to Trump's Florida estate for a summit.

"He's a powerful man. I happen to think he's a very good person. Now with that being said, he represents China, I represent the U.S.A., so, you know, there's going to always be conflict,"

Trump recently told the Fox Business Network. "People say we have the best relationship of any president-president, because he's called president also. Now some people might call him the king of China. But he's called president."

White House officials point to the Trump-Xi summit in Florida this spring, an event partly defined by Trump telling his Chinese counterpart about the missile strike he ordered on Syria while the two men dined on chocolate cake. But experts in the region suggest that Xi may have the advantage over Trump.

"Trump keeps portraying his relationship with Xi as great pals but that's wildly naive," said Mike Chinoy, an expert

on East Asia policy at the U.S.-China Institute at the University of Southern California. "The Chinese have figured out how to play Trump: flatter him. And there's nothing the Chinese do better than wow foreign diplomats."

## Trump said afterward that he's 'having a great time' in China

Trump talked tough during his campaign about fixing America's trade relationship with China and labeling it a "currency manipulator." But he has signaled that he would take it easy on Beijing if it will help with the nuclear threat from North Korea.

"Trump has mortgaged the whole U.S.-China relationship to get the Chinese on board with the North Korea plan," Chinoy said. "He is now coming at it from a position of weakness."

White House officials have said that if Trump were to chide Xi about human rights or democratic reforms, he would likely do it privately. Andrew Nathan, a political science professor and China expert at Columbia University, said Trump's "infatuation" with Xi was reminiscent of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's fascination with Zhou Enlai, the first Premier of the People's Republic of China.

"For Trump, Xi is wish fulfillment: 'I wish I could be as powerful as that guy!'" Nathan said.

One uncertainty for Trump: whether he will be able to use Twitter in China, which has banned the social media platform. Though the United States could enable it to work, the White House declined to comment on whether Trump would tweet from China.

Trump arrived in Beijing after two days in Seoul, where he largely avoided the inflammatory rhetoric that has defined his approach to Pyongyang. But he also warned North Korea in his speech to "not underestimate us. And do not try us."

He also sounded an optimistic note while in South Korea, saying confidently, if vaguely, that "ultimately, it'll all work out" while shifting views and expressing hope that diplomacy could resolve the tensions. Trump also underlined U.S. military options, noting that three aircraft carrier groups and a nuclear submarine had been deployed to the region.

But he said "we hope to God we never have to use" the arsenal.

One hoped-for message to Pyongyang went unsent. Though the White House had previously indicated that Trump would not visit the heavily fortified demilitarized zone separating North and South Korea, plans had been in the works for him to make an unannounced visit yesterday morning.

Trump boarded the Marine One helicopter and flew to within five minutes of the DMZ but U.S. military pilots and Secret Service agents determined the fog was too thick to safely land. The helicopter returned to Seoul and Trump waited nearly an hour for the weather to clear.

The fog did not lift in time. **AP**

## US, Chinese companies sign contracts during visit

**U**.S. and Chinese companies yesterday signed business deals the two sides valued at USD9 billion during a visit by President Donald Trump in a tradition aimed at blunting criticism of Beijing's trade practices.

China's biggest online retailer said it pledged to buy \$1.2 billion of American beef and pork but no other details of the 19 agreements signed at a ceremony attended by U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross were immediately released.

Such contract signings are a fixture of visits by foreign leaders to China and often involve agreements negotiated weeks or months earlier that Beijing saved to showcase its importance as a market.

Trump has made narrowing the multi-billion-dollar U.S. trade deficit with China a priority of his administration. He is due to hold talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

"Addressing the imbalance in China trade has been a central focus of collaborative discussions between President Trump

and President Xi. And achieving fair and reciprocal treatment for the companies is a shared objective," said Ross. "Today's signings are a good example of how we can productively build up our bilateral trade."

Online retailer JD.com said it would buy beef from the Montana Stock Growers Association and pork from Smithfield Foods Inc. over the next three years. Smithfield is owned by China's WH Group, the world's biggest pork packer.

JD.com said it would buy \$2 billion of U.S. goods over three years.

China's trade surplus with the United States in October widened by 12.2 percent from a year earlier to \$26.6 billion, according to Chinese customs data released yesterday. The total surplus with the United States for the first 10 months of the year rose to \$223 billion.

The chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, William Zarit, expressed hope ahead of Trump's arrival that the signing of business deals would



The presidential couples look at the 18th Century Clock with lifting tower as they tour the Conservation Scientific Laboratory of the Forbidden City in Beijing

draw attention away from "structural issues" including Chinese limits on foreign activity in finance, health care and other industries.

China is the No. 3 export market for the United States after Canada and Mexico. U.S. exports to China rose 77 percent from 2007 to 2016 but Washington reported a \$347 billion trade deficit with China last year. **AP**



India's main opposition Congress party supporters shout slogans as they arrive to join a protest on the first anniversary of the demonetization announcement

## INDIA

# Modi lauds last year's rupee swap, even as economy slows

Katy Daigle, New Delhi

ONE year after India launched one of its most ambitious monetary reforms — yanking 86 percent of its currency out of circulation without warning — many Indians still aren't sure if it was worth it.

Economic growth has slowed. Unemployment has risen. And corruption remains a scourge nationwide.

Still, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government insists the move to replace most of the country's currency bills has been a success, and declared yesterday

as "Anti-black money day" to celebrate the country's fight against money laundering and tax evasion.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said the "status quo needed to be shaken up" and that tax fraud had been sharply reduced as authorities scrutinize bank accounts for suspicious deposits.

Transparency in financial transactions was also up, with the number of credit card payments increasing 66 percent while other types of digital payments increased even more, according to data from the National Payments Corp. of India. More citizens and

businesses are depositing their money in banks, and tax authorities said in August they have registered 5.6 million new taxpayers.

Demonetization, as such currency overhauls are called, has not helped the economy much yet, but the populist move has mostly been welcomed by Modi's base.

"The appeal to people's frustration about corrupt elites who stash money illegally, the encouraging of people's trust in institutions, all that was a success," said political analyst Sreeram Chaulia, dean of the Delhi-based

Jindal School of International Affairs.

"Most average Indians have a much narrower notion of economic well-being. They're not looking at growth rates and moves on the stock exchange. They're looking at very simple things like the price of food, whether there is corruption, whether there are scams going on involving senior politicians."

Still, some find it hard to ignore the fact that Asia's third largest economy is sputtering.

Opposition parties have harshly criticized the currency reform as a hasty move that caused finan-

cial upheaval and losses for small businesses, manufacturers and countless poor who have long relied on cash for the bulk of their transactions.

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of the opposition Congress party called the demonetization drive "reckless" and said that while India needed to tackle tax evasion and fraud, "demonetization was clearly not the solution."

When Modi surprised the nation last year with his midnight announcement that all old 1,000-rupee and 500-rupee bills were now worthless, he called the exercise a "purification" ritual that would cleanse the country of the evils of money laundering and tax evasion. For a few weeks, people were allowed to deposit their old notes in bank accounts. As most did not have bank accounts, they were invited to open them.

But the cash-reliant economy took a hit, and some businesses were forced to shut down altogether. Demonetization was followed eight months later by another massive financial reform, as India replaced its complex system of cascading federal and state taxes with a single goods and services tax, or GST. While that was aimed at streamlining business and eliminating bureaucracy, the tax overhaul also hit small- and medium-sized businesses hard.

In the first quarter of 2017, the Indian economy slowed to 5.7 percent growth — far short of the 8 percent India needs to add enough jobs for the 12 million or so young people entering the work force every year.

Instead, urban unemployment rose to 8.2 percent last month, its highest level in 11 months.

At a rally yesterday in New Delhi, hundreds of protesters from the Congress party punched their fists in the air and shouted "Down! Down, Narendra Modi!" Some carried placards reading "Demonetization — Organized Looting."

"This was done to make the poor suffer," said Praveen Sonkar, a 42-year-old welder. "Demonetization was only to benefit the rich." AP

AD

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## MALAYSIA

# Defense seeks to show political link in Kim Jong Nam killing

Eileen Ng, Shah Alam

**D**EFENSE lawyers in the trial of two women accused of killing the estranged half brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un sought yesterday to establish there was a political motive in the brazen airport assassination, with many key suspects linked to the secretive state.

Siti Aisyah of Indonesia and Doan Thi Huong of Vietnam are the only two suspects in custody. They are accused of smearing the banned nerve agent VX on Kim Jong Nam's face at a Kuala Lumpur airport terminal on Feb. 13. They pleaded not guilty at the start of their trial on Oct. 2 and face a mandatory death sentence if convicted.

Prosecutors have accused four North Korean men, who fled Malaysia on the day of the killing and remain at large, of conspiring with the women to plot the murder.

"We are able to establish that it is not a simple murder. There are a lot of political connotations. All the suspects are North Koreans and the North Korean Embassy was not cooperative in helping police," Aisyah's lawyer, Gooi Soon Seng, told reporters after the court session. "In this case, the motive appears to be political more than anything else [...] and the girls would not have any political motive whatsoever."

Key parts of yesterday's session that tried to show the North Korean connection:



Indonesian Siti Aisyah (second left) is escorted by police as she arrives for court hearing at Shah Alam court house, outside Kuala Lumpur

**CAR USED**

Police investigating officer Wan Azirul Nizam Che Wan Aziz told the court that the car used to ferry three of the North Korean suspects to the airport on the day of the murder was bought by a North Korean Embassy official known as Chal Su four months earlier. But he said the vehicle was registered under the name of Ri Jong Chol, a North Korean man.

Ri, a chemist, was arrested four days after Kim was killed. He was later released due to a lack of evidence and deported because he did not have valid travel documents. Wan Azirul said Ri did not drive the suspects to the airport and told police before he was deported that Chal Su used his name to buy the car in October last year. He said he couldn't verify Chal Su's status because the North Korean

Embassy refused to cooperate.

**N. KOREA OFFICIALS**

Airport security video showed that Hyon Kwang Song, then the second secretary at the North Korean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, and Kim Uk-II of Air Koryo, North Korea's national carrier, arrived at the main airport terminal 40 minutes before Kim was attacked. The two men were later seen meeting with the Nor-

th Korean suspects, and Wan Azirul said they assisted the four in leaving the country.

Wan Azirul said police had issued arrest warrants for the two but couldn't interrogate them because they were hiding at the North Korean Embassy. The two were later allowed to leave Malaysia in exchange for nine Malaysians stranded in North Korea, in a deal to end a diplomatic row. Wan Azirul said police interviewed the two suspects before they left but didn't seize their cellphones or laptops to obtain further information. He has said the two claimed it was their duty to assist North Korean citizens flying off.

Wan Azirul said three of the four suspects flew to Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, right after Kim was killed, but couldn't confirm a defense assertion that they then flew to Dubai and to Vladivostok in Russia before landing in Pyongyang — routes that the defense said are through countries with friendly ties with North Korea. Wan Azirul said he didn't know if the three men worked for the North Korean Embassy. When asked by the defense whether the fourth suspect flew to Phnom Penh, Cambodia's capital, and stayed there for two days before flying to Bangkok, he said he did not know.

**CONSTRAINTS**

Wan Azirul said his investigation into the North Korean suspects has been partly hampered because it's a case involving another country, and that he needed approval from his superior before he could take any action involving the men. He also said he had sought to take a statement from another North Korean suspect, Ri Ji U, known as James, but didn't receive the green light. Defense lawyer Gooi has said James is believed to have recruited Aisyah. **AP**

## Senate committee backs new sanctions targeting North Korea

**A** Senate committee unanimously approved legislation that would impose mandatory sanctions on Chinese banks and other financial institutions if they are found to be helping North Korea evade existing penalties from the U.S. and U.N. Security Council.

Members of the Republican-led Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee voted 23-0 for the bill named after Otto Warmbier, the college student from Ohio who was imprisoned by North Korea for more than a year before he re-

turned home in June with brain damage and died days later.

The legislation also would punish companies that knowingly import coal, iron, lead and seafood products from North Korea. Those goods are estimated to be worth more than USD1 billion, about one-third of the country's estimated \$3 billion in exports in 2016.

President Donald Trump would be required to notify Congress before terminating or suspending the sanctions, according to the bill. Proponents said that provision is similar to

a mechanism in Russian sanctions legislation that Congress passed this year and Trump signed into law.

Sen. Sherrod Brown of Ohio, the committee's top Democrat, said the bill forces banks to make a choice: either do business with North Korea or the United States, but not both.

Approval of the bill comes more than a month after administration officials asked the committee not to pass any legislation that would undercut their push for a diplomatic resolution

with North Korea.

"When our hands are tied in different ways, it keeps us from being agile in the way that you would want us to be agile in order to maximize that economic pressure," Sigal Mandelker, Treasury undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence, told the committee in late September.

But Republicans and Democrats on the committee said they aimed to fill holes in existing North Korean sanctions by isolating Pyongyang's enablers.

Sen. Mike Crapo, R-Idaho, the committee



Chinese custom officials inspect trucks loaded with goods to and from North Korea in Dandong

chairman, said the bill will further restrict North Korea from developing nuclear weapons and the long-range missiles needed to deliver them.

Trump, who is in China,

urged the North to "come to the table" and "make a deal" on its nuclear weapons program. He stopped short of saying whether he wanted direct diplomatic talks. **AP**

UK

# Cabinet minister under fire over secret Israel meetings

Jill Lawless, London

BRITAIN'S international development secretary cut short a trip to Africa yesterday amid demands she be fired over unauthorized meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli politicians.

Britain's Press Association news agency and other media reported that Priti Patel was flying back to London after Prime Minister Theresa May ordered her to return. She had been due to attend events in Uganda.

Patel has been under pressure since it was revealed that she held 12 meetings with Israeli groups and officials, including Netanyahu, during a vacation in the country in August — and that she hadn't told the prime minister or colleagues about it.

Patel later discussed with her department the possibility of British aid being given to the Israeli army to support medical assistance for refugees from the Syrian civil war arriving in the Golan Heights.

Israel's Haaretz newspaper reported yesterday that Patel visited an Israeli military field



Britain's Secretary of State for International Development Priti Patel

hospital in the Golan Heights during her August trip. Britain regards Israel as illegally occupying the territory, which it captured from Syria in 1967.

Patel's situation has been made worse by her contradictory statements about the meetings.

When news broke about the August trip, Patel insisted that Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson "knew about the visit." Her department was later forced to clarify the statement, saying "the foreign secretary did become aware of the visit, but not in advance of it."

Patel apologized, saying the meetings "did not accord with the usual procedures."

It has since emerged that she also met in September with Israeli public security minister Gilad Erdan and a foreign ministry official, without any other British officials present.

If May fires Patel, she will be the second member of the increasingly unstable Cabinet to leave their job in a week. Defense Secretary Michael Fallon resigned Nov. 1 after sexual harassment allegations against him emerged.

## Patel apologized, saying the meetings 'did not accord with the usual procedures'

Several lawmakers have been suspended by their parties amid a growing scandal over sexual harassment and abuse in British politics. May's deputy prime minister, Damian Green, is facing a civil service investigation after a young party activist accused him of unwanted touches and text messages.

In another headache for the government, Johnson apologized Tuesday for saying a British-Iranian woman imprisoned in Iran had been training journalists when she was arrested. The family of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe says she was on vacation, and accused Johnson of putting her at risk of a longer prison sentence with his misleading comments. **AP**

USA

# Transgender woman makes history in Virginia House seat win

A transgender candidate defeated an incumbent Virginia lawmaker who sponsored a bill that would have restricted which bathrooms she could use.

Democrat Danica Roem, a former journalist, is set to make history as the first openly transgender person elected and seated in a state legislature in the United States. She unseated Republican Del. Bob Marshall, one of the state's longest serving and most socially conservative lawmakers. The race was one of the year's most high profile, drawing international attention and big money to the northern Virginia House of Delegates district outside the nation's capital.

"It's historic. [...] It

sends a message to politicians everywhere that the politics of bigotry is over," Democratic House Caucus Chair Charniele Herring said.

Roem will be the first transgender member of the House of Delegates and will become the first out transgender person to win and serve in a state legislature, according to the Victory Fund, a political action committee that works to get openly LGBTQ people elected and has supported Roem.

Roem openly discussed her gender identity during her campaign, but it was far from her focus. Instead, she focused on jobs, schools and, with particular fervor, northern Virginia's traffic congestion.

She started pursuing therapy to begin her gender transition when she was 28, and said in an interview with The Associated Press during the campaign that politics should be inclusive of all.

"No matter what you look like, where you come from, how you worship or who you love, if you have good public policy ideas, if you're qualified for office, you have every right to bring your ideas to the table," she said.

She also argued that Marshall, who has served in the House since 1992, has spent too much time on social policy.

A lightning rod for controversy, Marshall often drew the ire of even his own party.

In addition to this year's

bathroom bill, Marshall was also the author of a now-void constitutional amendment that defined marriage as between one man and one woman, and sponsored a bill banning gay people from openly serving in the Virginia National Guard.

On the campaign trail, Marshall and other Republicans repeatedly misidentified Roem's gender.

In a statement posted on his Facebook page, Marshall said: "For 26 years I've been proud to fight for you, and fight for our future. Though we all wish tonight would have turned out differently, I am deeply grateful for your support and effort over the years."

Roem, who sings in a metal band in her spa-



Danica Roem, who ran for the house of delegates against GOP incumbent Robert Marshall, casts her vote

re time, said she learned to listen to different perspectives and digest complicated policy as a reporter for the Gainesville Times and Prince William Times, skills she would bring to bear as a delegate.

Roem wasn't the only transgender candidate elected yesterday. Tyler Titus, who is openly transgender, won a seat

on a western Pennsylvania school board, The Erie Times-News reported.

"2017 will be remembered as the year of the trans candidate - and Danica's heroic run for office the centerpiece of that national movement," Aisha C. Moodie-Mills, president & CEO of Victory Fund, said in a statement. **AP**

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## what's ON



**2017 MACAU OPEN BADMINTON**  
**TIME:** 12pm-8:30pm (November 9-10)  
 12am-9:30pm (November 11)  
 12am-5:30pm (November 12)  
**VENUE:** Tap Seac Multisport Pavilion  
**ADMISSION:** MOP150 (November 7-10);  
 MOP400 (November 11-12)  
**TICKETING:** (853) 2855 5555

**A SCULPTURE - YANG XIAO HUA**  
**REPRESENTING WOMEN THROUGH MAM**  
**COLLECTION - 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY**  
**TIME:** 10am-7pm, last admission at 6:30pm (Closed on Mondays, open on public holidays)  
**UNTIL:** December 31, 2017  
**VENUE:** Macau Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, NAPE  
**ADMISSION:** Free  
**ENQUIRIES:** (853) 8791 9814

**AFFECTION FOR LOTUS - EXHIBITION OF PAINTING AND CALLIGRAPHY FOR THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF JAO TSUNG-I**  
**TIME:** 10am-6pm (Last admission at 17:30; closed on Mondays; open on public holidays)  
**UNTIL:** December 31, 2017  
**VENUE:** Jao Tsung-I Academy  
**ADMISSION:** Free  
**ENQUIRIES:** (853) 2852 2523

**DETERMINED SPIRIT - CALLIGRAPHY AND PAINTING OF FU SHEN**  
**TIME:** 10am-7pm (Last admission at 6:30pm, closed on Mondays, open on public holidays)  
**UNTIL:** November 19, 2017  
**VENUE:** Macau Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, NAPE  
**ADMISSION:** Free  
**ENQUIRIES:** (853) 8791 9814

**A BONSAI OF MY DREAM - WORKS BY WONG CHENG POU**  
**TIME:** 10am-7pm (Last admission at 6:30pm, closed on Mondays, open on public holidays)  
**UNTIL:** November 12, 2017  
**VENUE:** Macau Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, NAPE  
**ADMISSION:** Free  
**ENQUIRIES:** (853) 8791 9814

## Offbeat

## CANADIAN MOUNTIES ARREST FIVE NAKED SUSPECTS AFTER KIDNAPPING

Police arriving at a car crash in western Canada found five naked people inside, and ended up accusing them of kidnapping a mother, her father and her baby.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Cpl. Laurel Scott said the mother, baby and the woman's father had been taken from a home and forced into a vehicle against their will. While the car was being driven, the adult male, who was in the trunk, managed to escape. Shortly after that the woman escaped with the baby.

Authorities said a passer-by offered assistance and secured all three in his truck before the suspects' vehicle rammed the rear of the truck and ended up in the ditch.

Three adults among the suspects remained in custody facing charges of kidnapping and resisting arrest, police said. The other two suspects were youths and released without charges.

Officials said the three people who were kidnapped were not injured.

The investigation continued but officials believed drugs or alcohol might have been a factor.

## TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	RTPi News (Delayed Broadcast)
15:00	Miscellaneous
15:40	Miscellaneous
16:35	Miscellaneous
17:25	Zig Zag
18:15	Miscellaneous
18:50	Brazilian Mini Serie (Repeated)
19:15	Non-daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:50	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:35	Non-daily Portuguese News
21:40	Yes, Chef! Sr. 2 - Premiere
22:10	Brazilian Mini Serie
22:40	Miscellaneous
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:25	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:05	RTPi Live

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

09 Nov - 15 Nov



## LOGAN LUCKY

ROOM 1

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

Director: Steven Soderbergh

Starring: Daniel Craig, Channing Tatum, Adam Driver, Ridley Keough

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 118 min



## THOR: RAGNAROK

ROOM 1

7:00pm

Director: Taika Waititi

Starring: Chris Hemsworth, Cate Blanchett, Tom Hiddleston

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 109 min



## MIX!

ROOM 2

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

Director: Junichi Ishikawa

Starring: Yui Aragaki, Eita Ryoko, Hirose Koji Seto, Mei Nagano, Yu, Aoi

Language: Japanese (Chinese &amp; English)

Duration: 120 min

## FLATLINERS

ROOM 2

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

Director: Niels Arden Oplev

Starring: Ellen Page, Diego Luna, Nina Dobrev, James Norton

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 110 min

## LET ME EAT YOUR PANCREAS

ROOM 3

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

Director: Sho Tsukikawa

Starring: Minami Hamabe, Takumi Kitamura, Shun Oguri

Language: Japanese (Chinese &amp; English)

Duration: 115min

## this day in history



## 1989 BERLINERS CELEBRATE THE FALL OF THE WALL

The Berlin Wall has been breached after nearly three decades keeping East and West Berliners apart.

At midnight East Germany's Communist rulers gave permission for gates along the Wall to be opened after hundreds of people converged on crossing points.

They surged through cheering and shouting and were met by jubilant West Berliners on the other side.

Ecstatic crowds immediately began to clamber on top of the Wall and hack large chunks out of the 28-mile (45-kilometre) barrier.

It had been erected in 1961 on the orders of East Germany's former leader Walter Ulbricht stop people leaving for West Germany.

Since 1949 about 2.5 million people had fled East Germany.

After 1961, the Wall and other fortifications along the 860-mile (1,380-kilometre) border shared by East and West Germany have kept most East Germans in.

Many of those attempting to escape have been shot dead by border guards.

The first indication that change was imminent came earlier today when East Berlin's Communist party spokesman, Gunther Schabowski, announced East Germans would be allowed to travel directly to West Germany.

The move was intended to stem an exodus into West Germany through the "back door" which began last summer when the new and more liberal regime in Hungary opened its border.

The flow of migrants was intensified last week when Czechoslovakia also granted free access to West Germany through its border.

West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has hailed the decision to open the Wall as "historic" and called for a meeting with East German leader, Egon Krenz.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The opening of the Berlin Wall was preceded by a series of momentous events in East Germany.

They included the removal of the country's hardline Communist leader, Erich Honecker, and the resignation of the entire cabinet. East Germany's new leader, Egon Krenz, called for free democratic elections.

But it was not enough to turn the tide and once the Berlin Wall was breached, East Germany disintegrated.

On 3 October 1990 the two Germanys merged to form a new united country.

In 1997 Egon Krenz received a six-and-a-half year jail sentence for the manslaughter of people killed by border guards when trying to escape to the West.



YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 New beginnings aren't just your specialty...

Taurus April 20-May 20 Take time out to appreciate that you're happy with yourself.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Every now and then, we all get the chance to begin again.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You've always been a private person - it's the way you were born...

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 If you've been deliberately avoiding a topic that someone close has been trying to bring up...

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 It may be human nature to dream, and to at least make an effort to bring those dreams to life here on earth.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Your skills as negotiator and mediator have been famous for nearly forever, and for good reason.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 After days of intense conversation, you've finally reached a compromise of some sort.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 It's all too easy for you to fall headfirst into work and forget about anything even remotely resembling fun or leisure.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You're just about to take flight - in nearly every possible aspect of your life.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 When you hear about a major shift in your life that's just around the corner, it doesn't frighten you at all.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 It's time once again for yet another serious conversation, but don't run off quite yet - no matter what happened last time.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

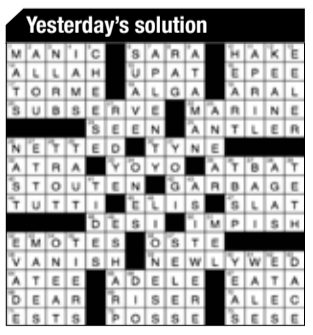
Sudoku puzzles categorized by difficulty: Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard. Each category contains a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION. It lists weather for various cities in China and the World.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Tax pro; 4- Protected from the sun; 10- Agreement; 14- Old California fort; 15- Photographic device; 16- Construction beam; 17- Deity; 18- Creative ability; 20- 'Besos' (1962 hit); 21- Fleshy fruit; 22- Pennies; 23- John Garner; 25- Outdoes; 28- Tit for; 29- South American monkey; 30- Lucid; 31- 'Exodus' author Leon; 32- Pertaining to a congress; 35- Fair-hiring abbr.; 36- Penpoint; 37- Something immaterial; 44- On a cruise; 45- In the least; 46- Scottish refusals; 48- Cambodia's Lon; 49- For want of; 50- Two-time loser to Dwight; 51- San Antonio landmark; 53- Mariners can sail on seven of these; 55- Discount rack abbr.; 56- Light of a candle; 59- Favor; 60- How sweet; 61- Generic; 62- Compass dir.; 63- Hawaii's state bird; 64- Person who fishes; 65- Get it?; DOWN: 1- Believable; 2- Commonplace; 3- Extend; 4- Listerine alternative; 5- Fabled loser; 6- Affable; 7- Grades; 8- 'tu' (Verdi aria); 9- Rockers Steely; 10- Heap; 11- From within; 12- Marsh plant; 13- Assignations; 19- Cooling units, for short; 24- Picture theater; 26- Airline to Oslo; 27- Threefold; 30- King Minos, for one; 31- Unfasten; 33- few rounds; 34- Lubricate; 37- Quarantine; 38- Dark pigment in skin; 39- Sorority letter; 40- Elevating; 41- Forbidden by law; 42- Clubfoot; 43- The beginning; 44- Aleeve alternative; 47- Yes, Bob!; 49- 'You've got mail' co.; 50- Fall bloomer; 52- Gds.; 54- Weary comment; 57- Bambi's aunt; 58- Actor Chaney;



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FOOTBALL

# Benched at his club, World Cup is focus for N. Ireland keeper

Graham Dunbar, Geneva

**WHEN** you have the World Cup, who needs the English second division?

Northern Ireland goalkeeper Michael McGovern will represent his country's national soccer team today in a playoff game against Switzerland in Belfast — his fifth World Cup qualifying game this season.

That is five more league games than he has played this season for Norwich, his team in England.

The only competitive club action McGovern had was a game in August in England's second-string cup competition. It was against a third-tier team.

That preparation doesn't seem ideal to help Northern Ireland return to the World Cup for the first time since going to Mexico in 1986, weeks before McGovern's second birthday.

Yet McGovern's seven shutouts in 10 qualifying group



Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer (center left) shakes hands with Northern Ireland goalkeeper Michael McGovern during the Euro 2016

games — conceding only in two losses to Germany, and an own-goal in the last match against Norway — is among the world's best records on the road to Russia.

He is in the good company of goalkeepers for a World

Cup-bound country who are stuck on the bench in English leagues. Argentina's Sergio Romero cannot dislodge David de Gea at Manchester United. David Ospina is first choice for Colombia but behind Petr Cech at Arsenal.

Still, goalkeepers are different, and newly appointed FIFA coaching specialist Pascal Zuberbuehler said McGovern's situation is not a problem.

"He is disciplined, he is professional. At the moment, he handles it fantastically," Zuberbuehler, who kept goal for Switzerland 51 times, told The Associated Press in a telephone interview.

The key to McGovern having consistent top-level success is setting high standards in training.

"You need to train hard for yourself, even if you have Cech or De Gea next to you," Zuberbuehler said. "And the head coach gives him the confidence that he is No. 1."

Northern Ireland coach Michael O'Neill built trust in McGovern on the team's run to the knockout round at the 2016 European Championship after starting as the fifth-seeded team in its qualifying group.

At Euro 2016, McGovern's sa-

ves in a 1-0 loss to Germany in Paris ensured his team advanced from their group. A three-goal defeat could have sent them home.

"The players gave him a round of applause when he came in the dressing room and, when that happens, you don't really need the manager to say any more," O'Neill said that day at Parc des Princes.

McGovern exchanged shirts with Germany counterpart Manuel Neuer, and started a friendly rivalry with Thomas Mueller.

The main photograph on McGovern's Twitter account, @mcgov12, is a blocking save to defy Mueller. After Germany's 3-1 win at Windsor Park last month, Mueller asked to swap signed shirts.

At Euro 2016, McGovern was technically without a job as a pending free agent. His reward was a three-year contract at Norwich, which was favored for promotion to the Premier League. McGovern played only 22 games in an underachieving mid-table finish.

This season, Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola loaned England under-21 international Angus Gunn to Norwich, and McGovern has watched his teammates play from the bench. **AP**

AD

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BASEBALL | OBITUARY

# Roy Halladay remembered for his hard work and generosity

Rob Maaddi, Philadelphia

**A** fierce competitor on the mound, Roy Halladay was generous and gentle away from the field.

The eight-time All-Star loved his family, baseball and flying.

Halladay's passion for piloting cost him his life yesterday [Macau time] when his private plane crashed into the Gulf of Mexico. He was 40.

Former teammates, coaches and fans mourned the sudden loss of the beloved former player, who was known for his tireless work ethic. Nearly every memory began with a story about Halladay's legendary workout program and his early morning routine.

Halladay even outworked Chase Utley.

The fan favorites quickly became close friends after Halladay was traded to the Philadelphia Phillies before the 2010 season. Utley recalled his introduction to Halladay at the team's practice complex in Clearwater, Florida.

"My heart hurts writing this," Utley wrote on Instagram. "I can still remember the first day we met. It was 5:45am on the first day of spring training when I arrived. He was finishing his breakfast but his clothes were soaking wet. I asked if it was raining when he got in. He laughed and said 'No I just finished my workout.' I knew right then — he was the real deal. Thank you Roy for allowing us to witness what it takes to be the

AP PHOTO



Roy Halladay

best. We will all miss you."

Former teammate Cole Hamels, currently a Texas Rangers ace, joined Phillies chairman David Montgomery at Philadelphia's ballpark to remember Halladay. Fans left pictures, candles and notes outside the stadium to honor Halladay, who played four years there after spending his first 12 seasons with the Toronto Blue Jays.

"Behind everything he did, he had a purpose," Hamels said. "I think you come to realize that you have very small, short moments in life to do something great so you have to maximize it. You have to make the best of it. And he did. He made us push to a level that sometimes you didn't think you could actually reach. He made everybody better."

Halladay won a Cy Young

Award in each league and tossed a perfect game and a no-hitter in his first postseason start in the same year after coming to the Phillies. The 6-foot-6 right-hander was a three-time 20-game winner who finished 203-105 with a 3.38 ERA.

Halladay was a devoted husband to wife Brandy and a loving father to sons Ryan and Braden.

"All-Star pitcher. All-Star

person. All-Star father and family man," Montgomery said.

Halladay served as a guest instructor with the Phillies in spring training and had his own office at the complex. He enjoyed working with the organization's young players on the mental aspects of baseball.

"He certainly would have given more to baseball in the future because of his love for the game," Montgomery said. "But his commitment to his family kept him where he was the last few years. We'd had a number of conversations about his potential future in the game. But he just would say, 'I want it, but it's on hold. It's on hold right now because of my family.'"

**All-Star pitcher. All-Star person. All-Star father and family man.**

DAVID MONTGOMERY

Halladay was the pitching coach at Calvary Christian High School, and he was coaching another youth team.

For all of his personal accomplishments, Halladay always put the team first and shared the credit. He gave all of his teammates and members of the organization a luxury watch to commemorate his perfect game and had a special bond with former Phillies catcher Carlos Ruiz.

"Roy was one of the greatest pitchers I ever caught, and an even better person and friend," Ruiz said. "I wanted to win more for him than myself. I will miss him very much. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones and all those, like me, who truly admired him." AP

BASKETBALL | NBA

# Davis powers Pelicans past Pacers 117-112

**T**HE New Orleans Pelicans appeared to be in big trouble. Then Anthony Davis and DeMarcus Cousins took over.

Davis had 37 points and 14 rebounds, Cousins added 32 points and 13 boards and the Pelicans rallied to beat the Indiana Pacers 117-112 yesterday [Macau time].

"I think our talent is different than a lot of bigs — there's so many ways we can dominate a game," Cousins said. "And I think we're just scratching the surface right now. We can get so much better."

Davis was 14 for 18 from the field in New Orleans' third straight win. Cousins also had six assists.

"We've been doing this almost all season," Davis said. "It's all the other guys [on this team] that make mine and DeMarcus' jobs easy."

Indiana had six players score in double figures in its third straight loss. Myles Turner had 21 points and 12 rebounds, Victor Oladipo scored 15 points, and Bojan Bogdanovic and Lance Stephenson each had 14.

Indiana led 75-61 at half-

time, but the Pelicans outscored the Pacers 35-19 in the third quarter. Indiana also blew a double-digit lead in a 108-101 loss to the New York Knicks on Sunday.

"Same thing that happened the last two games," Turner said. "We come out flat in the third quarter. They took advantage of it."

Darren Collison's corner 3-pointer with 1:31 left got Indiana within one, but Davis responded with a jumper for New Orleans. Jrue Holiday made a couple free throws and Cousins added a layup to help

the Pelicans hold on.

**TIP-INS.** Pelicans: Five of New Orleans' six wins have come on the road. New Orleans' lone home win came against the Cavaliers. [...] Darius Miller scored 12 points, and Jameer Nelson had 10.

**Pacers:** Thaddeus Young had 13 points, and Collison finished with 12. [...] Indiana shot 47.3 percent (44 for 93) from the field.

**HOT START.** The Pacers set a season high for points in the first quarter with 37. Indiana's previous high was 33 points, a total it reached twice this season. AP

AP PHOTO



New Orleans Pelicans center DeMarcus Cousins (0) drives on Indiana Pacers center Myles Turner (33)

opinion

**Made in Macao**  
 Jenny Lao-Phillips



**UNIVERSITY MAJORS DO NOT MATTER**

Most students in Macao are now halfway through their first semester, or in some high schools, have probably completed their first term. This is a time when the hustle of the beginning of the school year is over and everyone is settled in their new class, or new school for some students. For graduating classes, aside from preparing for all the external examinations, the soon to be high school graduates are being bombarded with information about universities as they decide where and what to study. Unless one is determined to pursue a licensed profession such as doctor, social worker, lawyer or psychologist, students' choice of university major does not really matter in Macao.

In countries where the unemployment rate is high, choosing a major with high employability is an important consideration. However, there are more vacancies than available candidates in Macao. On top of that, there is ample support for young entrepreneurs to create an alternative career if they are not able to find the right job. There are also many kinds of scholarships and interest-free tuition loans that provide opportunities for most students to attend the institution or university of their choice. Most young people in Macao have the advantage of being able to enjoy their undergraduate lives studying something they like, be it philosophy, fine arts or even theology, and they do not need to worry about not being able to find a job after graduation.

In fact, there are more important things to do during the four years of university life, such as networking, partying and falling in love. Yes, these are more important than what one's major is if the plan is to find a well-paid job in a large international organization. Why? Because these activities help develop the qualities that most employers are looking for.

According to different human resources professionals from large organizations, one of the most important qualities they look for in candidates is their attitude to work. But what constitutes a good attitude? The general replies are willingness to take on more tasks and pro-activeness in helping other colleagues. But good work attitude cannot be learnt in any major, it is rooted in the upbringing of a person. Someone who is not used to doing anything at home or fending for himself may not be willing to do much at work either. But meeting more people and seeing how others interact may change this attitude. That's why it's important to get out of one's home, go meet new people and party in college. What's more, having a fun time can develop a more positive attitude in life which would contribute to a better work attitude too.

Another important quality that managers look for in candidates in Macao is a strong communication skill set; more specifically the ability to carry on a conversation clearly and showing confidence when speaking to people. Even for back office jobs that do not require staff to communicate with guests or customers, the ability to convey information clearly between departments is considered an important trait. Surely communication skills can be learnt in the classroom, but it is better developed through practice. Participating in networking activities and accumulating experience in talking to strangers is a better way to improve one's communication skills than taking a class in communication.

Finally, fluency in English is also in high demand, but one does not need to major in English to be fluent in the language. Most high school graduates from Macao have already gone through years of English lessons and what is needed is the opportunity to practice. And the best way to practice is, of course, to talk with non-Chinese speakers, or better yet, to date one.

**THE ROMAN ROAD DISCOVERED DURING DIGGING IN GERMAN CITY AACHEN**

Authorities say workers digging in the western German city of Aachen have uncovered an ancient Roman road.

Aachen city archaeologist Andreas Schaub told the dpa news agency the road is about six meters wide and is thought to possibly date back to the second century.

Schaub says the road could have connected the important settlement in Aachen to what is

today the Dutch city of Maastricht.

Experts are now trying to determine how long the road might have been in use.

The road was discovered as workers dug to install security barriers to secure the city's annual Christmas market. A dozen people were killed in Berlin last year when a man drove a truck into a crowded Christmas market in the capital.

**Snapchat and Twitter adopting new looks to gain more users**



A pair of struggling social-media darlings have decided they need to take on new looks if they want to prosper.

Twitter is rolling out a 280-character limit for nearly all its users, abandoning its iconic 140-character limit for tweets.

And Snapchat, long an app popular with young people, will undergo a revamp to make itself easier to use, in the hopes it can attract a wider audience.

Both companies announced the moves Tuesday as they look for ways to expand beyond their passionate but slow-growing fan bases.

At the end of the third quarter, Twitter had 330 million monthly users, up just 1 percent from the second quarter. Snapchat added 4.5 million daily users in the quarter to 178 million, which amounts to a 3 percent growth. The company does not report monthly user figures.

But those numbers pale next to social media behemoth Facebook, which reported its monthly users rose 16 percent to 2.07 billion.

"The one thing that we have heard over the years is that Snapchat is difficult to understand or hard to

use, and our team has been working on responding to this feedback," Snap Inc. CEO Evan Spiegel said. "As a result, we are currently redesigning our application to make it easier to use."

His comments came on a conference call with industry analysts after the company posted the lackluster user-growth numbers and revenue that fell well short of Wall Street expectations. Snap's stock was bludgeoned in after-market trading, falling more than 17 percent to USD12.53. The Venice, California-based company went public in March at \$17 a share.

Snapchat needs to grow its user base beyond 13 to 34 year olds in the U.S., France the U.K. and Australia, Spiegel said. This, he said, includes Android users, people older than 34 and what he called "rest of world" markets.

Twitter, meanwhile, appears also to be banking that by freeing users from the 140-character straitjacket, its platform will gain in popularity. The San Francisco company says 9 percent of tweets written in English hit the 140-character limit. People ended up spending more time editing tweets or didn't send them out at all.

The move to 280 characters was first started as a test in September.

"People in the experiment told us that a higher character limit made them feel more satisfied with how they expressed themselves on Twitter, their ability to find good content, and Twitter overall," said project manager Aliza Rosen in a blog post.

The expansion to 280-character tweets will be extended to all users except those tweeting in Chinese, Japanese and Korean, who will still have the original limit. That's because writing in those languages uses fewer characters.

The news led to an onslaught of extended tweets by users seeming to revel in the sudden doubling of their Twitter real estate. Others were not impressed, including at least one who quoted Shakespeare: "Brevity is the soul of wit."

And, as Spiegel noted, change does not come without risk.

"We don't yet know how the behavior of our community will change when they begin to use our updated application," he said. "We're willing to take that risk for what we believe are substantial long-term benefits to our business." AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	40-60 Good
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Good
Ambient	45-65 Good

**WORLD BRIEFS**



**EGYPT**'s highest appeals court yesterday upheld a five-year prison sentence for Alaa Abdel-Fattah, an iconic figure of the country's pro-democracy movement convicted for taking part in a peaceful demonstration in 2013.

**EU-TURKEY** European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker says he wants some of the funds earmarked for Turkey's EU membership process to be shifted to bolster the country's judiciary.

**POLAND** The Polish government is encouraging citizens to go forth and multiply like rabbits. The health ministry of Poland, which has one of the lowest birth rates in Europe, has put out a short video praising rabbits for producing many offspring.



**SPAIN**'s Constitutional Court has ruled illegal the ousted Catalan parliament's recent vote to declare the region independent from Spain. The ruling yesterday came as pro-independence protesters blocked roads and stopped commuter trains in the northeastern region as part of a strike to protest the jailing of ousted Catalan government officials and secessionist activists.

**BRITAIN** In the latest crisis for Britain's beleaguered government, the international development secretary cut short a trip to Africa yesterday amid demands she be fired over unauthorized meetings with Israeli politicians, including the prime minister. More on p14

**VENEZUELA** A journalist said Tuesday that he had been released following two days of captivity and torture after photographing criminal gang activities inside a prison.