



MACAO MUSEUM CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

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LAND TIED TO A MOBSTER
Wynn's Boston area casino is rising on land whose previous owners include two convicted felons, one with alleged mob ties

P7 FEATURE



CHINA REMAINS TOP EXECUTIONER
China remains the "world's top executioner" according to a new annual report on the death penalty

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Times

FOUNDER & PUBLISHER Kowie Goldenhuys EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho

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New storm response measures announced

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WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA The Hong Kong Monetary Authority bought the local currency for the first time since the current trading band was imposed in 2005, after the exchange rate sank to the weak end of its permitted range. The de facto central bank purchased HKD816 million (USD104 million) yesterday.



VIETNAM Courts handed down lengthy prison terms against two activists as authorities stepped up their crackdown on dissent. The two were given nine and seven years respectively for attempting to overthrow the government and spreading anti-state propaganda in two separate trials. More on p13



AFGHANISTAN The Taliban stormed a government compound in central Afghanistan, triggering an hours-long gunbattle that killed 15, including three top local officials.

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MIECF 2018

Int'l exhibitors showcase solutions that curb pollution

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Extra
times
weekend Guide
INSIDE

Gov't draws up 10 priority tasks to reduce storm impact

Renato Marques

At a press conference yesterday, the government presented a series of ten measures to address the shortcomings detected after the passage of Typhoon Hato last August. The measures aim to improve the region's mechanisms to prevent and respond to natural disasters.

Chief Executive (CE) Chui Sai On gave the opening speech, with several members of the Commission for Reviewing and Monitoring the Improvements of the Response Mechanism to Major Disasters also in attendance.

The CE said the measures are based on reports issued by the three mainland institutions that the government commissioned to study its current disaster response mechanisms.

He noted that the government "[has] assimilated the scientific and technical proposals contained in this [final report on Hato] and adopted them in the design of short-, medium- and long-term disaster prevention and reduction plans, taking into account the real environmental conditions of Macau."

More immediate measures include an executive order to approve a new "Code for the Tropical Storm Signals", which adds two new categories to the



previous four. The wind speed will now be reviewed every ten minutes instead of every hour and the "Storm Surge" warning levels will be expanded from three to five.

The CE said these changes would be implemented this month, ahead of the typhoon season.

Another measure relates to the region's energy supply from mainland China. Macau and Zhuhai are currently linked by overhead cables, which China Southern Power Grid will replace with underground cables before the typhoon season.

It is expected that the works on the North-South main power

supply project will be completed before the end of the summer. These works "will allow greater reliability in the production of electricity and will strengthen the emergency response capacity and the fast recovery of the electric power network following a major incident," said the CE.

Several amendments to the regulations of use and operation of public car parks are also expected to be published this month. The car parks must now close one hour after Typhoon Signal 8 is hoisted or a Level 3 Warning (also known as Black Storm Surge) is issued.

As for other high-priority works scheduled to begin in 2018, the government will focus on expanding the "Basic Law of Civil Protection" as well as a series of general and specialized contingency plans. Commenting on one such project – the construction of tide barriers in the Inner Harbor area – the CE said, "We are aware that this is a matter that interests everyone but I want to reaffirm that the solving of the flood problem does not depend

on this project alone."

The Secretary for Administration and Justice, Sonia Chan, also noted that the new water drainage system would be built 'box culvert' style, which uses huge underground tanks to collect the extra water for pumping out. It is expected the water drainage system will be completed by 2021, with Chan adding that such works will affect the location of the current sewage network as well as the underground cable system.

Chan also said that 16,000 trees were severely affected by the typhoon and that around 2,000 would be replanted in 2018, mostly in gardens and parks.

The acquisition of heavy-duty equipment such as pumps, trucks and cranes will be completed in 2020.

Also present at the meeting was the Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak, who emphasized the "revision of the juridical regime of civil protection" as his top priority. He described the current regime as outdated, as it has been in force for more than 25 years, and said that the new regime will comprise one law and two administrative regulations.

Wong also added that safety and security measures should be reinforced in local schools, proposing that the topic and relevant materials be disclosed in all institutions.

The Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, highlighted the "unpredictability" of natural disasters.

"I don't know and I can't guarantee that all the works we [are] going to do [will] be sufficient to prevent all disasters in the future," he said.

Remarking on the disaster response plan, the Commissioner-General of the Unitary Police Services (SPU) Ma Io Kun said that "the works are running at a good pace and we expect to have it ready by the end of this month."

Ma said the plan's first tests would be done via a drill on April 28. The SPU intends to test the main systems, which range from public information and communication procedures to crisis response mechanisms and coordination capacities of various authorities.

WONG: CIVIL PROTECTION IMPROVED COORDINATION

QUESTIONED BY the media as to steps that the government is taking to prevent a disaster like the one that occurred on August 23 last year, the Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak said that "structure and coordination" had been reinforced and that the civil protection system now includes 29 public services. The Commission-

er-General of the Unitary Police Services, Ma Io Kun, also added, "We already have mechanisms to alert the population, namely on the rise of the tide in the lower areas of the city." Ma stated that the drill scheduled for the end of the month would test the authorities' capacity to respond to unforeseen crises.

CHUI SAI ON SAYS WEATHER BUREAU'S FORMER CHIEFS CAN APPEAL DECISION

ASKED TO comment on the penalty applied to the former leaders of the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau, the Chief Executive noted that, "the [individuals] involved now still have a period to contest this decision." Chui said his decision

was based on all reports at hand; namely those by the independent institutions from mainland China that investigated the actions of the Macau authorities, as well as the results of a more detailed investigation by the Commission Against Corruption.

Farm Cultural Park founder gives seminar in Macau

The seminar "Farm Cultural Park, a Platform for Change" will be held tomorrow in Albergue SCM Hall D1. This seminar, conducted by Andrea Bartoli, will provide information on how

creative and cultural industries influence a city, and will also look into topics including the rejuvenation and revitalization of old towns.

Farm Cultural Park, a contemporary art centre

founded by Bartoli, opened in 2010, when Bartoli bought several buildings in the semi-abandoned centre of the city of Favara (in Sicily, Italy) and renovated them, creating a cultural centre that now

hosts exhibitions by international and local artists, cultural events, exhibitions, talks, screenings and workshops, and also has shops and a bar.

The main aim of the project is to save the old

centre of Favara and give the city, previously known mostly for its general decrepitude and for having one of Italy's highest unemployment rates, a new life through art. Since its opening in

2010, the Farm Cultural Park has already attracted tourists from all over the world.

The seminar will be conducted in English and is now open for applications with free admission.

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A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

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ENVIRONMENT

Expert calls for immediate action to create clean, compact cities

Lynzy Valles

THE 11th Macao International Environmental Co-operation Forum & Exhibition (MIECF) kicked off yesterday, with Chief Executive Chui Sai On officiating the opening ceremony.

The three-day event brings together more than 50 speakers from various countries and regions.

The 2018 MIECF has an expo floor area of more than 16,900 square meters, and has attracted more than 490 exhibitors from 19 countries and regions to showcase products and solutions that curb air, water and soil pollution, as well as to build eco-cities.

The exhibition will also organize business-matching sessions, including one for the Greater Bay Area of Macau, Hong Kong and Guangdong, as well as a session for government procurement.

There will also be a one-on-one meeting between representatives of the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region and green technology suppliers from the European Union.

In his opening speech, the CE reiterated that Macau's Five-Year Development Plan includes accelerating the construction of a livable city, strengthening environmental protection and encouraging green living.

Chui said that Macau would push for the development of a green economy and seize opportunities arising from China's major national strategies.

He reiterated Macau's status as a platform for commercial and trade cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, which will be beneficial in reinforcing environmental cooperation between international entities.

"Macau will take these opportunities to actively strengthen collaboration on environmental protection and to develop a green economy," said Chui.

"We are dedicated to [...] enhancing the environmental sector of the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region to 'Go Global' and 'Bring in Investments,'" he added.

Christiana Figueres, the vice-chair of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, gave the event's keynote speech on "Shaping of Eco-Cities for Inclusive Green Economy".

Figueres – a former executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, who sits on the board of the ClimateWorks Foundation – emphasized in her address that urbanization is not only China's greatest challenge but also one of the greatest trials



of this century.

China has built 650 new cities since 1950, with its population projected to swell to two billion people by 2023.

We have an opportunity in how we build that infrastructure, not just in the hardware infrastructure of cities, but also in software.

CHRISTIANA FIGUERES

Although the cities were vital drivers of economic growth, they faced difficulties in dealing with environmental issues such as water, air and noise pollution, in addition to traffic congestion and space limitations.

Figueres said there will be six billion people living in cities by 2050, mostly in Asia and Africa.

"We're going to be having more high-density cities like Hong Kong. We're going to be having mega cities like Tokyo, Jakarta and New Delhi, and certainly we're going to be having more and more mega city clusters in China's Pearl River Delta," she said.

"It is no exaggeration to say that as Asia goes, the world goes – and certainly as cities in Asia go, so does the world."

Although there is not yet a set definition of an eco-city, Figueres

said that 60 percent of the infrastructure that the world needs has not yet been built.

"We have an opportunity in how we build that infrastructure, not just in the hardware of infrastructure cities, but also in software - the quality of life that we prepare in those cities," she explained.

She said there is a need for urban transformation, as cities have become "crowded, polluted, congested and dehumanized," calling on participants to help build and create cities that are clean, compact, connected and

well cared for.

She also advocated the removal of coal as the dominant source of energy and encouraged the use of renewables.

"That is why China is closing more than 100 coal plants in the cities in pursuit of blue skies. It's also why Hong Kong is prioritizing renewable energy," she said.

Figueres emphasized the importance of electric transport as part of an ongoing revolution, alongside investing in energy efficiency in public buildings and improving waste treatment.

"It [the industrial revolution]

sacrificed both nature and, to an extent, our humanity.

Today, we have already collectively started the fourth industrial revolution [...] this new revolution cannot sacrifice either nature or our humanity," Figueres stressed.

"The decarbonization of the global economy is critical and is underway. However, as we decarbonize our urban space, we have to purposely rehumanize our development as well," she concluded.

Figueres will hold an interactive session with the attendees today. It will cover potential ways in which to end cities' reliance on carbon-intensive economy and consumption by promoting economic transformation.

She will also attend the event's "Green Forum," which features six panel sessions and one keynote speaker session. The sessions will address strategies and policies for the development of sustainable and resilient eco-cities, as well as the challenges related to their implementation.

There will also be a presentation on the opportunities resulting from the construction of green buildings as part of eco-city development, along with examples and approaches used by Portugal.

For the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region Session, MIECF has invited an official from the environmental sector in Sichuan Province, who will present the findings from his visits to Portugal and Germany as part of a regional delegation.

Experts from China and Europe will discuss the development of environmental protection and green technologies in different regions.

Guangdong, Macau fund to guarantee 3.5 percent annual return

SECRETARY for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, told the press that Macau would invest RMB20 billion in the "Guangdong and Macau Co-operation Development Fund," which will have a guaranteed return of 3.5 percent per year.

The fund has a duration of 12 years, with Leong explaining that after seven years, it will recalculate the average investment return rate per annum.

If this rate exceeds 7.8 percent, "there will be a sharing of this extra bonus between Canton and Macau. Macau will take about 55 percent of this extra [bonus]," Leong told the press on the sidelines of the opening ceremony of the 2018 MIECF.

When asked whether the agreement will be signed this month, Leong said Macau has been in talks with Guangdong and that the relevant administrative procedures for the fund have just been completed.

He said the fund would mainly target infrastructure projects in Guangdong, which will be selected by the province.

"Because these projects are good for the Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau Greater Bay area [...] there can be certain returns to



Lionel Leong

the fiscal reserves [and it is good for Macau] to integrate [with] the Greater Bay Area development," Leong added.

"Regarding what exactly those projects will be, Guangdong is relatively more understanding. What projects we [Macau] care about more, such as infrastructure, [Guangdong] will surely choose," he concluded.

The returns of the investment will go toward the fiscal reserve.

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ANDREA BARTOLI

FOUNDER OF FARM CULTURE PARK

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Macao Museum plans renovations to attract more visitors

Renato Marques

TO celebrate its 20th anniversary, the Macao Museum is organizing a series of activities to highlight its history and contributions to the region, starting next week.

As part of an effort to attract more visitors, the museum will also carry out various renovation works to improve the space and provide visitors with a more interesting overall experience.

These include the refurbishment of the sections for permanent exhibitions and archeology, as stated by museum director Loi Chi Pang at this week's press conference to mark the museum's 20th anniversary.

The renovation is expected to cost MOP500,000, with the date of completion yet to be confirmed.

Over the last 20 years, approximately 4.8 million visitors have visited the museum, due largely to its proximity to landmarks such as St. Paul's Ruins. Loi said he did not consider this



Loi Chi Pang

to be a low figure but noted that the museum has been working to attract more visitors.

"I don't think the number [of visitors in 20 years] is low. We don't want too many people and we have been enforcing [...] crowd control measures several times. We want to give some quality to the visitors [when exploring the museum]," Loi said.

Loi added that the museum is "trying to do better" and received approximately 400,000 visitors in 2017, a 12 percent

increase from 2016 and almost 60 percent more than that of the 250,000 visitors in 2013.

Some of the museum's upcoming programs include themed exhibitions, as well as a series of cultural lectures and games related to the Macao Museum. The first of these will kick off on April 18 when the exhibition "Treasure from the Deep Sea - Archaeological Relics of the Nanhai No. 1" will open in the museum lobby.

The special exhibition, which

will run until July 31, includes a collection of 99 underwater archaeological relics from a Song Dynasty merchant ship that is said to be "the first to be found on the South China Sea and [includes] porcelains and gold ornaments that can reflect the prosperity of China at those times."

The museum will also host a lecture on the "Preservation of the hull of the Nanhai No. 1 and the relics unearthed on site" by Zhang Xuanwei, the deputy director of the Storage Department of the Maritime Silk Road Museum of Guangdong. The lecture, which will take place at 3 p.m. on April 21 in the Macao Museum Auditorium, will discuss the preservation works of the ship's hull as well as the artifacts within. Loi said the exhibition cost MOP3.5 million, which accounts for half of the museum's MOP7 million budget for its 20th anniversary activities.

A special collection commemorating the museum's 20-year history will also be featured on

the third floor of the building, showcasing pieces from past exhibitions, as well as artifacts donated by individuals and other institutions.

The head of Department of Exhibitions and Museums of the Cultural Affairs Bureau, Lei Lai Kio, added that the gallery of the Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre - now affiliated with the Macao Museum, which was renewed after extensive damage caused by typhoon Hato last year - will display a Lunar New Year-themed exhibition.

MUSEUM GOES VIRTUAL

THE MACAO Museum announced at yesterday's press conference that it will launch a mobile application using AR (augmented reality) and VR (virtual reality) to digitally explore the entire museum and its collections. The application, which is operated by scanning QR codes in several sections of the museum, is designed to offer museum visitors a more interactive experience.

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Residential mortgage loans decrease in Feb

New approvals of residential mortgage loans and commercial real estate loans decreased month-to-month in February 2018, according to statistics released by the Monetary Authority of Macao on Wednesday. New residential mortgage loans approved by local banks also dropped by 28.4 percent month-to-month to MOP2.6 billion. The monthly average of new residential mortgage loans approved between December 2017 and February 2018 was MOP3.1 billion, down by 13.5 percent from the previous period (November 2017 to January 2018). New commercial real estate loans dropped by 47.7 percent month-to-month to MOP6.8 billion. The monthly average of new commercial real estate loans approved between December 2017 and February 2018 was MOP8.4 billion, a slight increase of 0.9 percent compared to the previous period (November 2017 to January 2018). The delinquency ratio for residential mortgage loans was 0.22 percent at the end of February 2018, up 0.02 percentage points month-to-month or 0.03 percentage points year-on-year. The ratio for commercial real estate loans was 0.14 percent, virtually unchanged from the previous month.

Galaxy may be forced to consider alternative locations for casino

GALAXY Entertainment Group may be forced to consider other locations for its USD500-million casino project in the Philippines, according to a statement yesterday by Harry Roque, the country's presidential spokesman.

The statement follows President Rodrigo Duterte's pledge that he will not allow a casino to be built on the island of Boracay.

Duterte said on Monday that the popular resort island will be up for land reform upon the conclusion of its six-month rehabilitation period, referring to the Supreme Court's 2008 decision that the island cannot be privatized.

Duterte claimed to be unaware that Galaxy had been granted a license to build a casino in Boracay and said, according to Philippine media, that it would not benefit the local people.

"There are no plans for a casino. Let's stop it because it's too much. There's a casino here, casino there," he said according to several sources.

"Why would I give you a casino there? What will the Filipinos get out of it?"



Roque said that Galaxy may have to relocate its project elsewhere in the Philippines.

"The license must have been issued by PAGCOR [Philippine Amusement Gaming Corp]. But the president was talking about the physical existence of a casino in Boracay, which he will not allow, unless he has issued a proclamation to this effect because of the decision that Boracay, the island, is state-owned," Roque said, according to the Philippine Star.

"If they can't build in Boracay, perhaps they could build elsewhere. That's why I'm not saying [anything] unequivocally about the status of the Galaxy contract. But if the building of a casino in Boracay is an issue, then I have to reiterate already what

the president personally said."

Galaxy has not responded to the Times' enquiries regarding its plans or any ongoing discussions with the government.

Despite Duterte's claims that he was unaware of Galaxy's plans, he reportedly met with officials from the group several months ago – including Galaxy vice chair-

man Francis Lui – to discuss the investment project.

The Philippine president recently approved the closure of Boracay for up to six months, commenting that the waters off its famed white-sand beaches had become a "cesspool" due to overcrowding and development.

More than two million tourists visited Boracay last year, generating about 56 billion pesos (USD1 billion) in revenue. However, an influx of tourists, untended infrastructure and growth of resort establishments threaten to turn Boracay into a "dead island" in less than a decade, according to a Philippine government study.

Boracay will be shut down from April 26.

CHAN TO HEAD JAPAN OPERATIONS

GALAXY ENTERTAINMENT Group announced the nomination of Michael Mecca to the Board of GEG as board director and the appointment of Ted Chan as Chief Operating Officer – Japan Development. According to a statement

issued by Galaxy, Chan has "extensive gaming resort, hospitality and business development experience, gained through many years of involvement at one of Macau's Integrated Resorts." Michael Mecca joined GEG Group in 2009.

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Neil Weinberg

Wynn Resorts' Boston casino is rising on land tied to a mobster

WYNN Resorts Ltd.'s Boston area casino, heralded as a growth engine for locals and the company alike, was nearing completion when trouble arrived earlier this year in the form of sexual-assault allegations against founder Steve Wynn. Massachusetts's gaming regulator is threatening to pull the casino's license if it determines that the Wynn executives knew about and failed to disclose their boss's behavior.

But there's another cloud hanging over the USD2.5 billion Wynn Boston Harbor. The complex is rising on land whose previous owners include two convicted felons, one with alleged mob ties.

Casinos and their regulators take pains to keep criminals at a distance and avoid the appearance of benefiting them, so as not to undercut the public's trust in gambling operations. Though the state's gaming regulator determined the land sale wasn't problematic when it greenlighted it five years ago, information later emerged that cast the deal in a different light. In court testimony, two witnesses said the Wynn camp was told about one of the sellers' tainted past before the land deal was signed. Wynn has denied its executives knew about any such ties.

But the question about that seller — who knew what and when — hasn't been laid to rest, at least in two pending civil cases. The land deal figures into lawsuits against the gaming commission alleging that the casino license bidding process was rigged in Wynn's favor.

Barry Langberg, a lawyer for Wynn Resorts, wrote in two letters to Bloomberg that the witness statements and allegations made in the two lawsuits aren't "supported by any credible evidence." Wynn executives deny they were informed of any such criminal ties prior to the sale of the land, he wrote. A spokesman for Wynn Resorts, which isn't a party to either lawsuit, declined to provide further comment.

The casino operator can hardly afford missteps in Massachusetts. The Wynn Boston Harbor, one of the biggest private developments in Massachusetts history, is expected to contribute roughly 10 percent to the company's enterprise value. After Wynn, 76, resigned from the company in February, the casino operator has increasingly been seen as a potential acquisition target. Its now-chief executive officer, Matthew Maddox, has had informal talks about selling the unfinished Massachusetts casino.

Regulators in Macau — where the company generates more than three-quarters of its pretax profits — and Nevada are investigating sexual misconduct allegations. Wynn's Macau license is up for renewal in 2022.

Kurt Eggert, a law professor at Chapman University specializing in gaming regulation, said the ongoing inquiries could open the

door to revisiting questions about the land sale. If Massachusetts' findings end up being unfavorable toward Wynn, "the same questions would move to the front burner elsewhere, as people ask other gaming commissions what they're going to do about Wynn," he said.

There's an added complication to the state review of the licensing process. In the lawsuits alleging that Wynn Resorts received favorable treatment, the accusations are leveled at the Massachusetts Gaming Commission—the same body now conducting the review spurred by the harassment revelations. The commission, which has denied any wrongdoing, said it won't be looking into the land deal as part of its current review. It has moved to dismiss one of the lawsuits and vowed to fight the other.

The commission's chairman, Stephen Crosby, said the focus will be on Wynn executives' knowledge about a settlement that the company reached with a female employee before applying for the Massachusetts license. The panel wants to know what "did the board of directors and staff know and when did they know it, about the settlement and the associated allegations," Crosby said.

Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healy, who oversees a state gaming law-enforcement division, hasn't publicly addressed the land sale issue. But she has said the commission's review should be broad. "Nothing should be off the table right now—there are a ton of questions that need to be answered, and this is very serious business," Healy said in a radio interview Feb. 14.

Wynn's Boston strategy started back in 2011, when Massachusetts approved casino gambling as a way to pump money into the local economy. Competing against Caesars Entertainment Corp. and Mohegan Sun Massachusetts LLC, Wynn pitched a massive casino and hotel that it would build in nearby Everett, across the Mystic River from Boston and accessible by ferry.

Wynn's pitch included its plan to buy the Mystic River location—a 33-acre brownfield site where a Monsanto Co. factory once stood. It was owned by a partnership controlled by FBT Everett Realty LLC, which had paid \$8 million for it in 2009 and considered turning it into a waste-transfer station.

In late 2012, the Boston Business Journal identified an early FBT owner as a convicted felon. But that partner had already left the group. Five days later, Wynn signed a deal with FBT to buy the site for \$75 million if the casino license was granted.

But there was a second felon still in the mix. Around the same time, a Massachusetts prison official



overheard an ex-convict, Charles Lightbody, bragging on a recorded telephone line. He told an inmate with mob ties that he was hoping to make a killing on the Wynn land sale, according to court filings. Lightbody, who had a minority stake in the Everett site, had convictions going back decades for assault, grand larceny and identify theft, and was said by federal law enforcement to be an associate of the New England family of La Cosa Nostra.

Corrections officials alerted the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which flagged the state gaming commission in July 2013. The regulator, which is chartered to ensure "public confidence in the integrity of the gaming licensing process," started an inquiry. Commissioners asked if Wynn Resorts had known about Lightbody's record—a fact that could have forced the regulator to deny the license.

Among those the commission's investigators interviewed was Kimmarie Sinatra, Wynn Resorts' longtime general counsel. She told them she had no reason to believe at the time of the sale that any of FBT's owners had criminal ties. Sinatra later testified that she first heard of Lightbody when the gaming commission brought him up in July 2013. Sinatra said she was told by one of FBT's partners that there were only two other owners and that both had clean records, and has said the company performed due diligence on them. The commission concluded Wynn Resorts had "no knowledge" of attempts to hide ownership of the site.

The company and the commission also forged a solution: To prevent criminal elements from reaping a "gambling premium" on the land sale, Wynn Resorts would negotiate a discount. Instead of paying \$75 million to the FBT owners, it would pay what a consultant estimated a box store-chain might pay: \$35 million.

The commission approved the Wynn Resorts casino license in September 2014. A few weeks la-

ter, federal prosecutors indicted Lightbody and two other FBT investors for allegedly concealing his involvement from Wynn Resorts and the gaming commission.

During their three-week trial in Boston federal court in 2016, an alternate account emerged of what Wynn executives may have known. The FBT investors claimed casino executives knew who they were dealing with at the time of the sale. A government cooperator, Michael Flood, testified that he and his boss, one of the investors, escorted some Wynn executives, including Sinatra and now-CEO Maddox, around the Everett site a month before they signed the option agreement. The executives were told about the partners' backgrounds, according to Flood, including that one felon had recently left the ownership and that another one with a "checked past" was in the process of exiting.

Maddox, who was then Wynn's chief financial officer, and Sinatra expressed no concern, Flood testified. Maddox and Sinatra didn't recall the conversation Flood described, according to the trial transcript. Langberg, the Wynn Resorts lawyer, wrote that Flood couldn't prove he was at the purported meeting and had "assumed" that his boss was referring to Lightbody.

"Mr. Maddox and Ms. Sinatra have stated on numerous occasions, publicly and under oath, that there never was any conversation where they were informed that Mr. Lightbody was an owner, prior owner, or had any interest in the property," Langberg wrote.

The Wynn lawyer also said the defense argued that Lightbody was "not an owner at the time of the deal with Wynn Resorts so there could be no fraud in not disclosing him." The nature and timing of Lightbody's involvement in FBT were central to the criminal trial.

In court papers, the defendants had argued that the compromise price with the gaming commission had driven the prosecution. "There is at least a reasonable su-

ggestion that Wynn [Resorts]—the alleged victim in this case—was willing to feign being defrauded in order to reap a \$40 million financial windfall." Langberg rejected the allegation, saying it was a "suggestion" from a pre-trial brief with no evidence to support it. Ultimately, federal prosecutors failed to make their case that the three sellers committed fraud and conspiracy to hide criminal ties from Wynn and the gaming commission. The three were found not guilty on all charges. Gaming commission spokeswoman Elaine Driscoll said "the U.S. attorney's office investigated this matter and also found no evidence that Wynn Resorts had prior knowledge" of FBT's alleged efforts to conceal ownership.

The sellers are now suing the gaming commission, alleging they were wrongly pushed into lowering the sale price. Mohegan Sun Massachusetts, which lost out to Wynn Resorts for the greater Boston casino license, is also suing. Mohegan Sun said the commission showed "favoritism" toward Wynn and willfully ignored evidence that Wynn knew of Lightbody's involvement in FBT. The gaming commission has moved to dismiss the lawsuit by the FBT investors. It pledged to fight the Mohegan Sun suit. Langberg rejected Mohegan Sun's allegation.

As those legal battles play out, the casino has already risen 23 floors. The company has said the 27-story, 671-room project will be an anchor for revitalization, that it will generate 4,500 jobs and as much as \$260 million in annual taxes and fees for Massachusetts. While the commission has said its probe won't touch on the land sale, it will likely touch on whether Sinatra was aware of harassment allegations about her boss.

Elaine Wynn, Steve Wynn's ex-wife, said at a court hearing in Las Vegas last month that, back in 2009, Sinatra had called an employee's rape allegation against Steve Wynn a "personal" matter. In a statement issued after the March hearing, Sinatra said that Elaine Wynn never told her there was an allegation of rape against Steve Wynn, but made only an "oblique reference" to a settlement.

The state gaming commission, in a March 29 status report of its review, emphasized that the Wynn project should proceed because thousands of local jobs hang in the balance. But it put Wynn on notice that it proceeds on an "at risk" basis, pending the outcome of its investigation.

A Wynn executive said the company is open to "rebranding" the project—keeping it under company control, but removing the Wynn name entirely. **Bloomberg**

REAL ESTATE MATTERS

What makes a tenant a 'good' tenant?

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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practice in Macau as in other parts of the world, it is sometimes difficult to tell if a tenant will be a good tenant or not. But what makes a 'good' tenant 'good'? Here are 3 main criteria that landlords generally look for:

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Chinese Ministry of Commerce spokesman Gao Feng

Beijing denies Xi comments aimed at settling US dispute

CHINA'S government yesterday denied President Xi Jinping's promise of market-opening measures this week was aimed at settling a tariff dispute with Washington and said negotiations are impossible under "unilateral coercion" by the United States.

A commerce ministry spokesman, Gao Feng, complained U.S. President Donald Trump's government has "shown no sincerity," according to the official Xinhua News Agency. Gao said the two sides have yet to start negotiations.

Gao repeated complaints that Trump acted improperly when he responded to Beijing's protest over his plan to raise tariffs on USD50 billion of Chinese goods by saying he might add another \$100 billion of imports to the list.

"Under unilateral coercion, it is impossible for the Chinese side to conduct any negotiations," Gao was paraphrased as saying.

The measures to increase opening announced by China are a major decision to open to the outside.

GAO FENG

Trump's proposed tariff hike was a response to complaints Beijing steals or pressures foreign companies to hand

over technology. China has responded with its own \$50 billion list of U.S. goods for retaliation if Washington goes ahead with the increase.

Gao denied Xi was making an overture to Washington when he announced plans in a speech Tuesday to cut import duties on autos, ease restrictions on foreign ownership in China's auto industry and make other market-opening changes.

Share prices of global automakers rose on investor hopes their China operations, while some economists said the positive tone of Xi's comments might provide a basis for talks with Washington.

"The measures to increase opening announced by China are a major decision to open to the outside and have nothing to do with Chinese-U.S. trade frictions," Gao was paraphrased as saying. **AP**

HONG KONG

Law firms join Goldman in fight for gay spouse visas

Bruce Einhorn, David Tweed

MORE than a dozen large banks and law firms from the U.S., Europe and Asia are joining forces on behalf of a British lesbian in a landmark case for LGBT rights in Hong Kong.

Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Credit Suisse Group AG and Nomura Holdings Inc. are among 15 financial institutions that have filed an application to intervene in the case of a woman - named in court documents as QT - who sued after the government rejected her application to reside in Hong Kong as a dependent of her same-sex partner. Hong Kong's highest court is now considering an appeal filed by the government after a court ruled in favor of QT in September.

The banks and law firms believe "the appeal has no merit, or is based on an unequal treatment that discriminates against same-sex partners," said B. Chen Zhu, a Hong Kong-based counsel at Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, acting pro bono on their behalf. "They all want to express their support for equal treatment for LGBT immigrants."

The intervention comes as foreign chambers of commerce have lobbied Hong Kong's government to accommodate the spouses of expatriate gay staff in order to maintain its position as Asia's top financial hub. Hong Kong, which doesn't recognize same-sex marriages, in 2016 started allowing same-sex spouses or civil partners of consular officials to stay in the city.

"It's a challenge for some of our members who want to bring senior staff to Hong Kong but can't because they are in same-sex relationships," Jacinta Redden, chief executive of the Australian Chamber of Commerce, said yesterday.

Hong Kong Chief Executive Car-

rie Lam said Wednesday that the business community lobbied her on the issue, and drew comparisons to the diplomatic community. "They were finding it increasingly difficult to post diplomats to Hong Kong if we do not have some sort of arrangement," Lam said at a Bloomberg Invest conference. "I can only say that we will have to monitor this closely." Hong Kong's Department of Justice declined to comment because the proceedings are ongoing.

Vidler & Co. Solicitors, which represents QT, on Wednesday announced the applications by the financial institutions and law firms on its Facebook page without naming them. That disclosure caught firms by surprise. They had filed their applications last month and didn't want to discuss the matter outside the court room, according to Zhu.

"We did not intend for the interventions to be made public at this stage," he said. "We had intended to honor the confidentiality of the court's proceedings until the court made a decision to allow us to intervene or not."

If the court were to accept their applications, the financial institutions and law firms would become parties in the case and would be able to present their views to the judges, Zhu said.

A dozen institutions filed a similar application with a lower court last year, including ABN Amro Group NV, Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley. The same 12 have filed again, joined by three more: Barclays Plc, Deutsche Bank AG Hong Kong Branch and Macquarie Group.

In a separate application, 16 law firms also applied to intervene, including Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, Clifford Chance LLP and Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

6,200 SANDS STAFF MEMBERS CELEBRATE 10-YEAR MILESTONE



Around 6,200 Sands China team members are commemorating their 10-year service anniversaries with the company at more than 60 departmental celebrations that began in March and will continue throughout April.

Sands China, which has been based in Macau for over 13 years, has more than 8,500 Macau employees who have been with the company for 10 years or more. This latest group of 6,200 reached their 10-year milestone in 2016, 2017 or 2018. More than 75 percent of them are Macau locals, according to a press release issued by the gaming operator.

"Sands China is incredibly grateful for the loyalty, dedication and hard work of our team members celebrating their 10-year anniversaries with the company," said Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd.

"Their commitment to outstanding service - both toward fellow team members and to our guests and visitors - continues to reap benefits for the company and supports Macau's development as a world center of tourism and leisure."

At the celebrations, decorated with a 10-year service theme, team members received "The Perfect 10" commemorative service

pins and award trophies, and MOP500 food and beverage vouchers (worth more than MOP3 million in total) to be used in Sands China's restaurants.

According to figures provided by Sands China, the company has made nearly 18,000 promotions to date, involving over 10,000 local team members. More than 3,300 local team members have been promoted more than once.

Sands China's management team currently employs more than 2,500 locals, over two-thirds of whom have been working with the company for more than 10 years.

AP PHOTO

DEATH PENALTY

China remains top executioner as global executions fall

A new annual report on the death penalty calls sub-Saharan Africa a “beacon of hope” amid a decline in executions worldwide and China remained the “world’s top executioner.”

Excluding China, 84 percent of the reported executions last year were carried out in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Pakistan. Countries resuming executions in 2017 were Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

Twenty countries across sub-Saharan Africa have now abolished the death penalty for all crimes, Amnesty International says in the report released yesterday. Just two countries in the region, Somalia and South Sudan, carried out executions last year.

Executions worldwide dropped again in 2017, with at least 993 recorded in 23 coun-

tries. That’s down 4 percent from the year before and down 39 percent from 2015.

At least 2,591 death sentences were recorded in 53 countries last year, down from a record high of 3,117 the year before, the London-based human rights organization said.

The United States remained the only country in the Americas to carry out executions, with 23 last year, up slightly from the year before.

The numbers don’t include the thousands of executions and death sentences that Amnesty International believes have occurred in China, where they are considered a state secret.

With the progress in Africa, “the isolation of the world’s remaining executing countries could not be starker,” said the organization’s secretary general, Salil Shetty.

Even among those countries some “significant steps” were seen. In Iran, executions were down 11 percent and drug-related executions were reduced to 40 percent. In Malaysia, changes to anti-drug laws now allow discretion in sentencing for drug trafficking crimes.

But Amnesty International called “distressing” the continued use of the death penalty for drug-related offences, with 15 countries last year imposing death sentences or carrying out executions. Drug-related executions were recorded in China, Iran, Singapore and Saudi Arabia, where “drug-related beheadings rocketed from 16 percent of total executions in 2016 to 40 percent in 2017.”

The rights group also expressed concern that at least five people in Iran were executed last year for crimes committed

when they were under the age of 18, with another 80 people with similar pasts still on death row.

People with “mental or intellectual disabilities” were executed or faced a death sentence in the United States, Japan, Pakistan, Singapore and the Maldives.

Worldwide at least 21,919 people are known to be under a death sentence, Amnesty International said: “Now is not the time to let up the pressure.”

Other challenges remain, the report says, including in sub-Saharan Africa: Both Botswana and Sudan reportedly resumed executions this year.

And early this year, Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni said he will sign the first death warrants in nearly two decades to create fear among criminals, vowing to “hang a few.” **MDT/AP**

Sweden charges man with spying on Tibetans for Beijing

SWEDISH authorities said yesterday they have charged a man with spying for China, on suspicion that he gathered information on Tibetans who had fled to Sweden.

The man, a Tibetan who worked for the pro-Tibetan radio station “Voice of Tibet,” was charged with “gross illegal intelligence activity.” If found guilty, he faces sentences of up to four years in jail.

Daniel Stenling of Sweden’s security service SAPO said the man, who was not identified, was arrested Feb. 26. The security service said it had observed the man for some time, saying he gathered information among Tibetans in Sweden then handed them over to an intelligence officer from an unidentified “foreign nation.”

Prosecutor Mats Ljungqvist said the information included personal matters, ranging from where people lived and family relations to political activities, trips and meetings.

“This is a very serious crime because spying affects very vulnerable people,” said Ljungqvist, adding that refugees “must be able to feel confident that they can freely use their constitutional freedoms, for example to protest against a regime without risking persecution or other abuse.”

Ljungqvist told Swedish broadcaster SVT the suspect had been in contact with Chinese officials in Poland and Finland. He reportedly said the man received 50,000 kronor (USD6,000) on at least one occasion and had his expenses paid.

The prosecutor was not immediately available for comments. The suspect’s lawyer, Mikael Soderberg, told The Associated Press his client denies the charges.

“It is shocking news to us that China is spying on us,” Jamyang Choedon, the president of Tibetan Community in Sweden, told the AP. “This is not acceptable.”

“We have heard it is happening but now we might have a case,” Choedon said, adding that to her knowledge “this is the first time it’s been officially investigated.”

She said the Tibetan community in Sweden included some 140 people, including children. “We all know each other. I know him.”

The case comes at a time when relations between Stockholm and Beijing are tense.

China is holding a Chinese-born Swedish national on suspicion of leaking state secrets and has rebuked Sweden for demanding his release.

Hong Kong-based bookseller Gui Minhai, 53, was taken off a train by police on Jan. 20 while in the presence of two Swedish diplomats with whom he was traveling to Beijing. **AP**

SUN ZHENGCAI

Chinese politician accused of conspiracy admits to graft

A former Chinese political high-flyer who has been accused of plotting against the ruling Communist Party pleaded guilty to bribery yesterday, setting the stage for one of the highest-level convictions in President Xi Jinping’s campaign against corruption and political disloyalty.

Sun Zhengcai, former party leader of the western megacity of Chongqing, pleaded guilty to the charges in court and expressed repentance, according to the No. 1 Intermediate People’s Court in the eastern city of Tianjin.

Sun and his alleged associates were accused of accepting money and assets worth 170 million yuan (USD27 million) in return for providing help to unspecified organizations and individuals with engineering contracts, business operations and other mat-

ters, the court said.

He had been a member of the party’s elite 25-member Politburo and had been seen as a candidate for promotion to the Politburo’s Standing Committee, the select group of leaders who constitute the apex of political power in China.

Chinese leaders and party-run media have made it clear that though Sun was accused of corruption his alleged offenses were largely political in nature.

The chairman of China’s securities regulator said at a major party meeting last year that Sun and other senior figures prosecuted in the crackdown were “con-

spiring openly to usurp party leadership.”

Sun was expelled from the party and dismissed from public office in September because he was suspected of “serious discipline violations,” a phrase that usually refers to bribery but increasingly also includes political disloyalty.

He was removed suddenly from his Chongqing post and replaced by Xi protegee Chen Min’er, who was subsequently promoted to the Politburo.

Sun had been identified most closely with the China Youth League faction associated with Xi’s predecessor, Hu Jintao, which Xi had ef-



fectively sidelined in the succession process.

The court said on its official page on the social media site Weibo.

com that Sun said he had only himself to blame for his crimes. Sun could not be reached for comment. **AP**

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

Taiwan Strait live-fire drills announced amid tensions

CHINA yesterday announced live-firing military exercises in the Taiwan Strait amid heightened tensions over increased American support for Taiwan's government.

The announcement by the maritime safety authority in the coastal province of Fujian coincided with a statement from their counterparts in Hainan province that the navy was ending a three-day exercise in the South China Sea one day early.

No explanations were given in either case and the Defense Ministry did not immediately respond to questions. The Fujian authorities said the one-day Taiwan Strait drill will be held next Wednesday.

While Beijing responded mildly to U.S. President Donald Trump's early outreach to Taiwan's independence-leaning government, recent developments have prompted a tougher response. China claims Taiwan, which separated from the mainland during the Chinese civil war in 1949, as its own territory and says the sides must eventually be united, by force if necessary.

Despite the lack of formal ties, Washington is legally bound to respond to threats to Taiwan and is the island's main supplier of imported military hardware.

Chinese officials have denounced the recent passage of a U.S. law encouraging more high-level contacts with Taiwan. China says the Taiwan Travel Act violates U.S. commitments not to restore formal exchanges severed when Washington switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing in 1979.

An agreement to pass Taiwan submarine manufacturing technology and the appointment of hawkish National Security Adviser John Bolton have also hardened views among anti-American nationalists in China.

Beijing's Taiwan Affairs Office on Wednesday warned against additional moves to strengthen relations with Taiwan.

"Any attempt to play the 'Taiwan card' would only be futile," spokesman Ma Xiaoguang said. China, Ma said, would "not hesitate to protect our core interests."

That came after President Xi Jinping last month delivered a strongly nationalistic speech in which he vowed to protect "every



inch" of China's territory. "All acts and tricks to split the motherland are doomed to failure and will be condemned by the people and punished by history!" Xi said.

China has also stepped-up air force missions in airspace around Taiwan and has repeatedly sailed its sole operating aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, through the 160 kilometer wide Taiwan Strait.

The just-completed naval drills off Hainan underscored China's growing capabilities in defending its maritime interests and territorial claims, particularly in the disputed South China Sea.

Those exercises follow recent ones in the strategic waterway that featured the Liaoning, amid deployments and drills by the rival U.S. Navy. China's Maritime

Safety Administration said the exercises began on Wednesday and were to have lasted through the end of Friday.

China is building new vessels at a rapid pace to equip its navy, coast guard and maritime law enforcement agencies, including its first entirely domestically-built aircraft carrier.

It claims virtually the entire resource-rich South China Sea, through which an estimated USD5 trillion in global trade passes annually, and has constructed airstrips and other installations on artificial islands to enlarge its military footprint.

Hainan is home to a major military presence, including naval air stations and the country's largest submarine base.

This week it also hosted a global business forum that included a smattering of world leaders, among them Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, whose country is a U.S. treaty ally and has overlapping claims with Beijing in the South China Sea. AP

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Highlights of the Official Events		
13/4/2018 (Friday)		
09:00 - 18:00	Green Showcase (Trade and Professionals Only) & Green Matching	Expo Hall A (Level 1)
Green Forum		
09:30 - 12:50	Session 3 Sustainable and Resilient Eco-Cities – Key Challenges and Opportunities Part I: From Design to Reality – Exploring Eco-Cities Case Studies Part II: Relationship between Green Buildings & Eco-Cities	Sicily Room (Level 1) (2401-2502)
09:30 - 12:50	Session 4 Green Finance Innovation to Achieve Sustainable Development (Co-organised with Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM))	Florence Room (Level 1) (2201-2302)
14:30 - 15:15	Keynote Speaker Special Session Industry Insights with Ms. Christiana Figueres Shaping Tomorrow's Eco-cities	Sicily Room (Level 1) (2401-2502)
15:00 - 18:00	Session 5 Green Chemical Forum – Control and Treatment of VOCs Pollution in Petrochemical Industry	Florence Room (Level 1) (2201-2302)
15:30 - 18:00	Session 6 Pan-Pearl River Delta Region Session Part I: Sharing by Representative of PPRD Delegation to Portugal & Germany Part II: Introduction of PPRD Region/ Europe Environmental Protection Industry Part III: PPRD Environmental Protection Industry Association Panel Sessions (Co-organised with PPRD Environmental Protection Industry Co-operation Commission)	Sicily Room (Level 1) (2401-2502)
14/4/2018 (Saturday)		
09:00 - 17:00	Green Showcase & Green Matching	Expo Hall A (Level 1)
10:00 - 17:00	Green Public Day & Eco Market Macao	Expo Hall A (Level 1)

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Programme of Seminars & Presentations

Venue: Expo Hall A - Macao Pavilion (Level 1)

13/4/2018 (Friday)

09:45 - 10:30	Buyer Briefing Session: Water Management
16:00 - 16:45	Buyer Briefing Session: Green Building and General Eco Solutions
17:15 - 18:00	Buyer Briefing Session: Waste and Waste Water Management

Programme of Concurrent Events

14/4/2018 (Saturday)

09:30 - 11:30	Seminar on Macao Environmental Protection Development and Review	Sicily Room (Level 1) (2401-2502)
14:30 - 18:30	Macao International Eco-friendly Equipment Joint Exhibition	Sicily Room (Level 1) (2401-2502)

Free shuttles are provided for the public on April 14th (Saturday). Please refer to the following link for the route:
<http://www.macaomiecf.com/miecf2018/en/general-information/shuttle>

Green Showcase and Green Forum

13/04/2018	Open to Trade & Professionals Only
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Remarks: Please refer to the program of the above activities at www.macaomiecf.com for more updated details.

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NORTH KOREA

Construction is booming in the country, but who's paying?

Eric Talmadge, Pyongyang

BEACHFRONT, five-star hotels? Skyscrapers just blocks from Kim Il Sung Square?

North Korea is racing forward with major development projects some experts believe are aimed at expanding a market for rented or privately owned real estate to help fortify the finances of Kim Jong Un's regime against the bite of sanctions over its nuclear program.

A swelling market for private property doesn't sound very socialist, and it's not.

But the chronically cash-strapped government appears to be nurturing a fresh source of revenue — sales of property to the newly affluent class of North Koreans who have made their fortunes on the country's growing, but still largely unofficial, market economy that has come into its own since Kim assumed power.

The pressure on Pyongyang is growing as the Chinese investors who traditionally have propped up its economy are retreating amid tougher than ever restrictions imposed by Beijing.

The construction projects, which could cost well over a billion dollars to complete, have a lot of momentum behind them. They are part of a six-year building spree under Kim that has transformed the Pyongyang skyline. North Korean officials told The Associated Press they hope to have at least some of the developments ready to show off for celebrations in September marking the country's 70th anniversary.

"Since 2012, we have been building a new project each year, so I think one year from now a lot of changes will have been made in the city," said Kim Kum Chol, an architect with the Paektusan Academy of Architecture, the center for architectural research and design in North Korea. "We have a lot of construction plans."

He said there are three main projects this year:

— First, to redevelop the center of Pyongyang by replacing low-rise housing built after the 1950-53 Korean War with more space-efficient new skyscrapers, offices, public buildings and residential high rises. "For the center of the city there are many old residences, so we are trying to turn that into new ones," Kim explained.

— On the east coast's Wonsan-Kalma area, more than 10 hotels, thousands of units of residential housing and a number of recreational facilities are either planned or underway, Kim said. He said the hotels would range from rela-

■ The construction projects, which could cost well over a billion dollars to complete, have a lot of momentum behind them



tively modest three-star facilities to luxury five-star resorts. Kim Jong Un has already built a new airport to serve the area known as his home away from home.

— The third focus is near the Chinese border in Samjiyon, a scenic town at the foot of Mount Paektu, the spiritual home of the ruling Kim dynasty. The area is to become an "open-air museum for education in revolutionary traditions," according to state-media reports, and a center of mechanized potato farming "envied by the people the world over."

North Korea has often used ostentatious projects to inspire nationalistic pride, reward loyalty and enhance the prestige of the ruling regime. But Kim Jong Un seems to have a penchant for spearheading the completion of high-rise neighborhoods and modern, seemingly quite functional recreational facilities.

In theory, housing, education and health care are provided free

to all in socialist North Korea, where the state owns all capital, including the buildings, factories and land. Selling property outright, or collecting rents, would pull money out of the pockets of those who can afford it, putting it back into the coffers of the regime. Demanding prepayment could help finance projects underway or in the planning stages.

North Korea has been doing this to some degree for years.

Chinese investment has generally been seen as the key source of funds. So has slow but steady growth in the North's domestic economy, helped along by a swelling sector of entrepreneurs who have savings in foreign currencies like the U.S. dollar and Chinese yuan.

These people, known as "donju," or money masters, have been more visible since Kim Jong Un assumed power, creating a natural market for better housing that didn't exist in the past. Most live

in Pyongyang and the Wonsan area, where construction is most active. A big part of the building boom is focused on high-end properties in prime locations, like the Pyongyang city center or along riversides or ocean fronts that might be expected to appeal to them most — and have a higher market value.

Whether such projects would ever pay for themselves is unclear. That could help explain why Kim has made diplomatic overtures over the past few months to Seoul and Beijing — two potentially huge pools of investment and aid if the political tensions on the peninsula ease.

Before stepped up sanctions kicked in last year, North Korea made a massive sell-off of minerals to China that coincided nicely with the building boom.

William Brown, an economist at Georgetown University, said the "liquidation" of some state property makes fiscal sense, despite the cost to socialist principles, especially given North Korea's chronic trade deficit with China.

The downturn in Chinese trade and new investment since about September and Kim's inability to get foreign loans or woo other investors has cast serious doubt on the future of the economic boom and is jeopardizing funding for the military, said Benjamin Katzefz Silberstein, a scholar with the U.S.-based Foreign Policy Research Institute think tank and co-editor of the North Korea Economy Watch website.

Dwindling trade with China is not only sucking foreign reserves away from the regime, but also hurting businesses the "donju" rely on as well, a one-two punch to the economy that could get significantly worse in the months to come, possibly undermining demand for luxury property.

"The state really doesn't have any sustainable revenue source as of now," Silberstein said. **AP**

CHINA-AUSTRALIA

PM Turnbull says 'some tension' in relations

AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said yesterday there is "some tension" in relations with Beijing, following accusations of Chinese meddling in the country's politics and concerns over China's influence in the South Pacific.

In an Australian radio interview, Turnbull said ties remained positive overall and declined to say whether Australian officials had been refused visas to China for political reasons.

Yet, while he said he was confident that "any misunderstandings" would be resolved, he conceded that not all was well in the relationship.

"I would say that there's

obviously been, there's clearly been some tension in the relationship following the introduction of our legislation about foreign interference," Turnbull said.

Beijing has been angered by planned legal changes aimed at blocking foreign influence in Australian politics, issuing stern protests against accusations that it is seeking to manipulate the government and public opinion.

Chinese diplomats and agents of the ruling Communist Party have also been accused of controlling Chinese-language media in Australia and the large population of Chinese students at its universities. Influential Austr-

lian opposition lawmaker Sam Dastyari recently quit the Senate after coming under fire over his close links to wealthy Chinese political donors.

In Beijing, Geng Shuang, a foreign ministry spokesman, denied that China is refusing to grant visas to Australian officials. Geng told reporters at a regular briefing that China hopes Australia will work together with it in "doing something conducive to enhancing bilateral cooperation and mutual trust."

He also said suggestions that China is interfering in the domestic politics of other countries were "totally groundless."

Without citing China, Tur-

bull indicated he would continue to push the new legislation, saying it was incumbent on the government to ensure that only Australians determine their country's political fate.

"We don't accept foreign interference in our political or governmental processes. That is not directed at any one at any one nation," he told 3AW Radio Melbourne.

China's growing South Pacific presence has also raised concerns among Australian politicians and media, especially following reports that the island nation of Vanuatu, about 1,750 kilometers from Australia, was in talks with Beijing on potentially hosting a Chinese military



In this file photo, Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull (left) shakes hands with President Xi Jinping

base.

While Vanuatu and China have denied the reports, Turnbull on Tuesday said any kind of a foreign base would be unwelcome.

Australian politicians

have also attacked Chinese development projects in South Pacific countries, saying they added little value while locking such governments into dependency on Beijing. **AP**

COURTS in central Vietnam yesterday handed down lengthy prison terms against two activists as communist authorities stepped up their crackdown on dissent.

The two were given nine and seven years respectively for attempting to overthrow the government and spreading anti-state propaganda in two separate trials.

Nguyen Viet Dung, 32, was convicted of spreading anti-state propaganda by writing and posting on his Facebook page and blogs articles that the judges say distorted government policies and defamed the country's leaders. His lawyer Ngo Anh Tuan said he was also found guilty of flying the flag of former U.S.-backed South Vietnam and shooting video and photographs and posting them on Facebook.

The court also ordered Dung to serve five years of house arrest after completing his prison sentence.

Dung confessed his crimes during the proceedings, the lawyer said, adding that the court rejected his argument for lesser sentences.

Meanwhile, the People's Court in neighboring Ha Tinh province convicted Tran Thi Xuan of attempting to overthrow the government and sentenced her to nine

VIETNAM

Courts jail two more activists in stepped up crackdown



Activist Tran Thi Xuan is escorted into a court room in Ha Tinh province

years in prison and five years of house arrest, the official Vietnam News Agency reported.

Xuan, 42, was accused of affiliating with an outlawed group named Brotherhood for Democracy and instigating protests following

pollution by Taiwanese-owned Formosa Plastic Group's steel complex that devastated the fishing industry and tourism in four central provinces two years ago, VNA reported.

Their sentences came just days

after seven activists belonging to the same group, including prominent human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai, were convicted and imprisoned to between seven to 15 years for subversion.

Amnesty International and Hu-

man Rights Watch have called for Dung's release.

"Vietnamese authorities regularly claim to respect human rights but their actions suggest precisely the opposite," Phil Robertson, Human Rights Watch's deputy Asia director said in a statement. "Vietnam's government wrongly believe that freedom of expression and association only translate into only saying and doing things approved by the ruling Communist Party of Vietnam."

Despite sweeping economic reforms launched in the mid-1980s that made the country one of fastest growing in the region, the communist government tolerates no challenge to its one-party rule.

International human rights groups and some Western governments often criticize Vietnam for jailing those who peacefully express their views, but Hanoi says only law breakers are punished. AP

AD



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COLD WAR 2.0

US, Russia trade rhetoric, edge toward showdown over Syria

Nataliya Vasilyeva & Vladimir Isachenkov, Moscow

WHEN the U.S. fired Tomahawk missiles at a Syrian airfield a year ago after a chemical weapons attack, the Pentagon gave Moscow advance warning to get its personnel out of harm's way.

Since then, U.S.-Russian relations have soured, and the two nuclear powers have raised the ante, getting dangerously close to a potential military clash in Syria.

U.S. President Donald Trump has taunted Moscow to "get ready" for "nice and new and 'smart'" missiles coming to punish Syria for a purported chemical attack on Saturday that killed at least 40 people. The tweet followed Russia's warning that it will strike at incoming U.S. missiles and their launch platforms.

The defiant posture leaves both the White House and the Kremlin with fewer options to respond without losing face.

A stern statement last month by Russia's top military officer effectively drew a red line on any U.S. strike. Gen. Valery Gerasimov, the chief of the Russian military's General Staff, said Russian military officers are at

Syrian facilities throughout the country and warned that "if a threat to our servicemen emerges, the Russian armed forces will take retaliatory measures against both missiles and their carriers."

Some say the U.S. could launch a limited strike like it did in April 2017, when it hit Syria's Shayrat airfield with cruise missiles after warning Russia. Such a scenario would allow Washington to claim it made good on its promise to punish Syrian President Bashar Assad without triggering a clash with Russia.

A pinpoint U.S. strike on Syrian targets that does not harm Russian personnel "will allow Trump to say that the Assad regime has paid a heavy price [...] and Russia in its turn will be able to limit itself to ringing statements," said Fyodor Lukyanov, the head of the Council for Foreign and Defense Policies, an association of top Russian political and security experts.

He added, however, that the U.S. would be unlikely to warn Russia of the coming strike this time.

"The context of the relations has changed radically in the past year: We're in a state of a real and tangible Cold War," Lukyanov said.



Moscow's hopes of warmer ties with Washington under Trump have been shattered by the ongoing U.S. investigations of alleged Russian interference in the 2016 election and its potential ties with the Trump campaign. The Trump administration has ramped up sanctions against Russia and expelled dozens of diplomats. Tensions between the two countries have escalated on a broad range of issues — from the crisis in Ukraine to the war in Syria to the poisoning of an ex-Russian spy in Britain,

which triggered the massive diplomatic war.

President Vladimir Putin's top adviser, Vladislav Surkov said in an article released earlier this week that Russia has abandoned its centuries-long aspirations of integrating into the West and is bracing for a new era of "geopolitical loneliness." Surkov warned that "it's going to be tough," but added cryptically that "it'll be fun."

Opinions vary about what may happen in Syria.

"The situation is pretty bad, but it shouldn't be overdramatized," Alexei Malashenko, a leading Russian expert on Syria said in televised remarks. "I don't believe that a clash between Russia and the U.S. is possible."

■ 'What if the war starts tomorrow?' the front page of Moskovsky Komsomolets clamored

Washington and Moscow both have said that a hotline established in 2015 to prevent incidents between their militaries in Syria has worked well, but the rising stakes make the situation more unstable than ever during the Syrian conflict.

Under one possible scenario, Russia may try to use its sophisticated electronic warfare systems deployed in Syria to make U.S. missiles veer off course without shooting them down. If that softer option doesn't work, the Russian military could use an array of its state-of-the-art air defense assets in Syria to target the U.S. cruise missiles or drones.

Vyacheslav Nikonov, a senior lawmaker in the Kremlin-controlled lower house of parliament, said in televised remarks that the Russian military was getting its electronic countermeasures and air defense assets ready for action. He added on a combative note that the situation offers a "good chance to test them in conditions of real combat."

An even more threatening situation may evolve if the U.S. and its allies use manned aircraft, and the Russian strike results in casualties.

Such a scenario could trigger a quick escalation, leaving Russia and the U.S. on the brink of a full-scale conflict — a situation unseen even during the darkest moments of the Cold War.

Retired Lt. Gen. Yevgeny Buzhinsky, the former chief of the Russian Defense Ministry's international department, warned that Russia has thousands of military advisers in Syria "practically in every battalion," and a strike on any Syrian facility could jeopardize their lives. He warned that Russia and the U.S. will quickly find themselves in a major conflict if they allow a collision in Syria to happen.

"I have an impression that Americans' survival instincts have grown numb, if not vanished completely," Buzhinsky said. "They seem not to really believe that Russia will give a tough military response and expect some sort of a local brawl, exchanging some minor blows. It's a miscalculation. Any clash between Russian and U.S. militaries will expand beyond a local conflict and an escalation will be inevitable."

Andrei Klimov, the head of an upper house committee that investigates foreign meddling in Russian affairs, proudly said on the top talk show on Russian state TV that his relative, a Soviet pilot, won a medal for combat duty in Vietnam. Klimov pointed to heavy U.S. losses from Soviet missiles and jets in Vietnam, adding that Russia stands ready to counter any possible U.S. strike.

Unlike the Vietnam War, where Soviet advisers helping North Vietnam supposedly weren't directly engaged in combat, the potential clash in Syria would pit Russia directly against the U.S.

Fears of war swept Russian newspaper headlines and TV news, with commentators discussing the darkest possible outcomes, including a nuclear war.

"What if the war starts tomorrow?" the front page of Moskovsky Komsomolets clamored. Russia's best-selling newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda wondered: "Is macho Trump going to start World War III?"

Even former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev weighed in. The 87-year-old former president compared the tensions to the 1962 Cuban missile crisis and said he feels "great concern." AP

USA

Mike Pompeo: Soft policy on Moscow 'over'

MIKE Pompeo, the hard-charging CIA director picked to be the next secretary of state, will tell the Senate yesterday that years of soft U.S. policy toward Russia are "now over." Drawing a sharp contrast with predecessor Rex Tillerson, Pompeo will vow to promote democracy and human rights while ending "demoralizing" vacancies at the State Department.

According to his prepared remarks, Pompeo will chastise Russia for acting "aggressively" and emphasize that the Trump administration considers Russia "a danger to our country." But he will also say that diplomatic efforts with Moscow, while challenging, "must continue." The Associated Press obtained excerpts of his remarks from a senior Trump administration official.

Pompeo will also stress America's "duty to lead," despite Trump's vows to put "America first."

"If we do not lead the calls for democracy, prosperity and human rights around the world, who will?" Pompeo plans to say.



"No other nation is equipped with the same blend of power and principle."

Pompeo's remarks before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will be the first chance for lawmakers and the public to hear directly from the former Kansas congressman about his approach to diplomacy and the role of the State Department, should he be confirmed to lead it. Pompeo's views on global issues are well known — he was questioned extensively by senators for his confirmation to

run the CIA — but Democratic senators have raised questions about his fitness to be top diplomat, given his hawkish views and past comments about minorities.

"When journalists, most of whom have never met me, label me — or any of you — as 'hawks,' 'war hardliners,' or worse, I shake my head," the former Army officer will say. "There are few who dread war more than those of us who have served in uniform."

He will add, "War is always the last resort."

Since being nominated last month, Pompeo has spent much of his time at the State Department immersing himself in briefing books and undergoing mock hearings and prep meetings on key issues like Iran, Syria and North Korea, as well as the inner workings of the State Department, a person close to Pompeo said. He's also spoken to all eight living former secretaries — including Hillary Clinton, whom he famously criticized over the 2012 attack on U.S. facilities in Benghazi, Libya. AP

Ilan Ben Zion, Jerusalem

ISRAEL

Sirens wail as Israelis stand still for Holocaust remembrance

ISRAELIS stood still yesterday for a nationwide moment of silence in remembrance of the 6 million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, as a two-minute siren wailed across the country and the nation paid respects to those systematically killed by Nazi Germany and its collaborators in World War II.

As every year on Holocaust Remembrance Day, buses and cars halted on streets and highways and Israelis stepped out of their vehicles, standing with heads bowed in solemn remembrance.

The somber day is also marked by ceremonies and memorials at schools and community centers. Restaurants and cafes in the ordinarily bustling streets of Tel Aviv shutter, and TV and radio stations play Holocaust-themed programs. Dignitaries laid wreaths at Yad Vashem, the national Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem.

A third of the world's Jews were murdered in the Holocaust. Israel was established afterward in 1948, and hundreds of thousands of survivors fled to the Jewish state.

Earlier yesterday [Macau time], Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke at a Holocaust me-

morial ceremony at Yad Vashem and warned that archenemy Iran should not test Israel amid rising tensions in Syria.

"Events of recent days teach that standing up to evil and aggression is a mission imposed on every generation," Netanyahu said.

"Today as well, a murderous regime threatens us, threatens entire world peace, this regime explicitly declares that it intends to annihilate us, the Jewish state," he said, alluding to Iran.

Netanyahu compared the 2015 nuclear deal between world powers and Iran to the appeasement of Adolf Hitler in the run-up to World War II. He said the agreement "released the Iranian regime from its chains and since has devoured country after country, similar to what happened in Europe in the 1930s."

Israel regards Iran as an existential threat because of its nu-

AP PHOTO



Events of recent days teach that standing up to evil and aggression is a mission imposed on every generation.

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks during the Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony

clear and ballistic missile programs and support for anti-Israel organizations such as the Shiite

militant group Hezbollah in Lebanon and Palestinian militant groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Tehran insists that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only. AP

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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 European League Highlights
- 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 Portuguese Around the World Sr 2
- 22:20 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, FED UP WITH LINGERING COLD WEATHER, 'ARRESTS' WINTER



An upstate New York police department fed up with lingering cold weather has placed winter under arrest. The Post-Standard reports the Depew Police Department wrote Friday in a humorous Facebook post that it had arrested the season. Police said any more snow winter produces would be held against it in court. The department also called for groundhog Punxsutawney Phil to turn himself in for predicting six more weeks of winter. Police joke that they're willing to look past winter's "most recent transgressions" if it works with the department. New York has experienced wintry weather this month and high winds that caused power outages.

cinema

CINETEATRO

12 - 18 APR



RAMPAGE
ROOM 1
2:30, 4:30, 07:30, 9:30pm
Director: Brad Peyton
Starring: Dwayne Johnson, Naomie Harris, Malin Akerman
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 107min



SECRET SUPERSTAR
ROOM 2
2:30, 5:30, 08:30pm
Director: Advait Chandan
Starring: Aamir Khan, Zaira Wasim
Language: Hindi (English & Chinese)
Duration: 150min



TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY
ROOM 3
2:15, 5:45pm
Director: Nick Park
Starring: Eddie Redmayne, Tom Hiddleston
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 91min



READY PLAYER ONE
ROOM 3
9:15pm
Director: Steven Spielberg
Starring: Tye Sheridan, Olivia Cooke, Ben Mendelsohn
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 140min

this day in history



1964 POITIER BREAKS NEW GROUND WITH OSCAR WIN

The acting profession's top award has gone to a black actor for the first time. Sidney Poitier won the best actor Oscar for his role in Lilies of the Field. In the film, released last year, he played construction worker Homer Smith whom a group of nuns believe was sent to them by God to build their church. The only other black person to win an Oscar was the best supporting actress award given to Hattie McDaniel in 1939 for her role in Gone with the Wind. Alongside 'Rat Pack' actor Sammy Davis Jr and, earlier, Paul Robeson, Poitier is one of only a handful of black men to gain recognition in Hollywood for roles not involving singing or dancing. It was the second time he had been in the running for an Oscar after losing out in 1959 when he was nominated for his part in The Defiant Ones. "It has been a long journey to this moment," the actor said after he was presented with the prized statuette by actress Ann Bancroft. Sidney Poitier's early life seemed unlikely to spawn a Hollywood star. He grew up in poverty in the Bahamas in the Caribbean where his father was a tomato farmer. In his first months in New York he was so poor he slept in the toilets of a bus station. He was hampered in his efforts to break into acting by his strong Bahamian accent and was initially rejected by the American Negro Theatre. His first film was No Way Out alongside Richard Widmark in 1950 in which he played a doctor. But his big breakthrough came five years later in The Blackboard Jungle. His roles have been a big move away from the stereotypical dim-witted Negro characters made famous in the 1930s and 1940s by Stepin Fetchit.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Much of America was scandalised by the chaste congratulatory peck on the cheek Ann Bancroft gave Sidney Poitier when presenting his award. Three years later the actor took part in the first on-screen interracial kiss in the film Guess Who's Coming to Dinner? The film was among a string of hit movies Sidney Poitier starred in during the late 1960s and early 1970s. They included In the Heat of the Night and the role for which Poitier is probably most famous, Detective Virgil Tibbs. In 2002 Denzel Washington and Halle Berry won the best actor and best actress Oscars - the first black actors to win since Poitier. At the same ceremony Sidney Poitier was given a lifetime achievement award.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
If there's anything you really abhor, it's being told to wait, stop or sit still. You're a big fan of taking action - sometimes regardless of whether it's right or wrong. So feeling stalled or delayed won't sit very well with you.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
You're a hard-working individual, as diligent - okay, stubborn, even - as anyone can possibly be. But there's more to life than just making sure you take care of your responsibilities.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
The good news is that the person you want to be with will be just as eager to have you back in their arms. Think of tonight as a reward, then, and try your best to forget about anything other than enjoying their company.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
If you're not sure about how to deal with a financial issue that's been troubling you, don't make any changes just yet. Keep doing what you've been doing until you discover that you've done it wrong.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Stop thinking about the past - the negative parts of it, at least. You've done your share of that and it hasn't done you any good. Why not look to the future instead, and think about all the good things that lie ahead for you?

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
We either decide that it's time to concentrate on our health or we run into someone who's so darned interesting that we start thinking about how to make them interested, too.

Libra
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You're the type of person who has lots of friends from all walks of life. You've found them at school, at work and through your siblings and neighbors - not to mention because you happened to sit down next to them.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
You've got a lot to do and very little time to get it done. Fortunately, if anyone can manage it, it's you, mostly because you're used to this type of thing - the pressure, that is.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
If you've got somewhere to be, and you've got to leave today, you need to be doubly on your toes. This is one of those days when anything at all can happen. Basically, it's a Murphy's Law kind of day.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You're not sure what to do about your financial situation, especially when it comes to joint resources. Since there's really no way for you to figure it out now, your best bet is to find the one person you know will be able to help.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You're not the type of person to air your feelings in public, whether they're positive or negative. You just don't like letting the rest of the world in on your intimate matters, and that's entirely understandable.

Pisces
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
When someone comes to you now, asking that you allow them to confide in you, you'll be more than happy to indulge them. However, you may need to warn them not to talk with anyone else about all this.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

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			6	2		5		
		3					7	
4								
					1	3		
5							6	
					4			

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	7	11	drizzle
Harbin	-3	13	cloudy/shower
Tianjin	9	13	drizzle/moderate rain
Urumqi	-1	17	clear
Xi'an	8	12	drizzle
Lhasa	4	17	cloudy/shower
Chengdu	14	21	drizzle
Chongqing	16	23	drizzle/heavy rain
Kunming	13	26	clear/cloudy
Nanjing	15	19	shower
Shanghai	15	20	drizzle
Wuhan	12	21	moderate rain
Hangzhou	17	23	shower
Taipei	23	30	drizzle/cloudy
Guangzhou	23	30	cloudy
Hong Kong	24	30	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	0	12	clear/drizzle
Frankfurt	10	17	drizzle/overcast
Paris	7	16	moderate rain/drizzle
London	0	4	sleet/moderate rain
New York	12	17	flurry/drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Whiskey type; 6- Airline to Oslo; 9- Light ___; 14- Office solution; 15- Time to remember; 16- Lunar valley; 17- Hidden software surprise; 19- Reliable; 20- 6, on a phone; 21- Mil. addresses; 22- Wards (off); 23- Cushions; 25- We're off ___ the Wizard; 26- Llama relative; 29- Surgery reminder; 31- Directing head; 32- Created by humans; 36- Teri of "Tootsie"; 37- Kan. neighbor; 38- Look ___ hands!; 40- German biologist; 43- Quest; 45- Public disturbance; 46- Respect; 47- Capital of Yemen; 50- Pueblo Indian; 51- World book; 52- Twin in Genesis; 54- Wire measure; 57- Mess up; 58- Wine served with food; 61- Love, Italian-style; 62- TNT part; 63- Unspoken; 64- Stationed; 65- Small island; 66- Big name in hotels;

DOWN: 1- Bit of gossip; 2- Horse shade; 3- ___ many words; 4- Harden; 5- Charlemagne's realm; Abbr.; 6- Oozes; 7- Golden Fleece ship; 8- Droops; 9- Structure of an artistic work; 10- Fathers; 11- Roomy dress cut; 12- ___ France; 13- Cincinnati club; 18- "M*A*S*H" name; 23- Military chaplain; 24- Whiz; 25- Convert into leather; 26- Math subj.; 27- Jacob's first wife; 28- Graph prefix; 29- Refine; 30- Where the truck driver rides; 33- Stradivari's teacher; 34- Challenge to complete a task; 35- Suffix with exist; 37- Prefix with classical; 39- Resistance unit; 41- Collided; 42- Sportage maker; 43- Capital of South Korea; 44- Clairvoyant's claim; 47- Mouthlike opening; 48- Choir section; 49- Mother of pearl; 50- Nun wear; 51- Simple rhyme scheme; 52- James of jazz; 53- Rani's wrap; 54- Flaky mineral; 55- What's ___ for me?; 56- Riga resident; 59- Biblical verb ending; 60- Method;

Yesterday's solution

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

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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	<p>Riveria Tower 2, Unit N Macau 3 Bedrooms Apartment Available From - June 2018 HKD 15,500 / 1,173 sq ft Ref. 18030671</p>	<p>Coloane, Hellene Garden Coloane 3 Bedrooms Apartment Hillside View HKD 12,800 / 1,663 sq ft Ref. 18030673</p>	<p>Coloane, 4 Storey Commercial Building Coloane Licensed Commercial Space Located In a Wonderful Area HKD 168,000 / 4,003 sq ft Ref. 17040646</p>	<p>Car Park, Manhattan Taipa Single Car Park Available For Rent HKD 1,800 / sq ft Ref. 17075528</p>

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Tales Azzoni, Madrid

JUST when it looked like Juventus would pull off another stunning Champions League comeback, Cristiano Ronaldo stepped up once again.

Ronaldo converted a penalty kick deep into injury time to send Real Madrid through to the semifinals for the eighth straight season despite a 3-1 home loss to Juventus yesterday [Macau time]. The goal was enough to give the two-time defending champion a 4-3 aggregate win and avoid nerve-racking extra time after the Italian side had erased a seemingly insurmountable deficit from the first leg.

"It was a match in which we suffered," Ronaldo said. "It shows that nothing is a given in football, you have to fight until the end. We didn't play well, we have to admit. But in the end we deserved to advance."

A day after seeing Spanish rival Barcelona blow a three-goal advantage against Roma in Italy, Madrid nearly did the same. But Juventus' heroics came up just short after substitute Lucas Vazquez appeared to be pushed from behind inside the area in the third and final minute of stoppage time.

Veteran Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon, in what was likely his last Champions League game, was then sent off for furiously complaining after the penalty decision. The Madrid crowd at Santiago Bernabeu Stadium gave Buffon a standing ovation as he left the field.

"Life goes on," Buffon said. "I'm happy and proud of how we played, we made the impossible possible. It's a shame it ends like this."

In the night's other quarterfinal, Bayern Munich advanced with a 0-0 home draw against Sevilla as the newly crowned Bundesliga champions defended a 2-1 advantage from the first leg.

Madrid won the first leg 3-0 in Turin last week, when Ronaldo scored with a spectacular bicycle kick for his second goal of the match.

That deficit made the return leg seem like an impossible task for Juventus but it got off to the perfect start when Mario Mandzukic opened the scoring with a header two minutes into the match. He added to the lead with another header before halftime, and Blaise Matuidi scored the third early in the second half after a blunder by Madrid goalkeeper Keylor Navas.

But Ronaldo, in his 150th Champions League appearance, then netted his 120th goal in the competition by converting the penalty with a firm shot into the top corner. He celebrated by taking off his shirt and running toward the euphoric Madrid crowd.

Ronaldo has scored 21 goals in his last 11 matches in all competitions, and has netted in 11 straight Champions League matches.

The penalty came as Vazquez was in position to score in front of the goal after Ronaldo headed down a cross into the area. Ju-

FOOTBALL

Late Ronaldo penalty keeps Madrid alive in Champions League

ventus players stormed toward English referee Michael Oliver, who apparently had help from his behind-the-goal assistant to make the call.

The penalty was taken eight minutes into stoppage time as it took a while for Oliver to clear the Juventus players who were protesting against the decision.

Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri said he had a brief encounter in the tunnel with Madrid captain Sergio Ramos, who didn't play because of a suspension.

■ Ronaldo netted his 120th goal in the competition by converting the penalty with a firm shot into the top corner

"I just told him that it wasn't a clear penalty," Allegri said.

Madrid had conceded three goals at home only two other times this season, in a 3-0 loss to Barcelona and a 6-3 win over Girona. It was the first time Madrid was down 3-0 in the Champions League since losing 4-0 at Liverpool in the round of 16 in 2008-09.

"We didn't expect to concede an early goal like that," Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane said. "That allowed their team to grow and it made things difficult for us."

Juventus took advantage of Madrid's depleted defense, which had 21-year-old Jesus Vallejo playing alongside Raphael Varane.

Mandzukic opened the scoring in the second minute by entering the area behind the Madrid defenders to head in a well-placed right-flank cross by Sami Khedira in what was the fastest ever goal conceded by Madrid at home in the Champions League.

Mandzukic's second goal came with another header in the 37th, after Madrid had created a few good scoring opportunities of its own despite looking lost on defense. Stephan Lichtsteiner made the cross from the right side and Mandzukic beat Dani Carvajal to the ball.

The third goal came thanks to a 61st-minute mistake by Navas, who failed to hold on to a mid-height cross into the area and dropped the ball into Matuidi's feet in front of the goal.

"The first leg had given me confidence we could do this and the side deserved at least extra time," Allegri said. **AP**



Nerves of steel: Cristiano Ronaldo shoots a penalty shot to score his side's fourth goal during a Champions League quarter-final

Bayern Munich reaches semifinals



Bayern's Javi Martinez (left) and Sevilla's Ever Banega challenge for the ball

BAYERN Munich reached its sixth Champions League semifinal in seven seasons with a 0-0 draw against Sevilla in the second leg of their quarterfinal yesterday.

The Bavarian powerhouse, which clinched its sixth consecutive Bundesliga title on Saturday, progressed to the final four of Europe's premier competition thanks to its 2-1 win in the first leg in Spain.

Bayern will face one of Liverpool, Roma or Real Madrid in the semifinals.

"It's a step away from the final," Bayern winger Arjen Robben said. "But it won't get any easier. It'll get harder."

In the night's other match, Cristiano Ronaldo scored an injury-time penalty for Madrid to progress despite a 3-1 home loss to Juventus, with a 4-3 aggregate score.

"There is no team that you'd

rather have," Bayern captain Thomas Mueller said of Friday's semifinal draw. "We've earned it for ourselves and of course want to get through."

Bayern coach Jupp Heynckes sent out his strongest lineup in Munich with Robert Lewandowski, James Rodriguez and Mueller flanked by Robben and Franck Ribery.

James went close with a free kick before Robben shot just wide of the far post as the home side made a promising start.

Sevilla also had opportunities, however, first for Pablo Sarabia, then Joaquin Correa.

"They had chances that they could have used better," Bayern defender Joshua Kimmich said.

Sevilla's players were showing more bite, winning more challenges with some leaving their mark - Lewandowski was left with large swelling under his

right eye, while Javi Martinez, James and Rafinha also needed attention.

Bayern had better chances before the break through Mats Hummels and Franck Ribery, who shot straight at the goalkeeper.

Lewandowski hit the side-netting after the interval before Sevilla showed more ambition getting forward. Correa struck the crossbar with a header before the hour-mark.

But it was as close as the visitors got, and Sevilla's hopes were already over when Correa was shown red card in injury time for a bad challenge on Martinez.

"What we need to cling on to tonight is the tremendous amount of work we did," Sevilla captain Sergio Escudero said.

Bayern, which faces Bayer Leverkusen away in the semifinals of the German Cup next Tuesday, is going for a repeat of the treble it won in Heynckes' last season in charge in 2013.

The veteran coach has overseen a major improvement in Bayern's performances since being coaxed out of retirement in October for his fourth stint in charge.

"Nobody thought at the time that we'd win the league with five rounds to spare and a 20-point lead, and that the team would also reach the semifinals of the Champions League," Heynckes said. **AP**

opinion

Bizcuits
 Leanda Lee



A HEALTHY DISRESPECT

Plastered all over my social media feeds last week were still-shots of an athlete, not just any athlete, but the athlete who apparently is closest to God. Granted, what was depicted in the pictures, videos and Japanese anime caricatures was a highly physical, incredibly executed bicycle kick; an obvious soccer goal, given the excitement and space given to the marvellous feat.

Soccer mum, I am, but not being a particularly ardent fan of the beautiful game, I could not glean from the posts what the fuss was all about. Other players have managed gymnast-like aerial backflips to kick goals to stunning finishes in important games before, and most of the world knows how extraordinarily brilliant this Cristiano Ronaldo is. What gives, I wondered.

Tongue in cheek, feigning ignorance, I queried what a CR7 was. Suitably chastised, I was adeptly accused of living under a rock. Genuinely curious about the viral-worthiness of the event, in response to yet another post about the opponents giving CR a standing ovation, I loaded a picture of Tim Cahill (the Aussie) doing a similar backflip manoeuvre and asked, "What's the difference?" Apparently, this was incendiary.

This was one of those social media moments when one realises one has possibly overstepped a line. I would have to tread carefully. A lack of knowledge and appreciation for the occasion combined with daring to make any suggestion of comparison to a lesser mortal was just too much to be tolerated. Albeit not consciously baiting the fans, I was about to be taken down by someone who saw a red-rag, but was rescued by a calm, friendly and detailed explanation.

With the "not to disrespect Cahill" comment, I realised that this was all about respect – a subtle warning for me, too, to be respectful.

Firstly, I was told about the player's ability to reach the ball (the brilliance of execution), but that was not the reason. He told of the strength of the opposition and their defence: Juventus in Turin. He told also of the importance of that particular game and league: a Champions League quarter-final. However, what made this one of the best goals in history, he patiently explained, was not just these factors but the man himself. The Juventus fans "didn't" just applaud a great goal. They applauded greatness."

Greatness is adored. And such greatness is as clear as the day is light – thus the accolades, thus the applause. Yet, I remained troubled by the friendly sparing.

Daring to seek proof of greatness, hinting at any amount of disrespect, is a risky business, even within the safe confines of friendly banter. CR's greatness is legend and being in the sporting arena is clearly earned, easily quantified and readily explained. Should one care to look, it is apparent.

Not all greatness is as meritorious. Yet, to doubt, to question, to criticise, can raise the ire of fans, can lose one a career, friends, social networks, or worse. But question, we should.

It is the role of dedicated professionals to question the behaviour of their associates (the great Wynn's sexual harassment saga might have been averted); of the media to protect public interest (the Wall Street Journal highlighted Wynn's proclivities covered up for so long), and of academics to make everyone's lives impossible by shining a light into every nook and cranny.

Greatness is not sacred. It is not taboo to question. (We Australians commonly have a healthy disrespect for authority figures, so this comes naturally to us. It is what shall save us from tyranny.) There is no ultimate, unquestionable authority. The truly great can withstand the scrutiny.

Then, there are the Gods.

THE GERMAN NATIONALIST APOLOGIZES FOR BLAMING ATTACK ON MUSLIMS

A deputy leader of the nationalist Alternative for Germany party apologized yesterday for falsely blaming a fatal van attack in Muenster on Islamic extremists, saying that she leapt to conclusions too quickly.

Beatrix von Storch said on her Facebook page that "I made a mistake with my tweet about Muenster and I'm sorry." She added that she should have waited "until the facts were clear."

"Like millions of Germans I assumed that it was an Islamic attack."

The apology came after widespread criticism, including from within her own party, of her tweet suggesting Chancellor Angela Merkel's open-door refugee policy was to blame after a man drove into a crowd Saturday.

Two people were killed many more injured. When authorities revealed the van's driver to be a German with no known extremist links, von Storch initially doubled down, tweeting that the suspect was an "imitator of Islamist terror."



Zuckerberg: Regulation 'inevitable' for social media firms

FACEBOOK CEO Mark Zuckerberg acknowledged that regulation of social media companies is "inevitable" and disclosed that his own personal information has been compromised by malicious outsiders. But after two days of congressional testimony, what seemed clear was how little Congress seems to know about Facebook, much less what to do about it.

House lawmakers aggressively questioned Zuckerberg yesterday [Macau time] on user data, privacy settings and whether the company is biased against conservatives. As they did in the Senate a day earlier, both Republicans and Democrats suggested that regulation might be needed, but there was no consensus and few specifics about what that might look like – or even what the biggest problems are.

New Jersey Rep. Frank Pallone, the top Democrat on the panel and a 30-year veteran of the House, said at the beginning of the hearing that he plans to work on legislation but is pessimistic that Congress will pass anything.

"I've just seen it over and over again – that we have the hearings, and nothing happens," he said.

For Zuckerberg, who often found himself explaining what his company does in rudimentary terms to lawmakers twice his age, the hearings could be considered a win: Facebook shares

rose more than 1 percent after climbing 4.5 percent on Monday. And his company regained more than USD25 billion in market value that is had lost since it was revealed in March that Cambridge Analytica, a data-mining firm affiliated with Donald Trump's presidential campaign, gathered personal information from 87 million users to try to influence elections.

Still, Facebook's stock remains 10 percent below where it stood before the scandal, a decline that has wiped out about \$50 billion in shareholder wealth.

Zuckerberg agreed to the hearings as pressure mounted over the Cambridge Analytica scandal and the company's own admission last year that it had been compromised by Russians trying to influence the 2016 election. Earlier this year, special counsel Robert Mueller charged 13 Russian individuals and three Russian companies in a plot to interfere in the 2016 presidential election through a social media propaganda effort that included online ad purchases using U.S. aliases and politicking on U.S. soil. A number of the Russian ads were on Facebook.

Zuckerberg told the Senate on Tuesday that the company has been working with Mueller in his Russia probe and apologized over and over again for the company's handling of data privacy.

"I started Facebook, I run

it, and I'm responsible for what happens here," he said.

House lawmakers were a bit tougher on Zuckerberg than their colleagues in the Senate, many of whom seemed confused by the company and what it does. Some of the House members curtly cut him off in questioning, trying to make the most of their four minutes each.

Zuckerberg mostly held his composure, repeating many of the same well-rehearsed answers: He is sorry for the company's mistakes. He is working on artificial intelligence technology to weed out hate speech and at the same time ensure that they don't block people for the wrong reasons. People own their own data, as far as he sees it. And he's come a long way since he created the platform in his dorm room almost 15 years ago.

Some of the lawmakers talked to Zuckerberg, 33, as they would their children or grandchildren, and were occasionally befuddled by the complexities of his company.

Wrapping up his four minutes, Rep. Gus Bilirakis, R-Fla., commended the platform, saying "it's wonderful for us seniors to connect with our relatives."

By the close of Wednesday's hearing, Zuckerberg had spent roughly 10 out of the previous 24 hours testifying before Congress.

On regulation, Zuckerberg said he was open to it. **AP**

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	20-40 Good	
High Density Residential Area	15-35 Good	
Ambient	20-40 Good	

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

INDONESIA'S conservative Aceh province will no longer allow canings for violations of Shariah law to be carried out in public, its governor said, apparently in response to international condemnation of the caning last year of two men for gay sex.



SPAIN The crown prince of Saudi Arabia was on an official visit yesterday to longtime commercial ally Spain, where activists are criticizing past and possible future sales of military equipment to the kingdom.

SYRIA'S U.N. ambassador says it will facilitate a visit by international chemical weapons inspectors at "any point they want" in the town where a suspected gas attack occurred last weekend. Speaking in New York yesterday, Bashar Ja'afari said an inspection team from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is on its way to Damascus and that visas are being provided.



FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron declared yesterday that strikes and protests will not prevent him from overhauling the nation's economy – comments that came as train workers, hospital staff, students, retirees, lawyers and magistrates are challenging his economic vision.



ALGERIA Bodies of the 257 people killed in Algeria's worst aviation disaster were being identified at a military hospital yesterday and returned to families for burial, while officials provided no new information about the crash.