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WORLD BRIEFS



NORTH KOREA
While raising hopes for denuclearization and a peace treaty to finally end the Korean War, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's newly found focus on diplomacy comes with an ironic flipside: It could be a godsend for his generals. More on p12

PHILIPPINES President Rodrigo Duterte threatened yesterday to resort to emergency powers and enforce them "to the hilt" to deal with relentless criticism over his human rights record, crimes and government wrongdoing. More on p13

PAKISTAN A rights activist known for her criticism of Pakistan's military was abducted and held for several hours in the eastern city of Lahore on her way to a TV studio where she was to appear as an on-air analyst, her family said yesterday.

IRAN-IRAQ Iran's official news agency says gunmen shot and killed two Iranian border guards near the border with Iraq. It was not immediately clear who was behind the shooting.



JORDAN Professional associations in Jordan with about half a million members have staged a warning strike to press demands that the government scrap a planned tax increase.

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Shares slide amid UnionPay crackdown

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Prize winning student says English proficiency lacking in Macau

P3 MDT INTERVIEW



SJM opens gallery focused on Macau's gaming history

SOCIEDADE de Jogos de Macau (SJM) yesterday opened its Macau Gaming History Gallery. The gallery will exhibit information and preserved historical equipment from Macau's rich gaming history, aiming to conserve related historical information, artefacts and oral traditions.

These include 70s-era slot machines, manual dice shakers, old-fashioned card shoes and wooden card handlers, storage boxes of Keno lottery balls and Sap I Chi, historic discard holders and tombola cages.

The gallery also contains games played in Macau that are now defunct, such as Chinese-style lottery,

boule and Sap I Chi.

Located in Lisboa - Crystal Palace's gallery aims to present the history of Macau's gaming while promoting responsible gaming.

Additionally, the gallery details the architectural design features of the casino, Hotel Lisboa, and its artwork collection.

The evolution of casino uniforms as well as cherished photos of old employee events are also presented, along with winning works from last year's "Promoting Responsible Gambling 2017 - RG Comic Competition".

At the opening ceremony, Angela

Leong, managing director and chief administrative officer of SJM, said that gaming industry has enjoyed a long history in Macau, which can be traced back to as early as the 16th century.

Ever since Sociedade de Turismo e Diversões de Macau, S.A. ("STDM") obtained the gaming concession in 1962, the city's gaming industry has gradually evolved to move in the direction of leisure and entertainment.

The gallery also displays one of Stanley Ho's quotes: "No one can win all the time. We advise you to play merely for pleasure and to risk only what you can spare." **LV**

Company open to new partners

AMBROSE So, vice-chairman of the board of directors of SJM, told the press that the gaming operator has not received any official information regarding the gaming renewal licenses, yet stated that the SAR's gaming concessions will be re-auctioned.

Speaking to the press on the sidelines of the opening ceremony of the Macau Gaming History Gallery, the executive explained, "Everyone thinks that this will be a logical arrangement because everyone will [get to] start on the same page because it's quite unimaginable if [it] starts [one] tender procedure two years after the other."

So believes that the region has space for new players in the gaming industry, yet leaves the decision of how many concessionaires are beneficial to the development of the city to the central government and the SAR.

The executive also expressed that Sociedade de Jogos de Macau (SJM) would want to keep its satellite casinos, after being questioned on whether he was expecting some changes that will impact service agreements.

"Of course we will comply with whatever policy... is announced by the government. [...] We want to contain the number of satellite casinos, something that we inherit from the past. As you know, if we operate our own casinos, the profit margin is much better. This is a policy of SJM," So explained.

The executive further added that it is open to the idea of partnering with other players in the industry, after the new tender has been disclosed.

"We are open to consider all opportunities. We don't have [potential foreign partners] for the time being."

Commenting on the recent UnionPay crackdown that targets POS machines in Cotai pawnshop terminals, So argued that gaming operators will not suffer any major impact.

"UnionPay will set up their terminal anywhere... If they have to move away from the casino premises, for the time being, I don't see any major impact for any policy regarding this," he said.

Meanwhile, Bernstein analysts described the crackdown as unusual, due to the lack of information provided by authorities. **LV**

Moody's renews stable rating for MSAR gov't

MOODY'S Investors Service, an international credit rating agency, disseminated its annual credit analysis on Macau this week, finding that the territory's government has a "stable" rating outlook at "Aa3", due to the absence of public debt and consistent fiscal surpluses. It said that such factors were conducive to the build-up of large fiscal reserves.

The stable outlook is

related to the perceived ability of the Macau SAR government to use its reserves as protection against sudden external shocks. "Such shocks would likely stem from economic, financial and policy developments in China," the company wrote in a statement this week.

"For example, a further tightening of China's anti-corruption crackdown and/or the introduc-

tion of gambling on the mainland would weaken gaming and tourism in Macau," the statement continued. "As a small, open and concentrated economy, Macau's GDP growth will remain volatile."

Nevertheless, the credit rating agency said it expects Macau's growth recovery to extend over the next two to three years on the back of growing gaming and non-gaming

tourism.

Moody's used four categories to assess credit stability in Macau: Economic strength, which Moody's assessed as "moderate"; institutional strength "moderate (+)"; fiscal strength "very high (+)"; and susceptibility to event risk "low".

This year's rating marks no change from 2017, and a slight improvement on the Aa3 "negative" rating found the year before.

Aa3 is three notches lower than the highest possible rating. Ratings in the "Aa" category are high investment grade and are subject to very low credit risk.

Moody's could upgrade the rating upon evidence that the government's diversification plans — such as the expansion of non-gaming activities through family-oriented integrated resorts — are delivering stronger and

more resilient GDP growth over a longer period of time than Moody's currently expects.

Conversely, the rating would come under downward pressure from a new economic recession that erodes the government's fiscal buffers, Moody's said, warning that such a circumstance "would likely stem from Macau's strong financial, economic and political linkages with China."

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EDUCATION | PRIZE WINNING STUDENT SAYS

'I don't think people pay enough importance to English'

Julie Zhu

FONG Cheok Wang, an English debater from the University of Macau (UM), has expressed his hope that Macau residents will pay more importance to improving their English proficiency skills in the future.

The UM student, together with his teammates from the same school, recently defeated more than 100 teams and won the third prize at the 21st FLTRP Cup National English Debating Competition, held in Beijing.

In his interview with the Times, Fong remarked that "in Macau, many people regard English as a subject instead of a language."

The UM English debater believes that when English is not considered as a language, but treated as a subject, people will absolutely fail to speak it well.

"I think that in Macau, [people] do not pay enough importance to English. First of all, [...] English is not the official language but is used in many places. [In Macau, because] major customers come from mainland China, they [Macau residents] think it might be more useful to learn Mandarin or Portuguese rather than English," said Fong, who has been devoted to studying English since he was in college.

However, Fong voiced that, despite these circumstances, the Macau public still cares more



Fong Cheok Wang (left) poses with other local winners of the contest

about English than they do about Portuguese.

"I think they [Macau people] still pay more importance to English than to Portuguese. English is a mandatory subject in all schools. However, English is still just that, a subject. [...] It seems that every place needs talented human resources [who know] English, but not every place will hire someone who only knows English," said Fong. "From an educational perspective, I think that English has been paid more importance than Portuguese, but from the perspective of a resident, and of a student, I don't think people pay enough

importance to English," he said.

Fong, who also won several English contests in the past in Macau, also remarked that, in schools, English teachers often dedicate more effort and attention to English grammar and spelling, which consequently resulted in many students losing their interest in the English language.

"When students are already afraid [of making grammar and spelling mistakes], it will become extremely difficult for them to talk in English," said Fong.

In Fong's opinion, the English learning environment in Macau is unsatisfactory.

"The chances where we can really use English as a communication tool are too [few]. [...] I feel that [Macau people think] they don't need to use English, that there is no room for English. This led many expat workers [who speak English] to also cater to us to speak Chinese," said Fong.

When voicing his opinion on how to become proficient in English, Fong noted that "studying English can not only be limited to school textbooks. You can learn English from many places, not just from school textbooks or co-curricular classes."

"I think we can learn from

Hong Kong. [...] Students there will take the initiative to study English well [because] they are afraid of being unable to enter universities," said Fong.

The UM student, who will soon enter the job market, believes that the fact that Macau's main market consists of mainland China has stopped many locals from improving their English proficiency skills. However, he is confident that Macau's English proficiency will improve as time goes by.

In Macau, many people regard English as a subject instead of a language.

FONG CHEOK WANG

"I think [Macau people's] English will improve. It's not that Macau people can't speak English. Actually, many of them speak English. It's just that they are afraid of speaking in English," said Fong, adding "maybe [it is because] currently the Macau government is not paying too much importance to explore the tourism market in Europe and America. In the future, if we can also attract these people to Macau, then, when the market needs people to speak English, and when the Macau people realize the necessity of speaking English, their English might improve."

Fong suggested for local families to encourage their children to speak English at home, as well as to explore additional English resources, such as English TV programs.

HK influence has made Macau a trilingual society, says academic

Daniel Beittler

AN academic at the University of Macau has argued that the cultural influence of Hong Kong has essentially turned Macau into a de facto trilingual society.

The argument was outlined in a May 2018 paper published in the International Journal of Arts and Commerce.

The paper's author, Bruce Kwong, wrote that "English seems to be the third universally applicable [language] in this tiny enclave," a consequence of the importance of Hong Kong to Macau, starting in the late-19th century.

"Due to the gradual infiltration of the pluralis-

tic culture of Hong Kong, an ex-British colony in the Far East, English has been universally used by local Macau Chinese," wrote Kwong. "Most of the local Chinese can write and speak English more [proficiently] than that of Portuguese making one query the official status of English."

After the increase of gaming franchise in the early 2000's, the applicability of English has become more explicit over time.

BRUCE KWONG

Chinese and Portuguese are both recognized as official languages in the Macau SAR, whereas English is not. It is treated as an official language in neighboring Hong Kong, alongside Chinese.

However, since the gaming liberalization at the start of the century, a tide of expats and non-Chi-

nese speaking domestic workers has made the use of English in the city more common and more important.

"After the increase of gaming franchise in the early 2000's, the applicability of English has become more explicit over time," wrote Kwong. "It is claimed that Macau is a trilingual state in spite of the non-official status of English."

But the roots of English use in Macau go further back than that, argues the academic. They begin with the policy of Portuguese language education under the pre-1999 administrations.

"[The] Portuguese Macau government [admini-

stration] had made no intention to promote Portuguese education to local Chinese, and therefore, the only choice of receiving second language education to the local Chinese was English instead of Portuguese," he noted.

"Chinese and English then became the major language in Macau's Chinese society whereas Portuguese, [irrespective] of its governing status, became a minority language basically used within the small-circle Portuguese community."

The author contrasted the language experiences of Macau and Hong Kong under their respective colonial governments.

In the former, Portuguese remained a minority language spoken by only a handful of Chinese people, whereas "English was quite commonly used in Hong Kong, and many

local Chinese could speak English and took English as their second language."

Though there are technical aspects of Portuguese and English that make the former a more challenging language to learn, the prevalence of the latter is mostly due to the cultural and economic influences of Hong Kong, which include trade and commercial relations, as well as the city's film and television.

Bruce Kwong is an assistant professor at the University of Macau's department of government and public administration. His research interests include elections, policing and public ethic in the greater China region. He has also co-edited two volumes on socio-political affairs in Hong Kong and Macau following their handovers at the close of the 20th century.



AL PLENARY

Lawmakers turn against Polytex in P. Horizon case

Renato Marques

TWELVE out of a total of 17 spoken enquiries made by lawmakers yesterday at the Legislative Assembly (AL) addressed the “Pearl Horizon” case.

In fact, the interventions from the lawmakers involved little discussion, being almost exclusively direct messages to “Polytex,” the former concessionaire of land plot “P” in the Areia Preta district, which the government claimed back due to non-development after the granted construction period of 25 years expired.

The lawmakers gathered in a united critique of the company, recalling that the Court of Final Appeal has already ruled on the dispute between the company and the government, informing

the company to fulfill its liabilities with buyers as fast as possible.

Some lawmakers went even further and accused the company of trying to hide behind a new lawsuit against the government, in order to delay the refunds and compensation to buyers.

Others, like Zheng Anting, who has frequently been a voice on the topic, recalled the shortcomings of the Land Law currently in force. Zheng called for a revision to the law, to allow the land concession period to be extended or renewed if land concessionaires are not to blame for delays.

“The Chief Executive should be empowered to renew the provisional concessions in such situations, so that they can be converted into definitive concessions,”

Zheng said, adding, “I hope that the Government will respond to the demands of the public and move forward as soon as possible with the revision of the Land Law so that the people can indeed live and work with stability.”

Mak Soi Kun added to the words of Zheng, saying, “[the current Land] Law can be legal but its irrational... Is it acceptable [to have] a chaotic phenomenon, legal but irrational?” The same lawmaker noted, “for a [large] group of residents... the laws come from a group of people that share the same space and live together.”

“When there are conflicts, this should be the only grounds to solve them,” Mak said, recalling that many experts had already expressed the idea that a review on the

land law is needed.

On the same topic, lawmaker Kou Hoi In, besides urging Polytex to fulfill their duties with the buyers, called on the buyers to “pay attention to the good faith warning left by the government, about the right to claim compensation and its expiration period.” Kuo urged them to “protect their own interests by presenting their claim as soon as possible.”

The topic that went across the entire spectrum of the legislators, and also resonated with Ng Kuok Cheong from the pro-democratic wing, was the Social Welfare Fund. Ng continued, “If such [a] company [Polytex] still has any credibility... [they will] face the problem and compensate the buyers and the government.”

‘Arbitration Law’ approved on first reading

THE government-proposed bill to establish the “Arbitration Law” was yesterday approved at its first reading with a unanimous 29 votes in favor in the plenary session of the Legislative Assembly (AL).

Although the project was in general consensual, there were a few topics that raised questions from several lawmakers.

One of the questions that raised more debate concerned the qualifications and competencies of the arbiters; a topic initially raised by lawmaker Agnes Lam.

“What are the requirements to be an arbiter?” Lam asked, adding “who can perform such a task?”

On the topic, Secretary for Administration and Justice Sonia Chan replied that such qualifications could be examined later when the proposal is analyzed in detail.

“We are taking one step [forward]; this will be the basis,” she said adding, “It is most important to attract arbiters of international reputation.”

The Secretary also advanced the government will study “if it will be feasible to unify all these [five existing] arbitration centers into just one.”

According to Chan, Macau has several advantages when compared to neighboring regions [in terms of arbitrations], especially to become the center for arbitration of conflicts between China and Portuguese-speaking countries,” although admitted that there is still a long road to walk until the city reaches such a point.

That’s mostly due to another of the issues raised by the lawmakers: The lack of bilingual staff.

On the topic, lawmaker Pereira Coutinho mentioned that to reach the standard pursued by the government, besides bilingual, “we need also trilingual,” noting that for international arbitration it would be also necessary to add the English language to the process.

Nevertheless, Pereira Coutinho said he agreed with the proposal for “correcting the [currently existent] dual system [of local and international arbitration] and meeting the current modern legal systems.”

Questioned on the possibility of hiring foreign experts, the director of the Legal Affairs Bureau, Liu Dexue, replied, “yes, it is possible. The law does not establish any limitation on nationality but, we must observe the rules of quotas for non-resident workers.”

Adding to the topic, lawmaker Ip Sio Kai proposed to eliminate the quota system for such professionals “in order to allow the hiring of foreigners so we can start the arbitration center and establish a baseline while we train more professionals.”

HERITAGE

Committee opposes listing shipyards as cultural relics

THE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has not yet made a final decision on the Lai Chi Vun shipyards’ classification, IC Director Mok Ian Ian said yesterday.

At the current stage, the evaluation process concerning the shipyards is still in motion, according to Mok. A consultation summary report on the

shipyards will be published next week.

Mok also revealed that during the public consultation concerning the shipyards’ classification, 80 percent of the public suggested that the shipyards should be listed as cultural relics.

On Tuesday, Macau’s Cultural Heritage Committee held a plenary

meeting, with 17 committee members in attendance. Of them, 14 disagreed with listing the shipyards as cultural relics.

Members of the committee generally agreed that the Lai Chi Van shipyards need to be activated and reused so as to better extend the value of the properties in terms of landscape and shipyard techni-

ques, and solidify its role as a cultural resource, thereby achieving a greater benefit for Macau.

Some of the members are worried that if the shipyards are declared cultural relics, the properties will be included under the city’s cultural heritage protection law, which will make activation and utilization of the shipyard

properties very difficult.

After the discussion, most of the committee members did not agree that the shipyards are cultural relics, instead focusing on benefit to society.

Most of the committee members are also worried that if the shipyards become listed as cultural relics, a large amount of public money will be used

to repair them.

Later, the IC will complete a comprehensive analysis of the opinions gathered during the public consultation and the views of the committee members.

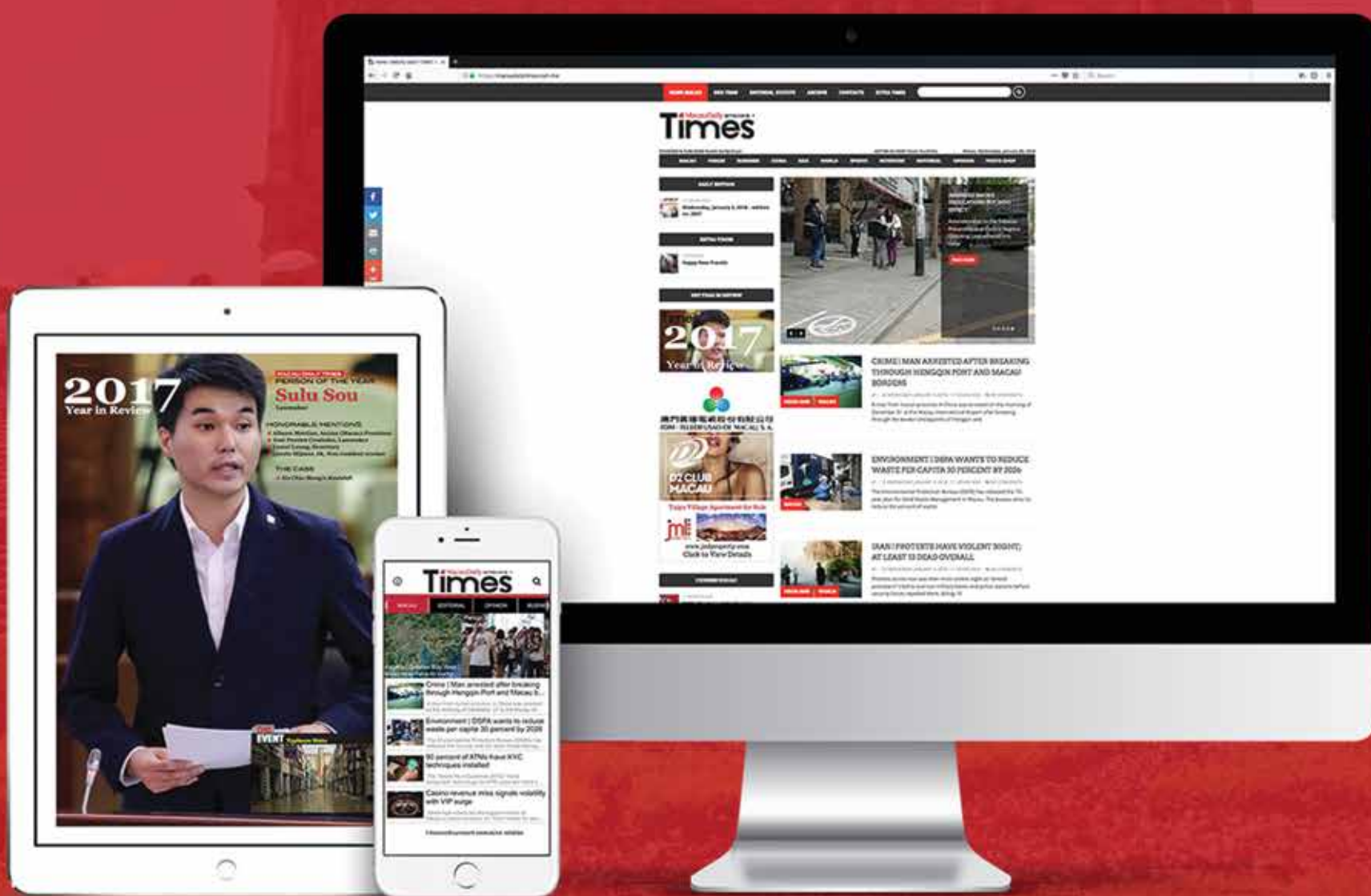
Only after the analysis is done will the IC make a final decision concerning the classification of Lai Chi Van shipyards.

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Over 750 inspections per day to enforce smoking law

HEALTH Bureau (SSM) inspectors have performed a total of 1.7 million inspections since the law on Smoking Prevention and Control entered into force on January 1, 2012, the SSM said in a statement.

The figure equates to a daily average of 754 inspections, which resulted in a total of 46,984 cases registered.

This year alone, from January to May, the inspectors carried out 150,267 inspections, which represents a daily average of 995 inspections. This is an increase of 9,690 inspections compared to the same period last year. In addition, 2,285 cases were registered, of which 2,278 are related to illegal smoking and five are related to illegalities detected on tobacco product labels. Another two cases of illegal display of tobacco pro-

ducts on visible shelves were also registered. The number of accusations related to illegal smokers dropped by 1,106 cases when compared with the same period of the previous year. The offenders were, in the majority, male (2,118 cases). Regarding the origin of the offenders, 63.3 percent of the fines were imposed on tourists, while Macau residents accounted for another 34 percent. In 70 cases, it was necessary to engage the help of police authorities to deal with offenders who refused to accept the charges. In terms of fine payments, 81.7 percent of the cases had already been settled.

The establishment type where most infractions were recorded was casinos, followed by parks, gardens and recreation areas. Bus and taxi stands come in third in this list. **RM**

MACAU casino shares declined for a fourth straight day as speculation over a renewed clampdown on capital outflows by China added to concerns of a slowdown in gaming revenue growth.

Investors are assessing the risks to Macau's gaming industry after banks withdrew some cash-back machines from pawnshops and jewelry shops inside casinos in recent days. The government in the past has imposed restrictions on the use of such machines in an effort to control the flow of currency out of China. The machines are a popular source of cash for casual gamblers in Macau.

Goldman Sachs analysts led by Simon Cheung said the move appears to have had a limited impact on Macau gaming revenue over the past few days, and further declines in casino stocks could present a buying opportunity. JPMorgan Chase & Co. analyst DS Kim wrote that "investors may want to wait-and-see how the situation pans out" before buying on dips.

An index of Macau casino operators slid as much as 3 percent yesterday before paring losses, with MGM China Holdings Ltd. falling as much as 4.4 percent. The gauge has dropped about 6 percent since data showed casino revenue growth in the world's largest gambling hub fell short of estimates for May. Forecasts call for a further slowdown this month.

Shares in the U.S. have also come under pressure, with Melco Resorts & Entertainment Ltd. losing 4.6 percent and MGM Resorts International down 2.2 percent in Tuesday trading.

Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Macau) Ltd. said in an emailed statement yesterday the bank took ac-



GAMING

Casinos drop for fourth day on China crackdown speculation

tion to remove non-compliant machines. Checks of so-called POS systems are routine, it said, and the proportion of shops affected during the inspection is similar to past years.

The Macau Monetary Authority said yesterday evening that any financial services to the public by any individuals or shops other than banks, Caixa Económica Postal, money changers and remittance companies constitutes a "legal violation." In 2015, the regulator issued a release that it had requested Macau banks to enhance monitoring of merchants in an effort to combat illegal cross-border financial activities and money laundering.

The uncertainty over China's central bank policies adds another risk to a two-year rally in Macau casino stocks. Another factor that could weigh on the sector: the World Cup.

Wynn Resorts Ltd. tumbled 5 percent on Monday after Deutsche Bank AG, a long-term bull, trimmed second-quarter estimates on the company, with analyst Carlo Santarelli suggesting this year's World Cup "could cause some VIP softness in June" for the junket operators who bring players to the Asian gambling enclave. Morgan Stanley analysts also cited World Cup concerns as a reason for potential near-term volatility. **Bloomberg**

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Huawei says it hasn't collected Facebook user data

Gerry Shih, Beijing

CHINESE mobile phone maker Huawei said yesterday it has never collected or stored Facebook user data, after the social media giant acknowledged it shared such data with Huawei and other manufacturers.

Huawei, a company flagged by U.S. intelligence officials as a national security threat, was the latest device maker at the center of a fresh wave of allegations over Facebook's handling of private data.

Chinese firms Huawei, Lenovo, Oppo and TCL were among numerous handset makers that were given access to Facebook data in a "controlled" way approved by Facebook, the social media giant's vice president of mobile partnerships, Francisco Varela, said in a statement on Tuesday.

The statement came after The New York Times published reports detailing how Facebook has given device makers deep access to the data of users' friends without their explicit consent. The data included work history, relationship status and likes on device users and their friends.

In a follow-up report, The Times said the recipients of Facebook data included Chinese firms like Huawei that have long been labeled a national security threat by Congress. Facebook told the newspaper it would end its data partnership with Huawei by the end of this week.

Senator Mark Warner, the top Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee, said the news raises legitimate con-



cerns and wanted to know how Facebook ensured data was not transferred to Chinese servers.

"Given the interest from Congress, we wanted to make clear that all the information from these integrations with Huawei was stored on the device, not on Huawei's servers," Facebook's Varela said Tuesday.

Huawei said its cooperation with Facebook was aimed at improving services for its users.

"Like all leading smartphone providers, Huawei worked with Facebook to make Facebook's services more convenient for users," Huawei spokesman Joe Kelly said in a text message yesterday, adding that Huawei "has never collected or stored any Facebook user data."

Hua Chunying a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, declined to comment on the issue but said: "We hope the U.S. can provide a fair, transparent,

open and friendly environment for Chinese companies' operation and investment."

The company, founded by former Chinese military officer Ren Zhengfei, has long denied that its products pose security risks even as it grew into the world's largest telecom equipment provider and a leading phone manufacturer — behind only Apple and Samsung.

Huawei and its Shenzhen-based rival ZTE have been the subject of security misgivings in the U.S. for years, but they have come under particular scrutiny since the start of the Trump administration amid rising U.S.-China tensions on a range of subjects.

The Pentagon in May banned the sale of Huawei and ZTE phones on military bases, four months after AT&T dropped a deal to sell a new Huawei smartphone. **AP**



The Impossible Burger, served on a vegan bun, topped with gouda, onions and pickles

Impossible Foods makes debut in Hong Kong's hotels

CALIFORNIA-BASED Impossible Foods is offering its award-winning, plant-based meat at three of Hong Kong's top-ranking hotels, namely Hotel ICON, Grand Hyatt Hong Kong, and InterContinental Grand Stanford Hong Kong.

The neighboring region is the company's first market outside the US.

It made its debut in Hong Kong last month at Chef May Chow's celebrated restaurants Little Bao and Happy Paradise, as well as Chef Uwe Opocensky's Beef & Liberty.

The Impossible, which develops plant-based meat and dairy products, is served in nearly 2,000 restaurants across the United States and Hong Kong.

The majority of these restaurants serve the Impossible as a burger on a bun with traditional condiments and sides, but Impossible 'meat' also can be adapted into a wide range of dishes, such as dumplings, noodle bowls, tacos, meatballs, breakfast sandwiches, and more.

"We've been so pleased with the warm welcome and support of Impossible in Hong Kong," said Patrick O. Brown, CEO and founder of Impossible Foods.

"As our first market outside of the U.S., it's been an illuminating experience to see such positive feedback from diners and we're really looking forward to launching next in some of the city's best hotels and restauran-

ts," he added, as cited in a report issued by the Associated Press.

The Impossible debuted at Hotel ICON in Tsim Sha Tsui, the renowned hotel known for its design-forward elegance and sweeping views of Victoria Harbour.

The Impossible's plant-based meat will be featured at Hotel ICON's all-day café and brasserie, GREEN, and the open air marketplace-inspired eatery, The Market, which has just taken the award for Open Rice's Best Buffet in Hong Kong for the seventh year in a row.

Impossible will also be added to the menu of Grand Hyatt Hong Kong's Grand Café and The Grill; while InterContinental Grand Stanford Hong Kong will feature the "Impossible Indian Burger" at Café on M.

Impossible meat is made from simple ingredients, such as water, wheat protein, potato protein and coconut oil.

One special ingredient, heme, contributes to the characteristic taste of meat.

The company developed a sustainable, scalable, and affordable way to make heme and therefore their 'meat', without the catastrophic environmental impact of working with livestock.

The company engineers and ferments yeast to produce a heme protein naturally found in plants, called soy leghemoglobin. **MDT**

corporate bits

BNU, MUST SIGNS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



A Strategic Cooperation Agreement between Banco Nacional Ultramarino (BNU) and the City University of Ma-

cau (CityU) was signed yesterday, aiming to strengthen the financial ecosystem, fully support financial education

development and cultivate financial innovation talents.

The cooperation agreement was signed by Sam Tou, executive director of BNU, and Shu Guang Zhang, rector of the university.

According to Tou, the agreement will be a significant starting point for mutual comprehensive cooperation in the future, as cited in a statement.

BNU noted that it intends to further cooperate with the university in terms of education and research in the field of Finance, as well as working together to improve the financial system in Macau and promote innovation and inspiration within the finance industry.

DEMOLITION WORKS OF POWER STATION NEARLY COMPLETED



The Macau Power Station demolition works, which commenced in January 2017, is now nearly complete, CEM announced in a statement.

To monitor the progress of the final phase, Horry Hoi, director of the Office for the Develop-

ment of the Energy Sector, made a visit to the site for inspection.

According to the statement, the entire demolition project has been conducted in line with standards of safety and quality.

Apart from the underground drainage and ground floor structure which remains, all buildings have been demolished.

A few years ago, the government and CEM discussed about recovering the land where the decommissioned power station was situated and turning it into public housing development, and decided CEM would be responsible for the entire demolition project.

The size of the Macau Power Station is approximately 18,540 square meters. According to CEM, the most difficult part of the project was the removal of the 101-meter-high chimney, which took four months to complete. CEM is believed to be the tallest building in Macau that has been demolished.

Australia says wine delays at Chinese ports are 'irritation'

Rod McGuirk

AUSTRALIA'S trade minister said yesterday that weeks of delays at Chinese ports of Australian wine exports were an "irritation" in a bilateral trade relationship that was thriving despite diplomatic tensions.

Australian wine and beef industry representatives are pressuring the government to patch up diplomatic differences with Beijing that the industries fear are impacting on exports to China, Australia's most important trading partner. Australia sees the major strain as its plan to ban covert foreign interference in domestic politics.

Australia-based Treasury Wine Estates, one of the world's largest wine companies, told the Australian Securities Exchange last month that its wine was being delayed while going through Chinese customs.

Trade Minister Steven Ciobo said yesterday he had taken up the company's complaint with Chinese authorities during a recent visit to Shanghai and had had "a high degree of success."

Ciobo did not reveal how much of the wine backlog had been allowed off the Chinese docks, saying that was commercially sen-

AP PHOTO



Steven Ciobo addresses the National Press Club in Canberra

sitive information.

"Where we do see an irritation, we work in a constructive way to overcome that," Ciobo told Australia's National Press Club.

"I'm not papering over where there's challenges, but it is also critical that we don't lose sight of the bigger picture here which is a trade-investment relationship that is very strong, very broad and very deep," he added.

Australian wine exports to China are booming since a bilateral free

trade agreement took effect in December 2015.

Wine exports have climbed from 211 million Australian dollars (USD162 million) annually three years ago to more than AUD1 billion — almost double the value of exports to Australia's next biggest customer, the United States.

Winemakers' Federation of Australia chief executive Tony Battaglione said several of Australia's larger wine exporters had experienced the same problems

with Chinese customs as Treasury Wine Estates.

"Certainly we've seen improvement of these issues at the border since the visit of Ciobo. Hopefully things are going to get back to normal," Battaglione said.

The holdups were caused by Chinese customs officials making more inspections in search of country-of-origin certificates that entitle Australian wine to preferential tariff treatment under the free trade deal.

"It was taking a month or longer to get approval of shipments to cross the border, and it always does take a little bit of time because it's China," Battaglione said. "But we're now seeing inspections have gone back to what we would consider more appropriate levels and products are starting to go through so hopefully it will continue," he added.

Battaglione said he could not quantify how much wine had been delayed. A Treasury Wine Estates spokeswoman declined to comment.

In Beijing, a Foreign Ministry spokeswoman defended the right of the country's customs officials to inspect imported products and suggested that talk of delays at Chinese ports was mere speculation.

"You say that it's delayed," spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters at a regular briefing. "I wonder if this is a fact or merely speculation by certain people and companies from Australia."

She said China and Australia's customs authorities maintain "smooth communications."

Ciobo said he did not know for much longer Chinese customs officials would demand more paperwork for Australian wine.

"Product is moving and ultimately, I think that is an indication of the strength of the relationship and the open lines of communication," Ciobo said.

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi last month demanded Australia take "concrete actions" to improve bilateral ties. **AP**

'Training' of Tibetan clergy stepped up

CHINESE authorities are ramping up political indoctrination among Tibetan Buddhist clergy and officials in charge of religious affairs as part of a campaign to strengthen the ruling Communist Party's grip on religion.

A Tibet government website reported this week that 35 officials traveled to the eastern city of Suzhou last month for "training" in China's policies on Tibet, ethnic and religious theories and diplomacy.

An unidentified number of monks and nuns also underwent three days of training in Tibet's capital, Lhasa, ending on June 2. As facilitators who pass on instruction in government policies, they were told to be "reliable in politics and take a clear-cut and firm stance," the website Tibet.cn reported.

The clergy and officials under the party's United

Front Work Department responsible for religious affairs were from the Tibet Autonomous Region and ethnically Tibetan areas of Yunnan province.

Such indoctrination, along with compulsory political study in monasteries, aims to reduce the appeal of the Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, as well as build loyalty to the officially atheistic party.

"It is important for United Front Work officials to improve their ability first, especially in regions such as Tibetan areas where the Dalai Lama clique intends to penetrate," Zhu Weiqun, former chairman of the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee of the legislature's advisory body, was quoted as saying by the party newspaper Global Times.

Other religious groups have also come under

increased pressure in recent months, with Christian churches destroyed and hundreds of thousands of Muslims held in re-education centers where they are forced to denounce Islamic beliefs and traditional culture.

Events have also been organized nationwide among religious communities to study the newly amended constitution that scrapped term limits for President Xi Jinping, who recently launched a campaign to study the works of Karl Marx.

According to the Global Times, party school professors, police and judges have been invited to symposiums and lectures at Buddhist temples to study the constitution since March.

Based on a Tibet.cn report on May 23, promotional campaigns have reached over 500,000 people in Tibet since March this year. **AP**

In HK bankruptcy case, rare golf club memberships on sale

CHINA Fishery Group Ltd.'s bankruptcy case enters its second anniversary this month with no resolution in sight as a key auction of its fishing assets in Peru stalls. It may have better luck selling its corporate memberships in the famed 129-year old Hong Kong Golf Club.

Membership No. 1024 and 1031 are being put up for sale to maintain the estate, according to a May 29 U.S. court filing. At no less than HKD17 million (USD2.2 million) each, it may be a small price and rare chance for the city's golfers to own a certificate, according to Tony Chan at Everfine Membership Services Ltd.

"There's a 20-year waiting list at the club for individual applications," he said by phone on Tuesday. "The club no longer accepts corporate applications." The



golf club has more than 6,000 members, including 2,650 principals, it said in an email reply to Bloomberg News.

The Hong Kong-based group has had to sell vessels and other non-core assets to help pay for its upkeep and fees to a battery of lawyers and financial-restructuring advisers. A planned auction of its Peru anchovy-fishing busi-

ness has been frozen since November, as a Chapter 11 trustee for its subsidiary pursues a case against lender HSBC Holdings Plc.

Hong Kong Golf Club, formed in 1889 by "thirteen golfing enthusiasts," has been home to the Hong Kong Open for more than 50 straight years, according to the club's website. **Bloomberg**



Undergraduate student Moe Lewis (left) shows her watercolor painting of peony leaves at a traditional Chinese painting class



Chinese language teacher Li Nana speaks during an interview

Matthew Pennington, Washington

ON college campuses in virtually every state across the U.S., the Chinese government supports more than 100 institutes that teach language and culture. For university students like Moe Lewis, they offer a chance to learn about Chinese art and pick up a few phrases in Mandarin. For critics, like Republican Sen. Marco Rubio, they present a threat to academic freedom and a spy risk.

As tensions between the U.S. and China rise over trade and security, perceptions vary wildly about educational exchanges that have thrived since diplomatic relations were normalized four decades ago.

Increasingly, U.S. authorities are concerned that Chinese professors and students could exploit access to universities to gather intelligence and sensitive research — an issue a Senate judiciary panel will address today [Macau time]. And while the China-funded Confucius Institutes that have mushroomed worldwide since 2004 focus on benign subject matter, U.S. lawmakers are pushing for them to be more tightly regulated or even shuttered.

“I think every college should be aware of what these institutes are used for and that they are in fact consistently been used as a way to quash academic freedom on campus at the behest of a foreign government,” said Rubio, R-Fla. “I would encourage every college in America to close them. There’s no need for these programs.”

The view from the George Mason University campus a few miles outside Washington is much different. While institutes have sometimes been accused of squelching anti-Beijing views on issues like Tibet, Lewis, an undergraduate studying animation, said she’s seen no sign of intentional bias. She said the institute is one of her favorite places on campus.

China institutes on US campus: Fount of learning or threat?

“I think that it’s nice to have a lot of multicultural experiences especially with countries that [we] have tensions with,” said Lewis, after painting peony leaves with watercolors at a weekly art session where most attendees were Chinese students and the painting teacher was an American. “It’s important to learn about those places.”

“To me as a person, it seems to be more about fear, an anti-China sentiment, rather than speaking of the truth.”

GAO QING
DIRECTOR CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE

The debate over Confucius Institutes has become a testing ground for the American response to China’s growing global reach, and underscores anxieties over the more than 350,000 Chinese who study in the United States, more than one third of all foreign students. Only around 20,000 Americans study in China.

In February, FBI Director Christopher Wray voiced concern that China could be using professors or students to collect intelligence at universities naive about the risks. He also told a Senate intelligence committee hearing on worldwide threats that the FBI was monitoring Confucius Insti-

tutes, although he highlighted no evidence of wrongdoing.

Since then, universities have announced the closure of three institutes in Texas and Florida after pressure from lawmakers.

Rubio is co-sponsoring legislation that would require the institutes to register with the U.S. government as representing the interests of a foreign power. Currently, their academic activities exempt them from the Foreign Agents Registration Act, which requires disclosure by lobbyists and others advocating for foreign governments and organizations.

“To me as a person, it seems to be more about fear, an anti-China sentiment, rather than speaking of the truth,” responds Gao Qing, executive director Confucius Institute U.S. Center in Washington, who rejects allegations of espionage. “The problem I have with people who disagree with Confucius Institutes is that they haven’t visited them.”

Foreign government funding of educational programs in the U.S. is not uncommon. U.S. allies like Japan and South Korea, for example, fund courses in their nation’s language and culture. Saudi Arabia and other Mideast nations have supported research in Islamic and Mideast studies.

Political suspicion about the Confucius Institutes has been driven in part by their sheer reach, with more than 500 in 140 countries, and by China’s rise as a world power. In 2009, a top Chinese Communist Party leader described the institutes as “an important part” of the Asian nation’s overseas propaganda. The Chinese government contributes

teachers, materials and funding.

America has been the biggest beach-head. But have threats to academic freedom — which forced the closure of institutes on campuses in Chicago and Pennsylvania in 2014 — been overblown?

“I would encourage every college in America to close them. There’s no need for these programs.”

MARCO RUBIO
REPUBLICAN SENATOR

Each institute has an American and a Chinese director, and according to Harvey Pearlman, a law professor at the University of Nebraska, the Chinese government agency that oversees the institutes, Hanban, has been flexible in amending contracts to make them subordinate to university rules. Their courses are tailored to the needs of the host university and have their own specialties, like Chinese theater and opera, traditional medicine and China’s financial system.

Former Republican lawmaker Matt Salmon of Arizona is “incredulous” that Chinese language training poses a security threat. He’s a Mandarin speaker and former chair of a House sub-

committee on Asia — a longtime friend of Taiwan and critic of Chinese trade practices. He now works at Arizona State University, which hosts more than 4,000 Chinese students.

He said that the Defense Department awarded a three-year grant to Arizona State to promote Mandarin teaching in public schools that is conducted with its Confucius Institute. It helps design courses taught by local teachers for high school students taking advanced Chinese. The funding from National Security Education Program, which supports learning in strategically important languages, has totaled USD450,000 in the past year-and-a-half, institute director Joe Cutter said.

“I believe very strongly that if the DoD felt there were some kind of a threat to the national security, it would have never given us that grant,” Salmon told The Associated Press.

Pentagon spokeswoman Maj. Carla Gleason said the institute is not a formal partner in Arizona or elsewhere — although it is mentioned in the language program’s annual report for 2017.

Rubio, a member of the Senate intelligence committee and one of the most outspoken critics of China in Congress, says such cooperation should end. He contends that Confucius Institutes are used to identify students who could become “agents of Chinese influence.” He warns that it is part of broader strategy by China’s ruling party to eclipse American power.

“It’s a new world we’re living in. A lot of the stuff sounds like Hollywood. But I wouldn’t waste my time on it if it wasn’t real,” he said. **AP**

Eric Talmadge, Tokyo

NORTH KOREA

Military may benefit from Kim's charm offensive

WHILE raising hopes for denuclearization and a peace treaty to finally end the Korean War, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's newly found focus on diplomacy comes with an ironic flipside: It could be a godsend for his generals.

Kim's thinking on how his military fits in to his plans to foster detente on the Korean Peninsula and negotiate security guarantees from Washington may become clearer when he sits down with President Donald Trump next week in Singapore.

But one thing is already clear. Kim cannot survive without his loyal troops. Whatever grand strategy he has in mind will strongly reflect their interests — and that includes the ability to make lots of money.

Along with the nuclear bombs and intercontinental ballistic missiles that have gotten the world's attention, the Korean People's Army is deeply involved in everything from raising mushrooms and apples to running its national airline and selling the country's mineral resources abroad.

So they stand to benefit greatly if Kim succeeds in depleting support for sanctions by negotiating with Trump and the North's affluent neighbors.

Rivalled only by the ruling party itself, with which it is carefully intertwined, the military is the biggest and most formidable organization in North Korea. It consumes roughly one-third of the country's annual budget and employs 1 million-plus personnel, making its standing army one of the world's largest despite the North's small population of less than 25 million.

From the reign of Kim's father, one of North Korea's most important slogans has been "Military First." And since he took power, Kim has set his sights on simultaneously developing



the nation's nuclear forces and its economy. His current diplomatic overtures to China, Seoul and Washington are based on his claim, laid out to party elites in April, to have already "completed" the development of his nuclear arsenal.

With the nuclear development mission accomplished, his argument goes, it's time to adopt a "new strategic line" that emphasizes the economy and the strategic use of diplomacy.

That should not be seen as a move against his military.

Just as shifts in the economy since Kim assumed power in late 2011 have created a growing income gap in the civilian sector, so have they contributed to growing disparity within the military ranks, suggests William Brown, an adjunct professor at

Georgetown University and former analyst with the U.S. State Department and CIA.

"Some units and some soldiers are making good money doing construction work and others are making essentially nothing doing

■ The military's involvement in such a wide variety of side-businesses also means it is in its interest to see an increase in trade

their foxhole duty. Same for the officers," he said. "Some are coming out of their 10-year tour of duty with marketable skills, like driving and fixing taxis, and others with no skills at all."

Brown said that, in the long run, diplomatic success could free Kim to cut costs by reducing the military's bloated ranks. But he stressed that for now "keeping soldiers happy when others seem to be getting rich is of paramount importance."

"I get the sense that Kim is getting ready for another massive state wage increase to make state workers, including the military, a little more happy," he said.

The military's involvement in such a wide variety of side-businesses also means it is in its interest to see an increase in trade well beyond sales of nuclear

technology or missile parts that will likely remain the target of international non-proliferation watchdogs no matter how well Kim's talks go.

"They own a large number of enterprises, and their share in the mining sector is probably one of the largest. So they've definitely lost out as sanctions have made North Korean coal and mineral exports plunge," said Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, an associate scholar with the non-profit Foreign Policy Research Institute.

Silberstein added that the most important role of the military in the economy is its ability to readily provide manpower where needed, doing construction and road repair work, helping out with the harvest and working in the mines. "That role is hard to quantify," he said, "but it is likely massive."

Unconfirmed reports this week out of Seoul and Washington that Kim recently replaced his top three military officials could suggest he is already trying to ensure the military is properly positioned to handle more foreign investment and to toe his new line without being lured by an influx of money into corruption or insubordination.

Symbolic of the military's dual role, one of the three new generals, Kim Su Gil, was at Kim's side during a recent trip to the Wonsan-Kalma tourism zone, a massive development project along the east coast that Pyongyang hopes will become a major attraction for South Korean visitors if sanctions are lifted.

The area, crawling with troops known as "soldier-builders" erecting luxury hotels and paving new roads, was popular with South Korean visitors during a previous period of detente.

Its popularity ended abruptly when a North Korean soldier fatally shot a South Korean woman who strayed into a restricted area. AP

THAILAND

Microlender boom that minted fortunes starts to wane

Anuchit Nguyen

A MASSING ever-larger profits by providing small loans is becoming more difficult in Thailand. Shares in microlenders Muangthai Capital Pcl and Srisawad Corp. have slumped this year on concern about the profit outlook and the prospect of tougher regulatory oversight. The phase of exponential growth in earnings may be over, according to Muangthai's founder Chuchat Petaumpai.

"We're starting from a higher base and there's more competition, so it's that

much harder to replicate the substantial earnings expansion of the past few years," Chuchat said in an interview Monday. "We also have to balance aggressive growth against asset quality."

Millions of Thais lacking the credit history required by commercial banks flocked to firms like Muangthai, Srisawad and Group Lease Pcl in recent years, pledging cars, motorcycles or land as collateral for loans. The demand helped to spur a boom in the companies' share prices.

Cracks emerged in 2017, after Group Lease's stock

slumped and Thailand's Securities and Exchange Commission filed a complaint against a Group Lease executive. This year, fears of slowing profit growth contributed to a 41 percent drop in Srisawad and a 12 percent decline in Muangthai shares through Tuesday.

Chuchat expects Muangthai's earnings to rise 35 percent next year, slowing from an estimated 40 percent pace in 2018. Srisawad, Asia's worst performing large consumer finance stock in the past month, is tackling bad debt and opening new branches

to bolster its outlook.

"There's lingering concern that new regulations may affect non-bank lenders including Muangthai," said Kasem Prunratnamala, the head of research at CIMB Securities (Thailand) Co. in Bangkok. "The net interest margin may also be hurt by rising competition and higher borrowing costs."

Chuchat said clarity in the new rules is likely as the year progresses and that the framework will have a limited impact on earnings, adding Muangthai's shares may eventually return to a more "normal pattern"



Chuchat Petaumpai, chief executive officer of Muangthai Capital

once such uncertainty is resolved.

He and his family have a fortune of about USD1.5 billion based on their Muangthai shareholdings, according to the Bloomberg Billio-

naires Index. The sisters who help to run Srisawad, as well as their mother, have stakes in it worth roughly \$420 million combined, data compiled by Bloomberg shows. Bloomberg

MYANMAR and U.N. agencies signed an agreement yesterday that could eventually lead to the return of some of the 700,000 Rohingya Muslims who fled brutal persecution by the country's security forces and are now crowded into makeshift camps in Bangladesh.

The memorandum of understanding promises to establish a "framework of cooperation" that aims to create conditions for "voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable" repatriation of Rohingya refugees but does not address Myanmar's denial of citizenship for the minority.

Myanmar's government said it hoped the pact would hasten repatriation, but rights groups still doubt it will let many Rohingya return or can guarantee the safety of those who do. Myanmar's statement didn't mention Rohingya, reflecting the government and the Burmese majority's insistence there is no such ethnic group in Myanmar. Instead it referred to them as "displaced persons."

Myanmar's security forces have been accused of rape, killing, torture and the burning of Rohingya homes in western Rakhine state, where most Rohingya lived. The U.N. and U.S. have described the army crackdown that began in August last year as "ethnic cleansing."

Predominantly Buddhist Myanmar and Bangladesh agreed in November to begin repatriating Rohingya. But refugees feared their lives would be at risk in Myanmar without international monitoring while Myanmar insisted they have identity documents, which most

Myanmar, UN sign pact on initial steps for Rohingya return

Rohingya have been denied.

Knut Ostby, U.N. Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar, said the agreement is an important first step toward resolving the crisis.

■ Rights groups remain pessimistic that the safe return of Rohingya refugees will ever be possible

"There is a lot of work to be done. This task should not be underestimated," Ostby said. "We are talking about approximately 700,000 people who don't only have to return, but the conditions have to be right for them to return: the conditions both in terms of their identity in society, in terms of their safety and also in terms of services, livelihoods, a place to live, infrastructure."

The U.N. has said the agreement provides for its refugee and development agencies to be given access to Rakhine state. It said that will allow the refugee agency to assess the situation and provide information to refugees about conditions in their

AP PHOTO



Knut Ostby talks during an interview

areas of origin so that they can better decide whether they want to return.

The Myanmar government statement said assistance from the U.N. agencies would assist the work it has already started toward repatriation. It highlighted that it had cooperated with the U.N. a quarter century earlier in repatriating 230,000 "displaced persons" — Rohingya — who had fled violence in Rakhine to Bangladesh.

Rights groups remain pessimistic that the safe return of Rohingya refugees will ever be possible.

They point to a lack of firm commitments from Myanmar and its decades of hostility toward a minority that was denied citizenship by a 1982 law that excluded them from a list of recognized ethnic groups in the majority Buddhist nation.

"How will the Burmese government guarantee these people will not face again persecution?" said Kyaw Win, executive director of Burma Human Rights Network. "It is very politically convenient for the Burmese government to sign this agreement, and also never commit."

Some 125,000 of the Rohingya who remain in Myanmar are living in camps where their movement is restricted after being forced from their villages in 2012 by a wave of violence led by radical Buddhists and security forces.

"There's still been no movement to ensure Rohingya have equal access to full citizenship," said Matthew Smith, the head of advocacy group Fortify Rights. "Discourse around repatriation now unfortunately appears to be attempted by authorities to distract from mass atrocities and crimes taken place."

PHILIPPINES

Duterte threatens to use emergency rule 'to the hilt'

Jim Gomez, Manila

PHILIPPINE President Rodrigo Duterte threatened yesterday to resort to emergency powers and enforce them "to the hilt" to deal with relentless criticism over his human rights record, crimes and government wrongdoing.

Duterte, who placed the southern third of the archipelago nation last year under martial law to battle Muslim militants, said "there's no difference actually between martial law and a declaration of national emergency."

"Even with this meager emergency power, I will use it to the hilt [to] put things in order," the brash-talking president said in a late-night news conference upon arrival from a South Korean trip. He has threatened before to re-



sort to authoritarian rule nationwide if lawlessness worsens beyond control.

Looking exasperated, Duterte warned that he would place problematic government agencies under his office so he could supervise them directly. He has publicly fired several officials for alleged corruption, excessive foreign trips and other unspecified wrongdoings.

"I'm warning all of you

criminals, all, in government or outside of it. I will make radical changes in the days to come," he said. "For those offices which could no longer be put under control, I will place you under the office of the president. I'll be the one you'll face every day."

It's unclear what triggered the volatile leader's latest outburst.

The 73-year-old former city mayor drew wides-

pread condemnation at home after he kissed a married Filipina on the lips in front of thousands of Filipino workers in a town hall meeting in Seoul.

He has repeatedly lashed out at U.S. and European officials, U.N. rights experts and watchdogs for raising alarm over his bloody crackdown against illegal drugs. His administration has also been blamed for rising inflation after it pushed through with a government tax reform package and for being soft on China in South China Sea

disputes.

During the news conference, Duterte asked before a reporter had a chance to speak, "What is your question, about the kissing?" The president went on to explain that the controversial act was "pure showbiz" done without malice and aimed at entertaining the huge Filipino crowd.

"That's my style [...] There is nothing wrong in a simple kiss [and] you cause an uproar. They're just envious," the president said, although he acknowledged that he may be confronted

■ The president warned that he would place problematic government agencies under his office so he could supervise them directly

by his two daughters when he returns home.

The kissing episode sparked another uproar when an official and one of Duterte's fierce backers, Mocha Uson, uploaded a video that showed late Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. being kissed by a woman on board a plane shortly before he was assassinated by soldiers at Manila airport in 1983. Aquino's killing sparked protests that ousted then President Ferdinand Marcos three years later.

Aquino's daughter and popular actress Kris Aquino slammed Uson in emotional remarks and warned she would confront her if Uson did anything that would besmirch the reputation of her parents, who are revered pro-democracy champions in the Philippines. AP



Former child soldiers stand in line waiting to be registered with UNICEF to receive a release package



Soldiers accused of a horrific attack on foreign aid workers including rape, torture, killing and looting on the Terrain hotel compound, are assisted to a prison van

South Sudan's latest civil war atrocities kept out of sight

Sam Mednick, Kinshasa

THE accounts are horrific. A young girl strangled and gang-raped. Children burned alive as government soldiers blocked the door of their hut and set it aflame.

These are some of the atrocities revealed in 14 reports, seen by The Associated Press, that have not yet been released by the independent body charged with monitoring a failed cease-fire imposed in December in South Sudan, where civil war is now well into its fifth year.

The reports should have been released last month at a meeting led by the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission but South Sudan's government did not attend, preventing the accounts of abuses from being made public because there was not a quorum.

"The reports contain evidence that soldiers continue to kill, rape and destroy property. The decision to keep these ongoing atrocity crimes secret sends the wrong message," Jehanne Hen-

ry, senior Africa researcher for Human Rights Watch, told the AP. Only five such reports have been released this year.

■ The civil war has killed tens of thousands and created Africa's largest refugee crisis since the Rwandan genocide

The African Union and the East African regional bloc that mediates South Sudan's peace talks should take action, said Edmund Yakani, executive director for the local advocacy group Community Empowerment for Progress Organization. "Silence on the violations only encourages further violations," he said.

While people attending the

meeting said copies of the reports on atrocities were distributed to diplomats from the United States, the United Nations, Britain and elsewhere, none have released them publicly or made public the reports of abuses.

South Sudan's government didn't respond to multiple requests for comment on why it didn't attend last month's meeting.

The unpublished reports describe violations by both government and opposition forces but most of the accounts blame government troops for instigating attacks and deliberately targeting civilians.

During an attack in February on a school in the town of Modit, children fled into a hut to hide. Government soldiers blocked the door and set it on fire, burning the children to death, said one report.

A young girl fetching water from a river in the town of Yei was strangled before she and her mother were gang-raped by government soldiers, another report said. More than 30 cases of

sexual assault were recorded in Yei and surrounding areas in the three months following December's cease-fire agreement.

And in the nearby town of Morobo, a woman was raped and beaten so badly that she lost sight in one eye. A disabled woman, unable to flee the fighting, was thrown into a burning house by government soldiers, the report said.

The group that compiled the reports, the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism, told the AP its mandate doesn't require it to publish reports and that releasing them had been the task of its parent body, the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission. The commission reports to the East African regional bloc, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. Neither responded to several AP requests for comment.

The concealing of the atrocities comes as the international community loses patience with South Sudan's civil war, which has kil-

led tens of thousands and created Africa's largest refugee crisis since the Rwandan genocide in 1994. The U.S., South Sudan's largest aid donor, has increased pressure on the Juba government amid widespread allegations that its officials are profiting from the conflict instead of working to end it.

Last week the U.N. Security Council adopted a U.S.-sponsored resolution that warns of an arms embargo and sanctions against six high-ranking officials if the fighting doesn't stop.

The U.S. and others, however, insist that the East African regional bloc, along with the African Union, should take the lead in finding peace and holding perpetrators of abuses accountable.

The U.S. urges the monitoring bodies to release the reports of atrocities as soon as possible and regrets that the South Sudan government's "refusal to attend the plenary on May 14 prevented those reports from being made public at that time," embassy spokesman Mark Weinberg told the AP.

Chris Trott, U.K. special representative for South Sudan, concluded that "it's important, for the sake of ordinary South Sudanese who are again falling victim to the violence and for the credibility of the peace process, that violators are held to account." **AP**

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Helene Fouquet, Marie Mawad

EMMANUEL Macron promised to fight fake news, and plans to do it this week - with a law.

Trouble is, Macron may soon learn, like a lot of other world leaders, that putting the fake-news genie back into the bottle is far from easy to do.

Himself a victim of a disinformation campaign during the 2017 French vote, Macron's bill "to fight fake news" will be presented in parliament today and will seek to shield elections in France from the influence of fabricated rumors, whether by extremists groups or so-called alternative media like Russia Today. Social media savvy observers, however, say archaic tools like those proposed in Macron's bill are ill-suited to stop the rapid spread of false information in the age of Twitter Inc. and Facebook Inc.

"They're fighting tomorrow's disinformation with yesterday's tools," said Alexandre Alaphilippe, executive director at EU DisinfoLab, a Brussels-based not-for-profit organization that researches disinformation on social media and gets financing from the Open Society Foundations and Twitter. "The core issues are the mechanisms of disinformation-spreading and influence-meddling. As long as this can't be tackled, the legal fight is tenuous."

If it passes into law, online banners would warn users when information on social media is sponsored, and a judge could block access or delete it. Macron is keen to get the law enacted before the European Parliament vote next year because his government sees a mounting fake-news campaign by the likes of Russia Today, Sputnik and Breitbart News potentially hurting the electoral process, a French official close to the president said.

Fake news has been on the

There's no easy fix to fake news, and France is no exception



minds of leaders around the world, roiling electoral processes from the U.S. 2016 presidential race to the U.K.'s Brexit referendum and Italy's March legislative vote. Countries across the globe are struggling to rein in this unchecked flow of false, doctored or misleading information. Italy is roping in its Polizia Postale, or postal police, to stop the spread of unfounded reports on the web. Germany is relying on enforcing strong hate speech laws.

Macron's own brush with fake news came as he sat across his far-right rival Marine Le Pen for their sole television debate in May 2017, with a volley of reports flying through social media channels alleging he had secret offshore bank accounts. A few days later as the campaign entered a "black-out" period, Macron's was left with no way to counter the flood of false information.

Standing next to Vladimir Putin in Versailles' Palace some

time later, the French president said Russia Today and its sister company Sputnik worked "as agencies of influence and propaganda, lying propaganda" that spread "misleading information" about him during the presidential campaign.

Russia Today, which claims that the Macron government has yet to provide evidence of any misleading information it has published, is critical of his bill. The proposed law seems to be aimed at "attacking any inconvenient fact or disagreeable voice instead of actually fighting falsehoods; in essence, a tool of censorship," the media outlet said in an emailed statement.

In a separate emailed response, Sputnik said "France doesn't need a new law to interfere with the work of certain inconvenient media," adding that its journalists are already barred from the French presidential palace and government bodies without "any proofs" of fake news published on its website.

Macron's bill seeks to get judges and the media sector's regulator involved in the fight against fake news. A fact-checking state-run website would be created and social media would have to pitch in by warning users when a post is sponsored - or when someone pays to give it better visibility in a feed.

The tools appear "modest," said Nathalie Mallet-Poujol, a member of the Montpellier University law faculty and a director of research at French public laboratory CNRS.

"There's just no miracle solution the state could adopt," Mallet-Poujol said. "I don't think the answer can be only legal. It has to be part of an ensemble," which also includes promoting ethics, more educated citizens and more responsible platforms, she said.

Also, there's a fine line between tackling fake news and hindering freedom of speech, she said. The state-backed fact-checking website has alarmed mainstream

media and opposition politicians have said it leaves France open to censorship by the government.

Macron says he discussed the issue with Internet leaders like Facebook Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg during their Paris one-on-one talk last month.

In the run-up to the French elections, Facebook deleted thousands of fake accounts and offered users extras to help with fact-checking. It also ran full-page print ads in newspapers with tips on detecting fishy content. Facebook has also teamed up with local media to get reporters to fact-check posts. It highlights content its partners have flagged with a banner.

"We're fully mobilized on this matter and are working actively and constructively with French and European authorities," a representative for Facebook in France said in an email. "We limit the financial gains of the authors of false information, we delete fake accounts used to spread them, and we work with independent third parties on verification."

For now, Macron's bill falls short on several fronts, said Reporters Without Borders Secretary General Christophe Deloire.

"The aim of the bill is legitimate, but it's not sharp enough and could soon become inoperative - it could backfire," Deloire said. What's to stop someone from claiming a piece of fake information as accurate because a judge hasn't ruled against it? he asked.

"We must invent a model, a framework for the future, for independent and verified information," he said. Macron's bill "doesn't touch on that at all." **Bloomberg**

GUATEMALA

New evacuations near volcano set off panic

FRIGHTENED people living near the Volcano of Fire fled with their children and few possessions when fresh flows of super-heated debris were announced, taking no chances after authorities gave them little time to evacuate before a deadly eruption over the weekend.

Traffic came to a standstill on choked roads Tuesday and those without vehicles walked, even in central Escuintla, which was not under an evacuation order. Businesses shuttered as owners fled, memories still fresh of Sunday's blast, which left at least 75 people

dead and 192 missing, and reduced a once verdant area to a moonscape of ash.

Mirna Priz, who sells tamales and chiles rellenos, wept as she sat on a rock at a crossroads, with a suitcase in front of her and her 11-year-old son, Allen, and their terrier mix Cara Sucia by her side.

"You feel powerless," she said. "I don't know where I'm going to go. To leave my things, everything I have." But after seeing what happened Sunday, she was afraid to stay.

A column of smoke rose from the mountain Tuesday afternoon and hot

volcanic material began descending its south side, prompting new evacuation orders for a half dozen communities and the closure of a national highway. The country's seismology and vulcanology institute said the smoke billowing from the volcano's top could produce a "curtain" of ash that could reach 6,000 meters above sea level, posing a danger to air traffic.

Rescuers, police and journalists hurried to leave the area as a siren wailed and loudspeakers blared, "Evacuate!"

Among those fleeing was retiree Pantaleon Garcia,

who was able to load his grandchildren into the back of a pickup with a jug of water and some food. They were heading to the homes of relatives in another town. "You have to be prepared, for the children," he said.

When the panic set off by the new evacuations became clear, disaster officials called for calm.

In the community of Magnolia, which was under the new evacuation order, residents fled carrying bundles, bags of clothing and even small dogs in their arms.

Many walked along the



side of the highway because vehicular traffic had stalled on the only road out.

By Tuesday the images of Sunday's destruction were familiar to everyone. What was once a collection

of green canyons, hillsides and farms was reduced to grey devastation by fast-moving avalanches of super-heated muck that roared into the tightly knit villages on the mountain's flanks. **AP**

what's ON



IN LOVE WITH MACAU – CALLIGRAPHY AND PAINTINGS OF MACAU

TIME: 10am-7pm (last admission 6:30pm; closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: August 12, 2018

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

TAIPA ANCHORAGE: NAMES OF THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

TIME: 10am-7pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: June 18, 2018

VENUE: Taipa Houses – Nostalgic House

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

THE EXHIBITION “SWISS STYLE NOW”

TIME: 10am-9pm

UNTIL: June 17, 2018

VENUE: Tap Seac Gallery, located at No. 95,

Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

MACAU SCIENCE CENTRE

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

VENUE: Macau Science Center

ADMISSION: MOP25 (Exhibition Centre)

MOP60 (Planetarium 2D dome or 2D

sky shows)

MOP80 (Planetarium 3D dome or 3D

sky shows)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

TREASURE FROM THE DEEP SEA - EXHIBITION OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL RELICS OF THE NANHAI NO. 1

TIME: 10am-6pm, last admission at 5:30pm

(Closed on Mondays, open on public holidays, free admission on Tuesdays and the 15th of every month)

UNTIL: July 31, 2018

VENUE: 3/F, Macau Museum, No. 112, Praceta do

Museu de Macau

ADMISSION: MOP15 (free for Macau residents, children of 12 years old or below and seniors of 65 years old or over)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911 & 8394 1208

Offbeat

POLICE: MAN SHOT WHILE RETRIEVING GUN FROM OVEN'S BROILER

Police say they've solved a shooting in Ohio that left a man wounded.

The oven did it.

The Vindicator in Youngstown reports 44-year-old Robin Garlock received wounds to both shoulders while trying to retrieve a handgun he'd hidden inside the broiler unit of his oven.

Warren police say Garlock put the gun in the broiler because children were coming over.

His girlfriend, unaware of the gun's presence, turned on the oven Sunday to bake. Police say she called out to Garlock when she thought she heard a gunshot fired outside. Police say Garlock was struck by bullets or bullet fragments when they exploded inside the gun.

Warren is 60 miles (97 kilometers) southeast of Cleveland.

No charges have been filed against the oven.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	Miscellaneous
17:50	Miscellaneous
18:20	What's Up Sr.2
18:45	Maternity
19:25	Portuguese Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Miscellaneous
21:35	Non-daily Portuguese News
21:40	Portuguese Serie
22:10	Brazilian Soap Opera
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Road to the 2018 FIFA World Cup
23:55	Miscellaneous
00:25	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01050	RTPi Live

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JURASSIC WORLD: FALLEN KINGDOM

ROOM 1

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

Director: J.A. Bayona

Starring: Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard, BD Wong

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 135min



THE WALL

ROOM 2

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

Director: Doug Liman

Starring: Aaron Taylor-Johnson, John Cena

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 119min



DESTINY: THE TALE OF KAMAKURA

ROOM 2

7:15pm

Director: Takashi Yamazaki

Starring: Masato Sakai, Mitsuki Takahata

Language: English (Chinese)

CODE GEASS LELOUCH OF THE REBELLION II

ROOM 3

2:30, 5:00, 9:30pm

Director: Goro Taniguchi

Starring: Jun Fukutama, Takahiro Sakurai, Yukana

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 149min

LOVE CHUNIBYO AND OTHER DELUSIONS

ROOM 3

7:30pm

Director: Tatsuya Ishihara

Language: Japanese (Chinese)

this day in history



1942 JAPANESE BEATEN IN BATTLE OF MIDWAY

The United States has routed the Japanese Navy in a major three-day battle over a remote US naval and air base at Midway Island in the Pacific Ocean.

The victory has dealt a severe blow to Japan's ambitions to advance right across the Pacific towards the US coast.

The tiny island, 1,000 miles north-west of Hawaii, was targeted as a potential launching pad for the Japanese advance.

The Japanese attacked in the early hours of 4 June with heavy air raids on the military base.

The US responded with a decisive counter-attack, using the US Pacific Fleet, army bombers and the marines. The Japanese were clearly taken by surprise by the scale of the American defence.

The battle was fought almost exclusively from aircraft carriers - only the second time this kind of fighting has been attempted.

The first was just a month ago, in the Battle of the Coral Sea, when the United States thwarted Japanese plans to invade Australia.

In that battle, the victory was not so decisive, and the United States lost one of its aircraft carriers, the USS Lexington.

Reporting on the end of the battle for Midway Island, the Commander-in Chief of the US Pacific Fleet, Admiral Chester Nimitz, said at least two enemy aircraft carriers had been completely destroyed, with all their aircraft, and at least two more seriously damaged.

Ten Japanese warships were also sunk or damaged. By contrast, on the American side losses were relatively small. One American carrier was hit and some aeroplanes were lost.

Fighting is still continuing in the area, but although Admiral Nimitz stopped short of claiming the Japanese were defeated, he said, "a momentous victory is in the making."

He went on, "Pearl Harbor has now been partially avenged. Vengeance will not be complete until Japanese sea-power has been reduced to impotence. We have made substantial progress in that direction."

Meanwhile, fighting is continuing around the US naval base of Dutch Harbor, in Alaska. The Japanese are known to have landed on some of the westernmost Aleutian Islands, and bombed the harbour on 3 June.

No news has been received from the area since then.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Japanese had invaded two Aleutian islands, Attu and Kiska, and attacked Dutch Harbor as a diversionary ploy to draw US forces away from the key battle at Midway.

But the US had broken Japanese military codes, and knew about the secret strategy - thus denying Japan an easy victory at Midway.

The loss of four aircraft carriers was more than the Japanese Navy could endure, and the battle proved a turning point in the Pacific War.

Six months to the day since the Japanese bombed the US Naval base at Pearl Harbor, they were placed on the defensive for the first time.

Slowly, the Americans drove them back, and eventually US forces occupied the major Japanese-held islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

The Japanese were finally forced to surrender on 15 August 1945 after the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Japan remained under US occupation for seven years, and there is a large and controversial US military base on Okinawa to this day.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Your memories can be wonderful, heartwarming notions that tie you to the people you love, and they maintain a valuable tie to a past that helped create the person you are today.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
There is an interesting phenomenon going on in your life right now: The closer you come to fully understanding things, the slower the pace of your life becomes.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
You are in the thick of things right now - which means that you are just as far away from the beginning of something as you are from the ending of it. This is the perfect time to take a break.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Clothing choices, hairstyles and cell phone habits are suddenly the most fascinating thing on earth for you - you'll get immense entertainment out of the oddness of others. This is the beginning of a very observant phase.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Why do you think you need to wait for someone else to get the ball rolling? You need to force yourself to establish communication - get online or on the phone and reach out to make something new happen.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
There are fascinating twists and turns laid out throughout your day, hidden like Easter eggs. While you might not encounter all of them, you should be open to experience as many of them as possible.

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22
You can bring about real change by being yourself - proud and loud. When you walk into a room, make your presence known to everyone, either by words, deeds or appearance.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Planning is the key to your success right now, so make sure you have enough time to organize all the details today. Dates, times and other critical information needs your devoted attention.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Be aware of the energy you are putting out into the world and make any adjustments that you feel might be necessary. Think more about how your role in the community could be developed.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You've been looking at your normal routine from a fresh perspective for a while now, which is enabling you to think more creatively. Try to think up new approaches that can replace old methods that just weren't cutting it.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
There are a few broad themes running through your life right now, and many of them are shared with someone close to you. This overlap gives the two of you a lot of common ground and similar interests.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20
There are few (if any) mysteries in your life right now, but that is a very good thing. Do not mourn the loss of the drama, the uncertainty and the stress of not knowing what's in store for you.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

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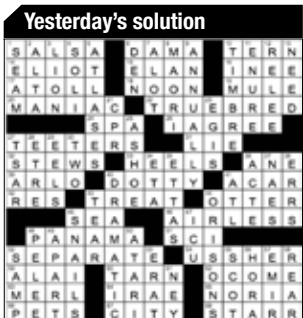
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	25	33	cloudy
Harbin	16	25	cloudy/thundershower
Tianjin	25	32	thundershower/drizzle
Urumqi	17	30	clear
Xi'an	22	32	overcast/cloudy
Lhasa	10	22	cloudy/shower
Chengdu	21	31	cloudy
Chongqing	22	35	clear
Kunming	16	27	clear/cloudy
Nanjing	21	31	cloudy
Shanghai	22	29	cloudy
Wuhan	20	32	cloudy
Hangzhou	21	31	cloudy
Taipei	26	33	overcast
Guangzhou	24	29	rainstorm
Hong Kong	26	29	heavy rain
WORLD			
Moscow	6	16	overcast/cloudy
Frankfurt	17	25	drizzle
Paris	17	23	moderate rain/drizzle
London	8	22	clear
New York	14	25	overcast/cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Former Russian ruler; 5- Forget it!; 10- Large village; 14- On a single occasion; 15- Overact; 16- Fencing weapon; 17- Buyers; 19- Ceremonial act; 20- Kick Out of You; 21- Most strange; 23- Sound booster; 25- Composition; 26- Pickle flavoring; 29- "Rhyme Pays" rapper; 31- Danny's daughter; 35- From Z; 36- Chemical used on trees; 37- Cosmetics; 38- Feast; 40- Shining; 41- Native Alaskans; 42- Info; 43- Skater Babilonia; 44- Synagogue scroll; 45- Poker pot starter; 46- DEA agent; 47- Bellini opera; 49- Litigate against; 51- Republic in central Europe; 54- View; 58- Et ___ (and other men); 59- Mechanical properties of air; 63- 1996 Tony-winning musical; 64- Utopias; 65- I smell ___; 66- Start of a counting rhyme; 67- Grandmas; 68- Went through, as the paper;

DOWN: 1- Pith helmet; 2- Cozy; 3- Land measure; 4- Type of thermometer; 5- PBS supporter; 6- Mantra sounds; 7- Heartache; 8- Still; 9- Approvals; 10- Japanese dish; 11- Mayberry boy; 12- Dampens; 13- Nair competitor; 18- Stage hog; 22- Open shelter; 24- Heaps; 25- Always; 26- Sponge gently; 27- Author Calvino; 28- Hermit; 30- Member of genus Felis; 32- Gaucho's rope; 33- Pertaining to the moon; 34- Eye-related; 36- Writer; 37- Ships' officers; 39- Amount; 40- Fink; 42- Kind of fingerprint; 45- Actress Plummer; 46- Drink of the Gods; 48- Grow to maturity; 50- Country bordered by Canada and Mexico; 51- River in central Switzerland; 52- Peter Fonda title role; 53- ___ Fein; 55- Green land; 56- Final Four org.; 57- Cornerstone abbr.; 60- Bard's nightfall; 61- Italian article; 62- Ed.'s in-box filler;



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- IACM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
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Macau
Third Floor Warehouse
Outdoor Garden
HKD 40,000 / 3,755 sq ft
Ref: 18050678

Violet Court, Hellene Gardens
Coloane
2,530sq ft / HKD 20M
HKD 7,905sq ft
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UEFA to pay USD2.28b prize fund to 32 Champions League teams

UEFA has announced big increases in Champions League prize money topping USD2 billion next season, to be paid out in a new system favoring elite clubs with most historical success.

Three-time defending champion Real Madrid is already sure to earn more than \$60 million, plus a share of Spanish television rights money, before playing a game next season.

The 32 Champions League teams kicking off in the group stage in September will share a prize fund of 1.95 billion euros (\$2.28 billion), up from 1.4 billion euros (\$1.6 billion) this season, UEFA said Tuesday.

A new distribution system sees 30 percent — 585 million euros (\$683 million) — of the fund now allocated via a points table ranking teams by 10 years of UEFA competition results and European trophies won since the 1950s.

It changes a system that better rewarded clubs from the most valuable broadcasting markets, such as England and Italy, by giving them a larger share of those rights deals, known as “market pool” money.

Leicester earned more from UEFA in the 2016-17 season than eventual winner Real Madrid, in part because the first-time English champion ear-



Real Madrid is top-ranked among the 32 teams

ned 49 million euros (\$57 million) in television money alone while reaching the quarterfinals. Madrid got 26 million euros (\$30.5 million) from a less valuable Spanish TV deal that had to be shared among five clubs.

Now, a smaller slice of the British and Italian TV money will go directly to their clubs, and some goes into the prize pot rewarding past titles. Also, a surprise English champion like Leicester with little track record in European competitions would now go near the bottom of the historical rankings.

Madrid is top-ranked among the 32 teams next season and will get 32 shares worth 1.1 million euros (\$1.3 million), totaling 35.5 million euros (\$41.4 million). The 32nd-ranked team will get one share.

Fifth-ranked Manchester United

will get 28 shares worth 31 million euros (\$36.2 million). Other clubs set to benefit from the new system include Benfica, Porto, Liverpool and Inter Milan.

UEFA also retains the existing five-year ranking of European results as a separate indicator to decide seedings in the group-stage draw held in August.

Each team in that draw will get a 15.25 million euros (\$17.8 million) entry fee, then 2.7 million euros (\$3.15 million) per win and 900,000 euros (\$1.05 million) per draw in the groups. More fees are earned for reaching each subsequent round, plus some “market pool” TV money.

In the Europa League, UEFA said the prize fund is 560 million euros (\$654 million). All 48 group-stage teams get 2.92 million euros (\$3.4 million). AP



Boxer Floyd Mayweather is the champ on Forbes money list

FLOYD Mayweather is the champ at making money. Forbes magazine reported Tuesday that the boxer is again the highest paid athlete and for the fourth time in seven years. His estimated earnings, including endorsements, for 2017 were USD285 million. That stems largely from his bout last August with UFC's Connor McGregor.

Mayweather overtook football great Cristiano Ronaldo, who held the money crown the previous two years.

Football players held

three of the top five spots. Forbes says 40 basketball players were among the top 100 thanks to a “soaring salary cap triggered by the NBA's \$24 billion TV contract.”

Lionel Messi was No. 2 at \$111 million, followed by Ronaldo at \$108 million, McGregor at \$99 million and Neymar at \$90 million. Completing the top 10 were basketball's LeBron James (85.5), tennis's Roger Federer (77.2), basketball's Stephen Curry (76.9) and quarterbacks Matt Ryan (67.3) and Matthew Stafford (59.5). AP

AD

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Aron Heller, Jerusalem

THE sports-crazed nation of Israel was in uproar yesterday over Argentina's abrupt cancellation of a World Cup warmup match following pro-Palestinian protests, with some of the country's leaders accusing Lionel Messi and his teammates of caving to terrorism.

Israel was eagerly awaiting the sold-out international friendly scheduled for Saturday night at Jerusalem's Teddy Kollek Stadium and the arrival of some of the world's best players. Argentina is one of the most popular national teams among Israelis and fans had been scrambling to get a chance to see Messi in person.

But after a fierce Palestinian campaign, which included images of Argentina's white and sky-blue striped jersey stained with red paint resembling blood and threats to burn Messi posters, Argentina's football federation announced it was skipping the event.

"In the end, they've done right thing, and this is behind us," Argentina striker Gonzalo Higuain told ESPN. "Health and common sense come first. We felt that it wasn't right to go."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called Argentine President Mauricio Macri and urged him to intervene, to no avail.

"It's unfortunate the soccer knights of Argentina did not withstand the pressure of the Israeli-hating inciters, whose only goal is to harm our basic right to self-defense and bring about the destruction of Israel," said Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman. "We will not yield before a pack of anti-Semitic terrorist supporters."

Israeli President Reuven Rivlin said it was a sad morning for Israeli sports fans, including his own grandchildren. "But there are values that are greater than even Messi. The politicization of the Argentinean move worries me greatly," he said.

Opposition figures, however, accused Israel's headline-seeking sports minister of bringing on the politicization of the sporting event by insisting on

AP PHOTO



Lionel Messi controls the ball during a team training session

Israel in uproar over Argentina pre-World Cup friendly snub

moving the game from Haifa to contested Jerusalem and by trying to orchestrate a politicized photo-op with Messi. Israel captured east Jerusalem, in the 1967 Mideast war and annexed the area in a move that is not internationally recognized. Israel considers the entire city to be its capital, while the Palestinians seek east Jerusalem as the capital of a future state.

Opposition leader Isaac Herzog called the snub a "spectacular own goal" by Miri Regev that delivered victory to boycotters of the Jewish State. Labor Party leader Avi Gabbay called for a police investigation into Regev's "corrupt conduct."

"We just absorbed a shot in the face. This is not just sports," he tweeted. "This, unfortunately, could start an international tsunami."

Regev countered that terrorist groups had made threats against Argentina's players and their families, sending them images of dead children. She accused members of the Is-

raeli parliament, or Knesset, of backing the boycott advocates. "Unfortunately, we have Trojan Horses in the Knesset who give headwind to terrorism," she said.

Israel has largely fended off the boycott campaign, with only a small number of artists and organizations shunning the country. Argentina's snubbing would appear to be the boycott movement's greatest achievement thus far.

The grassroots movement advocates boycotts, divestment and sanctions against Israel in what supporters say is a way to promote Palestinian rights through nonviolent means. Israel says the campaign goes beyond Israeli occupation of lands claimed by the Palestinians and masks a deeper aim of delegitimizing or even destroying the country. It has formed a government ministry whose primary mission is to combat the boycott movement.

The Argentinean move, which

featured on the front pages of all the major Israeli dailies, raised fears that it could serve as a template for future boycotts of Jerusalem, most notably next year's scheduled hosting of the popular Eurovision song contest.

■ Israel was eagerly awaiting the sold-out international friendly scheduled for Saturday at Jerusalem

The Palestinians celebrated the cancellation as a major triumph. The head of the Palestinian football association, Jibril Rajoub, had called on Arab football fans to burn Messi posters if he participated. He

has long tried to get football's world governing body, FIFA, and the International Olympic Committee to impose sanctions against Israel.

Following the move, he held a press conference in Ramallah featuring a picture of him with Messi and a sign reading: "From Palestine, thank you Messi."

Israeli organizers said an offer had been floated to have the game played in Barcelona instead, but it was highly unlikely.

"I think sports should never be involved with politics," said Shahaf Ashraga, a fan in Jerusalem. "It just makes me sad to think that the game has to be canceled because of the Palestinian pressure."

Argentina opens its Group D campaign in Russia against Iceland on June 16. It then plays Croatia on June 21 and Nigeria on June 26. It is unclear whether Argentina will play another warmup, or if it will arrive in Moscow ahead of schedule. **AP**

FOOTBALL

Saudi Arabia to support US bid to host 2026 World Cup

Vivian Nereim, Manus Cranny

SAUDI Arabia will back a joint bid by the U.S., Canada and Mexico to host football's 2026 World Cup, underlining its eagerness to strengthen ties with the Trump White House.

Morocco, the only other contender, solicited Riya-

dh's support a month ago and by then "we had given our word to the Americans," Turki Al Shikh, head of the Saudi Sports Authority, said in an interview with Bloomberg TV in Zurich on Monday. "We balance issues, and in the end, we go with the interests of the kingdom of

Saudi Arabia." FIFA, the sport's governing body, is to elect the host country on June 13.

U.S.-Saudi ties, which had suffered under President Barack Obama, are on the upswing under his successor Donald Trump, who shares the kingdom's antipathy toward Iran.

Riyadh hosted the first leg of Trump's first foreign presidential trip, and sent Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on a three-week American tour to promote his economic and social transformation plan.

In addition to putting a new emphasis on sports

as a means of public diplomacy, Saudi Arabia is also looking at the industry as an untapped revenue source. It plans to privatize its 16 soccer teams as part of a broader plan to raise funds, and Al Shikh predicted that could bring in USD800 million to \$1.5 billion.

In a move it promoted abroad, the conservative Islamic kingdom allowed women to enter three sports stadiums for the first time this year to encourage spending on local sporting events. Al Shikh said all stadiums will be opened to women in the coming season. **Bloomberg**

opinion

Girl About Globe
 Linda Kennedy



A WEEKEND WITH YOUR BANKNOTE BESTIES!

A coin has been issued to commemorate the Donald Trump/Kim Jong Un summit. It came out long before the date of the on-again, off-again meeting. On the coin, the men are in a remarkably close position. Almost legal tender.

Kim Jong Un got onto American cash with much less of a fight than women to get on a US dollar bill. It took years of campaigning by the pressure group Women On 20s, to win the promise that civil rights icon, Harriet Tubman, would be the first woman on a US bank note. And it's not happened yet. The latest news from the US Treasury is that the Tubman \$bill is delayed, due to currency 'redesigns not being approved'. Behind the scenes, it's thought that Trump is a fan of Andrew Jackson, the 7th US president and the man whom Tubman could replace on \$20 bills.

The speed at which the Kim coin was minted has prompted me to wonder: should women put away the pussy hats and knit some pink nuclear missiles? Seems like that's better tactics.

Meantime, in the UK, it's less than a year since Jane Austen's £10 note entered British currency. The Trump/Kim Jong Un coin would surely have intrigued Austen. 'If a man has 10,000 a year, what a fine thing. If he's on 10,000 a year, one has to ask why.'

Research was done recently looking into the relationship between women on bank notes and gender equality. I read about it in an article on Livemint, with the detail having been uncovered and analysed by research author Hansika Kapoor. One point felt especially worth noting: when a country's currency features women, its overall equality index tends to be higher.

Such countries are not the obvious ones. For starters, Colombia. On their notes is the amazing sounding Policarpa Salavarrieta, 'seamstress and spy'. Born 1795 and known as La Pola, she was captured by Spanish Royalists and executed for high treason in 1817. Indeed a woman of note and her seamstress skills raise the additional excitement she might have also worked in yarn. I'm thinking descendants of her wider family could help with those knitted nuclear weapons.

Marie Curie, the physicist, has been honoured on Polish money.

Leading suffragette Kate Sheppard has a note in New Zealand.

Jane Austen, as mentioned, is on English notes. And north of the border, scientist Mary Somerville is on some Scottish notes.

It all makes me think of a new type of travel. The slogan would be: 'Spend the night, with women. Eat fancy, with women. Take a ride, with women.' Sorry, sleazeballs, we're talking feminist wanderlust here. Such trips would involve visiting nations with banknotes featuring women. Forget the experience economy; this would be the equality economy.

There's a rise in women travelling – and, indeed, women travelling alone. It could be nice to feel empowered by a role model in your pocket.

And given the huge market in overseas bachelorette parties and girls' weekends, there seems potential there too. Why not buy all those cocktails and bottles of prosecco with female notes? 'A weekend away with your besties - and your new banknote besties!!'

As for Trump supporting more women on US money - easier, surely, if one were to phrase the request for his approval in terms he'd understand. 'Mr President. She's a lucre. You could definitely put your assets into her. Is it a yes?'

And, finally, returning to that coin featuring Trump and Kim Jong Un. I feel pretty sure it's a back-covering ruse. Trump said: 'I promised change.' And lo it came. Small silver.

THE BUZZ 86 PERCENT OF MACAU ARTS FESTIVAL TICKETS SOLD

Almost 86 percent of the tickets for the 29th Macau Arts Festival (MAF) were distributed or sold, according to a statement issued yesterday by the Cultural Affairs Bureau, signifying an "enthusiastic response for local and overseas audiences."

The festival concluded on May 31, having presented 26 performances and artistic exhibitions, as well as an outreach program encompassing over 100 activities.

This edition of the MAF was themed "Origin", which symbolizes the "spring of life," leading the au-

dience to recall the core meaning of life by means of different art manifestations.

The opening performance Das Kapital and the closing performance 13 Tongues were widely acclaimed by the public, according to the Cultural Affairs Bureau.

Meanwhile, local performances were highly sought after, said the Bureau, including Les Curious Fringes – Blast of the Cave, The Night Just Before the Forests, Humming of the Landscape, Pissed Julie and In Search of Memory.

China warns US against provocations following B-52 flyby



CHINA lashed out at the U.S. yesterday after a pair of B-52 bombers flew past a Chinese-held shoal in the South China Sea, amid escalating words and displays of military strength from the two major Pacific powers.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying warned the U.S. against "hyping up militarization and stirring up trouble," while promising that China would take all necessary measures to defend its sovereignty.

The U.S. "doing whatever they want is risky and China will not be threatened by any military warships," Hua told reporters at a daily briefing in Beijing.

This week's flyby near Scarborough Shoal, which China took from the Philippines in 2012, came af-

ter U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis accused Beijing of "intimidation and coercion" in the South China Sea. China claims almost the entirety of the sea – resource-rich waters that include some of the world's busiest shipping lanes – despite overlapping claims from neighbors including the Philippines, Vietnam and Taiwan.

Speaking at a summit of top security officials in Singapore last weekend, Mattis said China has deployed anti-ship missiles and surface-to-air missiles and landed nuclear capable bombers on the disputed islands. He vowed that the Indo-Pacific would remain a "priority theater" for U.S. forces.

Last month, China announced it had dispatched warships to drive away

two U.S. Navy vessels sailing close to Chinese holdings in the Paracel Island chain, where China recently announced it had landed strategic bombers on an airstrip for the first time.

That naval confrontation came shortly after the Pentagon withdrew its invitation for China to participate in multinational naval exercises near Hawaii to protest China's military moves in the South China Sea.

Despite rising tensions, Mattis is expected to visit Beijing at an unannounced date. He said last weekend he would travel soon at China's invitation.

China's Defense Ministry has said it would welcome Mattis and hoped for continued exchanges with the U.S. military. **AP**

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Xinhua/Deng Hua



Tan Guanghui paints on a porcelain vase in Guangzhou. Aged 57, the artist has worked in the field for nearly 40 years and opened his own studio for the purpose of craftsmanship heritage. Guangcai porcelain, a gold polychrome glazed porcelain, is a representative of Guangzhou's craftwork and is listed as a national intangible cultural heritage item.

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

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

YEMEN An international aid group is warning that escalation of fighting around Yemen's port city of Hodeida threatens to cut off essential supplies to millions of people in the war-ravaged country.

SYRIA The dominant U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish party that controls large swaths of oil-rich territory in northeastern Syria is prepared to hold talks with the Damascus government over the future of the area, a senior Kurdish official said yesterday.

CROATIA Former football boss Zdravko Mamic was sentenced yesterday to 6 1/2 years in prison for embezzlement and tax evasion over deals that included the sale of Croatia World Cup stars Luka Modric and Dejan Lovren.



GERMANY Chancellor Angela Merkel says the government no longer sees a reason to hold back on deporting people to Afghanistan on security grounds.

SPAIN A female-dominated cabinet is taking shape as part of Spain's new Socialist government, including a former astronaut as science minister and a European Union bureaucrat to oversee the country's economy.



GUATEMALA Authorities are evaluating whether it's safe to resume the search for survivors and the dead on the third day after a volcanic eruption devastated several small towns. **More on p15**

VENEZUELA The Organization of American States narrowly adopted a resolution that could trigger a process for suspending Venezuela at a later date if enough votes are gathered.