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**WORLD BRIEFS**

**CAMBODIA's** leader yesterday rejected the idea of reconciliation talks with the country's only significant opposition party, which was dissolved by court order last November.  
More on p13



**MYANMAR's** powerful army chief yesterday urged the country's ethnic rebel groups to agree to a comprehensive cease-fire agreement now and stop wasting time on demands he described as impossible.

**INDONESIA** A court ordered an Australian man to undergo rehabilitation after finding him guilty yesterday of possessing a small amount of drugs on the tourist island of Bali.

**INDIA** Two journalists have been killed in separate hit-and-run incidents that rights groups and their families described as deliberate attacks.



**RUSSIA** Distraught and angry, thousands of Russians took to the main square of a Siberian city yesterday to confront local officials whom they blamed for a shopping mall fire that killed at least 64 people, most of them children.

**IRAQ's** prime minister said yesterday that he has ordered the military to take full control of the country's borders amid escalating tensions and Turkish threats of an incursion into Iraq to chase Kurdish rebels.

More on backpage

AP PHOTO

# Train from Pyongyang suggests Kim visit to Beijing

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**PROPERTY**

# Retail site close to Senado Square sold for HKD800 million

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## Macau, Siem Reap sign cooperation deal

Macau and Siem Reap Province in Cambodia have signed a memorandum of understanding to establish friendly relations and extend cooperation on mutual interests within a number of fields. The agreement was signed yesterday during a ceremony held at the government headquarters in Macau. The document was signed by the Chief Executive, Chui Sai On, and the Governor of Siem Reap Province, Khim Bunsong. The document covers a number of potential areas for bilateral cooperation, including tourism, cultural affairs, trade, education and conservation of cultural heritage.

## Macau finishes AFC Asian Cup at group bottom

The Macau SAR football team lost its last match in this year's AFC Asian Cup qualification round yesterday, sealing its exit from the tournament. The local team was defeated 1-0 by hosts Myanmar, who had dominated much of the early game albeit without managing to turn their advantage into a lead. Finally, eight minutes after the hour mark, Myanmar's Kyi Lin's delivered the breakthrough. The match was the second leg of two games against Myanmar after the local team were whitewashed 4-0 at home earlier in the competition. The final match puts Myanmar and Macau in third and fourth respectively in the four-team group. Both were resigned to relegation before yesterday's match as they had not won enough points to advance.

## Training programs for fishermen launched

The Marine and Water Bureau, the Labor Affairs Bureau (DSAL) and a local fishermen association are accepting applications for training program targeting fishermen. The aim of the training program is to allow fishermen to develop their professional skills during the offseason. According to a statement issued by DSAL yesterday, considering that the fishermen's income is lower during this time of the year, MOP9,500 will be attributed to all those who conclude successfully the training program. All those with an attendance rate superior to 70 percent will receive part of that subsidy. The programs can train attendees to work as carpenters, electricians, painters and security guards, among other professions.

# Committee reaches consensus to launch study on urban renewal

Renato Marques

**T**HE government will be conducting a study into the territory's urban renewal needs through the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT), as mentioned by the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário.

The Secretary revealed on the sidelines of yesterday's meeting of the Urban Renewal Committee that the committee had finally reached consensus on a study that the government will commission to a private company. According to the same official, such study will "draw the paths to be followed on the matters of urban renewal."

The new study will pass through a public tender phase which Rosario said should be completed by "late April or early May [this year]."

After this process, the committee will analyze the proposals received and will then decide on the company that will do the job.

Rosario recalled that the Committee had earlier reached a consensus defining the scope



Raimundo do Rosário

and aims of such study. "Nevertheless, at the meeting two weeks ago, when our colleagues brought the tender dossier and the tender program, some members [or the Urban Renewal Committee] raised some other questions so it became necessary to proceed with a new round of opinions," Rosário said. "With all this, we lost about six months, but I think it was [worthwhile] to spend such

time so we could get this [full] consensus on the work we are commissioning; its scope and aims, as well as the several phases of such work and the duration of each of those phases," he added.

"I believe this will not take a long time now; we are ready to start sending the letters to the companies to announce the tender and receive proposals soon," the Secretary said. Rosá-

rio advanced that at this stage it "is not convenient to reveal the content of the tender dossier and works to be done," as "this will pass through a public tender and we want all companies to start with equal chances," he added, noting that revealing details on the content at this stage could influence the results. "We will have news about this in a few months, certainly," he concluded.

## CRIME

# Taiwanese tourist detained at airport for possession of illegal weapons

**A** tourist from Taiwan was detained at the Macau International Airport on Saturday after airport security found that he was carrying several forbidden weapons within his luggage, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) reported during a press conference this week.

Two Taser weapons, two extendable bats and two bottles of pepper spray were found inside the luggage the man was trying to pass through security.

Questioned by the PSP, the man, aged 56, claimed to have bought the items at Gongbei,

Zhuhai, for RMB800 on March 22, and brought them into Macau by the Border Gate border checkpoint.

He also said that he had the intention of giving them to his wife and daughter for self-defense purposes.

In a separate case, the PSP also reported that they caught two individuals suspected of theft, who were operating as pickpockets in the area in between Senado Square and the Saint Paul's Ruins.

Officers in patrol spotted the two suspects with suspicious behavior as they were tar-

geting tourists in that area. Later, they were spotted trying to steal a wallet from a backpack in a shop.

After several unsuccessful attempts which were witnessed by the officers, the two men moved in the direction of the Grand Lisboa hotel where the men noticed they were being followed by the police and attempted to get into a taxi to flee.

The police detained them, upon which it was revealed that the men were from mainland China, aged 43 and 50. The men did not provide a Macau entry

immigration form, a fact which led the police to suspect that they entered the region illegally.

In their possession the police also found two mobile phones that they admitted to have stolen from a tourist.

They were both presented to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) where they were charged with theft.

Accused of a similar crime were two Mongolian nationals who were reported by a victim who claimed to have had her phone stolen.

When stopped by the police, the two men

were found to be carrying two mobile phones in a bag that the suspects said did not result from theft, but that they could not access due to not knowing the passcode.

The police then called one of the victims to the police station who recognized the phone as hers and managed to open it using her passcode.

The Mongolian nationals were operating with the help of a third person, a 50-year-old woman also from Mongolia, who is being charged as an accomplice to the crimes. **RM**

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# Retail site close to Senado sold for HKD800 million

**S**NIPER Capital yesterday announced the divestment of its Senado Square asset, a 70,000 square foot retail development project in the heart of Macau's UNESCO-listed heritage district, for HKD800 million (approximately USD102 million).

It was planned that the site, which was acquired by the company in October 2007, would become a shopping center comprising a mix of international brands and food and beverage establishments. According to Sniper Capital's website, the project was estimated to be completed this year, but no redevelopment works have started on the site.

The asset has been purchased by Ardent Success Ltd and City Universe Ltd, according to previous filings from the company, and will be completed before the month is out.

According to the property investment firm, the divestment price was in excess of the as-



Current aspect of the building



Computer-generated image of the mall project

set's latest valuation. The sale price represents a circa 14 percent premium to the property's valuation and a gain of 541 percent over the acquisition cost of HKD124.8 million, it noted in a statement. This translates to a return on investment of 469 percent and an internal rate of return of 20 percent.

Sniper Capital also said that the sale marked a "major milestone" in the company's strategy of ma-

ximizing value for its investors.

"The sale of [the] Senado Square [property] – at a significant premium to valuation – adds to Sniper Capital's strong track record of successful divestments and asset stewardship," said Sniper Capital's Principal Tom Ashworth. "It is an excellent example of our ability to stay on the course and add value to assets to achieve a great outcome for our investors."

"We remain confident in the appeal these properties hold to investors seeking value opportunities in one of Asia's most compelling and attractively positioned property markets," he added.

The company attributes its investment success to its early entry into the Macau property market, starting in 2004 when the international casino operators first opened their doors.

According to Sniper Capital's Martin Tacon, the company's "first-mover advantage and local presence" has enabled it to identify emerging trends and themes in Macau's property market.

**■ The asset has been purchased by Ardent Success and City Universe, according to previous filings from the company**

Founded in 2004, Sniper Capital has made more than 20 acquisitions in Macau. Today it manages four Macau-focused funds, three of which are dedicated to sustainable heritage projects in the historically rich vicinity of Taipa Village.

Among the firm's most notable properties is its flagship residential asset The Waterside, a premium luxury en-bloc tower located within Macau's One Central Residences.

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## HEALTH

# Only one breach of smoking laws detected in casinos



A casino smoking lounge

**S**INCE the amended Tobacco Control Law was first implemented on January 1 up until March 23, there was only one case of infraction detected in a casino, the Health Bureau (SSM) has informed in a statement.

According to the statement, the infraction was related to the non-display of clear and visible signs indicating that it is forbidden to smoke inside casinos, leading to someone smoking inside the casino.

As of March 23, the SSM has performed a total of 219 inspections in Macau casinos carried out jointly with the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ). This represents

an increase of 56.4 percent, or 79 inspections, when compared year-on-year with the same period.

During these inspections 364 people were found smoking in forbidden places, leading to their prosecution.

According to the figures from the SSM, the large majority of the offenders were male, at 94.2 percent, and 86.2 percent of offenders were tourists.

Regarding the cases reported by the media of problems occurring with several venues in Macau, the SSM only said that, as of March 21, the SSM had received two requests from casinos Ponte 16 and MGM Grand for the creation of 12 smoking

rooms. All applications are still under review. They also note that they are aware other casinos are also currently undergoing preparatory work to apply for the creation of smoking rooms, but that such requests have not yet been submitted. The Health Bureau once more affirmed that approval procedures for such rooms would be carried out by the department strictly according to law, also noting that the SSM and the DICJ will continue to perform inspections in casinos to verify their compliance with the law. They will investigate and prosecute cases where infringements and legal liability are both found.

## Unemployment rate remains stable

**T**HE general unemployment rate (1.9 percent) and the unemployment rate of local residents (2.5 percent) for December 2017 to February 2018 increased slightly by 0.1 percentage points compared to the previous period.

The underemployment rate remained unchanged at 0.4 percent.

Total labor force was 385,500 and the labor force participation rate was 70.2 percent, the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) in-

dicated.

Total employment was 378,300 and number of employed residents totaled 278,500, up by 2,300 and 2,100 respectively compared to the previous period.

Analyzed by industry, employment in gaming & junket activities and hotels, restaurants & similar activities registered increases, while employment in the transport, storage & communications sector decreased.

The number of the unem-

ployed was 7,200, up by 300 from the previous period. Fresh labor force entrants searching for their first job accounted for 7.7 percent of the total unemployed, down by 2.2 percentage points.

In comparison with December 2016 to February 2017, the labor force participation rate dropped by 0.7 percentage points, and both the unemployment rate and the underemployment rate decreased by 0.1 percentage points.



People get off a Shun Tak Holdings Ltd.'s Turbo Jet ferry

## Shun Tak records profit of HKD1.45 billion

**S**HUN Tak Holdings has announced the consolidated annual results of the company and its subsidiaries for the year of 2017. According to the results consolidated profit attributable to owners of the company stood at HKD1,450 million last year, compared with a loss of HKD587 million in 2016. Meanwhile, the underlying profit adjusted for unrealized fair value changes on investments would be approximately HKD1,242 million, compared with HKD30 million in 2016.

Revenue of the company for the year of 2017 amounted to HKD6,388 million, up significantly from the HKD3,851 million recorded in the previous year.

Basic earnings per share was HKD47.7 cents, compared with a basic loss per

share of HKD19.3 cents in 2016.

The board of the company has recommended a final dividend of HKD6 cents per share for the year ending December 31, 2017, in addition to an interim dividend of HKD6 cents per share already paid on June 30, 2017. Subject to shareholders' approval, the proposed final dividend will be paid on July 19, 2018.

The company is continuing to develop a number of properties and projects in Hong Kong, mainland China, Singapore and Macau.

Of particular note is the residential and commercial complex of Nova Grand in Macau, as well as the adjacent and connected Nova Mall, which is scheduled to open in the latter half of 2019. **DB**

## Walking trail planned for Taipa Houses-Museum lake

**T**HE Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) announced recently that it plans to build a 1.8-kilometer walking trail at the Taipa House Museum.

The three meter-wide trail will be located beside the lake in front of the museum. Its first segment will surround the lake, with all segments totaling a distance of 1.8km. The

trail's 130-meter north segment will connect the garden to the Taipa House Museum square. The west section of the trail will be around 460 meters long from the garden to the Estrada Da Baía de Nossa Senhora da Esperança, and will feature two landscape platforms. The south segment will stretch for 500 meters along the lake next to the

Estrada Da Baía de Nossa Senhora da Esperança. In the middle of this section, two platforms will be available as resting zones from which members of the public can observe the lake.

Bidding for the project will take place this year with a construction period of approximately one year and a budget of MOP40 million.

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# Consulate celebrates influential Filipino women

**F**ILIPINO women were honored by the Philippine Consulate General in Macau as part of the ongoing Women's Month this March. The event was themed "Filipino Women Expanding Influence and Leading Change."

Held annually, the celebration aims to recognize empowered women who are making an impact on their workplaces, communities and society.

Organized by the Philippine Overseas Labor Offices (POLO), the department launched three award categories including Women of Inspiration, The Trailblazer Award and Leadership Award.

Labor attaché Vivian Tornea recalled that they have been conducting the celebration for the past three years, honoring women who have been examples of courage and selflessness.

"We've been holding this celebration to recognize some women in Macau who have outstanding performances, [...] for them to be recognized [as] achievers

here in Macau that have made an impact in their workplaces and community as well," Tornea told the Times.

According to Tornea, POLO received a total of 30 nominations from the community.

Last year, the consulate awarded women for their economic achievements, recognizing entrepreneurs.

This year, the labor attaché expressed the belief that women who are considered change agents and motivators should be recognized, as their accomplishments have an impact not just on their fellow compatriots but to other women in general.

One of the awardees, who has worked as a director of design for Wynn Design and Development for eight years, claimed that women are much stronger and more influential nowadays, adding that they have always been playing vital roles, particularly in their families – as cited in a report by TDM.

Other awardees included Eugenia Desano, who has been

working as a medical technologist in the public hospital since 1987, and Marissa Catan, a domestic helper in the city since 2010.

"Helping other people should be sincere [...], we should be agents of change," said Catan, who is actively volunteering in community projects.

The third edition of "Honoring Outstanding Filipina in Macau" recognized nine Filipino women altogether. LV



## Manila recalls labor attaché in Hong Kong

**M**ANILA has recalled its labor attaché in Hong Kong a year before the official was due to complete his term without justification in the official memo, in a move that has been heavily criticized by migrant groups.

Migrant groups suggested that the move might be related to Jalilo Dela Torre's outspoken advocacy against human traffickers and exploitative employment agencies, as cited in a report issued by the South China Morning Post.

Dela Torre received the memo on Friday, stating that the order was effective immediately, although typically, an official has 60 days to leave the post after a recall has been issued.

"Whatever the outcome is, I will continue to fight human traffickers and rogue agencies wherever I am," Dela Torre told the media outlet.

Migrant groups including Global Alliance Hong Kong criticized the move, noting that his exit will not benefit them, adding that the community is unaware of the reason behind his recall.

"But people believe that one of the reasons has to do with human trafficking. [...] He has been very outspoken," said the association's president, Leo Selomenio.

Dela Torre has exposed cases of Filipino helpers in Hong Kong who are trafficked to other destinations including Russia and Turkey.

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AP PHOTO



The Wynn Las Vegas and Encore resorts in Las Vegas, both owned and operated by Wynn Resorts



Elaine Wynn pictured in 2014

## Wynn Resorts hearing may include alleged misconduct evidence

**Regina Garcia Cano,**  
**Las Vegas**

**L**AWYERS for the casino mogul's ex-wife say they have evidence of Steve Wynn's pattern of reckless behavior and mismanagement of Las Vegas-based Wynn Resorts and will present it during a hearing scheduled to begin this week in state court in Las Vegas. It's the latest move in a yearslong case involving him, Elaine Wynn and the company they founded.

The hearing could feature previous deposition testimony as well as live witnesses, including Elaine Wynn, who has accused her ex-husband, the company's general counsel and members of its board of directors of getting her off the board in 2015 because of her inquiries into company activities. Her contract-related claims are what is left of a broader case that began in 2012.

A portion of the fight between the Wynns ended earlier this month when an agreement that stipulated that they would vote jointly on company matters was deemed legally invalid. These came weeks after Steve Wynn resigned as chairman and CEO of the casino-operating company amid sexual misconduct allegations that were first reported by the Wall Street Journal.

The newspaper reported two months ago that several women said the

billionaire harassed or assaulted them and that one case led to a \$7.5 million settlement with a manicurist formerly employed by the company. Other allegations and a settlement with a different employee have since surfaced.

Steve Wynn, 76, has vehemently denied the allegations the newspaper reported and attributed them to Elaine Wynn, whose attorney has denied that she instigated the news report.

Tuesday's hearing [US time] was set after the judge denied a motion from Steve Wynn's attorneys that sought to exclude from the trial the settlement he entered with the manicurist in 2005; alleged misuse of company resources including aircraft, Rolex watches and Ferrari automobiles; alleged illegal gambling and other misconduct by two company executives; and other issues.

"They'd like to try a case about sex, sexual harassment, illegal gambling, any other allegations that they can throw around without there being any evidence to link those allegations to the claims that she has asserted in this case," Todd Bice, an attorney Wynn Resorts, said during a March 16 hearing.

A so-called Petrocelli hearing like the one scheduled for Tuesday allows attorneys to present a judge, without a jury present, alleged prior

bad acts and evidence to support them. The judge then determines whether those acts will be told to the jury.

"The proffer of this evidence does not go to Mr. Wynn's propensity to commit sexual misconduct, but does go to the potential motivation of the cross-defendants in not re-nominating or supporting Ms. Wynn for the board seat, which is the breach of contract claim," Clark County District Court Judge Elizabeth Gonzalez said during a hearing Friday. "Ms. Wynn will have to show by a preponderance of the evidence that she reported each incident that she intends to introduce at trial and that there is credible evidence of the reported event."

Attorneys for Wynn Resorts in court documents have said Elaine Wynn "has even gone so far as to contact" the attorney for a woman who entered into a settlement with Steve Wynn "to ascertain her client's availability to testify" at the Petrocelli hearing.

Elaine Wynn owns 9.5 million shares in Wynn Resorts, which she founded with her ex-husband in 2002. Steve Wynn last week sold all his stock in the company.

A larger portion of the yearslong case was settled earlier this month when Wynn Resorts agreed to pay a Tokyo-based company \$2.4 billion by the end of March. **AP**

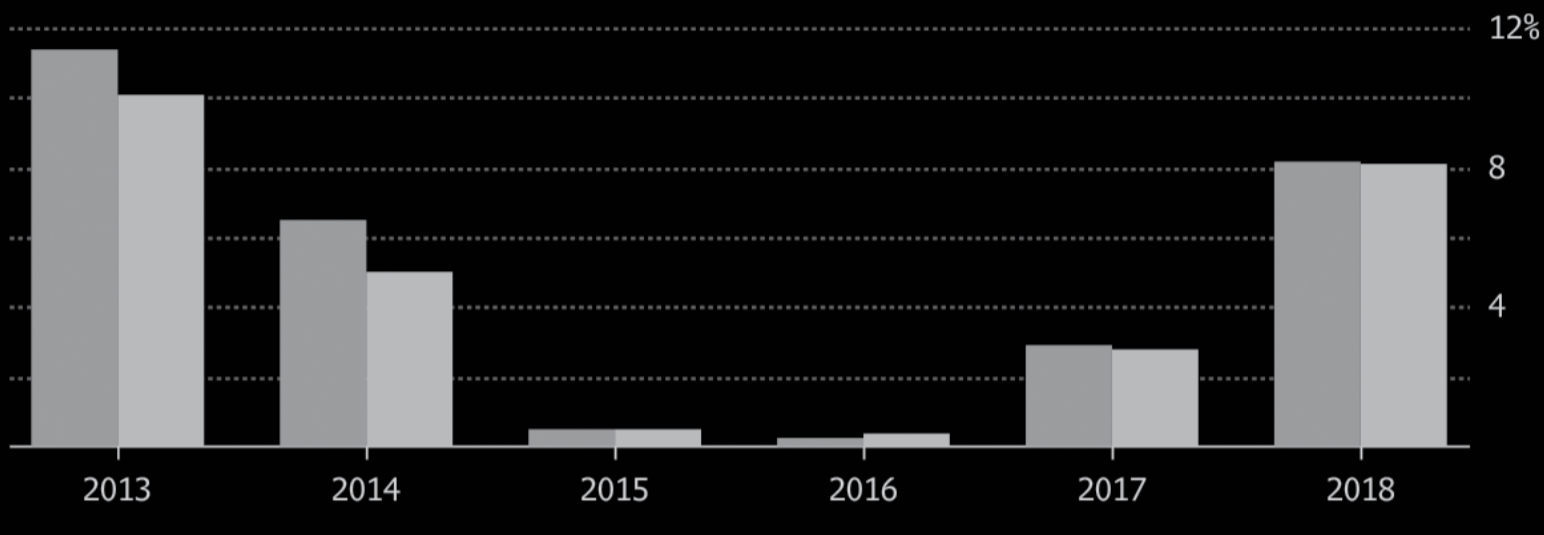


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## Light Ahead

Profit growth at big banks is set to accelerate

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CHINA

# Big banks stage profit comeback as bad loans recede

**T**HREE of China's largest banks posted better-than-expected profit growth in 2017 as a strengthening economy curbed soured loans and the government's campaign to cut debt boosted their lending margins.

Industrial & Commercial Bank of China Ltd. yesterday reported a 3 percent increase in net income last year, while Agricultural Bank of China Ltd. on Monday posted a 5 percent gain. China Construction Bank Corp., which also reported earnings yesterday, said its net profit rose 4.7 percent. All three lenders beat analysts' estimates.

China's top five banks, which control more than a third of the nation's USD40 trillion in banking assets, are staging a comeback thanks to improvements in borrowers' repayment ability and higher demand for

China's top five banks control more than a third of the nation's USD40 trillion in banking assets

loans. They are also benefiting from President Xi Jinping's crackdown on excessive debt, which is forcing smaller banks to turn to big lenders to borrow money.

ICBC's net interest margin widened by 6 basis points while the spread expanded by 3 basis points at AgBank. Both banks' nonperforming loan ratios dropped for the first time since at least 2013, and senior execu-

tives said at press conferences that they expect the benign asset quality trend to continue.

"The major non-performing loan indicators last year showed both the present and the future trend significantly improved," ICBC Chairman Yi Huiman told reporters at a briefing in Hong Kong. "That shows that our credit policy since 2013 is effective."

Together with China Construction Bank Corp., Bank of China Ltd. and Bank of Communications Co., combined profits at the Big Five probably grew about 3 percent last year, the fastest expansion since 2014, according to analysts' estimates. That's projected to pick up to about 8 percent in 2018 as rising global interest rates boost margins.

Their results are partly flattered by a poor 2015 and 2016, when concerns intensified about rising bad loans across China's finan-

cial sector. Asset quality has since improved as economic growth accelerated in 2017 for the first time in seven years. Another sign of optimism emerged this month, when the regulator was said to have lowered bad-loan provisions to a minimum 120 percent from the previous 150 percent, freeing up more cash for lending.

Shares of ICBC have climbed 8 percent this year while AgBank surged more than 24 percent, outperforming the 3 percent gain in the benchmark Hang Seng Index. Still, Hong Kong-listed Chinese banks are trading at an average 0.75 times their forecast book value.

ICBC's bad-loan coverage ratio, which measures provisions against soured credit, climbed to 154 percent by December. At AgBank, the buffer surged to 208 percent. **Bloomberg**

## Self-service test drive center debuts in Guangzhou

**A** gigantic "vending machine" for cars allowing self-service test drives opened in the south China city of Guangzhou on Monday. The multi-story facility was launched by Tmall, an online retail arm of China's e-commerce giant Alibaba.

The steel building, located in in Baiyun District, covers nearly 1,000 square meters and holds up to 42 vehicles. Customers can make an appointment for a three-day test drive by searching the keywords "super test drive" on the Tmall or Taobao apps, providing their identification details, and paying a deposit and a fee for the service on their mobile phones. They can then access the vehicles in the garage by themselves.

According to a Xinhua report, customers are eligible for discounts on the deposit and fee based on their score on Alibaba's credit scoring unit Sesame Credit.

During the first month of operation, the facility will only offer Ford vehicles. The service fee is RMB99 to RMB198 (USD15.80 to USD31.60) depending on the model, and the deposit is RMB3,000. After the test drive, interested customers can buy the vehicle they tested.

Tmall is in talks with other auto brands interested in the test drive service. It plans to build similar facilities in Beijing and Hangzhou soon, before expanding to more big cities within a year. **MDT/Xinhua**

### corporate bits

#### BENE TO SHOWCASE CUISINE FROM UMBRIA



The next Bene Food & Wine Mercato will move from Emilia-Romagna to Umbria in central Italy, Sheraton Grand Macao announced

yesterday.

On April 6 and 7, the hotel's Italian trattoria will explore the cuisine from the region known as Italy's "green

heart," which is also home to little-known seasonal ingredients that grow in the rich soil, including produce such as olive oil and truffles.

To showcase the best of Umbria's traditional cuisine, Bene's Executive Sous Chef Luca Pecorari has crafted a one-off menu for this edition of Bene's Food & Wine Mercato, featuring more than 15 types of Italian delicacies and four types of Umbrian wines at the food and wine booths.

Highlights include a trutta salmonata (deep fried salmon trout fillet with truffle mayonnaise), torta al testo (Umbrian-style flat bread stuffed with sautéed chicory, prosciutto and pecorino cheese), and porchetta (Umbrian-style slow-roasted pork with roasted vegetables).

#### HUAWEI UNVEILS IPHONE X CHALLENGER



Huawei Technologies Co. introduced its challenger to Apple Inc.'s iPhone X and Samsung Electronics Co.'s Galaxy S9, amid the company's fallout with U.S. retailers, wireless carriers and government officials.

The 5.8-inch P20 smartphone features an edge-to-edge display, and a 6.1-inch Pro

model also has three camera lenses on the back: one for color, one for black-and-white shots and one designed for close-ups. The screens of both versions feature a "notch" at the top similar to that seen on the iPhone X but avoided in Samsung's latest designs.

Huawei sold the third most

smartphones globally last year with 11 percent of the market, trailing Samsung's 22 percent and Apple's 15 percent, according to data from IDC. Huawei is also the only one of the top three players to consistently gain market share year-over-year since 2014, according to IDC.

But no matter the P20's competitive potential, officials in charge of the NSA, FBI, and CIA, have all recommended that U.S. citizens don't use Huawei devices. AT&T Inc. and Verizon Communications Inc. - the top two U.S. phone carriers - have also decided to not sell the company's products following government concern. As most phones in the U.S. are bought via carriers, the move puts China's top phone maker at an innate disadvantage.



Michelle Hong, right, and Catherine Ng wash lettuce on the roof of the 38-story Bank of America tower

## HONG KONG

# Skyline farms harvest more happiness than food

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

**H**IGH above downtown Hong Kong's bustling, traffic-clogged streets, a group of office workers was toiling away not on a corporate acquisition or a public share offering but on harvesting a bumper crop of lettuce atop one of the skyscrapers studding the city's skyline.

It's rooftop farming taken to the extreme, and more about reaping happiness than providing food.

The volunteers were picking butter lettuce, Indian lettuce and Chinese mustard leaf in rows of low black plastic planters on a decommissioned helipad on the 146-meter-high roof of the 38-story Bank of America tower, the scenery: a vertiginous panorama of glass office towers framed by lush mountain peaks and Victoria Harbor.

"It's pretty dirty but still I really enjoy it," said Catherine Ng, one of five volunteers who work for the property company managing the tower.

The farm is run by Rooftop Republic, a three-year-old startup whose founders are tapping growing interest in organic food and taking advantage of unused roof space in the cramped, high-rent Chinese city.

Hong Kong, with its skinny office blocks and apartment towers and busy, affluent residents, might seem an unlikely place for rooftop farming to catch on. The finance and trading hub has rural suburbs, but farming only takes up 700 hectares of its land and agriculture

accounts for 0.1 percent of its economic output. Rooftop Republic's founders say the appetite for their services is growing among Hong Kongers who are seeking a more sustainable lifestyle and concerned about where their food comes from.

"We have been getting more and more interest from people who want to grow their own food," said Michelle Hong, one of the founders. "A lot of it is triggered by concerns about food safety and the realization that a lot of the food they consume might be laden with pesticides. I think people want to have more control and also more trust."

Hong Kong imports almost all of its food, much of it from mainland China. Public awareness about food safety in the former British colony has risen after countless food contamination scandals on the mainland.

Rooftop Republic has set up on average one farm a month since its founding and now manages 36 covering about 2,800 square meters, including one in mainland China, Hong said. It also provides workshops for companies, building owners, schools, and community groups.

The Bank of America farm was a milestone because it was the first in the city's financial district. The company has since set up two more in the area and is looking at a few more sites, Hong said. Vegetables from the tower are donated to a food bank for uses in lunch boxes

distributed to the needy. Some of its other farms are at hotels or restaurants, which use the herbs, eggplants and melons for dishes on their menus.

Plenty of other groups or individuals have started cultivating their own rooftop vegetable gardens, said Matthew Pryor, a Hong Kong University architecture professor who has counted at least 60 and thinks there are a lot more he doesn't know about.

Pryor's research found approximately 1,500 rooftop farmers in the city, cultivating a total area of about 1 1/2 hectares. He thinks there's potential for that to easily grow to 50,000 people working on a suitable rooftop area of 600 hectares.

He helped set up a farm on top of a university building where volunteers, mainly staff, grow tomatoes, potatoes, strawberries, lettuce, dragon-fruit, papaya, beans, peas and squash.

Pryor said he discovered through his research that their main product isn't edible.

"The rooftop farms here produce virtually nothing" compared to Hong Kong's overall consumption, Pryor said. "What they do produce, however, is happiness, and this social capital that they generate is enormous."

The farms can help stressed-out, overworked and socially isolated Hong Kongers be happier and improve their well-being by letting them hang out with their friends and commune with nature. **AP**

## MYSTERY TRAIN FROM PYONGYANG

# North Korea's Kim

**K**IM Jong Un made a surprise visit to Beijing on his first known trip outside North Korea since taking power in 2011, three people with knowledge of the visit said.

Further details of his trip, including how long Kim would stay and who he would meet, were not immediately available. The people asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the information.

Speculation about a possible visit by a high-ranking North Korean official circulated around

the Chinese capital Monday, after Japan's Kyodo News reported that a special train may have carried Kim through the northeastern border city of Dandong. Nippon TV showed footage of a train arriving Monday in Beijing that looked similar to one used by Kim's father, Kim Jong Il, to visit the country shortly before his death in 2011.

The train believed to be carrying the North Korean delegation was observed yesterday leaving Beijing, Reuters reported, citing a witness.

Chinese Ministry of Foreign

## opinion

### NORTH KOREAN VISIT SHOWS BEIJING STILL HAS ROLE TO PLAY

Kim Tong-Hyung, AP Correspondent, Seoul

No matter who was on the private train that pulled into Beijing from Pyongyang overnight, one thing is clear: China still plays a major role in efforts to end North Korea's nuclear program.

Just how much is still open to debate, but the apparent high-level visit shows that Kim Jong Un hasn't forgotten his only major ally despite recent antipathy between the countries and bombshell announcements that the young North Korean leader will hold summits with his foes in Washington and Seoul. China, after all, provides the vital trade, aid and diplomatic support that keep the North and its broken economy afloat.

Because of North Korea's dependence on China, it makes sense that Pyongyang would send a high-level delegation to Beijing for consultations before any major approach to the West.

"North Korea will try to remove any Chinese concern that it's being passed over as Pyongyang attempts to shake up regional politics by reaching out to Seoul and Washington," said Koh Yu-hwan, a North Korea expert at Seoul's Dongguk University.

The North Korean delegation will try to make the point that it's "in the process of overhauling its external relations entirely, and not trying to leave China out of the picture," he said. "This will also be the message they want to send to the United States — the North obviously believes maintaining its traditional relationship with China would give it stronger influence over the United States."

There has been widespread speculation that the green and yellow train that arrived in Beijing on Monday was carrying leader Kim himself. Some analysts are doubtful though, saying it's hard to imagine that a proud young leader who has proclaimed his nation a world power would sneak into Beijing under cover of night for his first face-to-face meeting with the Chinese leadership since taking power in 2011.

If it's not Kim it could be his sister, Kim Yo Jong, who the leader sent to South Korea last month to attend the Winter Olympics bearing the offer of a summit. Another possibility is the train carried a grizzled military or political adviser, two of whom also went south last month.

Whoever it is, the move could also be part of a North Korean effort to gain leverage ahead of the planned talks with South Korean President Moon Jae-in and later U.S. President Donald Trump by showing that it has other options.

"Even if the situation surrounding its talks with Seoul and Washington plays out well for North Korea, it still needs China's help," Koh said. "And if the situation doesn't work out, North Korea will surely need Chinese support."

It may also be that the North recognizes some hard realities. North Korea's diplomatic outreach to South Korea and the United States followed an unusually provocative year of weapons tests and has been seen as an attempt, in part, to improve a struggling economy crushed the heavy sanctions those tests brought about. North Korea's provocations also took a toll on relations with Beijing.

Despite their decades-long alliance, forged during the 1950-53 Korean War, China has played a crucial role in international pressure against North Korea over its nuclear program and has signed on to increasingly strict UN sanctions. China's strengthened actions in recent months — including restrictions on oil supply — may have significantly raised North Korea's need to seek a diplomatic breakthrough.

For Beijing, it wants to be seen as a custodian of peace and stability in the region and also a larger player in world diplomacy as it competes with the United States for influence in Asia.

But it also has its own interests in mind. China is unhappy about having an emerging nuclear menace at its doorstep, but also doesn't want to see a collapse of a next door government it sees as a buffer state against U.S. ally South Korea.

# Jong Un is said to make surprise China visit



A military honor guard is seen marching away after a convoy of vehicles enter the the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse

Affairs spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a briefing in Beijing yesterday that she had no information about any visit by Kim or the train reported to have carried him into the country. She said any relevant information would be released in "due course."

The unannounced visit is the latest in a series of diplomatic power plays in Asia as U.S. President Donald Trump's battle to lower the U.S. trade deficit becomes entangled with his effort to get Kim to give up his nuclear weapons. Chinese President Xi Jinping has found himself preparing for a trade war with Trump even after supporting progressive rounds of United Nations sanctions against the Kim regime.

The U.S. appears to have had no advance knowledge of Kim's visit. White House Deputy Press Secretary Raj Shah told reporters yesterday [Macau time] that he couldn't confirm reports of the trip and "we don't know if they're necessarily true." A State Department spokesman, Julia Mason, responded to questions about the report with a single sentence: "We'd refer you to the Chinese."

"What I'll just state, though, is that where we are with North Korea is in a better place than we used to be because the president's maximum pressure

campaign in conjunction with dozens of countries around the world has paid dividends and brought the North Koreans to the table," Shah said.

"If this meeting is confirmed, it may actually be more productive than a photo op between Trump and Kim in a few weeks," said Melissa Hanham, a researcher at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, in Monterey, California.

"North Korea is often perceived as an ungrateful junior brother, but recent tensions and increased nuclear and missile capabilities mean China's taking this seriously and doesn't want to be left out of the process."

Trump decided earlier this month to grant an unprecedented meeting to the North Korean leader, after South Korean officials said Kim was willing to discuss giving up his nuclear weapons program. North Korea's official media have yet to confirm the summit, and details on when and where it will happen are still being worked out.

While Kim Jong Il was in power, Chinese and North Korean official sources usually waited until after his return to Pyongyang before confirming he had been in China. An exception was his final trip in May 2011, when Chinese state

media reported the elder Kim's meeting with then-President Hu Jintao a day before he left the country.

"Presumably, part of what's on the agenda is the Chinese want a sense of what Kim expects or is seeking in the meeting with the U.S., if it ever occurs, as well as their attempt, of course, to influence it," Jacques deLisle, who teaches Chinese law and politics at the University of Pennsylvania

Law School, said in an interview.

Kim's delay in visiting China since his ascension as North Korea's leader seven years ago reflects "strains in that relationship," deLisle said. "China has grown more frustrated with North Korea over the years especially under Kim the younger, Kim Jong Un."

Ties between China and North Korea, who fought together against South Korean and UN

forces during the Korean War, have been strained as China backed sanctions crimping the country's energy imports and sources of foreign cash.

There are precedents for the North Koreans going to Beijing to talk about what they should do next.

JAMES EDWARD HOARE  
FORMER UK DIPLOMAT

While China opposes North Korea's nuclear weapons, it also doesn't want to see Kim's regime collapse or war break out on the Korean Peninsula. Any instability could lead to a refugee crisis or potentially U.S. troops on its border.

"There are precedents for the North Koreans going to Beijing to talk about what they should do next," James Edward Hoare, associate fellow of Chatham House and a former U.K. diplomat to Pyongyang, said in an interview. "If it's true it's probably to ask advice on how they should handle a meeting with the Americans."

Kim was expected to meet South Korean President Moon Jae-in near their shared border next month, in a prelude to the potential summit with Trump. Diplomats from the U.S., North Korea and its neighbors have since been shuttling across the globe to prepare for the summits. **Bloomberg**

## Speculation triggers action by censors

THE speculation over just who traveled by special train from North Korea to Beijing drew a swift reaction from Chinese censors.

Searches for the term "North Korea" were blocked yesterday while "Kim Jong Un" turned up results from several days ago on major social media platforms, including Sina's Weibo.

China's routine censorship of sensitive subjects online can even target words and phrases with tenuous, and even unlikely, connections.

One of those blocked yesterday was a nickname Chinese have bestowed on the North Korean leader, Kim the Third Fatty ("Jin San Pang" in Chinese). A blocked Weibo post about Kim's possible visit even shows a combination of three photos of a pig character in a fictional Chinese television series.

The arrival of a train in Beijing on Monday that looks like one used by Kim's father, former North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, has triggered speculation that Kim was in Beijing.



The Chinese foreign ministry says it has no information on speculation that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has visited Beijing.

A ministry spokeswoman, Hua Chunying, told reporters at a regular briefing yesterday that she knew they were "all very curious" but that she had "no information" on whether Kim or any other North Korean official was visiting Beijing.

## POLL

# Americans open to Trump's planned North Korea talks

Matthew Pennington  
& Emily Swanson, Washington

**A**MERICANS appear open to President Donald Trump's surprise decision to negotiate directly with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, and at the same time are less concerned than in recent months by the threat posed by the pariah nation's nuclear weapons.

That's according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, taken after Trump agreed to what would be unprecedented meeting between a U.S. and a North Korean leader.

North Korea has yet to publicly confirm plans for the summit, slated for May, but the poll results suggest its potential has eased fears of war that intensified last year as the North made rapid strides in its nuclear and missile capabilities.

"If you sit down and talk over any matter, there can be a resolution to it without starting a war," said Sarah Dobbs, a 64-year-old retiree from Norman, Oklahoma, who described herself as a Democrat and is among the 48 percent of Americans who favor Trump's plan to talk with Kim.

"No other president has ever done something this bold. That's why I think: Why not let Trump have at it?" she said.

The poll found that 29 percent oppose the plans for talks between the two nations, while 21 percent say they're neither in favor nor opposed.

The survey also found an uptick in approval of Trump's handling of relations with North Korea as the focus has shifted

AP PHOTO



## N. Korea has yet to confirm plans for the summit, slated for May, but poll results suggest its potential has eased fears of war

from possible U.S. military action to diplomacy. That figure is now 42 percent, up from 34 percent last October amid a coarse back and forth between the two leaders.

Last September, Trump dubbed Kim "Rocket Man" and threatened to "totally destroy" North Korea. Kim responded

with threats and insults of his own, calling Trump "deranged" and a "dotard." North Korea's foreign minister suggested that it might conduct an atmospheric nuclear test in the Pacific — a threat it hasn't followed through on.

Since then, the proportion of Americans who say they're very or extremely concerned about the nuclear threat North Korea poses to the U.S. has dropped to 50 percent from 67 percent. It's a decline that registered with both Republicans and Democrats. Americans also see the threat as having lessened for U.S. allies Japan and South Korea, as well as U.S. overseas territories such as Guam.

Trump agreed to talk after Kim conveyed through South Korean intermediaries an offer to discuss "denuclearization" and halt nuclear and missile tests.

South Korea's leader is due to have his own summit with Kim in April.

Americans are divided over the potential goals of U.S. discussions with North Korea. Forty-four percent say the North must completely give up its nukes, the long-standing goal of U.S. policy. Forty percent think the U.S. should consider a deal if the North agrees to make progress toward that goal.

Only 13 percent think the country shouldn't consider a deal with North Korea at all.

"I would like to see a denuclearization of North Korea, but I don't know how feasible that is," said Aaron Saunders, a 26-year-old medical research associate from Three Rivers, Michigan, who was generally supportive of Trump's handling of the issue — aside from his tweeting.

Theresa Ferraro, 71, of Lowell,

Massachusetts, said a summit might make the world safer, but she questioned the president's temperament for negotiations.

"He speaks out too much," she said. "I'm outspoken myself, but you gotta know when to zip it and I don't think he knows."

Despite the general openness toward negotiations with North Korea, Americans have mixed views about the direction of U.S. national security. One in three say that it will get better over the next year. Similar proportions say it will get worse and stay about the same.

But there are clearer differences on partisan lines. Two-thirds of Republicans expect national security to improve, while a slightly smaller proportion of Democrats expect it to get worse in the year ahead.

Americans have largely negative views about how the U.S. is viewed around the world. Some 53 percent think respect for American will decline in the next ahead, with just 26 percent expecting it to improve. And 48 percent think U.S. influence around the world will decline in the next year, compared with just 27 percent who believe it will get better.

Pamela Williams, 69, of New York City, criticized Trump for boasting about U.S. military strength and having what she saw as flippant attitude to matters of war and peace.

"I have not seen anything that he's done since taking office that he's taken seriously. Everything is a joke to him," she said. AP

**Editor's Note** - The AP-NORC poll of 1,122 adults was conducted March 14-19 using a sample drawn from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak Panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 4.2 percentage points. Respondents were first selected randomly using address-based sampling methods, and later interviewed online or by phone.

# South Korean president visits his troops training Emiratis

**W**RAPPING up his first trip to the Mideast, South Korean President Moon Jae-in yesterday visited his nation's special forces training Emirati soldiers and pledged that peace on the Korean Peninsula would bring new business opportunities.

Moon's trip to the United Arab Emirates helped solidify Seoul's ties to a nation vital to its fossil fuel supplies. South Korea is also building its first nuclear power plant

overseas in the Gulf Arab state, the first such facility on the Arabian Peninsula.

The four-day trip was carefully managed for Moon, who faced no questions from journalists in the UAE, which has a deal with Seoul reportedly guaranteeing the Korean military's automatic intervention in "an emergency."

A statement from the South Korean presidency said Moon visited troops taking part in a program called "Akh," the Ara-

bic word for "brother." The program, running since 2011, has Korean commandos train Emirati forces.

"The 'Akh' unit is a symbol of the defense cooperation between South Korea and the United Arab Emirates and will also serve as a stepping stone toward further developing relations between the countries so they would see each other as a 'brother nation,'" Moon said in the statement.

Moon later visited

Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building. While at the tower, he gave a brief speech.

"South Korea is now building peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula. Right now is the best time to invest in South Korea," Moon said. "If we can stabilize peace in the Korean Peninsula, your investment will bear fruit and new business opportunities will arise."

AP PHOTO



South Korean President Moon Jae-in arrives for a luncheon in Dubai

Neither Moon nor Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha addressed the mysterious armored train that made a round trip from North Korea to Bei-

jing yesterday. Moon and Kim plan talks in April seeking to defuse tension over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons and missile program. AP

CAMBODIA

# PM Hun Sen says no negotiations with opposition

**C**AMBODIA'S leader yesterday rejected the idea of reconciliation talks with the country's only significant opposition party, which was dissolved by court order last November.

Prime Minister Hun Sen, speaking at a school graduation ceremony in Phnom Penh, also said he would spurn the appeals of foreign nations promoting such talks.

He also ruled out the possibility of pardons for the two founders of the now-defunct Cambodia National Rescue Party, one of whom is in exile and the other who is in jail awaiting trial on treason charges critics consider trumped up.

The CNRP would have been the only credible opposition to Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party in this July's general election.

Its dissolution, and a crackdown on the press, are considered efforts to ensure a victory for Hun Sen, who has held power for more than three decades.

Hun Sen has previously stated his unwillingness to reconcile



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen

with his opponents, but his remarks seemed especially harsh. They came in the wake of spirited protests against him by overseas Cambodians when he attended a summit meeting in Sydney between the leaders of Australia and the 10 member countries of

the Association of Southeast Asia Nations.

Former opposition leader Sam Rainsy has been in self-imposed exile since late 2015 to avoid being jailed in one defamation case, and was convicted again in December in connection with

a Facebook post in which he accused Hun Sen of offering USD1 million to a political operative to assail the opposition.

Kem Sokha, Sam Rainsy's successor as opposition leader, was charged with treason for allegedly conspiring with the United

States to topple the government, and now faces up to 30 years in prison if convicted. He was arrested on the basis of videos from several years ago showing him at a seminar where he spoke about receiving advice from U.S. pro-democracy groups. The opposition party denied the treason allegation, saying it was politically motivated.

Hun Sen said the opposition leaders are the people who often try to destroy the peace his government worked very hard to attain, and described himself as the founder and protector of peace. He credits his government with putting an end to the guerilla war in the late 1990s that the communist Khmer Rouge waged from the jungle.

Hun Sen said he wanted to eliminate Sam Rainsy and his circle as he had eliminated the Khmer Rouge movement.

Hun Sen also referred to reports that Kentaro Sonoura, an adviser to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, had urged him to have a dialogue with the opposition.

"I wish to announce that there will be absolutely no negotiations. First of all, no negotiations with the traitors and secondly, no granting the traitors amnesty," he said, adding that he wished to make clear to Japan and the international community that there would be no such talks with the opposition. AP


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## UK-RUSSIA

# Not just Moscow: Spies have long posed as diplomats

Matthew Lee & Josh Lederman,  
Washington

**I**N ordering the largest mass expulsion of Russian diplomats ever, the U.S. and its allies have upped the ante in an East-West spy game that dates to the Cold War and cast light on an unspoken but widespread practice in the cloak-and-dagger world: sending operatives abroad under diplomatic cover.

The tallies offered by senior U.S. officials were striking: Far more than 100 Russian spies are on American soil masquerading as diplomats. The U.S. said it was kicking out 60, so even after they're gone, at least 40 will ostensibly remain, free to roam Washington and other major U.S. cities under the official imprimatur of their nation's foreign ministry.

So if they're truly spies and the United States knows it, why not expel them all?

The answer, experts say, is that espionage, while murky, potentially distasteful and often illegal, is an accepted international practice. All countries spy and most if not all send spies overseas disguised as diplomats — including the U.S.

"Embassies and diplomatic mission for hundreds and hundreds of years have been used to spy in adversaries' lands," said retired Army Col. Christopher Costa, executive director of the International Spy Museum in Wash-



The Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation in New York

ington. He said even when spies are discovered, it's often more fruitful to follow them discreetly than to expel them. "The cat-and-mouse game of counterespionage is about understanding who that officer is in touch with."

There's another reason for the U.S. not to go overboard in kicking out known Russian intelligence operatives posted to diplomatic missions: America is in the game, too.

When one country expels another country's representatives, it's both expected and accepted that the country being punished takes reciprocal steps. In 2016, when the Obama administration expelled 35 Russian diplomats,

Moscow quickly booted 35 Americans. A similar tit-for-tat played out this month after Britain ousted 23 Russians and the Kremlin ordered out 23 Brits.

That means that the more Russian spies the U.S. kicks out, the more of its own spies are likely to be forced out of Russia, Costa said.

When one country posts spies to its embassy in a friendly nation, it usually "declares" them — telling the host country who they are. Those spies, while publicly still claiming to be diplomats, then act as liaisons to the host country's intelligence services, creating a useful backchannel.

With countries that have hostile relations, like the U.S. and Rus-

sia, the governments don't tell each other who the spies are. So a high-stakes game of spy-hunting inevitably takes place.

Every new Russian diplomat assigned to a mission in the United States, like the embassy in Washington, or the Seattle consulate that the U.S. has ordered closed, is assessed by the FBI and other U.S. counterintelligence officials, said John Schindler, a former counterintelligence official and National Security Agency analyst.

Some can be quickly identified based on where they've worked previously and in what positions — historical information that's far easier to track in the modern age of Google, LinkedIn and LexisNexis. Certain positions in embassies are notorious for being filled by spies, such as security officials, political officers and communications specialists, who often are secretly engaged in technical collection of what's known as signals intelligence: intercepting phone calls or electronic communications.

"If you still can't tell, you wait until they get to this country, and you watch what they do," Schindler said. "Are they having clandestine meetings with people? Are they using techniques to avoid surveillance?"

The U.S. has long claimed that as a rule, it does not use certain jobs as cover for intelligence operatives, such as U.S. Agency for Inter-

national Development workers and Peace Corps volunteers. The theory is that any perception that those staffers might be spies would create serious safety risks for actual humanitarian workers.

Said Schindler: "There are gentleman's rules about this, and there have been for a long time."

During the Cold War, capitals around the globe developed reputations for being awash in thousands of agents working for rival intelligence agencies under diplomatic cover. From Asia to the Middle East and throughout Europe, the East-West tug-of-war played out between spies in cities such as Athens, Bangkok, Beirut, Belgrade, Berlin, Cairo, Tehran and Vienna, often in open sight before unsuspecting passers-by.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, such activity subsided, but it never altogether disappeared. Now it's back with a vengeance.

"The rates of espionage are now as high if not higher than they were in the Cold War," said Angela Stent, a professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and a former Russia expert on the government's National Intelligence Council. "There is a huge degree of mutual suspicion between the intelligence services that never went away."

In fact, it was only last year that Russia complained bitterly to the U.S. about American diplomats posted to Moscow and other cities. Russia claimed they were really there to spy.

"There are too many employees of the CIA and the Pentagon's espionage unit working under the roof of the American diplomatic mission whose activity does not correspond at all with their status," said Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova. **AP**

## Australia, Ireland join countries expelling Russians

**A**USTRALIA and Ireland yesterday joined more than 20 other nations in expelling Russian diplomats in response to the nerve agent attack on a former Russian military intelligence officer and his daughter in Britain.

The mass expulsions were a show of solidarity for Britain, which blames Russia for the poisoning of former double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia. Moscow vehemently denies responsibility, and has vowed a "tough response" to the expulsions.

More than 20 countries on Monday announced that they were expelling a total of more than 130 Russian diplomats, including 60 kicked out by the United States.

Yesterday, Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said his country was expelling two Russian diplomats whom he described as undeclared intelligence officers. They have been given seven days to leave Australia. Turnbull slammed Russia for "reckless and deliberate" conduct that harms global security and violates rules against the use of chemical weapons.

The Russian Embassy in Canberra said the decision was regrettable and jeopardized bilateral relationships.

"It is astonishing how easily the allies of Great Britain follow it blindly contrary to the norms of civi-

lized bilateral dialogue and international relations, and against [...] common sense," it said.

Ireland also announced it was ordering one Russian diplomat to leave. Foreign Minister Simon Coveney called the nerve-agent attack on Skripal and his daughter a "shocking and abhorrent" use of chemical weapons.

Official in Moscow yesterday condemned the expulsions but have not yet announced steps of retaliation yet.

Speaking at a conference in Uzbekistan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told reporters that a reaction will follow because Russia "will not tolerate such rude behavior." Lavrov also speculated that the United States might have coerced some of the European countries into expelling Russian diplomats.

Later yesterday, NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said the military alliance will expel seven staffers from the Russian mission due to the nerve-agent poisoning of a former Russian spy in Britain.

He said NATO will also deny the pending accreditation request of three other workers at the Russian mission.

Russia is not a member of NATO. Stoltenberg says, despite the expulsions, Russia will still have a diplomatic mission of 20 people at alliance headquarters in Brussels and that will allow Russia to keep essential contacts with NATO members. **MDT/AP**

### COUNTRIES EXPELLING RUSSIAN DIPLOMATS

**Two dozen** countries including the United States and many European Union states, have announced they are expelling a total of more than 130 Russian diplomats, in a show of solidarity with Britain over the nerve agent attack on a former Russian spy in England. However, a small "coalition of the unwilling" inside the EU had indicated to the UK Foreign Office that they were not prepared to expel any Russian diplomats in solidarity with the UK. The eight countries were Portugal, Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia and Luxembourg. Belgium made no announcements but has indicated action will be taken after cabinet meetings.

— **UNITED STATES:** 60 Russian diplomats expelled; Russian consulate in Seattle ordered closed.

— **BRITAIN:** 23 Russian diplomats expelled.

— **CANADA:** Four Russians expelled; three applications for additional diplomatic staff being denied.

— **UKRAINE:** 13 Russian diplomats expelled.

— **GERMANY, FRANCE, POLAND:** Four Russian diplomats expelled from each country.

— **CZECH REPUBLIC, LITHUANIA:** Three Russian diplomats expelled from each country.

— **SPAIN, NETHERLANDS, DENMARK, ITALY, ALBANIA, AUSTRALIA:** Two Russian diplomats expelled from each country.

— **HUNGARY, SWEDEN, CROATIA, ROMANIA, FINLAND, ESTONIA, IRELAND:** One Russian diplomat expelled from each country.

— **LATVIA:** One Russian diplomat expelled, plus one Russian representative of a Russian company blacklisted.

# UK Expert says Brexit campaign used data mined from Facebook

Danica Kirka, London

**T**HE computer expert who sparked a global debate over electronic privacy said yesterday that the official campaign backing Britain's exit from the European Union had access to data that was inappropriately collected from millions of Facebook users.

Christopher Wylie previously alleged that political consultancy Cambridge Analytica used data harvested from more than 50 million Facebook users to help U.S. President Donald Trump's 2016 election campaign. Wylie worked on Cambridge Analytica's "information operations" in 2014 and 2015.

Wylie yesterday told the media committee of the British parliament that he "absolutely" believed Canadian consultant AggregateIQ drew on Cambridge Analytica's databases for its work on the official Vote Leave cam-



Whistleblower Christopher Wylie

paign. The data could have been used to micro-target voters in the closely fought referendum in which 51.9 percent of voters ultimately backed Brexit.

"I think it is incredibly reasonable to say that AIQ played a very significant role in Leave winning," he said.

Because of the links between the two companies, Vote Leave got

the "the next best thing" to Cambridge Analytica when it hired AggregateIQ, "a company that can do virtually everything that (Cambridge Analytica) can do but with a different billing name," Wylie said.

The testimony comes a day after Wylie and two other former insiders presented 50 pages of documents that they said proved Vote

Leave violated election finance rules during the referendum campaign.

**I think it is reasonable to say that AIQ played a very significant role in Leave winning.**

CHRISTOPHER WYLIE

They allege that Vote Leave circumvented spending limits by donating 625,000 pounds to the pro-Brexit student group BeLeave, then sending the money directly to AggregateIQ.

Campaign finance rules limited Vote Leave's spending on the

Brexit referendum to 7 million pounds. When Vote Leave got close to that limit in the final weeks of the campaign, it made the donation to BeLeave, said Shahmir Sanni, a volunteer who helped run the grassroots student group.

Wylie told Britain's Observer newspaper that he was instrumental in founding AggregateIQ when he was the research director of SCL, the parent company of Cambridge Analytica. He said they shared underlying technology and worked so closely together that Cambridge Analytica staff often referred to the Canadian firm as a "department."

AggregateIQ, based in Victoria, British Columbia, issued a statement saying it has never been part of Cambridge Analytica and has never signed a contract with the company. The company also said it was 100-percent Canadian owned and operated and was never part of Cambridge Analytica or SCL.

"AggregateIQ works in full compliance within all legal and regulatory requirements in all jurisdictions where it operates," the company said in a statement. "It has never knowingly been involved in any illegal activity. All work AggregateIQ does for each client is kept separate from every other client." AP

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## what's ON



## 11TH MACAU DESIGN BIENNIAL (HGM)

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

UNTIL: March 31, 2018

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

## THE DINOSAUR HUNT

TIME: Round the clock ("Dino Escape" green-screen experience only available from 12pm-8pm)

UNTIL: April 15, 2018

VENUE: Studio City Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8868 6767

## A CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF MACAU – EXHIBITION

TIME: 10:30am-5:30pm (closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: March 31, 2018

VENUE: Gallery of Carmo Post Office in Taipa

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2837 8138

## MONKEY KING

TIME: 4pm & 8pm daily (except on Thursdays)

VENUE: Sands Cotai Theatre

ADMISSION: MOP380, MOP480, MOP680, MOP980, MOP1280

COTAI TICKETING: (853) 2882 8818

KONG SENG TICKETING: (853) 2855 5555

## DOCUMENTING IMPERMANENCE: AN EXHIBITION OF REPORTAGE PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALICE KOK AND STUDENTS

TIME: 9am-10pm

UNTIL: March 31, 2018

VENUE: Team Building, Institute for Tourism Studies

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2856 1252

## Offbeat

## NAKED NEWS: DONALD TRUMP STATUE GOING UP FOR AUCTION



This undated image provided by Julien's Auctions shows a naked statue of Donald Trump that is going up for auction that will take place May 2 in Jersey City (N.J.)

A statue of a naked Donald Trump is going on the auction block.

Julien's Auction says the sculpture is the last statue remaining that was not vandalized or destroyed when it was displayed along with others in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Cleveland in the weeks before the Republican was elected president.

The auction house estimates the statue, which was created by the West Coast anarchist collective INDECLINE, will sell for USD20,000 to \$30,000.

The auction will take place on May 2 in Jersey City, New Jersey.

Five naked statues of then-presidential candidate Donald Trump popped up in cities around the country in one day of August 2016 as part of a bizarre anti-Trump art project. The hyper-realistic sculptures were created by a Cleveland-based artist and commissioned by INDECLINE.

## TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	Miscellaneous
15:40	Zig Zag
17:30	Miscellaneous
18:25	Brazilian Soap Opera (Repeated)
19:15	TDM Interview (Repeated)
19:50	Portuguese Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Portuguese Program
22:10	Brazilian Soap Opera
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:20	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:55	RTPi Live

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

22 - 26 MAR

## PSYCHIC KUSUO

ROOM 1

2:30, 6:00, 9:30pm

Director: Yuichi Fukuda

Starring: Kento Yamazaki, Kanna Hashimoto

Language: Cantonese (Chinese)

## MAZINGER Z: INFINITY

ROOM 1

04:15, 07:45pm

Director: Junji Shimizu

Starring: Shōtarō Morikubo, Ai Kayano, Sumire Uesaka

Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 95min



## UNSAFE

ROOM 2

2:30, 4:30, 07:30, 9:30pm

Director: Steven Soderbergh

Starring: Claire Foy, Joshua Leonard, Jay Pharoah

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 97min



## WONDERSTRUCK

ROOM 3

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

Director: Todd Haynes

Starring: Oakes Fegley, Julianne Moore, Michelle Williams

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 116min



## TOMB RAIDER

ROOM 3

7:15pm

Director: Roar Uthaug

Starring: Alicia Vikander, Daniel Wu, Dominic West

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 118 min

## this day in history



## 1965 THOUSANDS JOIN DR KING IN ALABAMA RALLY

Dr Martin Luther King has taken a crowd of nearly 25,000 people to the steps of the state capital of Montgomery, Alabama to highlight black grievances.

The procession marks the end of a five-day march which started in Selma last week and it brings to a close a month of civil rights protests in Alabama.

Troops policed the roads surrounding the capital and army helicopters hovered overhead as the crowd swelled to nearly 25,000.

Dr King, who addressed the protesters from a podium in the square, described the trek as "one of the greatest marches in the history of America".

"Our aim is not to humiliate and defeat the white man, but to win his friendship and understanding," he added.

Dr King tried to present a petition of black grievances to Governor George Wallace but he refused to meet the delegation.

The civil rights leader said he would ask trade unions to refuse to transport or use the state's products and he urged the Federal Government and the Treasury to withdraw all assistance from the area.

Dr King also said that demonstrations would have to continue where essential conditions remained unmet.

When the march began last week, large bombs were planted at a black church, a funeral parlour and a leading black lawyer's home.

They were later discovered and detonated by experts from the army base at Anniston, Alabama.

To prevent further attacks, US President Lyndon Johnson gave the marchers the protection of nearly 3,000 troops, plus FBI and local police assistance.

But three days ago Viola Liuzzo, a white civil rights advocate who had been ferrying demonstrators to their homes, was shot dead on a lonely stretch of road near the route of the march.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Ku-Klux-Klan movement have reportedly tried to contact President Johnson to discuss his aversion to their organisation.

There was no immediate response from the US President, who recently launched a scathing attack on the group, describing it as "a band of hooded bigots, whose loyalty was not with the United States".

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The protests came just months after the signing of the Civil Rights Bill which created equal rights regardless of race, colour, religion or national origin.

The Voting Rights Act, which banned literacy tests and poll taxes which had previously been used to prevent black people from voting, was introduced in August 1965.

But many states acted quickly to circumvent the law and most of the decade was marked by race riots and assassinations.

Further riots followed in Los Angeles in August 1965.

They lasted six days and left 34 dead and a further 1,000 people injured.

Dr King was assassinated in April 1968 and this led to riots in 100 US cities.

Black people continued to remain at a disadvantage when looking for work, and programmes of "affirmative action" were introduced during the 1970s under President Nixon.



YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 When it comes to saying what you're thinking, you've never been shy. That goes double now, when you'll be even more curious about a certain subject, and even more likely to ask questions.

Taurus April 20-May 20 If you thought yesterday was intoxicating, you ain't seen nothing yet. There's even more along those lines in store for you today. As fond as you are of love and the sweet nothings that accompany the condition.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 You're so ready to get the show on the road that your enthusiasm has caught on with at least one of your dear friends. They may even be thinking of doing something that's similar to what you're up to.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Your sign occasionally feels the urge to let go and let the world see just how good you are at what you do. You don't often give in to that urge, but right about now your loved ones will just about insist.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You've been going over this for a while now, trying to decide whether to keep quiet or just say what needs to be said. At the moment - and only if you're intuitively inspired to believe that opening up is the right thing.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 It's been going on for a while now, it certainly does feel wonderful and you'd like nothing better than to tell the entire world all about it - but don't. Not just yet. Keep it yours for just a little bit longer.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Love has been in the air lately for one and all. You, of course, specialize in this subject, even when it comes to making sure your friends are really happy and that they truly will be forever spoiled.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Stop worrying about that authority figure who's been avoiding you whenever you ask for a meeting about that raise, promotion or bonus. When the time is right, they'll be supportive and quite helpful.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Your sign is in charge of far off places, people, and cultures, and when you're not on the road, your only consolation is to be in touch with someone or something that amuses and interests you.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 It's time to reveal something now, though, so while the next 24 hours may not be surprising to you, expect that your actions may still shock, amaze and astound a loved one.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 If anyone loves the spontaneous side of life, it's you (what a shocker, hmmm?), and that goes double for people who aren't afraid to act on impulse - like yourself, for example.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 No one has ever accused you of not having a big heart - you have a huge one. You have enough room in that heart for not just those you love, but for anyone who needs you.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

MIN MAX CONDITION

CHINA

Beijing 13 25 cloudy
Harbin 4 17 cloudy
Tianjin 16 20 cloudy
Urumqi 5 10 cloudy/drizzle
Xi'an 12 30 cloudy/overcast
Lhasa 0 16 clear
Chengdu 13 26 cloudy
Chongqing 15 21 drizzle
Kunming 9 18 moderate rain/shower
Nanjing 13 27 clear
Shanghai 14 25 clear
Wuhan 12 27 cloudy
Hangzhou 13 27 clear
Taipei 19 29 drizzle/cloudy
Guangzhou 17 28 cloudy
Hong Kong 21 27 cloudy

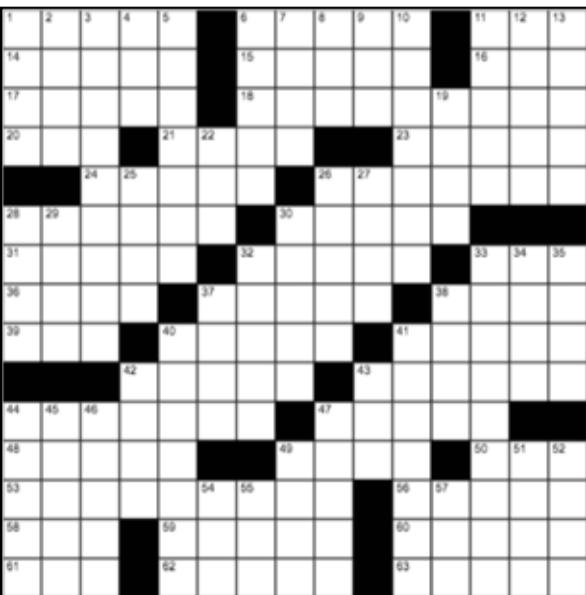
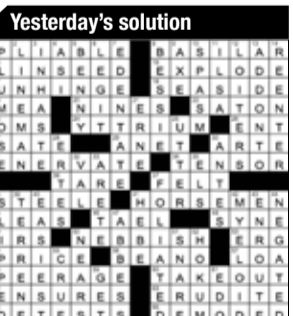
WORLD

Moscow -7 1 flurry/cloudy
Frankfurt 0 11 drizzle
Paris 3 12 drizzle/moderate rain
London 0 4 sleet/moderate rain
New York 0 10 overcast/drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- A Bell for \_\_\_; 6- Wind instrument; 11- PC program; 14- Small house; 15- Red fluorescent dye; 16- Pasture used for grazing; 17- Hang; 18- Secondary piece of equipment; 20- MSNBC rival; 21- Pianist Peter; 23- Gallows loop; 24- Considers; 26- Apprentice; 28- Self-centered person; 30- Movie critic Roger; 31- Marriage announcement; 32- Uneven, as if gnawed away; 33- \_\_\_ Haw; 36- Arch type; 37- Foremost part; 38- Cereal grain; 39- Not for a Scot; 40- Mesa \_\_\_ National Park; 41- Gumbo pods; 42- From head \_\_\_; 43- Horse restraint; 44- A brook, perhaps; 47- Burdened; 48- Light purple; 49- Make reference to; 50- Western Hemisphere org.; 53- Worship; 56- Rough files; 58- PBS benefactor; 59- \_\_\_ Dame; 60- Discharge; 61- Banned insecticide; 62- Without a break; 63- Bygone birds;

DOWN: 1- Electrically versatile; 2- Mend with rows of stitches; 3- Forsaken one; 4- Pinch; 5- Unity; 6- Phobias; 7- Nuts; 8- Trojans' sch.; 9- Draw; 10- Trap; 11- Crazy as \_\_\_; 12- As such; 13- Check recipient; 19- And \_\_\_ goes; 22- 911 respondent; 25- \_\_\_ kleine Nachtmusik; 26- Steakhouse order; 27- Take five; 28- Black, in poetry; 29- Nuts (over); 30- Chip away at; 32- Diamond flaw?; 33- Hardheaded; 34- And others: Abbr.; 35- "\_\_\_ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 37- Celebration; 38- Depression-era migrant; 40- Vent in the earth's crust; 41- Commanded; 42- Ski lift; 43- Dracula form; 44- Tasteless; 45- Assisted; 46- Swell up; 47- Covered on the inside; 49- Maize; 51- Lhasa \_\_\_; 52- Concordes, e.g.; 54- Heavy weight; 55- Suffix with meteor; 57- Gone by;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
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



AD

Real estate listings for JML Property. Includes 'FOR SALE' and 'FOR RENT' sections with details for properties like Grande Plaza, 1st Floor Car Park, Apartment B, Va Fat, Kinqlight, Carnation Court, Apartment C, Nam Long, and Apartment C, Vai Fat.



## CRICKET

# Australia calls for reinforcements amid cheating probe

**M**ATT Renshaw hit the winning runs to help Queensland state clinch the domestic cricket title before rushing to South Africa to reinforce an Australia squad mired in a cheating scandal ahead of the fourth test later this week in Johannesburg.

Australia skipper Steve Smith has been suspended by the International Cricket Council for the match for his part in a ball tampering scandal during the third test.

Opener Cameron Bancroft was also sanctioned by the ICC after admitting to using tape covered with dirt to rub one side of the leather ball to make it rougher and assist reverse swing for the Australian bowlers during a heavy loss in Cape Town last weekend.

Smith admitted some senior players were aware of the tampering attempt. He and vice captain David Warner agreed to stand down as team leaders pending an investigation by Cricket Australia, which is expected to result in fur-

AP PHOTO



ther sanctions possibly for both the senior batsmen and Bancroft.

Cricket Australia chief executive James Sutherland has flown to South Africa and is expected to make an announcement Wednesday regarding the findings of the investigation.

The 21-year-old Renshaw, who was replaced as Australian opener by Bancroft before last year's Ashes series against England, has returned to form since being sent

back to the domestic Sheffield Shield first-class competition.

The announcement that he had been drafted into the Australian squad came before he went out to bat yesterday, and he capped his national recall with an unbeaten 81 from 83 deliveries in Queensland's nine-wicket win over Tasmania in the final.

"It's pretty surreal," Renshaw said. "People dream about winning a Shield their whole cricket careers

and managing to do it at 21 and obviously what's coming [in South Africa], I can look forward to that, but I've got to enjoy a thing that not many people manage to do."

Renshaw, who has scored 623 runs in 10 tests at an average of 36.64, said he hadn't been concentrating much on the ball-tampering scandal.

"Just been putting all my emotions into winning [for Queensland] and it's just relief now," he said.

Other players were expected to join Renshaw on flights to South Africa, with reports fellow Queensland and former test opener Joe Burns is among those in the mix for selection.

The initial part of the Cricket Australia investigation has been conducted at the team's luxury Cape Town waterfront hotel, where they were staying before leaving for Johannesburg.

While cases of ball tampering haven't been uncommon in international cricket, with senior players from England, South Africa, India and Pakistan all involved in past charges, the cheating revelations from Cape Town have caused shock and accusations of hypocrisy against an Australian team that has always promoted itself as playing hard but fair. **AP**

## ZIMBABWE CRICKET OFFICIAL BANNED FOR 20 YEARS

**A ZIMBABWEAN** official has been banned for 20 years by the International Cricket Council after being found guilty of match-fixing charges. Rajan Nayer, who was an influential board member of Zimbabwe's cricket governing body until 2015, was initially suspended and charged for approaching Zimbabwe captain Graeme Cremer

with an offer of USD30 000 to influence the outcome of a game during the African team's home test series with the West Indies last October. Immediately after charges were laid, the Harare Metropolitan Cricket Association, the country's largest domestic cricket body, removed Nayer from his position as its marketing director.

AD

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AP PHOTO



Venus Williams



Sloane Stephens

## TENNIS

# Venus, Sloane advance to Miami Open quarterfinals

Steven Wine, Key Biscayne

**S**LOANE Stephens' loudest fan kept shouting advice and encouragement from the upper deck yesterday [Macau time], perhaps providing the nudge she needed to shake a post-U.S. Open slump.

Stephens earned her biggest victory since winning last year's Open, beating No. 3-ranked Garbine Muguruza 6-3, 6-4 to reach the quarterfinals at the Miami Open.

"Keep it in the court, girl — that's all you've got to do!" the spectator hollered, and Stephens did. During a post-match on-court interview, Stephens

thanked the fan, who has attended her past two matches.

"I have no idea who that is," she said later. "Day before yesterday was the first time I'd ever seen him. But it's entertaining. Obviously he knows tennis — he was shouting all the right things."

The fan might have picked a good time to jump on the Stephens bandwagon. She'll next face Angelique Kerber with a shot at reaching the Miami Open semifinals for the first time.

Also advancing was three-time champion Venus Williams, who came from behind for the second day in a row and beat defending champion Johanna Konta 5-7, 6-1, 6-2. The victory

was Williams' 64th on Key Biscayne.

"I'm not bad at playing tennis," the 37-year-old Williams said, "so why not keep going?"

Victoria Azarenka, another three-time champion, swept 2012 champ Agnieszka Radwanska 6-2, 6-2.

Stephens claimed her first major title in New York in September and is ranked 12th, but she arrived at Key Biscayne with a record of only 3-4 this year.

"After winning a Grand Slam, it's not easy to come back right out and keep playing," Stephens said. "I was so excited after winning the U.S. Open, I was living my life to the fullest. Now I'm back to my day job. It's a little

bit difficult. It takes a little bit of confidence and a lot of hard work."

On the men's side, qualifier Thanasi Kokkinakis lost in the follow-up to his upset of Roger Federer in the second round. Fernando Verdasco rallied from two mini-breaks down in the decisive tiebreaker and beat Kokkinakis 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (4).

Kerber advanced by rallying past qualifier Yafan Wang 6-7 (1), 7-6 (5), 6-3.

Stephens won with typically dogged defense, and by attacking Muguruza's weak second serve. The Spaniard has been battling a slump herself, falling to 8-6 in 2018.

"I missed too many shots, a

couple of mistakes I shouldn't have done in important moments," said Muguruza, the 2017 Wimbledon champion. "My serve in general could be better. It was not a big difference, but in the end a few details went to her side."

Stephens started the year by losing her opening match in consecutive tournaments, including the Australian Open. She then spent more than a month away from the tour, but said she was no longer celebrating her U.S. Open title.

"After Australia I really took time to get myself together," she said. "If you put in the work, you're able to get results."

More than one fan is applauding her success at the Miami Open, the hometown tournament for Stephens, a South Florida native.

Next year the event will move 18 miles north to the Miami Dolphins stadium. Stephens, who first came to Key Biscayne for juniors matches more than a decade ago, said she is sad about the switch — and not just because of tennis memories.

"I'll miss Sir Pizza," she said. "I've been going there since I was 12. The same people still work there, and it's such a gem. I'm definitely going to miss that place."

Other winners included American Danielle Collins defeating Monica Puig of Puerto Rico 3-6, 6-4, 6-2 and Jelena Ostapenko topping Petra Kvitova 7-6 (4), 6-3.

Denis Shapovalov edged Sam Querrey 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 and Nick Kyrgios defeated Fabio Fognini 6-3, 6-3.

Alexander Zverev stopped David Ferrer 2-6, 6-2, 6-4 and Frances Tiafoe led Tomas Berdych 6-7 (2), 6-2, 5-4 before the match was suspended at 2:13 a.m. because of rain.

The winner will play Kevin Anderson later today [Macau time]. **AP**

## OLYMPICS

# National committees get glimpse of Tokyo 2020 venues

**A**dozen national Olympic committees have been given a quick look at Tokyo's venue preparations for the 2020 Summer Games.

Mark England of the British Olympic Association says they were impressed.

"We haven't had many questions to ask the organizing committee because the venues have been absolutely fantastic," England said.

The tour yesterday marked the committees' first visit to Tokyo since

the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics ended last month.

Tokyo's Metropolitan Gymnasium was among the venues. It was built in 1954 and hosted gymnastics for the 1964 Olympics. It will be the venue for table tennis in two years and sits next to the new Olympic stadium, which is under construction.

"In this venue here today — historical and traditional though it is — we can see that it is in absolutely superb condition," England said.

Tokyo's use of existing venues will delight the International Olympic Committee, which has been criticized when cities have built "white elephant" sports venues.

The most recent Olympics in Rio de Janeiro left behind a half-dozen venues that are not being adequately utilized.

Rio built a cycling velodrome that has caught fire twice since the Olympics ended two years ago. Several arenas in the Olympic Park are largely vacant, and a newly built

golf course has struggled to find players.

"It was obviously more challenging for Brazil because it was the first [Olympics] in South America, so they didn't have that history, tradition of hosting games," England said. "The games were very different in Rio de Janeiro. The two are not comparable. The state of readiness if very, very well advanced in Tokyo."

In addition to Britain, nations on the venue tour included: Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Greece, Guate-

AP PHOTO



mala, Serbia, China, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Portugal, Monaco and Japan.

"National Olympic committees feed off of each other when we're talking

and asking questions," England said. "Some of us go back a number of games, so we know each other well. And you can see this is a terrific opportunity." **AP**

opinion

**Macau Matters**

Richard Whitfield



**OUR NEW PARKING METER SYSTEM**

Everybody should have noticed by now that Macau is converting to a new system of on-street parking meters. From several perspectives I believe that this new system is a major step backwards and a great opportunity lost.

Parking meters control the use of street-side parking bays. In the old system you parked, got out of your car and used coins or your MacauPass card to pay at the adjacent meter for using the bay for a period of time. Policemen could easily tell when a vehicle had over-stayed because empty meters flash a light. This is a well known, very reliable and easily understood system used all round the world for many, many years. The biggest problem with it is periodically collecting coins from the meters.

The “new” system uses kiosks that control several parking bays – you park, get out of your car and walk to the relevant kiosk, key in the parking bay ID and use coins or your MacauPass to pay for using the bay for a period of time. This is also a well known system that has been used for many years and has the well known problem that policemen cannot easily identify cars that have overstayed their payment. To compensate, coin collection is somewhat easier (but still has to be done regularly).

I keep on saying that Macau needs to be a showcase for new technology and be an example of “living in the future”. So, why do we choose to upgrade our system of on-street parking management to 20-year-old technology? And why do we choose a very poor implementation of such old technology, e.g. the parking kiosk instructions are only available in Chinese and Portuguese. Surely these systems come with instructions in any language?

Also, why do we spend lots of money putting in the older parking meter technology all round Coloane and other “outer suburban” places just a few years ago only to replace them with “new” parking kiosks a few years later?

Well proven toll road systems exist where vehicles are fitted with ID transponders that are linked to credit cards so that when you pass through a tunnel or drive on a toll road you are automatically charged a fee, eg the AutoPass system for the cross-harbor tunnels in Hong Kong, which dates from the early 1990s. The MacauPass and Octopus Card in Hong Kong also give another way of thinking about how to do on-street parking, and this technology is also 20+ years old.

It is easy to conceptualize how these approaches can be adapted to on-street parking. You buy a transponder for your car, fit it in the passenger side wheel well and link it to your credit card. Each parking bay is fitted with a transponder reader located near the front passenger wheel position in the bay. When you park your car, the reader interrogates the vehicle transponder to identify the vehicle and timestamps its arrival. When you drive away the reader also recognizes this event and charges your credit card for usage of the bay. The reader can also be fitted with an LED light that flashes when a vehicle has been in the bay for longer than the permitted maximum parking time, and can notify the police of the situation and automatically fine the vehicle.

Such a system totally eliminates coin collection and automates fines for over-stayers. If it does not exist, I am sure that if the Macau government supported the development of such a system we would have a world leading on-street parking management system that is “future-proofed” for use even by autonomous vehicles, and one that we could export all round the world. Even if it does exist already, implementing it in Macau would effectively showcase that we are a “city of the future” and we could export consulting advice to help other cities implement similar systems.

**THE WEBSITE DEFYING SPANISH BUZZ BOOK BAN TAKEN DOWN**

A website that defied Spanish court orders banning a book investigating drug trafficking in Spain has been taken down.

The Madrid Booksellers’ Guild earlier launched an online tool that automatically pulls some 80,000 words from Miguel de Cervantes’ classic novel “Don Quixote,” and pieces them together to recreate the contents of the banned work.

But the court struck back. The website was no longer available yesterday, less than two

weeks after its launch. A one-sentence explanation on the home page at findingfarina.com/en/ said it was removed on court orders.

The website was the latest flare-up in a wider legal and political dispute over freedom of expression in Spain.

When Cervantes wrote “Don Quixote” in the 17th century, he couldn’t have imagined that the novel would be used as a weapon in a modern battle over freedom of speech in Spain.

**Drone nearly hits plane landing in New Zealand from Japan**

Nick Perry, Wellington

AIR New Zealand said yesterday that a drone came within meters of a flight descending into Auckland Airport from Tokyo, putting the safety of 278 passengers and crew at risk.

After Sunday’s incident, the national carrier is calling for prison terms for drone operators who endanger lives.

Air New Zealand said the pilots of Flight NZ92 spotted the drone about 5 meters from their Boeing 777-200 at a point in their descent when it was impossible to take evasive action.

The airline said the drone passed so close that the crew worried it had been sucked into an engine, although a later inspection showed that hadn’t happened.

“It’s clear the time has now come for tougher deterrents for reckless drone use around airports to safeguard travelers,” David Morgan, the airline’s chief operations and integrity standards officer, said in a statement.

He called for penalties to be imposed more consistently and also called for better education around



File photo of an Air New Zealand passenger plane

drones.

The airline said it was the second example of reckless drone use this month, after an Air New Zealand pilot reported the presence of a drone within controlled airspace on March 6 at Auckland Airport. That incident prompted the airport to halt all flights for 30 minutes.

Under current regulations, drone operators who breach aviation rules can be fined up to 5,000 New Zealand dollars (USD3,600).

New Zealand’s Civil Aviation Authority said it su-

ported the airline’s call for better education, and that a government-led group was considering new drone regulations.

“There is no excuse for anyone flying a drone near an airport without authorization or in the flight path of aircraft,” Graeme Harris, the director of civil aviation, said in a statement. “Such action is highly irresponsible and is the height of stupidity.”

Harris said New Zealand was not alone in trying to grapple with a rapid rise in the use of drones in its skies. AP

**Key unofficial bishop in Vatican-China deal detained**

A bishop in China’s underground Catholic church has reportedly been detained, just as the Vatican has been laying the groundwork for him to step aside as part of a long-sought deal with Beijing over bishop nominations.

The AsiaNews agency, which closely covers the Catholic Church in China, said Bishop Vincent Guo Xijin and his chancellor were taken away Monday, at the start of Holy Week. AsiaNews noted that Guo had disappeared for several weeks last year around Easter as well.

The Vatican has for years been seeking to unite China’s underground and official churches to bring the more than 12 million Chinese Catholics ostensibly under the pope’s wing for the first time since China and the Holy See severed relations nearly seven decades ago. Worship in China is officially allowed only in state-authorized churches outside the pope’s authority.

Recently, the contours of a deal were hammered out under which the Vatican would recognize the seven “illegitimate” bishops in China, who were consecrated without papal consent, ask two underground bishops to step aside and

allow the official ones in Mindong and Shantou to become the de-facto Holy See-recognized bishops, a Vatican official told The Associated Press.

Guo agreed earlier this year to the Vatican request to step down and become the auxiliary bishop of Mindong, the official said.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn’t authorized to reveal the content of the negotiations, said the deal was not a “good” arrangement for the Holy See, since it limited its activities. But the official said it was the best the Holy See could get for now.

Going forward, the agreement calls for the pope to be able to “intervene” in future bishop nominations, which the official said amounted to a papal veto over names proposed by Beijing.

The Vatican spokesman didn’t immediately comment yesterday on Guo’s reported detention.

Police officials in the city of Fu’an, where Guo is based, as well as the city of Ningde, which oversees Fu’an, said they “did not know” anything about the reported detention. AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	45-65 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	70-100 Moderate
Ambient	70-100 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

**WORLD BRIEFS**



**LEBANON**’s state-run news agency is reporting that a Lebanese man has been charged with murdering a Filipina maid whose body was found stuffed in a freezer in Kuwait.

**EGYPT** Turnout appeared low yesterday as Egyptians voted on the second day of an election that President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi is virtually certain to win, after all serious rivals were either arrested or intimidated into dropping out.



**SERBIA-KOSOVO** Kosovo Serbs set up a roadblock in northern Kosovo and their representatives walked out of Kosovo’s government yesterday a day after the arrest and expulsion of a senior Serbian government official that has refueled tensions between the Balkan foes.

**ITALY** Police in southern Italy have detained an Egyptian imam who ran a cultural center where he allegedly preached extremist and violent interpretations of Islam to children.



**BRAZIL** Appeals court judges have unanimously upheld their decision to reject former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva’s appeal of his conviction on corruption charges – a move that brings him one step closer to being barred from the presidential ballot and put behind bars.

**MEXICO**’s navy said that a helicopter called in to support marines after they were ambushed in the border city of Nuevo Laredo didn’t kill the bystanders who died. Local media reported Monday that a mother and two children were killed.