



**ADELSONS, SANDS CHINA RAISE BAR ON TYPHOON RELIEF**  
Sands China has pledged yesterday to donate MOP65 million for relief efforts, 35 million coming from the Adelsons

P5



**GOV'T TO REFUND TAXES FOR CARS DAMAGED BY HATO**  
The government will offer financial assistance to vehicle owners whose cars were damaged by floods during the typhoon

P6



**CHINA TO RESCUE PUERTO RICO UNDER BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE**

P9



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## WORLD BRIEFS

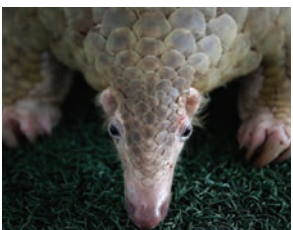
AP PHOTO



**Myanmar** Several hundred Buddhist nationalists, including monks, rallied in Myanmar's largest city on Wednesday to urge stronger action against insurgents from the Muslim Rohingya minority for attacks on police last week. The attacks in Rakhine state in western Myanmar have spiraled into chaotic violence, with more than 100 dead and villages torched.  
More on p12

**CAMBODIA** A court has found a 63-year-old Korean man guilty of child sex offenses and sentenced him to 14 years in prison. A spokesman for the Siem Reap provincial court said Park Youl was found guilty yesterday of child prostitution and sexual intercourse with girls under 15 years of age.

AP PHOTO



**THAILAND** Customs officials have seized more than 100 live pangolins and 450 kilograms of scales from the endangered animal in their latest action against illegal wildlife trafficking, the customs department chief said yesterday.

More on backpage



**JOURNALISTS, LAWMAKERS BARRED AT BORDER**

# Hong Kong persona non grata

P2-3 REPORT, ANALYSIS

## Say what? Jason Chao launches accountability website tomorrow

P7



**Extra**  
times  
weekend Guide  
INSIDE



## ANALYSIS

## The Right to Information

"Where there is lack of institutions for managing information and the political will to make information available, information professionals are unlikely to have a conducive environment in which to practice their skills. Well established institutions would stimulate the use of information and facilitate the acquisition of skills required to use information to advantage. It takes time to uproot the culture of impunity and non-accountability. This requires long term investment and commitment to promote a culture that appreciates information and makes it readily available to citizens." (Svård, 2017)

Sérgio de Almeida Correia\*  
MDT Exclusive

1. Macau's public has been confronted with news of four journalists from Hong Kong who were refused entry to Macau in the last week. It was reported that they intended to cover the devastating consequences of Typhoon Hato. In response to this impediment to a legitimate exercise of the journalists' profession, various associations of the press from both Macau and Hong Kong made their protests heard.

2. The documentation presented to the journalists regarding refusal of entry give reference to reasons of public safety. Asked to clarify, the Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak, summarized in a press conference as follows: (1) the cases are confidential and the reasons cannot be disclosed; and (2) that it is not a case of professional persecution since the authorities have not concentrated on any single profession. At the same time, the coordinator of the Civil Protection Operations Center of Macao revealed that "in principle," there is an entry ban on people who "could endanger the public order" [Hoje Macau 28/08/2017, p.5], and that the "Government and military personnel greatly respect the freedom of the press," therefore "we have press conferences almost every day" [Ponto Final, 28/08/2017, p.4].

3. The number of cases of refusal of entry into Macau has been increasing, and the reason is still not clear nor who is making such orders. There are also situations where people are requested to leave after gaining entry. In some

situations, and even when they are Chinese citizens coming from another SAR of China, it is important to question the compatibility with the text and spirit of the Basic Law of Macau of (a) this prohibition of entry and (b) the failure to clarify the rationale propped up by an argument of confidentiality. That is, whether the decisions respect freedom of the press, the right to information and the fundamental rights and duties of residents.

4. Article 18 of the Basic Law states that in addition to the Basic Law, the laws in force in the MSAR are those previously in force in accordance with article 8, and those determined by the legislative body. Of the national laws of the PRC, only those in Annex III of the Basic Law are applicable to Macau, none of which deals with the subject matter here.

5. It should also be borne in mind that the Basic Law enshrines the freedom of expression and freedom of the press for residents, guarantees the applicability in the MSAR of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and that non-residents enjoy equal rights and freedoms as granted and guaranteed to residents (see articles 27, 40 and 43 of the Basic Law).

6. In turn, the Chief Executive (CE) has the obligation to enforce the Basic Law and other applicable laws in the MSAR, as well as "to comply with the guidelines issued by the Central People's Government in relation to matters provided for in the Basic Law" (See article 50).

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The decision to prevent the entry of journalists from Hong Kong to the Macau seems incomprehensible, since it appears to be in flagrant violation ... of the Basic Law.

7. Of the set of laws in force in Macau subordinated under the Basic Law and related to the above issues, the Law of the Press (Law no. 7/90/M) must also be taken into account, as too must the Chief Executive's dispatches on the exercise of freedom of the press and the right to information.

8. It can then be said that while the Basic Law expressly and unequivocally sets down the freedom of the press, it does not establish any right

to information. However, this right is referred to in clear terms in article 3 of the Press Law, expressed as a right "to inform", "to seek information" and "to be informed", which includes "freedom of access to sources of information".

9. This formulation is in line with what constitutionalists Gomes Canotilho and Vital Moreira point out when, in an annotation to Article 37 of the Portuguese Constitution, they state that the "first [right to inform] consists [...]

of the freedom to transmit or communicate information to others, disseminating it without any impediment; but it may also have a positive form in the right to inform, that is, the right to the means to inform others."

10. In turn, the right to become informed "consists, in particular, of the freedom to collect information, to search for sources of information, that is, of the right not to be prevented from being informed [...]"

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A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

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11. As to the right to be informed, these authors refer to this as “the positive version of the right to be informed, consisting of a right to be properly acquainted with and truly informed” both by the media and by public authorities (CRP Anotada, Vol. I, 4th edition, 2007, P. 573).

**12.** As a “manifestation of the freedom of expression of thought,” the right to information has also been accepted by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which is currently in force in the MSAR. This right encompasses the freedoms “to seek, receive and be updated on information” (art. 19, no. 2), although it may be restricted upon grounds of “safeguarding national security and public order.”

**13.** The Chief Executive of MSAR, in the preamble to the CE Dispatch 145/2002, stated that he considered the “media indispensable to the exercise of fundamental rights in a democratic and pluralist society.” Thus, he emphasized the irreplaceable role of the press in “the development of society and the promotion of social harmony,” which is why he was concerned with “enhancing the independence of the right to information vis-à-vis political and economic powers.”

**14.** In this legislative context, the decision to prevent the entry of journalists from Hong Kong to the Macau SAR seems incomprehensible, since it appears to be in flagrant violation of what is postulated and therefore appears incompatible with the text and spirit of the Basic Law and other laws in force.

**15.** Having partially answered the first question above, it is now necessary to verify, before issuing a final judgment, whether the failure to explain the reasons for the prohibition upon grounds of confidentiality is permissible.

**16.** On this point, the official documentation presented to those targeted only mentioned internal security reasons, which itself clearly provides insufficient information to understand the motivation for the political and administrative power behind the decision being issued. It is true that the ICCPR provides for a restriction of the right to information in order to safeguard national security and public order, but this point could and should have been clarified by the Secretary for Security.

**17.** For Macau’s public opinion and for those targeted, i.e. professional journalists on duty - who, as far as we know came without criminal record,

since otherwise public authorities would not fail to provide this information - it seems strange that there could be reasons to recommend an approach so drastic as to impede their entry and the exercise of their profession.

**18.** It is not clear whether a journalist on a mission or a photographer from Hong Kong, a Chinese citizen, would jeopardize the safety of the MSAR simply by taking photographs of the garbage in the streets, fallen trees or public facilities, by having free access to uncover all its deficiencies of design, construction and oversight, trying to speak with local citizens and with the political and/or administrative representatives to obtain clarification. What was decided, and the way it was, jeopardized all the work that has been done in the MSAR in defense of the “second system” and forgets the investment that has been made by the taxpayers in the form of government subsidies to the Chinese and Portuguese press to defend the freedom of the press and the right to information.

**19.** In line with the aforementioned constitutionalists’ words, in the absence of a clause restricting the rights in question, it would be important for the rights to be harmonized “subject to methodical balancing or weighting” alongside other potentially conflicting benefits and rights. And further, what happened requires prompt explanation to those targeted and to the public, without formal subterfuge, so that the decision leading to impediment would not be seen as excessive given the circumstances, and therefore unfounded, perfectly arbitrary and abusive.

**20.** If we consider, according to J. C. Vieira de Andrade, that press freedom - and the right to information as one of its corollaries - is part of the core of the subjective fundamental rights guaranteed by the Basic Law, then things cannot happen as they did, let alone happen again in the future. In addition, those targeted are residents of a neighboring SAR, which forms an integral part of the PRC, and are also subject to the rule of law and benefit from the guarantees of the “second system”, including freedom of the press and access to sources.

**21.** More than a right, press freedom is “a complex or constellation of rights and freedoms” (G. Canotilho and V. Moreira, 2017), a “right of defense before the public authorities” and a “constitutional guarantee of the free public opinion.”

**22.** Mere reasons of confidentiality, which are unknown and are not minimally

justified, are still insufficient. Perhaps more serious, is the affirmation that other professional classes and people are being targeted without knowledge as to why. What did these citizens do that was so serious? What sort of reasons are these, especially when it is known that in the MSAR “the socialist system and policies do not apply” (art. 5 of the Basic Law), which according to art. 31 “of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China [...] the systems guaranteeing the fundamental rights and freedoms of its residents [...]” (art. 31) are based solely and exclusively on the Basic Law and these are extended to “individuals who are not residents of Macau,” but who, if they are in the MSAR, “enjoy, in accordance with the law, the rights and freedoms of the residents” (see art. 43)?

**23.** I admit that there is an excess of voluntarism (going beyond what is required by-law and even common sense) on the part of the public authorities, especially as not everyone is from the same background and the environment in which they were educated is not governed by the same standards of freedom and skepticism. But as long as there are good intentions - and I believe there to be good intentions for the MSAR and the progress of the PRC - too much voluntarism can be curtailed, the mistakes corrected, as mandated by good Confucian ethics, and the institutions, laws and procedures enhanced.

**24.** What is not to be condoned is that in the “second system” there are some entities that behave as if they were in the frame of the first system, ignoring the differences between one and the other, tarnishing the image that is transmitted outside of the MSAR and its institutions, thinking that the simple motto “I want, I can and I command” is enough, thus ignoring the demands of transparency and legitimate scrutiny of discretionary acts of power.

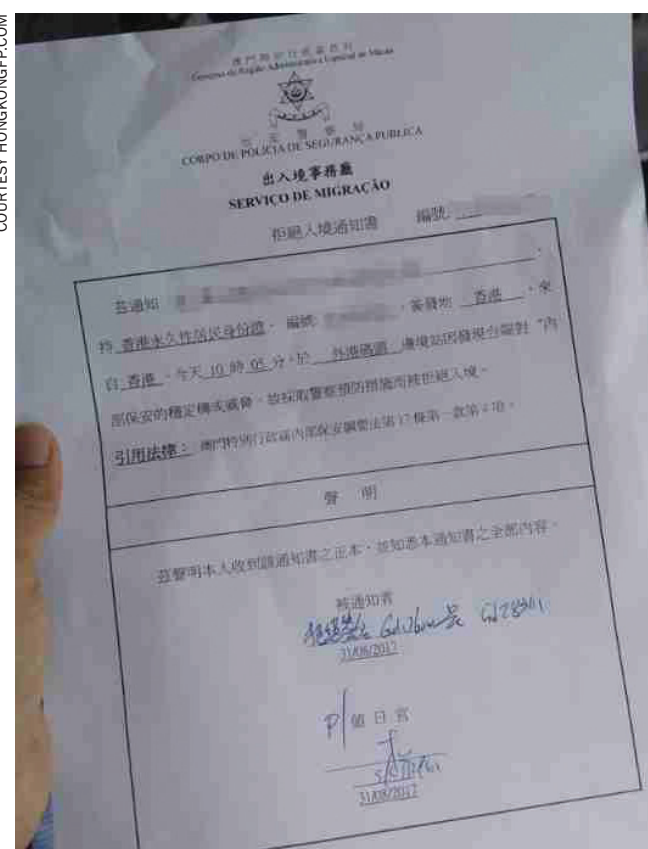
**25.** The respect for the exercise of press freedom, the legitimate right of access to sources and the guarantee of the right to information, in its various forms, does not involve the convening of press conferences where nothing substantial is clarified, with obscure decisions or apologies, and then simply moving on, trampling on fundamental rights guaranteed by the PRC and the Basic Law, which are part of the cultural, legal and civilizational heritage of the Macau SAR.

(This text was translated from the original Portuguese version by MDT/KTranz)

\*Lawyer and political scientist

## Another Hong Kong reporter denied entry

COURTESY HONGKONGFP.COM



**A**NOTHER Hong Kong reporter was barred from entering Macau on security grounds last week, Hong Kong Free Press reported yesterday.

The reporter, who worked for Apple Daily, is the latest individual to be refused entry into the territory by local immigration services.

Immigration services said the reporter was denied on the ground of constituting a threat to internal security and stability.

On Wednesday, Hong Kong politician and Tai Po District Council member Kwan Wing Yip was also detained at a Taipa checkpoint for two hours before being allowed to enter Macau.

Last week, four other journalists from Hong Kong’s Apple Daily, HKO1 and the South China Morning Post were turned away from Macau, after traveling to the MSAR to report on the aftermath of Typhoon Hato and subsequent relief efforts.

On Tuesday evening, democratic lawmaker Helena Wong was refused entry to the city for the same reason. She claims to have been traveling to Macau as part of an exchange trip to the University of Macau, organized by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

The Macau government has repeatedly denied that it is targeting foreign journalists and lawmakers, explaining that the services are not aware of the individuals’ professions. The government has not provided details on the criteria used to determine whether a person is a threat to security.

Some of the persons refused entry have promised to write to Macau’s chief executive, Chui Sai On, to complain.

Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak has said on several occasions that “every country and every region has its own immigration control policies. To those who carry influence or threat to region’s security, that country’s or the region’s law enforcement department has the right to execute the law.”

However, such immigration decisions are typically met with condemnation and alarm from activists, lawmakers, reporters and journalists’ associations.

The Macau Portuguese and English Press Association issued a statement this week that it “finds the explanation given by local authorities incomprehensible and unsatisfactory [...] and it] tarnishes the international image of the SAR regarding press freedom.” **DB**



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# The Adelsons and Sands China raise typhoon relief funds to MOP65 million

**EXPANDING** their prompt relief efforts in the aftermath of Typhoon Hato, Sands China (SCL) has pledged yesterday to donate MOP65 million for relief efforts. MOP30 million are from the company and another MOP35 million contribution comes from the Adelson Family Foundation.

The funds will be applied in identified recovery projects "to assist with longer term relief, recovery and rebuilding efforts," a SCL press release states.

"The thoughts and concerns of the Adelson family and our team members around the world have been with the entire Macau com-

munity, and certainly our fellow team members, during this extremely challenging time," said Sheldon Adelson, chairman and CEO of Las Vegas Sands and Sands China Ltd. "We are saddened by the loss inflicted on so many, but inspired by the perseverance and dedication of all those who have already begun the important process of rebuilding. Providing financial resources in support of that effort is a responsibility that Sands China and the Adelson family make without hesitation."

With this contribution the total amount pledged by gaming concessionaires totals MOP185 million. Besides SCL, also MGM/

Pansy Ho, Melco/Lawrence Ho and Lui Che Woo/Galaxy offered donations.

The casino operators are also engaged along with many other companies and individuals in volunteer recovery efforts for the community.

Shortly after Typhoon Hato hit Macau, SCL "began mobilizing its team members to help communities by providing professional and technical expertise from within the company and its network of associates, human resources, and financial contributions to those appealing for immediate help. This vital action-oriented work continues."

According to the company sta-

tement, "knowing that the entire city faced immense challenges because of limited engineering and technical services available in the aftermath of two typhoons, Sands China swiftly took the initiative to contact the Macau authorities to offer such support wherever possible."

Donations from SCL "have been made to four non-governmental organizations, including Caritas Macau and Fuhong Society of Macau, to repair motor vehicles damaged during the typhoon. In the meantime, four 7-seater vans have been made available to Caritas Macau to ensure that their Good Take Express service can continue ope-

rating."

SCL is also looking after its suppliers offering "for any goods or services that were delivered in August 2017 by micro-enterprises, young entrepreneurs or "Made-in-Macao" companies, "Sands China will, at the request of these suppliers, expedite payments to them. Upon suppliers' request, Sands China will also offer a 50 percent advance payment for purchase orders or contracts issued during the remainder of 2017."

Last but not least, "for children who tragically lost their parents to Typhoon Hato, Sands China has pledged to set up a fund to support their continuing education."



WILFRED WONG  
COO, SANDS CHINA

## 'Our relief pledge is for the long term'

Paulo Coutinho

**WILFRED** Wong, president and COO of Sands China said the gaming operator being "a company with its roots firmly planted in Macau, our thoughts are with the community during this difficult time when the city needs support on multiple fronts."

In an interview with the Times yesterday, Wong said the business was not much affected during the typhoons' week, and that the 10th anniversary of The Venetian may still be on the cards.

**Macau Daily Times (MDT)- You pledged MOP65 million relief fund. But let's be honest, money is not the issue for the Macau government...**

**Wilfred Wong (WW) -** Our pledge is an expansion of our relief efforts made ever since Typhoon Hato struck Macau. We felt that this is the time for us to make a pledge, not just for the immediate relief, but for the longer term.

**MDT - Do you have a plan on how to use the money?**

**WW -** Yes, we actually identified projects through our network of non-governmental organizations and the government. For exam-

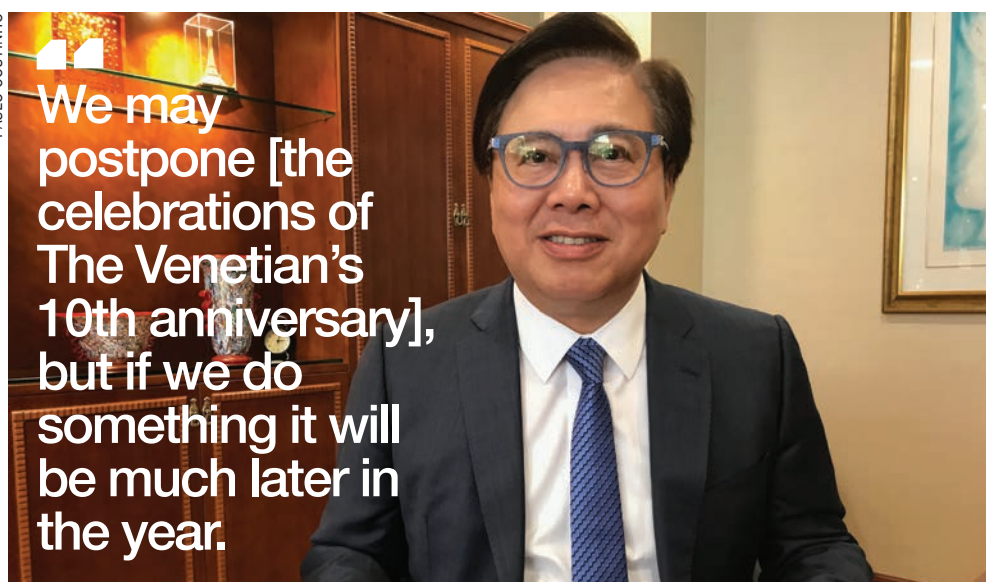
ple, on Tuesday we dispatched a team of technical staff to help the residents of a building in Fai Chi Kei, who were facing water supply problems. The team was able to quickly and successfully help restore the water supply there. The team is working with authorities to help check and make repairs to buildings. We are offering technical assistance, equipment, and assisting with stabilizing recently restored electricity and water services. We estimate that, including the buildings we're working on, we have helped or are helping to restore the water supply for maybe 2,000 residents. So it's not just the money, it is the staff time, it is [dispensing] staff from our team to work for the city. For example, the Deaf Association center was wiped out and the building was in danger [of collapsing]. The roof was collapsing, so we sent our engineers out there to [evaluate the situation] and if the government allows us, we repair the roof. We'll spend money, we'll get our contractors (working with us on a long-term basis) and we just send them to work in repair operations; so we redirect their resources. Another example is the waterfront; we have a row of wooden huts where the roofs were all gone. We are

now sending in contractors to secure them and make sure that they are liveable.

**MDT - Did the Sands properties sustain damage?**

**WW -** Sands properties in general were not badly affected. We do have ceilings, glasses were broken, windows were broken, but [the damage was] not large-scale and most of it can be fixed within the next two weeks. So I think as a property we're lucky. For example, the lift at the Eiffel Tower had to be suspended because the cable [was damaged]. The wind was too strong and pulled it [out]. Apart from these things, in terms of safety, we felt lucky; there were no major injuries sustained by any of our staff or guests during that period. There were some minor injuries to staff - some of them not at work. They were at home and you know, a window [fell], a leg suffered a cut, but these were minor injuries. And for a while, we were accommodating some of the staff whose homes are gone - or not liveable - in our hotel rooms.

**MDT - Another effect was the cancellation of The Venetian's tenth anniversary celebrations on the 28th. Are you still going to throw**



**a party at some point?**

**WW -** We have not made a decision yet, but we felt that the tenth anniversary is still a milestone that should be remembered and it's also important for our staff and our associates. Over the next couple of months we should [wait and] see how the situation is [evolving] and how Macau as a whole is recovering. From what we saw in the first week, it looks good. Things are beginning to return to normal; the government is allowing tour groups to come back and so on. Water is 99 percent restored, as well as electricity. That's why we didn't say we have canceled [the celebrations]. We may postpone it, but if we do something it will be much later in the year.

**MDT - How was the business affected?**

**WW -** The business and the gaming in August [has been] okay as a whole. If it were not for the typhoon it would have been better, but generally July and August were good months, and during the typhoon period our occupancy [rate] was very high. That's why we have to maintain all the services because there were over 10,000 rooms filled with guests in our property. So we have to keep the minimum service level going on, but luckily the power outage was only a few hours in our case. The air conditioning resumed much later - a couple of days later - but once the power was back on, we never ceased operations because our backup

generator was in operation and the first thing we put back in service was the food court. So by 6p.m. that day [August 23] the food court was up and running, and we managed to feed the guests. Otherwise, where would they go? There's nowhere for them to go. So business-wise, I think last week has been quiet because fewer Hong Kong people are coming and tour groups were not coming at all [from the mainland]. Zhuhai was also damaged, so not many people are coming across the border. But come September, business will resume as usual because we do have many MICE [events] already booked and they have not been canceled. Hopefully we will have a solid September.



**T**HE government will offer financial assistance to vehicle owners whose cars were damaged by floods during the typhoon, according to Financial Bureau Director Iong Kong Leong, who announced the policy in a joint government department press conference yesterday.

Only those who purchase a new vehicle to replace a damaged one will be eligible for financial assistance.

Those buying a replacement car which operates on clean energy (including gas, solar power, or electricity) will not have to pay taxes on their new vehicle. Additionally, the government will provide a 100 percent tax rebate to people who have already paid to repair their damaged cars.

Those purchasing cars that do not run on clean energy will be refunded 80 percent of taxes paid for damaged vehicles.

"Cars [damaged as a result of the floods] need to have their registration canceled by the Transport Bureau," said Iong.

Since the financial assistance program involves taxes, which fall under the authority of the Legislative Assembly (AL), Iong said the program will have to wait until the next AL to be approved.

The program will be immediately discussed by the new AL once it commences operations.

Transport Bureau (DSAT) Director Lam Hin San issued a reminder that the government has already reached an agreement with towing companies about towing fee standards, and that the city's towing companies will maintain the same prices for their services.

He suggested that the corporate owners of jointly-owned properties hire only one company to manage issues in private parking lots.

Meanwhile, acting director of The Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) Leong Ka Cheng said that there is a low chance of SMG hoisting a Signal 8 on Sunday in response to a tropical depression that is

RENATO MARQUES



## Government to refund taxes for cars damaged by typhoon

approaching Macau.

However, the SMG advised that it would raise Signal 1 within several hours after the press conference at 4:30 p.m. yesterday – Signal 1 was hoisted at 7 p.m. – and warned that there is a relatively high chance that Signal 3 will be raised between tomorrow and Sunday.

Due to the uncertainty of the tropical depression's trajectory, the likelihood of raising Signal 8 will increase as the storm approaches Macau.

According to Leong, rainfall is expected to occur on Sun-

day, and SMG does not exclude the possibility of light flooding in some places.

As noted by Leong, since the depression is estimated to arrive east of the Pearl River, there is a low chance of storm surge.

The Director of the Health Bureau (SSM), Lei Chin Ion, is advising the public to pay close attention to hygiene, as gastroenteritis cases are on the rise.

Some 40 to 100 people are typically diagnosed with

gastroenteritis daily, but the daily number surged to 200 immediately after the typhoon. Specifically, 226, 204 and 223 people were diagnosed with gastroenteritis on August 28, 29 and 30, respectively. **JZ**

## DSAT introduces changes at Border Gate bus stops ahead of new school year

**T**HE Transport Bureau (DSAT) has changed several bus routes in the Border Gate area to meet higher demand for public transport, which is expected to increase with the start of the new school year. "Taking into account the displacement of students and their parents and the road situations of the public streets around the Border Gate area and after an evaluation and coordination meeting held by DSAT with the Traffic Department of the Public Security Police Force (PSP) and the three bus operators, we will once more adjust the bus stops that serve Border Gate in order to meet the bus service requirements at the beginning of the school year, making an appeal to drivers to pay attention [to such changes]," DSAT said in a statement.

The changes will affect seven bus routes. Of the major changes, Routes Number 9 and 9A will stop at the new bus stop at Jardim Triangular; Numbers 3 and 3X will stop at Istmo Ferreira do Amaral; Numbers 1 and 25 will stop at Av. Artur Tamagnini Barbosa; and MT4 will stop at a temporary bus stop set up at Parque Municipal Dr Sun Yat Sen.

"The three bus operators will mobilize buses at rush hours to provide special bus services to meet the needs of passengers at the busiest stops, as well as accelerate the frequency," said DSAT.

The bureau added that PSP will closely monitor traffic intersections and congested areas and, if necessary, will reduce congestion by redirecting private vehicle traffic at busy sections. It will alert the public to such changes. **RM**

**■ A 100 percent tax rebate will be offered to those who paid to repair damaged cars running on clean energy**

## IC warns: Stay away from Cultural Center

**T**HE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) warned the public in a statement yesterday to stay away from the Macau Cultural Center, "for their personal safety."

The statement noted that of all IC entities, the Macau Cultural Center (CCM) is one of the fac-

ilities that has suffered the most extensive damage following Typhoon Hato, as its roof was severely damaged.

The bureau reported that the damage could "endanger public safety in a certain area" and it recommends "the public to avoid walking to that area

for their personal safety."

Staff of the Macau Cultural Center and other nearby entities are still required to work in and around the facility.

Also in the statement, the IC announced that it will distribute its budget to offer practical support to and funding for resto-

ration measures concerning the damaged inflicted on cultural heritage sites following Typhoon Hato. The decision was announced following a meeting on Wednesday with the administrators of several temples and churches in the territory.

The IC has gradually

collected information over the past week from temple and church administrators in order to carry out a comprehensive analysis and evaluation, needed to execute a restoration plan.

"The damage caused to temples and churches in Macau is basically under

control. There is no significant danger to public and heritage buildings," a statement released yesterday by the IC informed.

"The problems encountered are mainly caused by the collapse of trees which blocked access, wall or tile debris flaking off, electric wires damage resulting from the floods and health concerns related with the proliferation of mosquitos in still waters."



# Chao to launch website for candidates' social media

**P**ROJECT Just Macau will launch a new website tomorrow titled "What did they say?" to provide the public with a convenient way to access electoral candidates' past social media posts, so they can evaluate political figures' records before casting ballots in the September 17 Legislative Assembly election.

Initiated by activist Jason Chao, the project aims to promote public engagement in the election process by facilitating greater access to candidates' public online records.

According to the activist, the upcoming website will address the "weak and incomplete search functionality, probably deliberately [created]" by Facebook.

Thus far, the website has aggregated all public Facebook posts published by the first candidates. Only posts that were published or updated on or before September 2 will be available for search.

Election materials classified as "campaign information" will not be present in the dataset.

RENATO MARQUES



"Project Just Macau endeavors to collect all open information that Facebook makes it available for programmatic retrieval," said the activist.

"It's worthwhile to give the citizens the chance to understand

the speeches of the candidates in order to make better decisions in the elections," he told the Times.

The website will not include candidates who do not have social media accounts. Chao

said that the website took three weeks to launch, and has acquired information that candidates may have removed from their social media platforms.

"This will help local citizens to know [whether] their words [match] their actions," he said.

By leveraging big data technologies, Project Just Macau has also studied the use of social media by political figures – including some candidates – in the aftermath of Typhoon Hato.

The group analyzed a controversial post by an unnamed incumbent legislator about the necessity of soliciting the Macau Garrison's assistance.

Chao concluded from "reactions" to the lawmaker's post that the available online data does not support the popular speculation that the controversial post would significantly impact the chance of the lawmaker keeping or losing his seat.

Recalling the government's partnership with tech giant Alibaba, Chao noted that residents still do not understand the power of big data.

"Citizens have not yet realized [the] power of dictatorship in Macau. This is a chance for citizens to understand the power of big data," he said.

Chao also announced that Project Just Macau's role was far less necessary than first anticipated.

**Citizens have not yet realized [the] power of dictatorship in Macau. This is a chance for citizens to understand the power of big data.**

JASON CHAO

"The fact that the Legislative Assembly Electoral Affairs Commission [CAEAL] has stepped up in pursuing election complaints this year is making the role of Project JustMacau.net, in monitoring the authorities' handling of complaints, much less significant than initially expected," he concluded. LV

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REAL ESTATE MATTERS

The new laws and how they affect you

Juliet Risdon is a Director of JML Property and a property investor.

Having been established in 1994, JML Property offers investment property & homes. It specializes in managing properties for owners and investors, and providing attractive and comfortable homes for tenants.

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JULIET RISDON

You will almost certainly have read about the real estate laws that have been the subject of government discussion lately. Specifically, the discussion has been on the Civil Code Articles 969 – 1056 relating directly to Lease Agreements.

Overview

At first glance it appears that the idea of this review was to strengthen a tenant's position and offer tenants added layers protection. Your view on whether this purpose is misdirected will largely depend on whether you are a tenant or a landlord.

However, the real motivation behind the review is social stability, and this of course is the primary concern of the government.

As the Macau population continues to grow, there has been increasing pressure on the government to take action on rising property prices. The high price of purchasing a property means they are under pressure to introduce measures protecting the interests of tenants.

The review addressed seven articles, all but two of which were eventually passed and published on 21st August 2017.

The changes in the Civil Code will only come into effect 180 days after the publication of the revised articles, and therefore the new code will become effective from Feb 21st 2018.

Between now and when the new articles come into effect, all agreements made remain governed by the current law.

Once the new articles are effective, all agreements including Residential, Industrial, Commercial, Agricultural etc made before that date are governed under the old law, and all agreements made on or after that date will be governed by the new law.

Finally, before we review the changes to the articles, it is worthwhile noting that the subject has drawn a lot of discussion and has been somewhat divisive.

Since the law has already been passed, it is an agents job to understand the law and make use of it to best protect clients'

interests.

Considering what's at stake, we would urge readers to ensure that your agent has a clear understanding of the revisions and what they mean. Anything less could prove very costly indeed.

What was and was not revised;

The main areas revised concern;

1. The right to terminate an agreement
2. The recognition of signatures of the Tenant and Landlord
3. The establishment of an arbitration centre for lease agreement related disputes

Two revisions were not passed, both concerned with the concept of 'Rent Control' and the establishment of an index by which rent increases can be governed.

As such, these may be addressed and raised again in future, but for now the concept is shelved and the free market will be left to do its work.

**Next Week:** Detailed explanation of the revisions

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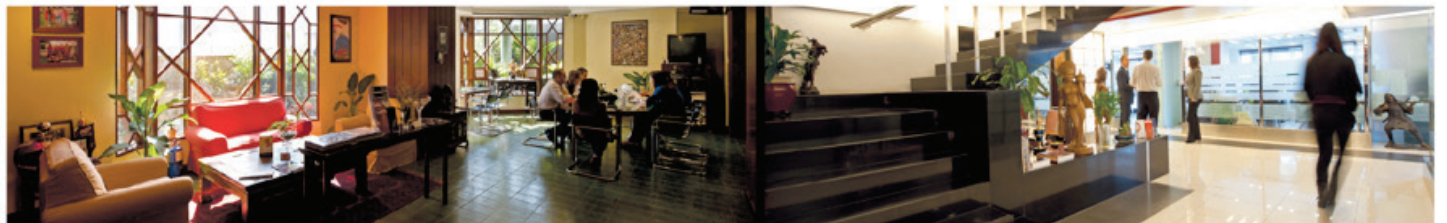
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Rebecca Spalding &  
Michelle Kaske

**O**VER the years, Puerto Rico has wooed visitors and investors with beaches, sun, tax breaks and splashy public works. Now the Caribbean island wants to add an outpost of Chinese culture, complete with graceful pavilions and regional cuisine.

The same territory that racked up more than USD70 billion of debt has a new plan for spurring its long-suffering economy: have private investors build a \$200 million China-themed center in Arecibo, on a former sugar-cane field about an hour outside San Juan. The investors, assembled by a Chinese law and development firm, plan to break ground in May and envision 39 structures to highlight foods, music and entertainment.

The plan, which must overcome both China's new restrictions on foreign investment and the commonwealth's checkered history of ambitious development, is part of a wider strategy to lure foreign money to a territory that defaulted and in May tumbled into bankruptcy. A decade-long recession has left the economy and infrastructure in dire condition, but years of excessive borrowing to fill budget gaps has shut the commonwealth out of the municipal-bond market.

"Puerto Rico really cannot at this point go to the market and issue bonds and borrow money for public investment," said Manuel Laboy, the island's secretary of economic development and commerce. "It has to be based on private investment."

Enter China. Puerto Rico is looking to capitalize on the nation's recent global investment surge through its 'Belt and Road' infrastructure initiative that may fuel as much as \$500 billion of international investment. The Americas - including some of Puerto Rico's Caribbean neighbors like Cuba and the Bahamas - have already been a popular investment destination for Chinese companies for years.

Puerto Rico officials plan to visit the country in September, a trip that follows a March investment forum in San Juan, where government officials met with more than 150 Chinese business people and Governor Ricardo Rossello gave the keynote address. Chinese investors have expressed interest in pharmaceuticals, tourism, manufacturing, power plants, road and bridge construction and recycling plants, Laboy said.

The commonwealth for decades has tried to make itself attractive to business. An export-services incentive gives companies a 4 percent tax rate and exemptions on dividends and property levies. To boost tourism, the island gives tax credits and exemptions for hotels, time shares, theme parks and golf

BLOOMBERG



## USD500B INVESTMENT

# Exotic China plan to rescue Puerto Rico's economy

courses. Credits for hotel development are in the range of 40 percent, Laboy said.

That backing doesn't equal automatic success: The island needs more than a booming cultural park to reverse its slump. And Puerto Rico has a history of spending on jinxed projects. The Tren Urbano, a \$2.25 billion commuter line that runs through San Juan, sells only a third of the rides that it needs and loses \$50 million a year; an experimental nuclear plant operated only about four years before shutting down in 1968; and after years of development, the Port of the Americas in Ponce doesn't operate enough business to repay about \$226 million that it owes.

The disarray is reflected by the market. Some island securities have traded at pennies on the dollar and bonds from the commonwealth's last borrowing in March 2014 have dropped in value by 38 percent, changing hands Wednesday at an average 57.9 cents on the dollar, down from 93 cents when it was first offered.

There are hurdles as well on the other side of the Pacific. China this month set new rules on overseas investments, discouraging "irrational" acquisitions in industries ranging from real estate to hotels and entertainment - categories that would seem to include the Arecibo project. The drive is meant to reduce leverage in financial markets, end systemic risks and slow capital outflows that could weaken the nation's currency.

Jeff Carmichael, chief executive officer of the Yingke Caribbean China Center, the regional outpost of the Chinese firm backing the project, said it isn't subject to cash controls because of its cultural focus.

Still, there are several lures for the Chinese. Investing there allows Chinese nationals to win visas reserved for people who plow money into U.S. businesses, said Dahai Guo, chief executive officer of PuraCap Pharmaceutical LLC, a Chinese-owned company that makes generic medications in Dorado.

## ■ Puerto Rico is looking to capitalize on China's recent global investment surge through its 'Belt and Road' initiative

"China is interested in Puerto Rico not only for the beautiful island and the beaches," said Guo, who was born and raised in China and moved to the U.S. in 1995. "China will consider the U.S. territory for the immigration law."

PuraCap Caribe has invested more than \$50 million since March 2016, doubling employment and increasing manufac-

turing more than 600 percent, Guo said.

In 2016, Chinese businesses spent \$46.2 billion on U.S. investments, more than three times the amount in the prior year, according to the Rhodium Group. Its citizens were the third-largest group of foreign visitors in 2015, behind travelers from the U.K. and Japan, and are expected to be the largest by 2021, according to the U.S. Travel Association. They spend an average \$7,201 per visit, the most among foreign tourists.

"Even if we get a small percentage of that pie, for both foreign direct investment and the number of visitors from China tourism, we believe that is going to have a huge impact," said Laboy, who has assigned two staff members to lure Chinese investments.

The interest appears mutual. Last November, Linda Yang, executive chairman of Yingke Global Holdings and a global partner in the associated Yingke Law Firm, came to Puerto Rico for the first time and toured the island by helicopter.

"We saw a lot of farmland that was still empty, so we believe there are opportunities," she said in a telephone interview. "I really thought this could be a good place for Chinese investors."

Plans for the firm's Arecibo park, on a lush, green tract bounded by modest homes and the Rio Grande River, are still underway. Backers envision something similar to Orlando's Epcot

rising from the verdant undergrowth. The concept includes hotels and park-side condos for Chinese visitors and Sinocurious tourists too far from Beijing. The investors said they will meet in September with Puerto Rico officials to hammer out details of government support.

Yang's firm, which has more 5,200 lawyers in 42 Chinese offices and another 2,000 in 88 offices abroad, has already acted on its convictions that Puerto Rico is an island of opportunity by opening the Yingke Caribbean China Center in San Juan last year. The facility is one of many regional hubs it has throughout the world to help business people connect with local partners, lawyers and accountants, and hosted the March investment forum.

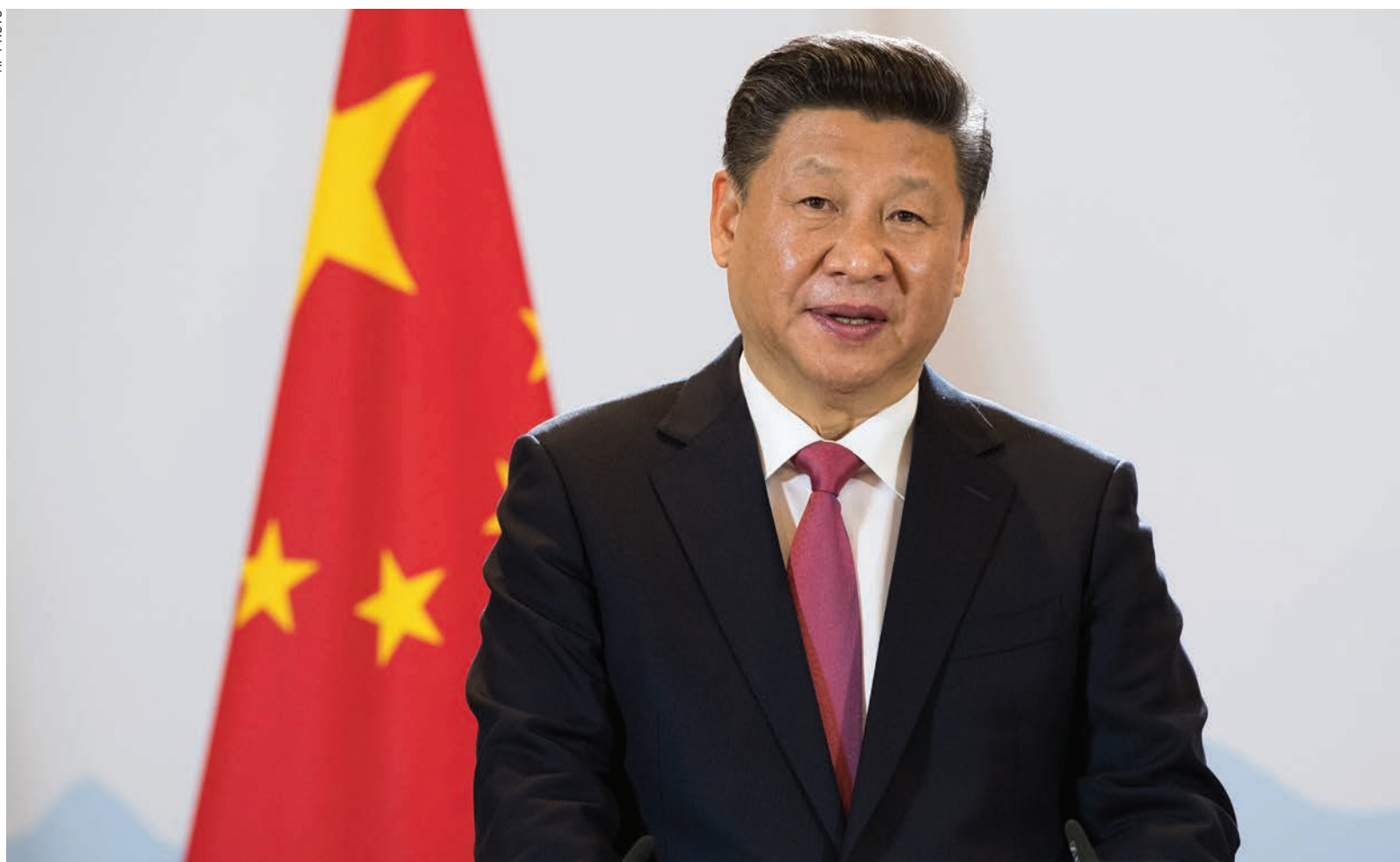
"On the one hand, the bankruptcy gives some signals that there is some risk for this region. On the other hand, after the bankruptcy, it could be like a new start, a new start with many new opportunities," Yang said.

Many in China have never heard of Puerto Rico. Yang's firm hopes the Arecibo park will change that. When tourists visit, perhaps they will also purchase a condo at one of the park-side developments also in the works or visit one of their manufacturing plants.

"Many times, Chinese combine business travel with personal travel," said Carmichael. The park could become "a reason for an extended stay." **Bloomberg**



AP PHOTO



Chinese President Xi Jinping

## COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS

# Markets to find out what happens after Beijing gathering

**F**OR most of the year, there's been an oft-repeated refrain among China-watchers. Whispered in private meetings with clients or loudly spoken by confident brokers, it goes something like this: "Don't worry about the economy or markets in 2017 - Beijing won't let anything bad happen ahead of the Communist Party Congress."

Much less clear is what happens after the gathering, a once-in-five years conclave now scheduled to convene on Oct. 18 in Beijing. Now that the dates - a secret until late yesterday - are known, the narrative will need to evolve, with what takes place at the meeting of some 2,300 delegates key to determining China's course over the next five years.

"There are two big concerns among overseas investors who are interested in China - the yuan and the uncertainties around the party congress," said Han Tongli, chief investment officer at DeepBlue Global Investment Ltd. in Hong Kong, which oversees USD200 million. "Once the dust has settled and the uncertainties have gone post-congress, investors will re-evaluate market pricing."

China's policy makers have stressed the need for stability and order in financial markets in the lead-up to what will be the 19th congress, even as they persist with a campaign against

leverage endorsed by the country's top leaders. Investors have taken comfort in the strengthened yuan and buoyant stocks, betting officials will act swiftly to quash any signs of speculation or upheaval that could distract from the party's message of prosperity and control.

## Xi Jinping has been continuously solidifying his power base since his ascension at the 2012 congress

But the 'Congress Put' keeping markets calm won't last, with the gathering a vehicle to dispense key messages about the party's vision for China's future. That could unleash a flurry of policy and regulatory activity once the agenda has been set and the delegates have returned home. Markets typically see volatility in the wake of party congresses, according to Goldman Sachs Group Inc.

President Xi Jinping, who also serves as general secretary of the party, has been continuous-

sly solidifying his power base since his ascension at the 2012 congress, and a key metric for China watchers will be how successful he is in influencing key personnel appointments.

The second critical aspect of the meeting will be the work report delivered on the first day, which sets the priorities for government policy in China for the next half decade. The importance of this document "can't be stressed enough," say analysts at Trivium, a research group co-founded by former Conference Board economist Andrew Polk.

"We are genuinely curious to see what happens here," they wrote in a preview of the gathering. "Xi has changed tack several times and the debate over economic policy is still raging with no obvious conclusion - stay tuned."

While the Communist Party pledged early in Xi's term to give markets a "decisive" role in shaping the economy, his leadership has seen the party's control deepened in a broad range of areas, from state-owned enterprises to social media and the military.

Xi's first term has seen periods of tumult in the markets, with individual investors encouraged to buy into stocks that went from boom to bust in a matter of weeks in mid-2015. Then came the shock devaluation of the yuan, which rattled global

markets and exacerbated depreciation pressures on the currency just as China was trying to internationalize it.

Since then, policy makers have been trying to insulate the yuan, first using reserves, then stricter capital controls and monetary tightening to stem its drop. Donald Trump's election, and his threat to label China a currency manipulator, brought with it a fresh imperative to stem weakness, and the yuan has charted a steady, strengthening course through 2017.

This means the work report will be keenly watched for the tone it adopts on market reforms.

"The guidance won't come in the form of specific policies, but represent the party consensus on longer-term strategies going forward," said Aidan Yao, a senior economist at AXA Invest-

ment Asia Ltd. in Hong Kong.

Another key point is language surrounding China's growth objectives. For market watchers, it's key that the party strike the right balance. Abandoning an explicit target for the economy without some new pledge to sustain a steady pace of expansion could cast doubt over the outlook for a continuation of the 6-percent-plus pace of gross domestic product gains. Still, too aggressive a target may fuel worries about excessive debt.

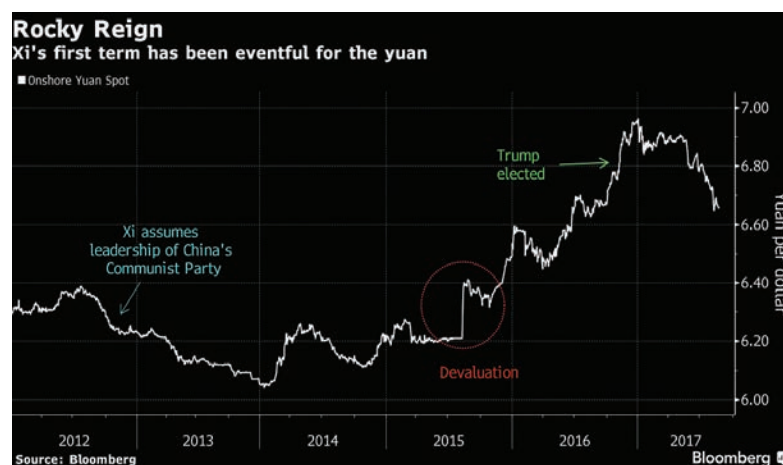
Similarly, observers will be watching for language on reining in financial risks, where again a balance between pledging to avoid a buildup in leverage while averting a contraction in credit that damages growth may be needed.

On personnel, the reshuffled membership of the Communist Party's top body, the standing committee of the Politburo, will be all-important. Among the key markers to watch:

Whether Xi ally Wang Qishan, who has led the anti-corruption drive, stays for another five-year term, despite being beyond the informal retirement age of 68. That could indicate whether Xi stays in power beyond 2022, breaking a recent precedent for party leaders to step down after a decade. How many allies Xi gets on the seven-member panel, and whether the group shrinks - giving Xi greater influence. Whether a clear potential successor is appointed to the panel. In recent history, the mid-term party congress typically sees the leader-in-waiting established, as Xi himself was in 2007. One man to watch is Chen Miner, a Xi protege recently elevated to party boss of megapolis Chongqing.

Also key, whether People's Bank of China Governor Zhou Xiaochuan stays on, along with Premier Li Keqiang. Li is considered a proponent of market reforms, but has been marginalized by Xi as the president set up competing bodies overseeing economic and financial policy.

"The past five years has seen growth largely driven by spending and an increase in leverage," said DeepBlue Global's Han. "It's understandable that Xi spent the first five years focusing on creating an environment that discouraged corruption, but now the market is looking for more." **Bloomberg**





## AP EXCLUSIVE

# China accuses outspoken tycoon in US of rape

Gerry Shih, Beijing

**E**SCALATING efforts to repatriate one of the ruling Communist Party's most wanted exiles, Chinese police have opened an investigation on a new allegation, rape, against New York-based billionaire Guo Wengui, who has been releasing what he calls official secrets ahead of a pivotal party leadership conference.

Two Chinese officials with direct knowledge of the investigation told The Associated Press that police are requesting a second Interpol arrest notice for Guo, 50, for the alleged sexual assault of a 28-year-old former personal assistant.

Guo and his representatives did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

The rape allegation represents a new element in the sprawling case that Chinese prosecutors are building against the real estate tycoon, who is being investigated for at least 19 major criminal cases. Allegations against him include bribing a top Chinese intelligence official, kidnapping, fraud and money laundering.

The Associated Press reviewed documents related to the rape investigation and confirmed their contents with Chinese of-



A Twitter page of Chinese exiled businessman Guo Wengui is seen on a computer screen in Beijing

ficial sources in Beijing, who requested anonymity to discuss an ongoing case. The Chinese officials' disclosures to the AP — an unusual move given the political sensitivity of Guo's case in China — underscores Beijing's urgent effort to not only bring a fugitive to heel on criminal charges but also silence a potent irritant in the run-up to a key Communist Party congress during which political stability and the stifling of any

challenges to the party head, President Xi Jinping, are paramount.

Although the United States does not have an extradition agreement with China, Beijing hopes that a mounting body of evidence could sway the U.S. government against extending the exiled businessman's visa, which is believed to expire in October, the Chinese officials said.

Senior U.S. and Chinese officials have discussed the allegations

against Guo, according to a third person with direct knowledge of the talks. The Chinese officials are asking the U.S. to cancel Guo's visa, according to the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to disclose the discussions.

It's unclear what steps Washington plans to take, if any. The White House would not comment on the matter.

The Guo saga highlights how

China's efforts to repatriate elite Chinese seeking refuge on American soil have become increasingly contentious in the bilateral relationship. The U.S. government has often refused Beijing's demands to extradite corruption suspects, citing flimsy evidence and China's opaque justice system. But the U.S. has sent back two Chinese fugitives in the past three months, including one suspected of rape.

## It's unclear what steps Washington plans to take, if any

In recent months, Guo has become a widely followed — and, in the eyes of China's leadership, highly destabilizing — social media presence by serving up sensational, if mostly unverifiable, tales of corruption and scandal within the Communist Party's innermost sanctum, including among Xi's closest allies.

In a daily stream of Twitter posts and YouTube videos tracked by Chinese who follow political gossip, Guo has revealed what he claims are everything from top leaders' secret homes in California to their bank account information and hidden stakes in business empires. He has vowed to continue airing the party's secrets until China unfreezes his assets and releases his relatives who have been seized by authorities, he says, as leverage against him.

MDT/AP

## German minister's 'one Europe' comments questioned

**C**HINA expressed dismay yesterday after Germany's foreign minister said Beijing should not "attempt to divide us" following complaints China uses its status as an investor to influence European Union decisions.

The comment by Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel comes amid rising European complaints about Chinese market access, steel and other issues. Germany is increasingly vocal in pushing Beijing to resolve complaints it is violating its market-opening pledges.

"We are shocked by Mr. Gabriel's remarks," said a foreign ministry spokeswoman, Hua Chunying, at a regular news briefing.



German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel

"We hope that he can clarify that what he means by 'one Europe,' and whether there is a consensus on 'one Europe' among EU members," said Hua. "We hope and believe his

remark about China's attempt to split Europe does not represent most European people's thinking."

During a visit to Paris on Wednesday, Gabriel called for a common Eu-

ropean stance on China and said Beijing "should have a 'one Europe' policy that doesn't attempt to divide us."

Gabriel gave no details, but some European officials complain Beijing uses its status as a major investor in smaller European countries to gain their support in European Union matters.

Greece blocked an EU statement in June that criticized China's human rights record and Hungary, where China is a major investor, has blocked other statements.

European officials also complain Beijing has tried to blunt a common European response on trade disputes by offering concessions to individual governments. **AP**

## Woman charged over botched medical procedure in Sydney

**A** Chinese woman with no Australian medical license has been arrested for administering an anesthetic to a customer at a Sydney beauty salon who then suffered cardiac arrest, officials said yesterday.

They said Shao Jie was charged with causing reckless grievous bodily harm and using poison to endanger the life of the customer during the breast procedure Wednesday at the Medi Beauty Laser and Contour Clinic. She faces a possible penalty of 20 years in jail.

The customer, Jean Huang, was hospitalized in critical condition.

"If she does not survive there'll be more se-

rious charges laid," the prosecutor said during Shao's bail application at Central Local Court yesterday.

The prosecutor told the court Shao had admitted in a police interview that she had administered an anesthetic despite not being a licensed medical practitioner in Australia. He said Shao had a reservation on Thursday to return to China, where she lives with her husband, and was a flight risk. The magistrate denied the bail request.

Shao's lawyer, Mary Underwood, said she was a graduate of a Chinese medical university and had arrived in Australia several days earlier on a tourist visa. **AP**





## MYANMAR

# Buddhists seek tougher action against Rohingya

SEVERAL hundred Buddhist nationalists, including monks, rallied in Myanmar's largest city on Wednesday to urge stronger action against insurgents from the Muslim Rohingya minority for attacks on police last week.

The attacks in Rakhine state in western Myanmar have spiraled into chaotic violence, with more than 100 dead and villages torched.

At least 18,000 Rohingya have fled the violence and crossed into Bangladesh in less than a week, with hundreds stranded in a no man's land at the countries' border, the International Organization for Migration said.

The army, responding to last week's attacks, launched what it called clearance operations against the insurgents, but advocates for the Rohingya say they are attacking and burning Rohin-

gya villages, shooting civilians and causing others to flee.

The government blames Rohingya insurgents and their sympathizers for the continuing violence. Government figures put the death toll since last week at a minimum of 103, including 12 members of security forces, 77 people described as insurgents and 14 civilians. There were reports of additional deaths Wednesday.

Rohingya advocates fear the death toll for civilians is much higher.

Most of Myanmar's estimated 1 million Rohingya live in northern Rakhine state. They face severe persecution in the Buddhist-majority country, which refuses to recognize them as a legitimate native ethnic minority, leaving them without citizenship and basic rights.

Longstanding tension between the Rohingya Muslims and ethnic

Rakhine Buddhists erupted in bloody rioting in 2012. That set off a surge of anti-Muslim feeling throughout the country.

Wirathu, a Buddhist monk and leader of the anti-Muslim movement who is known for virulent sermons, told Wednesday's protesters in Yangon that only the military can control the situation in northern Rakhine.

He criticized the civilian government of Aung San Suu Kyi for not responding quickly to the army's call Tuesday for a meeting of the National Security and Defense Council, which could declare a state of emergency in Rakhine and give the military absolute authority to enforce it. The military holds a majority on the council, which was created by the 2008 military-drafted constitution.

"Only the military's commander in chief can protect the lives

and the properties of the people," Wirathu said. "The military is the only one that can give a lesson to tame the Bengali terrorists."

Myanmar nationalists use the term Bengali for Rohingya because of a belief they migrated illegally from Bangladesh, even though many families have been in Myanmar for generations.

Wirathu also denounced international aid groups that the government has accused, without evidence, of giving assistance to the Rohingya insurgents. The allegations have circulated widely on social media.

The Information Ministry said Wednesday that 45 homemade bombs were detonated and seven villages, one security post and two neighborhoods in the township of Maungdaw were burned down on Sunday and Monday.

Maungdaw, in the northern part of Rakhine state, is a center of the violence, though villages over a much wider area were also hit.

Sanjukta Sahany, a spokeswoman for the International Organization for Migration in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, on the border with Myanmar, said the Rohingya crisis was not just an issue between Myanmar and Bangladesh but of international concern.

At the United Nations, the Security Council got an emergency, closed-door update Wednesday on Myanmar, at Britain's request. The council didn't issue any statement as a whole, but British Am-

bassador Matthew Rycroft said members condemned the violence and called on all the parties involved to de-escalate tensions.

The U.N. refugee organization on Tuesday urged Bangladesh to continue to allow Rohingya fleeing violence to seek safety. It said it was ready to help Bangladesh with assistance for the refugees.

Ali Hossain, Cox's Bazar district's top government official, told The Associated Press that its resources were under huge stress after some 87,000 Rohingya entered Bangladesh since October last year and another 18,000 since last Friday.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked the United States on Wednesday to pressure Myanmar so its government would stop pushing Rohingya toward Bangladesh, her spokesman said.

Hasina made the request during talks with Alice Wells, U.S. acting assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asia, said Ihsanul Karim, Hasina's press secretary.

The insurgent raids last Thursday were deadlier than an attack by the militants on three border posts last October that killed nine policemen and set off months of brutal counterinsurgency operations against Rohingya communities. Human rights groups accused the army of carrying out massive abuses, including killing, rape and burning down more than 1,000 homes and other buildings. **AP**



Supporters of nationalist Buddhist monks display banners calling for wider powers for the military to crackdown on Rohingya militants

## INDIA

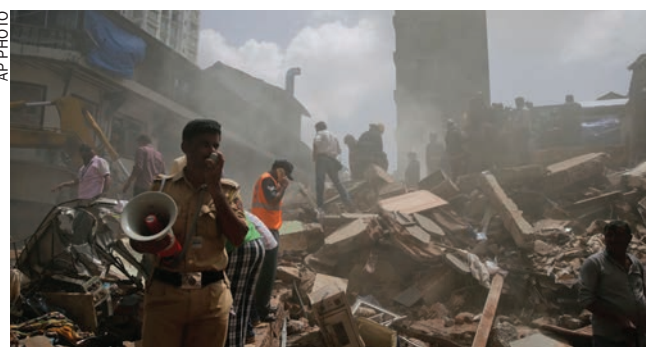
# Building collapses killing at least 12

A five-story building collapsed in India's financial capital of Mumbai, killing 12 people and injuring 14 others yesterday, after torrential rains lashed the country's west. Another 25 people are feared trapped in the debris.

Rescue workers, police and residents helped pull 13 people out of the rubble and were looking for those buried in the huge mound of mud, concrete slabs and twisted steel girders. The

residential building is located in a congested lane of the Bhendi Bazaar area in southern Mumbai.

Thousands of Mumbai buildings that are more than 100 years old are at risk of collapse, their foundations weakened partly by some of the heaviest rainfall that the city has witnessed in more than 15 years. Last month, 17 people were killed when a four-story building collapsed in the Mumbai suburb of



Ghatkopar.

Authorities were advising people living in an adjacent building to vacate

after it developed cracks following yesterday's collapse.

A police official at the site

said it was not immediately clear how many people were trapped in the building.

"We are asking people to check if their family members are safe and accounted for," said Manoj Sharma. He said nine families lived in the building.

A nursery school was located in the ground floor of the building, but the collapse occurred before the toddlers had reached for the day.

Hours after the collapse, rescuers used earth moving machines to lift concrete slabs and cement blocks as they searched for survivors.

Building collapses are common in India during the monsoon season, which is June to September. High demand and lax regulations encourage some builders to use substandard materials or add unauthorized extra floors.

Meanwhile, the city was slowly limping back to normalcy after it was paralyzed by heavy downpours for two days.

Since the start of the season, devastating floods across South Asia have killed at least 1,000 people and affected close to 40 million across northern India, southern Nepal and northern Bangladesh. **MDT/AP**



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**Urology** : Dr. Lo Kwong Yin Richard, Dr. Zhao Yun Qiao

**Paediatric Surgery** : Dr. Yeung Chung Kwong

**Paediatrics** : Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

**Obstetrics & Gynaecology** : Dr. Fong Kuan Io

**Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery** : Dr. Lam U Lin

**Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine** : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

**ENT** : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

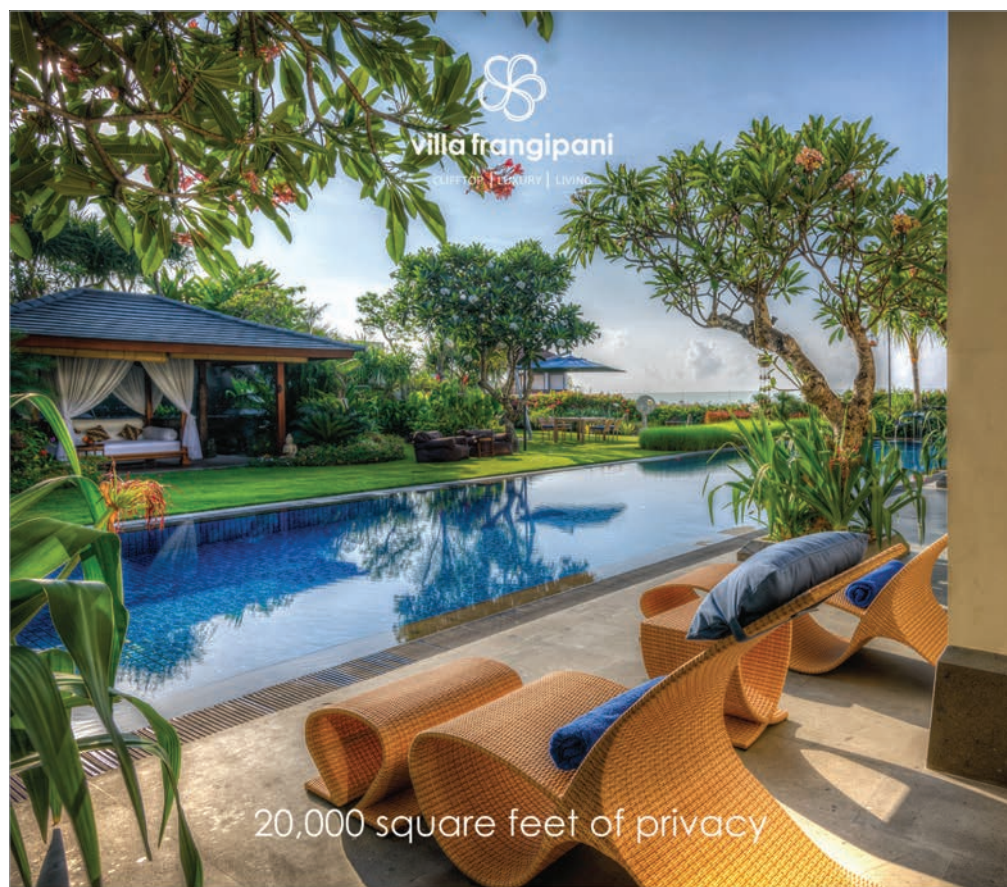
**Cardiology** : Dr. Wong Kwok Yiu Chris, Dr. Jin Chun, Dr. Leong Man Kin

**Gastroentero-Hepatology** : Dr. Zhan De Juan

**General Medicine** : Dr. Ng Kam Hong, Dr. Lam Weng Chio

**Dietitian** : Chan Lai U Joey

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## VENEZUELA

# New assembly demands probe and trial of 'traitors'

Jorge Rueda, Caracas

**T**HE all-powerful constitutional assembly has passed a decree ordering authorities to investigate and try Venezuelans believed responsible for supporting new U.S. economic sanctions.

The decree declares all those who promoted the latest U.S. response to the socialist government's handling of the country's political conflict as "traitors of the patria" and directs the chief prosecutor's office to immediately initiate a probe.

"Those who call for treason leave us no option but to treat them as enemies of their own country," said Diosdado Cabello, a delegate and leader of the ruling socialist party.

The move came just days after President Nicolas Maduro vowed to prosecute for treason opponents he accused of being behind the U.S. financial sanctions.

Maduro singled out Julio Borges, president of Venezuela's opposition-controlled congress, but Borges said that he bore no

AP PHOTO



responsibility for Venezuela's growing economic peril. "The only one responsible is Maduro," Borges said.

The sanctions announced last week prohibit American financial institutions from providing new money to the government or the state oil company, PDVSA. They also ban trading in two bonds that the government recently is-

sued to circumvent its increasing isolation from Western financial markets.

In addition, the sanctions restrict the Venezuelan oil giant's U.S. subsidiary, Citgo, from sending dividends back to Venezuela — moves that Maduro has said will be damaging to this nation's beleaguered economy.

U.S. officials contend the sanc-

tions were crafted to avoid causing harm to ordinary Venezuelans and punish a government that U.S. President Donald Trump now brands a dictatorship.

France's president, Emmanuel Macron, echoed that assessment, saying Maduro's administration is "a dictatorship" that is "trying to survive at the cost of

an unprecedented humanitarian distress."

The sanctions are certain to cause further strife in a country where food shortages are common. The average Venezuelan lost 19 pounds last year, according to one study.

Former corrections minister Iris Varela, now a constitutional assembly delegate, received a resounding applause when she said Venezuela can't allow "traitors" to get away without punishment. Those who betray Venezuela and take advantage of U.S. aggression "will have to be shot," she said.

**Those who betray Venezuela and take advantage of US aggression 'will have to be shot,' said one delegate**

The assembly, which is supposed to write a new constitution, was installed in early August following a disputed election of delegates. The assembly trumps all other branches of Venezuela's government and is ruling with virtually unlimited power. **AP**

## NATO wants more monitors at Russia war games

**N**ATO said Wednesday it will send three experts to observe military exercises between Russia and Belarus next month but alliance Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg wants the two countries to allow broader monitoring.

Russia and Belarus say the Zapad 2017 exercise, which runs from Sept. 14 to Sept. 20 not far from the borders of NATO allies Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, will involve less than 13,000 troops. Under international rules, the two should allow wider access to monitors if troop numbers exceed that figure.

NATO spokeswoman Oana Lungescu said the three experts will attend "Visitors' Days" in Belarus and Russia after they were invited to attend.

But she said international rules permit monitors to have much

AP PHOTO



Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg (second left)

wider access, including briefings on the exercise, opportunities to talk to soldiers and overflights.

The rules governing military exercises are enshrined in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's so-called Vienna Document.

Stoltenberg is calling for the Vienna Document to be revamped, and believes he can muster enough support to ensure that unannounced war games, or snap exercises, can

be watched with "snap monitoring," or that small, multiple maneuvers under different commands be recognized as one big exercise, loopholes he says Moscow is exploiting.

"It's especially important now, because tensions are higher than they used to be. There is more military activity, more exercises and therefore it's even more important that we avoid incidents and accidents or misunderstandings," he said.

NATO allies are con-

cerned that Moscow might leave military equipment behind in Belarus when the exercises are over, perhaps to use later should President Vladimir Putin want to send troops quickly across the border, as he did in Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014.

But Russia's Deputy Defense Minister, Lt. Gen. Alexander Fomin, has rejected what he described as Western "myths about the so-called Russian threat." **MDT/AP**

## LEBANON-SYRIA

## US airstrikes block evacuation of IS militants

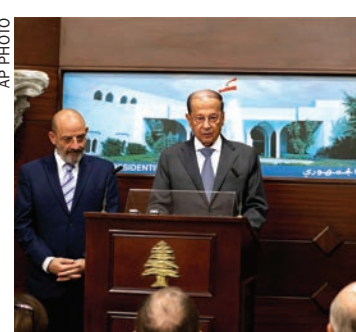
**U**.S. airstrikes blocked the advance of an Islamic State convoy carrying militants toward Iraq on Wednesday, derailing a Hezbollah-negotiated deal that removed the extremists from the Lebanon-Syria border, where they have been for years.

The airstrikes came amid U.S. criticism of the deal, reflecting a growing outrage within the Trump administration over the decision to give the militants safe passage from the battlefield instead of killing them, and Iran-backed Hezbollah's leading role in it.

The developments also were an embarrassment for the U.S.-backed Lebanese military, which agreed to the deal and had declared victory over the militants.

U.S. officials said the airstrikes to disrupt the fleeing militants were intended to send a strong signal that the deal, while helping to clear IS from the border, undermined a broader U.S.-led strategy for defeating the group in Syria and Iraq.

AP PHOTO



More than 48 hours after they left the Syria-Lebanon border for eastern Syria, the buses carrying 300 militants and almost as many of their relatives were stuck in a desert area on the outskirts of the largely IS-held Deir el-Zour province near the frontier with Iraq.

It is not clear how the standoff will be resolved. Syrian activists say alternate routes are being considered to bring the militants to Boukamal, an IS-controlled town on the Iraqi border, according to the agreement.

But officials of the U.S.-led coalition said they will continue to monitor the convoy and aren't ruling out more airstrikes. **MDT/AP**



TV canal macau



FRIDAY

13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
18:50	The Brazilians (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera (PT)
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
21:00	Miscellaneous
21:15	Miscellaneous
22:10	The Brazilians
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Portuguese Movie
01:15	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:50	RTPi Live

SATURDAY

10:40	Comedy
11:10	Blaze Riders
11:35	Chefs
12:30	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast (PT)
15:00	Miscellaneous
16:20	Soap Opera (PT)
19:20	Miscellaneous
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
21:00	Portugal in 150 Seconds
21:10	Drama (PT)
22:10	Miscellaneous
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:35	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:10	RTPi Live

SUNDAY

10:35	The Last Treasure
11:00	Sunday Mass (Live)
12:00	Miscellaneous
12:30	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	Zig Zag
17:40	Brainstorm
18:25	Miscellaneous
19:35	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
21:00	Miscellaneous
22:00	Vidago Palace
23:00	TDM News
00:20	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:55	RTPi Live

Offbeat

32,000 POUNDS OF COOKED CHICKEN SAUSAGE BEING RECALLED

Federal officials say a Massachusetts company is recalling more than 32,000 pounds of cooked chicken sausage product due to misbranding and undeclared allergens.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service said that Demakes Enterprises Inc. is recalling Thin 'n Trim Fully Cooked Chicken Sausage Buffalo Style.

The sausages were produced and packaged between Jan. 20 and Aug. 10. They had been shipped to retail locations in Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Officials say there have been no confirmed reports of adverse reactions to the product. Anyone who bought the product is urged not to consume it.

Demakes also sells deli meats and hot dogs. The company is based in Lynn. It hasn't returned an email seeking comment.

cinema



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CRAYON SHINCHAN MOVIE 2017

ROOM 1

2:30, 7:30pm

Director: Masakazu Hashimoto

Starring: Tamao Hayashi, Tôru Hotohara, Teiyû Ichiryûsai

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 107min



THE ADVENTURERS

ROOM 1

4:30, 9:30pm

Director: Stephen Fung

Starring: Andy Lau, Shu Qi, Zhang Jingchu

Language: English

Duration: 131min



THE DARK TOWER

ROOM 2

2:30, 4:15, 6:00, 9:45pm

Director: Nikolaj Arcel

Starring: Idris Elba, Matthew McConaughey, Tom Taylor

Language: English

Duration: 132min



A DOG'S PURPOSE

ROOM 2

7:45pm

Director: Lasse Hallstrom

Starring: Josh Gad, Dennis Quaid, Brit Robertson

Language: English

Duration: 95min



DANGAL

ROOM 3

2:30, 6:00, 9:00pm

Director: Nitesh Tiwari

Starring: Aamir Khan, Sakshi Tanwar, Fatima Sana Shaikh

Language: Hindi (Chinese & English)

Duration: 164min

this day in history



1960 GAME ON FOR BRITISH BETTING SHOPS

The government has given the go-ahead for betting shops to open for business from 1 May next year.

The move follows the introduction of the new Betting and Gaming Act.

The aim is to do away with archaic, restrictive and often inconsistent laws on gambling.

And from 1 January 1961 gambling for small sums will be legal for games of skill such as bridge.

As the Daily Telegraph newspaper's leader writer points out: "Weekly bridge clubs, meeting in the local hotel, will no longer have to settle up in the bus shelter."

And pubs will be allowed to introduce slot machines.

The government hopes legalising betting shops will take gambling off the streets and end the practice of bookmakers sending "runners" to collect from punters.

At the moment, anyone who wants to place a bet on the horses has to demonstrate they have enough credit to set up an account with a bookmaker and do their dealings by telephone.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Geoffrey Fisher, welcomed the move as a way of bringing the gambling habits of the country under greater government control.

The Home Secretary, Richard Austen Butler, has set out a timetable for the reforms. In October this year, licensing committees will be set up to consider applications from bookmakers from March and April 1961.

Then from 1 May approved bookmakers issued with licences and permits from the Racecourse Betting Control Board will be allowed to take bets at "tote odds", or totalizator, when the total amount staked - after tax and administrative costs are deducted - is divided among the winners.

Six months later, higher penalties for illegal street betting will be introduced.

The sections of the act governing gaming and arcade machines will probably come into force as soon as this autumn.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

After 1 May 1961 betting shops opened at a rate of 100 a week. After six months there were already 10,000 set up. About 1,000 casinos were opened in the first five years.

Two more Gaming Acts in 1963 and 1968 introduced licences for other forms of gaming.

But loopholes in the law allowed almost anyone to open a casino and as a result, many of the them became a cover for criminal activity.

In 1970 a new Gaming Act put far greater restrictions on all gaming, including bingo and slot machines, now subject to licence and placed under the control of the Gaming Board which answered directly to the Home Office.

Gambling is now a major industry worth billions.

The National Lottery was set up in 1994 while new gambling websites on the Internet allow punters to gamble 24 hours a day.

In October 2004 the government introduced the Gambling Bill designed to tighten rules for betting on the internet and lift restrictions on the number of casinos.



YOUR STARS



Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

When the end of the week rolls around these days, you're less than relieved. In fact, you're not feeling all that great about having two days off. Pack as much as you can into your waking hours.



Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

Someone is moody and nasty if they don't get what they want. Don't let them intimidate you into coughing up the cash. Go ahead, let them call you cheap. You know they're the ones who are really being selfish.



Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

A weaker person than you would have given up by now. Your persistence alone should be a matter of pride. Keep on keeping on. If you need inspiration, think of your role model.



Libra

Sep.23-Oct. 22

With so much to be down about, you need a pick-me-up. On the other hand, too much duality won't help matters, either. Settle for what brings you up into the middle ground, even if it's keeping your head down and toiling.



Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

If only you could follow your mood! Those days are long over. You have to make hay while the sun shines, just like the rest of the world. It goes without saying your energy level doesn't match the task before you.



Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Things have not been easy for you. Getting maximum comfort from your routine has served you well. It's time, though, to take it out for a farewell lunch. Give yourself permission to shake things up a bit.



Taurus

April 20-May 20

Catalogues are appealing, especially for things around the home. Don't even turn to page one. Even though there's no human being there, treat the shiny pages with the same caution you would a used car salesman.



Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

You may have half the assets you once had, but you have more than double of so many other things that count. You just haven't stopped to take inventory of the things that really matter. Start today.



Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

The most important thing you can do for your future self is to get organized today. Make it your priority. Everything else can wait, from family gatherings to socializing with friends.



Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Having a lot of drive is one way to block out your emotions. Losing money shouldn't make you feel things like horror or despair. Go ahead, slow down long enough to find out just what lurks behind your closed doors.



Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

People around you are over reacting. In fact, they're going ballistic. As long as they're not going postal, don't make it your concern. You have enough of your own financial issues to deal with.

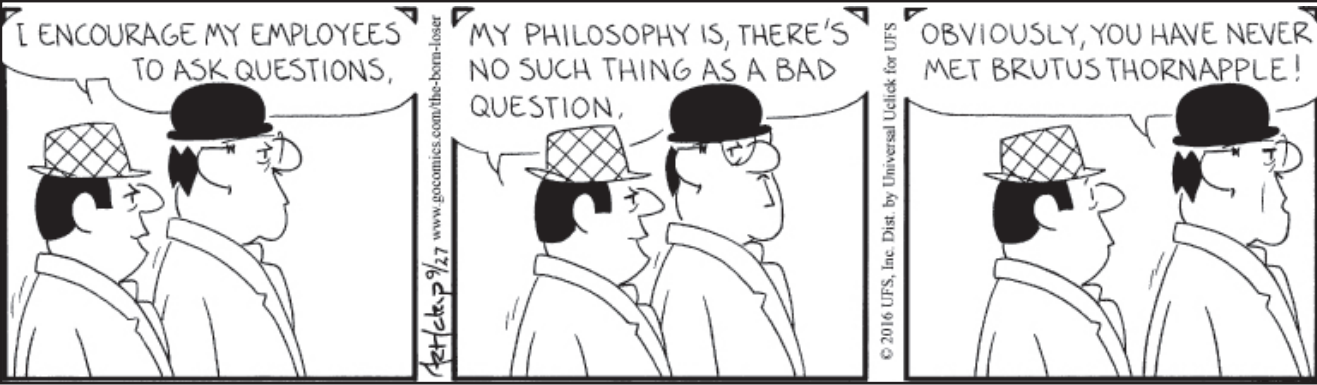


Pisces

Feb.19-Mar. 20

You're experiencing fun, even romance. Are you dreaming? Not at all. You can enjoy life even in the midst of the wreckage, if you continue to allow yourself to.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

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			6			3			
7	4								
								5	
	3	8				4			
				1					7

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Swedish import; 5- Belle or Bart; 10- Exchange; 14- Decorative pitcher; 15- Mexican moola; 16- Alas!; 17- Actress Petty; 18- Role for Clark; 19- Beef cut; 20- Handbill; 22- Brag; 23- Suit to \_\_\_\_; 24- Eliel Saarinen's son; 26- \_\_\_\_ we all?; 29- Person who plays the cathedral pipes?; 33- Civil rights org.; 34- Steer clear of; 35- Acapulco aunt; 36- As to; 37- Apparel; 38- Fast fliers; 39- Posed; 40- Petrol unit; 41- Celestial body; 42- Republic in E Africa; 44- Corpulent; 45- Medicinal amount; 46- The Beatles' "Back in the \_\_\_\_"; 48- Eight Days \_\_\_\_; 51- Crucial; 55- Graph prefix; 56- Thoughts; 58- Thus; 59- Billy \_\_\_\_ had a hit song with "White Wedding"; 60- Thaws; 61- Greenish blue; 62- Revivalists; 63- Kind of cat; 64- Scream;

DOWN: 1- Ego; 2- Mil. truant; 3- Ethereal; 4- Shattering effect of an explosion; 5- Binge; 6- Little laugh; 7- I'd hate to break up \_\_\_\_; 8- Decay; 9- They appear before U; 10- Old West watering hole; 11- Rider's command; 12- French friends; 13- Confined, with "up"; 21- URL starter; 22- Actor Pitt; 24- Uneven, as if gnawed away; 25- Sponsorship; 26- Licorice flavoring; 27- Charged toward; 28- Between Venus and Mars; 29- \_\_\_\_ barrel; 30- "Who's there?" response; 31- Locations; 32- Sample; 34- Bandleader Shaw; 37- Immerses; 38- Temperance; 40- Watch; 41- Price tag; 43- Standards of perfection; 46- Liquid waste component; 47- Actress Spacek; 48- Neat as \_\_\_\_; 49- Walk in water; 50- Switch ending; 51- Red or white, in the blood; 52- Algonquian language; 53- I've Got \_\_\_\_ in Kalamazoo; 54- Hang loose; 56- The Monkees' "\_\_\_\_ Believer"; 57- "Runaway" singer Shannon;

Yesterday's solution														
S	L	A	G		K	I	D	S		R	A	G	E	S
S	O	L	I		T	I	M	A	N		E	L	I	S
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S	H	I	A		T	S		U		W	O	U	N	D
					F	R	E	T	S		S	S		
W	O	O	F		E	R		E	S	T	E	E	M	D
E	L	V	E		S		C	R	E	E		R	A	R
I	D	A		S	P	A	R	R	O	W		N	O	R
G	I	L	L		S	A	A	B		O	B	E	S	E
H	E	S	I		T	A	N	T		K	R	E	T	E
					S	A	L		E	R	A	S	E	
S	U	B	S	U	M	E		I	R	E	L	A	N	D
A	F	O	O	T		A	R	G	O		I	N	E	E
N	O	T	M	E		R	A	H	S		N	A	R	A
A	S	H	E	N		P	I	T	S		E	T	O	N

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## Chapecoense crash survivors received by Pope Francis

**T**HE Brazilian soccer club that was devastated by an airplane crash in the mountains of Colombia last year met with Pope Francis at the Vatican on Wednesday.

Francis gave Chapecoense a special welcome in his remarks and posed for pictures with the team at the end of his weekly general audience.

When the team's flight went down in Colombia in November, all but six of the 77 players, officials and journalists on board were killed.

Three players survived the crash and two of them, Jackson Follmann and Alan Ruschel, were among those at the Vatican.

"I feel it was a miracle for what happened in my life,"

Ruschel said. "I am very happy to be able to be back and play at a high level, and now I am taking advantage of every minute that I am playing."

Follmann had part of his right leg amputated from injuries in the crash.

"I asked him to bless my rosary as I will get married soon," said Follmann, who was the team's goalkeeper. "He gave the blessing and so this will stay with me for the rest of my life."

Chapecoense faces Roma in a charity match at the Stadio Olimpico on Friday to raise funds for the team.

The redesigned team is in 17th place in the 20-team Brazilian league standings. **MDT/AP**

## NCAA head in Tokyo to offer advice on college sports body

Jim Armstrong, Tokyo

**N**CAA president Mark Emmert offered Japanese sports industry leaders advice on forming their own collegiate athletics association on Wednesday.

Japan is seeking to become one of the few countries outside the United States to establish an NCAA-type governing body for college sports. Emmert spoke to sports officials and representatives from more than 20 Japanese universities at a seminar in Tokyo.

"When I was asked to come over here and talk about this, I jumped at the chance because I think it is a terrific opportunity and we want to help," Emmert said. "We'd like to be a part of this because we value sports as a part of education."

Despite its success, few countries have followed the NCAA's model. Most countries do not view the integration of student-athletes the way American colleges do.

After describing the history of the NCAA and how it benefits students and colleges, Emmert talked about the revenue generated from



the association's 90 tournaments.

"The way the NCAA works is we generate revenue off of only those 90 tournaments," Emmert said. "We don't have anything else other than those 90 tournaments that we put on television and sell tickets for. Fortunately they are very, very popular so they allow us to pass hundreds of millions of dollars back to the universities."

Compared to the U.S., college sports in Japan have a long way to go, but Emmert said the time is right for a governing body similar to the NCAA.

"You have an extraordinary opportunity," Emmert said. "You

have some wonderful universities in Japan, you have a very strong higher education infrastructure here with some great schools and you have the enthusiasm of the Olympics in 2020, when you're whole nation is going to be focused on sport for the next three years as you roll into this incredible event."

The NCAA is interested in expanding its brand overseas. Stanford played Rice in a regular season football game in Sydney, Australia, on Sunday, while universities in Canada and Mexico have either been admitted as NCAA members or are seeking to join the organization. **AP**

AD

# MALO CLINIC

THE ART OF CREATING SMILES

MALO CLINIC Worldwide | Guimarães | Porto | Gaia | Aveiro | Coimbra | Sintra | Lisboa | Almada | Portimão | Faro | Funchal | London | Windsor | Milan | Verona | Lugano | Mönchengladbach | Hamburg | Oslo | Warsaw | Gdansk | Budapest | New Jersey | Portland | Montreal | Trois-Rivières | Brossard | Bogotá | Melbourne | Sydney | Perth | Brisbane | Adelaide | Luanda | Tel Aviv | Ramat-Hasharon | Dubai | Chennai | Macao | Hong Kong | Beijing | Shanghai | Guangzhou | Shenzhen | Taiyuan | Zhengzhou | Chengdu | Qingdao | Haikou | Shenyang | Tokyo | Sapporo | Bangkok | Phuket | Singapore



opinion

**Kapok**  
Eric Sautedé



BEING POSITIVE

Let's start by what could be deemed "positive news" by some: despite (or because) of last week's upheavals — the dreadful challenges brought about by undeviating Typhoon Hato — Macao society has demonstrated a remarkable resilience capacity: ill-prepared, confronted with overwhelming threats to their safety and earthly possessions, deprived of reliable information both before and at the time of the devastating gale, ordinary citizens unintentionally raised to hero status by displaying the very traits that make us so distinctively humane: our propensity to empathise and our moral urge to exert solidarity.

Overall, mutual aid prevailed over petty self-centred interests, and images of ordinary bravery were on par with frightening snapshots of destruction. Then came the news of three persons having lost their life, ultimately climbing to ten victims. Ten too many, and yet cleaning up started, mainly induced by grassroots and neighbourhood initiatives.

Civil security forces untiringly joined hands with residents — permanent as well as blue-card holders — soon to be seconded by PLA soldiers unprecedentedly called in to provide much-needed relief. The city as a whole was bracing for a second impact as Typhoon Pakhar was fast approaching and even though discontent was starting to grow, the collective bond weathered the storm, undistracted by the lingering bitter taste of incomprehension and unfairness.

These are indeed "uplifting" news. Dare I say not quite surprising? Despite the lamentations regarding the teaching of history and the ambiguities of a holistic destiny for our SAR, there is indeed a shared collective memory in and of Macao, one that is expressly connected to typhoons and the threats they represent, one that flows downhill from the Guia Lighthouse beside which typhoon signals have been hoisted since the end of the nineteenth century.

But positive news is not propaganda, quite the contrary. Positive news is produced by journalists whose stories help put on an equal footing the bright and the dark sides of current affairs. Positive news has the ambition, as one motto goes, to "offer quality, independent reporting on progress and possibility." It is not and should not be a self-mutilating effort at not reporting the ugly side of things, and it is just an attempt at tilting the balance back towards constructive thinking, but certainly not a replacement for a more critical if not confrontational approach.

When the authorities prevent five Hong Kong journalists from entering the territory on the ground that they 'pose a risk to the stability of internal security', they are simply trying to sweep back the dirt under the rug while conspiring against freedom of information and crippling our Basic Law. Contrary to what secretary Wong says, these were not "any" individuals, but the stories they published in Apple Daily, HK01 and the South China Morning Post had indeed been relentlessly exposing the shortcomings of the Macao government in the early hours of the disaster and the ineptness of the (non-existent) preventive measures at a time when most of the households were entirely deprived of clean water and electricity.

When the Macao Media Workers Association denounces in a public statement the documented pressures exerted over five local media editors to encourage more "positive news" and shield the Chief Executive from any criticism for the sake of public order and social harmony, they are denouncing blatant attempts at censorship and induced self-censorship.

Threatening would be rumourmongers and arresting three elders and a teenager for circulating hair-raising fallacies over WeChat about additional victims instil more doubts than certainties. Rumours do not initially feed on themselves. As social scientists reckon, they spread through "social cascades" and "group polarisation", and the primary causes are the lack of transparency and trustworthy information.

When will they learn?

THE HARD ROCK CAFE MOVING OFF AC BOARDWALK, INTO RE-DONE CASINO

The Hard Rock Cafe on the Atlantic City Boardwalk will shut down and be relocated into the former Trump Taj Mahal casino when Hard Rock reopens it under its own brand next summer.

The global casino and hospitality company says the Atlantic City Hard Rock Cafe will cease operations on Sept. 30.

Construction will then begin on a new cafe inside the former Taj Mahal.

The new cafe will employ more than 100 people, up from the 55-member current staff.

Hard Rock bought the shuttered casino, which now-President Donald Trump opened in 1990, from billionaire investor Carl Icahn.

# Inoculations give endangered California frog a shot at life

Scott Smith, Fresno (Calif.)

**ENDANGERED** California frogs are getting an immunity boost from scientists who are scooping them up from remote Sierra Nevada ponds and sending them to big city zoos for inoculation, giving them a fighting chance to beat extinction, officials said yesterday.

The experiment aims to rescue the 3-inch mountain yellow-legged frog — named for distinctive coloring under its hind legs. Scientists use nets to capture diseased tadpoles and then fly them by helicopter from their natural range deep within the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.

They are next driven over 322 kilometers across the state to the San Francisco and Oakland zoos, where they are inoculated against a ravaging disease partly blamed for wiping them out from much of their historical range in the Sierra, scientists said.

Roughly 385 frogs have been treated at the zoos and returned after two years as healthy, young adults to their native lakes and ponds.

Aquatic ecologist Danny Boiano of the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, who has led the three-year project, said it appears to be paying off. Next, his team will study their frogs to determine if it's working.



"It's experimental at this point," he said. "It's going to take several years to find out if it works."

The frog holds a key place in the Sierra Nevada food chain. Scientists say they feed on insects, then snakes and birds eat the frogs.

The species once thrived in such masses that people could not walk the shores of lakes and ponds in the mountain range without stepping on them, according to historical accounts, which add that with each step, dozens more launched into the water.

Their decline began a century ago with the introduction of non-native trout for sport fishing that gobbled up the tadpoles. Starting in the 1960s, the frog suffered a second blow from an invasive disease, called the chytrid fungus.

The fungus is blamed for the decline and extinction of more than 200 amphibians worldwide, scientists say.

Today, the mountain yellow-legged frog is missing from 90 percent of its historical region in the Sierra. Both state and federal wildlife authorities have listed it as endangered.

At neighboring Yosemite National Park, the frog's population has made a significant recovery in part because rangers stopped stocking some lakes with non-native fish, park officials say. Inoculating the frogs in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks costs roughly USD175,000 a year, which Boiano said mostly goes to pay his team of 10 seasonal biologists doing field work.

"Just like vaccinating people, we are jump-starting their disease-fighting immune systems," said Jessie Bushell, director of conservation at the San Francisco Zoo. "Letting the population completely die out is not a good option." AP

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

WORLD BRIEFS

**MALAYSIA** Host Malaysia won 145 gold medals at the Southeast Asian Games to emerge as overall champion for the first time in 16 years, making it a double celebration as it ushered in its 60th anniversary of its independence from British rule.



**INDIA** A five-story building collapsed in India's financial capital of Mumbai, killing 12 people and injuring 14 others yesterday, after torrential rains lashed the country's west. Another 25 people are feared trapped in the debris. More on p12

**TURKEY** Seven people were injured in western Turkey after an explosive device was detonated yesterday, according to officials.



**GERMANY** City authorities in Frankfurt plan to evacuate more than 60,000 people from their homes on Sunday to defuse a World War II bomb found during construction work.

**FRANCE** President Emmanuel Macron's labor reforms, aimed at boosting investment and jobs by doing away with rigid rules, have been criticized from both left and right on the political spectrum. The French government announced the proposed changes yesterday.

**US-RUSSIA** The United States is retaliating against Russia by forcing closure of its consulate in San Francisco and scaling back its diplomatic presence in Washington and New York. The State Department says the move brings the U.S. and Russia into "parity," with each having three consulates in the other country.

times square by rodrigo

