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'King' of court crowned
LeBron James is named
AP Male Athlete of Year
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Star Wars icon dies
Carrie Fisher, 60, rose to
fame as Princess Leia
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TRANSPORTATION

Two bullet train lines now connect southwest to coast

By LUO WANGSHU
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China opened two major high-speed rail lines on Wednesday, linking the country's less developed southwest with built-up coastal areas.

It also marks Yunnan province's entry into the nation's high-speed railway network. The new lines link its capital, Kunming, with Shanghai and Guangzhou.

Twenty-nine of 31 provincial-level regions on the Chinese mainland are now served by high-speed railways, excluding only the Tibet and Ningxia autonomous regions.

The 2,252-kilometer Shanghai-Kunming rail line traverses five provinces — Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Hunan, Guizhou and Yunnan — and cuts rail travel time between the two cities from 34 to 11 hours, according to China Railway Corp, the nation's rail service provider.

It's the nation's longest east-west high-speed railway. Trains run from 300 to

350 kilometers per hour, depending on topography.

The new Kunming-Guangzhou line cuts travel time from 16 1/2 hours to 8 hours and 52 minutes, running at 200 to 250 km/h.

A high-speed grid of four north-south lines and four east-west lines is taking shape. In 2008, China set a target to build the grid by 2020. Only two sections have not opened yet, the Jinan-Shijiazhuang and Baoji-Lanzhou lines.

"The two new high-speed lines and the newly opened transportation hub at Kunming South Railway Station are important basic infrastructure to link with neighboring countries in South Asia and Southeast Asia," China Railway Corp said in a statement.

The system also aims to help eradicate poverty by transforming the high-speed rail industry into an economic driving force.

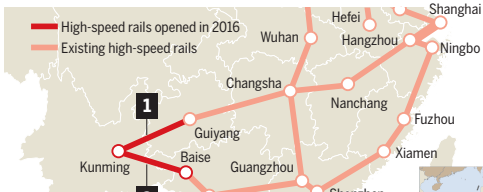
Peng Wan, a 28-year-old train fan from Kunming, took a day off work on Wednesday to catch the first

SEE "RAILWAY" PAGE 3

New high-speed rails

1 Guiyang-Kunming railway
(part of Kunming-Shanghai railway)
Length: 463 km
Date opened: Dec 28
Initial designed speed: 300 km/h

2 Kunming-Baise railway
(part of the Kunming-Guangzhou railway)
Length: 486 km
Date opened: Dec 28
Initial designed speed: 200 km/h



TRAVEL TIME
Travel time before and after the opening of the Kunming-Shanghai railway:

	Kunming-Beijing	Kunming-Shanghai	Kunming-Shenzhen	Kunming-Wuhan
Before	33h 22m	34h 8m	29h 7m	22h 12m
After	12h 11m	11h 15m	6h 51m	6h 25m

Source: China Railway Corporation CHINA DAILY

HOUSING MARKET

Builder financing may be limited

By WU YIYAO in Shanghai
and LI XIANG in Beijing

Chinese regulators may bar securities and futures firms from running private asset management funds that directly or indirectly invest in residential property projects in key cities.

The move would be aimed at curbing speculation and cooling off the property market, analysts said. It also would rule out asset management as a financing tool for the residential properties market in those cities, they said.

A report by 21st Century Business Herald cited sources close to the matter as saying the key cities are 16 first- and second-tier cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen. The list is being drawn up based on the record of local housing authorities in controlling the rise in residential prices.

"Deleveraging will be a key task for China's regulators next

year, and the property industry will be among the first sectors to feel the pain," said Wang Jianhui, director of the research center at Capital Securities Co Ltd.

"In addition to tightening bank loans, the regulators will very likely curb the leveraging in shadow banking areas. For this reason, tightening control of capital flowing into the property sector is within expectations," Wang said.

Deleveraging is reducing the proportion of borrowed money in the economy, and leveraging refers to investing with borrowed money.

Xia Lei, property analyst at Founder Securities Co, said tightening measures could provide an opportunity for cash-rich property companies to overtake their competitors since some firms might be forced to sell their projects.

"Curbing speculative capital from entering the residential property market could help consolidate the sector and con-

DIPLOMACY



US President Barack Obama and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe lay wreaths at the USS Arizona Memorial in Hawaii on Tuesday.
CAROLYN KASTER / AP

Abe's Pearl Harbor visit masks 'hawkish' intent

Japanese prime minister only trying to strengthen US alliance to curb rise of China, analysts say

By AN BALJIE
and MO JINGXI

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Pearl Harbor, criticized by China as lacking in sincerity, was quickly followed by one of his Cabinet ministers visiting a Tokyo war shrine on Wednesday.

According to analysts, Abe's visit to Pearl Harbor, the target of the 1941 Japanese surprise attack on Hawaii, had hawkish intentions at heart, not pursuing peace and reconciliation. The purpose, they said, was to broaden Japan's military capabilities and curb the rise of China by strengthening the alliance with the United States.

On Tuesday, Abe and US President Barack Obama laid wreaths at the USS Arizona Memorial.

Afterward, in a speech, Abe said that Japan would never again wage war. On Dec 7,



Former South Korean "comfort women" Gil Won-ok (left) and Kim Bok-dong attend a protest on Wednesday calling for annulment of a settlement between Seoul and Tokyo on the issue. JUNG YEON-JE / AFP

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1941, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor killed more than 2,400 US citizens and drew the US into World War II.

Not long after Abe spoke,

carrying out the war.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said Japan should reflect upon its war crimes in a sincere manner rather than "make political shows repeatedly". She spoke at a regular news conference on Wednesday.

The reconciliation between Japan and victimized Asian countries, including China, must be based on Tokyo's sincere reflection on the suffering it caused, she said, adding that some Western media have used words like "shrewd" to describe Abe's visit.

In the Financial Times, writer Joji Sakurai called Abe's visit "a dovish act that masks a hawkish intent". The visit is "shrewd politics", through which Abe could defuse fears about militarism reawakening in Japan, Sakurai wrote.

"Mr. Abe's dream is to

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CROSS-STRAITS

Taiwan risks ties by denying Consensus

By ZHANG YI
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Both a Taiwan affairs official and researchers have indicated the island's "diplomatic ties" will likely continue to suffer if Taipei continues to shun the 1992 Consensus on one China.

An Fengshan, spokesman of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, China's Cabinet, said on Wednesday that the Chinese mainland and Taiwan have achieved peaceful development of their relationship since 2008 based on sticking to the 1992 Consensus and opposing Taiwan "independence".

That's why they have avoided frictions in dealing with "diplomatic affairs", An said at a regular news conference.

But the relationship changed on May 20, he said, because Tsai Ing-wen of the Democratic Progressive Party assumed office in Taiwan that day, and she has denied the 1992 Consensus.

Any attempt to create 'two Chinas', or 'one China, one Taiwan', is doomed to fail."

An Fengshan, spokesman for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council

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An said Taiwan leader Tsai's refusal to support the Consensus has undermined the common political ground and political trust.

"The prospects ... and the achievements of the development of their relations have been through severe blows, and the impact has come in many aspects," An said. "The mainland has always upheld the one-China principle in dealing with Taiwan's 'diplomatic affairs'. Any attempt to create 'two Chinas', or 'one China, one Taiwan', is doomed to fail."

China resumed diplomatic relations with Sao Tome and Principe on Monday, after the African nation cut "diplomatic ties" with Taipei.

Liu Guoshen, director of the Taiwan Research Institute at Xiamen University, said Beijing is prudent in dealing with the resumption of diplomatic ties with former allies of Taiwan.

"Beijing puts the relationship with Taiwan first. However, if the tension between the mainland and Taiwan continues to grow, it is inevitable that Beijing will consider the requests for establishing diplomatic relations from former allies of Taiwan," Liu said.

Sheng Jiuyuan, head of the research center of Taiwan affairs at Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, said there is an irresistible trend that Taiwan's "diplomatic allies" now hope to establish diplomatic relations with the mainland because it is in their political and economic interests.

In the news

CHINA Student success

Survey says 28 percent of collegians aim to be entrepreneurs. > p5

LIFE Best movies



China Daily's critic picks top films for 2016. > p19

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NEGOTIATIONS

Turkey, Russia agree on Syria cease-fire

By AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE in Istanbul

Turkey and Russia have agreed to a cease-fire plan for all of Syria that was expected to come into force at midnight Wednesday, Turkish state media said on Wednesday, as Ankara and Moscow tighten cooperation to find an end to the civil war.

The plan was to expand to the whole country a cease-fire that was brokered by Turkey and Russia earlier this month in the city of Aleppo to allow for the evacuation of civilians, the state-run Anadolu news agency said.

But in a speech in Ankara following the report, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan made no reference to the plan, while Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said he could not answer questions on an issue "about which I don't have

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enough information". A Syrian rebel source, who asked not to be named, told AFP in Beirut that details still had to be submitted to the rebel groups, adding that there was no agreement as yet.

Like earlier plans brokered by the United States and Russia, it excludes "terror" groups, the agency said.

If successful, the plan could form the basis of political negotiations overseen by Russia and Turkey between the Damascus regime and the opposition in the Kazakh capital Astana, it added.

It was not immediately clear how and where the plan had been agreed on. Qatar-based Al-Jazeera said a new meeting is planned on Thursday in Ankara between Syrian rebels and Russia.