



### RETROACTIVE FISCAL BENEFITS

The proposal to assist residents who have lost their vehicles during Typhoon Hato will be voted on

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### CHUI TAK KEI'S PHOTOBIOGRAPHY

A photobiography on Macau's late influential leader Chui Tak Kei will be released to the public on Saturday

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### TROUBLED CHINESE INSURER RECEIVES BAILOUT

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# Times



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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

### WORLD BRIEFS

**CHINA-KOREA** Senior Chinese diplomat Wang Yi told North Korea's foreign minister that Beijing supports the North's planned summits with South Korea and the United States.



**INDONESIA** Waters off an Indonesian port city reek like a gas station after an oil spill and fire that killed four people over the weekend, an official said yesterday. More on p12

**THAILAND** The political group that has won every national election since 2001, only to be forced out of power repeatedly by non-electoral means, has taken an initial step on a comeback trail, registering its members in order to contest polls promised for early next year. More on p12



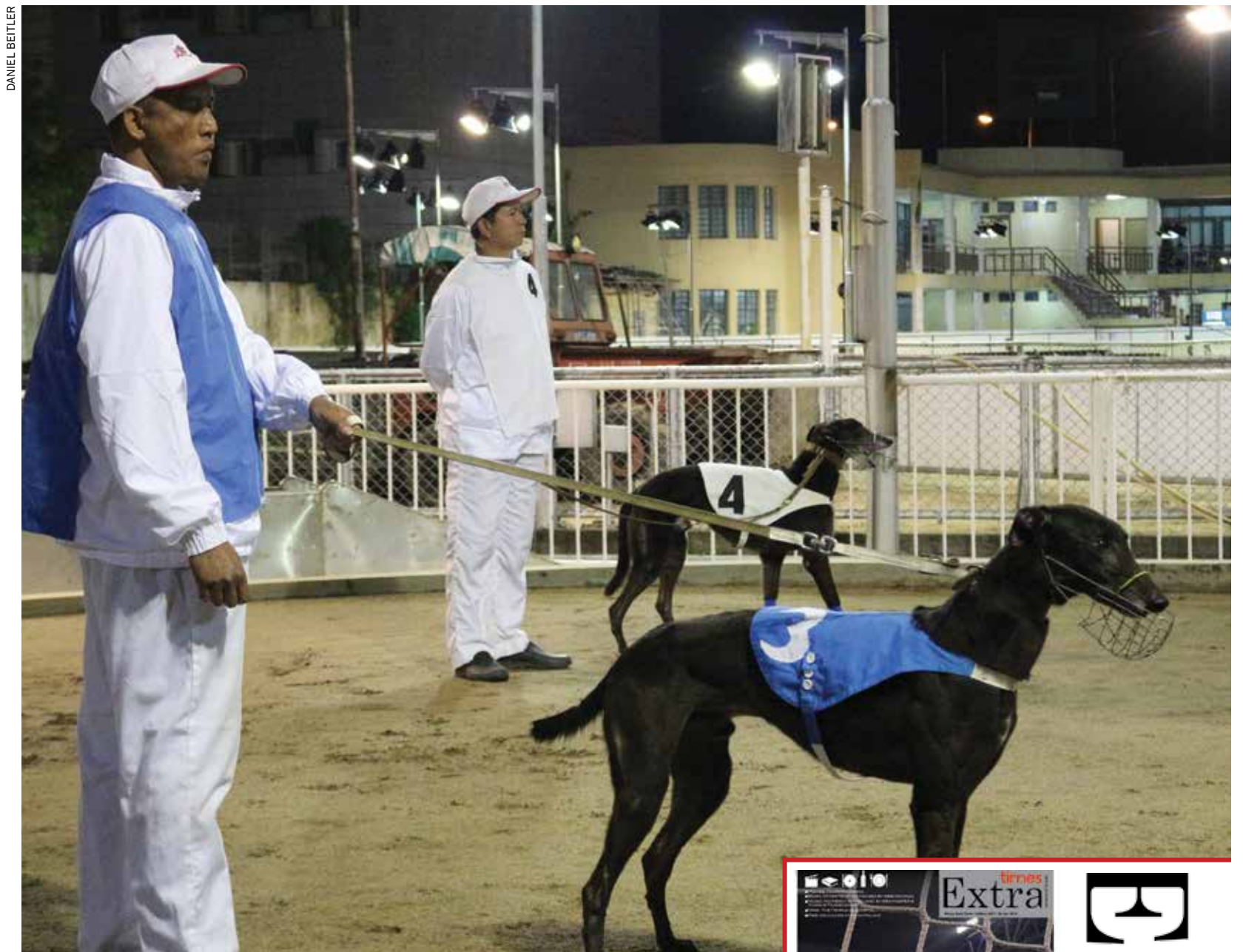
**MYANMAR** Lawyers for two Reuters journalists detained in Myanmar asked a court yesterday to dismiss the case against them, saying the evidence doesn't support the charges. More on p13

**US-PAKISTAN** The United States has placed a small Pakistani political party on its list of foreign terrorist groups, calling it a front for the militants behind the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

More on backpage

# Trade dispute grows, China slaps tariffs on US

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## Greyhound gamblers heavy-hearted in last days of Canidrome

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# Gov't proposal on Hato damaged vehicles subsidy to be voted on

Renato Marques

**T**HE Executive Council (ExCo) has analyzed the final draft of the proposal which will be sent to the Legislative Assembly (AL) in order to support residents affected by Typhoon Hato in August last year.

The proposal to assist residents who have lost or had their vehicles severely damaged in the storm was announced several days after Typhoon Hato, but details of the proposal have only recently been finalized and released.

In a press conference at the government headquarters, ExCo spokesperson Leong Heng Teng said that the proposal differs slightly from initial drafts. "We are extending the period of application to two years after the entry of the law into force," said Leong. Such a change resulted from "several opinions heard during this period."

Another significant change is the government's decision to allow the bill to be analyzed by the AL, instead of being passed as a matter of urgency (as was initially decided).

On the topic, director of the Financial Services Bureau (DSF) Iong Kong Leong said, "It will follow the normal [legislative] procedure and not the urgent one as we thought it was reasonable to do so since this law has a retroactive application."

Regarding the expected time



frame in which residents who have replaced their vehicles can expect to receive a tax refund, Iong said, "This is a proposal, the final version will depend on the discussion at the AL. At this point we are not sure if this bill will be approved like it is or not. [...] After [the law] is into force [the tax refund procedure] won't take a long time, more or less one month to the restitution of the tax to the taxpayer."

There is still the matter of what percentage refund taxpayers who have replaced lost or damaged vehicles will receive.

Iong noted, "although minimum limits were established

[MOP2,000 for motorcycles and MOP8,000 for automobiles], that doesn't mean that taxpayers will get that. [...] For example, if a resident buys a new motorcycle but the tax payable for this new motorcycle is only MOP1,500, he will receive only that amount as refund [in case he is entitled to the 100 percent refund]."

If the new vehicle acquired by the resident uses "alternative energies," that is, fuel that is not a petroleum derivative, the maximum rebate is set at 80 percent of tax paid for vehicles less than a year old. The claimable rebate will drop by 10 percent

each year for all vehicles up to 10 years old, at which point they are considered obsolete and ineligible for a rebate.

A total of 6,521 vehicles will fall under this rebate. These are vehicles registered for cancellation at the Transport Bureau before September 18 last year, which were damaged beyond repair by the typhoon and associated flooding.

Damaged vehicles that could be repaired by their owners will not receive government support. The DSF director estimated that a total of MOP147 million in taxes might be refunded.

## Fake casino chips nearly double in 2017

**T**WENTY-one extra cases involving counterfeit money were registered in 2017, compared to the 278 cases in 2016, according to statistics released by the Office of the Secretary for Security.

The 299 cases of counterfeit money involved a total of 2,869 counterfeit banknotes, coins and casino chips, worth a total of MOP12.63 million.

In 2017, 22 counterfeit Macau pataca banknotes were seized, which included four MOP1,000 notes, 12 MOP500 notes, five MOP100 notes, one MOP50 note, and also one MOP5 coin.

In 2016, 17 counterfeit Macau pataca notes, amounting to a total of MOP9,510, were seized.

In 2017, 2,304 counterfeit Hong Kong currency notes were seized, including 2,233 HKD1,000 notes, 44 HKD500 notes and 25 HKD100 notes, worth a total of HKD2.25 million.

In 2016, only 337 counterfeit Hong Kong currency notes, worth a total of HKD274,820, were seized.

In addition, in 2017, 158 counterfeit US currency notes were also apprehended, with the notes' value amounting to MOP15,800.

In 2016, 24 counterfeit US dollar notes, amounting to MOP2,400, were seized.

The office said that, most noticeably, 245 counterfeit casino chips were seized in 2017, including 16 chips each worth MOP500,000, two chips each worth MOP100,000, 149 chips each worth MOP10,000, 23 chips of HKD5,000 and 55 chips of HKD1,000, amounting to a total of MOP9.86 million.

In 2016, the number of counterfeit casino chips was only 106, with those chips being worth MOP6.65 million. **JZ**

## Man admits killing father

**T**HE Judiciary Police (PJ) reported the latest updates on the alleged murder which took place on Tuesday.

A 28-year-old local man was arrested on charges of killing his father, a local resident in his 50s. He has confessed to the murder.

The incident took place on Tuesday morning, at a residence unit of the Edf. Man On, located in Iao Hon.

According to the PJ, the victim and the suspect

frequently came to blows following family disputes, and their relationship was described as analogous to that between a tenant and a landlord.

The father was stabbed by his son in the neck after he fell into a coma. The accused was unemployed at the time of the alleged murder, having returned to Macau in 2013 upon finishing his studies in Taiwan.

The victim was diagnosed with mental problems in 1995 and has been un-

dergoing treatment since then.

The victim previously lived with his daughters, having only moved in with his son at the end of 2016.

The accused has confessed guilt. Following a medical evaluation indicating that the accused had no mental health problems at the time of committing the offence and his confession was made while in a normal mental state, the PJ is now considering the confession valid.



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# Greyhound gamblers heavy-hearted in last days of Canidrome

Daniel Beittler, Julie Zhu

**W**HEN the local government presented the Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome with an ultimatum in mid-2016 – close down or relocate to another site – most observers assumed that the dog-racing track's days were numbered.

They saw no other viable location for the greyhound racing track, and Angela Leong, consort of casino mogul Stanley Ho and owner of the Canidrome, agreed. She confirmed at the start of this year that the facility would close its doors by July 21, 2018.

But the recent and surprise quarter-century renewal of the Macau Jockey Club's concession – despite the company's financial non-performance – made some observers hint at the possibility that the government could revoke its ultimatum at the final hour.

With just 15 weeks remaining on the 55-year-old concession, the Times took the opportunity to revisit the Canidrome in the hope of documenting its final days.

## A RELIC THAT WILL BE MISSED

A relic of old Macau, the aging facility is in an obvious state of deterioration.

It is a noiseless, motionless crater save for the wailing of its greyhounds and the staging of occasional races to entertain a handful of patrons.

Just two dozen or so visitors patronized the facility on one recent Tuesday night visit; some of them tourists, the others resident regulars.

Its stillness was a stark reminder that the Canidrome is one of the most sparsely-populated

urban sites in one of the world's most densely-populated neighborhoods.

And yet its races will be missed by its patrons, who – be they tourists or residents – say they disapprove with the government's decision to force its closure.

Michael Chan, a local resident in his 40s who lives in the area, said he has been coming to the races for more than 20 years. He said that he was regretting the Canidrome's closure because "it has accompanied us for half a lifetime."

"This [used] to be a very popular activity," he told the Times. "There were a lot of people before, then gradually fewer people [came] because the management became worse. I think it is closing because its operation is bad."

Others were disgruntled by the impending closure.

"Of course I am sad," answered a sexagenarian local who identified himself as Ao Ieong and said he has wagered on the greyhounds every week for the last 10 years. "Now [the government is] closing the Canidrome, where can we, the Macau people entertain [ourselves]?"

A Taiwanese tourist named You Liao said she thought it was a pity that the racetrack was closing. "It's quite special," she told the Times. "This is my first time coming here. I heard that it is closing, so I came here to have a look."

Another Taiwanese tourist, who identified only as Kao, said that his Tuesday night visit was the second he had made to the Canidrome after December last year. "I don't think it is about gambling or not gambling," he opined. "I think this is a culture, a tradition. [...] It is a pity if it is not kept."

Kao said that the facility was

exceptional and should be preserved as one of the few places worldwide that still have greyhound racing tracks.

"It is not like horse racing which probably many places have," said Kao. "For my last trip to Macau, the most impressive thing for me was the dog racing. So I think it is worth keeping."

Contrarily, a young local by the name of Martin Wan said he was indifferent about the Canidrome's July closure, despite the fact he has been visiting the racetrack for at least five years, because he would migrate to the Jockey Club.

"Actually, I don't feel it is a pity [that] the concession can't be renewed," he told the Times. "I can also go [to see the] horse racing. [...] It does not matter to me [if it is closed or not]."

**I think this is a culture, a tradition. [...] It is a pity if it is not kept.**

KAO

TAIWANESE TOURIST

## LITTLE BETS, BIG LOSSES

Many critics were astounded in February to find that the government had granted the Macau Jockey Club a 24-year concession as the sole provider of horse racing activities in Macau. They had reasoned that the company's consecutive years of accumulated losses – as well as its alleged failure to generate tax revenue for the government – would have discounted that

possibility.

Could the Canidrome be presented with a similar, surprise renewal?

Local animal rights activist Albano Martins says it won't as the government has already informed the public that the facility will close. Nevertheless, he said, the company doesn't appear to be packing its things just yet.

The financial state of the Canidrome appears broadly similar to that of the Macau Jockey Club.

According to figures from the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau, gross revenue from greyhound racing in the territory amounted to MOP205 million in 2012. That has fallen uninterrupted every year since, and in 2017 stood at approximately MOP46 million. Profit for the company in 2015 amounted to just MOP4.8 million, marking a fall of over 80 percent from the previous year.

In 2015, an international campaign to blacklist the Canidrome began to pick up momentum. Spearheaded by Martins, an alliance of international observers came down on the facility, describing it as "the world's deadliest greyhound racetrack," due to the abnormally high number of euthanized dogs.

A blockade of greyhound imports then contributed to a diminishing number of dogs housed at the racing track and, as a consequence, less frequent races. This may have contributed to the consistent decline in Canidrome revenues.

The Times enquired during its visit as to how much and how often its patrons gamble, and found that few of them were willing to stake a lot on their favorite greyhound.

Of the local residents inter-

viewed, Michael Chan said he bets up to HKD100 per race, Ao Ieong said he bets "normally five patacas or ten patacas," while Martin Wan only bets "once in a while."

Most of the tourists did not disclose how much they had gambled, though Kao, the return visitor, said he had bet "all afternoon [...]" and then won about HKD200."

## WHAT NEXT FOR THE GREYHOUNDS?

Today, the most pressing issue ahead of the Canidrome's closure – for those on both sides of the debate – is what will happen to the dogs in its care. It is an issue that escalated into an intense, if short-lived, spat last year between Angela Leong and Albano Martins.

Martins wants a local animal rights association to inherit the greyhounds and prepare them for adoption. But Leong argues that the dogs belong to private owners and therefore the Canidrome company has no right to cede them without the owners' permission. Anyway, she retorted in October last year, why is Martins so interested in acquiring the animals?

Martins contends that the Canidrome is the single largest owner of greyhounds at the facility and is the de facto owner of the rest, under the contractual obligations negotiated between the company and private investors.

Gamblers at the Canidrome say that they are equally concerned about what will happen to the greyhounds once the site shuts down. All of the interviewed residents said it "would be better" for the dogs to be adopted, but highlighted problems with their reputation for making high-maintenance pets.



## Chinese company wins La Liga image rights in China

The Spanish Football League, La Liga, has confirmed that Chinese company "Nice International Sports Ltd" will be awarded the right to manage the audio-visual rights for the league, as well as for the second division, in mainland China, Macau and Taiwan until the end of the 2021/22 season. In a press communique released this week, La Liga confirmed the agreement "is of major importance in one of the key regions for the Spanish competitions and one which will take them closer to their fans" in the area. La Liga said that it wants its fans in China to be able to "enjoy a premium product." Meanwhile, the awardee assured it will work "with its partners in the market to guarantee the promotion of La Liga and the management of its rights in China."

## C2 Magazine discusses bookstore survival

The twenty-sixth issue of C2 Magazine will be launched today, discussing the business and operation models of local brick-and-mortar bookstores in Macau and their survival in the "Feature" section. According to a statement issued by the Cultural Affairs Bureau, the story behind local design brand established by two local sisters of the post-90s generation TICK.DESIGN, is shared in the section "Brand Story." In the section "Budding Talents", street art team GANTZ5 was invited to share its experience in graffiti art creation, while local columnists shared their perspectives on the development of the cultural and creative industries. C2 is a bimonthly online trilingual magazine issued on the first Wednesday of every two months.

# Author to launch Chui Tak Kei's photobiography

Lynzy Valles

A photobiography on Macau's late influential leader Chui Tak Kei will be released to the public on Saturday at Albergue SCM, showcasing nearly a hundred photos of Chui's activities as a public figure across 40 years.

The book, "Chui Tak Kei, History in a Biography", is authored by João Guedes, who has collected photographs from different archives including Tung Sin Tong's, Kiang Wu Hospital's and archives from the Government Information Bureau.

Spanning a total of 240 pages, the photobiography is the third edition of the "Macau-FotoBios" Collection and contains photographs and documentation on Chui Tak Kei which has not been available to the public until now.



Born in Macau in 1911, Chui Tak Kei was a key political figure and an influential mediator between China and the colonial Portuguese administration, playing a pivotal role in the December 1966 riot, known as the "1-2-3 incident".

The riot occurred on December 3, 1966 stimulated by the China's

Cultural Revolution.

Speaking to the Times, Guedes explained that the public figure had a significant role in the city, particularly during the World War II, assisting refugees who were coming to Macau.

"He was one of the three leaders of the Macau Chamber of Commerce – that was [what]

we called 'shadow government' of Macau at that time," he said.

"The photos speak about various times [in Macau] after the Second World War and until his death," the author added.

The leading figure in the public and private institutions of Macau held political roles such as vice-president position of the Legislative Assembly of Macau, and positions in the Governors Consultative Committee and the Town Council of Macau (also known as Leal Senado).

The uncle of the SAR's Chief Executive Chui Sai On, Chui Tak Kei was also a member of the Drafting Committee of the Basic Law and the president of the Consultative Committee of the Basic Law of the SAR.

According to Guedes, Chui Tak Kei financially contributed to artistic

and music associations, as he was a fond patron of the arts with a specific interest in painting and music.

He devoted himself to drawing, painting and Chinese calligraphy.

Guedes hinted at the need for biographies of local personalities, particularly of public figures in Macau in order to inform younger generations.

"As far as I know, there are no biographies [in Macau]. So I think it's very important to save it as a memory for the future [especially] these kinds of figures of the history of Macau, otherwise they disappear completely from the memory," Guedes added.

Meanwhile, the author and journalist noted that he had just concluded a monography on Saint Joseph's Seminar, which will be published in a few months.

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## HEALTH

# Islands hospital public tender works under discussion

**T**HE Islands District Medical Complex will soon go through public tender processes, according to Chou Kuok Hei, Coordinator of the Health Bureau (SSM) Expansion and Construction Office.

The Infrastructure Development Office (GDI) is responsible for the project's public tender works as well as the project's construction works, according to a statement released by the SSM on Tuesday.

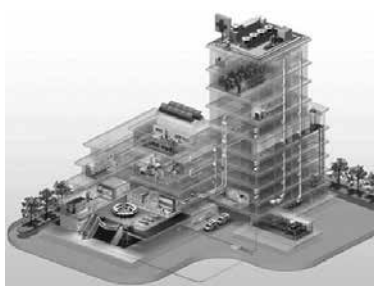
The SSM said that the design of the medical complex is already complete, and has been submitted to the GDI with a

list of necessary works.

The Island District Medical Complex will have a total of approximately 1,100 beds for patients.

Inside the hospital, high-tech facilities for medical protection, radiation therapy, and organ transplant procedures will be installed, together with an automatic medicine dispensing system and an automatic logistic system.

The SSM claimed that the medical complex's design will significantly influence the hospitals' future operation, and that the facilities needed to be practical and convenient for



the public to access.

Regarding the infectious diseases building, the SSM has already revised its design of the building's foundation works and provided a list of engineer works. A report concerning these matters was submitted to the GDI in

the beginning of March this year.

The SSM stresses that in 2016, the bureau received a request that the height of the infectious disease building be reduced by nine meters, necessitating a redesign for that building as well.

The construction of the infectious diseases building will be divided into two phases: foundation works and superstructure works.

The design and construction of the superstructure works is still being amended based on the opinions provided by several governmental departments, according to Chou. **JZ**

## esports final coming to Macau this month

Asian consumer internet platform provider Garena has announced that the esports 2018 League of Legends Master Series (LMS) Spring Playoffs will take place on Saturday April 14, Sunday April 15, and Sunday April 22. The final will be held at Macau's Studio City integrated resort. The playoffs will comprise best-of-five match format and will be contested by four teams in a seeded, winner-advances-style battle for prize money and championship points. The semifinals on April 14 and 15 are scheduled to take place at Garena eSports Stadium in Taipei. The 2018 LMS Spring Final will mark the first time that the event has taken place in Macau. It will also be the largest esports event to be held in Macau this year, according to the company. The team that finishes in 1st place in the LMS Spring Split Team Prize will receive a cash prize of TWD1.5 million (MOP415,000).

## China and US trade spat to have little local impact

**T**HE president of the Macau Union Suppliers Association, Sunny Ip Sio Man, believes that a looming trade war between the U.S. and China will not have a big influence on Macau, according to a report by Macao Daily News.

Ip made the comment with a particular focus on US wine imports to Macau

and other parts of Asia. In his words, American wine is still not common in Macau, which in turn diminishes the impact on the region's importers.

According to Ip, US wine has only recently gained recognition and even though it has a reasonable reputation, its value is not high and is not very popular.

On the other hand, Ip thinks that dry fruit imported from the US will produce more complications than wine. Unlike dry fruit, wine importers will be able to search for substitutes of American wines among wine coming from other countries.

Ip, who is also the president of the Macao Federal Commercial Association of

Wine and Food Industries in Portuguese-Speaking Countries and Regions, noted that the economic and trade activities between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries could fill the gaps left in the market, in the case China and the US impose heavier trade sanctions on one another.

Ip believes that China's

state strategy has made it easier for suppliers to find substitutes of US goods. He further predicts that Macau will excel as the platform between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries.

Ip believes that the current China and US trade spat is only going to create a short-term pain to suppliers.

## Deposits record slight decrease

**M**ACAU'S broad money supply retreated in February, and resident deposits also declined, the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM) said yesterday. Currency in circulation and demand deposits grew by 6 percent and 0.3 percent respectively.

According to data released by AMCM, resident deposits dropped 0.7 percent from the preceding month to MOP589.9 billion while non-resident deposits also fell 1.1 percent to MOP254.7 billion.

Public sector deposits within the banking sector increased 4.7 percent to MOP197.4 billion, with the result that total deposits in the banking sector increased 0.2 percent from a month earlier to MOP1,042.0 billion.

The shares of MOP, HKD, RMB and USD in total deposits were 20.1 percent, 51.8 percent, 3.7 percent and 21.5 percent respectively.

Domestic loans to the private sector grew 0.8 percent from last month to MOP462.4 billion. Among those deposits, MOP138.2 billion was MOP-de-



nominated, MOP301.2 billion was denominated in HKD, MOP0.3 billion was denominated in RMB and MOP19.2 billion was denominated in USD.

On the other hand, external loans decreased 0.1 percent to MOP445.1 billion.

At end-February, the loan-to-deposit ratio for the resident sector edged up from 58.6 percent at end-January to 58.7 percent.

Meanwhile, the loan-to-deposit ratio for both the resident and non-resident sectors rose marginally from 87.0 percent to 87.1 percent.

Both the one-month and three-month current assets-to-liabilities ratios remained relatively high, at 55.4 percent and 57.4 percent respectively.

## IFT signs collaboration with Myanmar on tourism training

**T**HE Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Myanmar's Ministry of Hotels and Tourism to jointly promote sustainable tourism development, fostering collaboration in tourism education and training between both regions.

IFT said in a statement that Fanny Vong, president of IFT, and Aung Thu, director of the Training and Education Department of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, signed the MoU in Nay Pyi Taw last week.

The signing is part of the Macau delegation's itinerary for its visit to Myanmar. The delegation comprises representatives of industrial and commercial sectors, including Edmund Ho, vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

Following the collaboration, ten tourism officials and professionals from Myanmar will attend a professional training

program at IFT between May 24 and 31 on the topic of capacity-building for destination marketing and tourism development.

Back in 2015, the SAR and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) signed an agreement in Macau to enhance cooperation between both parties in improving the quality of human capital and increasing the competitiveness of tourism destinations, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.

Since the establishment of the Global Centre for Tourism Education and Training by IFT in 2016, it has organized four training programs in partnership with UNWTO and six training workshops for Portuguese-speaking countries.

In May 2017, 17 tourism officials and professionals from Myanmar attended a training program at IFT on "Strategic Tourism Planning and Management for a Sustainable Future", which the center held in collaboration with UNWTO.

## IACM helps to improve street market's competences

The management regime for street market and vendors, which is currently under public consultation, suggests a maximum of 30 rest days for street market stalls. It has been suggested that vendors be given a maximum of 60 days of rest. IACM president José Tavares said that street markets face significant competition from supermarkets, thus urging a faster amendment of the relevant law to help the industry. He added that the IACM will also improve the competencies of street markets. The IACM and the Cultural Affairs Bureau reached an agreement for the renovation of the Red Market to only target internal facilities, not the external appearance.

## Gongbei seized 28,000 tonnes of smuggled solid waste

Gongbei Customs seized 27,000 tonnes of solid waste in a single smuggling case, according to a report by Jornal Va Kio. The items were first seized on February 11, declared by a company from Shanghai. On March 22, a test carried out by the Guangdong quarantine authority concluded that the batch of items were residual materials, scraps, and unqualified mixture that had originated from the production of pellets. Three people were arrested in Shanghai on March 25 for smuggling.



REAL ESTATE MATTERS

How wall colours can affect your psychology

Sam Lee is a marketing manager and property consultant at JML Property. JML was established in 1994 and offers Investment Property & Homes. It specializes in managing properties for owners and investors, and providing attractive and comfortable homes for tenants.



SAM LEE

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The colour of the walls in a property can have a big impact on how you resonate emotionally with a room. Each colour can be a unique representation of your personality and induce particular feelings, emotions and even thoughts. Perhaps you've seen an old and tired property suddenly come to 'life' and feel much 'brighter' after a simple lick of paint was applied throughout. Or maybe you've walked into a room with cool coloured walls like ocean blue and felt yourself relax. Although our reactions to colour can be subjective, certain colours tend to get a similar reaction from most people according to variations in the shades and tones used. So, what colour should your walls be? Here are some general guidelines for popular wall

colours: Red: Red is the most intense and exciting colour. It is a great colour for the dining room to create energy and stimulate conversation. Or it can be used to create a strong first impression in an entryway. Yellow: Yellow is best used in moderation, and not as the most dominant colour in the room. It has a great dynamic with sunlight, and can be used to great effect in a kitchen or bathroom with good natural light. Blue: Blue is considered a calming and relaxing colour, and is often recommended for bedrooms and bathrooms. Different shades of blue can have different effects and it is recommended to balance out cooler shades of blue with warmer or at least neutral colours to avoid making

the space feel too 'chilly'. Black: A touch of black can have a strong emotional impact. Black is often seen to represent elegance, mystery and power. Too much black can be depressing however so it is best used as an accent to the room. Fortunately, a lick of paint never cost anybody a fortune, and it isn't too difficult to repaint a wall if you don't like the colour after a while so you can afford to experiment a little. You can also be flexible and play with combinations of different colours depending on the purpose of the space. Since wallpapers are not often used in Macau due to humidity and mold issues, maybe it is not a bad idea to consider repainting your walls and giving your home a new feeling for the approaching summer!

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# New Zealand recalls 50,000 cars with faulty Takata air bags

Nick Perry, Wellington

**N**EW Zealand's government yesterday issued a compulsory recall for 50,000 cars with faulty Takata air bags after saying a voluntary recall wasn't making enough progress.

The move comes after Australia issued a compulsory recall for 2.7 million cars with defective air bags in February.

Takata air bags have been blamed for at least 23 deaths around the world, including one in Australia.

The New Zealand recall applies only to vehicles with the type of Takata air bag considered most dangerous, known as the alpha-type. The country is also banning imports of new and used vehicles with those air bags.

Consumer Affairs Minister Kris Faafoi said the government will closely monitor a further 250,000 vehicles with other types of Takata air bags that remain under the voluntary recall, which first came into effect five years ago.

Faafoi said if the motor vehicle industry doesn't make fast enough progress, he will make the recall compulsory for cars with all types of Takata air bags.

There haven't been any reports of deaths in New Zealand caused by the air bags.

"While I have been reassured by officials that the risk in New Zealand is comparably low — air bags are more of a concern in humid countries with extremes of temperature — I am not willing to allow any risk to remain while we can remove it," Faafoi said.

About 100 million vehicles around the world have been affected by the Takata recall.

The Japan-based company was forced into bankruptcy last year amid lawsuits, multi-million-dollar fines and crushing recall costs involving air bag inflators that use the explosive chemical ammonium nitrate as a propellant.

The chemical can deteriorate over time when exposed to high heat and humidity and burn too fast, blowing apart a metal canister.

The compulsory recall is one of the largest ever in New Zealand. It requires the air bags be replaced by December 2019. **AP**

AP PHOTO



Bahraini Oil Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa

# Bahrain's largest oil find estimated at 80 billion barrels

Aya Batrawy, Dubai

**T**HE small island-nation of Bahrain yesterday announced the discovery of 80 billion barrels of shale oil, its largest oil and gas find ever.

Bahrain's oil minister and energy executives detailed the find at a press conference, saying the tight oil was discovered in the offshore

Khalij al-Bahrain Basin, which spans some 2,000 square kilometers (770 square miles) in shallow waters off the country's western coast.

The field also contains an estimated 14 trillion cubic feet of gas.

Oil Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa said the amount of oil that can be extracted from the Khalij al-Bahrain

Basin is still being studied.

Still, the discovery dwarfs the onshore Bahrain oil field, which produces around 45,000 barrels per day. The non-OPEC country also produces close to 160,000 barrels of oil per day from an offshore field it shares with Saudi Arabia.

The minister announced a separate discovery of gas reserves below Bahrain's main gas reservoir, with

estimates that push deep gas reserves in the region to between 10 and 20 trillion cubic feet.

Experts and officials said they expect the newly discovered oil field to be 'on production' within five years.

Bahrain started pumping oil in 1932, becoming the first among its Arab Gulf neighbors to produce oil.

The Arab state, ruled by a Sunni-led monarchy, is located in the Persian Gulf just east of Saudi Arabia's oil-rich coastal areas and desert. It hosts the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet.

■ **The new finds have the potential to significantly raise the country's profile and boost its economy**

Bahrain is not a major oil producer, but the new finds have the potential to significantly raise the country's profile and boost its economy, which has suffered double blows in recent years from lower oil prices and years of unrest and protests by some of the country's majority Shiites.

The country has introduced some austerity measures to limit spending and boost revenue, including reducing some fuel subsidies and increasing taxes. Like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, it introduced a 5 percent value-added tax this year to most goods and services. **AP**

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Joe McDonald, Beijing

**T**HE troubled Chinese insurer that owns New York City's Waldorf Hotel said yesterday it is receiving a USD9.6 billion bailout from a government-run fund.

Regulators seized control of Anbang Insurance Group in February after a global asset-buying spree raised questions about its stability. Its founder, Wu Xiaohui, went on trial last week on charges he defrauded investors and misused company money.

The case added to a string of scandals in China's insurance industry. The industry's former top regulator was charged in September with taking bribes and other insurers have been accused of reckless speculation in stocks and real estate.

The injection of money from the China Insurance Security Fund will help Anbang "maintain stable operations," the privately owned insurer said on its website.

The injection of 60.8 billion yuan (\$9.6 billion) will increase Anbang's registered capital to 61.9 billion yuan (\$9.8 billion), the company said. That would mean the government fund owns 98 percent of the company, wiping out most of the equity stake of Wu and other shareholders.

Anbang said it would look for strategic investors. That sugges-

# Troubled Chinese insurer receives government bailout



ted they might be expected to buy out the government's funds ownership.

The Communist Party has made reducing financial risk a priority this year after a surge in debt prompted rating agencies last year to cut Beijing's credit rating for government borrowing.

Anbang is being run by a committee of officials from China's insurance regulator, central bank and other agencies. They have said its obligations to policyholders and creditors are unaffected.

Wu founded Anbang in 2004 and, while rarely appearing in public, gained a reputation for

aggressive expansion in a stodgy industry dominated by state-owned insurers.

The company grew to more than 30,000 employees with 35 million clients. It diversified into life insurance, banking, asset management, leasing and brokerage services.

Wu is accused of fraudulently

raising 65 billion yuan (\$10 billion) from investors and abusing his post to benefit himself. State television showed him confessing in a Shanghai court last week but no verdict has been announced.

## The case added to a string of scandals in China's insurance industry

Anbang discussed possibly investing in a Manhattan skyscraper owned by the family of U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law and adviser, Jared Kushner. Those talks ended last year with no deal.

The negotiations with Kushner Cos. about 666 Fifth Ave. prompted members of the U.S. Congress to raise ethics concerns. **AP**

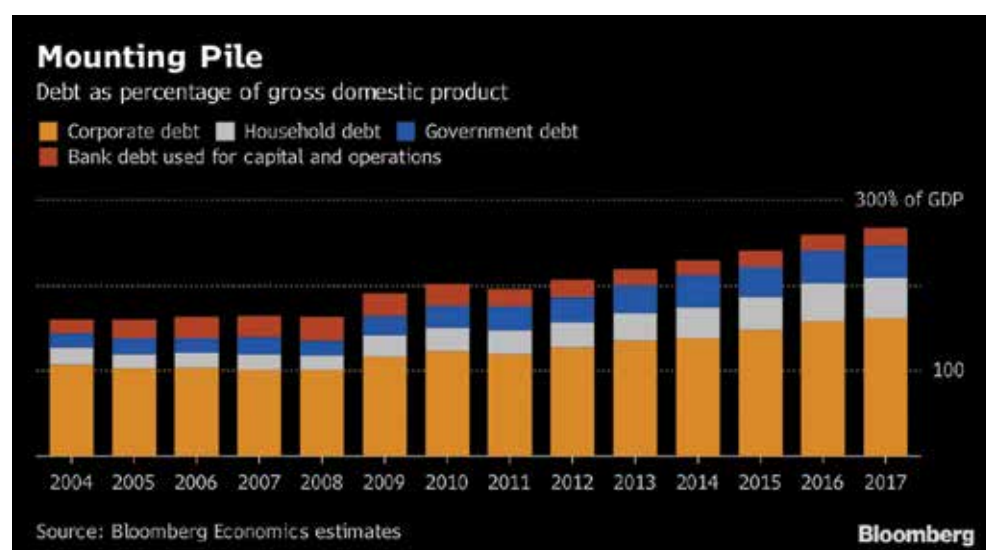
# Alarming debt pile seen finally stabilizing in 2018

**C**HINA'S massive debt pile may finally stabilize this year as President Xi Jinping prioritizes control of financial risks, according to economists.

Total debt will be 260 percent of gross domestic product at the end of 2018, the same as it was 12 months earlier, according to the median estimates of 21 economists surveyed by Bloomberg in March. In nominal terms, that would mean the growth in debt is slowing to roughly the same pace as the economy.

China is one of the countries most at risk of facing a banking crisis, the Bank for International Settlements warned recently, and Xi's newly appointed top economic officials aim to prevent such an outcome. Stricter regulations, curbs on lending between financial institutions, and a gradual increase in borrowing costs over the past year have all contributed to the deceleration of credit growth, and that campaign has now expanded beyond the financial sector.

"The deleveraging cam-



campaign will be comprehensive this year - local governments, state-owned firms, households. There is no escape," said Shen Jianguang, chief Asia economist at Mizuho Securities Asia Ltd. in Hong Kong. Shen projects that the debt ratio peaked last year and will decline because of the government's actions and robust corporate earnings.

While China has not published any official data on the size of its outstanding debt, the analysts surveyed estimated it at between 200 percent and

283 percent of GDP at the end of last year. Bloomberg Economics estimated it at 266 percent.

The nation reined in interbank lending last year, and the growth of M2 broad money supply slowed last December to a record low in data going back to 1996. Guo Shuqing, who led the de-risking campaign in the financial sector as the top banking regulator, was appointed to a top role at the central bank last month.

Former central bank governor Zhou Xiaochuan

- who retired last month - told a press conference during the National People's Congress in Beijing that China "has entered a phase of stabilizing and gradually reducing leverage."

The debt curbs are now expanding to target the broader economy. Local governments and enterprises, especially state-owned firms, should speed up the pace of leverage reduction, according to a Xinhua News Agency report on the first meeting of the new central committee for financial and

economic affairs, which is chaired by Xi.

The People's Bank of China vowed to "effectively control the macro leverage ratio and credit risks in key areas" at a meeting chaired by Guo on Tuesday, according to a statement posted to the bank's website yesterday.

The broader crackdown will curb debt-fueled investment growth in areas such as housing construction, and bridges, tunnels, and other infrastructure. Fixed asset investments in all three major categories - real estate development, infrastructure and manufacturing - are forecast to decelerate, according to the economists surveyed.

Raymond Yeung, chief greater China economist for Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd. in Hong Kong, sees the debt ratio edging down this year and reaching a steady state within three years. "Much of the credit in the past has flowed into the unproductive sector," Yeung said. "Therefore, the negative impact of growth due to this deleveraging should be small."

Still, even a slower pace of debt growth may fail to limit risks in some areas. Leverage is falling at a faster pace among stronger borrowers and more slowly among those that are less efficient - such as utilities, real estate, materials and energy, Bloomberg China economist Qian Wan wrote in a recent note.

Some economists believe the expansion of the pile has yet to be contained. "China's debts expanded very rapidly in the past, and more time is needed for the stockpile to decelerate or decline," said Xia Le, chief Asia economist at Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria SA in Hong Kong. He projects the ratio to jump to 270 percent this year from 260 percent, and rise to between 280 and 290 percent before stabilizing around 2020.

"Bankruptcy is the real effective method to crack down on debts," Xia said. "When Chinese society gradually learns to accept defaults and bankruptcies, the credit growth will slow down for real." **Bloomberg**





A worker sits near a shelf displaying bottles of American whiskey for sale at a supermarket in Beijing

# China lists USD50b of US goods it might hit with 25pct tariff

Joe McDonald

**C**HINA yesterday issued a USD50 billion list of U.S. goods including soybeans and small aircraft for possible tariff hikes in an escalating and potentially damaging technology dispute with Washington.

The country's tax agency gave no date for the 25 percent increase to take effect and said that will depend on what President Donald Trump does about U.S. plans to raise duties on a similar amount of Chinese goods.

Beijing's list of 106 products included the biggest U.S. exports to China, reflecting its intense sensitivity to the dispute over American complaints that it pressures foreign companies to hand over technology.

The clash reflects the tension between Trump's promises to narrow a U.S. trade deficit with China that stood at \$375.2 billion last year and the ruling Communist Party's development ambitions. Regulators use access to China's vast market as leverage to press foreign automakers and other companies to help create or improve industries and technology.

A list the U.S. issued Tuesday of products subject to tariff hikes included aerospace, telecoms and machinery, striking

at high-tech industries seen by China's leaders as the key to its economic future.

China said it would immediately challenge the U.S. move in the World Trade Organization.

"It must be said, we have been forced into taking this action," a deputy commerce minister, Wang Shouwen, said at a news conference. "Our action is restrained."

A deputy finance minister, Zhu Guangyao, appealed to Washington to "work in a constructive manner" and avoid hurting both countries.

Zhu warned against expecting Beijing to back down.

"Pressure from the outside will only urge and encourage the Chinese people to work even harder," said Zhu at the news conference.

Companies and economists have expressed concern improved global economic activity might sputter if other governments are prompted to raise their own import barriers.

The dispute "may compel countries to pick sides," said Weiliang Chang of Mizuho Bank in a report.

"U.S. companies at this point would like to see robust communication between the US government and the Chinese government and serious negotiation on both sides, hopefully to avoid a

trade war," said the chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, William Zarit.

"I can only hope that we solve our differences as soon as possible to avoid damage to the U.S. economy, Chinese economy and to U.S. companies."

## ■ The Chinese list yesterday included soybeans, the biggest U.S. export to China

American companies have long chafed under Chinese regulations that require them to operate through local partners and share technology with potential competitors in exchange for market access. Business groups say companies feel increasingly unwelcome in China's state-dominated economy and are being squeezed out of promising industries.

Chinese policies "coerce American companies into transferring their technology" to Chinese enterprises, said a USTR statement.

Foreign companies are increasingly alarmed by initiatives such as Beijing's long-ran-

ge industry development plan, dubbed "Made in China 2025," which calls for creating global leaders in electric cars, robots and other fields. Companies complain that might block access to those industries.

Wang, the commerce official, defended "Made in China 2025." He said it was "transparent, open and non-discriminatory" and foreign companies could participate.

Wang said the plan, which sets specific targets for domestic brands' share of some markets, should be seen as a guide rather than mandatory.

A report released Tuesday by the USTR also cited complaints Beijing uses cyber spying to steal foreign business secrets. It was unclear whether the latest tariff hike was a direct response to that.

The Chinese list yesterday included soybeans, the biggest U.S. export to China, and aircraft up to 45 tons in weight. That excludes high-end Boeing Co. jetliners such as the 747 and 777, leaving Beijing high-profile targets for possible future conflicts.

Also on the list were American beef, whisky, passenger vehicles and industrial chemicals.

Zhu, the deputy finance minister, expressed thanks to American soybean farmers who he said had lobbied the Trump adminis-

tration to "safeguard hard-won economic relations between the United States and China."

To minimize the cost to China, regulators picked products for which replacements are available, such as soybeans from Australia or Brazil, said Tu Xinquan, director of WTO studies at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

"China has made meticulous efforts in deciding the list of the products to make sure the impact on China's economy is controllable," said Tu.

"If the U.S. decides to increase intensity, China will surely follow suit," said Tu. "In the event of all-out trade war, both may lose all sense of reason, but I do hope it will never happen."

The Global Times newspaper, published by the ruling party and known for its nationalistic tone, suggested further retaliatory action might target service industries in which the United States runs a trade surplus. Regulators have wide discretion to withhold licenses or take other action to disrupt logistics and other service businesses.

"What China needs to do now is to make the United States pay the same price" so Americans "understand anew the Chinese-U.S. strength relationship," the newspaper said.

In a separate dispute, Beijing raised tariffs Monday on a \$3 billion list of U.S. goods including pork, apples and steel pipe in response to increased duties on imports of steel and aluminum that took effect March 23.

The United States buys little Chinese steel or aluminum, but analysts said Beijing would feel compelled to react, partly as a "warning shot" ahead of the technology dispute.

In another warning move, Chinese regulators launched an anti-dumping investigation of U.S. sorghum last month as rhetoric between Beijing and Washington heated up.

China has accused Trump of damaging the global system of trade regulation by taking action under U.S. law instead of the through the WTO.

Previously, Trump approved higher import duties on Chinese-made washing machines and solar modules to offset what Washington said were improper subsidies.

The technology investigation was launched under a little-used Cold War era law, Section 301 of the U.S. Trade Act of 1974.

However, as part of its response, the USTR also lodged a WTO case last month challenging Chinese policies it said unfairly limit foreign companies' control over their technology.

U.S. authorities say Beijing denies foreign companies the right to block use of technology by a Chinese entity once a licensing period ends. And they say it imposes contract terms that are less favorable than for local technology. **AP**



## THAILAND

# Top political party registers members anew

Tassanee Vejpongsa, Bangkok

**T**HE Thai political group that has won every national election since 2001, only to be forced out of power repeatedly by non-electoral means, has taken an initial step on a comeback trail, registering its members in order to contest polls promised for early next year.

The Pheu Thai Party last held power in 2014, when an army coup ousted it and installed a military government that until last month banned almost all organized political party activity.

The ruling junta, having promised an election for February next year, is now allowing new and old parties to register their members, with a minimum of 500 needed to sign up in 30 days to qualify.

Pheu Thai members, representing the legacy of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, the party's guiding light, signed up this week at its headquarters. Former lawmakers and senior figures, as well as ordinary supporters, came to help get the party back on its feet.

It has been overthrown twice under different names by the military, and twice was dissol-



Former Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat (front center) and former lawmakers show receipt after registering their memberships to Pheu Thai Party

ved by the courts. But judging by the enthusiastic reception for former Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat as he entered the headquarters, Pheu Thai members are eager to rejoin the fray.

But some things have changed significantly since a military edict banning political activities forced it and all other parties into dormancy following the 2014 coup.

Ahead of the general election promised for 2019, the junta has imposed new and complex elec-

toral rules. Their architects say they make politics more open and inclusive, but critics say they are specifically designed to stop Pheu Thai from repeating the crushing victories that gave it solid parliamentary majorities.

"Some forces dislike us, disagree with us, and try to sort us out, but it's what happens, and we and the people have to find our way out of it," said the party's general secretary, Phumtham Wechayachai.

Those forces have proved persistent. Thaksin, head of what was then called the Thai Rak Thai party, fell to a coup in 2006. Court decisions removed two prime ministers from its successor People's Power Party in 2008, leading to its coalition government being forced to yield power. Thaksin's sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, came to power in a 2011 election, only to be forced out of office by another controversial court decision shortly before the army seized power again.

But throughout it all, the appeal of the family behind the party — the Shinawatras — has endured. Their carefully targeted populist policies won a large and devoted following. How much Thaksin and his sister Yingluck, both in exile to avoid jail terms, can still sway voters today may be key to Pheu Thai's future fortunes. Open involvement in the political fray could jeopardize the party's legal standing.

One analyst believes it will do well at the polls because Thailand is still deeply polarized and Pheu Thai is a rallying point against the junta and the elite — often known as the "yellow shirts" — who loathed Thaksin.

"Everyone who does not like the coup, regime, doesn't like the yellow shirts, doesn't like the conservative politics. What they can do? They have only one choice. They have the Thaksin party to vote for," said Prajak Kongkirati, a professor at Bangkok's Thammasat University.

Some senior figures on Wednesday voiced concern over the effect of the junta's long political ban on the party's ability to organize effectively before the promised election.

"The result of the political ban is that the party cannot communicate with the people, is not allowed to exchange ideas with the people about policies," said Chaturon Chaisang, a former education minister. "It is a limitation to the political parties. Because of that, we shouldn't take it for granted that our party will be strong without working real hard."

For one woman signing up as an ordinary member, Pheu Thai's importance was clear.

"They help poor people and poor people need them. We are suffering right now," said Supa Nuchapong, a 50-year-old fruit seller from the outskirts of Bangkok. **AP**

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## INDONESIA

## Oil spill fire chokes port city; 4 dead

**W**ATERS off an Indonesian port city reek like a gas station after an oil spill and fire that killed four people over the weekend, an official said yesterday.

Balikpapan city secretary Sayid Fadli said that the city on the island of Borneo was in its third day of a state of emergency following the weekend spill around Semayang Port.

"The city is in an emergency situation because of the oil spill and the bay is now like a gas station," Fadli said. "We have warned workers and residents around the bay to refrain from lighting cigarettes and make safety the priority."

Four people died after the fuel caught fire on Saturday, filling skies around the city with choking black smoke. One person is missing.

The city has distributed masks, and more than 1,300 people have suffered breathing problems, nausea and vomiting.

Fadli said police were still investigating the source of the spill, which as of Tuesday had an area of about 12 square kilometers (4.6 square miles). A preliminary investigation showed it was marine fuel oil.

The port authority was working with Chevron Indonesia and state-owned oil and gas company Pertamina, which operates an oil refinery in Balikpapan, in its attempts to clean up the spill, Fadli said.

Sanggam Marihot, head of the Balikpapan Port Authority, said five oil booms have been deployed and collected the equivalent of more than 14,600 barrels of oil.

Environment Minister Siti Nurbaya said in a statement that officials from the ministry were assessing the environmental damage.

The joint team responding to the emergency should prioritize residential areas for cleanup "due to the stench and other potential risks," she said. **AP**



## MYANMAR

# Lawyers ask judge to dismiss case vs. Reuters journalists

**L**AWYERS for two Reuters journalists detained in Myanmar asked a court yesterday to dismiss the case against them, saying the evidence doesn't support the charges.

Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo face possible charges under the Official Secrets Act, a law dating from British colonial times. If convicted, they could get up to 14 years in prison.

Wa Lone, 31, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 28, were arrested Dec. 12, with police accusing them of violating the law by acquiring "important secret papers" handed them by two policemen who worked in troubled Rakhine state. Security forces there have been accused of serious human rights violations against the persecuted ethnic Rohingya Muslims.

Around 700,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled into Bangladesh since August in response to brutal counterinsurgency campaign.

The court is currently holding preliminary hearings, during which the judge can dismiss the charges. The case against the reporters has drawn global attention with high-profile rights lawyer Amal Clooney announcing last week she's taking it on.

Than Zaw Aung, one of the reporters' lawyers, said yes-



Kyaw Soe Oo (center) is welcomed by his wife Chit Su Win (second left) and his daughter as he arrives at the court for his trial

terday's hearing concerned the defense's motion to dismiss the case on the basis that the charges had not been proven. He said the prosecution countered that witnesses' testimony proved they had committed the crimes.

Prosecution witnesses who have appeared before the

court so far have offered confusing and conflicting testimony, lending weight to the belief that the arrests were a clumsy set-up by the government, which is sensitive to any reporting that is critical of its activities in Rakhine.

The judge is expected to rule next week on the request to

have the case dismissed.

Wa Lone, responding to a reporter's question of whether he believed he would soon get his freedom, said "the decision will be made next hearing and we will know for sure, then."

"I did not do anything wrong, so I hope I will be free soon," Kyaw Soe Oo added. **AP**

## SINGAPORE

# Court imposes hefty fines for Airbnb rentals

**A** court in Singapore on Tuesday fined two men 60,000 Singapore dollars (USD45,800) each for breaching laws banning short-term rentals by renting out condominium units through online services such as Airbnb, Craigslist and HomeAway.

Terence Tan En Wei and Yao Songliang had pleaded guilty at the State Court in February to four charges of illegally renting out four units last year, in the first case of its kind in the Southeast Asian island nation.

Defense lawyer Wong Soo Chih said prosecutors had requested a fine of 20,000 Singapo-



Terence Tan En Wei (left) and Yao Songliang arrive at the State Court in Singapore

re dollars (\$15,267) per charge but the judge set it at 15,000 Singapore dollars (\$11,450) per charge.

Offering short stays in private homes is illegal in Singapore, where most residents live in

subsidized public housing. The minimum rental period had been six months, but has since been reduced to three months. Officials have said the rule minimizes disturbances to neighbors.

Despite these limitations, Airbnb continues to thrive in the city-state, where the platform has over 8,000 active listings. Last year, 350,000 guests stayed in Airbnb apartments in Singapore, according

to the company.

Airbnb said in a statement after the sentencing that it will work with Singapore's authorities to allow the fair use of home sharing.

"We believe that an individual should, minimally, be able to share the private residence that they live in; and that no individual should be criminalized for sharing their home," said the statement from Mich Goh, Airbnb's head of public policy for Southeast Asia.

Describing the issue as "complex and multifaceted," the statement said the company looks forward to clarifying the rules through an upcoming public consultation and supports "a framework that allows responsible and sustainable home sharing to thrive to Singapore's immediate and long-term benefit." **AP**

# South Korea, India cut trade surpluses with U.S. as Trump rails

Karthikeyan Sundaram, Jiyeun Lee

**A**S President Donald Trump railed against a growing trade deficit last year, two countries in Asia quietly cut their bilateral surpluses with the U.S. It's unclear what they got in return.

India and South Korea were among a handful of nations worldwide that narrowed their trade surpluses with the U.S. in 2017 by raising imports of U.S. goods, long before Trump announced tariffs aimed at offsetting the U.S. deficit and balancing trade with partners.

Shortly after Trump's inauguration in January 2017, South Korea said it would increase imports of U.S. energy and high-tech machinery. It ended up more than doubling its purchases of U.S. semiconductor manufacturing machinery last year to USD6 billion, while imports of liquefied natural gas soared to \$806 million from only \$11 million in 2016, data from the Korea International Trade Association show.

Meanwhile, South Korea's exports of cars and parts to the U.S. declined by 6 percent and 16 percent, respectively, in 2017. The result was that South Korea's surplus in goods trade with the U.S. tumbled by 23 percent last year from 2016 to \$18 billion, according to South Korean data. The Korean numbers differ from U.S. figures due to different methods of calculation.

Those efforts didn't stop Trump from insisting on renegotiating their bilateral deal. Trump called the deal unfair, complaining that the U.S. deficit with Korea had doubled since it took effect in 2012.

Even after a new one was reached, though, Trump threatened to hold it as a bargaining chip in negotiations with North Korea. However, Seoul was granted an exemption to Trump's steel tariffs.

India cut its goods-trade surplus with the U.S. as well, by 6.1 percent to \$22.9 billion, as it took delivery of defense purchases that were part of efforts to diversify its sources of military hardware. More than half of its current inventory is Russian-origin equipment.

India's imports of aircraft and parts from the U.S. more than doubled in fiscal 2017 to \$4.24 billion, India's commerce ministry data show. That included six Lockheed Martin Corp.'s C-130J Hercules military transport planes, according to the state-run Press Information Bureau.

India wasn't granted an exemption from the U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum, although officials have said they will continue to seek one. Still, the nation's steel and aluminum exports to the U.S. totaled only \$680 million in fiscal 2017, a sliver of its \$12.5 billion in total metal exports. **Bloomberg**



US

# What's wrong with very low unemployment? Hawaii knows

Audrey McAvoy,  
Christopher S. Rugaber

ARE there downsides to a low unemployment rate? In Hawaii, which has the United States' lowest jobless rate at a minuscule 2.1 percent, the answer is yes.

Employers are frustrated by their inability to find workers. And unfilled jobs may be slowing the state's economic growth.

A low unemployment rate is certainly better than a high one. And many employers are responding to the worker shortage by offering higher pay.

Still, Hawaii's experience serves as a cautionary tale for the nation as a whole: Low unemployment can mask underlying problems. Nationwide, the jobless rate is at a 17-year low of 4.1 percent, and economists forecast it could drop another half-point by next year. That would bring the rate to a half-century low.

U.S. employers are already complaining about their struggles to find qualified employees. The number of open jobs nationwide reached the highest level on record in January.

Like the rest of the country, Hawaii has an aging population, and its unemployment rate has been held down in part by retiring baby boomers.

The state also has unique challenges, such as an economy long dominated by tourism. Many of Hawaii's available jobs are in the service sector and don't pay enough to cover the state's high housing costs. And economists say Hawaii's ongoing economic sluggishness could make it harder for the state to pay its public pension obligations in the future, and fund highways and other expensive infrastructure.

U.S. Rep. Colleen Hanabusa, a



A woman speaks to Maui Divers Jewelry representatives at a job fair in Honolulu

Democrat, cited the deceptively rosy jobless rate when she launched her campaign challenging a sitting governor from her own party in this year's election.

"We cannot wait as more and more of our young people, discouraged by the future they see for themselves here, leave Hawaii in hopes for better opportunities on the mainland," Hanabusa said in January. A recent poll conducted for the Honolulu Star-Advertiser gave her a 20-percentage point lead over Gov. David Ige in the August primary.

Hanabusa was pointing to a trend reflected in census data: People are moving away from Hawaii even as employers here clamor for workers.

Last year, the state suffered a net loss of more than 1,000 people. On Oahu, home to Honolulu and major military installations like Pearl Harbor, the population declined an average of 11 people per day. The median price of an Oahu

home tops USD770,000.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 47 percent of Hawaii's residents spend more than a third of their monthly income on rent. That's greater than any other state. About one-quarter of renters put half of their income toward housing.

The personnel squeeze is forcing employers to offer incentives to attract workers.

Maui Divers Jewelry, a retailer in the old whaling town of Lahaina, offers employees extra money to cover the cost of driving to its stores from Maui's bigger cities.

Star of Honolulu Cruises and Events has raised the hourly wage for servers on its boat cruises to \$12 from \$10.

"They can be picky now, I feel like. The ball is in their court," Sheridan Andres, the company's human resources manager, said of job applicants. Star of Honolulu is also advertising for kitchen staff, boat maintenance workers, bus

drivers and supervisors.

Hawaii Pacific Health, one of the state's largest health care providers, is pursuing a pilot program to train medical assistants at five public high schools so they'll be ready to walk into jobs when they graduate. The company has 7,000 employees, along with 44 openings for medical assistants and more than 400 openings overall.

The demand for labor is driven by a tourism surge that brought a record 9.4 million visitors to the islands last year. Strong hiring and income gains in the Western U.S. mean more Americans can make the trip. And Japan and Canada, where most of the state's overseas visitors come from, also are experiencing solid growth.

That's led to an increase in low-paying hotel and restaurant jobs, which accounted for 60 percent of Hawaii's job growth in 2017, according to data compiled by Moody's Analytics. Hotels and restaurants employ about one of

every five workers in the state, double the proportion in the rest of the U.S.

Adam Kamins, a senior economist at Moody's Analytics, says the state has had little success in luring better-paying tech jobs from western states such as California or Washington, because of high housing and business costs. Tech firms are instead moving to cheaper states such as Utah, Colorado and Idaho.

## People are moving away from Hawaii even as employers here clamor for workers

An economy with an unemployment rate as low as Hawaii's should be growing about 3 percent a year, said Eugene Tian, the state's chief economist. Instead, it's growing at about 1.5 percent.

"We don't have enough housing. We don't have enough trained labor. That's limiting the growth," Tian said. "They are connected."

Paul Brewbaker, an economist with consulting firm TZ Economics, said Hawaii's growth rate has lagged the nation's for the past decade. On average, Hawaii's economy has grown just 1.6 percent per year compared with the national average of 2.1 percent since 2009.

On a per-capita basis, gross domestic product in Hawaii was one-third higher than the national average 40 years ago, Brewbaker said. It's now the same. The trend could have profound consequences for Hawaii in the long term.

"Where do we go from here? If we're on this road, how do we pay for the public employee retirement system? If we're on this road, will we ever be able to build another freeway, not to mention a mass transit system?" Brewbaker said. AP

ITALY

# Political talks on forming new government open

ITALIAN President Sergio Mattarella opened two days of formal consultations yesterday to determine if any party or coalition can muster support to form a government after the country's inconclusive March 4 elections.

Consultations started with the parliament speakers followed by minor parties, and will continue Thursday with those winning the most votes and whose positions will carry the most weight in the talks.

The populist 5-Star Movement was the single party with the highest number of votes at 32 percent while the center-right coalition led by the anti-migrant League and including former Premier Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia won 37 percent.

Neither of the two leading forces can govern alone, and no clear path to a coalition deal has emerged in the weeks since the elections.

The leader of the 5-Stars, Luigi di Maio, says he is

open to a government with the League or the Democratic Party, which suffered its worst electoral loss ever. But he ruled out governing with former Premier Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia, citing his tax-fraud conviction that makes him ineligible for office.

The Democratic Party has said that it intends to remain in opposition, while Berlusconi's party itself has said it would not consider a government with the 5-Stars.

If Mattarella does not see conditions for a government emerging from the first round of talks, he is likely to schedule another round as soon as next week. While an impasse could lead to new elections, most analysts believe no party is eager to return to the ballot, leading instead to a softening of positions.

Neither speaker from either house nor President Emeritus Giorgio Napolitano made any statements to journalists as they emerged from the consultations.



Senate Spokesperson Elisabetta Casellati leaves Rome's Quirinale presidential palace after talks with Italian President Sergio Mattarella on the formation of a new government



# US museum stalls Hiroshima exhibit over nuke weapon ban push

Russell Contreras, Mari Yamaguchi

A museum in Los Alamos, New Mexico — a once-secret New Mexico city that developed the atomic bomb which helped end World War II — has put an exhibit from Japan on hold because of its theme of abolishing nuclear weapons.

The Los Alamos Historical Museum confirmed this week that it will not host a traveling exhibit organized by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum until all parties can work out their differences over the theme.

The exhibit, which features articles of clothing, exposed plates, and other personal items from victims, aims to draw attention to the horrors of the bombs that destroyed both cities.

Heather McClenahan, executive director of the Los Alamos Historical Museum, said the museum's board of directors felt uncomfortable about the exhibit's call to abolish nuclear bombs. The New Mexico city is still home to the Los Alamos National Laboratory, one of the U.S.'s premier nuclear wea-



A man stands close to a building now known as Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima

pons research centers.

The exhibit dispute comes as the Los Alamos National Lab competes with the U.S. Energy Department's Savannah River Site in South Carolina to continue production of plutonium pits. Those are critical cores which trigger nuclear warheads.

No new pits have been made since 2011. The Energy Department wants to ramp up production to 80 pits a year by 2030.

"The Los Alamos Historical Society will continue its dialogue with the museums in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in hopes that we can overcome cultural and linguistic differences and host exhibits that are respectful to all of our commu-

nities' concerns and stories," McClenahan said. "In other words, we hope this is not the end but the beginning of delving together into our history and the questions it raises."

She said the historical society will not send an exhibit about Los Alamos scientists to Hiroshima and Nagasaki without significant dialogue and input from their museums. "We would ask that the same respect be afforded to our community," McClenahan said.

Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum official Tomonori Nitta told The Associated Press that officials were informed by the Los Alamos museum in mid-February that its board meeting turned down a cur-

rent plan, failing to meet a deadline for funding needed to hold an exhibit in 2019.

Nitta said it is mainly up to the Los Alamos side to figure out a resolution and he hoped the exhibit was still possible.

**We only wish people from around the world to see our exhibit and learn the reality of atomic bombings.**

TAKATOSHI HAYAMA  
OFFICIAL AT THE NAGASAKI ATOMIC BOMB MUSEUM

"If 2019 doesn't work, we still hope to achieve an exhibit at a later occasion," Nitta said. "We will continue to cooperate so that we can clear the hurdles and hold an exhibit."

Takatoshi Hayama, an official at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, said no details have been decided and that officials are still hoping to put on an exhibit.

"We only wish people from around the world to see our exhibit and learn the reality of atomic bombings and their consequences," he told the AP from Nagasaki.

The traveling atomic bombing exhibit is taking place in Budapest, Hungary, through end of August, before moving to France and Belgium later this year. The atomic bombing exhibits have been held in 12 other cities in the U.S.

In the 1940s, scientists working in the then-secret city of Los Alamos developed the atomic bomb as part of the World War II-era Manhattan Project. The secret program provided enriched uranium for the atomic bomb. Facilities in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and Hanford, Washington were also involved in the project.

The two atomic bombs were later dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, ending World War II. More than 210,000 people in both Japanese cities were killed. AP

AD

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## TV canal macau



## FRIDAY

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 13:00 | TDM News (Repeated)                              |
| 13:30 | News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast                    |
| 15:00 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 16:50 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 18:25 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 18:55 | Brazilian Soap Opera (Repeated)                  |
| 19:45 | Non-daily Portuguese News (Repeated)             |
| 19:50 | Portuguese Serie                                 |
| 20:30 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report            |
| 21:15 | Portuguese Documentary                           |
| 22:10 | Brazilian Soap Opera                             |
| 23:00 | TDM News   |
| 23:30 | Documentary                                      |
| 01:25 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated) |
| 02:15 | RTPi Live  |

## SATURDAY

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 10:30 | Comedy   |
| 11:35 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 12:30 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 13:00 | TDM News (Repeated)                              |
| 13:30 | News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast (PT)               |
| 15:00 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 16:55 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 17:50 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 18:35 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 18:35 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 20:30 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)       |
| 21:00 | Macau Documentary                                |
| 22:30 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 23:00 | TDM News   |
| 23:30 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 00:30 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated) |
| 01:05 | RTPi Live  |

## SUNDAY

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 10:25 | Kids Serie                                       |
| 11:00 | Sunday Mass (Live)                               |
| 12:00 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 13:00 | TDM News (Repeated)                              |
| 13:30 | News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast                    |
| 15:00 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 16:30 | Brainstorm                                       |
| 17:15 | Got Talent Portugal                              |
| 19:10 | Macau Documentary (Repeated)                     |
| 20:30 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report            |
| 21:00 | Non-daily Portuguese News                        |
| 22:00 | Documentary                                      |
| 23:00 | TDM News   |
| 23:30 | Miscellaneous                                    |
| 00:15 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated) |
| 00:50 | RTPi Live  |

## Offbeat

## POLICE INVESTIGATE REPORTS OF 'ZOMBIE' RACCOONS

Police are investigating reports of "zombie-like" raccoons in northeast Ohio.

WKBN-TV reports Youngstown police have received more than a dozen calls in the past three weeks about raccoons acting strangely in the daytime.

Photographer Robert Coggeshall says he was playing with his dogs outside his home last week when one such raccoon approached them. Coggeshall says the animal would stand on its hind legs, show its teeth and fall over backward.

The raccoon Coggeshall saw and 14 others police responded to were euthanized.

The state Department of Natural Resources says the animals were likely suffering from distemper, not rabies. The viral disease causes coughing, tremors and seizures and leads raccoons to lose their fear of humans.

Authorities are asking residents to report raccoons behaving unusually to their local police station.

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

04 APR - 11 APR



## READY PLAYER ONE

ROOM 1

2:30, 7:00, 9:30pm

Director: Steven Spielberg

Starring: Tye Sheridan, Olivia Cooke, Ben Mendelsohn

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 140min

## YO-KAI WATCH THE MOVIE: A WHALE OF TWO WORDS

ROOM 1

05:00pm

Director: Shinji Ushiro

Starring: Shōtarō Morikubo, Ai Kayano, Sumire Uesaka

Language: Cantonese



## PACIFIC RIM: UPRISING

ROOM 2

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

Director: Steven S.DeKnight

Starring: John Boyega, Scott Fastwood, Rinko Kikuchi

Language: Chinese

Duration: 96min



## EARLY AN

ROOM 3

2:15, 5:45pm

Director: Nick Park

Starring: Eddie Redmayne, Tom Hiddleston

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 111min

## PETER RABBIT

ROOM 3

4:00, 7:30pm

Language: Cantonese

7:45pm

Language: English (Chinese)

Director: Will Gluck

Starring: Domhnall Gleeson, Rose Byrne

Duration: 95min



## MARY MAGDALENE

ROOM 3

9:30pm

Director: Garth Davis

Starring: Rooney Mara, Joaquin Phoenix, Chiwetel Ejiofor

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 120min

## this day in history



## 1955 SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL RESIGNS

Sir Winston Churchill has resigned as prime minister of Britain due to his failing health.

The news was announced in a statement from Buckingham Palace this afternoon.

It said: "The Right Honorable Sir Winston Churchill had an audience with the Queen this evening and tendered his resignation as Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury, which Her Majesty was graciously pleased to accept."

Sir Winston Churchill's resignation follows a dinner party held at 10 Downing Street last night attended by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh and a number of the prime minister's past and present government colleagues.

Tributes to the 80-year-old premier, who will be replaced by Sir Anthony Eden tomorrow, have poured in from around the world.

Sir Winston Churchill's political career began in 1900 as Conservative MP for Oldham but in 1906, disillusioned with his party, he defected to the Liberal party.

He first became prime minister, as a Conservative again, in 1940 and led the wartime Coalition Government during World War II.

During this time he inspired courage throughout the entire British nation even though he had promised nothing more than "blood, toil, tears and sweat."

After the war the Coalition Government broke up and Winston Churchill resigned the office of prime minister on 23 May 1945.

He was immediately asked by the King to form a new government and his second tenure as prime minister, this time of a caretaker government, began.

But Churchill, although regarded as a superb wartime leader, was regarded less favourably in peacetime and in the general election which followed in July 1945 he was heavily defeated.

A Labour government, led by Clement Attlee, took the reins of power until 1951 when Winston Churchill once again became prime minister at the age of 77.

In 1953 he was made a Knight of the Order of the Garter in recognition of his services to his country.

Sir Winston will continue to sit in the House of Commons as member for Woodford.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Sir Winston Churchill, who is remembered as Britain's greatest wartime leader, remained a backbencher until 1964.

He died on 24 January 1965, aged 90 at his London home at Hyde Park Gate.

Following his death Sir Winston's body lay in state in Westminster Hall for three days - an honour not accorded any English statesman since Gladstone in 1898.

After a funeral service at St Paul's Cathedral he was buried in Bladon, not far from his birthplace at Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire.

On Sunday November 24 2002, Winston Churchill was named the greatest Briton of all time in a nationwide poll which attracted well over a million votes.



YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Someone you adore is silently begging you to try -- just this once -- to be tender, romantic and maybe even sentimental.

Taurus April 20-May 20

You're due to catch someone's eye and touch their heart, too, in a very nice way, thanks to a friend who'll alert you about the glances a coworker is tossing your way.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21

When you're out to audition a new friend or lover -- and don't even try to pretend that you aren't -- in your book, there's only one way to cut to the chase.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Family matters could be tricky, but that won't keep you from getting involved, and possibly being able to solve something that's been put on the back burner for far too long.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22

As if it's not already been a rather exciting time, how about one teenier, tiny little disruption in the day -- just to be sure you don't ever get too, too comfortable?

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22

You've probably already got more penciled into your book than you can possibly pull off, unless you're careful with your time -- which, of course, we all know you usually are.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22

You'll be attracting an awful lot of attention right now. First off, everyone around you is waiting to see what will happen between you and the person you've been feuding with.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Communication is the name of the game. All that secret stuff, all those undercover encounters, all those clandestine meetings -- well, they've finally all added up, just like at the end of a murder mystery.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Stop me if this sounds familiar. Someone you know and love could be offended by something you're about to say, quite off the cuff, in an entirely playful way

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19

An authority figure who's had their eye on you for awhile now is just about ready to let you know how well you've done, especially based on stressful situations you've solved recently, with an ease they've found impressive.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18

You're about to rush headlong into something you were never expecting the possibility of. An intimate encounter with someone who's so interesting and unusual -- no, downright fascinating.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20

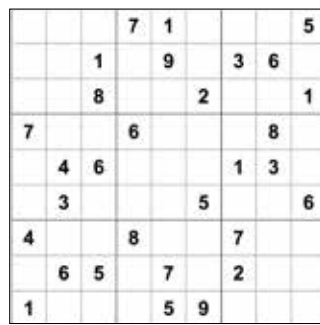
If anyone has the intuition that psychics pretend they have, it's you. So when you run into someone who's just dying to deliver or accept an apology, make it happen.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

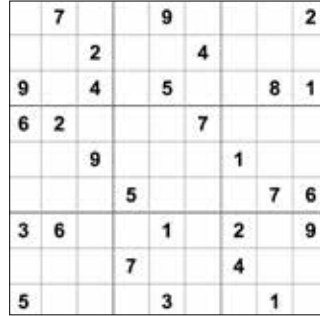
Easy



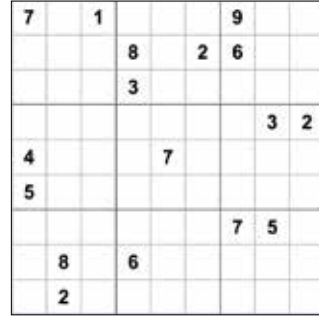
Easy+



Medium



Hard



WEATHER

|  | MIN | MAX | CONDITION |
|--|-----|-----|-----------|
|--|-----|-----|-----------|

CHINA

|           |    |    |                          |
|-----------|----|----|--------------------------|
| Beijing   | 0  | 10 | moderate snow/cloudy     |
| Harbin    | -5 | 4  | clear/cloudy             |
| Tianjin   | 3  | 12 | moderate snow/overcast   |
| Urumqi    | -2 | 11 | clear                    |
| Xi'an     | 6  | 20 | drizzle/cloudy           |
| Lhasa     | 2  | 15 | cloudy/overcast          |
| Chengdu   | 12 | 24 | drizzle                  |
| Chongqing | 13 | 26 | heavy rain/moderate rain |
| Kunming   | 10 | 25 | clear/cloudy             |
| Nanjing   | 8  | 11 | overcast/rain            |
| Shanghai  | 11 | 17 | overcast/moderate rain   |
| Wuhan     | 8  | 19 | overcast/moderate rain   |
| Hangzhou  | 13 | 17 | overcast/moderate rain   |
| Taipei    | 21 | 28 | cloudy/overcast          |
| Guangzhou | 21 | 29 | cloudy                   |
| Hong Kong | 23 | 30 | cloudy                   |

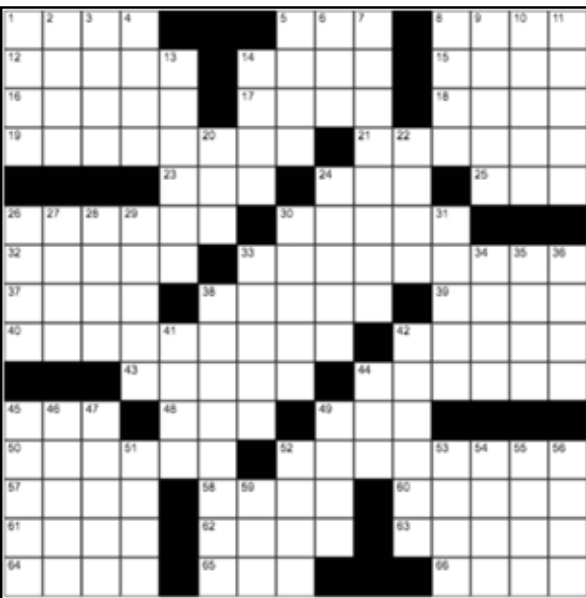
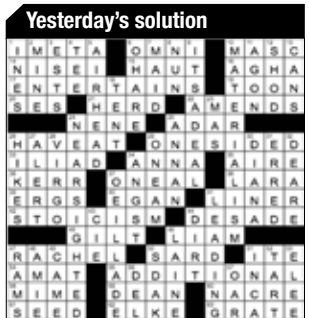
WORLD

|           |   |    |                     |
|-----------|---|----|---------------------|
| Moscow    | 1 | 10 | clear/cloudy        |
| Frankfurt | 8 | 11 | drizzle             |
| Paris     | 9 | 12 | drizzle             |
| London    | 2 | 6  | drizzle             |
| New York  | 3 | 18 | moderate rain/clear |

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- French girlfriend; 5- Church perch; 8- Conks out; 12- Actress Berry; 14- Scorch; 15- Amo, amas, \_\_\_; 16- On \_\_\_-to-know basis; 17- Roll call response; 18- Annika Sorenstam's org.; 19- Person that survives; 21- Feeling cold; 23- Driver's aid; 24- Reggae relative; 25- Affirmative answer; 26- Stealthy walk; 30- Flight of steps; 32- More healthy; 33- Written history of a person's life; 37- Alaska's first governor; 38- Heavy metric weight; 39- Intestinal sections; 40- Soliloquy; 42- Meat; 43- Puzzle in pictures; 44- Hitching posts?; 45- Fast flier; 48- Rejections; 49- "\_\_\_ Ventura" was played by Jim Carrey; 50- Swelling reducer; 52- Canal; 57- Barrett of gossip; 58- Earth goddess; 60- Singer Bryson; 61- Breaks off; 62- Auto loan figs.; 63- Some locks; 64- Writing table; 65- Maiden name indicator; 66- Nuisance;

DOWN: 1- Cries of discovery; 2- Hindu lawgiver; 3- Robert of "The Sopranos"; 4- Mtn. stat; 5- Jury member; 6- Musical ability; 7- Remains of anything ruined; 8- Surrealist Salvador; 9- Suggest; 10- Bald, golden, or harpy; 11- Remains; 13- Newspaper executive; 14- Foot covering; 20- Neckline shape; 22- "Aquarius" musical; 24- Rock; 26- Not us; 27- Othello villain; 28- Scheme; 29- Barbershop quartet member; 30- Nasal cavity; 31- Singer Bonnie; 33- Counterfeit; 34- Entreaty; 35- Listen to; 36- Tibetan oxen; 38- Sled; 41- Tuneful Horne; 42- Drowsy; 44- Tread the boards; 45- Begat; 46- Biscuitlike quick bread; 47- Looks after; 49- Small batteries; 51- Catch some rays; 52- Used to be; 53- Cut the crop; 54- Fabric ridge; 55- Burrows and Vigoda; 56- Baseball's "Walking Man" Eddie; 59- Gibbon, e.g.;



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|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
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NHL

# Stanley Cup saying goodbye to names like Richard, Hull, Howe

**JIMMY** Golen, Boston So long, Gordon Howe. Bye-bye, Robert Hull. Au revoir, M. Richard.

Those Hockey Hall of Famers and the rest of the players who won an NHL championship from 1954-65 are being stripped off the Stanley Cup this spring to create room for a new layer of names without making the trophy too big to be skated around the ice by the winning captain or checked on an airplane for its next journey.

“People in Saskatchewan are a little upset Gordie’s name is coming off, but that’s the tradition,” said Mike Bolt, one of the Hall of Fame staffers assigned to escort the Cup around the world. “It can’t get any bigger. [...] We wouldn’t be able to do what we do.”

Perhaps the most iconic trophy in sports, the Stanley Cup is unique among major prizes because the NHL passes it from team to team instead of producing a new one for every champion. It’s also the only one that includes the

AP PHOTO



name of every player to win it in each season — though the names come and go.

Since it was first donated in 1892 by Lord Stanley, the governor general of Canada, the Cup has grown from a 7-inch-high bowl to a 3-foot trophy more the size of a large wedding cake, with three small layers under the original bowl and five more bands

under that that fit about 13 years of champions apiece.

The top one of those bands, honoring much of Toe Blake’s Montreal Canadiens dynasty and three of Punch Imlach’s four titles in Toronto, will be removed in a matter of weeks. It will be flattened and displayed along with two previously retired rings — covering the 1927-40 and ‘41-

53 championship teams — at the Hall of Fame in Toronto. (In place of the name-by-name listing, teams are engraved on the upper rings).

## If you win it when you’re young, you’re going to be around when your name comes off.

MIKE BOLT

The process will need to be repeated every 13 years, meaning a player’s name lasts on the Cup a maximum of 65 years.

“I run into some of the older timers, like from the ‘70s, even the ‘80s. They’re always like, ‘Hey, Mike. How many years have I got left on the Cup?’” Bolt

said. “Some guys start doing the math, ‘Oh, I won’t be around anyway.’ But if you win it when you’re young, you’re going to be around when your name comes off.”

On tour to promote the start of the NHL playoffs April 11, Bolt stopped at The AP bureau in Boston this week before going to a hockey arena to surprise a group of kids. He dons white gloves and unsnaps the latches to reveal the Cup in its form-fitting, blue velvet travel sanctuary.

The black base is chipped and dinged from years of celebrations by joyous champions. There are also a few misspellings, and one name is crossed out. Still, seeing the trophy remains a thrill for many fans; earning a spot on it is the ultimate goal for every NHL player who has ever laced up a pair of skates.

“That’s the best part of the job, watching the reaction. That’s one of the things that does not get old,” said Bolt, who accompanies the Cup on its travels for the traditional summer tour that allows every player on the winning team to spend a day with it — often in his hometown, no matter where on the globe he grew up.

“I’ve seen grown men cry; They can’t believe they are this close to it,” Bolt said. “It’s like a celebrity. Everybody’s always happy when the Cup’s around.” AP

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Prince Charles (right) officially declares the games open



Dancers perform at Carrara Stadium during the opening ceremony of the games

# After a drenching, Commonwealth Games open on a bright note

Dennis Passa, Gold Coast

**P**RINCE Charles delivered a message from Queen Elizabeth II to officially open the Commonwealth Games before fireworks exploded on cue.

The opening ceremony finished on a brighter note than the way it started yesterday night, when a heavy rain shower drenched fans in the stadium.

The weather cleared quickly enough not to completely overshadow a ceremony choreographed to showcase the traditional culture of Australia's indigenous people and the laid-back beach lifestyle of the Gold Coast.

Charles and his wife Camilla arrived in Queensland state hours before the games festivities officially began and entered the stadium shortly after the rain cleared.

## MOTORCADE INCIDENT

Two Queensland policemen involved in a Commonwealth Games motorcade were injured after their motorcycles collided with each other on the Gold Coast.

Police say the crash occurred on the Gold Coast Highway just before the start of the Games' opening ceremony at Carrara Stadium.

A 27-year-old officer was taken to the Gold Coast University Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries while the other officer, 42, was transported to hospital as a precaution.

## ROOKIE CAMBAGE

Liz Cabbage begins her tu-

neup for the WNBA season with the Dallas Wings when she leads the Australian team in the Commonwealth Games basketball competition. The 2.03-meter center is a two-time Olympian for Australia but is playing the Commonwealth Games for the first time. She's one of the most experienced players on the team, but doesn't think of herself as a veteran. "I'd still like to think of myself as one of the young ones," she said. "I'm not a veteran yet. I'm still 26, I'm still a baby, I'm trying to hold on to that."

Australia coach Sandy Bron-dello, who won three Olympic medals as a player with the Australian women's team, the Opals, had some simple advice for Cabbage: "Just go in there and be Liz Cabbage. Play your game, be your dominant self and everything will go well."

Australia opens against Mozambique on Friday in Townsville, north Queensland, about 1,200 kilometers (750 miles) north of the Gold Coast. All preliminary basketball matches are being played in northern Queensland state. The finals will be held on the Gold Coast.

## ABORIGINAL PROTEST

A small group of indigenous protesters blocked a Gold Coast road, bringing a temporary halt to the Queen's Baton Relay on its final day. The group of approximately 30 people lined up in nearby Southport, leaving the relay staff and baton runners stranded in a parking lot. After approximately an hour, organi-

zers resumed the final leg of the relay. The baton is due at the stadium for the opening ceremony Wednesday night.

The protesters, calling themselves the "Stolenwealth Games," are using the Gold Coast games to highlight their "anti-colonial activity and authority views." Queensland police acknowledged the group's right to protest, saying: "Should any activities occur during a protest which pose a risk to the safety or enjoyment of the Commonwealth Games, the [police] will respond accordingly."

About 100 activists gathered near the stadium just before the opening ceremony to continue the protest.

## OOPS

Games organizers have blundered by listing England as part of Africa in the official souvenir program.

The colorful Commonwealth Games 2018 edition lists the English capital as Banjul (instead of London), locates it in the Africa region and notes its population as slightly more than 2 million. That mirrors the details listed — correctly — for Gambia, only recently restored to the Commonwealth Games, directly underneath on Page 97. Gold Coast 2018 chief executive Mark Peters explained the blunder as an "overprint" as organizers rushed to accommodate Gambia's re-inclusion into the Commonwealth just weeks ago. The African nation did not compete at the 2014 Glasgow Games after withdrawing from the Com-

monwealth in 2013. A change of prime minister in 2016 led to the readmission of Gambia last month, and the country has six athletes competing on the Gold Coast.

## GOING FOR GOLD

The first gold medalist of the games will likely be the winner of the women's triathlon today, and the overwhelming favorite is two-time world champion Flora Duffy of Bermuda. Duffy won six out of seven races in last year's World Triathlon Series. England's Alistair Brownlee, who has won gold in the past two Olympic triathlons, is entered in the men's race. The individual men's and women's races and a mixed team event on Saturday will be over the sprint distance — a swim leg of 750 meters, a 20-kilometer cycle and a 5-kilometer run, half of the Olympic version. Brownlee is coming off hip surgery last August and one of his biggest threats for gold will come from his brother Jonathan, who won silver behind Alistair at Glasgow in 2014, and bronze medalist Richard Murray of South Africa. Gold medals on day one of competition will also be presented in artistic gymnastics, track cycling, swimming and weightlifting.

## EASY BRONZE

Australian boxer Taylah Robertson ensured the first medal of the Commonwealth Games without setting foot in the ring. The 19-year-old Robertson was the beneficiary of a lucky draw in the women's 51-kilogram di-

vision and is guaranteed at least a bronze medal. Only seven boxers entered the competition, so three bouts will be contested as quarterfinals, with Robertson receiving a direct passage to the last four. Both losers of the semifinals win bronze medals. The boxing program starts today.

## OFFICIAL INVESTIGATED

Queensland state police are investigating an alleged assault involving an official and an athlete of the Mauritius team. Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski said the allegation involved "an assault of an aggravated matter." Gollschewski said police had been aware of an allegation before a complaint was made overnight. He declined to give further details. Commonwealth Games Federation chief executive David Grevenberg said if the allegation is proved, it "compromises the integrity of everything we uphold in terms of a harm-free environment."

## NEW SKIPPER

Jesse Parahi is new captain of the Australian rugby sevens team, and there have been a few before him this year. Long-time skipper Ed Jenkins retired at the start of the season, and his replacement, Lewis Holland, was injured in the team's last World Series tournament before the games. The man who replaced Holland, James Stannard, sustained a fractured skull in a one-punch attack last week and will miss the Commonwealth Games. **AP**



opinion

**World Views**

David Fickling and Shuli Ren, Bloomberg

**CHINA'S REJOINDER SHOWS NO ONE WANTS A TRADE WAR, REALLY**

Is the phony trade war over? With its plans to levy 25 percent tariffs on USD50 billion of U.S. products including soybeans, cars and aircraft, China looks to have stepped the simmering trans-Pacific economic battle up a gear.

The initial parries between Washington and Beijing resulted in little more than flesh wounds. There were a series of levies on steel and aluminum exports to the U.S., which largely excluded the countries that export steel and aluminum to the U.S.; an impost on China's infinitesimal imports of U.S. pork, and on a scrap trade that Beijing is already trying to stamp out; and then Tuesday's hefty \$50 billion tariff list from Washington, which was nonetheless carefully crafted to be almost invisible to Joe Sixpack.

Pick apart Beijing's latest list of countervailing duties and you'll see that in many areas there's once again less than meets the eye.

To be sure, the list deals a few headline-grabbing blows to select political constituencies. There's a special levy on cranberries, which these days are mainly grown in Wisconsin, the home state of House of Representatives Speaker Paul Ryan. Another hits the whiskey industry associated with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's base of Kentucky, borrowing a move from the European Union's tit-for-tat trade war game plan. And let's not forget those levies on fresh orange juice, calculated to hit growers in the electorally pivotal state of Florida.

Beneath that, though, many of the details suggest a more moderate approach. The duties on aircraft exclude all planes with an operating empty weight above 45 metric tons, a provision that looks to spare every aircraft that matters to Boeing Co. - and, in any case, aerospace companies can get around tariffs by deferring orders to China and bringing forward deliveries to lessors elsewhere in the world.

Seven of the trade categories affected relate to beef, which China resumed importing from the U.S. only last year - in minute quantities - after a 14-year ban due to fears of mad cow disease. New 25 percent duties on wheat and corn won't do much additional damage to a trade that's minimal given the 65 percent import tariffs that China already charges on those crops.

The weight of the retaliation comes down to six categories: Cars, soybeans, plastics, tobacco, sorghum and chemicals. There's a canny political strategy buried in that list: The first three sectors are heavily concentrated in Midwestern states stretching from Ohio to Wisconsin that flipped from supporting Obama in the 2012 election to Trump in 2016. Tobacco and sorghum farms, too, tend to be in traditionally conservative areas of the South - Texas, Virginia and North Carolina - where Democrats have been making increasing inroads.

That politics-first approach makes more sense. For all the big talk, each side knows that it has more to lose than gain if the situation spirals out of control. Turning Trump's base into advocates for de-escalation and offering a few concessions on issues like technology transfer, automotive joint ventures and finance that Beijing had already been mooting seems like the perfect way to back off from these tensions.

With the latest skirmish imposing duties on roughly a third of Chinese imports from the U.S. and a tenth of the trade in the opposite direction, each side now has its hands on some real weapons - but for that very reason, conditions are ripe for a ceasefire.

Beijing and Washington don't really want to bring each other to heel, but to the negotiating table.

**THE TRUMP WANTS US MILITARY TO SECURE BORDER UNTIL WALL IS BUILT**

President Donald Trump wants to use the military to secure the U.S.-Mexico border until his "big, beautiful wall" is erected. He said during a news conference Tuesday: "Until we can have a wall and proper security, we're going to be guarding our border with the military." Trump has been frustrated by the lack of progress on fulfilling the signature promise of his campaign. Federal law prohibits the use of active-duty

service members for law enforcement inside the U.S., unless specifically authorized by Congress. But over the past 12 years, presidents have twice sent National Guard troops to the border to bolster security and assist with surveillance and other support. The administration appears to be considering a model similar to a 2006 operation deployed by President George W. Bush.

**Cool jazz: Bowhead whales improvise when singing, study says**

Seth Borenstein, Washington

**SOME** whales are taking jazz riffs to new depths. For the first time, scientists have eavesdropped year-round on the songs of bowhead whales, the little-heard whales that roam the Arctic under the ice. They found that bowheads — the bigger, more blubbery cousins of the better known humpbacks — are more prolific and downright jazzier than other whales.

"Bowhead whales are the jazz singers of the Arctic. You don't know what they're going to do. They inject novelty," said University of Washington oceanographer Kate Stafford.

Over three years a single underwater microphone captured 184 distinct bowhead whale songs, according to Stafford's study in Wednesday's *Biology Letters*. That's remarkable because there are probably only a couple hundred males in an area between Greenland and Norway to make the songs, Stafford said.

Stafford and her colleagues couldn't track specific songs to individual whales to know for sure, but given the wide variety of songs they think each male has a different song, and that they likely change from season to season.

In contrast nearly all humpback males sing versions of



the same song every winter, Stafford said. "Humpback whales are classical music singers. They make long elaborate songs but their songs are really ordered and almost predictable."

Until now, biologists would hear only snippets of bowhead songs in other Arctic areas. They have many recordings of humpback songs because there are more humpbacks and they travel much further south.

Scientists think only male bowheads sing and that they are singing for sex, improvising to try to attract females with the best rendition of songs. Stafford said she was reminded of Miles Davis on his "Bitches Brew" album. Though she admitted bowhead music isn't for everyone.

"I find the songs to be quite beautiful, but some people compare them to fingernails on a chalkboard," Stafford said. "They're scream-y. They're yell-y and they're quite funny."

Bowheads — which can live to be 200 years old and are

almost 60 feet long — start with very high notes, modulate their tune quite a bit and at times make two completely different sounds at the same time.

"We don't know how they do that," Stafford said. Humans can't, but some birds can, she said.

Syracuse University biology professor Susan Parks, who wasn't part of the study, praised the research as "a huge step forward" in learning about bowhead songs, showing surprising novelty and variety.

"The diversity of signal types uncovered by this study suggests that something very different is going on with bowhead whale song," Parks wrote in an email.

One of Stafford's favorites makes repeated riffs of "woo-woo-woo" but with differing modulations. She'll often just turn the songs on her cell phone and bliss out.

"These guys are great mimics. They can imitate ice," Stafford said. "They make the nuttiest songs." AP

| Station                       | Air quality |   |
|-------------------------------|-------------|---|
| Roadside                      | 20-40 Good  | 😊 |
| High Density Residential Area | 20-40 Good  | 😊 |
| Ambient                       | 20-40 Good  | 😊 |

**WORLD BRIEFS**



**TURKEY** President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (right) said yesterday that Turkey's military "won't stop" its efforts to oust Syrian Kurdish fighters from Syria's north, as the leaders of Turkey, Russia and Iran met for talks on resolving the conflict in Syria.

**CAMEROON's** government says security forces have freed 18 hostages, including 12 European tourists, who had been seized by separatists fighting for the independence of English-speaking regions.



**SWEDEN** Police in Sweden say they have detained a man his 50s who is suspected of arson at the Portuguese Embassy in Stockholm.

**ITALY** President Sergio Mattarella opened two days of formal consultations yesterday to determine if any party or coalition can muster support to form a government after the country's inconclusive March 4 elections.

More on p14



**BRAZIL's** top court could soon rule on whether former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva can stay out of prison while appealing a corruption conviction.

**THE DECISIVE MOMENT**

AP Photo/ Thibault Camus



'Grotesque' red carpet selfies are banned during the Cannes Film Festival. That's the message from top festival official Thierry Fremaux, who says red carpet-selfies will be banned at this year's star-studded event. Violators, he said on Europe-1 radio yesterday, won't be let in to see films.

**HOLIDAY TIMES**

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holiday. The Times will be back on the stands on Monday April 9. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times.