



THE PARISIAN SAVES THE DAY FOR SANDS

P2 GAMING



MALDIVES EX-LEADER EXPOSES BELT & ROAD

"A large emerging power is busy buying up the Maldives," Nasheed said, referring to investments under Xi's plan

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TRIAL ON KIM JONG NAM'S MURDER RESUMES

A Malaysia court heard that the original videos in the main server were automatically deleted after 30 days

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Police after copper thieves from LRT sites

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ANGELO MAGAT

SINULOG

The festival of faith

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WORLD BRIEFS

AP PHOTO



HONG KONG A bookseller who was secretly detained in China has been taken away by Chinese authorities again after being released into house arrest last October, his daughter said yesterday. More on p11

AP PHOTO



PHILIPPINES The country's most active volcano ejected a huge column of lava fragments, ash and smoke in a thunderous explosion yesterday, sending thousands of villagers back to evacuation centers and prompting a warning that a violent eruption may be imminent.

VIETNAM A former oil executive was sentenced to life in prison and a former high-ranking Vietnamese government official received a lengthy prison term yesterday at the end of a major corruption trial.

More on backpage

Repairs to flooded houses to complete in Q2

Three public housing projects, which sustained damage during Typhoon Hato, will see their repairs completed in the second quarter of 2018. The three housing projects are Edifício Fai Ieng, Edifício do Bairro da Ilha Verde, and Edifício Cheng Tou. The buildings were heavily hit by flooding, and all three sustained damage to the ground and underground parking lots. In those areas, most of the electronic equipment was damaged and required either repairs or complete replacements. In total, four new public housing projects recorded damages as a result of Hato. The fourth, located in Taipa, is Edifício Iat Fai, and it has already been repaired.

Public suggests point-based system for drivers



Several spectators at Sunday's Macao Forum suggested the government establish a point-based system to grade Macau's drivers. Former transport committee advisory member Leng Sai Vai agreed with the idea of a point-based system. Leng believes that Macau needs a new mindset, and that a point-based system could increase the drivers' awareness at all times. Leng suggested that in addition to fines, the government should also offer further training courses to drivers to allow them to increase their safety awareness. Police representative Ma Chio Hong noted that the police authority has an open attitude towards a point-based system.

GAMING

The Parisian softens the blow of disappointing 2017 for LVS

LAS Vegas Sands Corp.'s (LVS) latest Macau property, The Parisian Macao, may have softened an otherwise disappointing year for the firm, a new report by market analyst The Motley Fool claims.

Though the Las Vegas-based company saw its stock climb about 35 percent in 2017, it performed below expectations in Macau and was overshadowed by its rivals Wynn Resorts and Melco Resorts. The firm also recorded its worst operating year since the global financial recession.

LVS's Macau revenue growth stood at just under 12 percent last year, far below the 19 percent aggregate expansion in the city's gaming economy. However, the Parisian Macao's strong posting has allowed the company to weather a particularly bad year for its other resorts, with individual revenues at The Venetian Macao, Sands Cotai Central and Four Seasons Macau dropping 7.9 percent, 12 percent and 12.1 percent from a year earlier respectively.

Macau accounts for more than half of LVS revenue through its subsidiary, Sands China Ltd.

Sands China has been the most enthusiastic of Macau operators in shifting its business model away from the VIP segment and toward mass-market players, the conferencing and exhibition sector, and the entertainment industry.

It is a strategy that may or may not pay off in the years ahead.



Macau gaming revenues climbed 19.1 percent last year to reach over MOP265 billion, the highest posting since 2014. Analysts broadly credited the 26 percent expansion in the VIP segment as the driving force behind the recovery's strength.

This played into the hands of casino operators like Wynn Resorts, which cater mostly to high-end gamblers.

Analysts are divided over whether the VIP segment will continue to propel revenue growth or whether its relative contribution will wane this year. Brokerage firm Sanford C Bernstein pre-

dicts an 8 percent expansion in the VIP segment, while Morgan Stanley is backing a 20 percent increase.

Should the VIP segment continue to show strength in 2018, The Motley Fool warns that the outlook for LVS may not improve.

The silver lining might prove to be the firm's next Macau property, The Londoner Macao, building on the successful branding of city-themed resorts.

The Londoner Macao is envisioned as a USD1.1 billion renovation of the Sands Cotai Central complex, featuring some of the

British capital's most recognizable landmarks. Company CEO Sheldon Adelson has promised that the resort will accommodate more overnight guests than The Venetian and The Parisian combined.

But the earliest Macau is likely to see LVS's latest resort is in "late 2019", according to the company, and that assumes there are no delays to its opening.

In the meantime, the company will have to contend with new entries to the Cotai scene, such as MGM Cotai and the Lisboa Palace, both of which are scheduled to open this year. **DB**

FROM January to September 2017, over 30 percent of the people who sought help from the Social Affairs Bureau (IAS) due to a gaming disorder were employees in the casino sector, according to IAS deputy director Hoi Wa Pou.

In the first three quarters of last year, the IAS received requests for assistance from 119 individuals.

The high proportion of gaming employees among the total number of cases reflects that gaming employees are at

Gaming employees at high risk of gambling disorders

a higher risk of developing a gambling disorder.

According to Hoi, the IAS in recent years has offered the executives of gaming operators certification courses on responsible gaming instructors. Approximately 30 people have completed the training.

Hoi believes that if these instructors organize activities regarding the

prevention of gambling disorders within their companies, then there will be a lower incidence of gaming employees becoming addicted to gambling.

Hoi also noted that the IAS supports the banning of gambling employees from entering the casinos while off-duty.

Late last year, Professor Bo J. Bernhard,

executive director of the UNLV International Gaming Institute, told the Times that the incidence of problem gambling is connected to exposure to gaming, both in terms of length of time and frequency.

"There is definitely research that suggests that casino employees have slightly higher rates of problem gambling," said Bernhard. "But it is

worth mentioning that typically for the overall population [the rate] is 0.9 percent and for casino employees it might be 1.5 percent. So it is an elevated risk, but that doesn't mean a crisis."

Macau lawmaker and gaming scholar Davis Fong has also argued on several occasions that exposure to gaming heightens the risk of developing an addiction.

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RENATO MARQUES



CRIME

LRT facilities robbed before even opening

Renato Marques

TWO facilities from the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system were robbed over the weekend, causing damage of over MOP500,000, the Judiciary Police (PJ) repor-

ted at the joint press conference held yesterday afternoon at the PJ headquarters. According to the PJ spokesperson, there were two separate cases registered in the past few days involving facilities at the LRT stations in Taipa.

In both cases, large pieces of copper located in different areas were stolen from the stations, which are forecast to commence operations in 2019. In the first case, the theft of a large piece of copper, which forms part of the protection bars limiting

passenger access, was reported. The stolen piece was estimated to be worth around MOP130,000.

The PJ said that for the time being the only suspect is a 46-year-old construction worker from the mainland who had been reportedly seen by a security guard at the LRT site, and left a bag there with some tools inside it.

The police have already found the suspect and questioned him but the man denies having anything to do with the theft, saying that he only slept in the area where he was spotted by the guard.

In the second case, an even larger piece of copper was reported missing from another station. The long metal piece about 2 meters in length is used for the system that protects against lightning storms and was valued at about MOP400,000.

The police suspect that several people might be involved in this theft as it is unlikely that only one person could handle the weight and size of the materials stolen.

In an unrelated story, the PJ noted the occurrence over the past few days of two cases of arson caused by teenagers, in the same location.

In the first case, which occurred on Sunday, an unidentified person called the PJ saying that there was a case of arson at a construction site located in Taipa. However, before the PJ even commenced investigations, a youth called the force to confess the crime.

Following questioning by the police, the suspect together with a friend (12 and 13 years old respectively) said that they wanted to take photos of an anthill, and one of them decided to set fire to it.

Returning home, the teenager said they saw a TV news report about the incident which said that the police were searching for culprits, at which point, he decided to turn himself in.

In another case, a group of three youngsters aged between 14 and 17 were also investigated by the PJ for setting fire to several wood pieces at the same construction site.

Two of them admitted to the police that they were boy scouts and recently learned how to start a fire using survival methods. They had decided on that day to put their knowledge into practice.

Police find two more cases of 'fake' marriage

THE Public Security Police Force (PSP) said yesterday at joint press conference that they had discovered another two cases of "fake marriage," in addition to ones previously reported in the last couple of weeks.

This time, the cases have the distinction of being significantly different from other reports as in both cases, the motivation for the "marriage" seems to be difficulties in getting work permits through standard procedures. As mentioned by the PSP spokesperson, the cases first came to the attention of the Identification Bureau (DSI) who found the cases to be suspicious due to the age gap between the individuals. The DSI requested that the PSP investigate both cases as a result of these suspicious circumstances.

In the first case, one of the suspects, a 31-year-old male hairdresser from mainland China, was searched on January 18 at the salon where he works. When he saw the officers entering the shop, he grabbed his mobile phone and barricaded himself in the lavatories of the establishment.

When the salon manager was asked to open the door, the woman acquiesced, and the police spoke with the man.

The man admitted to the PSP that he met his

wife, a local resident aged 59, through a friend. According to him, he had done her hair several times, and in 2009, they decided to marry. He elaborated that his wife paid him a monthly allowance of MOP5,000 from 2008, meaning that between then and 2018, he received a total amount of about MOP600,000.

The police also determined that he lived in private quarters inside the hair salon. Although he claimed his wife also lived with him, the PSP found no items that looked as though they belonged to his wife.

In a different case with very similar details, a mainland man (46) and a local woman (60) were also found to be in a fake marriage when, on January 20, the police intercepted the man at the border gate checkpoint.

He said he met the woman through a friend and married her back in 2002. In 2004, the same woman employed him to work in her café.

The man said that he wanted to be able to work in the region and that he had accepted the deal of working for one year in the coffee shop in exchange for his visa as well as his son's eligibility to live in Macau.

In both cases, the suspects were detained and accused of false declarations and document forgery. **RM**

LOAN SHARK PRESENTS COMPLAINT AT PJ OVER UNPAID DEBT

A MAINLAND loan shark presented a complaint to the Judiciary Police (PJ) over an unpaid debt from one of his "clients." The man lent the sum of HKD5,000 to another mainland man for gambling purposes, charging an interest of HKD500 in addition to 50 percent of all won bets. As a guarantee of payment, the loan shark

retained all his client's documents. In the end, the gambler lost all the money and tried to escape, telling the police at the border checkpoint that he had been stripped of all his documents by a loan shark. The other man decided to present charges to the PJ over the unpaid debt. Both men ended up in jail for their unlawful practices.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Gov't reaffirms mutual recognition of drivers' licenses benefits locals

THE director of the Transport Bureau (DSAT), Lam Hin San, has reaffirmed that "it is better for Macau residents" to have drivers' licenses which are mutually recognized in Macau and mainland China.

During yesterday's Legislative Assembly (AL), lawmakers debated the mutual driving license recognition. Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, and the DSAT Director, Lam Hin San, both attended the AL.

Among those who expressed their strong opposition to the policy, Lei Cheng I started by questioning the government about fact-based evidence, goals and references behind the proposal of such license recognition.

When replying to Lei, Lam said "the consideration has always been Macau residents. When the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge opens, many residents will need to travel, will need to do business, or go to mainland China. [...] In each of the recent



Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raimundo do Rosário

years, between 3,000 and 5,000 Macau residents took a driving license test in mainland China."

"Previously, we did not take into consideration the fact that, each year, the number of Macau residents taking mainland driving license tests was increasing. [...] Expanding the recognition to the entire country [rather than just to Guangdong] is better for Macau residents," explained Lam.

Mak Soi Kun supported the recognition granted by the licenses, and pointed out that

mainland residents can still drive in Macau as long as they obtain driving licenses from Hong Kong.

Lam then noted that "on average, more than 50,000 mainland residents acquired their driving licenses in Hong Kong. [...] These residents can also drive in Macau due to the mutual recognition established between Hong Kong and Macau."

Lam also believes that the number of vehicles for rental will remain at 100 units after the recognition is approved.

"Even if tens of thousands of mainland residents come to Macau, there will only be 100 cars available for renting," announced Lam.

According to Lao Sio Hap, a representative of the police authority present at yesterday's AL, Macau has more than 7,000 registered non-local drivers, including 2,500 from mainland China.

Au Kam San wanted to know the number of Macau residents who are currently doing business in mainland China. Lam replied that the related data was temporarily unavailable to him.

Zheng Anting commented that "the recognition will worsen the transportation network." But Lao Sio Hap said that the "driving licenses' mutual recognition does not have a direct connection with the increase in the number of cars and the exacerbation of traffic jams."

Moreover, according to the Lao, in 2016, nine out of 510 transportation accidents, which resulted in injuries, were caused by mainland drivers; in 2017,

the total number of accidents with injuries was 505, of which 13 were caused by mainland drivers.

Wu Chou Kit voiced his support for the recognition of such licenses, saying, "I find it hilarious that we cannot recognize our own country's driving license."

DSAT director Lam said that in the first 10 months of 2017, the mainland reported a total of 20,700 transportation violations, including minor ones, which were caused by Macau residents.

On the sideline of yesterday's AL, both DSAT director Lam and Secretary Rosário declared that "it will not be that serious," when they were asked if they wanted to anger between 20,000 and 30,000 residents who would organize a demonstration to call on the government to cancel the proposal.

Once again, Lam stated that "the consideration has always been the welfare of Macau residents." **JZ**

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+ INFO



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Angola may close consulate in Macau

ANGOLA is considering closing 18 of their consulates, including their representation in Macau. The information comes over a proposal written by the Secretary for Diplomatic Affairs of the President of Angola, Victor Lima, to be handed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country. The proposal stated that the measure includes the closure of 18 consulates as well as another ten commercial representative organizations around the world, aiming to save the government USD66 million (over MOP531 million). It includes not only the closure of the local diplomatic representation but also ones in Guangzhou and Hong Kong. Several embassies were also noted in the document, such as those in Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Netherlands, and Mexico, among others.

The Macau consulate-general of Angola has been established for 11 years and according to figures cited by several media sources, it has around 50 registered users served by an estimated 16 staff members. Commenting on the potential closure of the consulate-general of Angola, the president of the Chamber of Commerce of Angola in Macau, Carlos Lobo said to TDM radio, that the measure is "understandable" and comes in light of the new policies and the "new way [that the president of Angola, João Lourenço] sees matters related with the state, meaning that such measures and strategies have been studied [to optimize resources]." Lobo said the measure should not cause major problems to the work done locally as well as in connection with central government of China. **RM**

Bus driver charged with negligent homicide

THE part-time bus driver who was involved in a fatal bus accident earlier this month has been charged with criminally negligent homicide.

The 32-year-old bus driver was said to have mistakenly stepped on the accelerator instead of the brake, causing the death of a 67-year-old local woman on R. de Francisco Xavier Pereira and injuring at least four others.

The woman was squeezed between two vehicles, and the driver of a private car was trapped inside his vehicle as a result of the accident.

Criminally negligent homicide carries a maximum sentence of five years.

Last week, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) announced that the department has instructed bus companies to reduce the number of bus accidents by 10 percent, in response to the deadly accident.

It also called for the suspension of 30 part-time bus drivers for safety reasons as "the resting time of non-permanent drivers cannot be ensured, and the associated risks are higher than full-time drivers'."



The scene of the fatal bus accident earlier this month

Also, early last week, the PSP announced a car accident involving a local woman at a zebra crossing in Lam Mau Tong district who was hit by a van. According to the police, the male driver, a non-resident worker, failed to give way to the woman.

The police earlier said that the driver of the van is a non-resident worker, and they are investigating whether he is working legally in the region.

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Sinulog Festival celebrates 18th edition

ONE of the biggest Filipino events in the region - the Sinulog Festival - held its 18th edition over the weekend, featuring seven dance groups in vibrant and diverse costumes representing tribes in the Philippines.

Santo Niño devotees showcased their religion and culture by participating in dance parades hailing, "Viva Pit Señor!," which translates to "long live the baby Jesus."

Organized by the Santo Niño de Cebu in Macau Association, the annual religious procession was held at the public square in Macau Tower.

The annual celebration began after the image of the Santo Niño was brought to Cebu in the early 16th century and the Catholic faith was established in the region.

Participants on the weekend held images of St. Niño to honor the infant Jesus and the historical event.

Violeta Duran, head organizer of Sinulog-Macau noted that such events minimize the distress of Filipino



migrant workers in the city, as cited in a report by state broadcaster TDM.

"It [the event] helps us [while] being far away from our country. We feel that, for one day, we are in the Philippines. It minimizes our homesickness."

Filipino priest, Andy Vera-gra, recalled that the event, which was initiated in 2000 in Macau by Filipino Catholic devotees who are not able to go back to their hometowns

in Cebu during the occasion. "For the Filipino, it's an important [event] because it's a kind of devotion that they have, [it is] an expression of their faith to God," he said.

The event, which originated in Cebu, customarily takes place on the third Sunday in January and involves a traditional Sinulog dance in which participants take two steps forward and one step back, swaying to the rhythm of the drums. LV

EDUCATION

792 students accepted by top mainland universities

THIS year, a total of 792 local students were admitted to top mainland universities through a process known as the 'recommendation admission', according to the Chinese press. The results of the mainland universities' first admission round for recommended students were released on Sunday. From the 1,077 candidates, a total of 792 students were admitted, which is an acceptance rate of 73.5 percent.

Ten universities which participated in this admission process accepted more students than originally intended.

Students who were not accepted in the first round will have another chance in the second recommendation admission. More than 200 students are included in this category, and these students have an opportunity to be accepted by one of mainland China's top 50 universities.

This year, the number of universities, the number of recommended students, and the number of the applicants recorded a noticeable increase.

Overall, 79 mainland universities have been included in the recommendation admission, providing a total of 1,113 positions to Macau students. Last year, 930 positions were provided by 57 mainland universities.

This year's 1,077 Macau students who applied for admission, was a figure 367 higher than last year's, representing an increase of approximately 50 percent.

The Tertiary Education Services Office said that 18 schools accepted exactly the number of students originally planned, and informed that 50 mainland universities are still offering more than 300 positions for Macau students.

The deputy director of Fu Dan University's admission office, Wang Yang, said that the examination levels of this year's students are better than last year's, and that "the written examination grades are the best in recent years."

This year, 53 students applied for Fu Dan University, with 30 students being accepted.

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China Inc.'s debt bills could be worse than thought in 2018

THIS was supposed to be the year when Chinese companies caught a break, with the amount of local bonds coming due dropping to the least since 2014. But it's no longer looking so clear cut.

The wrinkle? So-called put options, which give noteholders the right to demand repayment even though the securities don't mature until later years. Rising interest rates are making it more likely that investors will do just that - using the funds to buy recently issued bonds with higher coupons. There's a record 1.25 trillion yuan (USD195.2 billion) of notes that could be put in 2018, more than three times last year, according to data compiled by Tian-

feng Securities Co. Higher-than-expected debt bills could translate into more defaults. President Xi Jinping has been stepping up a campaign to cut leverage in the financial system, and surging refinancing costs have already left more companies unable to roll over borrowings. Investors in Chinese firms also must tread carefully, as puttable bond details sometimes aren't disclosed in domestic audited financial reports.

"It could aggravate the liquidity crunch of weak issuers and increase their default risks," said Ivan Chung, head of Greater China credit research at Moody's Investors Service in Hong Kong.

Chinese authorities have doubled down on steps to

reduce risks posed by the world's biggest corporate borrowings, after Xi consolidated power at a key party congress last year. Their efforts are meeting with some success - the nation is squeezing more economic growth out of new credit as borrowers cut wasteful investments. And the amount of corporate bonds maturing this year has fallen to a four-year low of 4.1 trillion yuan, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

But various forms of borrowings that don't immediately meet the eye threaten to slow progress. Companies have increasingly turned to perpetual bonds that can be listed as equity without adding to obligations on balance sheets, even though in practice they are essen-

tially debt. Asset-backed securities also require extra attention when gauging a company's borrowings.

China has the world's biggest amount of outstanding company puttable debt. That's in part because many investors have demanded such options, given that low trading volume in the nation's fledgling bond market can make it otherwise hard to offload securities.

Such securities could exacerbate some debt ratios that have already been deteriorating. Excluding puttable bonds, China-listed companies had outstanding short-term debt 1.3 times in excess of cash, according to Bloomberg-compiled data based on third-quarter earnings reports. That's up from 1.2 times based on 2016 annual earnings reports.

Moody's generally factors in puttable bonds by adding the full amount to debt maturities at the put date for a given time period when analyzing credit risks. Of course, investors may not wind up exercising the option, but calculating potential debt bills that way makes it clear if the borrower has enough cash or other financing channels to cover short-term borrowings.

The risk that more of the notes will be sold back to borrowers is spreading. Investors exercised put options on a record 31 percent of such Chinese securities in 2017, according to Tianfeng Securities.

"As part of investment due diligence, investors should factor in the potential impact from puttable bonds being exercised," said Wayne Lai, an analyst at Fitch Ratings. **Bloomberg**



HK most expensive housing for 8th year

Hong Kong was named the least affordable housing market for the eighth year in a study that put Sydney in the No. 2 slot and Vancouver as No. 3. The median price of a home in Hong Kong is 19.4 times the median annual pre-tax household income, up from 18.1 times in the previous study by Demographia, an urban planning policy consultancy. Cooling measures have failed to tame Hong Kong's housing, with prices more than double the 1997 levels preceding a crash that obliterated two-thirds of value. Academic research indicates that the city's home prices have been driven higher by rules restricting land use, Demographia said. The study took in 293 metropolitan housing markets across nine countries, including Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States. The data came from the third quarter of last year.



HK market rally makes best week since 2015

Hong Kong's market rally is benefiting developers to drugmakers, which rushed to sell stock in the biggest week for follow-on equity offerings in more than two years. Companies listed in the city priced a combined USD2.5 billion of such share sales last week, making it the busiest week since June 2015, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. The flood of new equity came as the benchmark Hang Seng Index soared past 32,000 points, breaking a previous all-time high set a decade ago, while a gauge of Chinese companies listed in the city is on its longest-ever winning streak. More deals are coming. Sinopec Oilfield Service Corp. has appointed investment banks to arrange a sale of H shares worth about \$640 million based on Friday's closing price, according to a Dec. 18 exchange filing. China Dongxiang (Group) Co., which sells Kappa sportswear products in China, announced on Sunday a \$21 million stock placement to its executives.

corporate bits

WYNN RANKS HIGHEST ON FORTUNE'S MOST ADMIRABLE LIST



Wynn Resorts has been placed as the highest-ranking casino resort on FORTUNE Magazine's 2018 World's Most Admired Companies list in the hotel, casino and resort category. Its posi-

tion was third on the list, behind hospitality giants Marriott International and Hilton Worldwide Holdings, but ahead of MGM Resorts International (4th) and Las Vegas Sands (6th).

Wynn Resorts ranked first overall in the category of Quality of Products/Services among all international hotel companies. The company also received high marks for Innovation, People Management, Quality of Management, and Global Competitiveness.

FORTUNE works with top industry executives and analysts to rate companies based on nine categories that range from financial soundness to social responsibility.

Each year, FORTUNE Magazine conducts a survey to compile the "World's Most Admired Companies." The Most Admired list provides a definitive report card on corporate reputations in a variety of fields including consumer products, power, natural resources, and hospitality.

CEM HOSTS ENERGY FUN FAIR



CEM on Sunday hosted the Energy Fun Fair at Tap Seac Square, inviting hundreds of students representing 12 local secondary schools to take part in the event with their families. The fair was

held from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with the theme, "Build your smart home, Use appliances efficiently".

The Fair aims to promote the smart home concept, according to a CEM statement,

by encouraging children to use electrical appliances in a more efficient manner. This will help to conserve more energy and contribute to protecting the environment.

A special 'Recycling Workshop' booth was on display to encourage the youngsters to recycle plastic bottles from their daily consumed beverages to make useful utensils.

Another booth was dedicated to showcasing electric vehicles (EV). Citizens could find useful information about the EV charging stations in the city and a video of how to use the charge stations.

Moreover, many prizes were available at the several game booths, including sports towels and recycling bags, as well as lucky draw items.

US solar has a billion-plus long-shot plan to end a trade war with China

Brian Eckhouse

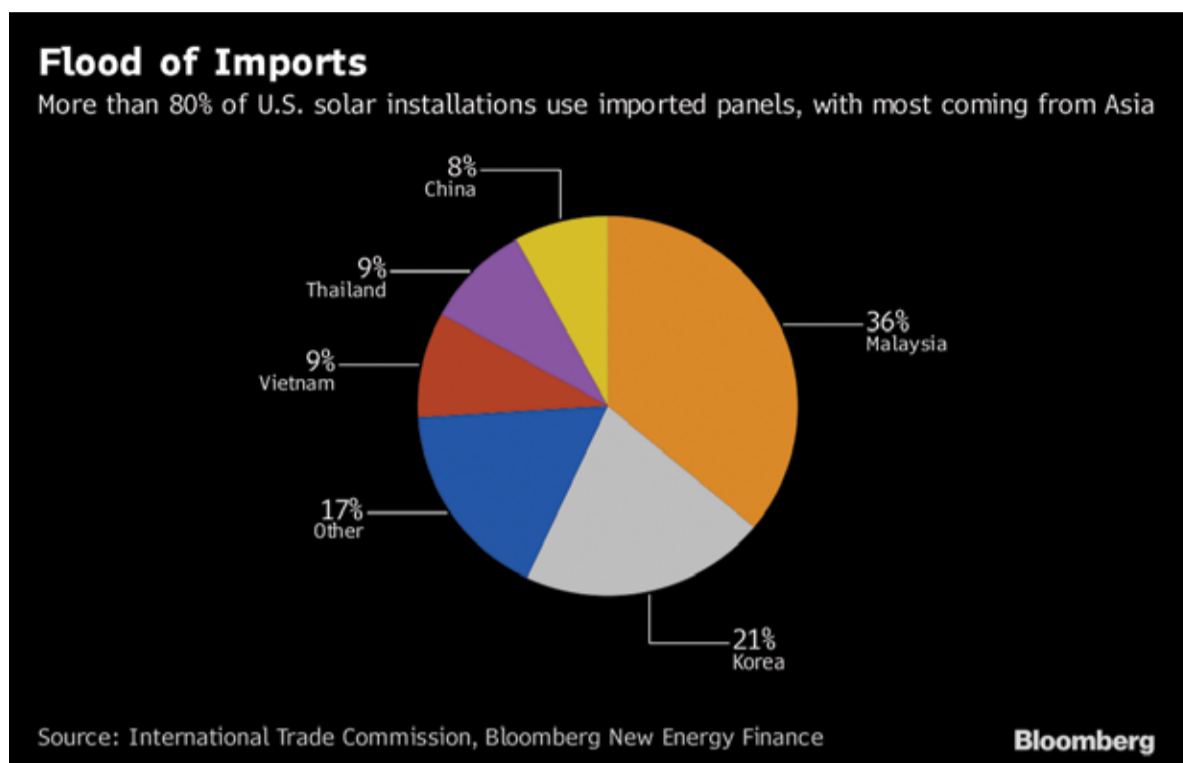
WHILE President Donald Trump prepares to announce his decision on new solar panel import tariffs, the U.S. industry is quietly trying to broker a sweeping deal to settle a different trade dispute with China involving an estimated USD1.5 billion held by Washington.

Since 2012, the U.S. has been collecting duties on panels imported from China. American solar companies are pushing to divvy up that money between manufacturers and suppliers in both the U.S. and China as part of a deal that, they say, could effectively reset solar-trade relations between the two nations.

The proposal, which trade experts describe as a long shot at best, would call for Trump to drop existing duties on solar panels - and for the president to not levy new ones. China, in turn, would abandon its own tariffs on U.S. polysilicon, a key solar-panel ingredient. There would be many hurdles to making it all happen. Chief among them, of course, is convincing Trump to take a conciliatory stance with China. Yet solar companies say the deal would fit squarely into the president's agenda.

"This administration has a real opportunity to succeed where others failed as a result of your commitment to a re-balancing of trade relations," Craig Cornelius, senior vice president of renewables at power generator NRG Energy Inc., said at a hearing before Trump's trade representative in December.

The White House didn't immediately respond to a re-



quest for comment. Emily Davis, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Trade Representative, declined to comment.

This administration has a real opportunity to succeed where others failed.

CRAIG CORNELIUS
SVP, NRG ENERGY INC.

Trump has until Jan. 26 to decide whether to impose tariffs, making it unlikely that any deal will be brokered in time to prevent new duties. Most U.S. solar companies oppose tariffs, saying they

will cripple the industry and kill tens of thousands of jobs. In the short-term, many are lobbying to keep any duties as low as possible. Ultimately, they are pushing for a broad deal to end all solar trade barriers between the U.S., China and other nations.

"We maintain our position that a global settlement, following the general construct proposed last month by NRG's Craig Cornelius, would be a welcome outcome to these cases," Solar Energy Industries Association President Abigail Ross Hopper said in an emailed statement.

The push for the tariffs Trump is considering began in April, when Suniva Inc., a bankrupt, Georgia-based panel maker filed a trade complaint arguing it had been crippled by a flood of imports. SolarWorld Americas, the U.S. unit of a bankrupt German manufacturer, joined the

case the following month.

Suniva's chief creditor is SQN Capital Management. The creditors of SolarWorld AG, the German company, include Centerbridge Partners LP.

The U.S. International Trade Commission voted in October to recommend tariffs of as much as 35 percent on imported panels. The president has the final say on the size, scope and duration of any duties. They could affect panels imported from nearly every nation.

The tariffs that the U.S. first imposed in 2012 initially targeted Chinese panels and later were broadened to include those from Taiwan. The duties came after SolarWorld Americas accused Chinese manufacturers of illegally selling panels at prices below the cost of production. China hit back in 2014 with tariffs on solar-grade polysilicon

from the U.S.

Over the last five years, the U.S. is estimated to have collected more than \$1.5 billion in duties on imported panels, Cornelius said in his December testimony. James Rockas, a Commerce Department spokesman, declined to comment.

U.S. solar companies and others have quietly pushed for years to use the money collected from the 2012 tariffs to broker a settlement to resolve the trade dispute with China.

"It was almost resolved it at the end of the Obama administration," said Jigar Shah, the co-founder of Generate Capital Inc. who was president of Coalition for Affordable Solar Energy, a group that represented a wide swath of U.S. solar installers, developers and manufacturers. The group disbanded in 2015.

There is precedent for the idea. In 2006, the U.S. agreed to drop tariffs on Canadian softwood lumber and split the duties that had been collected between companies on both side of the border. Canadian loggers got about \$4 billion, and about \$1 billion went to U.S. companies and initiatives.

At the trade hearing last month, Cornelius proposed to split the solar duties that have been collected three ways between U.S. panel manufacturers and polysilicon producers and the Chinese companies that have been paying the tariffs. Instead of new duties, he called for imposing a fee of 2 cents per watt on imports.

"There is hope for a negotiated settlement," said Clark Packard, trade policy counsel at the free-market think tank R Street Institute. "But there are two issues. One, you're up against a pretty firm deadline. And two, it would probably require bringing the U.S. and China back to the table to unwind these duties on solar products that cut both ways." **Bloomberg**

Beijing defends role in trade after Washington criticism

CHINA defended its role in global trade yesterday and accused Washington of being disruptive after the U.S. government said it was a mistake to support Beijing's World Trade Organization membership on terms that failed to open its economy.

China is "strictly complying with WTO rules" and "making great contributions" to the global trading system, said a foreign

ministry spokeswoman, Hua Chunying. She repeated criticism that U.S. President Donald Trump's administration has threatened the stability of the international system by launching trade investigations against China under U.S. law instead of through the WTO.

"We are a defender, builder and contributor of the multilateral trade system," Hua said at a regular news briefing. "And you may

have noted it is the unilateral actions and unilateral messages from the U.S. that pose an unprecedented challenge to the multilateral trade system. Many WTO members have expressed their concerns over that."

Beijing faces growing complaints from Washington, Europe and other trading partners that it hampers access to its banking, energy and other industries in violation of market-

opening commitments it made when it joined the WTO in 2001.

In a report to Congress, the U.S. Trade Representative said the United States made a mistake in supporting China's WTO membership "on terms that have proven to be ineffective in securing China's embrace of an open, market-oriented trade regime."

The report echoed previous U.S. frustration with

China's trade policies but used unusually severe language.

The Trump administration is expected to announce results in coming weeks of its "Section 301" investigation launched in August into whether Beijing improperly pressures foreign companies to hand over technology.

If the investigation concludes Beijing acted improperly, Washington could seek remedies ei-

ther through the WTO or outside of it. The Chinese Ministry of Commerce warned earlier that Beijing will "resolutely safeguard" its interests if Washington takes action.

Also this month, Chinese authorities criticized Washington for invoking national security concerns in blocking e-commerce billionaire Jack Ma's proposed acquisition of the money transfer service MoneyGram. **AP**

BELT & ROAD WITH BUMPS

Maldives ex-leader says Chinese projects akin to land grab

AP PHOTO



China is 'buying up our lands, buying up our key infrastructure and buying up our sovereignty'

Krishan Francis, Colombo

THE exiled former leader of the Maldives said yesterday that this year's presidential election could be the last chance to extricate his country from increasing Chinese influence, which he described as a land grab in the guise of investments in island development.

Mohamed Nasheed told reporters in Sri Lanka's capital that current President Yameen Abdul Gayoom has opened the doors to Chinese investment without any regard for procedure or transparency.

"A large emerging power is busy buying up the Maldives," Nasheed said, explaining that he was referring to China.

China is "buying up our lands, buying up our key infrastructure and effectively buying up our sovereignty," he said.

China considers Maldives to be key cog in the Indian Ocean in its "Belt & Road" project along ancient trade routes through the Indian Ocean and Central Asia. The initiative is Chinese President Xi Jinping's signature project and envisages building por-

ts, railways and roads to expand trade in a vast arc of countries across Asia, Africa and Europe.

Nasheed is disqualified from contesting the presidency this year due to a prison sentence. He is now living in exile in Britain after going there for medical treatment while in prison.

Nasheed said he is awaiting a decision from the U.N. Human Rights Committee, which he hopes will ask the Maldivian government to allow him to run in the election. His trial on terrorism charges and 13-year prison sentence in 2015 drew widespread international criticism for an alleged lack of due process.

The U.N. working group on arbitrary detention said Nasheed's sentencing was unlawful.

Nasheed became the archipelago state's first democratically elected president 10 years ago, ending a 30-year autocratic rule. However, he resigned in 2012 after public protests for ordering the arrest of a senior judge.

He lost the 2013 presidential election to Gayoom.

Maldives' democratic gains have largely diminished under Gayoom's presidency, with all of his potential election opponents either jailed or in exile. Nasheed says the opposition parties are in discussion to field a common candidate if he is unable to run.

"President Yameen wants a coronation; not an election. We won't let that happen," he said.

There was no immediate comment from the government. **AP**

HONG KONG

Bookseller detained again by Chinese authorities

A Hong Kong-based bookseller who was secretly detained in China has been taken away by Chinese authorities again after being released into house arrest last October, his daughter said yesterday.

Angela Gui told Radio Sweden, the English-language service of national broadcaster Sveriges Radio, that her father, Gui Minhai, was on a train with two Swedish diplomats when a group of police officers seized him.

Gui, a Chinese-born Swedish national, ran a Hong Kong publishing company specializing in gossipy tales about high-level Chinese politics when he disappeared from his Thai holiday home about two years ago. He was believed to have been spirited away by Chinese security agents to mainland China, where he later turned up in police custody.

Four employees were also

held, but they were released within months while Gui was not freed until October. Even then, his daughter told the station, he was put into a "police-managed flat" in the city of Ningbo, near Shanghai, and remained under surveillance.

The case reinforced rising fears that Beijing was eroding rule of law in Hong Kong, a semiautonomous Chinese city that is promised civil liberties like freedom of speech until 2047. The books the group sold at their Causeway Bay Bookshop were popular with visitors from mainland China, where such titles were banned.

Angela Gui said her father was traveling to Beijing to see a Swedish doctor after he was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a neurological disease that he developed while in custody.

He had arranged the visit with the Swedish Embassy and had been on the train for about five hours when 10 police officers got on at a stop outside of Beijing.

They "said they were from the police and just grabbed him and just took him away," she said.

"It's quite clear that he has been abducted again and that he's held somewhere in a secret location," she said, adding that she was worried because of his health condition.

Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom later told Sveriges Radio that the Nordic country will summon the Chinese ambassador over Gui's detention.

"The Swedish government has a thorough knowledge of what has happened," Wallstrom said, adding that the Swedish foreign ministry is working on the issue "around the clock." **AP**

North Korean figure skaters competing in Taiwan

AP PHOTO



Ryom Tae Ok and Kim Ju Sik of North Korea compete during the pairs free program at the Figure Skating-ISU Challenger Series in Oberstdorf, Germany, last year

THE North Korean figure skating pair that will compete in the Winter Olympics is in Taiwan this week for a competition.

Ryom Tae Ok and Kim Ju Sik were seen leaving Taipei Arena after a practice session yesterday. They did not talk to reporters.

The North Korean skaters won the bronze in pairs at the 2017 Asian Winter Games in Japan.

The duo is set to compete in the ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships that starts tomorrow.

On arrival in Taipei on Sunday, Ryom told

reporters: "I will not say anything before the competition. I will make a comment after the competition ends."

She and Kim are among 22 North Korean athletes invited to compete at the Winter Olympics in South Korea next month.



Indonesian Siti Aisyah (above, left) and Vietnamese Doan Thi Huong are escorted by police as they arrive for court hearing at Shah Alam court house

MALAYSIA

Trial in Kim Jong Nam's murder resumes

Eileen Ng, Shah Alam

THE high-profile trial in Malaysia of two women accused of killing the estranged half brother of North Korea's leader resumed yesterday after a seven-week recess, with witnesses taking the stand to verify the authenticity of security camera videos capturing the attack.

Indonesia's Siti Aisyah, 25, and Vietnam's Doan Thi Huong, 29, are accused of smearing VX nerve agent on Kim Jong Nam's face in a crowded airport terminal in Kuala Lumpur last Feb. 13. They pleaded not guilty to murder charges when their trial began Oct. 2. The two are the only suspects in custody, though prosecutors have said four North Koreans who fled the country were also involved.

Prosecutors, who last year

showed the security videos to the court, called four employees of the airport and airport hotel to the stand yesterday to explain how they extracted the relevant images from the main computer server and copied them to discs. This was to enable the court to accept the videos as formal evidence.

The court heard that the original videos in the main server were automatically deleted after 30 days.

Prosecutor Muhamad Iskandar Ahmad told the court they will call four more witnesses and that the defense will cross examine a previous witness, the chief police investigator, before prosecutors wrap up their case. So far, 29 witnesses have testified.

"Their whole case is based on the CCTV footages and VX, so the admissibility of

the footages is very important. But they are taking a very simplistic approach and have failed to examine if the women have any motive," said Gooi Soon Seng, the lawyer for Siti Aisyah.

■ The court heard that the original videos in the main server were automatically deleted after 30 days

Gooi has said Kim's killing was a political assassination because of involvement by the North Korean Embassy. A police witness has testi-

fied that a car used to take the North Korean suspects to the airport on the day of the murder belonged to the embassy. The court also heard that an embassy official met the suspects before they fled and facilitated their check-in at the airport.

If they are convicted, the two women could face the death penalty but not if they lacked intent to kill. That is their defense.

Defense lawyers say the women believed they were playing a prank for a hidden-camera TV show. Prosecutors contend the women knew they were handling poison.

The court has heard that traces of VX were found on the women's clothing as well as on Huong's fingernails. An autopsy showed VX on Kim's face and in his eyes, blood and urine as well as on his clothing and bag. Doctors

concluded the cause of death was "acute VX nerve agent poisoning," and ruled out any other contributing factors.

Kim, the eldest son in the family that has ruled North Korea since its founding, had been living abroad for years after falling out of favor. It is thought he could have been seen as a threat to his half brother Kim Jong Un's rule.

Malaysian officials have never officially accused North Korea of involvement in Kim's death and have made it clear they don't want the trial politicized.

Prosecutors are expected to rest their case in March. The judge could then decide there is no case against the women, who would be freed, or to let the case continue. If that's his decision, the defense will be called and the trial would last several more months. **AP**

THAILAND

Police arrest two Israeli men in compatriot's killing

POLICE in Thailand have arrested two Israeli men suspected of killing a fellow citizen on a Thai resort island after running him down with a car.

Police Capt. Silchach Kamunee said yesterday the suspects are being held on

suspicion of premeditated murder.

The two men, Dolez Suarez and Eyal Bokal, were arrested at a Bangkok airport, police said. They are accused of slamming their vehicle into a motorcycle driven by the victim, Maor

Malul, and then stabbing and killing him.

Deputy police chief Chalermkiat Sriworakan said three others were injured in the attack Sunday.

The arrests came after Thai media published security video of the attack on

Koh Samui island. The video shows an SUV crashing into a motorcycle, knocking off its two riders. The SUV then accelerates in reverse gear, colliding with the motorcycle again. A man then jumps out of the car and chases down the motorcy-

cle driver, stabs him and flees.

Pol Maj. Gen. Apichart Boonsriroj, chief of Surat Thani police station, said the suspects and victim had a personal dispute before entering Thailand.

Israeli newspaper Haa-

retz said Malul was a member of an organized crime group who was convicted in 2016 in the attempted murder of a local Israeli crime boss. It said Malul was likely murdered in revenge for the attempt on Baruch Bokal's life. **AP**

Jamey Keaten, Davos

IN Davos this week, participants can experience “a day in the life of a refugee.” Or hear about ways to uphold the Paris climate accord and promote free trade. Or rub elbows with any number of leaders of African countries.

Enter Donald Trump. The World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, is meant — pretentiously perhaps — to be a place for the world’s decision-makers to put their power to good use. The theme this year is “Creating a Shared Future in Fractured World,” an ambition not likely to turn up on the U.S. president’s Twitter feed.

Instead, Trump will bring his zero-sum message of “America First,” and will speak last among the parade of world leaders — from places like India, France and Canada — who are gathering from today to Friday in the Swiss snows.

As with most things Trump, there are stark contrasts between how attendees view his visit. Some are happy and hope for dialogue. Others unabashedly say they wish he would stay away and accuse him of a lack of compassion and vision for the world that are out of place in Davos.

“I find it quite sad he’s coming to the WEF, but I imagine nothing can be done about it,” said Buddhist monk Matthieu Ricard, a longtime disciple of the Dalai Lama.

While his trip — which was still on schedule despite the U.S. government shutdown — may seem incongruous, unwelcome or unexpected, he will be sticking to one key aspect of the WEF’s original ambition in starting the annual forum in Davos 47 years ago: Business. An array of Cabinet officials is also due to tag along, suggesting the U.S. is preparing a big economic and diplomatic push.

Some have suggested it’s ironic that Trump, a self-styled populist despite his penchant for the penthouse, is attending the elite Alpine event. Others speculated he could have felt a need to regain the Davos spotlight for the United States a year after Chinese President Xi Jinping stole the show by casting China as a champion of free trade and stability — and many companies responded by turning greater attention toward it.

An administration official said Trump is expected to tout the booming U.S. economy and measures like his recent tax overhaul, while again criticizing trade practices that he sees as unfair toward the U.S. The official, who spoke only on condition



DAVOS

Trump to face mixed welcome at elite gathering

of anonymity to discuss internal plans, said Trump made the decision to go because he thinks he has a positive economic message.

With Wall Street surging, Trump has some cheerleaders on the economic front — even if they hope he’ll be more accommodating.

“I think it’s really good that he’s going,” said Bill Thomas, chairman of business services KPMG International. “The American economy is dependent on global engagement, and I think he’s in Davos because he knows that.”

Some wonder whether Trump can win over the Davos set, or whether they might succeed in turning his ear — and give him a chance to reboot his administration’s image abroad.

“Corporate America, in terms of economic policies, is very pleased with the way the administration is going,” said Andy Baldwin, a regional managing partner for financial services firm EY. But he acknowledged that Trump controversies elsewhere had “overshadowed some of the policies.”

Outside of business, though — whether among human rights advocates, environmentalists, peaceniks or free-trade proponents — Trump is shunned.

“Despite its formal name, Davos is about more than economics,” said Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, in an e-mail. “So while Trump undoubtedly intends to trumpet U.S. economic progress, many Davos participants will question his racist, misogynistic, and xenophobic rhetoric and policies.”

■ Trump could have felt a need to regain the Davos spotlight for the US a year after Chinese President Xi stole the show

“Unless he plans an unexpected apology and reversal, he will face a far colder reception than he probably anticipates,” he said.

Parts of the jet-set have it in for Trump. Elton John, whose song title “Rocket Man” Trump used to deride North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, will be in Davos, as will actress Cate Blanchett, who

shaped chewing gum into a phallus on late-night TV to mock Trump just days after he took office. So will several African leaders whose countries Trump allegedly dismissed with a vulgarity earlier this month.

Small protests have started, and others are expected in Zurich today and possibly in Davos on Thursday. A Swiss anti-Trump petition has garnered more than 16,000 supporters online, calling on him to stay away. Authorities are boosting security for only the second visit by a serving U.S. president to Davos, after Bill Clinton in 2000.

Some might even see a snub in French President Emmanuel Macron’s decision to not stick around to see Trump even though the White House initially had announced a face-to-face meeting in Davos.

In his speech tomorrow, Macron is expected to offer a “lucid” diagnosis about globalization, and raise environmental concerns, an adviser said. Macron’s speech could shape up as a counter narrative, and though he wasn’t expected to mention Trump by name “you can read between the lines,” the adviser said, on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter.

“It’s good to have the pre-

sident here, if the snow conditions and the situation in Washington allow us,” WEF founder Klaus Schwab told The Associated Press on Monday, alluding to the U.S. government shutdown that could spoil Trump’s plans to attend. The White House has said it’s monitoring the situation day to day, and Schwab said: “At the moment we cannot make a comment on that [Trump’s attendance].”

Trump has, in a way, already been on hand in Davos. During last year’s event, which coincided with his inauguration, many attendees gawked at TV sets as Trump declared “America First” from the Capitol steps.

When he arrives this year, discretion may be the order of the day: Zurich airport, the closest big hub, has announced a lockdown on press access for the arrival of Air Force One.

Switzerland’s Young Socialists party is revving up to protest to register pent-up anger about how Trump lost the popular vote in 2016, but won the election, and suspicions of Russian meddling in that contest.

“He’s sexist, he’s racist,” said Tamara Funicello, the group’s president. “And I don’t think it’s responsible to speak with him.” AP

LATIN AMERICA

Dismissive words on abuse scandal cast pall over pope's trip

POPE Francis ventured into the Amazon to demand rights for indigenous groups, decried the scourge of corruption afflicting the region's politics and denounced a culture of "machismo" in which violence against women is too often tolerated.

Yet his latest visit to South America is likely to be remembered most for 27 dismissive words that sparked outrage among Chileans already angry over a notorious clerical abuse scandal and haunted the rest of his trip.

"That is the enigma of Pope Francis," Anne Barrett Doyle of the online abuse database BishopAccountability.org said yesterday [Macau time]. "He is so bold and compassionate on many issues but he is an old school defensive bishop when it comes to the sex abuse crisis."

Even before Francis landed in Chile for the first leg of his two-country trip, the pontiff's visit seemed ripe for contention. Vandals fire-bombed



AP PHOTO

three churches in the capital of Santiago, warning in a leaflet that "the next bombs will be in your cassock," and an angry group protesting the high cost of hosting him briefly occupied the Nunciature where he would sleep.

Also looming over his visit to both Chile and Peru were damaging clerical sex abuse scandals and growing apathy over the Catholic Church. In a Latinobarometro annual poll last year, 45 percent of Chileans identified as Roman Ca-

tholic, a sharp drop from the mid-60s a decade ago. Even in deeply religious Peru, where nearly three-quarters of the population calls itself Catholic, the number of faithful has dipped notably from a generation ago.

As Francis drove through the streets of Santiago in a popemobile after arriving the crowds standing by to greet him were comparably thin when compared to other papal visits.

"Love live the pope!" some yelled. But others weren't welcoming. "Stop the abuse, Francis!" one person's sign said. "You can so you must."

Francis almost immediately dove into the thorny topic of the abuse scandal, meeting on his first full day with survivors of priests who had sexually abused them and apologizing for the "irreparable damage" they suffered.

He proceeded to take on equally contentious concerns throughout the rest of his

stay in Chile. He called on the government and indigenous Mapuche to find ways to peacefully resolve differences that have seen a surge of violence. And he urged Chileans to remain welcoming to a surge of new immigrants.

All the while, signs that Francis himself was unwanted continued to emerge. Police shot tear gas and detained dozens of protesters outside a Mass in the capital and there were more church burnings. Aerial photographs taken by local newspapers of all three of Francis' outdoor Masses showed swaths of empty spaces

Then came the 27 words that stunned the nation.

Questioned by local journalists about Chilean Bishop Juan Barros, who abuse survivors say was present when the Rev. Fernando Karadima molested them decades ago, Francis responded that there was no proof against the bishop he appointed in 2015 and characterized the accusations as slander.

"The day they bring me proof against Bishop Barros, then I'll speak," he said. "There is not one shred of proof against him. It's all calumny. Is that clear?"

The comment, combined with Barros' presence at several activities during the week, cast a pall over the entire trip. **AP**

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what's ON



TEAMLAB FUTURE PARK

TIME: 1:30pm-10pm (Mondays to Fridays)

10:30am-10pm (Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays; 90 minutes per session, maximum capacity is 150 people at one time)

UNTIL: February 28, 2018

VENUE: MGM Art Space

ADMISSION: MOP150 (MOP120 for Macau residents; free admission for children aged 2 or under)

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: February 25, 2018

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

SEALS OF 108 HEROES OF SHUI HU LEGEND FROM THE MAM COLLECTION

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

UNTIL: February 26, 2018

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

THINK BRICK – PLAY AND LEARN WITH LEGO® EDUCATION

TIME: 10am-6pm (closed on Thursdays; open on public holidays)

UNTIL: February 25, 2018

VENUE: Macao Science Center

ADMISSION: MOP25

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

CRAYON SHIN-CHAN KASUKABE ADVENTURE 2017 (MACAU)

TIME: 2pm-9pm (last admission 8:30pm)

UNTIL: February 14, 2018

VENUE: 2/F, Broadway Macau

ADMISSION: From MOP128, available at Kong Seng Ticketing Service

ENQUIRIES: (853) 6288 9485 / 2855 5555

Offbeat

DOUGHNUT-EATING CHAMP CHARGED WITH STEALING FROM... DUNKIN' DONUTS

A North Carolina man who made headlines when he was caught for break-ins after winning a doughnut-eating contest has been arrested again. And this time he's accused of stealing from a doughnut shop.

The Virginian-Pilot newspaper reports 27-year-old Bradley Hardison of Elizabeth City was charged last week with stealing from a Dunkin' Donuts in November.

An Elizabeth City Police Department statement says he's charged with felonies including breaking and entering and larceny. It wasn't clear if he helped himself to any doughnuts.

A phone listing for Hardison rang disconnected.

The Virginian-Pilot reported that in 2014, Hardison won a doughnut-eating contest put on by Elizabeth City police while he was wanted on suspicion of several break-ins. Investigators said they arrested Hardison after his win prompted further scrutiny, and he was convicted, according to the paper.



This undated image provided by the Elizabeth City Police Department shows Bradley Hardison

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	Miscellaneous
15:40	AB Science
16:10	NOS League: Setubal x Sporting (Repeated)
17:50	Brazilian Soap Opera (Repeated)
18:40	TDM Sports (Repeated)
19:50	Portuguese Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Interview
21:30	Grimm Sr. 2
22:10	Brazilian Soap Opera
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Europe 30
00:15	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:50	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

18 JAN - 24 JAN



THE COMMUTER

ROOM 1

02:30, 04:30, 07:30, 9:30pm

Director: Jaume Collet-Serra

Starring: Liam Neeson, Vera Farmiga, Patrick Wilson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 104 min



PITCH PERFECT 3

ROOM 2

02:30, 04:15, 6:00, 9:45pm

Director: Trish Sie

Starring: Anna Kendrick, Rebel Wilson, Hailee Steinfeld

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 93min

INSIDIOUS: CHAPTER 4

ROOM 2

07:45pm

Director: Adam Robitel

Starring: Lin Shaye, Angus Sampson, Leigh Whannell, Josh Stewart

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 103 min



NAMIYA

ROOM 3

02:30, 04:30, 9:30pm

Director: Han Jie

Starring: Kary Wang, Dilraba, Dong Zijian, Lee Hong Chi

Language: Putonghua (Chinese & English)

Duration: 118min

COCO

ROOM 3

7:15pm

Director: Lee Unkrich

Starring: Anthony Gonzalez, Gael Garcia Bernal, Benjamin Bratt

Language: Cantonese (English)

Duration: 105 min

this day in history



1973 NIXON ANNOUNCES VIETNAM PEACE DEAL

The US president, Richard Nixon, has appeared on national television to announce "peace with honour" in Vietnam.

Statements issued simultaneously in Washington and Hanoi confirmed the peace deal was signed in Paris at 1230 local time, bringing to an end America's longest war.

The ceasefire will begin at midnight Hanoi time on Saturday, 27 January, monitored by an international force made up of troops from Canada, Poland, Hungary and Indonesia.

President Nixon's speech from the Oval office at the White House was broadcast on national radio and television.

He said: "Throughout the years of negotiations, we have insisted on peace with honour, I set forth the goals that we considered essential for peace with honour.

"In the settlement that has now been agreed to, all the conditions that I laid down then have been met." The conditions include the release of prisoners of war within 60 days and all American forces to be withdrawn within the same time period.

An international conference will be held within 30 days, probably in Vienna, to guarantee the peace.

American forces have been involved in the conflict in Vietnam for more than a decade. In 1967, there were 500,000 American troops deployed in Vietnam.

For the people of South Vietnam, the president had this message: "By your courage, by your sacrifice, you have won the precious right to determine your own future and you have developed the strength to defend that right.

"We look forward to working with you in future, friends in peace as we have been allies in war."

To the leaders of North Vietnam, the president said: "As we have ended the war through negotiations, let us now build a peace of reconciliation.

"For our part, we are prepared to make a major effort to help achieve that goal, but just as reciprocity was needed to end the war, so, too, will it be needed to build and strengthen the peace."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The last American troops left Vietnam on 29 March 1973.

The following year there were frequent violations of the peace treaty.

In 1975, fullscale warfare resumed between North and South Vietnam - without American intervention. In 1976 the first elections were held to a National Assembly, finally reuniting North and South.

As for Nixon, he had been re-elected with a landslide majority and sworn in for a second time three days before announcing the 1973 peace deal.

But his honeymoon period did not last. Before Nixon's re-election, it was known there had been a break-in at the Democratic offices in the Watergate building. By the end of January, it was being linked to his re-election campaign and an inquiry was ordered.

The scandal grew and on 9 August 1974, facing impeachment, he resigned.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You need some help to get where you're going today. Of course, you're great on your own - better than most - and well-known for doing amazing work independently.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
Your well-planned approach - to work, to your love life or to an issue with a good friend - is about to run up against someone else's beliefs about how things ought to be done.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
That strange feeling is back, and it's making you itch for movement. It doesn't have to be forward motion - lateral movement can be just as effective. Look for a new work project.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Caution with your feelings is one thing, but refusing to let yourself feel vulnerable is another - and it's a killer! Listen to your instincts about this new situation - they should tell you what to do.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
If you've been wishing for love, you may suddenly find yourself in the company of a smart new friend. If you've been hoping for (and working toward) major progress at work.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
You've made a real connection - now you need to push it along into something you really want it to be. Think about deepening the link and discovering all the mutually supportive nooks and crannies you two share.

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22
You've got a special glow - one that shows that your brain is running and generating some serious heat up in your head. You're never quite as sexy as you are when you're occupied with creative energy.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Some really weird energy is blowing your way, bringing with it the possibility of unusual outbursts and big, crazy ideas. Someone close rubs you the wrong way or does something completely unexpected.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
That old advice 'Don't talk to strangers' doesn't really apply to you. In fact, at the moment, talking to new folks is both simple to do and amazingly rewarding. If you're at a shop, ask someone for help deciding what looks right.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
A new financial possibility seems quite appealing, but it's not like you to rush into anything - and this isn't a good time to start! Before you invest or make any other decisions, use your critical faculties.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Life's a party for you now - in fact, you're practically the guest of honor! Since it's all about you, expect some odd venues or behaviors, like an eccentric art studio filled with people wearing glammed-out 70s clothes.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20
The information you're getting from around you is a little hard to make sense of - at least in any way you've tried so far. Fortunately, you're quite comfortable in the realm of the unreal.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

	1							5
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		3				6		
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2	6							

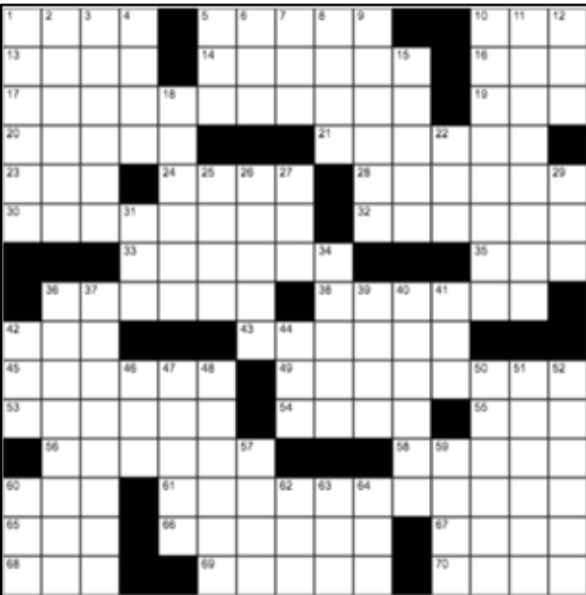
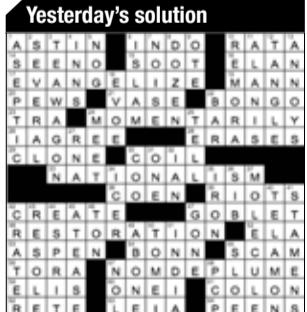
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-10	-4	clear
Harbin	-32	-24	clear/cloudy
Tianjin	-11	-6	cloudy/clear
Urumqi	-19	-14	cloudy
Xi'an	-1	6	cloudy
Lhasa	-7	12	clear
Chengdu	6	12	overcast
Chongqing	9	12	overcast
Kunming	3	19	clear
Nanjing	2	5	cloudy/overcast
Shanghai	4	6	cloudy
Wuhan	2	9	cloudy
Hangzhou	3	9	cloudy/overcast
Taipei	16	20	overcast/drizzle
Guangzhou	15	24	smoggy
Hong Kong	16	21	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-12	-6	flurry/overcast
Frankfurt	2	4	drizzle
Paris	6	10	drizzle
London	5	12	drizzle
New York	4	10	drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Flat sound; 5- Once ___ time...; 10- Campers, briefly; 13- Prefix with plasm; 14- Falafel sauce; 16- Comparative suffix; 17- Hotel maid; 19- Arafat's org.; 20- Pave over; 21- Sound system; 23- U.K. record label; 24- Court org.; 28- Vulgarly; 30- Inclined to silence; 32- Although; 33- Rio Grande city; 35- Ave. crossers; 36- English astronomer; 38- Like an infamous knoll?; 42- Join a poker game; 43- Soundless; 45- Mother of Calcutta; 49- Divide; 53- Fix beforehand; 54- The Beatles' "Back in the ___"; 55- Fallen space station; 56- Simple life form; 58- Slatted wooden box; 60- Short trader?; 61- Placed within parentheses; 65- Half of D; 66- Declared; 67- Decree; 68- Female pronoun; 69- Reduces speed; 70- IRS IDs;

DOWN: 1- Concealed; 2- Conceptual framework; 3- Lacking movement; 4- Body of an organism; 5- Salt Lake City athlete; 6- Average; 7- Resistance unit; 8- Long and Peebles; 9- "Peer Gynt Suite" dancer; 10- Maturity; 11- Swiftly; 12- Hit sign; 15- Standard of perfection; 18- Savage; 22- Massage; 25- Certain; 26- Low cards; 27- Besides; 29- Elevs.; 31- Sick; 34- Leers at; 36- High priest; 37- In a trembling state; 39- Workout count; 40- Revolt-leader, old-style; 41- Orch. section; 42- Indy 500 sponsor; 44- Terre Haute sch.; 46- That, in Tijuana; 47- Oozes; 48- Plate appearances; 50- Fine fiddles; 51- Bright golden brown; 52- Puts up; 57- Shrinking Asian sea; 59- Whistle blowers; 60- Cooling units, for short; 62- DDE's command; 63- Fresh; 64- NFL six-pointers;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IACM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
- Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
- Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



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John Pye, Melbourne

TENNIS | AUSTRALIA OPEN

Sandgren upsets Thiem; Federer into 14th quarter-finals

TENNIS Sandgren had never won a Grand Slam match or beaten a top 10 player until last week.

Now he's into the Australian Open quarterfinals on debut after adding an upset win over No. 5-seeded Dominic Thiem last night to his earlier victory over 2014 champion Stan Wawrinka.

The 26-year-old American, who entered the season's opening major ranked 97th, missed a match point in the fourth set but held on for a 6-2, 4-6, 7-6 (4), 6-7 (7), 6-3 win over Thiem.

"I don't know if this is a dream or not — all you guys are here, so maybe it's not," he said in an on-court TV interview. "I'm not in my underwear, so maybe it's not a dream.

"Trying to keep riding the wave."

He's only the second man in 20 years to reach the quarterfinals on debut at Melbourne Park.

Next up he could meet six-time Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic, who was playing Hyeon Chung in his fourth-round match on Rod Laver Arena.

Defending champion Roger Federer had no real difficulties in reaching the Australian Open quarterfinals for the 14th time, accounting for Marton Fucsovics 6-4, 7-6 (3), 6-2.

The 19-time major winner had never played Fucsovics but had beaten his coach — Attila Savolt — here in the second round in 2002.

Federer will renew a lengthy rivalry next against Tomas Berdych, who returned to the quarterfinals for the seventh time at Melbourne Park with a 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 win over Fabio Fognini.

Federer leads their career head-to-heads 19-6, including all four times they've met in Melbourne and in the Wimbledon semifinals last year.



Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic

"We have had some good ones over the years going back all the way to the Olympic Games in Athens in 2004," said Federer, recalling Berdych's comeback win in their first meeting.

The win over Fucsovics was Federer's first day match of the 2018 tournament, and he joked about needing sunglasses and a towel for the beach but said really the only change was to set the alarm for a different time.

Angelique Kerber, the only

Grand Slam singles winner remaining in the women's draw, was up earlier, and got a serious wakeup call.

For a while it appeared Kerber's progression could unravel against No. 88 Hsieh Su-wei, a former top-ranked doubles player with a double-handed grip on both sides, until she regained momentum for a 4-6, 7-5, 6-1 win. That earned Kerber a quarterfinal spot against U.S. Open finalist Madison Keys.

With a mix of slice and chips,

lobs and bunts, whippy half-volleys and wristy crosscourt ground strokes off both wings, Hsieh pushed Kerber to the extremes.

"Credit to her. She played an unbelievable match," said Kerber, who won the Australian and U.S. Open titles in 2016 and is on a 13-match winning streak to start 2018. "I was feeling I was running everywhere."

Keys returned to the quarterfinals here for the first time in three

years with a 6-3, 6-2 win over No. 8-seeded Caroline Garcia, and is yet to drop a set so far.

Top-seeded Simona Halep has had her troubles in Melbourne, including first-round exits in 2016 and '17 and having to rally from triple match point down to advance through the third round this time.

The two-time French Open finalist, who is also contending with a left ankle injury, beat Naomi Osaka 6-3, 6-2 to return to reach the quarterfinals here for the third time.

Hsieh, contesting the fourth round in a major for the first time in a decade, certainly made the most of her time back in the spotlight.

The Taiwanese player took out one major winner — Wimbledon champion Garbine Muguruza — in the second round, and took the first set of Kerber.

Kerber needed to produce her best tennis. She finished 14-shot rally early in the second set by racing forward and reaching at full stretch to track down a drop shot and send a forehand winner over the net post.

After converting a break-point chance with a sliding forehand winner down the line late in the second set, Kerber crouched and screamed to celebrate the point and regaining the momentum.

"I like to play freestyle," Hsieh, a two-time Grand Slam doubles titlist, explaining her unusual array of shots. "Like today I go on the court, if I don't have a plan then I do whatever I can." AP

FOOTBALL

Southampton frustrates Spurs as Kane scores 99th EPL goal

HARRY Kane scored his Premier League-leading 21st goal of the season in a frustrating 1-1 draw for Tottenham at Southampton yesterday [Macau time].

Kane has scored 99 Premier League goals overall.

Southampton went ahead at St. Mary's Stadium in the 15th minute after Tottenham defender Davinson Sanchez deflected the ball into his own net while trying to clear Ryan Bertrand's cross.

Tottenham quickly equalized with Kane

heading in Ben Davies' corner in the 18th.

Spurs stayed fifth and fourth-placed Liverpool can now pull five points clear in the Champions League spots with a win at Swansea.

Southampton remained in the relegation zone.

Sergio Aguero scored a hat trick as runaway leader Manchester City beat Newcastle 3-1 over the weekend. City has a 12-point lead over Manchester United, which is three points in front of third-placed Chelsea.

While Tottenham will

regret the dropped points, Southampton delivered a fighting draw for its under-pressure boss Mauricio Pellegrino.

The grumbling at St Mary's has grown louder in recent weeks and with Marco Silva available after being fired by Watford hours before kickoff here, the atmosphere could quickly have turned sour.

The Saints are without a win in 11 games, the longest drought of any team currently in the division, but a gutsy, aggressive display earned the players warm

applause as they left the pitch.

Tottenham missed the creativity of Christian Eriksen, who was ill, while Hugo Lloris' virus gave Michel Vorm his first league start in goal since April last year.

Southampton was punishing Serge Aurier down Tottenham's right and it was from there they took a surprise lead as Bertrand's cross was turned into his own net by the sliding Sanchez.

The hosts' advantage lasted only three minutes, however, and it



Southampton's Dusan Tadic (right) celebrates the first goal with teammates during the EPL soccer match against Tottenham

could have been fewer had Eric Dier's shot not crashed against the post. Moments later, Kane ghosted past Jack Stephens to nod home Davies' corner.

Tottenham was out early for the start of the second half but failed to shake off the loose touches and misplaced passes that continually stalled its attacks. AP

opinion

Our Desk

Julie Zhu



CALL RECORDINGS WITH PHONE SCAMMERS

An anonymous source (below referred to as 'S') provided the following call minutes from a call with phone scammers.

The first criminal (below referred to as 1) has a strong southern Chinese accent (most likely not a 'Canton' Mandarin accent), spoke in poor Mandarin, with a panicked tone, and reacted slowly to almost all questions and comments posed.

The second criminal (below referred to as 2) spoke in Mandarin with a strong Taiwanese accent, although similar accents can be found among speakers of Fujian dialects.

1: We are the immigration department. Why did you call?

S: I did not call, you called me.

1: Why did we call you? To give you a notice or what? I checked. Indeed, we, the immigration department called you to give you a notice. Please listen carefully. The Fujian province, the Fujian city, and the police department issued a notice to us because, on December 24, you helped a person named Chen Li Mei get a Travel Document to Hong Kong and Macau from the police department in Fuzhou, Fujian. Is it true?

S: I did not.

1: Do you know a lady called Chen Li Mei?

S: I don't.

1: If you don't know, how come Fujian issued us a notice to carry out border control against you?

S: I have no idea. I don't know this person. I did not do it either.

1: Lady, I must tell you, if you don't handle this case today, your departures and arrivals will have been blocked by customs by the end of the day.

S: Well, what can I do? It is not me.

1: The important thing is that the customs seized a lot of unclear identification cards and credit cards from this lady named Chen Li Mei. She said it was you who helped her process her Hong Kong and Macau travel document. Fujian police suspect that you are a co-suspect. [...]

S: It is not me. Absolutely not me.

1: Our conversation is all recorded. [...] She left a number to us and it happens to be your number. What do you plan to do?

S: Well, I must go to the police station, right?

1: Your case took place in Fujian, if you want to go, you have to go to Fujian police. Are you in Macau?

S: Yes. I am in Macau.

1: Are you able to go to Fujian on time?

S: I have to, right?

1: It's better that you arrive there before 4 p.m. today. [It was already 1 p.m. at the time of the call.]

1: Otherwise, border control will bring trouble into your life and work.

S: What should I do?

1: Do you need our assistance? If you do, we will forward your call to the Fujian police department.

S: Of course, of course.

1: When the call is connected, you should say: "my name is ***", and I received a phone call from the Macau Pac On immigration department, upon which I realized that a lady called Chen Li Mei said I helped her doing something. Now she has committed a crime."

S: You want me to tell the police exactly these words? But I did not do it!

1: You just need to tell the office as I said, and they will know. [...]

2: You said you can't be in Fuzhou, where are you now?

S: Macau.

2: You are in Macau. You are not in Fuzhou?

S: No.

2: Therefore, indeed, it will be difficult for you to come. [...] I can take phone notes for you. It will also be legal. [...]

S: Ok.

2: I have to remind you that since your personal information has been leaked, we will proceed with an investigation. We need your cooperation. Try as much as possible to not leak information regarding this case in the next three days. Don't tell people that your information was leaked. Pretend that you don't know.

THE BUZZ 15-YEAR-OLD GIRL SHOT AT TEXAS SCHOOL; BOY, 16, ARRESTED

A 15-year-old student was injured in a shooting at her high school in Texas early today and a 16-year-old boy, also a student at the school, has been taken into custody, sheriff's officials said.

The girl was airlifted to Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas following the shooting in the town of Italy, some 70 kilometers south of Dallas, said Sgt. Joe Fitzgerald of the Ellis County Sheriff's Office.

The sheriff's office reported an active shooter

at Italy High School at about 7:50 a.m. The shooter was found and taken into custody without incident.

Fitzgerald did not have any information on the injured student's condition. Several law enforcement vehicles and an ambulance were parked outside the school. The sheriff's office said students have been removed from the school and that an investigation is ongoing.

Italy promotes itself as "The Biggest Little Town In Texas."

SCAN, SHOP AND GO

Amazon to debut cashier-less store in downtown Seattle



AMAZON employees have been testing it, but is the public ready for a cashier-less store?

More than a year after it introduced the concept, Amazon is opening its artificial intelligence-powered Amazon Go store in downtown Seattle today [Macau time].

The store on the bottom floor of the company's Seattle headquarters allows shoppers to scan their smartphone with the Amazon Go app at a turnstile, pick out the items they want and leave.

By combining computer vision, machine learning

algorithms and sensors, the online retail giant can tell what people have purchased and charges their Amazon account. If someone puts an item back, they aren't charged.

The store is not without employees — Amazon says there will be people there making food, stocking shelves and helping customers. The store will offer ready-to-eat breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and snacks, as well as some grocery staples like bread, milk, cheese and chocolates. It'll also have Amazon Meal Kits.

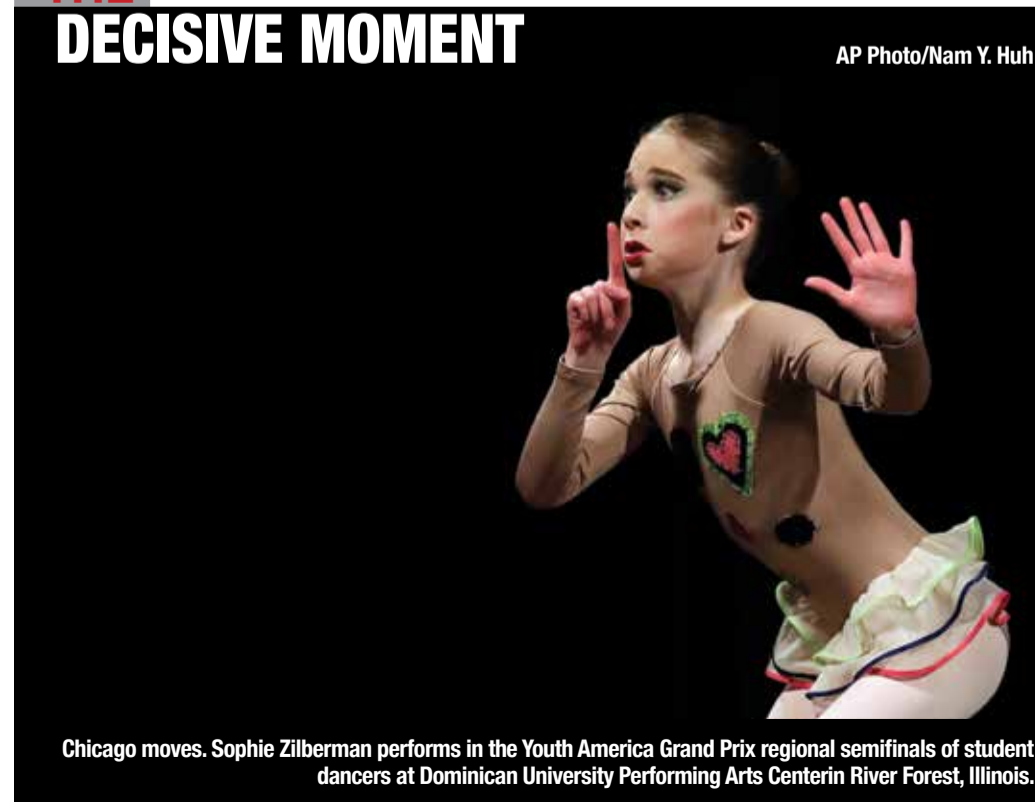
At about 1,800 square feet, the Amazon Go store adds

to the company's growing physical store presence and its expansion into groceries after its purchase last year of organic grocer Whole Foods and its 470 stores.

Amazon now has more than a dozen Amazon Books stores, which also sell toys, electronics and small gifts. It has space in some Kohl's stores. Amazon also has small shops in several malls.

The company had announced the Amazon Go store in December 2016 and said it would open by early 2017, but it delayed the debut while it worked on the technology and company employees tested it out. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



Chicago moves. Sophie Zilberman performs in the Youth America Grand Prix regional semifinals of student dancers at Dominican University Performing Arts Center in River Forest, Illinois.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	130-160 Bad
High Density Residential Area	130-160 Bad
Ambient	130-160 Bad

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS



THAILAND A motorcycle bomb exploded at a market yesterday morning in southern Thailand, killing three people and injuring 18, police said. The attacker parked the bike rigged with explosives nearby and bought goods at the market to blend in with the crowd.

INDIA-PAKISTAN Indian and Pakistani soldiers again targeted each other's posts and villages along their volatile frontier in disputed Kashmir after a day's lull, killing at least one civilian and wounding three others, officials said yesterday.



TURKEY-SYRIA Intense clashes erupted yesterday as Turkish troops and their allies advanced on a Kurdish enclave in Syria, the third day of the Ankara offensive aimed at ousting the U.S.-backed Kurdish militia from the area, the militia and a war monitoring group said.

SWITZERLAND Police say eight men who have been stuck in a cave in the Alps since Saturday will likely have to spend at least another 48 hours underground because of flooding.

SPAIN The fugitive ex-president of Spain's Catalonia region left his self-exile in Belgium and visited Denmark unimpeded yesterday after a Spanish judge refused to ask Danish authorities to arrest him.



EU-VENEZUELA The European Union has imposed sanctions on seven senior Venezuelan officials accused of human rights abuses or breaching the rule of law in the country.

BRAZIL The head of Brazil's Supreme Court has put the swearing-in of the nominee for labor minister on hold after a group of lawyers sought to block her appointment because of past labor law violations.