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Najib tells Chinese voters that support is a two-way street
HOT NEWS • 2



KL DEPLOYS 25-MEMBER TEAM

S'pore, M'sia water-bomb hot spots in Sumatra

S'pore sends Chinook helicopter, 34 SAF personnel as Australia said to deploy aircraft

JAKARTA – Aircraft from Singapore and Malaysia yesterday began water-bombing missions to put out the raging fires in South Sumatra that have caused weeks of unhealthy haze in neighbouring nations.

In all, seven helicopters and four fixed-wing aircraft are involved in the mission, Indonesia's National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) said in a statement yesterday.

Singapore has sent a Republic of Singapore Air Force (SAF) Chinook helicopter with a 5,000-litre heli-bucket and 34 SAF personnel to help fight the ongoing forest fires, together with

● CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



PHOTO: ARNAUD GAILLARD (TWITTER)

SIA PLANE COLLAPSES DURING PREFLIGHT CHECK A Singapore Airlines Airbus A330-300 collapsed at Changi Airport yesterday morning after its nose gear retracted during a landing gear check. No passengers and crew were on board at the time, and recovery crew and equipment have moved in to assess the damage. **HOT NEWS • 4**

KL to shore up stock market but let ringgit float

LIMA – Malaysia will use its state funds to put a floor under the country's battered stock market, though currency intervention and interest rate hikes are ruled out as tools to keep sharp falls in the ringgit in check, its Deputy Finance Minister said.

The world's second-largest exporter of liquefied natural gas has been hit by the collapse in global crude prices that added to the pains of an economy grappling with mounting household debt.

Foreign investors have trimmed ex-

posure to Malaysia, causing its stock and bond prices to tank. Its currency, down 16 per cent this year, remains vulnerable to further falls against the dollar as the United States Federal Reserve eyes raising interest rates.

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hot news

MALAYSIAN PM'S OVERTURES SUPERFICIAL, SAY ANALYSTS

Najib tells Chinese voters that support is a two-way street

Defends M'sian Chinese Association against claims it is 'spineless'

KUALA LUMPUR— Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak sought to reach out to ethnic Chinese voters yesterday by pledging to “do more” for the community should they support the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition.

“You must show support. If you show support we have no problem

giving more. But you must come forward to support me. If not I'll get the heat,” said the BN chairman at the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) annual general assembly.

“They will say, you give them so much, but then they never support you. This is difficult lah,” he added,

“

You must show support. If you show support we have no problem giving more.

Mr Najib Razak
MALAYSIAN PRIME
MINISTER AND BARISAN
NASIONAL CHAIRMAN

referring to the main Malay base in BN's dominant party, United Malays National Organisation (UMNO).

His comments come amid racial tensions after ethnically charged demonstrations in downtown Kuala Lumpur recently put the country on edge.

As it is, the Malay right wing has called on Mr Najib to drop efforts to win back ethnic Chinese after the community voted overwhelmingly for the opposition in the 2013 general election, leading to looser ties between the country's two major races as the UMNO president focused more on bolstering support in his party's main Malay voter base.

At MCA's event yesterday, Mr Najib sought to close that gap by reaching out to the Chinese community and also backing the MCA in his speech by taking a swipe at criticisms from the opposition.

“They say MCA is a silent party. This is not true. They are not a silent party. In fact they have spoken up on many issues ... the yellow shirts, the red shirts, Low Yat incident or 1MDB, you name it. They have spoken about it in cabinet or BN meetings,” he said. “The only difference is they did it politely. Not rudely.”

The ruling Chinese party's political foe, the Democratic Action Party, have repeatedly called MCA “spineless” for allegedly failing to speak up on controversial issues involving UMNO.

While MCA dismissed the allegation as untrue, the perception stuck with the community and contributed to MCA's declining influence. In the last general election, MCA only won seven federal and 11 state seats, half of what it garnered in election 2008.

Mr Najib had repeatedly said since then that MCA has to work harder to regain Chinese support, but some MCA leaders said this would be impossible due to UMNO's tendency to ride on race politics in order to win votes.

Yesterday, Mr Najib reiterated that MCA needs to “show more” and “respond” to his plea to get the Chinese back into BN's fold.

“If you want more seats you need to get Chinese support ... you have to show, respond to it. And it must not only be in words but in action,” he said.

Analysts contacted by TODAY were critical of Mr Najib's comments yesterday, saying that his overtures to Chinese voters were all but superficial.

“He is doing what is expected ceremoniously of him to boost support for MCA. It would be naive to think he means anything in his message that all ethnic groups need each other,” said head of political and social analysis at think-tank Penang Institute, Wong Chin Huat.

Mr Ooi Kee Beng, deputy director of ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, said Mr Najib was “parroting the traditional BN narrative in his speech”.

“He is the PM. He can appeal directly to Chinese voters instead of trying to do it through a BN party that has obviously lost almost all support from the Chinese ground,” he said.

A former political aide to Mr Najib said that his message to Chinese voters will probably meet with “an equal if not stronger expectation for the ruling coalition to instead make the first move in favour of some of the long-standing demands of the Chinese community, before they are willing to revert somewhat to supporting BN”.

“So it is a chicken and egg scenario, with each side expecting the other side to make the first move before reciprocating,” said Dr Oh Ei Sun, now a senior fellow at the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies.

**AGENCIES, WITH ADDITIONAL REPORTING
BY JASON TAN**



Mr Najib Razak speaking at the opening of the Malaysian Chinese Association's annual general assembly yesterday. PHOTO: THE MALAY MAIL

Racial extremism has no place in Malaysia: Najib

KUALA LUMPUR— Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak said yesterday that his government will not stand for racial extremism, and called for greater cooperation between Malaysians of different races to ensure a better future for the country.

“The Malays cannot do it alone, the Chinese cannot do it alone. We must do it together in one political union called Barisan Nasional,” he said, referring to the ruling coalition of which he is chairman.

Speaking at the opening of the Malaysian Chinese Association's (MCA) annual general assembly, he said the BN formula based on the principles of moderation was the best for a Malaysia which had various races, religions and cultures.

Racial ties in Malaysia have been strained following two large rallies in Kuala Lumpur. A pro-government Red Shirt rally on Sept 16 was reportedly held to uphold Malay pride in response to an earlier pro-reform Bersih 4.0 rally in late August said to be attended mostly by Chinese and Indians. Yesterday, Mr Najib criti-

cised both rallies, but suggested that the latter was more provocative.

“What we should stress on, if you want to do a rally, do it peacefully. We allow peaceful assembly. But don't bring banners that are racist, don't make statements that are seditious. Don't hurt the feelings of others. And, most importantly, don't insult the country's leader,” he added, referring to the action of some yellow shirt-wearing Bersih 4.0 supporters who stomped on pictures of leaders such as Mr Najib and Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party president Abdul Hadi Awang.

Mr Najib did not previously endorse the Red Shirt rally, but had said that the ruling United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) party would not prevent members from joining it.

The event involved incendiary remarks and racially charged placards, with Chinese Malaysians being called “babi” (pigs) and told to “balik Cina” (go back to China). Riot police used water cannons when protesters tried to gain access to Petaling Street, commonly known as Chinatown.

MCA is an ethnic Chinese com-

“

What we should stress on, if you want to do a rally, do it peacefully ... and, most importantly, don't insult the country's leader.

Mr Najib Razak
MALAYSIAN
PRIME MINISTER

ponent party of the ruling BN coalition, but its poor performance at the 2008 and 2013 general elections has left it struggling.

Speaking at the same event, MCA President Liow Tiong Lai expressed concern over increasing racial and religious tensions and called on the government to set up a national reconciliation council to forge unity among the people.

“A comprehensive solution must be implemented. There is no time to waste,” he said, noting that recent incidents, such as calls to abolish Chinese schools and threats to slap the Chinese, showed that hatred was growing at an alarming pace.

Calls to end vernacular education resurfaced recently after the Red Shirt protesters demanded the government abolish Chinese and Tamil schools, which they claimed to promote “racist” tendencies.

Mr Najib yesterday promised that the government will continue to defend the Chinese community's right to vernacular education.

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The aircraft, an Airbus A330-300, had been scheduled to operate Flight SQ890 from Terminal 3 to Hong Kong. PHOTO: INSTAGRAM @AHTANLORLOR

CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE IS INVESTIGATING

SIA aircraft collapses after nose gear retracts

Maintenance work was being carried out on plane to rectify defect, says national carrier

LAURA PHILOMIN
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SINGAPORE – A Singapore Airlines (SIA) aircraft keeled over onto its nose on the Changi Airport tarmac during maintenance work yesterday morning after its nose gear retracted during a landing gear system check.

The national carrier said there were no passengers or flight crew on board at that time. An engineer was on board although he was not hurt.

Responding to TODAY's query as to what caused the nose gear to retract, SIA said: "Maintenance work was being carried out on the aircraft to rectify a defect, and the gear retracted during a subsequent landing gear system check."

The Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore is investigating the incident, which happened at around 8am.

The aircraft, an Airbus A330-300, had been scheduled to operate Flight SQ890 from Terminal 3 to Hong Kong at 7.35am. Due to maintenance carried out on the damaged plane, another aircraft was assigned to the flight. Online



No passengers or flight crew were on board at the time of the collapse. An engineer was on board but was not hurt. PHOTO: TWITTER @ERIIIC

flight schedules showed the flight taking off 40 minutes later than scheduled.

The aircraft had last operated Flight SQ835, which arrived in Singapore from Shanghai's Pudong International Airport at 12.49am yesterday.

"We do not have details of damage to the aircraft at this point. An assessment will be carried out after it is removed from the gate," said SIA. "Singapore Airlines will be co-operating fully with the authorities in their investigations."

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The Singapore armed forces helping out in water-bombing operations in Palembang yesterday. PHOTO: NG ENG HEN'S FACEBOOK PAGE

S'pore, M'sia water-bomb hot spots in Sumatra

● CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a six-man Disaster Assistance and Rescue Team from the Singapore Civil Defence Force, and a 5,000-litre heli-bucket. Two RSAF C-130 aircraft were also deployed to transport SAF and SCDF personnel, as well as their equipment, said Singapore's Ministry of Defence.

Singapore's Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen last night posted photos from the operation on his Facebook page. He said conditions were "difficult" as the thick smoke affects visibility.

Meanwhile, Malaysia has deployed a 25-member team along with three assets, including a Bombardier aircraft that is capable of sucking up over 6,000 litres of water in 12 seconds, enough to put out fires the size of football field each round.

The operation is now concentrated in the worst-affected areas of Ogan Komering Ilir and Musi Banyuasin in South Sumatra Province.

Due to the severity of the fires, Indonesia has also requested for large plane from Australia that will be able to drop 15,000 litres of water in a few seconds. Australia will deploy the Hercules L-100 aircraft to Indonesia next week for just five days as it will then need to head home to New South Wales where forest fires are raging, said BNBP.

"The National Disaster Management Agency is looking into renting more helicopters and new aircraft for the operation. Discussions with the Russian government are still ongoing. Mainly, we hope they will send a Beriev BE-200 aircraft that has a huge capacity and the BE-200 flight can scoop water up, like this bombardier jet, and can carry out water bombing," said BNBP spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho.

The BE-200 aircraft can scoop up as much as 12,000 litres of water simply by skimming the surface of the sea or lake.

After repeatedly declining offers of help for weeks, Indonesia last week accepted assistance from its neighbours to put out the fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan that drove air quality in Singapore to levels described as

"hazardous" and caused haze as far away as Thailand and Vietnam.

Indonesia hopes to extinguish all fires burning in different parts of the country within two weeks, with the help of neighbouring countries.

Yesterday, Malaysia Prime Minister Najib Razak said Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo had expressed regret over the haze in a meeting between the two leaders in Bogor, West Java.

"Indirectly. I think he understood

(the problem), and he felt embarrassed and under pressure," The New Straits Times quoted Mr Najib as saying. "It's a complicated problem — it's not (Mr Widodo's) intention to allow the burning (to continue)."

Mr Najib, who was on a two-day visit to hold bilateral talks with Mr Widodo, added: "I told Jokowi that the haze threatens the Malaysian people's interests, especially in areas such as health, transport and education, with schools having to be closed and

so on. It has also affected economic and social activities."

Malaysia reopened three of its airports earlier last week after they were forced to close from the deteriorating haze, Malaysia Airports said in a tweet.

Seven provinces in southern Thailand were affected by the haze, including the resort island of Phuket, according to the nation's Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation.

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Higher student-care subsidies for financially needy children

KELLY NG
kellyng@mediacorp.com.sg

SINGAPORE – There will be higher subsidies for financially needy children

attending Student Care Centres next year, in tandem with a projected increase in fees.

A circular on the Ministry of Social and Family Development's (MSF)

website said each child under the ComCare's Student Care Fee Assistance Scheme (SCFA) will get as much as S\$30 more in subsidies per month starting from January, depending on

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his family income. The increase in the subsidy is based on a higher "norm fee" of S\$290 — the norm fee currently is S\$260. Norm fee is calculated based on the reported fees charged by registered service providers. Close to 7,000 families are expected to benefit from the higher subsidies, said an MSF spokesperson. Poorer families get higher subsidies under the SCFA. The subsidies can offset up to 98 per cent of SCC fees, up to a maximum amount of S\$285.

The MSF spokesperson said the subsidy adjustment is part of the ministry's regular review to keep fees affordable for lower income families with working parents. The last revision was in July 2012.

"Student Care Centres set their fees according to their programme and services. Student care fees are generally affordable," the spokesperson added. Student Care Centres provide before- and after-school care for children aged seven to 17 years. Services typically offered include meals, homework supervision and tuition.

After the revision to the subsidies, students who come from families which have a household income of S\$1,500 and below, or gross per capita income of S\$375 (for households with five or more family members) will be subsidised up to S\$285 per month if their monthly student care fees cost at least S\$290. If their monthly student care fees are less than S\$290, students within this income bracket will receive a 98 per cent subsidy.

More families will also qualify for subsidies under the SCFA because the household income ceiling will be raised from S\$3,500 to S\$4,000 — or a gross per capita income of up to S\$1,000 for families with five or more members.

Besides the income parameters, the child must be a Singaporean or permanent resident whose parents are both working to qualify for the SCFA. Of the 15 Student Care Centres TODAY contacted, three said they plan to raise monthly fees next year due to higher operating costs, including staff salaries.

For instance, the centre at Edgefield Primary School, run by MERCU Learning Point, will raise fees from S\$230 to S\$250, while fees at Compassvale Primary School's centre, run by Pro-Teach Education Group will be raised from S\$280 to S\$290. Another three centres run by MERCU will raise registration and material fees.

AS MUCH AS S\$30 MORE IN SUBSIDIES PER MONTH

● A circular on the Ministry of Social and Family Development's website said each child under the ComCare's Student Care Fee Assistance Scheme (SCFA) will get as much as S\$30 more in subsidies per month starting from January, depending on his family income. The increase in the subsidy is based on a higher 'norm fee' of S\$290 — the norm fee currently is S\$260.

The Chinese Development Assistance Council, which currently charges S\$285 at its two Student Care Centres in Bendemeer Primary and Chongfu School, said it will assess the need to revise fees after the contracts expire next year. There are currently more than 400 Student Care Centres where the SCFA can be administered. These centres offer more than 26,000 places and the MSF has plans to further expand this capacity. More than 110 of the SCCs are now based in primary schools, up from fewer than 50 in 2011. The MSF said it is working with the Education Ministry to increase the number of school-based centres to 140 by the end of next year.

DEATH TOLL STANDS AT MORE THAN 60

China steps up probe into knife massacre at Xinjiang mine

BEIJING – The authorities in north-western China have cordoned off an area twice the size of New York City as their hunt for the perpetrators of one of the region's deadliest-ever attacks enters its fourth week.

Residents of Baicheng county in Xinjiang province say that at least 60 people, most of them migrant coal miners from across the country, were knifed to death in a Sept 18 attack on the Sogan coal mine.

Most of Baicheng's residents are Muslim Uighurs, a small number of whom have taken up arms against a government they believe is deliberately eroding their religious and cultural heritage by encouraging a wave of Han Chinese migration.

Xinjiang has long been a strategic priority for the Chinese government because of its natural resources, including the country's largest coal reserves, and its proximity to even bigger energy sources in Central Asia. It is also a key component of President Xi Jinping's "New Silk Road" strategy, aimed at enhancing Eurasian infrastructure links.

"More than 60 people were killed at the mine," one Baicheng resident told the Financial Times. "Military helicopters and drones are still searching the mountains for the attackers."

The person asked not to be named, citing warnings from local officials: "They said we shouldn't embarrass China and Baicheng by talking to foreign journalists. But I think they are really worried that they will be punished for incompetence if too much information gets out. How can they not have caught anyone after such a big attack?"

The helicopters and drones are operating out of the airport at Aksu, the largest city in the area. Police have established checkpoints on all roads leading to Baicheng, which covers an area of some 16,000 sq km. Heavily armed police are posted behind sandbag bunkers at each road block, providing cover for their colleagues who perform identification and weapons checks on all people entering the area.

An FT reporter was turned back at one of the checkpoints on Saturday. "You can't go to Baicheng or the coal mine because of the counter-terrorism operation," one police officer said. He declined to comment further on last month's attack, which was first reported by Radio Free Asia's (RFA's) Uighur-language service, or the continuing search. RFA said last month's victims included at least five police officers who responded to the incident.

“

They (local officials) said we shouldn't embarrass China and Baicheng by talking to foreign journalists. But I think they are really worried that they will be punished for incompetence if too much information gets out. How can they not have caught anyone after such a big attack?

Anonymous Baicheng resident
SPEAKING TO
THE FINANCIAL TIMES

Despite the information blackout, the attack is the talk of Aksu, where residents speculate that the death toll may exceed 100. The deadliest known outbreak of intercommunal tensions in Xinjiang occurred in 2009 in the region's capital, Urumqi, when mob violence claimed the lives of 197 people, most of them Han Chinese.

Organised attacks on symbols of the state, especially police stations, have been common for years in Xinjiang. But beginning in March last year, alleged Uighur "separatists"

began to deliberately target civilians in well-coordinated assaults, at a train station in the city of Kunming in south-western China, and a food market in Urumqi.

Last month's Baicheng massacre would appear to fit this pattern as most of the victims were migrant coal miners, but it is also possible that apparently sectarian-motivated attacks in Xinjiang could instead stem from disputes over pollution or land.

A number of these (recent) incidents have differed from previous ones

in that they seemed to target civilians and involved a degree of planning," said Mr Nick Holdstock, who has written several books about Xinjiang. "But we should be careful not to assume people in different regions in Xinjiang share the same grievances simply because of their shared ethnicity. The concerns of Uighur businessmen may not be the same as Uighur farmers."

The Chinese government claims that shadowy terrorist groups and religious extremists are responsible for much of the violence. **FINANCIAL TIMES**



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Tuas water plant: Ecosystem monitoring urged

SINGAPORE – Environmental experts have recommended a slew of monitoring measures to be taken for the construction and operation of the Tuas Water Reclamation Plant, which national water agency PUB said it will review and implement progressively as construction begins in 2017.

The Tuas Water Reclamation

Plant, which is part of the Deep Tunnel Sewerage System that will meet Singapore's long-term needs for water collection, treatment, reclamation and disposal, will serve the western part of Singapore. Construction of the discharge point for treated used water — called the outfall — will begin after 2021 at Tuas Basin. The plant will

handle used water from around 2024.

In an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report commissioned by the PUB, experts at DHI Water and Environment said the discharge of treated used water is expected to have minor to moderate negative impact on surrounding corals and seagrass, and slight negative impact on mangroves.

There will also be an increased risk of algal blooms, which are of minor negative impact to overall ecology and biodiversity. These are largely due to the levels of nitrates and phosphates in the discharged water.

The good news: There will likely be no impact on marine animals such as dugongs and sea turtles.

Overall, the building of the plant is a more sustainable approach compared with a no-build scenario, as it would replace the Ulu Pandan and Jurong water reclamation plants, which use older technology, and free up land.

The EIA report, currently available for public inspection, suggested the annual monitoring of seagrass beds once the plant begins operation, given the "ecological importance of seagrass meadows in the Southern Islands and (the) presence of internationally protected species".

Although coral communities have been shown to adjust to local water quality and conditions, DHI suggested the seasonal monitoring of coral reef conditions and nitrate levels.

A monitoring programme for phytoplankton — plankton that requires sunlight to live — should also be in place to detect cells or toxins "sufficiently early". The programme will help protect public health, fishery resources and the ecosystem structure, DHI said. Phytoplankton populations, water temperature and salinity and chlorophyll levels are among the items that should be measured.

DHI found that the discharge of treated used water would be of negligible risk to fish farms around Pulau Semakau, more than 10km away.

Asked if PUB intends to adopt all

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Malaysian markets may face a temporary setback from a US rate hike. But if the Fed wanted to raise rates, it would have to do so quickly as markets "don't like uncertainty" on when it will happen, Mr Johari said.

He stressed the government does

● CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

KL to shore up stock market but let ringgit float

● CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Asked if state investment funds are ready to prop up slumping domestic stock prices with purchases, Mr Johari Abdul Ghani said: "Yes, our state fund is quite big right now, in the sense we always have ample space" to absorb any sell-off by foreign investors.

"Every year, these (domestic) pension funds are getting new funds almost close to RM40 billion to RM50 billion (\$13.5 billion to \$16.9 billion), so I think there is enough for them to continue buying while waiting for external factors to improve," he told Reuters on Saturday during his visit to Lima for the World Bank and International Monetary Fund meetings.

Malaysian markets may face a temporary setback from a US rate hike. But if the Fed wanted to raise rates, it would have to do so quickly as markets "don't like uncertainty" on when it will happen, Mr Johari said.

He stressed the government does

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mitigating measures recommended by DHI, it said the Deep Tunnel Sewerage System Phase 2 and Tuas Water Reclamation Plant project spans more than 10 years, and all proposed monitoring measures will be "reviewed and implemented progressively as the project is being developed".

The treated used water to be discharged will be less than 35 per cent of the volume received by the Tuas plant, as the bulk is used to produce NEWater. The discharge does not include solid waste from households and industrial sources, which is extracted from used water and used to produce biogas before being incinerated.

The Tuas plant will use advanced technology, such as membrane biological reactors that greatly reduce the level of organic matter and total suspended solids in used water, compared to conventional treatment processes. This means its treated water will be of high quality.

The Tuas plant, which will result in the Ulu Pandan and Jurong plants being phased out by 2030, could adopt even more advanced technology when major upgrading is expected in 2050, noted the report.

Representatives from the Nature Society (Singapore) have seen the EIA report. Mr Stephen Beng, who chairs the society's marine conservation group, said the EIA was comprehensive and a positive step from Phase 1 of the Deep Tunnel Sewerage System completed in 2008. An EIA was not done for Phase 1, he said.

Calling for the sharing of mitigating measures from the project's environmental monitoring and management programme (EMMP), he said: "It's going to be over a 25-year period. Coastal landscape and environmental conditions change, so baselines have to change as well."

● CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

not see an urgent need to take steps to defend the ringgit and will leave markets to determine its levels. "Pegging (the ringgit to the dollar) is out of the question," as well as direct intervention to prop up the currency or imposing capital controls, Mr Johari said.

"We do a lot of trade with a lot of countries ... We allow markets to find their ways," he said. An interest rate hike by Malaysia's central bank is also ruled out as an option to rein in declines in the ringgit, as it would hurt households with high debt and cool consumption, Mr Johari said.

Malaysia has sufficient foreign reserves to weather further declines in its currency and can repatriate profits or liquidate assets its state funds hold overseas if needed, he added. "Our financial system is very solid compared to 1997 to 1998," when Asia suffered from a financial crisis. "I think we're ready to face the headwind."

Mr Johari also said the government will liquidate assets of heavily indebted state fund 1MDB, including its energy and property investment, by early next year that will raise enough funds to avoid a bailout. **REUTERS**

PHASE 1 COMPLETED IN 2008

● Phase 1 of the Deep Tunnel Sewerage System, which uses deep tunnel sewers to convey used water by gravity to centralised water reclamation plants located at coastal areas, was completed in 2008 and serves eastern Singapore.

Periodic updates on the EMMP when the plant begins operations will help the public know what PUB is doing about the "growing risks of the outfall on corals and seagrass", he added. "It's the connected nature of the marine environment where individual stressors act in concert, resulting in cumulative effects on marine ecosystems. That's why it requires constant monitoring."

The executive summary of the EIA report could also be posted online to

be more accessible to the public, suggested Mr Beng. The report can be viewed by appointment at the Environment Building.

The last two EIAs that PUB conducted took place in 2011 for Tuaspring Desalination Plant and this year for the third desalination plant to be built in Tuas. Both reports were open for public viewing, said the PUB spokesperson.

Currently, EIAs are required for major development projects, espe-

cially those near sensitive areas such as nature reserves and marine and coastal areas. The PUB incorporates EIA recommendations in project tender specifications to ensure minimal impact and disruption to the surrounding environment, she said.

The PUB did not say if every EIA report is open to public viewing. The spokesperson said: "The EIA goes through a multi-agency review before reports are gazetted and available for public viewing." **NEO CHAI CHIN**



“
We do a lot of trade with a lot of countries ... We allow markets to find their ways.

Mr Johari Abdul Ghani (picture)
MALAYSIAN DEPUTY FINANCE MINISTER

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comment & analysis

PHILIP STEPHENS



Barack Obama's pivot to Asia has had a bad press. The moment the US president uttered the phrase, the Middle East demanded closer attention. The scepticism should ease with last week's deal on a trans-Pacific trade and investment pact. There are hurdles still to jump, but the accord among a dozen Pacific Rim nations speaks to the power of geoconomics.

There is also the view through the other end of the telescope. Washington is not the only party to the strategic realignment under way in Asia in response to China's rise. Maybe we should be talking about Asia's pivot to Washington.

I was reminded of this during a weeklong study group in India organised by the European Council on Foreign Relations and Germany's Robert Bosch Foundation. The purpose of a crammed agenda of meetings with politicians, policymakers and scholars was to find out "What India Thinks". For a bunch of Europeans, one answer was decidedly depressing: Indians may buy German engineering and French jets but, in the game of great power politics, Europe is a bit-part player. The serious rumination is reserved for China and the US: The first viewed as a threat; the second, sotto voce, as an indispensable ally. The two things, of course, are connected.

U.S. IS VITAL GUARANTOR OF INDIAN EFFORT TO CHECK CHINESE POWER

China spurs Modi's pivot to Washington



Mr Narendra Modi has been nothing if not energetic on the international stage. The Indian Prime Minister has visited 20-odd foreign capitals since taking office in May 2014. Old relationships have been refurbished and new ones forged. He does not lack ambition. It has become commonplace to call the 21st century the Pacific Century. He wants to change that. We should be talking of the Indo-Pacific Century. The official account sets India's foreign policy on two pil-

US President Barack Obama and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi before their meeting at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Jan 25. After decades as a big nation with a small worldview, Mr Modi's India is shaping up as a nation set on remaking Asia's balance of power.

PHOTO: REUTERS

lars. The first is an inescapable link between economic development and geopolitical weight. Policymakers boast that India is now growing faster than a slowing China. And while China is getting older, India's demography promises the energy of youth. Fair enough, but the Indian economy is only a fraction of the size of the Chinese economy. Catching up demands decent infrastructure, foreign investment and cutting-edge technologies.

So, each of Mr Modi's forays overseas has an economic dimension. When Chinese President Xi Jinping tipped up at the White House the other day, Mr Modi was in California selling the Indian dream to the behemoths of Silicon Valley. The Indian Prime Minister and Japan's Shinzo Abe share a strongman view of leadership, but what adds depth to the relationship is an understanding that Japan and India can do business together.

BALANCING CONCERN WITH ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT

The second pillar is the neighbourhood. Past leaders have been peremptory in their treatment of smaller neighbours. What energy there has been has been sucked up by the cycle of conflicts with Pakistan. Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan and the rest have been seen as beneath Delhi's interest. Mr Modi has changed things. The simmering stand-off over Kashmir with Pakistan will always be a source of tension, but, albeit yielding varying degrees of success, he un-

“Rather than compete with other financial centres on the basis of market size, Singapore should seek to find a niche for itself as a hub for financial innovation within a growing network of Asian financial centres.

WOO JUN JIE • 14

derstands that great powers do well to dampen disturbances in their own neighbourhood.

More muted in the official foreign policy narrative is the concern about China's regional ambitions. Beijing has been assiduous in courting India's neighbours. Mr Xi's One Belt, One Road strategy is calculated to make China the pre-eminent Eurasian power. For Delhi, the reopening of the silk routes to Europe and the Chinese push into the Indian Ocean feel like encirclement; and that by a power with which India once went to war over still-disputed borders and one that remains Pakistan's patron.

Mr Modi has to balance such concerns with economic engagement. China is an untapped source of investment and infrastructure know-how. Yet, Beijing's ambitions also provide the context for the deepening of Delhi's ties with Japan and Australia, and the building of new relationships with Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia. The thread through these networks is the quest for a counter-weight to an assertive Beijing.

Mr Modi's pivot to Washington is part of the same picture. India will always be ambivalent about the US. Part of it still hankers for the "strategic autonomy" that came with leadership of the nonaligned movement during the Cold War. Visceral pride says India can never be a junior partner in a US-led alliance system. The historically close relationship with Russia also matters; the habit of close collaboration with Moscow has outlasted the collapse of communism. Yet, the world's largest democracy needs the investment and defence equipment that only the world's most advanced democracy can offer. And the US is the essential guarantor of the effort to check Chinese power. European integration after the second World War was made possible by an overarching US security guarantee. Something similar is true of the alliance systems emerging in Asia: Their credibility rests on the connection to the US.

India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru once remarked that foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy. He was right. Mr Modi's dream of an Indo-Pacific century depends on economic modernisation. Yet, the change in outlook is palpable. After decades as a big nation with a small worldview, Mr Modi's India is shaping up as a nation set on remaking Asia's balance of power. **FINANCIAL TIMES**

● Philip Stephens is associate editor and chief political commentator at the Financial Times.



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JEFFREY SACHS



In May 1961, President John F Kennedy stirred America and the world with these words: "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the Earth."

Just eight years later, NASA did just that — with astounding benefits for science, technology and the world economy. Now, a group of leading scientists, innovators and economists has identified our era's moonshot: To replace fossil fuels with clean-energy technologies within this generation.

Since a group of policy leaders from the United Kingdom initiated the Global Apollo Programme to Combat Climate Change earlier this year, I and many others have enthusiastically signed on. The programme, named after the NASA moon mission, is built on the idea of "directed technological change". In other words, through a conscious effort, backed by public funds, we can steer the development of the advanced technologies needed to ensure humanity's safety and wellbeing. At the top of the list is clean energy, which will enable us to head off the global warming caused by the combustion of massive amounts of coal, oil, and gas worldwide.

The Deep Decarbonization Pathways Project (DDPP) has demonstrated that a low-carbon future is within reach, with huge benefits at a very modest cost. (DDPP is an initiative by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Solutions Network and the Paris-based Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations to understand and show how individual countries can transition to a low-carbon economy)

In the United States, for example, cutting emissions by 80 per cent by 2050 is not only feasible; it would require added outlays of only around 1 per cent of GDP per year. And the benefits — including a safer climate, smarter infrastructure, better vehicles and cleaner air — would be massive.

Pathways to a low-carbon future focus on three main actions: Improving energy efficiency, producing electricity from low-carbon energy sources (such as solar and wind energy), and switching from petroleum to low-carbon energy for powering vehicles (such as electric or fuel-cell vehicles) and heating buildings. These are clear and achievable goals, and the public sector should play a major role in advancing them.

Politicians need to end subsidies for coal, oil and gas, and start taxing emissions from their use. Moreover, they must meet the need for new power lines to carry low-carbon solar, wind, geothermal and hydroelectric power from remote areas (and offshore platforms) to population centres.

But, meeting these requirements presupposes advances in technologies

REPLACING FOSSIL FUELS WITH CLEAN-ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES

Low-carbon future is within reach



that will enable low-carbon energy systems to compete with the alternatives. That is where the Apollo Programme comes in, with its bold goal of reducing the cost of renewable energy to below that of coal, oil and gas.

Of course, renewable energy is sometimes already cheaper than fossil fuels — when the sun is shining bright or the wind is blowing strong and consistently. The main challenge with renewables is energy storage, in two senses. First, we need to store renewable energy for use in vehicles in a low-cost and efficient way. While we already have high-quality electric vehicles, they require improvements in range and cost to be able to outcompete conventional vehicles.

The highest technological priority is to develop batteries for transport that are cheaper, longer-lasting, faster-charging and lighter.

Second, we need to store intermittent energy for times when the wind is not blowing, the sun is not shining and rivers are not flowing strongly enough to turn hydroelectric turbines.

Many energy-storage technologies are already in use or in development. One example is pumped hydropower, in which excess wind and solar energy is used to pump water uphill into reservoirs that can later produce hydroelectric power. Another is the conversion of renewable energy into hydrogen (by splitting water molecules) or a synthetic liquid fuel made with carbon dioxide from the air. Others in-

Steam and smoke rising from a coal-burning power plant in Gelsenkirchen, Germany. The world's governments would be wise to invest tens of billions of dollars each year in the research and development needed to achieve a low-carbon energy future.

PHOTO: AP

clude compressed air and large-scale battery storage.

Low-carbon technologies can be improved markedly in many other areas, too. Power grids running on renewables need more sophisticated systems for balancing energy supply and demand. Improvements in carbon capture and storage technologies would enable some fossil fuels to be used safely. And nuclear power plant designs can be made safer with passive (automatic) safety systems and fuel cycles that leave behind less radioactive waste and fissile material that could be turned into weapons.

Given the trillions of dollars of potential losses from human-induced climate change, and the trillions of dollars invested annually in global energy systems, the world's governments would be wise to invest tens of billions of dollars each year in the research and development needed to achieve a low-carbon energy future.

With this in mind, more than one politician should have already followed in JFK's footsteps, stepping forward to announce this generation's critical moonshot, and to offer the public finances needed to make it happen.

So far, none has. In the US, for example, the government allocates around US\$31 billion (S\$43 billion) per year to biomedical research (with great returns to health), and roughly US\$65 billion per year for military R&D, but only about US\$7 billion per year for non-defence energy, and, of

that, less than US\$2 billion per year for renewable-energy R&D. This is a shocking lapse on two counts: First, the US and the world are losing time on decarbonisation; second, the US is squandering the chance to develop its own future high-tech industries.

ENGAGING WORLD GOVERNMENTS

Together, the Apollo Programme and the DDPP point the world's governments towards the agreement they should reach at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris this December.

First, governments should pledge to decarbonise their economies in order to keep global warming below the extreme danger zone of 2°C. Second, they should promise to unveil, in the next couple of years, national "pathways" to deep decarbonisation by 2050. And third, they should join together to fund the new global moonshot for clean energy. The pooled financing should start with a minimum of US\$15 billion per year, and rise sharply thereafter, as key, high-return technology breakthroughs come into view.

As JFK showed, great progress begins with a great goal, one that is bold yet feasible. The goal today, backed by the Apollo Programme, is deep decarbonisation. It is time for world leaders to commit to the planet-saving clean-energy moonshot. **PROJECT SYNDICATE**

● Jeffrey Sachs, Professor of Sustainable Development, Professor of Health Policy and Management, and Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, is also Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals.

TECHNOLOGY, GOVERNANCE CAN HELP REPUBLIC STAY ON TOP AS COMPETITION INCREASES

How S'pore can stay ahead as a financial hub

WOO JUN JIE



York, and Hong Kong.

The Global Financial Centres Index (GFCI) 18, which measures and ranks competitiveness among the world's financial centres, also saw Tokyo retain its fifth spot and Seoul move up to sixth. This means four of the world's six top financial centres

are now located in Asia.

Other major Asian financial centres such as Shanghai, Shenzhen, Busan and Taipei saw marked improvements in their rankings. The rising fortunes of Asia's financial centres reflect the region's growing economic strength and its rapid financialisation.

In a recent global ranking of financial centres, Singapore was placed fourth, trailing only London, New

Rather than compete with other financial centres on the basis of market size, Singapore should seek to find a niche for itself as a hub for financial innovation within a growing network of Asian financial centres.

Beginning with the emergence of the four "Asian Tigers" of Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan, which culminated in the meteoric rise of China, the rapid growth and rising sophistication of Asia's economy has stimulated a growing demand for financial services and investments.

The development of regional financial frameworks such as the Chiang Mai Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank further serves to iterate the point that Asia is truly emerging as a financial powerhouse in its own right.

However, a consequence of all this is greater competition among financial centres in Asia. While Singapore has leveraged on traditional strengths such as its strategic location, strong rule of law and highly skilled workforce to achieve its current position, other financial centres are now seeking to emulate these factors.

To stay in the top spot, Singapore will require greater attention to two drivers of future financial success: Financial technology ("FinTech") and financial governance ("FinGov").

FINTECH HERE STILL NASCENT

The first driver is technology. With financial products becoming increasingly complex and financial markets more volatile, banks and financial institutions have increasingly turned to technological innovations to manage such financial complexity. These include electronic and digital banking, machine trading, and data analytics.

While technology helps, it also introduces challenges such as cybersecurity threats, privacy protection concerns and fraud. Furthermore, real-time and machine trading have led to an unprecedented level of complexity and potential instability in financial markets.

Financial technology, or FinTech, in Singapore is still at a relatively nascent stage, but it has the potential to grow. As participants at a recent Sim Kee Boon Institute for Financial Economics conference noted, Singapore is well-positioned to develop FinTech capabilities as it already has a vibrant ecosystem of banks, technology companies and research organisations.

This ecosystem represents a stock of "knowledge capital" that, through the use of FinTech, can enable financial sector innovation and development. It also promises to help financial institutions and regulators deal with financial complexities through the use of tools such as data analytics.

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But for this ecosystem to develop, policymakers will need to ensure that technopreneurs and researchers find the space to grow and innovate. This may entail providing incentives to attract technology companies to Singapore or tailoring regulations to take into account the diversity and dynamism involved in FinTech, as compared with traditional financial firms.

INNOVATIONS IN FINGOV

Aside from technology, a second crucial driver of a financial centre's success is a new form of financial governance that is more coordinated and integrated with other aspects of city governance. Let us call this FinGov.

In ranking the world's financial centres, the GFCI grants strong weightage to governance-related indicators such as rule of law, regulatory stability, transparency of tax regime, reliability of urban and ICT (information and communications technology) infrastructure, and security. These indicators suggest that at the heart of a successful financial centre is a safe, vibrant and efficiently run city.

Singapore has consistently scored well on these variables. However, these advantages may prove transient, as other financial centres are also looking to emulate and develop them. For instance, Shanghai is seeking to enhance its legal-regulatory infrastructure to improve investor confidence.



As is the case with financial technology, Singapore will need to introduce greater sophistication into its financial governance to keep ahead of the competition and deal with increasingly complex financial markets.

It is already beginning to move in this direction. For instance, the recent reshuffle of the Cabinet has yielded two important changes that will prove crucial to Singapore's development as a financial sector.

First, Mr Heng Swee Keat was appointed Minister for Finance. As a former Monetary Authority of Singapore managing director who had overseen

Singapore's swift recovery from the 2008 global financial crisis, Mr Heng brings with him a wealth of experience in financial governance and strong technical knowledge of the workings of financial markets.

Second, but by no means any less significant, Singapore's former Finance Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam will take on the role of Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies while retaining his appointment as Deputy Prime Minister. This provides Mr Tharman with centralised oversight of Singapore's economic and financial development.

While Singapore has leveraged on its strategic location, strong rule of law and highly skilled workforce to achieve its current position as a leading financial centre, others are now seeking to emulate these factors.

TODAY FILE PHOTO

The introduction of this Coordinating Minister role represents an important innovation in FinGov. By introducing centralised coordination, it boosts the Government's capacity to address complex policy issues that cut across traditional functional areas.

In light of the increasingly intertwined nature of finance and the real economy, Mr Tharman's oversight over other aspects of economic policy also ensures that FinGov is integrated into Singapore's overall economic governance. This contributes to greater economic stability.

MERGING FINTECH, FINGOV

In several speeches delivered earlier this year, MAS managing director Ravi Menon had called for Singapore's development as a "smart financial centre" that is governed through "smart regulation". At the heart of this "smart regulation" is a merging of FinTech and FinGov.

This emphasis on technological and governance innovation will provide Singapore with a unique comparative advantage.

Rather than compete with other financial centres on the basis of market size, Singapore should seek to find a niche for itself as a hub for financial innovation within a growing network of Asian financial centres. This will ensure our survival and, at the same time, contribute immensely to regional financial development.

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Holistic review, approach needed to fight infections

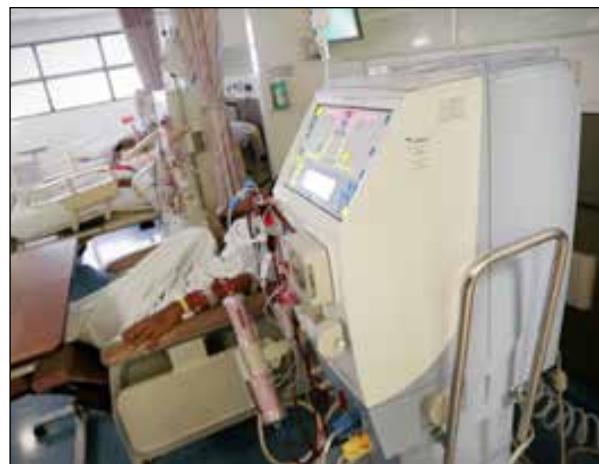
FROM **WONG SHIH SHEN**

The recent hepatitis C outbreak, which is possibly linked to four deaths so far at the Singapore General Hospital (SGH) and prompted the screening of nearly 1,000 patients and hospital employees for the virus, highlights the challenges of infection control procedures in hospitals ("Panel to review if there were gaps in SGH's handling of outbreak"; Oct 10).

There needs to be a holistic assessment and review of the overall infection control measures for all restructured and private hospitals and nursing homes. Hepatitis C is just one infectious disease. There are other infectious diseases, including those caused by superbugs.

Recently, there was a superbug called Klebsiella pneumoniae carbapenemase-producing bacteria (KPC) found to be spreading between patients at a hospital in Melbourne. Eighteen people who had the bacteria in them died. The measures introduced by the hospital included stepping up its infection control procedures with more screening of vulnerable patients, faster testing systems, steam-cleaning of rooms, hand hygiene education and isolation of people found to be carrying the bug.

In view of such infectious diseases, some areas that I think Singapore needs to look holistically at include reviewing and introducing stringent in-



The hepatitis C outbreak was said to have occurred at a renal ward, such as this one, in SGH. There needs to be a holistic assessment and review of the overall infection control measures for all restructured and private hospitals and nursing homes.

PHOTO: JASON QUAH

fection control procedures for high-risk infectious diseases, ensuring hospital employees are regularly trained on infection control measures and educating the public on basic hygiene procedures when they visit patients.

Healthcare workers also need to be trained regularly on the proper and safe use of equipment used to treat patients, while the use of big data analytics should be considered to track reports of infectious diseases.

This will proactively alert the hospital to trends and potential issues related to infections.

Without a holistic view and approach taken to tackle infectious diseases, I fear occurrences of such incidents will continue to happen.

S'pore has much to learn from MTR in Hong Kong

FROM **CHAN LAI YING**

I refer to "Khaw aims for rail network reliability to match that of HK's" (Oct 10).

My family and I visit Hong Kong yearly and we frequently use the MTR for our journeys. We often stay in Mong Kok, which has been dubbed as the "busiest place on Earth" by ABC News and "the world's most crowded place" by Reuters news agency.

With an average of 130,000 people packed inside each sq km in Mong Kok, the number of passengers that pass through that MTR station far surpasses Singapore's most crowded MRT station.

Nevertheless, the trains in that MTR station arrive and depart like clockwork and big crowds congregating at the platforms are cleared quickly, which means there are no snaking queues like those we see on our MRT platforms.

The train speed in Hong Kong is also faster. We also did not experience any jerking and stopping of the MTR trains on the tracks like what we experience on our MRT trains.

If Hong Kong can have an efficient transport network, I believe Singapore can have one too.

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More equitable, inclusive, ethical tack needed to sell the TPP

FROM PAUL CHAN POH HOI

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) deal, which creates the world's largest free-trade zone, comes amid considerable controversy as to its purpose and its ramifications on global trade ("How to sell the TPP"; Oct 7).

For one, the TPP has been shrouded in secrecy, leading to criticism over its lack of transparency. Leaked documentation suggests the agreement would have a dire impact on creative and innovative industries, which rely on the use or licensing of intellectual property. The TPP could also be perverted to preserve unhealthy monopolies on pharmaceuticals, for instance.

Moreover, developing economies such as Vietnam, Mexico and Chile

could be hamstrung by the TPP's strict terms concerning state-owned enterprises, undermining the implementation of any capitalist-developmental state model. This is especially unfair considering that many of the TPP signatories, including Singapore, have previously used such a strategy.

If the TPP deal is based on the political priorities of select groups, rather than the shared benefit of all prospective partners, it would be hard to sell as the guarantee of fair free mar-

ket trade that it has been touted as.

It is also worth noting that the TPP excludes China, one of the world's most important economies. Indeed, President Barack Obama alluded that the TPP would block China from dictating terms for the global economy.

This approach is questionable considering that China already holds separate free trade agreements with five of the 12 TPP members. China also continues to grow its influence over emerging economies, such as the Af-

rican nations and its "One Belt and One Road" initiative. One trade pact may not be successful in containing the rise of China.

Promisingly, China's Ministry of Commerce has stated it is open to the TPP and any mechanism that follows World Trade Organization rules to boost Asia-Pacific's economic integration. Thus, to truly sell the TPP, or any multilateral economic project for that matter, a far more inclusive, equitable, and ethical approach is needed.

Negative sports mindset can discourage athletes

FROM JONG CHING YEE

As Singapore looks to improve its global ranking and gain recognition in various sports, many individuals continue to have the mindset that there is no future in focusing on sporting endeavours because few athletes here gain success. Such a mindset can deter the younger generation from venturing into sporting careers or possibly make them think of giving up when they experience failure.

While I understand that it will take a gargantuan step for Singapore to reach the standards of the likes of England, Australia or Japan in the sporting arena, Singapore is doing pretty well in the region in the areas of swimming, table tennis and shooting.

This year, Singapore has also done exceedingly well in hosting the SEA Games in June, while not forgetting the other sports meets that were held in Singapore in the past few years.

These events serve as platforms for youngsters to get to know more about various sports, get enthusiastic over what they are interested in and also see the athletes as role models.

Inspirational stories can act as a force of motivation, but seeing the games for themselves, taking part in them and competing with other athletes contribute to a kind of motivation from within which works best.

I hope youths get more of such opportunities to showcase their talents, so that they can gain confidence in themselves and the support of our own people, regardless of the result.



(Sports) events serve as platforms for youngsters to get to know more about various sports, get enthusiastic over what they are interested in and also see the athletes as role models.

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A dragon boat race was among the activities during the official launch of PAssion WaVe @ Marina Bay. More than 20,000 people are expected to benefit from the new club. PHOTO: WEE TECK HIAN

Water sports galore at new community club



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PAssion WaVe @ Marina Bay also offers land sports, lifestyle classes, and other programmes

SIAU MING EN
siaumingen@mediacorp.com.sg

SINGAPORE – A new community club in the Tanjong Rhu area officially launched yesterday offers visitors the pick of the widest range of water activities, from newfangled ones such as bell-boating to more familiar sports such as kayaking and windsurfing.

Touted as Singapore's first "specialist" community club, PAssion WaVe @ Marina Bay also offers land sports, lifestyle classes and programmes catered to specific causes and groups of people.

For instance, the lifestyle programmes offered at the club include coffee appreciation, denim upcycling, terrarium-making and urban gardening workshops.

There will also be programmes tailored to those with special needs, the disabled and seniors, such as the bimonthly line-up of water sports activities for clients of the Singapore Association for Mental Health.

More than 20,000 people are expected to benefit from the new club, located at Rhu Cross, by the Marina Bay waterfront area. This is the eighth Water-Venture park opened by the People's Association.

Plans are underway to upgrade other centres to specialist community clubs as well, starting with the ones at East Coast and Pasir Ris.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the launch yesterday, Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean said he liked the idea of making use of themed community spaces, particularly for water.

"We hope that we (can) have more themed activity centres and community areas (where) residents (who) share the same interest can come together."

"I think water is a particularly important aspect for us and it's something which we all can identify with — whether it's the sea because we're an island or our inland water bodies," he said.

“We hope that we (can) have more themed activity centres and community areas (where) residents (who) share the same interest can come together.

Mr Teo Chee Hean
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

The official Water-Venture Committee (Marina Bay) was also officially appointed yesterday. Its chairperson, Celine Koh, said the committee and volunteers had met up with residents before coming up with the list of activities.

Residents living near the new facility said they are inclined to visit the area to try their hand at the water sports.

Engineer Lim Kok Yong, 44, said the new facility will be a good place for his family to gather on weekends, where some can pick up water sports while the rest participate in the other lifestyle programmes.

STRIKING A DELICATE BUSINESS BALANCE

The best of both worlds

Enhance your career prospects with skills and expertise in business and environmental science, says Dr Neil Hutchinson

Many organisations and businesses worldwide are striving to reduce their environmental impact.

Dr Neil Hutchinson, an environmental science lecturer at JCU Singapore, said: "To do so, businesses require key employees who can facilitate their growth in times of strong social and governmental demands for good environmental practices."

It is no wonder there is a strong demand for graduates with multi-disciplinary skills, such as business and environmental science.

Dr Hutchinson said: "Our JCU Singapore Bachelor of Business and Environmental Science graduates are pursuing careers in public, private and non-profit industries, such as construction companies, environmental consultancies and aquariums."

He added: "Some have furthered their studies in cross-disciplinary areas, such as sustainability, while others have chosen to specialise in the sciences. Such graduates may pursue

careers as research scientists, aquaculture specialists and environmental policy makers."

Here, Dr Hutchinson discusses the Bachelor of Business and Environmental Science programme at JCU Singapore.

TELL US MORE ABOUT THIS DEGREE PROGRAMME.

This degree programme provides students with a solid grounding in business and environmental science.

Over the course of two years, students select half of their subjects from a pool of business-focused topics and the other half from environmental science topics.

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On the other hand, the Sustainable Aquaculture module investigates the sustainability of aquaculture as the industry expands and the world faces critical shortages in food supplies.

It addresses contentious issues, such as wild resource harvesting, the physical effects of aquaculture, aquaculture waste, disease and parasites, and the impact of introduced species. It also addresses how to develop and implement sustainable aquaculture systems.

WHAT CAN STUDENTS EXPECT?

Students will enjoy a broad assortment of unique experiences ranging from developing practical solutions for the industry to overseas field excursions to examining environmental issues, such as human impact on marine ecosystems driven by overfishing and habitat destruction.



JCU Singapore's Bachelor of Business and Environmental Science degree equips students with skills for environmental decision-making, consultancy and leadership, says Dr Neil Hutchinson.
PHOTO: KOH MUI FONG

HOW WILL STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM THIS DEGREE?

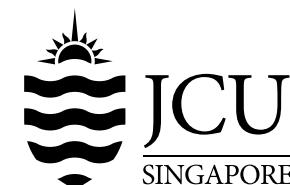
Employers are looking for graduates who can bring additional skills and knowledge into the workplace.

By learning fundamental concepts and skills in business and science, students develop the ability to use critical thinking to examine issues from multiple directions.

This holistic approach equips students with expertise in environmental decision-making and business leadership.

This is the final story in a 13-part collaboration between JCU Singapore and TODAY.

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RESIDENTS PROPOSED THE IDEA

Reward people to catch litterbugs: Nee Soon MP

Lee Bee Wah says scheme done in Taiwan, is working with NEA to carry out pilot in her ward soon

SINGAPORE – After kick-starting a monthly community cleaning project in her Nee Soon South ward, Member of Parliament Lee Bee Wah is pushing for another new idea to keep neighbours spick and span: Reward people who catch litterbugs in action.

Her residents suggested replicating this idea from Taiwan, and Dr Lee is working with the National Environment Agency (NEA) to carry out a pilot in her ward soon.

"In Taiwan, every resident is an enforcement officer. They can video, they can take photos of the litterbug and

submit to their NEA. And if there is successful prosecution, their NEA will give the resident who reported it half of the summons collected," she said, on the sidelines of her ward's monthly litter-picking yesterday.

Channel NewsAsia reported that there could be challenges in implementing the idea, including the need to amend legislation.

NEA chairman Liak Teng Lit said the idea could work, but needed to be studied further.

"If you look at the equivalent of what is happening on the road, many people today have their in-vehicle cameras and not many people dare to make funny claims about accidents because there is a risk that whatever you say could be contradicting what's on the camera in someone else's vehicles," he said.

"So, certainly, having neighbours watching over the environment and watching over each other will be very helpful," he added. "For the good citizens, there is nothing to worry about. In fact, people will be filming you doing good things and praising you rather than reprimanding you."

About 120 volunteers picked up litter in Nee Soon South yesterday. The programme — called HABIT (Hold on And Bin IT, make it a HABIT!) @ Nee Soon South — started about three years ago, and organisers said they have seen a gradual decrease in the amount of litter collected. Meanwhile, the number of residents volunteering has also increased.

The NEA said it wants to replicate the project elsewhere in Singapore. It said representatives from Jurong and Queenstown have shown interest, and have attended Nee Soon's litter-picking to learn more. **MONICA KOTWANI**



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5 N.Z. Tenderloin with Veal Sausage Skewer Char-grilled NZ tenderloin steak topped with veal sausage, served with warm turkey bacon sauerkraut with cheese, accompanied with roasted potatoes and seasonal vegetables.	30.50
6 N.Z. Tenderloin Steak with Chipolata & Pumpkin Croquette Char-grilled NZ tenderloin steak served with smoked gouda of beef and white asparagus topped with hollandaise sauce, accompanied with pumpkin croquette and seasonal vegetables.	30.50

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“For the good citizens (who do not litter), there is nothing to worry about. In fact, people will be filming you doing good things and praising you rather than reprimanding you.”

Mr Liak Teng Lit
NEA CHAIRMAN

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19-year-old Timothy* has suffered for years

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*Timothy's name has been changed to protect his identity

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Timothy once had to fend for himself in a house that was often empty. His mother was ill and his father had been drifting in and out of his life. He was also not going to school.

There was no money for bus fare or recess. Staying home meant he did not have to go hungry as he could cook instant noodles.

Timothy's life changed when he was referred to Sunbeam Place, a residential home and gazetted place of safety for abused and neglected children, seven years ago. At Sunbeam Place, he found a nurturing environment, support and another chance to go to school.

Today, the 19-year-old is a polytechnic student. He has plans to pursue a career in information technology and business management.

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MEMBER COUNTRIES START TALKS IN SOUTH KOREA TODAY

China-backed trade pact playing catch-up after US-led TPP deal

Proposed 16-nation free-trade area would be the world's biggest such bloc, covering 3.4b people

SEOUL – Left out of the United States-backed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade pact struck last week, China and India approach this week's talks on a huge Asia-wide equivalent with fresh urgency, lest competitor nations steal a march on export access.

Beijing is a key driver of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), a proposed

16-nation free-trade area that would be the world's biggest such bloc, encompassing 3.4 billion people.

"Member countries will be under pressure to fast-track negotiations for RCEP," said a senior official in India, which is keen to avoid being excluded from major trade accords.

While China's rivalries with India and Japan will complicate progress, it has incentive to get things moving.

China's central bank estimates the world's second-largest economy could

forfeit a 2.2 per cent boost to gross domestic product if Beijing does not join the TPP, according to a commentary by the bank's chief economist Ma Jun published in the official Shanghai Securities News on Friday.

China stands to lose ground to manufacturing competitors such as Vietnam which, as a TPP member, will have greater duty-free access to the US and other member nations, said Mr Tu Xinquan, a professor at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

"It's not that there is competition between the RCEP and the TPP, but overall, because of the pressure put on by the TPP, there's hope for a faster end to negotiations for more liberalised trade in the region," Mr Tu said.

The RCEP was first conceived by the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), but China is increasingly prominent as a backer of the proposed pact.

While the RCEP has largely been seen as an alternative to US-led trade plans, some say that view is evolving.

China may ultimately look to steer RCEP talks towards a broader pact that would encompass TPP into a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific, said Mr Kim Young-gui, head of regional trade studies at the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy in Seoul — an idea first put forward by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation grouping.

Seven countries — Australia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Vietnam and Brunei — are in both the TPP and the RCEP.

New Zealand views TPP and RCEP as complementary stepping stones to the vision of a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific," said a Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade spokesperson.

The TPP deal, reached on Oct 5 after marathon talks between the US and 11 Pacific Rim nations, aims to liberalise commerce in 40 per cent of the world's economy and would be a legacy-defining victory for President Barack Obama.

Mr Obama wants the TPP to help boost US influence in East Asia and counter the rise of China, but Beijing officially welcomed the pact, saying it hoped the deal would promote Asia-Pacific trade.

"We hope that regardless of whether it is the TPP or the RCEP, they both can supplement, promote and be ben-

CHINA WELCOMES TPP FOR MULTILATERAL TRADE

“We hope that regardless of whether it is the TPP or the RCEP, they both can supplement, promote and be beneficial to strengthening the multilateral trade system.

Ms Hua Chunying
CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESWOMAN

TPP NOT DESIGNED TO ENCIRCLE CHINA

“It is not designed to encircle China ... if China is interested in pursuing membership and it is able to meet the standards, we would welcome that.

Deputy US Secretary of State Antony Blinken
ON WHETHER THE TPP DEAL IS A WAY TO CHECK CHINA

eficial to strengthening the multilateral trade system," said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan, a key player in the TPP, held out the prospect of bringing China into the deal in future, saying it would increase the pact's strategic significance and improve regional stability.

Washington does not dismiss the possibility, though China would need to undertake reforms to meet the standards of commerce envisioned by the TPP.

"It is not designed to encircle China," Deputy US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in Seoul last week when asked if Washington sees the TPP deal as a way to check China. "To the contrary, if China is interested in pursuing membership and it is able to meet the standards, we would welcome that."

Those standards include minimum labour rights and principles for currency management that the RCEP is unlikely to demand of Beijing.

A Japanese Foreign Ministry official said the TPP would accelerate the pace of the RCEP and could have some impact on "raising the level of the outcome of the negotiations", but the "very diverse group" had different ideas on what might be desirable.

The 16 RCEP countries will present their offers for market opening when they meet in Busan in South Korea today, with an aim to make "best efforts" towards reaching agreement by the end of the year, a South Korean official close to the negotiations said.

Negotiators are expected to share their lists of offers for tariff reductions on goods and service sectors.

Dr Song Yeong-kwan, a research fellow at the state-run Korea Development Institute, believes agreement remains years away. "Some countries have tensions with China, so it will not be easy, and the process could be a bumpy ride," he said. **REUTERS**

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Beijing, HK must agree on reform: Lawmaker

HONG KONG – A leading pro-China politician in Hong Kong said future leaders of the global financial hub face a grim prospect unless lawmakers and Beijing end their impasse over political reform.

"If you don't change the system, you can only expect similar people to take the post in the coming years, and they will be faced with the same problems," said Mr Jasper Tsang, president of Hong Kong's legislative council and founder of its largest pro-Beijing party, after former chief executive Donald Tsang was charged last Monday with misconduct.

Mr Tsang is one of three chief executives to have run Hong Kong since Britain handed it back in 1997, and all have been unpopular, underscoring Beijing's struggle to find a credible and acceptable leader for the former colony. "It will be even more difficult for the chief executive in 2017 to establish a minimum degree of legitimacy," said Mr Jasper Tsang.

The next chief executive is due to be chosen in 2017. "We must be able to break the vicious circle ... A weak government makes it very difficult for the bureaucrats, for the officials, to really achieve and win respect from the public," said Mr Jasper Tsang.

Lawmakers in the Chinese-controlled city recently vetoed a proposal to hold public elections for Hong Kong's top political leader, the chief executive, after China insisted that only pre-screened, pro-Beijing candidates be allowed to stand.

That veto had followed months of pro-democracy protests that shut down major roads and posed one of the biggest challenges to China's Communist Party leadership in decades.

Mr Jasper Tsang said Beijing's proposal to move towards full democracy in stages showed it was sensitive to dissatisfaction at governance in the city. However, it was important to avoid a "revolution" by jumping from the old colonial system to free elections, he added. He did not offer specific ideas for a compromise.

Britain returned Hong Kong to China under a "one country, two systems" deal which aimed to ensure that the city's freedoms and independent judiciary would remain for 50 years.

In a major embarrassment for Beijing, Hong Kong's legislative council in June vetoed its conditions for universal suffrage. That means the chief executive will be again selected in 2017 without a popular vote.

The post is critical to Beijing's rule over the city and its stated desire for stability and harmony. Communist Party leaders need someone they can trust, but also someone who can win local support and manage the city's increasingly antagonistic relationship with the mainland.

Those differences were highlighted last month when Beijing's chief Hong Kong representative, traditionally a low-key figure, sparked controversy by saying the chief executive was

above the local judiciary and legislature. Veteran Hong Kong political and constitutional experts say the situation could work if a leader could keep Beijing's trust while openly lobbying on behalf of the city, something none of Hong Kong's three post-colonial leaders has managed.

The first, Mr Tung Chee-hwa, quit

in his second term after more than 500,000 people took to the streets to protest against a proposed anti-sedition law, among other grievances.

Mr Donald Tsang, who was knighted for public service under the British colonial administration, retired from office in 2012, but was charged this month with misconduct in public office

over a rental deal for a penthouse flat in Shenzhen, southern China.

While he avoided bloodshed, current chief executive Mr Leung Chun-ying presided over the biggest civil unrest since the 1960s. For 79 days last year, pro-democracy activists occupied downtown Hong Kong to press Beijing for full democracy. **REUTERS**

66

A weak government makes it very difficult for the bureaucrats, for the officials, to really achieve.

Mr Jasper Tsang
PRESIDENT, HONG KONG
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL



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PRESIDENT LINKS ATTACKS TO PREVIOUS TERROR INCIDENTS

Tensions at a high in Turkey after deadly bomb blasts

Country caught up in growing battle between PKK and Islamic State, and the Syrian civil war

ANKARA – Bombings in Ankara that killed at least 95 people have brought Turkey's political and ethnic tensions, exacerbated by the civil war in neighbouring Syria, to a grim new level.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the deadliest terrorist attacks in Turkey's recent history, although suspicion quickly turned to Islamic State.

The Saturday blasts targeted a march called to urge an end to violence between the government and Kurdish militants. Afterwards, Kurdish fighters declared a unilateral cease-fire, which they said they would honour as long as they are not attacked.

The carnage in Ankara, the Turkish capital, came as United States-allied Kurdish forces affiliated with the militant Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, were preparing to advance toward Islamic State's self-declared capital of Raqqqa in Syria, according to Mr Nihat Ali Ozcan, who studies the Kurdish conflict at the Economic Policy Research Foundation in Ankara.

"Daesh struck at the PKK in Ankara before a Kurdish offensive on Raqqqa," Dr Ozcan said by phone, using the Arabic acronym for Islamic State.

"Turkey has become the battleground in a growing war between the PKK and Daesh."

Even though many Kurds were in the targeted crowd, Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu maintained in a televised news conference that the PKK, and not only Islamic State, may be behind the bloodshed.

"There are strong signs that the attack has been carried out by two suicide bombers," said Mr Davutoglu, who added that Turkey has apprehended many would-be suicide bombers in recent days.

He met with Kemal Kilicdaroglu, leader of the largest opposition party, the Republican People's Party, or CHP, in Ankara yesterday to discuss the violence. After the attack, Mr Kilicdaroglu said his party was prepared to do all in its power to end the violence.

In addition to the 95 people killed, 246 were wounded, including 48 being treated in intensive-care units, the Prime Minister's office said on its website. Eleven of the dead belonged to CHP, Haberturk newspaper reported.

Parliamentarians from the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party, or HDP, and CHP attended a memorial service for the victims in Ankara yesterday.

The HDP procession was attacked by riot police as it attempted to lay carnations for the dead, and several participants were injured, the party said in an e-mailed statement. Police and protesters clashed in Turkish cities on Saturday night after people took to the streets to condemn the violence.

Saturday's attacks follow a July 20 bombing in the town of Suruc that was linked to Syria's civil war and blamed on a suicide bomber with ties to Islamic State. Fighting on Turkey's border is pitting Kurds that Turkey views as terrorists against Islamic radicals it also views as enemies. The Suruc bombing killed dozens of activists rallying support for Kobani, a Kurdish border town in Syria.

ALLIED ADVANCE

Video images from Saturday's blast showed bodies draped with peace banners and flags of HDP, whose success in elections on June 7 stripped the ruling Justice and Development Party, or AKP, of the majority government it had held since 2002.

Violence between Kurdish militants and the state have escalated since that vote, which ended in a hung Parliament and failed to produce a stable government. The Turkish government has repeatedly accused HDP of links to the PKK. HDP has rejected charges of terrorism while saying the PKK is a reality.

The militant group declared a unilateral cease-fire in Turkey's largely Kurdish southeast on Saturday, ahead of repeat parliamentary elections on Nov 1, according to the pro-Kurdish ANF news agency.

"The cease-fire by the PKK comes at a time as it is shifting its focus from Turkey to its battle against Islamic State in Syria," Dr Ozcan said.

President Tayyip Recep Erdogan called a new vote after political parties failed to agree on forming a coalition, and the nation's interim government, still dominated by the ruling party, ordered bombings of PKK positions in Iraq and Turkey after the Suruc attack. The strikes have killed more than 2,000 PKK militants, Mr Davutoglu said on Friday.

The increased violence and political uncertainty have battered markets while raising fears that Turkey is being increasingly dragged into the civil war in Syria. Turkey's lira has lost 20 per cent of its value against the dollar this year, and yields on government debt are up by almost 300 basis points.

In an interview with ATV on Friday, Mr Davutoglu said any truce was a stunt by the rebels and that operations against the PKK would continue until the group, classified as a terrorist organisation by Turkey, the US and European Union, disarmed.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said on state television that the Ankara blasts were aimed at destabilising the election campaign in Turkey, and called for efforts to join the fight against terrorists.

Turkey, while a member of the Western coalition fighting Islamic State, has differed with the US on its approach to Kurds in Syria.

Turkey views Kurdish groups fighting the Islamic State there as terrorists, while the US sees Syrian Kurds as its most formidable partner in the ground war against the Islamic radicals.

After Saturday's bombing, Mr Davutoglu led an emergency security meeting in Ankara, and said he would cancel campaign events for three days. Mr Erdogan also cancelled events planned in Istanbul.

Mr Selahattin Demirtas, co-chairman of HDP, linked the blast to Islamic State attacks on Kurds in Turkey, Haberturk reported. "It's a continuation of the type of attacks in Diyarbakir and Suruc," Mr Demirtas told reporters.

The Diyarbakir blast took place two days before the June election and targeted an event where he was scheduled to speak.

Mr Erdogan connected the bombing to PKK attacks on Turkish security forces.

"The terrorist attack targeting civilian citizens today at the Ankara train station is no different at all from the previous attacks in various locations against our soldiers, our police, our village guards, public servants and innocent citizens," he said in a statement.

"I invite everyone to act with responsibility and to take their side against terror, not with it."

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There are strong signs that the attack has been carried out by two suicide bombers.

Mr Ahmet Davutoglu
TURKISH PRIME MINISTER

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Barred from Coco Islands, Myanmar's opposition sees dirty tricks in campaign

YANGON – A sparsely populated cluster of Indian Ocean islands has become the unlikely focus of allegations that Myanmar's government is spiking the chances of democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi's opposition party in next month's landmark general election.

Both the ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) and the Nobel peace laureate's National League for Democracy (NLD) have fielded candidates on the Coco Islands, an archipelago off Myanmar's west coast and the country's smallest parliamentary constituency.

But NLD parliamentary nominee Win Min has been prevented from visiting the islands, where the main installation is a naval base, making it almost impossible for him to canvas for votes in the Nov 8 poll.

The allegations undermine the semi-civilian government's insistence that the election will be Myanmar's first free and fair poll for 25 years, a milestone in its transition from military dictatorship to democracy that will be closely watched by the international community.

"I believe if they let me go there, I will win," said Mr Win Min during an interview in Yangon, where he has recently been racking up a large mobile phone bill making calls to voters on the islands, about 300km away.

The islands are a restricted area and transport links are sparse. A military plane flies every two weeks from Yangon, while a navy ship and a state-owned boat also make occasional trips.

Mr Win Min said he had planned three times to visit the islands since the campaign started on Sept 8, once by boat and twice by plane. His scheduled boat trip was abruptly cancelled while he was waiting to board. He was told there was no space on two subsequent flights to the island. He had rented a boat and planned to set sail on his own yesterday to the islands, a 36-hour journey from Yangon, but the government withdrew permission.

Mr Win Min's USDP rival, Mr Thet Swe, who until August served as commander-in-chief of the navy, has been able to campaign freely on the island.

Although there are no reliable opinion polls, the USDP — which includes many members of Myanmar's former junta — is expected to be beaten in many parts of the country by the NLD.

However, the Coco Islands seat is considered to be a relatively easy win for the ruling party because of the development projects it has rolled out there, and many voters are military personnel or government officials.

Western diplomats say the party has used a variety of tactics to trip up NLD candidates, but most overtly in seats where it wants to ensure a victory for its prominent leaders.

Three senior USDP officials at party headquarters in the capital, Nay-

pyidaw, declined to comment on why only their candidate was allowed on the Coco Islands. The election commission says it has no say over whether the NLD candidate can visit the islands, and the decision is up to the Yangon regional government. Offi-

cialis in Yangon could not be reached for comment. "It is quite clear they don't want us campaigning there," said Mr Win Htein, a senior NLD official, who accused authorities of "playing volleyball" with complaints filed by his party.

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Mr Win Min sent campaign materials, notebooks emblazoned with Ms Suu Kyi's image and NLD headbands on a cargo ship bound for the islands last month. Retired navy surgeon Hla Tun and his wife have set up an NLD branch on Great Coco, the only inhabited island in the group. They have been quietly distributing the materials, but also face challenges.

"USDP members on the island are carrying out a whisper campaign, saying that those who vote for the NLD will get in trouble," he said. **REUTERS**

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- The Coco Islands' population is about 1,900, according to census data. Most are military families, civil servants and workers brought to the islands to build an airport. All require permission from authorities to come and go, a regulation that National League for Democracy candidate Win Min says he would abolish. "They are hungry for change," he said.

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Japan's retail sector sounds alarm on spending

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TOKYO – Do not believe in official statistics, Japanese retailers seem to be saying, as they warn of lacklustre consumer spending, a key growth engine for Japan at a time when exports and factory output are stalling.

If you go by the larger-than-expected 2.9 per cent gain in household spending in August — the first year-on-year rise in three months — then consumption looks like it is finally alive and well again, after a sales tax hike last year stifled the economy.

But profits of retailers suggest the spending data has not captured the full picture. Restrained household consumption raises the stakes for a central bank policy meeting due on Oct 30, and for the government's plan to flesh out new economic policies.

"Consumer spending has ground to a halt," said Mr Noritoshi Murata, president of Seven & i Holdings. "There are a lot of concerns about the global economy and not many positives for consumption. Weak spending could continue into the second half of the fiscal year."

Seven & i, which operates Japan's 7-Eleven convenience stores, trimmed its full-year profit forecast by 1.6 per cent to ¥367 billion (\$S4.26 billion) and cut its revenue forecast by 3.9 per cent to ¥6.15 trillion.

The main problem is wages are not rising fast enough to keep pace with rising food prices, and consumers are starting to cut back on other goods.

Real wages, adjusted for inflation, rose 0.5 per cent in July from a year earlier. That was the first gain in 27 months. But wage growth subsequently slowed to 0.2 per cent in August, government data shows.



Consumer spending has ground to a halt. There are a lot of concerns about the global economy and not many positives for consumption. Weak spending could continue into the second half of the fiscal year.

Mr Noritoshi Murata
PRESIDENT,
SEVEN & I HOLDINGS

Another problem is more workers are getting stuck in jobs with low pay. Part-time and irregular workers comprised a record 37.4 per cent of the workforce last year, and they earn on average less than half of what regular full-time workers do, tax data shows.

The third problem is the government plans to raise the nationwide sales tax again, to 10 per cent in 2017 from 8 per cent, and households are already changing their behaviour.

"Shoppers are tightening their purse strings," said Mr Masaaki Yoshizawa, senior managing director at apparel maker Onward Holdings.

"There is a lot of uncertainty about consumer spending, and another sales tax hike is on the way. Women are cutting back on clothes."

Onward Holdings had expected to make a ¥2.4 billion profit in the six months ended September, but it was only ¥200 million. **REUTERS**

CONSUMER SPENDING TO HELP GROW THE ECONOMY

India rate cut boosts sales of cars, luxuries, big appliances

Retail sector welcomes the unexpectedly sharp cut by the Reserve Bank as a much-needed stimulus

MUMBAI – The way car salesman Ashish Bhavsar tells it, in India, men come first on their own to eye up a potential purchase. Then, they bring their wives. Then, if it's serious, the whole family.

On this weekday, almost two weeks after the central bank cut interest rates, a young boy and his elderly grandmother inspect a sports utility vehicle at a busy Hyundai Motor dealership in downtown Mumbai, while his parents speak to a sales agent nearby. That's good news for branch manager Bhavsar.

He estimates that cheaper borrowing could mean sales growth of 12 to 15 per cent this year, above his 10 per cent target.

"Many customers were waiting for rate cuts. They didn't want to make a decision," he said with a grin. "They will definitely come now."

India kicks off its two-month religious festive period on Monday, a time considered auspicious to buy big-ticket items such as cars, and when promotions abound. Company executives say they see the Reserve Bank of India's unexpectedly sharp 50 basis points cut last month as a lifeline.

Consumers have already been showing an eagerness to spend more on small luxuries, such as movie tickets and fancy haircuts, even as the overall economy struggles to take off after a period of cooler growth.

Yet with retail spending accounting



India needs households to splurge on more expensive, higher-margin items instead of small luxuries for its economy to take off after a period of cooler growth. PHOTO: REUTERS

for 50 to 60 per cent of the economy, India needs households to splurge on more expensive, higher-margin items such as washing machines, TVs and cars. To date, a combination of slow consumer spending and a dearth of corporate investments has delivered a double punch to the economy, which grew 7 per cent in the April-June

quarter, well below the government's 8 to 8.5 per cent target.

GOING SHOPPING

With inflation around record lows, and central-bank rate cuts totalling 125 basis points so far this year, retail executives believe a

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We can afford the washing machine now since EMI will be cheaper after interest rates have come down, and there are discount offers before festive season.

Ms Sunita Pednekar
WHO PLANS TO BUY A WASHING MACHINE NOW AND A TV NEXT MONTH

THE MAJOR ROLE OF CONSUMER SPENDING

● Consumer spending accounts for 50 to 60 per cent of the Indian economy. So far, consumers have been spending more than in the past on small luxuries. But the hope is that the recent rate cut and upcoming Diwali festive season will prompt them to spend more on big-ticket items as well, giving the economy a boost that weak investment has failed to deliver.

consumer recovery is now on the cards.

Firms selling discretionary items such as cars and electronics are desperate for such a recovery. They have reported double-digit annualised falls in earnings for the past four quarters.

Banks have not passed on all of the latest cut. Auto loans are down only 25 basis points, and home loans by 30 basis points. But retailers expect traditional festival-season discounts to help pull shoppers in.

Added to that, Indian consumers often prefer instalment plans to finance bigger purchases. Known as equated monthly instalments (EMI), they are typically provided on a floating-rate basis, so consumers benefit from falling loan rates.

Ms Sunita Pednekar, a 35-year-old nurse, said she planned to buy a washing machine for now, and a TV next month during Diwali, the Hindu holiday that marks the peak of the Indian festive period.

"We can afford the washing machine now since EMI will be cheaper after interest rates have come down, and there are discount offers before festive season," she said as she headed into an electronics store with her husband and young son. "I can spread out the expenditure."

Optimism about consumer demand is being given a further boost as India gears up to raise the wages of 10 million government employees and pensions from next year.

Mr Abheek Barua, chief economist at HDFC Bank in New Delhi, said the official rate cut and the expected pick-up in consumer demand would help boost economic growth. He has forecast 7.5 per cent growth for the year ending in March. "Earlier we were banking on investment demand to push up growth," he said. "Now we are expecting a better consumption phenomenon." **REUTERS**

Indian states to compete for foreign cash as bond market opens up

MUMBAI – India's states are gearing up to sell up to US\$7.6 billion (\$10.6 billion) in debt to foreign investors for the first time, stepping up competition for funds that could force the country's spendthrift provinces to clean up their books and tighten spending controls.

India's states pay the second-highest government yields in Asian emerging markets, after Indonesia: about 8.16 per cent for a 10-year bond, much higher than Indian federal debt and nearly two and three times the yield on Philippines and Thai paper.

That is expected to be a big draw for overseas funds, which have already poured nearly US\$8 billion into federal government Indian debt so far this year, attracted to economic fundamentals that have been relatively better than emerging market peers.

The arrival of foreigners could force a major change in the state government bond market, where yields vary little across the states despite different fiscal positions, and put governments under pressure to curb waste-

ful spending. Some states are prone to expensive pre-election giveaways: everything from spice grinders and fans to laptops and subsidised or free rice and vegetables.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has told investors that all states benefit from identical sovereign guarantees. But foreign investors, unlike domestic investors who tend to treat state debt equally, say some states will be more appealing than others, at least in the short term.

"There are so many states in India and each state is pretty much a country of its own," said Ms Leong Lin Jing, a Singapore-based investment manager on Aberdeen Asset Management's Asian local rates and currency team. She said clarity was needed on what the implicit sovereign guarantee meant in practical terms and on the ability of state governments to borrow from the central bank.

The RBI said last month it would progressively open up state-level debt, allowing foreign investors to invest up

to 500 billion rupees (\$10.8 billion) through March 2018. Auctions are set to start on Monday.

The ensuing pressure to clean up state finances comes at a time when the Indian government is devolving far more funds and spending decisions to the states than ever before.

MOMENT OF TRUTH

India is composed of 29 states of sharp contrasts, varying from poor states such as West Bengal, seen as spendthrift, to wealthier ones such as Maharashtra, home of financial capital Mumbai and with an economy roughly the size of Egypt.

So far domestic investors have seldom differentiated between fiscally stronger states and weaker ones, comforted by the assurances of the implicit sovereign guarantee. No state has ever defaulted to actually test that commitment.

Gujarat state, rated at "A plus", paid 8.15 per cent for 10-year debt at

the latest auction. Meanwhile, "BBB plus"-rated West Bengal, which is three notches below, paid 8.17 per cent.

"It's imperative that we look at each state differently," said an investment adviser with a London-based debt fund.

States are facing a critical test of their fiscal discipline as India's government hands out more financial power, giving more than two-fifths of federal revenues back this year, compared to one-third previously.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also been urging states to take a lead role in attracting investment and accelerating the economic recovery.

"We will monitor the pricing from foreign investors," said Mr Arvind Srivastava, secretary of budget and resources at Karnataka state, home to outsourcing centre Bangalore.

"We are ready to take corrective actions to bring down borrowing costs if there is any price differentiation made," he said. **REUTERS**

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Laptop access goes beyond fingerprints to use veins in the palm

New security scanner cuts the chances of unauthorised access down to 0.00008 per cent

WONG PEI TING
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SINGAPORE – What's more secure than a fingerprint sensor? Biometric technology that can recognise the complicated patterns of veins under the skin of your palm.

Fujitsu has incorporated this technology into its new Lifebook U745 notebooks, offering users the option

to use a palm vein sensor to login to their notebooks.

Described by Fujitsu as "premium security", the palm vein sensor has made unauthorised access to such laptops rather impossible; the chances are less than 0.00008 per cent, it said.

With my hand hovering above a 2cm-wide sensor for about two seconds, the system, which is said to be capturing more than five million reference points from my vein pattern, granted me access.

The scanner detects vein patterns by transmitting light at a wavelength that is near the infra-red range at about 760 nano-metres. As such, it's

“

As authentication hinges on the body's blood flow, it is not possible to replicate and forge another person's vein patterns.



The Fujitsu Lifebook U745 makes use of new PalmSecure technology. PHOTO: FUJITSU

even possible to log in while you are wearing a glove.

As authentication hinges on the body's blood flow, it is not possible to replicate and forge another person's vein patterns.

The initial set-up to configure my palm on a new laptop took about 20 scans. I was signalled to shift my hand closer to, or away from, the sensor. Two vein patterns can be registered for one Windows account.

What are the chances the palm sensor fails to recognise the veins on its owner's palm?

That could happen about 0.01 per cent of the time, advised Fujitsu, making this technology 10 times more reliable than the use of a fingerprint biometric.

I tried to log in more than 10 times on separate occasions, and the scanner worked each time.

Nonetheless, since passwords are still used as an alternative for login, the use of the palm vein technology can only offer limited protection, if your password is not secure.

The technology might make more sense applied elsewhere, for example in ATMs or for entry into offices where access cards are still used.

The Fujitsu Lifebook U745 notebook with the palm vein technology, PalmSecure, costs S\$2,999 at authorised Fujitsu retailers Newstead and Best Denki.

It has a 14-inch anti-glare display with backlit keyboard options, is less than 2cm thick and weighs 1.55kg.

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TEAM'S ENERGY, FOCUS DURING TRAINING COME AS NO SURPRISE

HUNGRY LIONS FUELLED BY ASIAN CUP DREAM

Players are eager to qualify for continental finals for very first time

NOAH TAN
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SINGAPORE - There was a palpable sense of excitement, optimism and more significantly, determination, among the Singapore players as they were put through their paces by head coach Bernd Stange at the Geylang Training Field yesterday.

Despite fighting hard to secure a remarkable 1-0 victory over Afghanistan last Thursday, there was no let-up in the intensity of the Lions' training session, with each player determined to pull their weight and impress the coaches.

The team's impressive energy levels and focus during training comes as no surprise.

With the Lions currently sitting third in Group E of the 2018 FIFA World Cup qualification – three points off table-toppers Japan – there is a genuine sense of belief within the squad that they can create history and qualify for the 2019 Asian Cup.

Only the top team from each of the eight groups, and the four best runners-up will go through to the next round of World Cup qualifying, as well as secure a berth in the next edition of the Asian Cup finals, which will be held in the United Arab Emirates.

The only time Singapore participated in the finals was in 1984, when they were granted an automatic spot as hosts of the tournament.

While the Lions are expected to improve their chances of reaching the finals by picking up all three points against Cambodia at the National Stadium tomorrow, Stange was keen to temper unrealistic expectations of his team, and admits the road to the 2019 Asian Cup is still an uncertain one.

"Of course we have to keep the players' feet on the ground," the 67-year-old German said.

"Asian Cup qualification is still a long way to go for us. We are dreaming of a direct qualification, but sometimes I feel, especially after performances against Afghanistan, that we don't have the stability or the manpower to achieve such things."

"So we have to be prepared to take the longer way (via the third-round playoffs). But I personally believe that Asian Cup qualification is a must for our football association, and we can achieve it."

National defender Baihakki Khaizan, who took on the captain's armband in the second half against Afghanistan after Shahril Ishak was substituted, added: "We have had a good run over the past few games.

Ticket sales (www.sportshubtix.sg)

- Cat 1 - \$38
- Cat 2 - \$28
- Concession (for students 16 and below) and senior citizens (60 and above): \$15 (Cat 1) and \$10 (Cat 2)



Despite fighting hard to secure a 1-0 victory over Afghanistan last Thursday, there was no let-up in the intensity of the Lions' training session. PHOTO: WEE TECK HIAN

Our statistics also show that we've only conceded one goal (after four games), and these are positive points for the whole team.

"Personally, I want to play in the Asian Cup finals as well, and it's not far off for us. But we have a few more hurdles to go through. We just want to do well in our next few games, and then we'll see how to go from there after that."

Singapore's hopes of claiming all three points from Cambodia tomorrow will be boosted by the return from suspension of key players Safuwani Baharudin and Hariss Harun, with the absence of both midfielders hindering the Lions' performance against Afghanistan.

While Singapore, who beat Cambodia 4-0 away in June, are firm favourites to win the return tie tomorrow, Hariss insists his team can ill-afford to take all three points for granted.

"We cannot afford complacency

to creep into the team," the 24-year-old said.

"That can be very dangerous for us, especially as we're playing at home. In addition, the fans are all expecting a lot from us after our good result against Cambodia away.

"But we believe in ourselves and know that we have the players to get the job done and to get the points on the board. So we have to just come up with a plan, execute it, and I'm sure we'll do fine."

FAST FACTS:

- S'pore's results so far:
- Beat Cambodia 4-0 (away)
- Drew Japan 0-0 (away)
- Lost Syria 0-1 (away)
- Beat Afghanistan 1-0 (home)

Remaining fixtures:

- Oct 13 - vs Cambodia (home)
- Nov 12 - vs Japan (home)
- Nov 17 - vs Syria (home)
- Mar 26 - vs Afghanistan (away)

broken, forcing him to lift his entire leg for braking, a situation the German called "quite dangerous".

"F1 is pretty incredible sometimes how tough it is," a crestfallen Rosberg said. "After a great start, leading the race and feeling confident. Straight after the safety car the pedal broke. It was quite dangerous. Definitely not a nice way to end the day."

However, he insisted he would not give up on the title. "The championship is more difficult of course but I am never going to win a championship like that when normal things break," he told the BBC. Hamilton has 302 points, Vettel is second with 236 and Rosberg has 229. No other driver is in contention. AP

TITLE IS PRACTICALLY HAMILTON'S NOW

SOCHI (RUSSIA) - Lewis Hamilton took a huge step toward retaining his Formula One title by winning the Russian Grand Prix yesterday as his main rival Nico Rosberg failed to finish.

Hamilton started second behind Rosberg and took over the lead from his Mercedes teammate when Rosberg experienced a throttle problem that forced him to slow to a crawl and then come into the pits to retire.

Hamilton then cruised to victory by 5.9secs over Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel, with Sergio Perez third for Force India, 17 seconds further be-

hind. With four races to go, Hamilton leads Vettel by 66 points and Rosberg by 73.

However, Mercedes secured the constructors' title yesterday after Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen was given a 30-second penalty for a last-lap collision with Valtteri Bottas' Williams. Bottas and Raikkonen both passed Perez for third and fourth place respectively, before Raikkonen attempted a poorly-judged move on the inside to take third from Bottas, spinning the Williams driver into the wall. The penalty means he cannot prevent Mercedes from taking the

crown. Perez's third place was the best finish this year for Force India, while Raikkonen limped home in fifth behind the second Williams of Felipe Massa. Russian driver Daniil Kvyat pleased the home crowd with sixth, ahead of Felipe Nasr for Sauber and Pastor Maldonado for Lotus.

The two McLarens of Jenson Button and Fernando Alonso rounded out the top 10 in what is only the second time this season that the troubled team has had both drivers finish in the points.

Following his retirement on lap 7, Rosberg said his throttle pedal had

LONDON – Rugby World Cup folklore is often carved out on the back of moments of creative genius or dazzling attack. In a brute of a Test at Twickenham, Australia's extraordinary, unbreakable band of gold demonstrated that it does not always have to be that way, and that a 'thou shalt not pass' defence can be just as beautiful, just as unforgettable.

The Wallabies' never-say-die fortitude for a long, long dozen-minute period during the second half when reduced to 14 and then 13 men against Wales, who were bearing down on their line with manic intensity, will go down in the World Cup annals as the ultimate example of rugby resilience under fire.

Protecting only a six-point lead, Will Genia had been sent packing to the sin bin, so had Dean Mumm, and lynchpin David Pocock was hobbling off to the touchline injured. Wales were spurning one penalty goal kick opportunity after another, going for the throat, death by line-out or scrum, sure in the belief that 13 men could not possibly hold out from one pick and go drive after another.

For seven minutes, Australia were two men down. Just call it 'the Siege of Twickenham'.

Yet as Welsh attackers could not find the wit nor imagination to get on the outside of, or through, the beleaguered golden line, their assaults kept being repelled in a fashion even defeated coach Warren Gatland could only find one suitable word for. "Heroic," he called it. "They were throwing their bodies on the line."

Yes, Wales had their opportunities, and captain Sam Warburton could only summon a wry smile when subject to a similar interrogation to the one England captain Chris Robshaw faced two weeks ago. Why did he not go for the kicks at goal, he was inevitably asked. Any regrets?

"It's a hot topic now," said Warburton with a shrug.

"We felt we needed a try to

WALLABIES TRIUMPH WITH THE GREAT WALL OF AUSTRALIA



Despite being two men down for seven minutes, Australia (in gold) held the fort against Wales. PHOTO:AP

beat Australia. We were six points behind and two penalties would have brought us to a draw. Against 13 men, any country would have backed themselves to go over. You just have to put your hands up and say they defended really well."

Wales' lack of clinical finishing in the 15-6 defeat is something Gatland said he would have to work on before next weekend's quarter-final with South Africa, but when your men are held up over the line three times by Australian bodies, then you have to recognise rare fortitude.

George North had tried to burrow his way over in the opening minutes, but was not allowed to touch down and, when the siege was at its most intense, Kane Douglas kept

AUSTRALIA HAD
40%
OF POSSESSION AGAINST WALES' 60%. HOWEVER, THE WALLABIES MADE 134 TACKLES TO WALES' 84

OTHER RESULT
● Argentina beat Namibia 64-19 in a Pool C game

out a rampaging Jamie Roberts. And, just when it seemed North had finally broken through, replacement Ben McCalman held him up a second time.

Even Michael Cheika, a coach not easily given to lavish praise, felt moved to admit: "I'm not shy to say I'm very proud of the lads.

"I was proud of their resilience and intent to do what they did. Being a forward and not a very talented one, I liked tonight. There wasn't much talent there, it was about getting stuck in and trying to help each other."

Last week, against England, was where we had seen the Wallabies' talent and clinical finishing, but this win, reckoned former England World

Cup-winning scrum-half Matt Dawson, was where we saw the spirit and commitment of the team, which he believes will now go on to win this year's edition.

Cheika called it his team's "different skin". Yes, that of a rhinoceros.

The Wallabies will be hot favourites to beat Scotland in the quarter-final next week, but Cheika would not have any truck with the idea that his side have an easier route to the final because it avoids the prospect of meeting either South Africa or New Zealand until the final.

"What I do know is that Vern Cotter is a very clever coach and had a very successful time as an Anglo Saxon coaching in France, which is not easy to do. I'm sure he'll have Scotland ready," he said.

Wales too, felt Cheika, had every chance in their match against the Springboks, even if another injury, this time to Liam Williams, looked ominous for them.

"They're a good team. They caused us a lot of trouble," said Cheika, praising the Welsh use of the choke tackle, which slowed Australian attacks and ensured they did not cross the Welsh line.

"They had a few tricks up their sleeve, tried to move us around, a very well coached side with players who have a lot of passion. I know they'll make their country proud when they play in the quarter-finals."

RUGBY WORLD CUP

OUTSTANDING LAIDLAW SQUEAKS SCOTS PAST SAMOA

LONDON – Scotland coach Vern Cotter hailed his skipper Greig Laidlaw and spoke of his immense pride in his team after Scotland headed off a spirited Samoa to win 36-33 in a pulsating Rugby World Cup match that was in the balance until the final whistle.

The win secured Scotland their quarter-final place, killed Japan's hopes of reaching the last eight, and now, as a reward, they will face Australia at Twickenham next Sunday.

Samoa were a changed side from the disorganised outfit who had been outmuscled and outclassed by South Africa and Japan in successive weeks.

After those emphatic defeats, the team had spoken in midweek of the need to restore pride in the jersey, and made good on that promise as they took an early lead against Scotland in a high-scoring and at times brutal encounter at St James' Park.

It took, Cotter said, a heroic per-

formance by Scotland to withstand such a concerted display from their Pacific Island opponents. "I'm really proud of the boys and the way they played," he said. "They were down at half-time but showed the character and spirit to come back. It showed just how much it means to them and I'm really happy for the group as they worked so hard to get there."

With Scotland needing a win to qualify for the quarter-finals, they followed the pattern of their three previous pool games and once again started slowly. They allowed Samoa to score three first-half tries to take a narrow lead into the interval.

"We saw things from Samoa which we hadn't seen from them so far, but we adapted and got through in the end," said Cotter. "Samoa played the best they have done at this World Cup. We anticipated that they would go to a Barbarian-style approach, and maybe they did catch us una-



“This is the biggest achievement of my career and leading the team out in a quarter-final will be the greatest honour of my career.

Greig Laidlaw
SCOTLAND SKIPPER

wares, but we stuck to the things we are good at and it saw us through."

He also paid handsome tribute to the outstanding Laidlaw, whose captain's innings extended to 26 points in total: five penalties, three conversions and the winning try.

"Greig's performance speaks for itself," said Cotter on rugbyworldcup.com. "He had an outstanding game, no two ways about it. Every-

body knows and acknowledges his qualities as a leader and as a player."

Laidlaw — who was part of the 2011 RWC team that failed to get out of the pool stages — spoke of his relief at coming through such a colossal contest. "This is a great day for Scottish rugby ... We've done what we said we were going to do, but there's still much more to come from this team," he said.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

SPORTS FIXTURES HIGHLIGHTS				
Event	Home	Away	Timing	Venue
Tue, 13 Oct 2015				
Euro Champ	Russia	Montenegro	12.00am	No telecast

No person under the age of 18 years shall be allowed to purchase a ticket or to claim any prize.

LW: Livewire (MBS) & Livewire (RWS) (21 years and above)

Livewire (Singapore Pools) (21 years and above during 'Live' telecast)

SB: SportsBuzz@Kranji (18 years and above)

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STEPPING STONE FOR RISING LOCAL STAR

S'PORE SHUTTLERS WIN SINGLES AND DOUBLES GOLD IN INDONESIA

Dream weekend at the Asia U-17 and U-15 Championships

GERARD WONG
Sports Editor
gerard@mediacorp.com.sg

SINGAPORE – Rising local shuttler Yeo Jia Min achieved a double victory as well as a personal double feat at the Badminton Asia Under-17 and Under-15 Championships in Indonesia yesterday afternoon.

The 16-year-old Singapore Sports School (SSP) student not only captured the Girls U-17 singles title when she defeated Indonesia's Sri Fatmawati 21-15, 21-13 in a 45-minute encounter, she also combined with SSP schoolmate Crystal Wong to beat Japanese duo Saito Natsu and Yoshida Rumi 21-18, 21-18 to



lift the Girls U-17 doubles crown.

This is also the second time that Jia Min has won an Asian junior title — she had emerged triumphant in the Girls U-15 singles in 2013.

A relieved Jia Min said she was happy to be able to deliver the goods for Singapore as she had felt some pressure entering the

Yeo Jia Min (left) and Crystal Wong won gold in the Girls U-17 doubles, just after Jia Min captured the U-17 singles title. PHOTO: SINGAPORE BADMINTON ASSOCIATION

singles tournament as the top seed.

"There was pressure to live up to the seeding but I just made sure I played my best in every match, and improve on each performance, and I left the rest in God's hands. I thank Him for giving me the strength to pull through each time," she said.

After resting for about an hour, Jia Min then partnered Crystal to victory in the Girls U-17 Doubles.

The duo had finished third in the U-15 tournament two years ago, but this time they managed to capture the gold after a 35-minute battle with their Japanese opponents. What made their feat even more commendable was the fact that they had not played together in the lead-up to the championships.

But Crystal said: "Even though we did not partner together prior to this competition, we used offensive and aggressive tactics against all our opponents.

"I feel very elated and satisfied

with my performances, and I will continue to work hard in order to achieve more results in the future."

Jia Min's next assignment will be the World Junior Championships in Lima, Peru, next month (Nov 4-15), and national singles coach Kelvin Ho said his charge's victory will boost her confidence for the world meet.

"We are very happy with Jia Min's achievement," he said.

"This tournament is a stepping stone for her, and a boost to her confidence. Badminton strategy on the courts is constantly changing, but Jia Min's success here was due to her ability to overcome whatever obstacles came her way during her matches. The World Juniors will now provide the real test and gauge of her abilities against the top junior shuttlers from all over the world."

Jia Min and Crystal's victories wrap up what has been a good week for Singapore badminton as it was just last Sunday that 19-year-old Liang Xiaoyu finished second in the Thailand Open.

The world No 120 pulled off the biggest scalp of her career when she defeated Thailand's 2013 world champion Ratchanok Intanon in the semi-finals. She then lost 0-2 to South Korea's Sung Ji Hyun in the final.

TENDER NOTICE

1-Net Singapore Pte. Ltd. invites Tender for:

TENDER NO: 2100016487

Invitation To Tender For The Design, Supply, and Construction of 50,000 Litres Underground Diesel Storage Tank for 1-Net Data Center at Block 750 Estuary, Technopark @ Chai Chee.

TENDER CLOSING DATE: 30 October 2015 (3PM)

Tender is to be submitted at Caldecott Broadcast Centre, Main Reception, Tender Box 1.

TENDER DOCUMENT FEE:

S\$214.00 (inclusive of GST) non-refundable (by cash & cheque only – in favour of "MediaCorp Pte Ltd")

1-Net Singapore Pte. Ltd is not bound to accept the lowest bid or offer or any at all. All expenses incurred by the applicant in the submission of this tender shall be borne entirely by the applicant.

ELIGIBILITY

Tenderer must be BCA CRS registered with minimum CW01 Grade B2 or ME11 Grade L4.

COMPULSORY SITE SHOW-ROUND/BRIEFING:

Date: 16 October 2015

Time: 10:00AM

Venue: Blk 750D, Technopark @ Chai Chee

COLLECTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS:

Interested companies to contact Mr Khairul Akram via email: (khairulakram@mediacorp.com.sg).

Please note that all required information (NDA & eligibility clearance) and payment should be completed and submitted by 10am, 15 October 2015 before the collection of tender documents.



* Ironman favourite Frodeno claims world title in Hawaii

Germany's Jan Frodeno won the Ironman World Championship on Saturday, pulling away in the bike leg in scorching conditions for his first victory in the event.

The 34-year-old heavy favourite completed the 3.86km ocean swim, 180.2km bike leg and marathon run in 8hrs, 14mins, 40secs. He was second after the swim and took the lead for a good 153km in the bike leg. Frodeno finished the swim in 50:50, bike ride in 4:27:28 and run in 2:52:22. "I had good run form, but it was brutal," he said. "No shade at all. If you're going uphill, your heart rate goes up and it just doesn't come back down."

Frodeno, who was third last year, is the reigning Ironman 70.3 world champion and won the gold medal at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. His win on Saturday makes him the first athlete to claim both an Olympic gold and the Hawaii Ironman. Countryman Andreas Raelert was second in 8:17.43 while American Timothy O'Donnell finished third in 8:18.50.

Daniela Ryf of Switzerland won the women's race for her first Ironman title in 8hrs, 57mins, 57secs after two-time defending champ Mirinda Carfrae of Australia withdrew mid-race with a sore back. Great Britain's Rachel Joyce was second in 9:10.59 and Liz Blatchford of Australia was third in 9:14.52.

Each year, more than 110,000 athletes vie for event slots. More than 2,300 triathletes started the race on Saturday.

PHOTO: AP

I'M A FIGHTER, SAYS BLATTER

ZURICH – Sepp Blatter will battle on despite his suspension as head of world soccer body FIFA, he was quoted as saying by a Swiss newspaper.

"I am a fighter," the Schweiz am Sonntag quoted him in an advance summary of an interview to be published yesterday. "They can destroy me, but they cannot destroy my life's work."

Blatter, 79, who has headed FIFA since 1998, was provisionally suspended from his duties as president for 90 days on Thursday. He has denied wrongdoing and filed an appeal to try to reverse the ban. Blatter said the Ethics Committee had forbidden him to speak about FIFA. While surprised by the ban, "I am doing well and I feel good," he said.

Swiss prosecutors last month opened a criminal investigation of Blatter on suspicions of mismanagement and misappropriation of funds over a television rights contract he signed in 2005 and a two-million Swiss franc (\$S2.9 million) payment in 2011 to Michel Platini, president of the UEFA soccer confederation. Platini has also denied any wrongdoing.

Meanwhile, The Mail on Sunday has reported new evidence of financial wrongdoing submitted to the committee could lead to Blatter and Platini being banned for years. The tabloid quoted a high-ranking source close to the committee as saying: "Emotions are high at present but this is far more serious than anyone can imagine. The reality is that this is beyond clumsiness, it possibly verges on a criminal offence." AGENCIES



MOVE IT:
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IT'S NO JOCK

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ALL HANDS ON DECK

**LOVE 97.2FM DJ
WENDY TSENG ON
LESSONS LEARNT
DURING HER 11-YEAR
JOURNEY IN RADIO**

HON JING YI
honjingyi@mediacorp.com.sg



We live in the age of the Internet, where information about anything and everything can be found in a heartbeat. One only needs to go to Google or YouTube to access thousands, if not millions, of tutorials on anything. But to many, there is nothing quite as intimate as hearing someone familiar share his or her tips and address your concerns on radio.

And at MediaCorp Radio's Love 97.2FM, deejay Wendy Tseng has become one such voice, particularly for those interested in health and beauty.

"If you host an infotainment programme, especially on topics like health, you can't just make things up! When listeners call in asking questions I cannot answer, I usually tell them I have to ask an expert before I respond. I take down their contact information, ask an expert and then call them back to tell them what I've found out," said Tseng, who added it's particularly challenging giving make-up tips on radio, when you can't refer to photos or models as examples. "Even if there is only one person out there listening to my show who benefits, I will have achieved something. Because you never know if that person might benefit from that information for a lifetime."

If Tseng sounds like she knows



what she is doing, it's probably because she's worked very hard over the last decade to learn the ropes and establish herself as a credible host. Although you wouldn't have guessed it, the chatty and affable Taiwan-born Singaporean deejay, who started out as a television host and actress in 1995, was overwhelmed when she first made the switch to

Chinese radio 11 years ago. Tseng said she broke down and cried when a manager asked her to deliver cakes to listeners on her own — which may not sound like the worst thing in the world, but it was shocking to a young actress who was used to being taken care of everywhere she went.

"I cried because I felt so helpless! I didn't know how to handle the situation, because as a television artiste we never needed to handle any of our own matters," she said. "Then I told myself that it didn't matter how many years I had spent in the television industry. I had to learn how to start from scratch, and accept any challenges that came my way."

Since then, Tseng has been on a very steep learning curve. In addition to hosting, singing and acting — she stars in the upcoming Channel 8 series House Of Fortune — deejays at Love 97.2FM have to learn how to dance, perform at musicals and concerts, and even play "tour guide" on trips to places like Bhutan and North Korea with their listeners.

**Love 97.2FM DJ
Wendy Tseng
thinks she can go
far to touch the
hearts of listeners
with radio.**

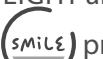
PHOTO: CHUA HONG YIN

"Deejays now must know how to do everything. We have to go out to do roadshows, or host events, and the companies that hire us sell everything — make-up, health products, kitchen appliances, food and electronics. And when you explain something, you have to sound like you understand what you are saying, and not like you are reading from a script," said Tseng, who also recently did a roving report for work from Uzbekistan.

Even after so many years, Tseng said she is still finding ways to make her shows more exciting and informative, to keep her listeners and fans engaged.

"I think you can go very far with radio, although it's not like it was in the past. You cannot be long-winded, and you have to grab your listeners' attention very quickly. It's an art," she mused. "I hope I will be able to do a good job with my shows in the future, so the people who listen to my shows now will still find a reason to talk about it, ten years from now."

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Sweet reunion

While S'pore's dance greats return to the stage, a dance company goes backstage

MAYO MARTIN
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SINGAPORE – After jumping non-stop for a few seconds, Jeffrey Tan stopped to ruefully rub his knees. "Old, liao," remarked the former hotshot dancer-choreographer for Singapore Dance Theatre.

Scripted or not, it's part of the conceit of this year's da:ns festival's highly anticipated (and sold-out) Above 40. Over the weekend, four of Singapore's most established dance artists — all above the supposedly ripe old dance age of 40 and now teaching and choreographing — returned to the stage after a significant absence. Tan hung up his shoes in 2008, Re: Dance Theatre founder Albert Tiong in 2012 and THE Dance Company's husband-and-wife bosses Kuik Swee Boon and Silvia Yong in 2012 and 2011, respectively. (Incidentally, this week, 50-year-old ballet legend Sylvie Guillem is also performing her swan song Life In Progress at the same fest.)

So did this fab four still have what it takes? Well, yes and no. While they gamely poked fun at themselves with age and weight jokes, and while it did take a while to get the engine going, there were enough explosive moments to remind you why they were once considered the scene's best dancers a while back — and why they command so much respect and admiration today.

But it's also quite silly to reduce such a heartfelt, moving experience to a question of whether they can still do splits. Above 40 was not a virtuosic showcase but a generous lesson. It brought up questions about the limitations of the body as much as it highlighted the endless possibilities of the spirit.

Under the shadow of a slowly spinning ceiling fan — itself evoking a kind of sad setting in a bar inhabited by has-beens and forgotten characters in noir films — the quartet gathered in an Avengers Assemble-esque reunion moment before taking turns or teaming up. While age may be undoubtedly catching up — and it did seem like they paced themselves in terms

of the pieces' intensity — years of experience have honed their presence and mastery.

Their respective styles still shone: Yong's languid-but-solid feminine aura was the much-needed calm among the more extroverted voices of the three men. Tiong, whose years with Taiwan's Cloud Gate dance company had resulted in a distinct dance aesthetic, was relentlessly teased by the others in English, Cantonese and Mandarin about how his movements hadn't changed since two decades ago — and if bending and squatting was all he can do. "Grab up, grab down, what is he grabbing?" snipped Tan, as part of the hilarious live commentary.

Tan's own autobiographical confrontational moment with ballet was more sombre in tone. A punishingly demanding dance form to which he had dedicated his life, Tan kept repeating the word "perfect" as he manipulated a pair of ballet shoes before he admitted: "I'm not perfect".

His bros seemingly backed him up in his despair and resignation, with Kuik rhythmically slamming a chair and Tiong tearing up a piece of paper after announcing his thanks for the opportunity given to him.

But Above 40 saved the best for last, a poignant (and perhaps not unexpected) duet between Kuik and Yong, whose artistic careers have had to accommodate running a dance company and taking care of their firstborn child. It has not been easy for the couple, who spent time apart early on at the peak of their solo careers, and this translated on stage as they barely touched until a climactic final, fierce embrace.

While the couple was having their catharsis-laden poetic moment, their company was likewise having its own moment at The Esplanade building itself.

Korean choreographer Kim Jaeduk's Impulse was THE Dance Company's first site-specific piece inside the bowels of the arts centre.

A dancer's head was pressed against a railing or a wall, seemingly in the process of listening to the space. And so a kind of measured, sensitive duet was performed between the dancers and various backstage spaces, from a loading bay to a lift.

Hints of parkour were thrown into



Above 40 with (from left) Jeffrey Tan, Silvia Yong, Albert Tiong and Kuik Swee Boon was not a virtuosic showcase but a generous lesson. PHOTO: BERNICE NG

the mix of Kim's Asian dance-tinged choreography, while undertones of a sinister gangster narrative was balanced by snippets of humour, such as dancer Wu Mi mimicking a robot being assembled and disassembled in one of Esplanade's factory-like cavernous space.

As site-specific works go, Impulse was pretty much a clean, controlled version — this was the Esplanade, after all, and while there will certainly be a hint of danger, given some of the machines found in certain areas, the only disruption (or unintentional intervention) in this tightly produced piece was the unexpected crackling of a security guard's radio. Nonetheless, it's still a comparatively wilder space

> **Impulse**
continues on
Oct 16, 17 and 18,
various times, at
the Esplanade
Backstage. For
more info, visit
<http://www.dansfestival.com/2015>

to negotiate in comparison to "proper" stages. While the spaces here are very much like sets in a static sense, it's this very controlled aspect of Impulse — however ironic that sounds — that resulted in one of the tightest site-specific dance performances we've seen.

But we also have to add that "tight" is a relative word: THE has been in a process of transition for a while now, with founding member Lee Mun Wai the latest to depart, leaving Zhuo Zihao as the only remaining founding member-dancer. This new batch still has some way to go before reaching the level of their hard-working and talented pioneering batch, but as Above 40 shows us, experience and talent come with patience, age and practice.

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Dated 29th September 2015

(Sgd.) INKA FARHANA BINTE JEFFERY
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Dated 29th September 2015

(Sgd.) INKA FARHANA BINTE JEFFERY
Liquidator



MediaCorp artiste Guo Liang (left) makes his Singapore theatre debut in Chinglish.

THEATRE REVIEW: CHINGLISH

No language barrier

What happens when East and West marry and produce a comedy of subtitles

NING CAI
features@mediacorp.com.sg

SINGAPORE – The gala premiere of Chinglish at the Drama Centre Theatre was a full house of hearty theatre-goers evidently impressed by Pangdemonium's latest production. Directed by the local theatre company's co-artistic director Tracie Pang, the crowd-pleaser is based on David Henry Hwang's multi-award-

winning play of the same name.

A modern comedy addressing hilarious miscommunications stemming from the clash of different cultures, values and philosophies, Chinglish is a bilingual play performed in English and Mandarin, with subtitles for non-Chinese speakers.

However, if you are comfortable with both languages, you will definitely find Chinglish a lot funnier. The cast of Chinglish is a strong one, with

well-loved Mediacorp artiste Guo Liang making his Singapore theatre debut and star of Titoudao, Audrey Luo, stealing the show with her side-splitting impressions of three different but all impossibly bad Chinese business translators in their element.

Guo and Luo's accents and diction were impressively spot-on in comparison to Adrian Pang and Oon Shu An's, whose delivery in Mandarin felt slightly less authentic but by no means unbelievable.

Pang, who previously admitted he failed his A-Level Chinese as a student, completely nailed it with his accurate depiction of a typical Chinaman "speaking" on his mobile phone in a performance that would surely make his former teachers proud. Oon, meanwhile, decked in classy high heels and elegant dresses, added grace and poise to the show and has ostensibly perfected that cool aloofness of a Chinese femme fatale.

Award-winning actor Matt Grey won the crowd over with his many lines of fluent Mandarin, specially learnt for the production. Daniel Jenkins, another accomplished thespian, further charmed the audience with his rendition of Chinglish's main character, the befuddled and naive American businessman who is a stranger in a strange land.

The play was served well with a beautiful set involving a revolving stage floor that ensures smooth transitions, and multimedia screens



Say what?

Korean heart-throb Joowon isn't the manly risk-taker he plays in The Gang Doctor
<http://tdy.sg/todaytelevision>

PHOTO:ZHANGWEIFANG

cleverly built into the backdrop. Chinglish touches on the complexities of cultural and linguistic differences, besides the agonising struggle of understanding Chinese false modesty, including the Middle Kingdom's famed ways of indirectness and ambiguity.

More importantly, Chinglish highlights China's gargantuan focus on "guan-xi" (connections), and its theme of networks and relationships, like love (the Chinese have various terms used for different forms of affection) and duty, which are prevalent throughout.

> Chinglish runs until Oct 25. It is sold out, but you can contact Pangdemonium for a place on their waiting list.

Thanking the audience during curtain call for their tremendous support for Pangdemonium, a jubilant Pang shared that tickets for the entire run of Chinglish have been sold out. It is heartening, not just for Pangdemonium, but the country's arts scene in general, to see Singapore's theatre scene blossoming in vibrancy.

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10.00 Viewpoints With Howie Lim And Andre Ahchak
2.00PM The Culture Cafe With Angela Lim And Daphne Lim
6.00 Evening Digest With Michelle Martin And Daniel Martin
9.00 LateNite Lineup With William Xavier



- 6.00AM The Bright Side With Sonia Chew
10.00 9 In A Row With Mimi The Cat
NOON Turn Up With Tabitha Nausser
4.00PM The Bro Code With Gerald Koh And Joakim Gomez
8.00 The Happy Ending With Kimberly Wang



- 6.00AM Muttons In The Morning With Justin Ang And Vernon A
10.00 Lunch Break With Yasminee Cheng
2.00PM Afternoons With Simone Heng
5.00 Cartunes With Jean Danker
8.00 Nights With Tim Oh



- 6.00AM Mike And Joe Xperiment
10.00 Denise Tan
2.00PM Jamie Yeo
5.00 Vernetta Lopez
8.00 Nite Flite



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938LIVE, 6am



LATE NITE LINEUP WITH WILLIAM XAVIER
Catch up with all the local news of the day.

938LIVE, 9pm



DENISE TAN
Tune in for all your favourite songs and yummy treats.

Gold 905, 10am



MUTTONS IN THE MORNING WITH JUSTIN ANG AND VERNON A

Start your morning with a big breakfast of humour and a double shot of local fare.

Class 95FM, 6am



5	6	7	2	1	4
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SUBTITLES

E: English

C: Chinese

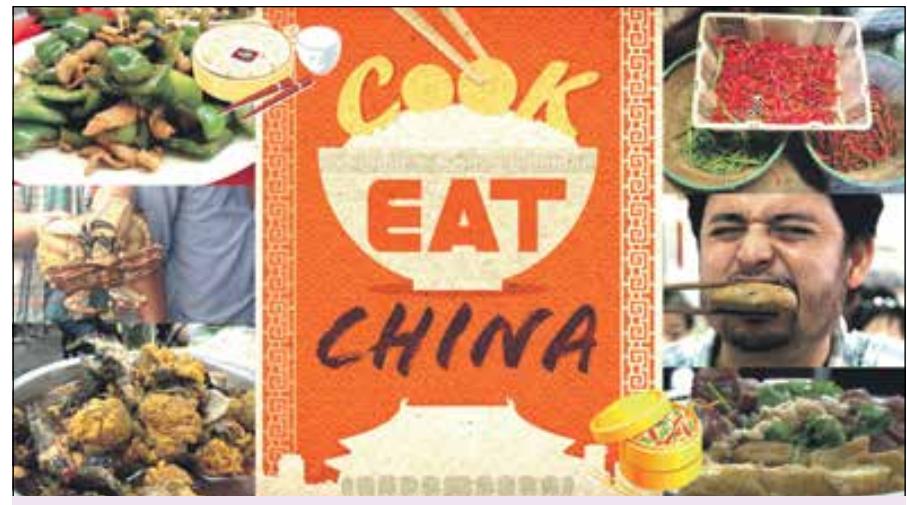
M: Malay

T: Tamil

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COOK EAT CHINA II (EP 12)(PG)

In the second half of our 26-stop tour of China's most mouthwatering destinations, we soak up the Islamic-Chinese culture and hunt down delicious Chinese-Muslim fare.

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Hosted by Mark Lee and Lee Teng, the series returns for a brand new season with doctors, nutritionists, TCM practitioners and even chefs to discuss healthy living, eating and cooking. **PG** **E,C**



CITY TIME TRAVELLER 2

In this new season, eco-architect Jason Pomeroy visits some of the greatest cities in Asia. In each stop, Jason revels in his passion for architecture.



A SINGAPOREAN ABROAD 3

This eight-part series tells the stories of Singaporean heroes travelling and making new homes across the globe to make a positive change in communities.

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POTS OF GOLD (PG)

A president of a large jewellery company and the eldest son in the family business, Park Hyun Soo has led an affluent lifestyle since he was a kid. However, due to his strict father and growing up without a mother, he becomes a recluse. **PG** **E,C**



A PLACE CALLED HOME (PG)

Retired principal Lin Shishi marries off his three daughters one after another. But even as his daughters venture into their brand new lives, Lin and his wife continue to give them their non-wavering support whenever they encounter obstacles. **PG** **C**



tellchannel5@mediacorp.com.sg

6.00AM	Jelly Jamm
6.30	William & Sparkle's Magical Tales
7.00	Gofrette II
7.30	My Big Big Friend
8.00	Tractor Tom
8.30	Curious George IX
9.00	The Dr Oz Show V (HD)
10.00	JML TV Home Shopping (Paid Presentation)
11.00	The Ellen DeGeneres Show XIII (HD)(PG)
NOON	Martha Stewart's Cooking School II (HD)
12.30PM	Lorraine Pascale: Baking Made Easy (HD)
1.00	Films And Stars (HD)
1.30	Tanglin (HD)(CC)
2.00	Everyday Heroes (HD)
2.30	For Better Or Worse (C,M) (HD)
3.00	The Dr Oz Show V (HD)
4.00	Troy (HD)(PG)
5.00	Undercover Boss Canada (HD)(CC)
6.00	The Ellen DeGeneres Show XIII (HD)(PG)
7.00	Wheel Of Fortune XXXI (HD)(CC)
7.30	Minute To Win It (HD)(CC)
8.30	Tanglin (HD)(CC) (C,M)
9.00	News 5 (HD)
9.30	Food Wars Asia (HD)(CC)
10.00	Lion Moms (HD)(PG)(CC)
11.00	The X Factor UK XII (HD)(PG)
1.00AM	Tanglin (HD)(CC) (C,M)
1.30	The Vampire Diaries IV (HD)(PG13-Violence)
2.30	Martha Stewart's Cooking School II (HD)
3.00	Lorraine Pascale: Baking Made Easy (HD)
3.30	The Cube III (HD)
4.30	Wheel Of Fortune XXXI (HD)(CC) (Variety)
5.00	The Dr Oz Show V (HD)

**LION MOMS (HD)(PG)(CC)**

Jennifer is unhappy with the way things are run in school. Durani has to decide whether to accept the offer of a bigger role at work. Eddie has to make amends with his daughter Min Yi or he may lose the chance to be with his grandson.

Channel 5, 10pm (C,M)



tellchannel8@mediacorp.com.sg

6.00AM	Arts & Hearts (E)
6.30	The Return Of Liang Po Po
7.00	Tuesday Report: Lifeline
7.30	Hello Singapore Highlights (HD)
8.00	Hand In Hand (HD) (E) (PG-Some Violence)
9.00	Morning Express (HD)(Live)
9.30	118 (HD)(PG) (E,C)
10.00	Jiangnan Flavor (HD) (E,C)
10.30	Unique Flavour (PG) (E,C)
12.30PM	Travellers' Beat
1.00	News 8 At One (HD)
1.30	Focus (HD) (E,C)
2.00	Fresh Farmers (HD)
2.30	Pilgrimage To The West
3.30	The Oath (HD) (E)
4.30	A Place Called Home (E,C) (PG)
5.30	In The Name Of Love (E,C) (HD)(PG)
6.30	Hello Singapore (HD)(Live)
7.30	118 (HD)(PG) (E,C)
8.00	Hey Gorgeous 2015 (HD)(CC)
9.00	Hand In Hand (E,C) (HD)(PG-Some Sexual References)
10.00	News Tonight (HD) (E,C)
10.30	Unnatural Season 2 (HD) (PG13-Mature Themes)
11.00	Cruel Romance (E,C) (HD)(PG)
MN	The Patriot Yue Fei (E,C) (HD)(PG13-Battle Scenes)
1.00AM	Wonderful World XI (E,C) (HD)
2.00	Five Foot Way
4.00	Life (PG)

**HAND IN HAND (HD)(PG-SOME SEXUAL REFERENCES)**

Da Tou updates Mei Qiang about the investigation into Ah Dong's death. Apparently, Da Tou's wife, who is also Ah Dong's ex-wife, once saw a woman going home with Ah Dong. Thinking that she is the one Ah Dong is having an affair with, Da Tou questions her.

Channel 8, 9pm (E,C)



tellchannel10@mediacorp.com.sg

11.00AM	Home Shopping
3.00PM	MasterChef China (E,C)
4.00	Life Horizon — Different People, Same World
5.00	Twinkle Twinkle (PG) (E,C)
6.00	The Confidant (PG- E,C) Some Drug References
7.00	Tears Of Heaven (E,C) (PG)
9.00	Mars Vs. Venus
10.00	Triumph In The Skies (E,C) II (PG)
11.00	News Tonight (E,C)
11.30	Mars Vs. Venus
12.30AM	Power Office Girls 2013 (PG)
2.30	End Of Transmission



CHANNEL NEWSASIA programming@channelnewsasia.com

HEADLINES

10.30am, 1pm, 1.30pm, 5.30pm, 8pm, 8.30pm, 11.30pm, 12.30am, 1.30am, 2.30am, 3.30am, 5.30am

HEADLINES/S'PORE UPDATES

9.30am, 11.30am, 2.30pm, 4.30pm

Programmes may be pre-empted due to breaking news

6.00AM	News Pulse
7.00	First Look Asia
9.00	News Now
9.33	World View
10.00	News No
10.32	Correspondents' Diary
11.00	News Now
11.33	Expensive Eats
NOON	Asia Connect
1.02PM	Future Forward
1.32	Bright Start, Bright Sparks
2.00	News Now
2.33	First Look Encore
3.00	News Now
3.32	World View
4.00	News Now
4.33	City Time Traveller 2
5.00	News Now
5.32	Cancer — The Emperor Of All Maladies
6.02	Boat People
7.00	Primetime Asia
8.01	Don't Call Us Beaten
8.31	Power List Asia 4
9.00	Primetime World
9.30	Between The Lines
10.0	Singapore Tonight
11.00	World Tonight
11.31	Money Mind
MN	News Pulse
12.31AM	Between The Lines
1.01	Don't Call Us Beaten
1.30	Power List Asia 4
2.00	News Pulse
2.31	World View
3.00	News Pulse
3.31	Between The Lines
4.00	Singapore Tonight
5.00	Boat People

**DON'T CALL US BEATEN**

Reality bites as our students face the challenges of the working world in their internships. Sin Ziyue works in a cafe but she is painfully shy, while apprentice baker Faisleena races against time to fulfil a crucial customer's order.

Channel NewsAsia, 8.01pm



tellvasantham@mediacorp.com.sg

3.00PM	Anjaraipetti 4
3.30	Rasippom Rusippom IV (Episode 1)
4.00	Penn
4.30	Vasantram Star 2009
5.00	Akka Tangai
5.30	Vasantram Challenge II
6.00	Aahwanam
7.00	Luckka Kickka 2 (CC) (E)
7.30	Maalai Maathurum (HD)(CC)
8.00	Anthanaal Nyabagam (HD)(CC)
8.30	Tamil Seithi (Live) (E)
9.00	Sathuranga Vettai (HD)(Premiere)
10.00	Kudumbam United 2 (E) (CC)
10.30	Ragasiyam 2 (HD) (CC)(Season Premiere)
11.00	Sambavam
11.30	Tamil Seithi (E)
MN	Close

**KUSINERO CINTA**

Rihanna fails to make Izmir love her even though she loves him very much. Izmir loves Edrina. Hafizul feels guilty after he had accidentally bumped into Edrina when he was drunk and demanded money from her.

Suria, 11pm

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FOX HD (Singtel TV Ch 330), 9pm

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DIVA Universal (StarHub TV Ch 513), 9.25pm

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HBO Hits (StarHub TV Ch 605), 9pm

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Handicaps Welfare Association

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Syawwal Syreezan (5)

Viriya Community Services

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