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# Times

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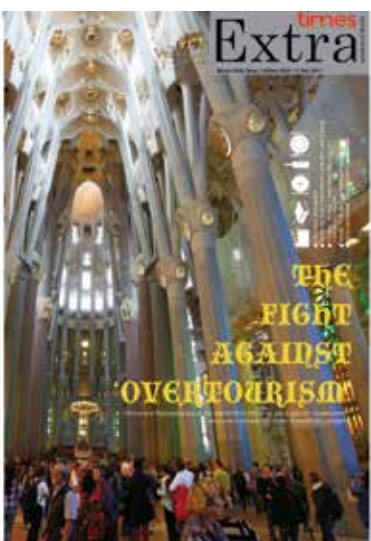


**CAMBODIA's** Supreme Court ordered the country's main opposition party (leader pictured) to be dissolved yesterday, dealing one of the most crushing blows yet to democratic aspirations in the increasingly oppressive Southeast Asian state.

**MALAYSIA** Prosecutors in the Malaysian trial of two women accused of killing the estranged half brother of North Korea's leader could finish their case in the second quarter of next year, defense lawyers said yesterday as another week of testimony concluded.

**INDONESIA's** anti-graft commission said yesterday it will declare the speaker of parliament a fugitive if he doesn't turn himself in after being accused of involvement in the theft of USD170 million of public funds.

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Paulo Coutinho

10 YEARS AFTER, THE VENETIAN

# First we took Paris, now we take

**S**HELDON Adelson will land today in Macau to preside over The Venetian's 10th anniversary celebrations, the "jewel of the crown" in the Las Vegas Sands empire, at a time when the "empire" is expanding its theming to a London-styled property, after the successful one-year operation of The Parisian.

The event, slated initially for August 28, was postponed to Monday, November 20 due to the devastation left behind by typhoon Hato, leaving no room for celebrations. But the region has recovered and it's time to change the mood.

"The Venetian's 10th anniversary is a very memorable milestone for our company and for the development of Cotai as well, because we're the first property on the Cotai strip. We're going to have a celebration," Wilfred Wong, Sands China (SCL) President told the Times in an exclusive interview recently held in his Cotai office.

And the gaming operator has plenty of reasons to celebrate. This year's third quarter has been the best quarter since Q4 2014, with profits reaching USD652 million, up 13 percent year-on-year.

"October was [also] very strong. Hopefully for this year, with only two months to go, we can continue the growth trend. The economy and finance secretary also said that he expects that this year is going to pan out well," Wilfred Wong said.

It was quite a turnaround for SCL and the whole gaming sector, after three years of steep decline in revenues following the anti-corruption and anti-money laundering drive put in place in mainland China (the



Wilfred Wong, Sands China president

major source of Macau's visitors) which had a tremendous effect on the VIP sector - the driving force of post gaming liberalization.

For Wong, the turnaround came because "Macau, as a brand, has come into force."

"We see an increase in the number of visitations, increase in our retail, increase in our ho-

tel occupancy. You know, everything's gone up and what drove the 2014 spike was the VIP segment and this time it's more solid. It's all segments [mass, premium mass], in addition to the VIP segment, which has also done very well in the last six to nine months," he said.

In the first six months of 2017, visitor arrivals to Macau totalled nearly 15.6 million, up by 5.4 percent from a year earlier. During this period, the number of overnight visitors rose by 13 percent year-on-year to nearly 8.1 million while the tally of same-day visitors dropped by 1.8 percent to just under 7.5 million.

However, the Sands China president has few doubts about what killed the goose that laid the golden egg "it's still there."

"I think that this fight against corruption, the anti-money laundering, they're going to be here forever. I believe this is a long-term feature, but if you look at the recent APG report [Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering], Macau really passed with flying colours and I think this is really owing to the combined effort of all of us here

because we know that the way it's conducted means that it's more sustainable. If the economy in China continues to grow - and it's still growing at 7 percent - I'd love to see that in my private invested funds!"

**We hope that both the community and the gov't [see] that we have a long-term commitment in Macau.**

Regardless, The Venetian is still the jewel of the crown, said Wong, "It is the only casino that has a profit, or EBITDA, of over a billion US dollars. It's impressive and if you look at the number of visitations, it's still the number one destination for visitors. After St Paul's Cathedral, the next place they hope to come is The Venetian."

A bit further south on the Cotai strip, The Parisian became a new must-see destination resort.

The Parisian Macao achieved a quarterly EBITDA of USD135 million, according to the latest LVS earnings call, meeting the "targeted 20 percent annualized rate of return," said chairman Adelson at the conference.

Recently, the Paris-themed resort has brought to Cotai French inspired shows like Crazy Horse, which ran for two weeks. Meanwhile, there was the first Macau Fashion Week, a world-class fashion display that according to Wilfred Wong "is going to become a permanent yearly event."

And there is more to come, like a resident show which features "a motorcycle [running inside] a ball [...] with a bit of Crazy Horse, a bit of dancing, and maybe magic."

LVS has invested a total of USD13 billion in Macau since the early 2000s in five integrated-resorts. The company announced recently that it is willing to add some USD1.1 billion to revamp and reinvent Sands Cotai Central into ano-

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# London

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ther must-see European-themed city, London.

Wilfred Wong: "Mr Adelson has on many occasions said that in a market where there's many competitors, he would like to use themed developments in order for people to recognise us and really to serve as a destination, and he has proven this right by the building of The Venetian and The Parisian. Both of them are very successful properties, and one of the problems that I have encountered in Sands Cotai Central (SCC) is the lack of a theme and we have many rooms there, but different hotel brands. You know, the Sheraton, Conrad and all that and so, what do we call that space? It's now called SCC, but SCC has a blurred identity."

The revamp, which will commence within six months and should be completed in 2019, is aimed at boosting SCC's mass market appeal but targeting a higher-end customer.

The investment will provide 350 luxury suites at St Regis and another 295 suites at a new Four Seasons Tower.

The Londoner will be born out of an entire revamp of the Holiday Inn facility.

"Sheraton has 4,000 rooms. Conrad is a known brand. Holiday Inn is also good, but is low yielding. And then we have St Regis [at the top end]. We think that maybe we can use the Holiday Inn and convert it into a themed hotel. [...] We'll be combining rooms to make bigger rooms, similar to the Venetian."

The company plans to retain the other two hotel brands upon completion, Conrad and Sheraton Grand.

Iconic London landmarks, Big Ben and the Palace of Westminster are likely to be the dominant features of The Londoner Macao.

President Wong added that at this moment it's still an open plan. "Those are all the things that have come up in our research as to what are the most recognisable features of London and you're right - Big Ben, Houses of Parliament, Harry Potter - they all came up on top."

What about Mr Bean, the Wax Museum, we asked. "Yes, all these matters we're looking at."

In The Londoner, said Wong, "we can increase retail and we have space in the Sheraton Hotel that we can build on. You know, like a bigger ballroom and [other facilities] to support MICE activities, because we see an upsurge in MICE activities in Macau this year."

This is especially relevant given the imminent opening of



the Delta Bridge and the proximity of the Hong Kong Airport.

"Hopefully, that will be a game changer. There will be diversification of markets in terms of the origin of visitors. Right now, Macau is basically regional, mainland China and Southeast Asia, but in the future, we're looking at people from afar. [We have] already enquiries from Europe and from the US about Macau."

## The fight against corruption, the anti-money laundering, they're going to be here forever

Wilfred Wong is confident in the investment the company is making, especially close to the expiration of licenses (2020-2022).

"We hope that both the Macau community and the government would see us as a

long-term commitment - that we have a long-term commitment in Macau and that we are doing our very best to promote Macau as a world tourism and leisure destination. For example, having in

mind the award of this title [by UNESCO], 'Creative City of Gastronomy.' We're doing everything we can to match and to support this title, by creating more F&B space, inviting brand names to come

and operating and upgrading our own operations. So, you can expect to see in the next year or two that there will be some major improvement in our F&B offerings," Wilfred Wong concluded.

## All-Italian feast for Venice, Cotai anniversary

**T**HE late writer Austin Coates would say when he was waking up in Venice or in Macau that he could never tell in which city he was. That was in the 1950s and sixties when Macau, from Bela Vista Hotel, where he would inevitably stay, truly resembled a Mediterranean port.

Now decades later, the irony is that a Venice replica emerged in Cotai on August 28, 2007 in a Las Vegas fashion, and in a swamp the surroundings of which looked all but Mediterranean.

On Monday, SCL is showcasing an all-Italian event to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the biggest and most lucrative integrated-resort in the world titled, "Very extraordinary - Very Venetian."

"We have video mapping, which will be a reflection of contemporary art and traditional culture and then fireworks. It will be conducted outside in the lagoon, where you will see probably some gondolas floating through, creating that atmosphere of Venice," Wilfred Wong told MDT.

The party will cost "slightly less" than that of the opening of the Parisian a little over a year ago.

"We'd like our own people to be showcased," Wong continued. There are over 8,000 staff who [have] worked at The Venetian for the entire 10 years.

For example, Wilfred Wong revealed that every dish "will be cooked by a

chef who has worked here for 10 years and we will live-feed from the kitchen so that the guests outside know who's preparing the dish."

With an Italian menu and wine, the gala dinner will also feature The Three Phantoms (three tenors) singing songs from famous musicals and Hong Kong star singer-actress Joey Yung.

Ten years on, The Venetian is undergoing a major renovation which will be completed before the Chinese New Year.

Apart from presiding over the celebrations, the Adelsons will be making a donation to a local charity. The amount was not disclosed. **PC**



# Secret ballot to decide Sou's suspension



**T**HE Legislative Assembly (AL) will vote for the suspension of lawmaker Sulu Sou's mandate by secret ballot. According to the AL House Rules Committee the voting will be determined by simple majority.

The committee met yesterday to discuss the AL rules which would be applicable to the decision to suspend Sou. Sou also attended this meeting.

Chairman of the committee, Kou Hoi In, noted that after the meeting the House Rules Committee will not express any controversial opinions to lawmakers and that the voting will be decided based on sim-

ple majority.

"House Rules Committee will not carry out an analysis of the case [Sou's], as it is not within our work. [...] Regarding whether suspending a lawmakers' mandate, the right to do so lies with the AL," said Kou.

According to Kou, before November 20, the committee will deliver a report to the AL chairman providing suggestions on which AL rules should be applied regarding Sou's suspension.

On the effect and duration of Sou's suspension, Kou clarified that "the suspension is not forever, it is only temporary."

"During the suspension,

he still holds his rights as a lawmaker, but he cannot exercise his position. He can attend the AL plenary meeting, but he cannot discuss, nor can he express opinions," explained Kou.

After the meeting, Sou confirmed that he had been given the opportunity to clarify his case and defend himself.

"What started the behavior? My behavior aimed at protecting the public interest. [The reason behind the behavior] is the same as [the reason behind] expressing freedom. It was not a behavior taking advantage of the rights as a lawmaker or aiming at corruption," said Sou. **JZ**

## IFFAM'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

# Infrastructure needed to boost local film industry

Lynzy Valles

**T**HE second edition of the International Film Festival & Awards – Macau (IFFAM) intends to be a platform to celebrate new filmmakers, offering a USD60,000 prize to the best feature of first and second-time directors.

As well as featuring a variety of classic films, the festival is also highlighting young filmmakers from abroad to stimulate the young local filmmaking culture in the city.

Appointed as the festival's artistic director for this year's edition (after renowned film director and festival planner Marco Müller suddenly resigned before the inaugural edition in 2016), former Protagonist Pictures CEO Mike Goodridge stated that the IFFAM gives effect to the intention to promote cinema from many parts

of the world. In doing so, IFFAM brings exposure to new filmmakers and introduces young filmmakers in Macau to the global film conversation.

Speaking to the Times, Goodridge stated his belief that while Macau has the potential to advance in its filmmaking production it is still in need of infrastructure, training and education for aspiring filmmakers.

The film expert also noted that the region, as an entertainment hub, is also capable of attracting multi-million dollar film productions – which would also be to the advantage of local crews and stimulate the local industry.

"When you bring a hundred million dollar production like that, you can employ a lot of people. They start to learn how to do things very quickly and very easily," he said on the sidelines of the British Business Association of Macau's morning talk.

"Once you have that group of local people who know how to do films, other films will come and shoot here because they have the local crew. It takes a while to build up the expertise and takes commitment to stimulate the local industry," Goodridge continued.

The artistic director expressed hopes that the upcoming film festival will serve as a 'cog in a wheel' to attract foreign films to shoot in the region. Meanwhile, questioned by the Times on what the audience can expect from the second edition of IFFAM, Goodridge noted that there is a notable line up of movies this year, adding that a few would not be out in cinemas until next year.

Goodridge pledged to work hard to continually promote the festival amongst the local audience in a bid to encourage the public to engage in the film industry, thus supporting local filmmakers as well.



Mike Goodridge

"We've got some of the best films of the year. [...] It's really diverse," he affirmed. He added that he wished to encourage locals to participate in the festival.

The expert noted that film festivals also take a few years to develop before gaining the trust of foreign communities to allow their films to be featured in the region.

The second IFFAM will be held from December 8 to 14 this year with the theme "A New Avenue to the World of Films."

The festival will open with the regional premiere of Paul King's "Paddington 2", while French filmmaker Laurent Cantet will lead the event's main competition jury.

A Best of Fest Panorama section of IFFAM will feature ten award-winning films including "Call Me By Your Name," "The Florida Project," "Angels Wear White," and "Sweet Country."

The latest creations from international cinema will play in the Flying Daggers section, including "A Prayer Before Dawn" by Jean-Stephane Sauvaire, Brian Taylor's "Mom and Dad" and S. Craig Zahler's "Brawl in Cellblock 99."

Out-of-competition screenings include the 30th anniversary presentation of Bernardo Bertolucci's "The Last Emperor" and Venice Film Festival Golden Lion winner "The Shape of Water."

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## POLICY ADDRESS

# Macau Scholars Union dissatisfied with lack of patriotic education measures

**MACAU** Scholars Union 澳門學者聯盟 vice president Li Jiazeng strongly condemned the government's 2018 policy report for not setting up measures to enhance patriotic education in Macau.

Yesterday, the Macao Polytechnic Institute (IPM) held an academic symposium on the government's Policy Address, which was presented this week by Chief Executive Chui Sai On.

During the symposium, Li questioned: "If Macau gained so much under the support of the State, why shouldn't the city pay back the motherland?" In addition, the scholar remarked on the Hong Kong people's low passion and low consciousness in terms of national pride.

He mentioned that this was a result shown in a survey carried out in Hong Kong and targeting Hong Kong residents.

"I think that if there are people in Macau daring to conduct such a report, they will conclude that the results are not much better than Hong Kong's," said Li.

Li criticized the Policy Address for only devoting a small part to discussions about the enhancement of patriotic education for students. Li reasoned that more texts should be added into the policy address next year.



Leng Tiexun, director of the One Country Two Systems Research Centre of IPM, on the sideline of the symposium, indicated that he does not think that the Policy Address needs new measures.

"The government administration is basically [already working on these issues] [...] I think maybe the new aspects should concern what the public has been talking about, such as the government having new measures regarding disasters," said Leng.

"The difference in this policy address is that it emphasized the importance of the constitutional law and of the Basic Law. In the past, it emphasized the Basic Law more," said Leng, adding "I think these are some practical actions."

Leng suggested that the government should add

more context regarding the construction of the legislative structures. "I think that [political, social, legal] system build-up is always a big thing for Macau," said Leng.

Another scholar, IPM scholar Yang Yunzhong, pointed out "obvious flaws" in the policy address.

Yang mentioned that the Greater Bay Area agreement "clearly specifies that Macau's development positioning is One Center and One Platform, and One Base. [The One Base] consists in building a communication and cooperation base where Chinese culture is the mainstream, and where multi-culturalism co-exists. [...] It is a pity that the report did not correctly comprehend it [the positioning] and emphasize it," complained Yang. **JZ**

## 'Macau Good Design - Berlin Exhibition' opens in Germany

The 2017 Macau Good Design - Berlin Exhibition opens today at the China Cultural Centre in Berlin, Germany. The exhibition is an extension of a showcase previously exhibited at the 2016 Hong Kong-Macau Visual Arts Biennale, as well as the Beijing Minsheng Art Museum, the Gansu Dunhuang International Cultural Expo, and the Henan Art Museum in Zhengzhou. It features graphic design, animation design and a 3D mapping show. Across these mediums local elements from Macau are highlighted, such as design and production of Macau's products, award-winning works in previous editions of the Macau Design Biennale and paintings depicting Macau by 19th century British painter George Chinnery. The showcase runs from November 18 to 30. According to the Cultural Affairs Bureau, it offers German audiences "a humanistic image of Macau presented from different angles."

## Wai Long public housing plan questioned

The president of the Architects Association of Macau, Wong Chung Yuen, criticized the government for having "answered too fast" when questioned by the public about the number of Wai Long public houses. In the government's Policy Address, it is indicated that only 6,500 public house units will be available at the Wai Long public housing project, which is 1,500 short of the government's previous promise. Wong said that the government was not careful in its calculations back then. In Wong's opinion, there will also be a need for serious consideration concerning transportation once the project is done. During a press conference this week, the chief executive said that "after several works" it was concluded that only 6,500 units can be built.

AD



### Objectivo

Para a promoção do 65º Grande Prémio de Macau, pretende-se coleccionar videos espectaculares das várias edições do Grande Prémio de Macau. Todos os videos coleccionados poderão eventualmente ser projectados em diferentes ocasiões para apreciações do público.



### Requisitos para Inscrição:

Os participantes têm que ser portadores de BIR de Macau válido e com 18 anos ou superior. Os participantes podem participar a título individual ou colectivo, com o máximo de três participantes.



### Prazo para submissão dos videos:

Até 12h00 do dia 29 de Dezembro de 2017



### Meio para a submissão dos videos:

Todos os videos participantes deverão ser enviados, através de uma hiperligação válida com o ficheiro do video, juntamente com o boletim de inscrição, por correio electrónico para o endereço: [mgpvideo@macaotourism.gov.mo](mailto:mgpvideo@macaotourism.gov.mo)



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## GAMING

# Economic diversification not driven by gov't but by profit



Grant Govertsen (left), Augustine Vinh (center) and Vitaly Umansky

Daniel Beitler

A panelist discussion held yesterday as one of the last sessions of this year's MGS Entertainment Show and Summit discussed the future of Macau's gaming economy, and found that diversification of the industry was being pursued gradually and not without commercial interest.

The panel, moderated by GGR Asia Principal Michael Grimes, consisted of Union Gaming's Grant Govertsen, Sanford C. Bernstein analyst Vitaly Umansky and Professor Augustine Vinh, who advises Vietnam's government on the casino industry.

In an all-to-brief 40-minute session, the three panelists discussed a range of issues involving the future of Macau's gaming economy, including the blurring division between VIP and premium mass gamblers, the role of junket promoters in Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative, and how the success of Macau as a casino jurisdiction will continue to be underpinned by its local customer base in Guangdong Province.

Here is just some of what they said yesterday:

## DIVERSIFICATION

With the aim of reducing Macau's dependence on its gaming industry, economic diversification has been a key government initiative since as early as 2011. But it was only when gaming operators were confronted with the 'new normal' during the prolonged recession period that this buzzword really started to take root.

Yesterday's panelists were in agreement that diversification was being gradually implemented by the city's six operators but said that government policy had not been the driving force.

"What we have seen in Macau in the past couple of years is an expansion of non-gaming – not so much because the government wanted to see diversification – but because the operators themselves realized that in order for this market to have long-term growth capability, it needs non-gaming [amenities]," said Umansky.

He said that Macau makes its money when its customers are kept in front of the gaming tables.

Any diversification – whether in food and beverage, entertainment or retail – is merely a means to this end.

"If that means having the customer stay overnight in a hotel room so they can get up the next morning and sit at the baccarat table, that's what the operators are going to do."

However, since "customers may only be coming [to Macau] for a short time and you don't want to pull them away from the casino for too long," too much diversification may in fact be harmful to operators.

## VIP OR PREMIUM MASS

The introduction of the premium mass player threw a veil of confusion over where to draw the line between the traditional VIP and mass-market segments. Gaming operators, market analysts and the government each draw this line differently, giving rise to minor disputes over which player segment is contributing most to the economic recovery.

For Govertsen, it is a matter of prudent accounting. He highlighted yesterday that casinos typically have a 25 percent margin in the premium mass segment, but only 10 percent for VIP players due to junket fees and higher tax rates.

"Casinos would take 25 percent margin over 10 percent any day, so that is why they are moving increasingly toward premium mass," he argued.

Umansky said that the major difference is whether the casino or the junket promoter controls

the relationship with the gaming customer.

"In a VIP-junket relationship, the casino has no control and visibility into the player, which is [arranged] by the junket hosts on the casino's property. [Casinos prefer to] have direct communication with the players and have the ability to market directly to them and persuade them to visit more frequently and spend more money," he said.

This means that the same customers can often be classified as both premium mass and VIP and, with a financial incentive for operators to record them as premium players, there is likely to be at least the appearance of premium mass growth in the near future.

## BELT & ROAD

An earlier session at the MGS Summit advanced the idea that Macau's junket industry had a part to play in Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative, with high-profile members of this industry – including Suncity's Alvin Chau – advocating for their involvement.

Professor Augustine Vinh admitted that there could be a role for junkets in countries like Vietnam, even though Beijing probably did not have gaming in mind when it envisioned the Belt and Road Initiative.

"The Vietnamese government and Vietnamese travel agencies have no experience in gaming," he said. "They have to rely on the junkets to provide players by bringing them via chartered flights from Macau."

Gaming analysts Govertsen and

Umansky noted that junket participation in the Initiative is unsurprising but, again, it is more a matter of "business sense" than patriotic duty.

Govertsen described it as "bandwagoning" the Central Government's policy and said the move was profit-driven rather than a nod to Beijing.

Umansky said these investments might allow gaming promoters to act in ways that are no longer permitted in developed gaming jurisdictions like Macau.

"Junkets are in the business of making money, and one way to do that is to [...] go after [jurisdictions with] tax arbitrage and regulatory arbitrage," he said. "They can do things in certain jurisdictions that they can no longer do in Macau, with proxy betting being the prime example."

It is also good for the stability of their business, said Umansky. "It is becoming more evident to the larger junkets that having diversified [investments] is important to long-run sustainability. So by having VIP operations in Australia, in the Philippines, or in Korea, they are at least able to diversify a part of their revenue stream. It's just business sense for them to do this."

## MARKET PROXIMITY

But the panelists also stressed Macau's most enduring comparative advantage in the Asian gaming sector: a robust local market just across the border.

"Macau has both a local market and a destination market. Many of the visitors in Macau are locals: they are from Guangdong Province and Hong Kong," said Umansky. "That local feeder market allows Macau to be what it is."

"Most destination markets [that] want to cater to Chinese customers are not viable when resorts cost USD2 billion to build. They're viable when they cost USD200 million to build [...] but that is a very different kind of project to what most governments are looking for."

He added that Singapore and Japan both have the local market support to thrive, but most other locations in Asia will not and are therefore unlikely to become large-scale gaming centers.

Umansky's argument does not seem to have discouraged Vietnam, where the customer focus is almost entirely orientated toward the China market.

The government in Hanoi is only beginning to experiment with the idea of permitting locals to gamble in domestic casinos – an initiative that could reclaim as much as USD800 million per year in tax revenues that currently go to casinos in neighboring Cambodia.

Vinh, a long-time proponent of local access to casinos, said yesterday that "for the new integrated resorts in Vietnam, they [casino operators] are talking about 100 percent Chinese players. They ask: why do we need Vietnamese players when we have [access to] the Chinese market just across the border?"

## MGS SUMMIT CONCLUDES FINAL DAY

**THE 2017** MGS Entertainment Show and Summit, organized by the Macau Gaming Equipment Manufacturer Association, concluded its third and final day yesterday with several talks and industry exhibitions. Issues discussed included Japan's integrated resorts bill, how

technology is changing the Asia-Pacific region and the future of esports betting. The theme was smart-city technology, and exhibitors yesterday highlighted equipment relating to "smart traffic", LED displays for custom animations, and robotic humanoid baccarat dealers.



## REAL ESTATE MATTERS

## 25 Property Questions We Were Asked This Year

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

We end the year again with another list of the most popular questions that we were asked throughout the year.

### 25. When should I get my 2 months Security Deposit back?

Security Deposits are usually returnable within 2 weeks according to most tenancy agreements.

The security deposit should be returned in full unless both parties agree to make deductions from the deposits.

We usually manage to pass back security deposits within 1-5 working days of a tenant checking out of a property, and it's sometimes possible to arrange a refund of the deposit upon the check-out itself.

### 24. Macau is so expensive, how can I afford to buy a property here?

This question is on the mind of everyone that lives here who have not yet bought in Macau.

The first thing to understand is of course that the bank will loan you a lot of the money that is required to buy a property.

If you are a Macau resident, it is possible to get up to 70% of the property price funded by the bank. As a non-permanent resident, banks will still lend up to 50% of the buying price.

That still leaves 30% - 50% of the cost to come up with though, and even on an apartment costing \$4.0m, you must find \$1.2m - \$2m in cash for the initial deposit.

There are lots of ways in which family and friends can help with the purchase. For example, it's possible for more than one person to co-sign for a property, so you could consider buying a property with a partner. Another option is to live with a friend or family member who can contribute towards the mortgage cost.

### 23. What should I expect to find in a furnished / unfurnished apartment?

In summary;

Unfurnished generally means there are no pieces of furniture such as chairs or TV. No surprise there.

However, you would usually expect to find 'white goods' such as a fridge, freezer, washing machine etc in the apartment.

In addition, you could also expect to see air-conditioning units, and basic kitchen appliances such as an oven and / or a cook top.

In a furnished apartment, you can expect to find Chairs, Tables, TV's, Sofa, etc, but may not have such things as cutlery or plates.

In a 'fully furnished' apartment, the general idea is that you can walk into the apartment with a suitcase, unpack and live there, so the apartment should have cutlery, bed linen, towels etc.

### 22. What costs are involved when I buy a property?

First you have the price of the property of course. But there are other fees that

you should be aware of.

'Stamp Duty' (see full explanation later) is a tax paid to the government on the price paid for the property. It is 1% on the first \$2m, 2% for the next \$2m, and 3% on everything over \$4m.

Agency Fees are normally 1% of the purchase price, and are paid by both buyer and seller.

Legal fees and registration fees vary, but in general you can allow 5% of the price of the property to cover all related fees (including stamp duty and legal fees), and you won't be far away.

### 21. Where should I buy in Macau?

Whether you are buying a home or an investment property, it's tough to go wrong in Taipa. Its close the Cotai Strip, gives easy access to the Taipa ferry terminal, and you can be in Macau in minutes if required.

If you want value for money, you will find prices in Macau a little lower, and this may be an attractive option if your job is on the peninsula as well.

Coloane, usually Hellene Gardens, is great if you crave a more 'rural' existence, and prefer easy access to trails and beaches as opposed to the hustle and bustle of the built up areas. It also offers great value for money as a place to live. We do run a yearly article entitled 'Best Places to Live', look out for that or send us a request by e-mail and we will be happy to share the latest edition with you.

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## FILM

# Fallout continues for Weinstein and his former company

**F**ALLOUT from sexual harassment and abuse allegations against Harvey Weinstein continued Wednesday as the disgraced producer was hit with a new lawsuit, lost an honorary degree and his former company forced to sell off a major film asset because of the scandal.

Weinstein and his former company were hit Wednesday with a proposed class action lawsuit that targets what it called the producer's "casting couch" harassment and abuses. The suit, filed in Los Angeles federal court by an unnamed aspiring actress who claims Weinstein harassed her in a building occupied by his former company, Miramax, also names The Weinstein Co. as a defendant and accuses its leadership of being complicit in Weinstein's systematic harassment and abuse of women.

Representatives for Weinstein and the company did not respond to messages Wednesday seeking comment.

The company is reeling from the allegations against its co-founder, and on Wednesday announced it had sold the distribution rights to its biggest upcoming release, "Paddington 2." Warner Bros. will now release the film, which is based on late author Michael Bond's famous "Paddington Bear" stories.



"Paddington" producer David Heyman earlier said he intended that the Weinstein Co. name to be "nowhere near" "Paddington 2," which was wholly financed by Studiocanal.

Trustees from the State University of New York and the SUNY chancellor on Wednesday revoked the degree granted to Weinstein in 2001. He was an English major at the University at Buffalo from 1969-1973.

In a statement, the University at Buffalo says Weinstein's alleged conduct is "inconsistent" with the values and policies of the university and "contradicts the spirit of the honorary degree" and "undermines the accomplishments" that were cited to

bolster the awarding of the degree.

It is the latest honor lost by Weinstein, who has been expelled from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and received lifetime bans from the television academy and producers guild.

Dozens of women, including actresses Gwyneth Paltrow, Angelina Jolie, Lupita Nyong'o and Ashley Judd, have accused Weinstein of sexual harassment, while actresses Asia Argento, Rose McGowan and others have accused the Oscar-winner of raping them.

Weinstein's representatives have denied all accusations of non-consensual sex, but no charges have been filed.

Weinstein, 65, is being investigated by police in Los Angeles, Beverly Hills, New York and London.

The harassment and abuse allegations against Weinstein have led to numerous women coming forward with allegations of harassment and abuse against powerful men, including actor Kevin Spacey, numerous entertainment industry executives and politicians in the United States and abroad.

Actor Terry Crews named a talent agency executive he said groped him, likening the experience on "Good Morning America" on Wednesday morning to being a prisoner of war. Crews said he felt emasculated by the incident, and he has filed a police report.

The scandal in Hollywood has prompted Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey to establish a task force to handle any forthcoming criminal complaints. The advocacy group Women in Film also plans to make a help line and panel of pro-bono legal experts available beginning next month to provide counseling, referrals and legal advice to harassment victims.

The Workshop production company announced Wednesday it will begin work this month on an eight part documentary series that will be called "Shame: The Story of Sexual Harassment in Hollywood." The project aims to explore issues starting with the "casting couch mentality" that dates back to the days of silent films. It will stretch from the disgrace of "Fatty" Arbuckle nearly a century ago to modern-day offenders like Bill Cosby and Harvey Weinstein, shining a light on how actors, directors and producers have routinely used their power to engage in unsolicited, abusive behavior. **AP**

# Spotify maintains faith in post Brexit U.K. with new office

Giles Turner

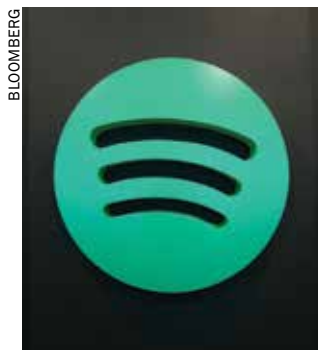
**M**USIC streaming service Spotify Ltd is moving to a new London office in order to double its workforce over the next two years, focusing on roles including engineering, data and machine learning.

Spotify will move to the Adelphi building, which overlooks the River Thames and is just a few steps from Trafalgar Square and the Charing Cross rail station, where it will expand its current 200-strong workforce with research and development staff.

"London will be one of our major hubs where we'll house key investment areas including expansion of our subscription-commerce capabilities," said Jason Richman, vice president of product at Spotify.

Spotify's plans are another stamp of confidence by a major tech company in the future of London and the U.K. in attracting tech talent. The British government Tuesday revealed plans to double the number of visas for highly skilled workers, including technology-savvy candidates.

Facebook Inc., Snap Inc. and Google have all announced plans to increase hiring in the U.K., while Apple Inc. is leasing about 500,000 square-feet of office space at Battersea Power Station on the south bank of the Thames.



Spotify's new hires in London will initially focus on engineering across front end, back end, machine learning, and data, followed by design and research roles. London will join existing Spotify R&D hubs in Stockholm, Gothenburg, New York, San Francisco, and Boston.

Spotify, the world's largest paid music streaming service, is currently planning to skip a traditional share sale and list directly on the New York Stock Exchange. The company has already raised more than USD1 billion in equity and obtained a \$1 billion convertible loan from investors led by TPG in March 2016.

Total revenue for Spotify Ltd, its U.K. domiciled business, increased to 237.8 million pounds (\$313 million) over 2016, up from 187 million pounds the previous year, with the number of active users increasing 33 percent to 7.1 million and paid subscribers up 64 percent to 2.8 million, according to accounts filed in the U.K. in late October. **Bloomberg**

## corporate bits

### MGM CHINA RECOGNIZED WITH ANTI-SLAVERY AWARD



MGM China was selected as a top-15 global finalist for the esteemed "Stop Slavery Award" presented by the Thomson Reuters Foundation on Wednesday, the company announced in a statement yesterday, saying that

the recognition "identifies MGM for its best practices and continued leadership in combatting human trafficking across the globe."

In addition to holding events to bring together local stakeholders in the govern-

ment and NGO sector, the company has held a number of internal anti-human trafficking training sessions for its employees.

It has also established a Vendor Code of Conduct, with provisions related to supplier workplace standards in an effort to eliminate child labor, forced labor and other violations of human rights.

"To be a finalist for such an esteemed award alongside other global enterprises is truly motivating," Mr. Grant Bowie, CEO and executive director of MGM China said. "Over the past years, we have worked vigorously to highlight this important issue [...] to put an end to modern-day slavery worldwide."

### PULLMAN OPENS FIRST YUEYANG HOTEL LOCATED ALONG DONGTING LAKE



Pullman has announced the opening of the brand's first hotel in the historic city of Yueyang and its second in Hunan Province. Slated to open in the fourth quarter of 2018, Pullman Yueyang Oriental is located along the western shore

of Dongting Lake.

The new hotel will be part of the Dongting Lake International Residences under Guangdong Huanghe Group. The 136-acre development comprises the 300-room hotel, a cluster of residential

villas and an 18-hole golf course.

Part of the city's development, Pullman Yueyang Oriental is the group's key project in the lakeside vicinity. It is targeting both business and leisure travelers, offering an extensive range of dining and recreational facilities, as well as versatile meetings and events space, the company said.

"Yueyang attracts large crowds of tourists to its historical locations and scenic sites each year," said Michel Mollet, chief operating officer of AccorHotels Greater China. "With a chic and welcoming service, Pullman Yueyang Oriental offers cosmopolitan travellers the perfect blend of work and play."





From left, Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, Indonesia President Joko Widodo, Malaysia Prime Minister Najib Razak and Thailand Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha

## SOUTH CHINA SEA

# ASEAN shuns mention of Beijing's new islands, arbitration loss

Jim Gomez, Manila

**S**OUTHEAST Asian nations avoided mention yesterday of China's construction of islands in the South China Sea and a U.N.-linked arbitration ruling that invalidated Beijing's claims in the disputed waters in the latest show of China's regional clout.

President Rodrigo Duterte, speaking on behalf of fellow heads of state of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, also expectedly skirted any expression of alarm over

serious human rights concerns in the region, including the plight of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar and his deadly anti-drug campaign in a statement following their annual summit Monday in Manila.

Such statements have been made public shortly after the annual gatherings of leaders of the 10-nation bloc but there was no immediate explanation for the three-day delay, which drew the attention of some Manila-based diplomats. The few instances of delays in the past were caused by differences over

wording on long-thorny issues, like the territorial rifts.

China, which wields considerable influence on ASEAN, has steadfastly opposed criticism of its artificial islands, where it has reportedly installed a missile defense system despite widespread concern, including by the United States, Japan and Australia.

Duterte, who took office last year and assumed ASEAN's rotational chairmanship this year, has openly tried to court China's friendship, trade, investment and infrastructure

financing. He has toned down sharp rebuke of China's assertive actions in the strategic waterway, one of the world's busiest, and refused to immediately seek Chinese compliance with an arbitration ruling last year that invalidated its vast claims in the South China Sea on historical grounds.

His rapprochement turned the Philippines from being one of Beijing's sharpest critics in the disputed sea.

In the ASEAN statement, Duterte repeated previous calls for a peaceful resolution of the dis-

putes, adherence to the rule of law and welcomed the approval of a framework or outline of a proposed "code of conduct" aimed at preventing confrontation in the contested waters. Deadly clashes have erupted in the past between Chinese and Vietnamese forces.

With an agreed outline, first proposed 15 years ago, negotiations could now start for the regional code, according to a joint statement by ASEAN and China whose leaders met Monday. Both sides agreed to start the negotiations early next year and conclude the talks as soon as possible, with Duterte taking a position that the code should be legally binding, presidential spokesman Harry Roque said.

"We further reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, emphasized the importance of non-militarization and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states [...] that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea," the statement said.

While ASEAN's decision to adopt a non-confrontational approach promotes friendly relations with China, it may not foster the rule of law, said Malcolm Cook, a senior fellow with the ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute in Singapore.

"It is bad because it clearly places the political expediency of good relations with China over holding China to fulfilling its commitments under international law," Cook said. "Short term expediency trumps long-term principle."

On human rights, ASEAN "welcomed the commitment by Myanmar authorities to ensure the safety of civilians, take immediate steps to end the violence in Rakhine, restore normal socio-economic conditions, and address the refugee problem through verification process" in language devoid of the alarm expressed by some governments amid deadly conditions threatening the Rohingya. **AP**

# China makes no offer of debt relief for Venezuela

**C**HINA yesterday made no offer of debt relief to Venezuela, but said it was confident the country can deal with the problem.

The statement from the foreign ministry came a day after Russia and Venezuela signed a deal in Moscow that envisages Venezuela will pay its USD3.15 billion debt to Russia over 10 years. Venezuela, by comparison, owes China \$23 billion.

"We believe that the Venezuelan government and

people are capable of properly handling the debt issue," ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said.

"We hope the relevant parties can resolve the issue through consultation. At present, the China-Venezuela financing cooperation is carried on as usual," he said.

The Russian Finance Ministry said that under Wednesday's deal, Venezuela's payments will be "minimal" during the

first six years. The agreement will allow Venezuela to allocate more funds for economic development, the Russian ministry said.

Under late Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, the country used its oil wealth to spend heavily on social programs. The economy has been ravaged by the drop in global oil prices, with widespread shortages amid triple-digit inflation sparking major social unrest. **AP**



Darwin, a 40-year-old homeless man prepares his only meal for the day in Caracas, Venezuela



# China renews call for North Korea, US 'freeze-for-freeze'

**C**HINA yesterday reiterated its call for an agreement between North Korea and the U.S. under which the North would gain concessions if it freezes its nuclear weapons program, apparently contradicting remarks a day earlier by President Donald Trump.

Foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang Geng said China's position has not changed and the "freeze-for-freeze" initiative, under which the U.S. and South Korea would suspend large-scale military exercises in return, remained a "first step."

"We believe that the freeze-for-freeze initiative is the most viable and reasonable plan against the current backdrop, which cannot only alleviate the current tensions, but also addresses the most urgent security concerns of all sides," Geng told reporters at a regular briefing.

Such an agreement would "create opportunities and conditions for the resumption of peace talks, and find break-

AP PHOTO



throughs to get out of this stalemate," Geng said.

The U.S. has long dismissed the proposal, saying North Korea must unilaterally cease its program before negotiations can begin. Earlier, Trump told reporters that China had agreed with the U.S. on that

point during his 12-day trip through Asia that included a state visit to China, where he was hosted by President Xi Jinping.

"President Xi recognizes that a nuclear North Korea is a grave threat to China, and we agreed that we would not ac-

cept a so-called freeze for freeze agreement, like those that have consistently failed in the past," Trump said.

China and Russia have proposed the agreement, also known as "dual suspension," as a way to restart long-stalled negotiations.

China, North Korea's only major ally, said Wednesday that it would send a high-level special envoy to the North's capital, Pyongyang, amid an extended chill in relations between the neighbors.

The official Xinhua News Agency said the director of the ruling Communist Party's International Liaison Department, Song Tao, would travel to Pyongyang today to report on the party's national congress held last month. Song would be the first ministerial-level Chinese official to visit North Korea since October 2015.

**China and Russia have proposed the agreement, also known as 'dual suspension'**

Trump, who wants China to play a bigger role in pressuring North Korea to end its nuclear program, reacted to the announcement of the visit by calling it a "big move."

"China is sending an Envoy and Delegation to North Korea - A big move, we'll see what happens!" he tweeted yesterday. He did not elaborate. **AP**

AD



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## MALAYSIA

# Mahathir says current government 'must go'

Ted Anthony, Bangkok

**T**HE man who led Malaysia through the final two decades of the 20th century and has waded back into its politics in recent months said yesterday the country's current government is deeply problematic and "must go."

"We are facing a lot of difficulties with a government that ignores the rule of law," Mahathir Mohamad told an audience in Thailand at a forum about Southeast Asia.

"These kinds of people must go," he said of current Prime Minister Najib Razak's government, which has held onto power through a huge corruption scandal.

Mahathir, now 92, was Malaysia's prime minister from 1991 until 2003. Today, he has emerged as an unlikely rallying point for an opposition coalition stocked with people who once despised him. He has recently taken a strong stance against Najib's government, saying his one-time protege is corrupt and has elbowed Malaysia backward instead of propelling it forward.

"I'm working with the very people who used to call me 'dictator' and other nasty things," Mahathir said. He has insisted he does not want to become prime minister again and is said to be considering running for a parliamentary seat.

The opposition coalition tried to go after Najib over an international financial scandal that involved a state fund he created when he came to power in 2009. The so-called 1MDB fund is being investigated in the United States and several other countries. The U.S. Justice Department has said at least USD4.5 billion is believed to have been misappropriated from the fund.

Najib has denied any wrongdoing. The coalition has targeted him in a number of ways, trying to engineer a no-confi-

AP PHOTO



Former Malaysian PM Mahathir Mohamad speaks at the ASEAN@50 in Retrospect yesterday in Bangkok

dence vote, asking for the intervention of the country's king and trying to get police involved. Each effort fell short.

"Now we have to wait for elections," Mahathir said. "We hope the elections will be fair and just, but we have worries about it."

General elections in Malaysia must be held by August 2018.

In recent days, two Malaysian newspapers linked to the government have run stories about Mahathir's granddaughter, Meera Alyana Mukhriz, and chronicled what they call her lavish lifestyle. The coverage is widely perceived as a shot at the former premier.

Asked about it, he seemed unfazed.

"You can publish the picture of my granddaughter on a yacht," he said, then quipped, "It was a small yacht anyway."

**We are facing a lot of difficulties with a gov't that ignores the rule of law.**

MAHATHIR MOHAMAD

Mahathir was in Bangkok speaking at a forum called "ASEAN@50: In Retrospect,"

which looked back on the past half century of the Southeast Asian economic and security alliance. The forum was sponsored by The Bangkok Post.

In remarks to the forum, Mahathir reflected on ASEAN's history and its penchant for helping Southeast Asian nations develop economically but, more importantly, avoid conflict with each other. He attributed that ability to a diplomatic politesse rooted in the group's leaders, who he said know how to deal with contentious issues without being too pointed.

"You couch your words in a way that doesn't raise the hackles of another leader. You place constraints on yourself by being po-

lite," he said. "Developing an almost club-like atmosphere is very important."

But he lamented the loss of a tradition — that longtime regional leaders really got to understand each other. Heads of state and government now pass across the stage so fast, he said, that it's hard to build relationships as he did with fellow Southeast Asian leaders like Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew and Indonesia's Suharto.

"We knew each other very well. We were friends," Mahathir said. "Now, every time you have a meeting of ASEAN, you see different faces. . One term is not enough to develop good friendships." AP

## AFGHANISTAN

# Suicide bomber kills 14 at political meeting

AP PHOTO



Afghan firefighters clean up the site of a deadly suicide bombing in Kabul, Afghanistan

**A** suicide bomber killed 14 people at a political gathering in the Afghan capital yesterday in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group.

Kabul police spokesman Basir Mujahid said another 18 people were wounded, and that the casualties included security forces and civilians. Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish said the attacker struck at the

entrance to the wedding hall where the event was being held.

The Islamic State group claimed the attack in a statement carried by its Aamaq news agency. The Taliban denied involvement.

Parliament member Hafiz Mansoor, who attended the meeting but was not harmed, said around 700 supporters of the governor of the

northern Balkh province were attending a conference to highlight his work.

Afghan security forces have struggled to combat the Taliban and other insurgents since the U.S. and NATO shifted to a counterterrorism and support role at the end of 2014. The Taliban have seized a number of districts across the country, and both groups have

carried out major attacks.

Both the Taliban and the Islamic State affiliate, which is largely made up of disgruntled former Taliban fighters, are at war with the government. Both groups want to impose a harsh version of Islamic law on Afghanistan, but they are fiercely divided over leadership, tactics and ideology, and have clashed on a number of occasions.



## SPAIN

# Ex-Catalan leader to head campaign for election from Belgium

Ciaran Giles, Joseph Wilson

**T**HE fugitive leader of Catalonia's secessionist movement said that he will repeat as his party's leading candidate in upcoming elections for the Spanish region while he fights extradition from Belgium.

Carles Puigdemont told El Punt-Avui television from Brussels that he is handpicking a list of candidates to run under him in Dec. 21 elections for Catalonia's regional parliament, which were called by Spain's national government after the region's legislators voted to declare independence.

He said that the list, running under the name "Together For Catalonia" (Junts pel Catalunya), will include members from his Democratic Party of Catalonia (PDeCAT) and some independents without a background in politics.

"I have told PDeCAT that I need to make a list that is more mine than of the party so the greatest number of people feel comfortable," Puigdemont said. "PDeCAT has accepted it and is working toward it."

The Democratic Party of Catalonia



confirmed to The Associated Press that its national board decided Wednesday to accept Puigdemont's proposal to create his own list.

Puigdemont said he plans to run his campaign from Brussels, where he and four former Cabinet members are facing an extradition hearing that could send them back to Spain to face accusations of rebellion and sedition. A Belgian judge released them from custody after they turned themselves in more than a week ago under the condition that they remain in Belgium.

"I am excited to campaign, but

with limitations," Puigdemont said. "I don't have the right to leave Belgium and obviously I won't."

Puigdemont is a wanted man since he fled Spain following a crackdown by authorities after Catalonia's parliament voted in favor of a declaration of independence Oct. 27. He has said he went to the European Union's capital because he didn't trust that he would be fairly treated by Spanish courts.

Puigdemont and the other four former ministers have their extradition hearing Friday. However, the entire extradition process could take months.

He and 13 other former Cabinet members face prison sentences of up to 30 years. Nine former members of his government remained in Spain and were sent to prison by a judge while the investigation proceeds.

Spain's government responded to the northeastern region's declaration of independence by firing Puigdemont's government, dissolving Catalonia's Parliament and calling snap elections that it hopes will lead to a victory by parties against independence.

Polls forecast a tight race between parties in favor of secession and those who want to preserve centuries-old ties with the rest of Spain. According to the polls, Puigdemont's party is poised to lose votes, while the pro-secession Republican Left is expected to get the biggest block of votes yet fall well short of an outright majority.

Puigdemont said he was disappointed that he failed to persuade the Republic Left party to join his coalition.

Catalan separatists claim a mandate for independence from the results of a referendum on secession held Oct. 1 despite a ban by Spain's top court, a boycott by par-

ties against independence and its failure to meet international standards. Forty-three percent of eligible voters turned out to cast ballots in the face of police raids on polling places. If Puigdemont is convicted, besides jail time he could be banned from holding public office.

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has pledged to quash all attempts of a breakaway, citing the Spanish constitution's provision that the nation is "indivisible."

Earlier Wednesday, Rajoy expressed confidence his government could handle any outside attempts to tamper with the election in Catalonia after his government had said there were indications of cyber-meddling by foreigners.

Spanish Defense Minister Maria Dolores de Cospedal said Monday that "many actions" to mount a misinformation campaign to destabilize Catalonia had "come from Russian territory" and elsewhere in recent months. However, both Cospedal and Rajoy said Spain had no indication the Russian government was involved. Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, dismissed insinuations of Russian meddling in Catalonia as unsubstantiated. **AP**

## USA

# Las Vegas shooting lawsuits stack up with 14 more filed

**L**EGAL action following the mass shooting at a Las Vegas concert is picking up with lawsuits filed Wednesday on behalf of 14 concertgoers, including some who were shot or injured trying to escape and one woman who is so traumatized that she has since mistaken the sound of rain for gunshots.

The hotel-casino from where Stephen Paddock fired, concert organizers and the makers and sellers of a bump stock gun accessory that enabled him to fire rapidly are named as defendants. The court filings argue that they all share blame for the worst mass shooting in recent U.S. history.

The 14 civil complaints, filed together in state court in Las Vegas, follow at least three others filed since Paddock opened fire Oct. 1 from the 32nd floor of the Mandalay Bay hotel and casino, killing 58 people and injuring hundreds of others.

The lawsuit seeks unspecified compensation for both "physical and mental injuries."

The challenge for mass-shooting lawsuits is clearing a high legal bar to prove someone other than the shooter bears any responsibility. Such litigation typically drags for years and can end with victims and their families receiving little to nothing.

One of those suing, Elisha Seng, described in a phone interview haunting images she can't dispel — of bullets thudding around her on the concert grounds and of turning to see a young woman covered in blood after being shot, clutching her throat and falling forward.

"I don't sleep at night and, when I do, I have nightmares," said the 46-year-old from Bartlett, Illinois, just outside Chicago. Recently, as heavy rain began to fall outside overnight, she jumped up from her bed. "I

thought it was gunshots."

Seng, who wasn't physically injured, returned to work as a sales representative, but said she quickly tires from her lack of sleep. Going to concert or sports halls can prompt flashbacks. She recently attended a Chicago Blackhawks game and found herself nervously calculating the best escape routes should someone open fire.

A Chicago law firm helped to prepare the filings, which include several plaintiffs from the Chicago area. Victims named in the suits also include a California man, Anthony Crisci, who was rushed to a hospital with a gunshot wound in a truck crowded with other victims.

Among deficiencies at the concert venue were poorly marked exits, Wednesday's filings say. And the hotel, it says, should have had gun-fire-location devices that pinpoint where shots are coming from.

The 64-year-old Paddock, who killed himself just before his room was stormed, is also named in a bid to seize assets from his estate. Paddock was able to use VIP status conferred on him as a high-stakes gambler to stockpile more than 20 rifles in his hotel suite, including by using exclusive access to a service elevator over days, the filings say. They argue what should have been routine checks of Paddock's bags and his room would have revealed his growing arsenal.

The filings name a leading bump stock maker, Texas-based Slide Fire Solutions, as a defendant. A lead attorney, Chicago-based Antonio Romanucci, said it wasn't yet clear which manufacturer, wholesaler or retailer made and sold the specific bump stock that Paddock used, but that the idea was to hold "the entire supply chain" responsible. Messages seeking comment from



Debris litters a concert festival grounds after a mass shooting in Las Vegas

Slide Fire weren't returned.

MGM Resorts International, the parent company of Mandalay Bay, called the shooting "a meticulously planned, evil [...] act" in a statement Wednesday and added that it would respond to any allegations only through "the appropriate legal channels." Live Nation, a concert organizer named in the filings, said in a statement it cannot comment on pending litigation, but that the company remains "heartbroken for the victims."

Bump stocks were originally created ostensibly to make it easier for people with disabilities to shoot. But the filings allege that Slide Fire geared its marketing to regular gun owners who wanted their semi-au-

tomatic rifles to mimic fully automatic weapons.

Civil cases in mass shootings are becoming increasingly common. Romanucci has also filed a lawsuit on behalf of victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting that killed 49 people last year in Orlando, Florida.

Seng said she joined the civil case to force better security at concerts and at hotels. She said she can't fathom how a hotel-casino that devotes so many resources to catching gamblers that cheat didn't notice Paddock bringing in high-powered weapons over a number of days.

"They can catch a person counting cards," she said. "But they can't catch someone carrying bags of guns." **AP**



## SONANGOL BOSS FIRED

## Angolan leader targets dos Santos clan

Candido Mendes,  
Henrique Almeida

**A**NGOLAN President Joao Lourenco dismissed Isabel dos Santos as chair of state-owned oil company Sonangol as he takes aim at the family of former President Jose Eduardo dos Santos.

Africa's richest woman was relieved of her post along with the entire board of Sonangol, according to a presidential statement. Later Wednesday the government ordered the state television station to terminate contracts for the management of a local and an international state-owned channel with two of dos Santos' younger children, according to a statement from the Ministry of Social Communications.

Sincere replacing the 75-year-old dos Santos as president in September, Lourenco has



vowed to end monopolies and fight corruption in a country where the former leader's family and their allies control huge sectors of the economy. Before today's dismissals, Lourenco fired the governor of the central bank, the head of diamond company Endiama and the boards of all three state-owned media companies.

Dos Santos' dismissal "wasn't unexpected given the changes that we saw taking place before today," Gary van

Staden, an analyst at NKC African Economics in Paarl, South Africa, said by phone. "I think this is the start of the end of the Dos Santos' family influence in Angola."

Another child, Jose Filomeno, heads Angola's USD5 billion sovereign wealth fund, and has come under fire this month following a report by Swiss newspaper Le Matin Dimanche claiming the fund's assets are being mismanaged.

Wednesday's decisions

mark the first time Lourenco has directly targeted the family of Dos Santos, who ruled Africa's second-biggest oil producer for 38 years and appointed his eldest daughter to the helm of Sonangol last year.

She will be replaced by Carlos Saturnino, whom she fired from Sonangol last year. Saturnino was recently appointed secretary of state for oil and put in charge of a 30-day review of the sector.

Isabel Dos Santos' spokesman in Lisbon wasn't immediately able to comment.

Apart from her former job at Sonangol, Isabel dos Santos also controls Unitel, Angola's largest mobile-phone company. She owns Candando, a supermarket chain, and has stakes in Angolan lenders Banco BIC and BFA and several companies in Portugal. Bloomberg estimates her net worth at \$2.5 billion.

More than a third of Angola's population of 27 million lives on less than \$2 a day, according to the World Bank. The country is struggling to recover from a drop in crude prices and the impact of a civil war that ended in 2002. **Bloomberg**



## ZIMBABWE

## Mugabe is urged to go peacefully

**P**EOPLE across Zimbabwe are starting another day of uncertainty amid quiet talks to resolve the country's political turmoil and the likely end of President Robert Mugabe's decades-long rule.

Mugabe has been in military custody and there is no sign of the recently fired deputy Emmerson Mnangagwa, who fled the country last week.

The military remains in the streets of the capital, Harare, as the mood is tense.

Regional officials are meeting on the crisis as civil society groups and churches in Zimbabwe issue appeals for calm.

A joint statement by more than 100 civil society groups urges Mugabe, the world's oldest head of state, to peacefully step aside and asks the military to quickly restore order and respect the constitution. Trade unions have urged workers to go about their business. **AP**

AD

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- ⚡ Inspect if the electrical installation and wiring are damaged or in bad condition;
- ⚡ Timely maintain and test the standby generator or the emergency power supply equipment, if equipped, to ensure the system is able to operate properly at all times.



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16-19/11/2017

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## TV canal macau



## FRIDAY

- 07:30 Suncity Group Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - 51th Edition - Qualifying (Live)
- 08:25 Suncity Group Chinese Racing Cup - Qualifying (Live)
- 09:15 Suncity Group Macau Guia Race - FIA WTCC - Free Practice 2 (Live)
- 10:35 Suncity Group Macau Road Sport Challenge - Practice (Live)
- 10:15 CTM Macau Touring Car Cup 1600cc Turbo - Qualifying (Live)
- 11:00 SJM Macau GT Cup - FIA GT World Cup - Free Practice 2 (Live)
- 12:40 CTM Macau Touring Car Cup over 1950cc - Qualifying (Live)
- 13:25 Suncity Group Macau Guia Race - FIA WTCC - Qualifying (Live)
- 14:50 Suncity Group Macau Guia Race - FIA WTCC - MAC 3 (Live)
- 15:25 Suncity Group Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix - FIA F3 World Cup - Qualifying 2 (Live)
- 16:25 SJM Macau GT Cup - FIA GT World Cup - Qualifying (Live)
- 19:15 TDM Talk Show (Repeated)
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report
- 21:00 Portuguese Serie
- 22:10 Brazilian Mini Serie
- 23:00 TDM News
- 23:30 Miscellaneous
- 01:50 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

## SATURDAY

- 09:00 Suncity Group Chinese Racing Cup - 10 laps (Live)
- 10:20 Suncity Group Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix - FIA F3 World Cup - Qualification Race - 10 laps (Live)
- 11:30 Suncity Group Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - 51 st Edition - Warm Up (Live)
- 12:25 SJM Macau GT Cup - FIA GT World Cup - Qualification Race - 12 laps (Live)
- 14:40 Suncity Group Macau Guia Race - FIA WTCC - Opening Race - 8 laps (Live)
- 15:40 Suncity Group Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - 51 st Edition - 12 laps (Live)
- 19:00 Miscellaneous
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
- 21:45 Portuguese Serie
- 23:00 TDM News
- 00:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
- 01:05 RTPi Live

## SUNDAY

- 09:00 CTM Macau Touring Car Cup 1600cc Turbo and over 1950cc - 12 laps (Live)
- 10:40 Suncity Group Macau Guia Race - FIA WTCC - Main Race - 11 laps (Live)
- 12:10 SJM Macau GT Cup - FIA GT World Cup - 18 laps (Live)
- 13:45 TDM News (Repeated)
- 15:30 Suncity Group Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix - FIA F3 World Cup - 15 laps (Live)
- 19:20 Soap Opera
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
- 21:00 Non-daily Portuguese News
- 22:00 Documentary Serie
- 23:00 TDM News
- 23:30 Europe League Magazine 2017/2018
- 00:25 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

## Offbeat

## OH, MAN! TOWN DROPS 'MEN' FROM NAME OF ITS GOVERNING BOARD

A Massachusetts town has removed the word "men" from the name of its governing body.

Brookline approved changing the Board of Selectmen to the Select Board at a Town Meeting vote yesterday [Macau time]. The title "selectman" has been replaced with "select board member."

The five-member panel includes two women.

The Boston Globe reports the measure also requires the use of gender-neutral language in town documents and communications.

The changes were proposed by a member of the town's Commission for Diversity Inclusion & Community Relations. Commission member Alex Coleman says the measure is intended to help reflect a commitment to diversity and inclusion. Coleman says similar changes have been made in Newton and Amherst.

Brookline Town Meeting member Michael Burstein had proposed referring to all board members as selectwomen. That proposal failed.

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

16 Nov - 22 Nov



## JUSTICE LEAGUE

ROOM 1

(2D) 2:30, 4:45, 9:30pm

(3D) 19:15pm

Director: Zack Snyder

Starring: Ben Affleck, Raymond Fisher, Jason Momoa

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 118 min



## THE GLASS CASTLE

ROOM 2

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

Director: Destin Daniel Cretton

Starring: Brie Larson, Woody Harrelson, Max Greenfield

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 109 min



## THOR: RAGNAROK

ROOM 1

7:00pm

Director: Taika Waititi

Starring: Chris Hemsworth, Cate Blanchett, Tom Hiddleston

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 109 min

## MIX!

ROOM 3

2:30, 7:15pm

Director: Junichi Ishikawa

Starring: Yui Aragaki, Eita Ryoko, Hiroe Koji Seto, Mei Nagano, Yu, Aoi

Language: Japanese (Chinese &amp; English)

Duration: 120 min



## LET ME EAT YOUR PANCREAS

ROOM 3

4:45, 9:30pm

Director: Sho Tsukikawa

Starring: Minami Hamabe, Takumi Kitamura, Shun Oguri

Language: Japanese (Chinese &amp; English)

Duration: 115min

## this day in history



## 1989 POLICE CRUSH PRAGUE PROTEST RALLY

Riot police in Czechoslovakia have arrested hundreds of people taking part in a protest march.

More than 15,000 people, mostly students, took part in the demonstration, the biggest show of public dissent for two decades.

They called for the resignation of their country's communist government, led by Milos Jakes.

Scores of people were injured, several seriously, as the police forcibly broke up the rally.

Witnesses said the police used clubs to beat marchers and sprayed tear gas indiscriminately.

It comes in the wake of a wave of reform sweeping through other former Soviet bloc states.

In particular, the fall of the Berlin Wall last week in neighbouring East Germany and the disintegration of its hard-line communist regime has heightened expectations of possible change here.

The demonstration began at Charles University, just south of the city's centre.

It started off as an officially-sanctioned march to commemorate Czech student martyr Jan Opletal, who died at the hands of the country's Nazi occupiers 50 years ago.

The fact permission for the march was given at all reflects a growing recognition on the part of the country's communist leaders of the need for change.

It was only the second time a non-government rally had been allowed in Czechoslovakia since the crushing of Alexander Dubcek's reformist government by the Soviet Union 21 years ago.

Mr Dubcek, who has since lived in relative obscurity, was refused permission to travel to Prague to take part in the rally.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The following day rumours began to circulate that a 20-year-old student, Martin Smid, had been beaten to death by riot police during the demonstration.

These reports were hotly disputed by the government but nevertheless thousands of people once again took to the streets on 19 November in protest at the killing.

Throughout November peaceful mass demonstrations and strikes gained momentum.

On 22 November Alexander Dubcek addressed 200,000 people gathered in Prague's Wenceslas Square.

Eventually the Communist party leadership resigned and, in December 1989, was replaced by a government composed mainly of non-communists.

The overthrow of Czechoslovakia's communist regime became known as the "Velvet Revolution".

In 1993 the country split peacefully into two nations - the Czech Republic and Slovakia.



YOUR STARS

Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Everyone needs to do a serious cleansing every now and then. It's your turn now, so you probably want to get serious. If you have the urge to throw things out - even if you're emotionally attached.

Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

You're quite a cerebral, intellectual creature, but that doesn't mean you don't have any feelings - just that you're better at keeping them contained than most are under similar circumstances.

Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You're quite proud of everyone you love and everything you own, and that goes double for those you've worked hard to keep close. Whether they're newly acquired or they've been with you since childhood.

Libra

Sep.23-Oct. 22

You've had troubled sleep for a couple of days now, mostly because someone you care about is under fire and you can't quite figure out how to help them handle it. Force yourself to relax.

Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

You're a born authority figure - in the sense that you trust your own judgment over anyone else's. That's usually a good plan, because your instincts are ordinarily right on.

Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Your objectivity is legendary among your people. You may even have been accused of being too coldly rational. That may be the case sometimes, but right now, you're dealing with an emotional situation.

Taurus

April 20-May 20

You're as self-sufficient as anyone can possibly be, so when someone close approaches you with advice, you're torn between listening to them and listening to your instincts.

Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Something special is headed your way today. It might not arrive in the most attractive package - or any package at all - but it's something you've been wanting for a long time.

Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Even if everything seems to be going quite well, you just can't help but worry that things might take a turn for the worse. It's time for you to let go of your pessimism, if possible.

Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

You are somewhat famous for your willingness to do whatever it takes when someone you love needs you. That's happening right now, and the hints are sure to keep coming your way.

Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

You've been kind of bored and restless lately, and might be thinking that a change of scenery would suit you. Stop telling yourself that you're just trying to duck out from responsibilities.

Pisces

Feb.19-Mar. 20

You tend to respect authority figures, though you have your limits. You admire how much time and energy your elders have invested into expanding their wisdom and experience.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-1	6	cloudy
Harbin	-13	-3	cloudy/snow shower
Tianjin	2	7	overcast
Urumqi	-3	-1	moderate snow/cloudy
Xi'an	6	12	cloudy/drizzle
Lhasa	-1	17	cloudy
Chengdu	13	17	drizzle
Chongqing	16	18	overcast
Kunming	8	23	cloudy/clear
Nanjing	14	16	drizzle
Shanghai	14	20	drizzle
Wuhan	13	16	drizzle
Hangzhou	13	18	drizzle
Taipei	22	28	overcast
Guangzhou	20	27	cloudy
Hong Kong	22	26	cloudy

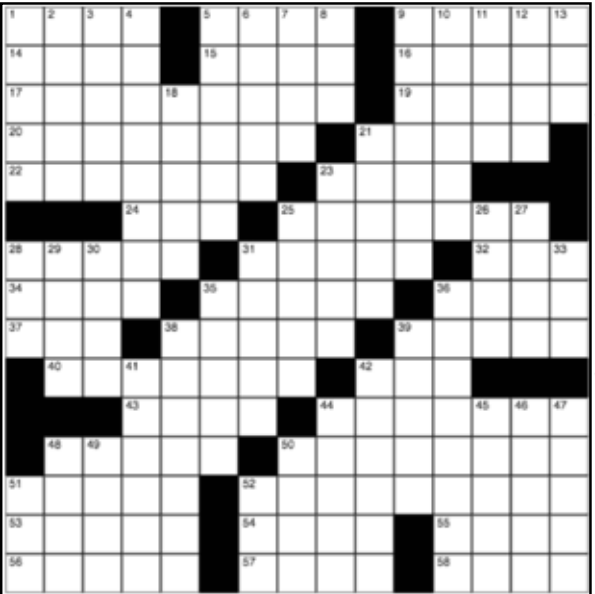
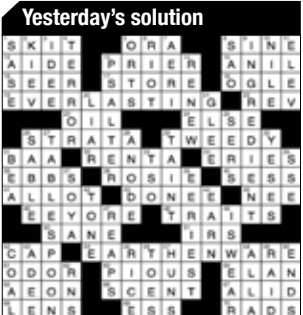
WORLD

Moscow	1	3	drizzle
Frankfurt	-4	7	cloudy/drizzle
Paris	0	9	overcast/drizzle
London	6	8	drizzle/clear
New York	6	8	cloudy/clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Nothing, in Nogales; 5- Tick off; 9- Divest; 14- Came down to earth; 15- Skin cream ingredient; 16- You \_\_\_ right!; 17- Variety of peach; 19- Units of force; 20- Absolute ruler; 21- Battery pole; 22- Began; 23- Chicken cordon \_\_\_; 24- Silent assent; 25- Dampen; 28- Chad neighbor; 31- State not to "mess with"; 32- A Kennedy; 34- \_\_\_-deucey; 35- Apple centers; 36- Evict; 37- Long, long time; 38- Committee head; 39- Out of order; 40- Most proximate; 42- Hosp. procedure; 43- "We're all in the same \_\_\_"; 44- Small mat; 48- Condescend; 50- Mocking; 51- Fire starter; 52- Secondary occupations; 53- Stiff bristles; 54- Wallet fillers; 55- Let off steam; 56- Burn with water; 57- Brouhaha; 58- Chow;

DOWN: 1- Grannies; 2- Aboriginal Alaskan; 3- Judicial rulings; 4- A lawyer; 5- Spoiled; 6- Troy story; 7- Receptacle for holy water; 8- Lawyer's charge; 9- Sorrow; 10- Audition; 11- Tear; 12- Aha!; 13- Not neg.; 18- Role player; 21- AKA; 23- Prizefighter; 25- Reason for a raise; 26- Ornamental case; 27- Capone's nemesis; 28- Not for a Scot; 29- Clickable image; 30- Basic unit of heredity; 31- Raise a glass to; 33- Skid row woe; 35- Inexpensive; 36- Omitting; 38- Not straight; 39- Thin as \_\_\_; 41- Away from the mouth; 42- To a greater extent; 44- Yielded; 45- Fungal infection; 46- Incident; 47- Reposes; 48- Job detail, briefly; 49- Cheerio!; 50- Pebbles's pet; 51- Leaky tire sound; 52- Drunkard;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944	
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731	
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333	
Commission Against	
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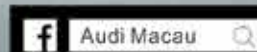
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**A**S Peru's president promised, the South American country had its football-dedicated holiday yesterday.

Peru beat New Zealand 2-0 on Wednesday to win a two-leg intercontinental playoff and earn the 32nd and last spot at the World Cup in Russia next year. It will be Peru's first trip to the World Cup since Spain in 1982.

"It is a wait of 35 years. We didn't deserve to be away from the World Cup for so long," said Christian Cueva, who set up both goals. "All Peruvians should take this Thursday to celebrate as never before."

After a 0-0 draw in New Zealand on Saturday, a more vibrant Peru showed up at the Estadio Nacional and denied New Zealand a third appearance at the World Cup.

Despite the absence of their main striker Paolo Guerrero, who is serving a FIFA doping ban, the Peruvians controlled the match from the start.

Striker Jefferson Farfan opened the scoring in the 28th minute from the edge of the box burying the ball into the New Zealand net. In tears, the Lokomotiv Moscow forward showed the shirt of his boyhood friend Guerrero to the crowd.

Defender Christian Ramos netted the second in the 65th from Cueva's corner.

## FOOTBALL

# Peru qualifies for first World Cup since 1982 by beating NZ

A still tearful Farfan said after the match that his team had "to endure a lot of nonsense until we got here." Before being banned, Guerrero scored six goals for Peru in South American qualifiers.

"I dedicate this to Paolo, I promised him we would deliver," Farfan said.

**All Peruvians should take this Thursday to celebrate as never before.**

CHRISTIAN CUEVA  
FOOTBALLER

The draw for the World Cup finals will be on Dec. 1 at the Kremlin in Moscow and groups will be formed with one team from each of the four pots. Peru will be in a pot of second-seeded teams alongside Spain, Swit-



Peru's Christian Ramos (right) celebrates after scoring his side's second goal against New Zealand, with his teammate Alberto Rodriguez (center) during a play-off qualifying match for the 2018 Russian World Cup

zerland, England, Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay and Croatia.

Peru coach Ricardo Gareca thanked the team's psychologist for the playoff victory, which followed a fifth-pla-

ce finish in South American World Cup qualifying.

"He was very important for us at this turbulent moment," Gareca said.

Peruvian President Pedro Paulo Kuczynski used Twit-

ter to ask for moderation in the festivities on the holiday on Thursday.

"Thanks to our warriors for giving us this joy," he wrote. "Let's celebrate with responsibility." AP

## BASEBALL

## MLB hopes for new Japan posting deal by early December

Ronald Blum, Orlando

**M**AJOR League Baseball hopes to put in place a new posting system agreement with Japan by early December, a deal that would allow star pitcher-outfielder Shohei Otani to start negotiations with big league teams.

MLB Chief Legal Officer Dan Halem said a new framework has been agreed to with Nippon Professional Baseball and has been given to the Major League Baseball Players Association for its approval.

"I'm hopeful that we can wrap up our discussions with the union soon, maybe within a week," he said Wednesday at the general managers' meetings.

After that, MLB owners would hold a conference call for an approval vote.

"I'm hopeful that we'll



Dan Halem, chief legal officer of Major League Baseball

have a new system in place in which players can be posted by the NPB in early December," he said.

Otani, a 23-year-old with the Pacific League's Nippon Ham Fighters, would be restricted to a minor league contract with a maximum signing bonus of USD3,535,000, with each team having different amounts to

spend.

Halem also hopes to have a separate deal with the players' association by mid-January on pace-of-play changes such as a pitch clock, limits on mound visits. Baseball also is considering split screens to allow commercials on broadcasts as half-innings start.

"Proposals have been exchanged and in-per-

son meetings have taken place," he said. "I would characterize those discussions as being in the beginning. We have a ways to go. In terms of the calendar, I think we would need to complete those discussions by mid-January in order to effectively roll them out and explain them to umpires and our clubs."

Nine-inning games ave-

raged a record 3 hours, 5 minutes during the regular season and 3:29 in the postseason.

Owners have the right for next season to unilaterally institute a 20-second pitch clock and limit a catcher to one mound visit per pitcher each inning, but baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred prefers to reach an agreement with the union in time for next season.

"Both discussions are 'ongoing' and we remain 'optimistic,'" union head Tony Clark wrote in an

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email to The Associated Press.

Halem said baseball officials and general managers discussed sign stealing this week and teams were reminded that watches with internet capability are prohibited from dugouts. Boston was fined in September for improper use of an Apple watch.

After a season in which a record 6,105 home runs were hit, topping the 5,963 in 2000 at the height of the Steroids Era, MLB is examining baseballs and quality control.

"We have consultants that are on retainer that look at all of our equipment, including the baseball," Halem said. "The test results for the baseballs this year, including the postseason, were no different than the test results in prior seasons. That being said, it is an issue that has generated a lot of discussion, so we are thoroughly reviewing the entire testing process and the way baseballs are handled to determine whether changes should be made." AP



opinion

Bizcuits

Leanda Lee



FAKE IT UNTIL YOU MAKE IT

"Walk through the corridors as if you own the place. No-one will stop you", was some very early and surprising advice I received in how to succeed. That first lesson was offered to get me down hospital corridors outside visiting hours – it worked, but it had taken gumption. The message was have some bravado, look like you plausibly know what you are doing, and rarely will you be questioned. When in doubt, don't look like you might be.

To that point in my education, confidence had always been linked to competence: knowledge and knowhow, skills and talent were all necessary preconditions to a professional persona. It was not de rigueur to pretend to be someone you were not. Only real experts were called experts, scholars were aged, and professors and consultants lauded not because they looked the part and were only one step ahead of the next informed person, but because they knew all that there was to know in their field.

Yet, there is also value given to form and status over function: some cultures and echelons of society do this and accept it more readily than others. Unknown unknowns are made up for with intellectual humility. Unknown knowns are obscured by arrogance of the inexperienced, and with work and effort become knowns in the hands of the expert. The true professional knows which is which.

Admittedly sweeping generalisations (because they are useful), men seem to be better than women at novice posturing, and MBA graduate-cum-management consultant wannabes are particularly adept at the BS factor. Then there are fly-in 'scholars' and commentators to Macau often reported in the media and at conferences who conveniently dismiss the nuanced Macau context to deliver advice on what Macau should do to succeed: note the broken-record and hackneyed superiority of the Las Vegas Model; mass market family-friendly forms of diversification; and, over ten years in the making, MICE to the rescue.

The Pareto principle (the 80/20 Rule) of putting effort into the 20% of activity that brings 80% of the benefit seems to have been put on its head over and over again in these recommendations. If hardcore gaming in the VIP segment is where the profitable turnover is generated for the majority of the stakeholders (government coffers, junket operators and casino operators), a natural consequence is that less investment will be enthusiastically ploughed into do-good whimsy.

There is a potential count-down to make a return on today's concessions (note MGM's mere two-year window of opportunity to recover investment on MGM Cotai). No wonder we have continued to see a less than enthusiastic non-gaming investment – albeit manipulated somewhat by government prompting - where there are no guarantees into the future. Across the concessions, eagerness to invest in non-gaming elements appears correlated with the perceived risk related to concession "renewal" – a kind of insurance.

Macau is one of those uncertain contexts, confounding even those experts who are used to recognising gaps in their knowledge. What is rarely clear is whether the so-called 'expert' is expert enough to acknowledge gaps in their knowledge, or whether theirs is simply bravado.

Commentary on how the various elements of Macau's gaming environment come together is speculation at best. Research, breadth and strength of connections, proactively testing theories through seeking new data and information all go to determine the quality of the thinking and suitability of the recommendations and explanations offered.

Some analysts fake it until they make it with publishable sound-bites of plausible or prevailing views: Beware the comfortable pronouncements that have you nodding agreement. Other analysts go against the tide, repeatedly experiencing the self-doubts of the Impostor Syndrome and constantly striving to know and understand both the knowns and the unknowns that are Macau. The rein lies the most likely explanations.

THE JAPAN RAIL OPERATOR SAYS SORRY, AS BUZZ TRAIN LEAVES 20 SECONDS EARLY

They put a high premium on punctuality in Japan.

A politician once had to drop out of an election after he delayed a bullet train by pushing staff to halt it for a campaign stop. This time, though, it's a rail company that's apologizing after the 9:44 a.m. train on Tokyo's Tsukuba Express line left earlier than scheduled on Tuesday 20 seconds too early.

In a statement on its website, management

"deeply" apologized for the "severe inconvenience" caused to customers who missed the too-early train and couldn't afford to wait for the next one - scheduled for four minutes later. The conductor on board didn't correctly check the train's timetable, resulting in the early departure.

While issuing the mea culpa, the company noted that it actually hadn't received any customer complaints.

Leonardo da Vinci's Christ painting sells for record USD450M

AP PHOTO



Bidding representatives react after Leonardo da Vinci's "Salvator Mundi" sold for USD450 million at Christie's in New York

A painting of Christ by the Renaissance master Leonardo da Vinci sold for a record USD450 million (380 million euros) at auction yesterday [Macau time], smashing previous records for artworks sold at auction or privately.

The painting, "Salvator Mundi," Latin for "Savior of the World," is one of fewer than 20 paintings by Leonardo known to exist and the only one in private hands. It was sold by Christie's auction house, which didn't immediately identify the buyer.

"Salvator Mundi" is a painting of the most iconic figure in the world by the most important artist of all time," said Loic Gouzer, co-chairman of post-war and contemporary art at Christie's. "The opportunity to bring this masterpiece to the market is an honor that comes around once in a lifetime."

The highest price paid for a work of art at auction had been \$179 million (152 million euros), for Pablo Picasso's painting "Women of Algiers (Version O)" in May 2015, also at Christie's in New York. The highest known sale price for any artwork had been \$300 million (253 million euros), for Willem de Kooning's painting "Interchan-

ge," sold privately in September 2015 by the David Geffen Foundation to hedge fund manager Kenneth C. Griffin.

A backer of the "Salvator Mundi" auction had guaranteed a bid of at least \$100 million (85 million euros). The bidding opened at \$75 million and ran for 19 minutes. The price hit \$300 million about halfway through the bidding.

People in the auction house gallery applauded and cheered when the bidding reached \$300 million and when the hammer came down on the final bid, \$400 million. The record sale price of \$450 million includes the buyer's premium, a fee paid by the winner to the auction house.

The 66-centimeter-tall Leonardo painting dates from around 1500 and shows Christ dressed in Renaissance-style robes, his right hand raised in blessing as his left hand holds a crystal sphere.

Its path from Leonardo's workshop to the auction block at Christie's was not smooth. Once owned by King Charles I of England, it disappeared from view until 1900, when it resurfaced and was acquired by a British collector. At that time it was attributed to a Leonardo disciple, rather

than to the master himself.

The painting was sold again in 1958 and then was acquired in 2005, badly damaged and partly painted over, by a consortium of art dealers who paid less than \$10,000 (8,445 euros). The art dealers restored the painting and documented its authenticity as a work by Leonardo.

The painting was sold by Russian billionaire Dmitry Rybolovlev, who bought it in 2013 for 108 million euros in a private sale that became the subject of a continuing lawsuit.

Christie's said most scholars agree the painting is by Leonardo, though some critics have questioned the attribution and some say the extensive restoration muddies the work's authorship.

Christie's capitalized on the public's interest in Leonardo, considered one of the greatest artists of all time, with a media campaign that labeled the painting "The Last Da Vinci." The work was exhibited in Hong Kong, San Francisco, London and New York before the sale.

In New York, where no museum owns a Leonardo, art lovers lined up outside Christie's Rockefeller Center headquarters on earlier this week to view "Salvator Mundi." AP

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	30-50 Good	
High Density Residential Area	30-50 Good	
Ambient	30-50 Good	

SOURCE: DSGM

WORLD BRIEFS

**JAPAN-N. KOREA** Japan yesterday handed over three North Korean crew members who were rescued from a capsized fishing boat to a North Korean vessel that will return them home, officials said.

**SYRIA** Activists and a monitoring group say almost two dozen civilians have been killed in the last three days of fighting in the suburb of the capital, Damascus, along with dozens of government forces and rebels.

AP PHOTO



**ZIMBABWE** President Robert Mugabe was shown meeting yesterday with the army commander who put him under house arrest, as negotiations with a South African delegation and a Catholic priest at the state house pushed for a resolution to the political turmoil and the likely end to Mugabe's decades-long rule. More on p14

**POLAND** Two prominent members of the Polish government have expressed support for destroying the Palace of Culture, a Stalinist-era skyscraper that dominates Warsaw's skyline and stands as a symbol of the country's former subservience to Moscow.

**GREECE-MACEDONIA** Police blocked some 200 migrants and asylum-seekers Wednesday from leaving a city in northern Greece for the Macedonian border in hopes of traveling on to other European Union countries.

AP PHOTO



**SPAIN** The fugitive leader of Catalonia's secessionist movement said that he will repeat as his party's leading candidate in upcoming elections for the Spanish region while he fights extradition from Belgium. More on p13

**VENEZUELA**'s ousted chief prosecutor yesterday asked the International Criminal Court to open an investigation into President Nicolas Maduro and four other senior officials for alleged crimes against humanity.