



TACKLING SENSITIVE TOPICS
Interview with Ofir Raul Graizer, author of "The Cakemaker", a film tackling sensitive topics

P2 IFFAM



10,000 DRIVING PERMITS
Hong Kong authorities yesterday increased the number of driving permits for the upcoming Delta Bridge

P7



MACAU JAZZ WEEK RETURNS

P8 MDT REPORT



WED. 13
Dec 2017

T. 17°/ 21° C
H. 65/ 95%

facebook.com/mdtimes
+ 11,000

N° 2947
MOP 7.50
HKD 9.50



MacauDaily 澳門每日時報® Times



FOUNDER & PUBLISHER Kowie Geldenhuys EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS

AP PHOTO



BANGLADESH

Counterterrorism officers are questioning the wife and other relatives of a man accused of carrying out a bomb attack in New York City's subway system, as the government condemned the attack, saying it opposes all forms of terrorism. More on p12

HONG KONG A British banker sentenced to life in prison for the gruesome slayings of two Indonesian women appeared in a Hong Kong court yesterday to appeal his conviction. More on p11

AP PHOTO



CAMBODIA

The European Union said yesterday it has suspended assistance to Cambodia's election commission following last month's dissolution of the country's main opposition party, and warned that next July's general election will not be legitimate if the opposition is not allowed to participate. More on p12

PAKISTAN's army says militants opened fire on an army vehicle on patrol in the country's mountainous northwestern region near the Afghan border, killing two soldiers. More on backpage

Greater Bay tourism federation established

P3



Philanthropists lead the way 2 years after Paris climate agreement

P20

IFFAM

Israeli director wants to show complex plot in conservative cities

Lynzy Valles

THE "Cakemaker" - a film directed by Ofir Raul Graizer - is a movie that tackles religion, grief and hidden love, shown through a slight political lens.

The film, which was part of the competition segment of the 2nd International Film Festival & Awards Macao (IFFAM) - is about a young German baker, Thomas, and an Israeli widow, Anat, who both grieve for an Israeli businessman named Oren.

Oren, a married man from Israel frequently traveled to Germany on business. When Oren dies in a car crash in Israel, Thomas travels to Jerusalem seeking answers about his death.

Hiding his romantic relationship with Oren, Thomas infiltrates the life of Oren's widow Anat who owns a small café in the city, where he starts to work for her.

Graizer, when speaking to local press, admitted that directing the movie also required a sensitive approach - but at the same time, it was a daring move since the Israeli director grew up in a world of both religious and secular conservatism.

"What I tried to do is to make this topic [religion] a part of the story but in the background. [...] [I] let the characters consider religion in their own way," he said.



Ofir Raul Graizer

The movie, which was reviewed as a blend of "old-school melodrama and contemporary identity politics" depicts the pain of the characters with empathy.

Graizer directed "The Cakemaker" as a unique story of same-sex romance that recognizes a human being's sexuality, desire, and emotional need.

"Even though they have this concept on religion and lifestyle, and belief, they are eventually human beings and they find a way to remain human despite the difference," the director said of his characters.

Inspired by a true story, Graizer

explained that his friend, who had passed away, lived a double life, as he was married, had children - yet had an affair with a man.

"It's actually a story which is happening today in liberal cultures. [...] There are still people who are living a double life because of family, social and religious [matters]. It's still happening," explained the filmmaker.

When exploring the line between fiction and reality in his film, Graizer noted that the context of the movie was factual, while the elements in the film - food, and the connection between Israel and Berlin, blurs more into the realm

of fiction, although still draws upon his experiences.

Questioned by the Times whether there were hesitations in screening the film in the region due to sensitive topics that it portrayed, Graizer said that he has always been curious about showing the film in places which might be more conservative.

"What I don't want to do is to hurt people. [...] I didn't try to make it either nice or provocative. In the end when I look at it, I think it's quite done in a gentle way," he commented.

The movie's ending is relatively open to interpretation, and Grai-

zer remarked, "the idea is to let people find their own way to define who they are."

"This is what the characters try to do in the film in an unconscious way. They want to be able to exist without defining themselves nationally, religiously and sexuality," he continued.

It took eight years for the movie to be realized due to funding difficulties, yet the director noted that the movie has been invited to be screened at different regions including the United States, Australia, Spain, Korea and Taiwan.

The director, who is based in both Israel and Germany, is currently working on the script "The Dream Of The Shepherd" - a movie very different from "The Cakemaker" - as it tackles politics, violence and refugees.

Sharing more on "The Cakemaker," the director admitted, "I think it's a very political film and has a very political message. It's something hidden. It's the first time I'm saying it."

Graizer also shared that he is developing three more stories, all of which are influenced by what is happening in politics and his personal life.

"Today we live in a world where ideas of human rights or the rights of the refugees have been neglected. They've been less valued, while the idea of nationality, religion and patriotism and monarchy are coming back," he commented.

"The Cakemaker," which screened at the Macao Cultural Center on Sunday, is Graizer's first feature film and had its world premiere at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival in the Czech Republic in June, where it won the Ecumenical Jury Award.

TSI confirms decision on Iec Long Firecracker Factory land plot

THE Court of Second Instance (TSI) concluded the analysis on the appeal submitted by the Sociedade de Desenvolvimento Predial Baía da Nossa Senhora da Esperança S.A. last week. The appeal was made to stop the legal order to vacate the land where the former Iec Long Firecracker Factory in Taipa is located.

The order issued by the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) had been grounded on a previous decision

from the Administrative Court (TA). The TA gave their support to the Chief Executive's (CE) order, from April 24. According to that order a contract of land swap between the government and three companies (including the defendants) was cancelled. The reason for its cancellation was the legal impossibility of making such a contract in light of the investigations and report, made prior by the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) in July 2016.

The company has decided to appeal after the TA's decision and their case had been forwarded to the upper court (TSI). The aim of their appeal was to try to supersede the order from DSSOPT, which was imposing a 60-day period for the release of the land, to avoid immediate eviction.

According to the CE's order, the DSSOPT had the duty to "take immediate action to keep unoccupied lands, which are its property, [specifically in

this case] the area called Iec Long Firecracker Factory." The company have contested this action, claiming that the process is still running and that this procedure would cause them to suffer financial losses.

Concerning claims that "the execution is likely to cause damage, which will be difficult to repair for the applicant" the TSI ruled that in the case of a later decision (that is favorable for the appellant), they, the company, "may



Inside the decrepit Iec Long Firecracker Factory

request compensation for the losses suffered, even if it can not continue as owner of the concession of the land."

The TSI ruling continued, "nor can it be said that it will be impossible to calculate the exact amount of profit losses,

damages and any other losses which it may suffer," reaffirming that "it is possible to establish criteria to determine the profitability of the construction and the profits that the entrepreneur would have if he could have completed the use of the land."

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

+ 4 Million page views
PER MONTH

Thank You!

+12,000 like us on facebook.com/mdtimes

Times

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF (DIRECTOR) Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
MANAGING EDITOR Paulo Barbosa paulo.barbosa@macaudailytimes.com
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Eric Sautedé, Leanda Lee, Severo Portela

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Daniel Beitler, Emilie Tran, Grace Yu, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Julie Zhu, Juliet Risdon, Lynzy Valles, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Rodrigo de Matos (cartoonist), Viviana Segui
DESIGNERS Eva Bucho, Miguel Bandeira | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES Associated Press, Bloomberg, Financial Times, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua | SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao arry@macaudailytimes.com

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

SECRETARY Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR Telephone: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com

For subscription and general issues:

general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

Greater Bay Area tourism federation established

THE Tourism Federation of Cities in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau Bay Area held its first members' assembly in Hengqin yesterday.

During the assembly, the Federation approved its internal rules. Initiated by the Tourism Administration of Guangdong Province, the Hong Kong Tourism Commission and the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) and under the guidance of the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA), the federation is a new organization for comprehensive coo-



operation of tourism authorities of the nine cities in Guangdong Province – Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Jiang-

men and Zhaoqing – as well as the two Special Administrative Regions, Hong Kong and Macau.

Among the federation goals is the building of “a quality living circle ideal for inhabitation, work and travel.”

The Secretariat of the federation is set up at the Tourism Administration of Guangdong Province, and the first Rotating Chairman of the year is the Tourism Administration of Guangzhou Municipality. Upholding the principle of “concerted development, joint branding and market sharing”, the Federation will promote communication and coopera-

tion among members through resource integration, image promotion, collaborative marketing and other means, as all members join hands to forge a world-class travel destination. The CNTA director general of the Department of Affairs on Tourism of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, Li Yaying, remarked that tourism is a rising industry and a new era of holistic tourism development has arrived.

According to a statement issued yesterday by the MGTO, the establishment of the federation will not only push forward tourism cooperation and interchanges between the three destinations but will also foster their joint branding as one international tourism destination. The statement continues to say that the cooperation will forge a new tourism benchmark as a world-class bay area, creating a strong momentum for the tourism development of the entire region of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, as well as national tourism development.

Sou and Chiang trial to kick-off on January 9

THE case which involves current lawmaker Sulu Sou, as well as former leader of New Macau Association, Scott Chiang, has been scheduled to start on January 9 at the Court of First Instance. They are facing charges of qualified disobedience to police authorities, allegedly perpetrated after a demonstration on May 15, 2016, when the association led a street protest against the Macao Foundation over the subsidy granted to the Jinan University in Guangdong for the amount of RM-B100Million.

The trial was initially scheduled for last month, but was postponed on request of the president of the Legislative Assembly (AL), so the legislative body could count the vote regarding the suspension of the mandate of Sou as lawmaker and his consequent ability to be present in court.

The voting occurred last week when the AL plenary voted for the suspension of the mandate of Sou, with 28 votes in favor and only four against.

Since the accusation of Sou and Chiang was public, several people have been accusing this case as being politically motivated, which has been refuted by the Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak.

GUANGDONG LAUNCHES MEASURES FOR GREATER BAY AREA

THE GUANGDONG Security Department yesterday announced 18 measures to assist the Greater Bay Area plan. The 18 measures encompass six fields, including security force cooperation, border entry of people and vehicles, and talented people's residence concerning the three regions. The

Hengqin Free Trade Zone will allow a maximum of 800 Macau single plated cars to enter the zone. This number is seven times the current value, in terms of said vehicle permissions. Macau's single plated cars will also be waived from undergoing annual checking within the next six years.

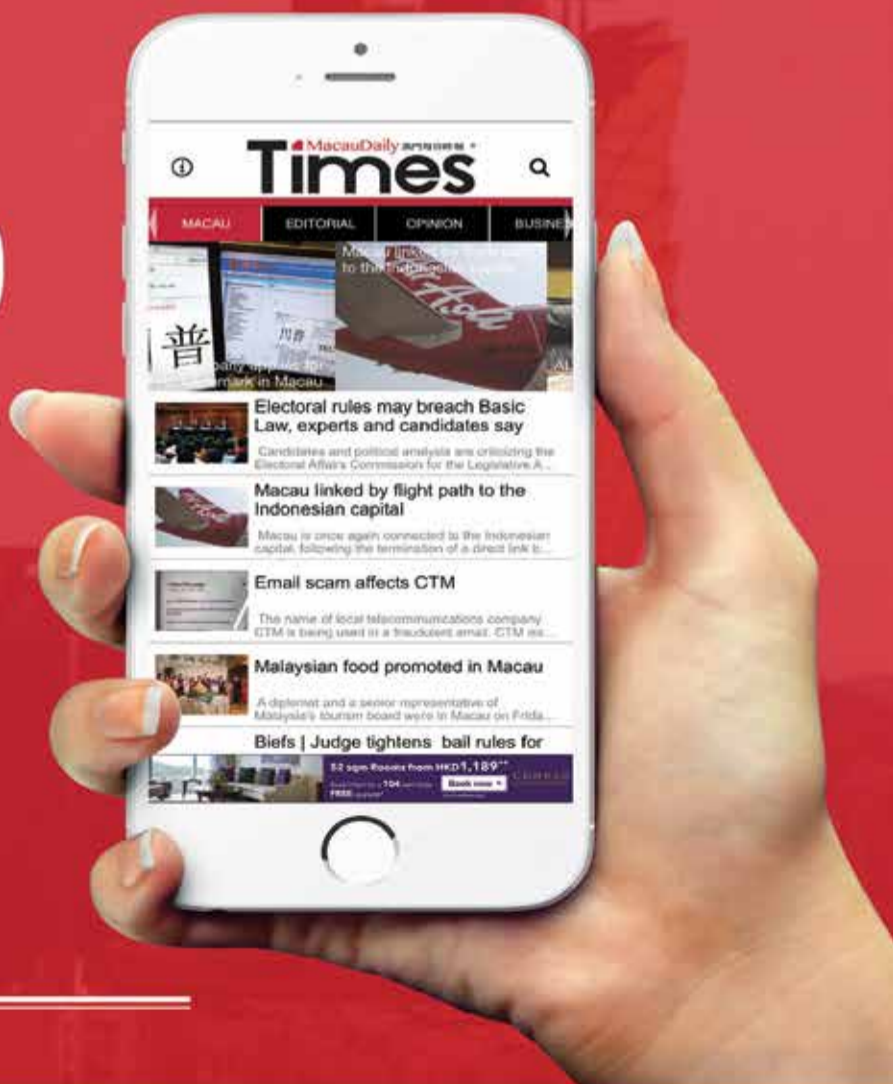
+50m pageviews per year

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo



Times App

News At Hand



" THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

advertising@macaudailytimes.com

Gongbei Customs arrest three drug dealers

Gongbei Customs has arrested three drug dealers at the Gongbei Port Plaza, following the seizure of an anonymous package containing drugs which had been shipped from Pakistan. In total, 447.5 grams of Ketamine were spotted while the customs officers carried out daily checking of shipped parcels. After spotting the drugs, the Gongbei customs authority took action to detain the drug dealers. Two people working at a shop located in the Gongbei Port Plaza were arrested, as well as another man who picked up the drugs at the shop.

Lawmaker questions reopening of flooded parking lots

The pedestrian flyover at Avenida Doutor Mário Soares has been repaired and has now reopened. The flyover was first opened in August, before being damaged during Typhoon Hato. Regarding facilities damaged by Hato, lawmaker Lam Lon Wai also questioned the government about the reopening of parking lots, which were flooded during the typhoon. Three parking lots that were flooded are still closed. The lawmaker has urged the government to open the government department's parking lots to the public, as Lam believes that these parking lots are not being used reasonably.

ANIMAL RIGHTS

Queen bandmates appeal to CE to pressure Canidrome

A letter signed by musicians Brian May and Roger Taylor from English rock band Queen is calling for the local government to pressure the Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome into surrendering possession of its greyhounds.

The letter, addressed to Macau's chief executive, is the second instance of high-profile westerners expressing concern for the dogs currently under the Canidrome's care, after legendary French actress Brigitte Bardot penned her own message earlier this year. It comes in the broader context of global activists and other celebrities, like British comedian Ricky Gervais, who have shamed the Canidrome in recent years.

Last year, international observers described the facility as "the world's deadliest greyhound racetrack," due to the abnormally high number of euthanized dogs.

However, as the closure of the Canidrome has become increasingly likely, activists have

AP PHOTO



Brian May, member of Queen (right), performs with Adam Lambert at the 2015 edition of the Rock in Rio music festival

changed their tone from condemnation to appeal, calling for the Canidrome to hand over its greyhounds to Anima (Macau) for rehousing.

This was the message in the recent letter from May and Taylor, shared with the Times yesterday.

"The current cycle of suffering and death that is happening at the Canidrome of Macau goes against our shared values,"

the letter reads. "It is also an affront to Macau's proud history."

"You have a once in a lifetime opportunity to end this suffering and set a positive example for the entire world. [...] We are therefore writing to you, the Macau Chief Executive so that you may be able [to] obtain assurances from the Canidrome of Macau that the greyhounds in their possession

will be transferred to the care of Anima – Society for the Protection of Animals (Macau) so that their safety is assured and adoptive families can be found."

The Queen bandmates also appealed to the Macau government not to allow the greyhounds to be exported to "any other Asian country, where they will likely be used for illegal races or consumed as meat." DB

AD

UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH
2017 USJ Community Scholarships and Fellowships Award Ceremony

Today, 13th December, 2016, 59 scholarships and fellowships ranging up to MOP 698,500 will be awarded to the students of the University of Saint Joseph. The USJ community scholarships' philosophy aims to encourage and support students with outstanding academy performance while the USJ community fellowships aim to help those with financial needs.

USJ would like to thank the following prominent local institutions and individuals in Macau for sponsoring scholarships and fellowships to USJ students (Listed in no particular order):

Estrada Marginal da Ilha Verde, 14-17 | +853 8592 5600 | <http://www.usj.edu.mo>

KTRANZ
 TRANSLATIONS LIMITED

ACCURATE, TIMELY & COMPETITIVE TRANSLATIONS

Languages:
 ENGLISH, CHINESE, PORTUGUESE, JAPANESE, KOREAN, SPANISH, FRENCH, ARABIC, RUSSIAN

Services:
 TRANSLATIONS, PROOFREADING, COPYWRITING, DATA INPUT, NEWS MONITORING

We translate +10,000 words a day

Contact: Ms. Amy Yang
 Email: amy@ktranz.com.mo
 Tel: +853 2871 6081/2 Fax: +853 2871 6084

Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

Sands China celebrates local suppliers, awards exceptional companies

SANDS China Ltd. held its 2017 Sands Supplier Excellence Awards at The Venetian Macao last month, where the company recognised the cooperation and services of several of its outstanding suppliers.

Now in its fifth consecutive year, the awards are a global initiative of Sands China's parent company, Las Vegas Sands Corp.

The awards night aims to annually celebrate the integrated resort operator's suppliers for the extra effort and initiative as Sands China's key partners.

"For five years now, Sands China has held these awards to recognise the most outstanding of our suppliers," said Dr. Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd.

"Sands China considers our suppliers to be partners in our mutual success. So whether large corporations, small businesses, or micro-enterprises, it is our pleasure to recognise the suppliers who have demonstrated the highest levels of professionalism and service – not only during normal business operations, but even under extreme circumstances such as after Typhoon Hato," the president added.

Wong remarked that it is through working hand-in-hand that the company is better able to fulfil its company strategy of delivering unforgettable experiences to local and international guests and visitors.

Last year, Sands China has 375 SME suppliers, and this year, it has over 430, showing their strong support to local sources.

Nearly 30 companies were nominated for this year's Sands Supplier Excellence Awards by Sands China's business units and employees, carefully selected from among thousands of service providers and suppliers that work with the company.

The companies nominated represent diverse industries like construction and development; furniture, fixtures and equipment; facilities and services; hotel supplies; food and beverage; and many others.

In line with the Macao government's initiative to "buy local", this year's winners include long-established local companies that have contributed to Macau's development over the years.

As in prior years, the 2017 Sands Supplier Excellence Awards featured entertainment and an appreciation dinner.

More than 400 participants were invited, in which nearly 300 representing 144 suppliers – mostly from Macau, Hong Kong and mainland China.



Awards were given to distinguished suppliers in seven categories: small- and medium-sized enterprise (SME), corporate culture and sustainability, cost management, service excellence, project management, total quality management, and innovation.

Sands China considers our suppliers to be partners in our mutual success.

DR WILFRED WONG

This year, the service excellence category has been expanded to include a total of four awards recognising outstanding local suppliers who made significant contributions to Macau's recovery effort and fully supported Sands China's daily operations and typhoon relief effort after Typhoon Hato caused extensive damage to the city in August.

"We can see that the whole

Macau is with one heart. Macau recovered relatively fast from this typhoon," Wong recalled.

"Our services were not stopped and this is all due to our suppliers. Some delivered products to us even when the transportation was inconvenient so that they'd be able to deliver the goods on time. Some awards, especially the high quality services is proposed for them," he added.

Winners of the awards were selected by a judging committee comprised of Sands China executive management.

Wong pledged to increase its collaboration with all its local suppliers, particularly to the winners of the night.

"Normally our procurement department will evaluate, if the suppliers are qualified and are good, our confidence will naturally grow, thus we will make big orders from them," said the president.

"The whole prize is to encourage all to do better, we all hope that everyone can improve their service towards this orientation."

Judges examine a range of criteria including suppliers' leadership, vision and strategy; product consistency and process capability; and creative partnership opportunities, among other criteria. Besides

some large companies, five out of the ten winners are local SMEs (Chao Pak Kei, Legumes E Hortalicas Lei Kei Limitada, Chi Kei Fo Van, Hang Fong Hong (Macau) Limited, and Long Tin), a testament to Sands China's ongoing support of local Macau enterprises.

Initiator of the global event, Norbert Riezler, senior vice president and chief procurement and sustainability officer for Las Vegas Sands Corp. is confident of the group's local suppliers.

As the night was a night to celebrate the suppliers' hard work, Riezler stressed that Sands China tremendously values local sourcing and has plans on expanding its figures.

"This year we're going to source

around MOP11.6 billion. About MOP9 billion will be sourced locally, which is almost 80 percent. Of that, MOP2.4 billion will be sourced from local SMEs," the executive shared.

As the integrated resort operator aims to keep these figures rising, Sands China have developed a procurement academy where it trains its local suppliers with a comprehensive programme.

"Local sourcing in Macau and developing them is extremely important to us and the company," said Riezler.

"We plan on raising the bar next year," he added.

This article was sponsored by Sands China Ltd.

WINNERS' TESTIMONIES

"Our business is about five times than our previous business. We are really happy that Sands is leading us to grow. Sands introduced us to many things. In fact, they are leading us to let us improve, in Macau, there must be enterprises like Sands China to lead everyone, then we all can improve." – Long Tin

"Our business had a great leap. Moreover, we need to improve our management to bring more brands from all over the world to Sands China, to let them choose. We will go to different exhibitions to look for products. As an SME, I'm happy and honored to have received such award." – Chao Pak Kei

The New Tiguan2. All grown-up



Active Info Display



1.4TSI with 150HP



5 star NCAP



LED Headlight



3D LED Taillight

The Tiguan 2 is a great all-grown-up SUV with distinctive styling which redefines its class and confidently points the way to the future. The new generation Tiguan is the first sport utility vehicle to be based on the modular transverse matrix (MQB), and it sets new standards in design, comfort and functionality. In doing so it of course remains capable of off-road, with a rugged all-wheel drive system that includes premium class technology for use on and off the highway. The Tiguan 2 is, then, both more SUV and more than an SUV.



Volkswagen

PS : 1) The pictures are for reference only.

2) In the event of any dispute, Volkswagen Hong Kong reserves the right to make the final decision.

Volkswagen showroom : Avenida 1° de Maio N°680, The Bayview , R/C, G, Macau Tel : 2872 1222

Volkswagen service center : Avenida Son On, Paca On, Lote N, Taipa, Macau Tel : 2885 7533

Outstanding balance of loans rises

APPROVALS of residential mortgage loans (RMLs) decreased slightly in October from the previous month, while those of commercial real estate loans (CRELs) rose, according to data released yesterday by the Monetary Authority of Macao. Both RMLs and CRELs witnessed monthly increases with regards to the outstanding balance.

As of the end of October, the outstanding value of RMLs was MOP188.6 billion, up 0.2 percent from a month earlier or 5.6 percent from a year ago. The outstanding value of CRELs was MOP176.1 billion, up 1.5 percent month-to-month or 2.7 percent year-on-year.

During the month of October, new RMLs approved by Macau banks decreased slightly by 0.2 percent month-to-month to MOP2.8 billion, of which new

RMLs to residents accounted for 97 percent of the total, decreased by 1.2 percent to MOP2.7 billion. In contrast, the non-resident component rose by 45 percent to MOP8.4 million.

When compared with the same month in the previous year, October approvals of RMLs fell by 2.2 percent. Meanwhile, newly-approved CRELs rose by 3.4 percent month-to-month in October to MOP4.6 billion, of which the resident component accounted for 97.3 percent of the total, increasing 0.7 percent to MOP4.4 billion. On an annual basis, new approvals of CRELs decreased by 26.5 percent.

The delinquency rate for RMLs stood at 0.18 percent in October, virtually unchanged from the previous month, but up by 0.03 percentage points compared to a year earlier.

HK to issue 10,000 driving permits for Delta Bridge

HONG Kong authorities yesterday increased the number of driving permits for the upcoming Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge to 10,000, in response to "overwhelming" demand.

The revision, announced by Hong Kong's Transport Department, marks a threefold increase from the initial 3,000 dual-plate permits.

"In light of the overwhelming response, the two governments have decided to increase the quota for Hong Kong cross-boundary private cars by 7,000, bringing the quota for Hong Kong cross-boundary private cars to 10,000," explained the Transport Department in a statement.

The permits allow Hong Kong private cars to use the bridge to cross into Zhuhai and to drive on the mainland. It remains unclear whether these permit holders will be entitled to drive in Macau, or whether



other such arrangements are being planned by authorities.

The licenses refer to the car in question and not the driver, and last for an initial period of five years.

Those eligible to apply for the permits include Hong Kong-based companies with an accumulative tax amount of at least RMB100,000 in Guangdong Province in the past three years, recognized hi-

gh-tech companies and residents of the HKSAR who have donated over RMB5 million to Guangdong-based charities.

Hong Kong residents who are members of the People's Congress and the CPPCC in Guangdong will also be eligible, according to media reports.

Several Hong Kong industry leaders welcomed the increase but complained that the 10,000 permits are

not enough to satisfy demand in the SAR and that the mega-bridge is able to accommodate a much larger number.

The multi-billion-dollar HKZMB is scheduled to complete before the year ends, however a date for when it will open to traffic has not been announced.

The bridge has been beset for almost a decade by delays, budget overruns and safety concerns.

ALBERGUE SCM

人婆仔屋文創空間

Exhibition by Zuo Zheng Yao

左正堯作品展

Exposição de Zuo Zheng Yao

On the Occasion of the 18th Anniversary of Macau Handover to China
慶祝澳門回歸祖國十八周年
Por ocasião do 18º Aniversário da R.A.E.M.

Opening Ceremony
13 December 2017 (Wednesday), 6:30 PM

Exhibition Period
13 December 2017 – 4 February 2018

Opening Hours
Everyday from 12:00PM to 8:00PM
Monday from 3:00PM to 8:00PM

Exhibition Venue
Albergue SCM - A2 Gallery

Free Admission / 免費入場 / Entrada Livre

ALBERGUE SCM
ADDRESS: CALÇADA DA IGREJA DE SÃO LÁZARO No. 8, MACAU
TEL: +853-2852 2550 / +853-2852 3205 FAX: +853-2852 2719
INFO: facebook.com/AlbergueSCMMacau
EMAIL: creativealbergue@gmail.com

Organizer Co-organizer Sponsor Managed by

澳門基金會 FUNDAÇÃO MACAU

仁德 CENTRO MÉDICO PEDDER

仁德醫療中心

We bring high quality of medical service to Macau

General Surgery : Dr. Fok Manson, Dr. Lai Cheuck Seen Edward, Dr. Lau Wing Kee Peter, Dr. Kwong Man, Dr. Nie Fu Zhong, Dr. U Chong San, Dr. Lei Chin Chong

Breast Surgery : Dr. Leong Iat Lun

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

Paediatric Surgery : Dr. Yeung Chung Kwong

Paediatrics : Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

Obstetrics & Gynaecology : Dr. Fong Kuan lo

Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery : Dr. Lam U Lin

Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

ENT : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

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

Gastroentero-Hepatology : Dr. Zhan De Juan

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

Dietitian : Chan Lai U Joey

Avenida da Praia Grande No 599, Edifício Comercial Rodrigues 14 e 15 Andar, em Macau
T. 2832 2298 / 2832 2229 Website: www.peddermacau.com
Opening Hours: Mon - Fri 10:00 - 19:00 Sat 10:00 - 14:00 Sun & PH closed

Travel warning issued for UK

The Tourism Crisis Management Office (GGCT) has forwarded a travel warning issued by the Chinese Embassy in the United Kingdom (UK), which aims to provide information for Chinese citizens that are currently in UK or planning to travel there shortly. In the message, the Chinese diplomatic representative in UK warns Chinese nationals about the current conditions of the snowfall and cold weather. According to the message, the snowfall is occurring in several regions of the United Kingdom and has been affecting air, rail and subway services. The message aims to alert the Chinese citizens and make them aware and informed of the possible aggravation of the conditions. Travelers have been told to pay special attention to warnings on the official website of the British Meteorological Service (www.metoffice.gov.uk) and to keep an eye out for updates on information issued on the websites of Heathrow Airport (www.heathrow.com) and the London Transport Service (tfl.gov.uk), to accurately take into account the impact that the snowfall might have on their travel plans.

Nansha to open lusophone exhibition center

The Portuguese-speaking Countries' Commodities Exhibition Center, located at the innovation zone in Nansha, Guangzhou, will officially open to the public from the first day of 2018. On December 20, operations will start internally. A ceremony to mark the launching of the exhibition center will be held in April. The center has been established to give mainland customers access to products from the Portuguese-speaking countries. Nansha's innovation zone reportedly said that the zone will build a 6,666 square meters economic and trade center for products coming from Portuguese and Spanish speaking countries.

MUSIC

Macau Jazz Week returns with world-class lineup

Renato Marques

REACHING its sixth year, the Macau Jazz Week, an annual event held by Macau Jazz Promotion Association, is currently ongoing and will run until December 16. This year, the event has a world-class lineup highlighted by names such as Martin Taylor and Ulf Wakenius, the head of the organizing association, Mars Lei, told the Times.

"We are truly excited to make this a great event once again. We have, of course the headliners, world-class guitarists Martin Taylor and Ulf Wakenius, but also Eugene Pao from Hong Kong and many others."

"We also invited a number of Asian talents from Taiwan and from Malaysia [Hope Yeh and Junji Delfino respectively] and we also partnered with local schools and other organizations to feature local talents in the Jazz Week," Lei said, adding, "our idea



Martin Taylor (left) and Ulf Wakenius

is to build [through the Jazz Week] a platform for music lovers and appreciators."

Regarding the turnout of the audience, Lei said, "it is difficult to predict as the concerts are free admission and sometimes Macau is a bit unpredictable, but we hope to have [many] people attending."

The organizer also added that for the headliners of the festival "we never worry with those as [for sure] we always have full house for those. But we hope to also have a full-house for the other concerts

as the venue [Don Pedro V Theatre] is also not a very large one."

Today will see one of the bigger concerts when the trio of the "The Guitar Legacy"-Martin Taylor, Ulf Wakenius & Eugene Pao - hit the stage at D. Pedro V at 8p.m.

Taylor, with over 40 years of experience and 30 albums under his belt, is the most famous name of this year's event. The veteran guitar player has been widely revered by fellow musicians and fans and received a MBE

award (Member of the Order of the British Empire) for services in jazz music in 2002. Sharing the stage will be the Swedish guitar player Ulf Wakenius, an exclusive artist of German label ACT with an impressive number of records spanning his career. Wakenius had, in the past for several occasions, filled the guitar chair of Joe Pass in the legendary Oscar Peterson Quartet. Chinese jazz icon Pao is considered one of the greatest jazz influences in and beyond his home city, Hong Kong. Jazz fans would be happy to see him play again in Macau, after his appearance last year as the guitarist of the Asian Jazz All Stars Power Quartet.

Another concert that Lei says is not to be missed is the closing of the Jazz Week on December 16. The closing show will include a traditional jam session where local musicians will perform with guests at the amphitheater of Taipa House-Museum.

AD

Extravagance

at MOULIN ROUGE

FMCC Charity Gala Dinner 2018
2018澳門法國工商會慈善晚宴 - 輕歌曼舞紅磨坊

EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT until 31/12/2017
2017年12月31日
前購票可享提前預訂優惠

10th Anniversary
FMCC

FRANCE MACAU
Chamber of Commerce
法國澳門工商會

Friday 26/01/2018
Grand Ballroom, MGM Macau

6:30pm Cocktail • 7:30pm Dinner

Great singers, musicians and artistic performances, exciting lucky-draw with proceeds to charity, dancing & laughter fill midnight
Dress Code: Black Tie

Enquiries, Reservations & Sponsorships
(+853) 8798 9699 | info@francemacau.com | www.francemacau.com

CHRISTMAS GIFT-AWAY

You're in for a treat this December with our fabulous Tria gift-away!
Receive MOP500 in credit when you purchase MOP1,988 worth of retail products from Tria Spa. You'll also get a complimentary gift box.

Reserve now at (853) 8802 3838

*Terms and conditions apply

mgm.mo

For Disney CEO Bob Iger, Fox deal is all about future of TV

Christopher Palmeri

WHEN news broke last month that Walt Disney Co. was in talks to buy a large part of 21st Century Fox Inc., the first question many investors had was, why are the Murdochs selling? Then came the second: Why is Disney buying?

The USD50 billion deal, which could be announced this week, would mark a significant turning point in the empire-building career of Fox's founder and executive chairman, 86-year-old Rupert Murdoch. It would also be a defining moment for Disney and its Chief Executive Officer Robert Iger.

Iger has built a reputation over the past 12 years for making bold bets, including the \$7.4 billion he paid for Pixar animation just months after he became CEO. But this would be much bigger, giving the home of Mickey Mouse and Princess Elsa the 20th Century Fox film studio, the FX network, 39 percent of Britain's Sky Plc TV service and other assets. It's just the kind of consolidation media investors have said was long overdue, particularly in film.

"There's a lot of synergies in doing this, particularly in global distribution," said Mario Gabelli, whose Gamco Investors Inc. holds more than \$350 million of Fox shares. "If I'm Disney I love the distribution globally, India, satellites in Italy, Germany, England. This is good stuff."

Disney could shave as much as \$500 million annually in costs by combining businesses, according to Alan Gould, an analyst with Rosenblatt Securities Inc. Half of that would come from the studio side, where Disney could close and sell the Fox lot in Los Angeles, he said in a Dec. 4 note.

The timing is opportune, Gould



said, because other potential bidders for Fox, including Verizon Communications Inc., may be hesitant to do a big deal given AT&T Inc.'s current fight with the Justice Department over its proposed \$85.4 billion acquisition of Time Warner Inc. Comcast Corp. said Monday that it considered a Fox deal, but never made an offer.

Acquiring the Fox assets fits two of Iger's big-picture initiatives. One is to bulk up on content, particularly franchises beloved by filmgoers all over the world. Acquisitions he's made in the past, such as Lucasfilm and Marvel Entertainment, have allowed Disney to dominate the box office for the past two years.

The Fox studio would give Disney more such franchises, including "Avatar," "Planet of the Apes" and the X-Men comic book characters. At Disney, Iger scaled back film releases, focusing on a handful of key brands. His strategy with the Fox assets could be very similar, using the 20th Century Fox label for some of the more edgy movies, for example.

"They have the capital and scale and distribution power that Fox is lacking," said Hal Vogel, an analyst and author of "Entertainment Industry Economics: A Guide for Financial Analysis." "Fox can continue in the business for quite a long time, but Disney has much bigger

scale potential. They have the capital they can pour into it. They can exploit it more effectively, through merchandising and theme parks."

That also explains why Murdoch is open to parting with a portion of his media empire. The billionaire has been frustrated with the market undervaluing his assets, and is willing to reshape his empire if he can get what he thinks the holdings are worth, according to a person familiar with the matter.

Iger's other major strategic initiative is to cut out the middle man and establish a relationship directly with consumers. Here the Fox assets fit as well, such as doubling Disney's stake in the Hulu streaming service to 60 percent and acquiring a big chunk of Sky, which offers pay TV service to 22.5 million customers in five countries in Europe.

And as Iger prepares to launch two online subscription TV services in the U.S., one for ESPN next year and one for Disney-branded movies and shows in 2019, Fox assets could give him more to fill those pipes and more opportunity to offset the loss of subscribers to Disney's traditional TV channels, according to Macquarie Capital analyst Amy Yong.

"For Disney, scale and distribution together matter more now, and this would give it both in droves," Yong said in a Dec. 6 note. **Bloomberg**



China's Citic sees Brazil as growth driver after Dow corn deal

CITIC Agri Fund, an investment vehicle created by China's largest conglomerate, has chosen Brazil as the platform for its global strategy in agriculture.

The Citic Ltd. fund concluded the acquisition of Dow Chemical's Brazil corn-seed assets earlier this month in a USD1.1 billion deal. Another \$2.5 billion is available for new investments in research or acquisitions of other agricultural companies with profiles that match the fund's strategy, including businesses in soybeans and rice, according to Vitor Cunha, the general manager at LP Sementes, the new company created from the corn deal.

"Citic is starting to become an international company, and Brazil will be the global manager of this strategy," Cunha said in a telephone interview from Ribeirao Preto, in Sao Paulo state. "The Chinese will expand its agricultural business from Brazil."

The decision to make Brazil the main driver for Citic's global agriculture growth stems from the Dow corn deal. The acquired assets give Citic deeper knowledge about the corn-seed market, Cunha said. LP Sementes is Brazil's third-biggest supplier of the seeds, with almost 20 percent market share. Yuan Longping

High-tech Agriculture, the company responsible for managing Citic's corn assets in Brazil, is the world's largest rice-seed company.

LP Sementes plans to offer a new corn-seed brand to replace a Dow variety by April 2018 for planting during the 2018-19 season. The company has the right to use the Dow brand over the next 12 months. The newly formed company's sales strategy and its focus on co-operatives and retailers will remain unchanged, Cunha said.

While no substantial change in the company's management is expected after the acquisition, Cunha, who was also general manager at the former Dow unit, said LP Sementes plans to try and expand its seeds genetics to others countries in South America and in Africa.

"China is trying to expand partnerships with this deal in Brazil - we don't see it as a threat or loss of sovereignty to Brazil," Cunha said after being asked about a tweet on Citic-Dow deal sent Dec. 10 by Jair Bolsonaro, one of the leading candidates in the nation's presidential elections. Bolsonaro argued the deal poses a threat to Brazil's food security as it gives China almost 20 percent of the country's corn-seed market. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

SANDS CHINA DONATES MOP2 MILLION TO ELDERLY HOME



Sands China Ltd. presented a cheque for just over MOP2 million to Macau Holy House of Mercy yesterday to help with the cost of restoring its elderly home, which was damaged

when Typhoon Hato tore through Macau in August.

Sands China Ltd.'s president Wilfred Wong met with the elderly residents and received a tour of the damaged areas that will

be restored with the help of Sands China's donation.

"Macau is still recovering from the devastation of Typhoon Hato, so it is important that we continue to assist the community where we can," said the president.

Holy House of Mercy's president Antonio José de Freitas said, "this donation will be of critical importance in helping us restore our elderly home back to a suitable condition for its residents."

Typhoon Hato caused damage to Macau Holy House of Mercy's elderly home, including major structural damage to its roof.

MGM INVITES FU HONG SOCIETY TO ITS DIGITAL EXHIBITION



Along with the latest collaboration with the art collective teamLab, MGM invited members of the Fuhong Society of Macau to participate in an art workshop for display at its co-creative digital

exhibition "Learn & Play! teamLab Future Park", and prepared an exclusive exhibition session for them.

According to a statement issued by the gaming operator, MGM hopes to give

them an opportunity to be part of the exhibition, to express their creativity and empower them to display their ideas.

Prior to the official opening of the exhibition, MGM Golden Lion Volunteer Team went to Pou Lei Center, one of the service centers of the Fuhong Society, for an art workshop.

MGM invited 30 members of the Fuhong Society to the exhibition on December 4 to experience the interactive space, called the "Light Ball Orchestra," where they enjoyed the changing colors of the spheres in the area by touching them or bumping them against one another.

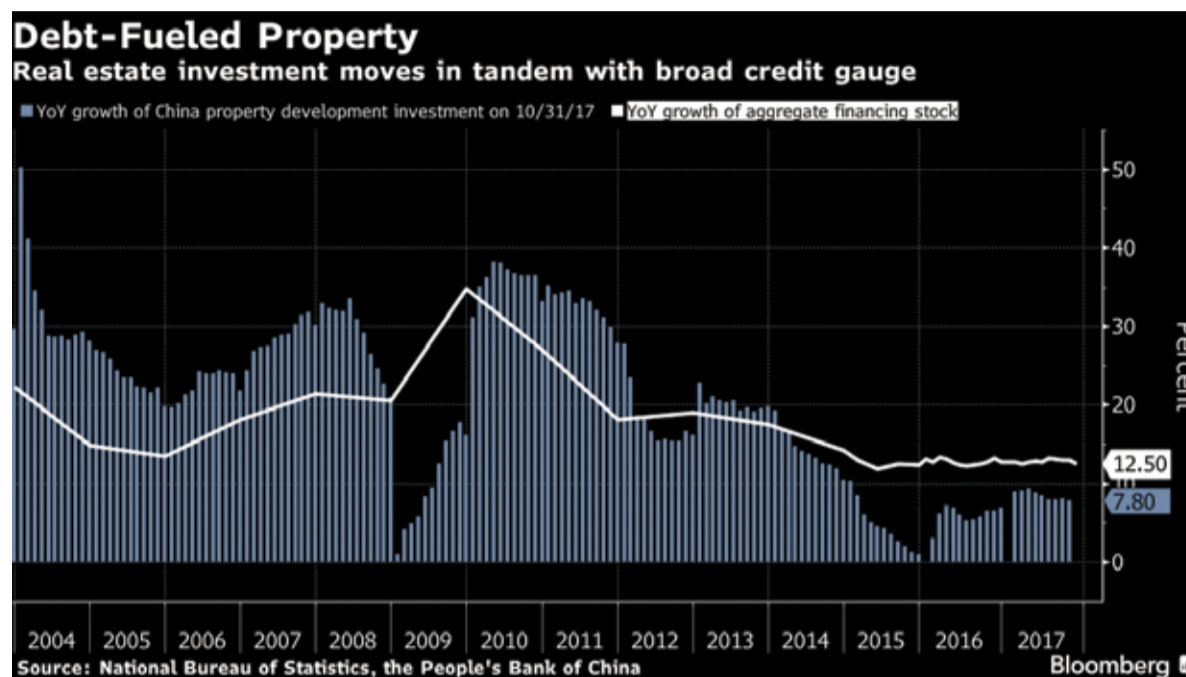
How China's debt curbs could start weighing on the economy

CHINA'S sweeping deleveraging push is poised to inflict more pain next year. Authorities tightening funding in financial markets and reining in excessive borrowing will likely deal a blow to investment in infrastructure and property, while soaring corporate funding costs may damp business expansion.

That could add to headwinds facing an economy expected to grow at the slowest pace in more than a quarter century next year, complicating the balancing act for policy makers who want to defuse the country's debt bomb without derailing the expansion.

When the central bank turns down the credit tap, governments and companies are less keen to build roads, railways and other infrastructure. Often a key prop to the expansion, such construction is expected to decelerate next year, weighing on economic growth.

When banks sneeze, property developers often catch cold first. Real estate made up 17 percent of all fixed-asset investment last year, and accounts for an even larger share of total economic output if related industries are



included. The sector has close interconnections with steel and cement makers, producers of excavators and bulldozers, and of course real estate agents.

Corporate bond issuance is on pace to drop in 2017 for the first time in four years as surging yields make selling debt more expensive. Banks will also likely charge higher premiums

on top of benchmark loan rates, raising the overall financing costs for companies, according to Nathan Chow, an economist at DBS Bank Hong Kong Ltd. That means companies may invest less in business expansion, he said.

It's getting pricier for banks to get funding, as the seven-day reverse repurchase rate and

yields on negotiable certificates of deposit have surged amid tighter liquidity. This means the lenders must charge higher rates for loans, especially those made to smaller private companies, to keep making a profit, Chow said. That gives another boost to corporate funding costs.

The yield premium for China Development Bank bonds over

government debt surged past 1 percentage point last month. The debt selloff, triggered by concerns about the deleveraging push and tighter liquidity, poses an increasing challenge to the credit CDB and other policy banks extend because they use market funding rather than deposits. This could be a drag on growth as those funds go to everything from renovating shantytowns to Belt and Road Initiative projects across Asia, Europe and Africa.

The 10-year yield on the policy lender's bonds climbed four basis points to 4.87 percent as of 12:02 p.m. in Shanghai, extending a three-day advance to 11 basis points. The yield on similar-maturity government debt rose one basis point to 3.96 percent.

The financial services industry accounts for roughly 8 percent of China's gross domestic product, yet it's the sector most directly impacted by borrowing curbs, as banks and brokerages charge fees on debts issued and stocks sold.

China's stocks will trade weaker than current levels for much of next year as deleveraging crimps credit growth and keeps interest rates elevated, according to Bocom International Holdings Co.'s Hao Hong. That would damp the output from financial services, which is more closely tied to equity markets and can affect overall growth by 0.5 percentage point. **Bloomberg**

Australian lawmaker quits over political links with Beijing

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

AN influential Australian opposition lawmaker under fire over his close links to wealthy Chinese political donors announced yesterday that he was quitting the Senate for the good of his party as the government moves against foreign interference in politics.

Sam Dastyari announced that he would quit as a senator for the center-left Labor Party before Parliament next sits in February. The move comes after Cabinet Minister Peter Dutton on Monday described him as a "double agent" of China.

"I've been guided by my Labor values, which tell me that I should leave if my ongoing presence detracts from the pursuit of Labor's mission," Dastyari told reporters. "It is evident to me we are at that point, so I will spare the party any further distraction," he added. Dastyari refused to take questions from reporters.

The 34-year-old senator widely known as Shanghai Sam resigned from his leadership roles in Labor last month over scandals involving the wealthy Sydney-based Chinese businessman and political donor Huang Xiangmo that have raised accusations of China buying influence.

■ Cabinet Minister Peter Dutton described Dastyari as a 'double agent' of China

Australian security chiefs have advised against accepting political donations from Huang because of his suspected links to the Chinese Community Party.

Labor has accused the conservative government

of tapping into community "China-phobia" to attack Dastyari.

A week ago, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced that Australia will ban foreign interference in its politics — either through espionage or financial donations — in a move motivated largely by Russia's alleged involvement in last year's U.S. election and China's growing influence on the global political landscape.

On Friday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said Turnbull's remarks were prejudiced against China and had poisoned the atmosphere of China-Australia relations.

China is Australia's largest trading partner and its biggest source of foreign political funds. Australian law has never distinguished between donors from Australia and overseas.

The government said Dastyari's has not broken current laws, but the reformed laws would not allow

a repeat of Dastyari asking Huang to pay a USD1,250 travel bill that Dastyari owed.

Dutton, who will head Australia's security and intelligence agencies as the government's first minister for home affairs next year, accused Dastyari of being a "double agent" who should be dumped by Labor.

"Sam Dastyari can't be beholden to a foreign power and pretend to be acting in the Australian public's interest by being a senator in the Australian Parliament," Dutton told reporters.

Fairfax Media reported that Dastyari gave Huang counter-surveillance advice when they met at the businessman's Sydney mansion in October last year. Dastyari suggested the pair leave their phones inside the house and go outside to speak in case Australian intelligence services were listening, Fairfax reported.

Dastyari has not denied the reports but said he had no knowledge about whether Huang was under



Australia's Sen. Sam Dastyari

Australian surveillance at the time.

Media later broadcast audio of the senator misleading Chinese journalists last year on Labor's policy on the South China Sea territorial disputes.

Australia maintains that China should respect international law, and an arbitration ruling last year found China's broad claims to the sea were legally baseless. But Dastyari told Chinese reporters at a news conference in Sydney attended by Huang that Australia should observe "several thousand years of history" by respecting Chinese claims over most of the South China Sea. The phrasing mirrors China's stance.

Accusations of Dastyari representing Chinese interests have continued to mount. Fairfax reported on Monday that Dastyari attempted to pressure deputy opposition leader Tanya Plibersek to abandon a meeting with a pro-democracy activist in Hong Kong in 2015 because of Beijing's sensitivities. The meeting went ahead.

Opposition leader Bill Shorten said Dastyari made the correct decision by resigning.

"Sam Dastyari is a good, decent and loyal Australian, and an effective parliamentarian, but his judgment has let him down and now he has paid the heaviest price," Shorten said in a statement. **AP**

Wasbir Hussain, Gauhati

ENVIRONMENT

India says Chinese construction on river dirtying water

OFFICIALS in India's northeast are complaining that Chinese construction activity on the upper reaches of one of the largest rivers that flows into India are likely turning the waters downstream turbid and unfit for human consumption.

Over the weekend, Sarbananda Sonowal, the chief minister of India's Assam state, said the Brahmaputra river was contaminated with bacteria and iron, with laboratory tests declaring its waters unfit for human consumption. Sonowal asked that the Indian government take up the matter with Beijing.

The Yarlung Tsangpo river originates in the Tibetan Himalayas and enters India as the Siang in far-eastern Arunachal Pradesh state before flowing downstream to Assam as the Brahmaputra. The river finally empties into the Bay of Bengal through Bangladesh, where it is called the Padma.

Last week, Pema Khandu, the chief minister of Arunachal Pradesh, which shares a border with China, wrote to Indian Home Minister Rajnath Singh, saying the waters of the Siang river have been "unusually turbid" for the past two months, and sought a federal investigation.

Keshab Mahanta, the water resources minister of Assam state, has written to Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj expressing serious concern about the water quality of the Brahmaputra.

Locals in Arunachal Pradesh suspect the Siang is contaminated because of Chinese construc-



Students from India's northeastern Assam state hold placards by the Brahmaputra river during a protest against the contamination of the river in Gauhati

tion activities in the upper reaches of the river, including possible attempts to divert the river to feed its arid northern areas.

"The Chinese may seek to deny, but we suspect there is massive tunnel building activities to divert the Yarlung Tsangpo to Xinjiang province, particularly the Taklamakan desert region," Lungkang Ering, president of the All Bogong Students' Union in the border district of East Sing, said in a letter to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"China is constructing several dams on the Yarlung Tsangpo.

One big dam, the Zangmo dam, is already operational and about three to four other dams are under various stages of construction. The Zangmo dam is located just 3-4 kilometers from the Indian border and is 116 meters high," according to Nayan Sharma, a leading Indian hydrologist at the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said yesterday that it had never heard of the project mentioned by Indian officials in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh states. In the past, China has denied such ac-

cusations without providing details or enunciating its long-term plans for the area.

India's foreign ministry spokesman did not reply to queries about whether New Delhi had raised concerns with Beijing.

“We suspect there is massive tunnel building activities to divert the Yarlung Tsangpo to Xinjiang province.”

LUNGKANG ERING
PRESIDENT OF THE ALL BOGONG
STUDENTS' UNION

Sharma said the turbidity in the segments of the river in India could be because of construction debris flowing downstream or because of an earthquake last month near the Great Bend on the Yarlung Tsangpo just as the

river enters India, leading to major damage and debris flowing down.

"A federal investigation is a must because there is loss of aquatic life in the Siang and the Brahmaputra because of the contamination over the weeks. China is miserly in parting information on the river issues and therefore New Delhi must take up the matter at the highest level with Beijing," said Arunav Goswami of the Gauhati-based Centre for Development and Peace Studies.

Sharma and other experts say India needs to investigate the causes of the contamination of the river, which has also begun hitting aquatic life on the Siang and Brahmaputra rivers, because China is unlikely to share information with New Delhi.

Kameswar Sahani, a fisherman in Arunachal Pradesh, told a local newspaper that dozens of fishermen like him have been forced to stop working on the Siang river.

Over the last few months, his catch went down to just 3-4 kilograms from 30-40 kilograms earlier. Sahani also said that customers were balking from purchasing fish from the Siang because of contamination fears.

"How will I feed my family?" he asked. **AP**

UK banker back in Hong Kong court for murder appeal

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

A British banker sentenced to life in prison for the gruesome slayings of two Indonesian women appeared in a Hong Kong court yesterday to appeal his conviction.

Lawyers for Rurik Jutting made their case in the semiautonomous Chinese city's Court of Appeal, arguing that the trial judge gave incorrect instructions to the jury on deciding their verdict.

The nine-person jury last year convicted Cambridge University-educated Jutting of the 2014 killings of Seneng Mujiasih, 26, and Sumarti Ningsih, 23.

The case shocked residents of Hong Kong, while also highlighting wide inequality and see-

dy aspects usually hidden below the surface.

Jutting, 32, watched the proceedings from the dock yesterday, wearing a blue dress shirt and often leafing through a bundle of court documents as he followed along. During a break he chatted with the three uniformed court officers sitting alongside him.

Jutting worked for Bank of America-Merrill Lynch, while Seneng and Sumarti arrived in Hong Kong as foreign maids but ended up as sex workers. During the trial, jurors were shown graphic iPhone videos shot by Jutting of him torturing Sumarti and snorting cocaine.

Jutting attempted at the trial to plead guilty to manslaughter, which the court rejected. His



Police officers stand guard next to prison bus which carries British banker Rurik Jutting upon his arrival at the High Court in Hong Kong

defense argued that he was under diminished responsibility.

Yesterday, lawyer Gerard McCoy told the three-judge appeal panel that the trial judge made a "fatal error" in his directions to the jurors on how to assess Jutting's psychiatric disorders and whether they constituted a mental abnormality.

Under Hong Kong law, an "abnormality of

mind" that substantially impairs mental responsibility can be used as a defense against a murder conviction.

Jutting's lawyers argued the trial judge also erred by instructing jurors to come up with the same verdict for both counts, despite the different circumstances of the two deaths.

The case was adjourned until today. **AP**

Gas giant focuses on homes amid winter crunch criticism

Aibing Guo

CHINA National Petroleum Corp. is restricting natural-gas sales to industries across the country to divert more of the fuel to heat homes in the northern part of the country.

The move is a response to instructions from the National Development & Reform Commission, which called on local governments and gas suppliers to combat gas shortages in the north. An industry group in southeastern China said it will probably face shortfalls as well, and pinned the blame on CNPC.

Natural gas supplies to petrochemical industries will be "severely" reduced, and other industrial direct-sale users will see gradual declines in supply heading into the winter season, CNPC said in a statement on its website Monday. The company said it

will coordinate with regional governments to secure supplies to residential users.

CNPC, the main supplier to northern regions, failed to predict the sharp rise in demand for gas after China implemented coal-to-gas conversion projects this year to fight air pollution, Guangdong Oil & Gas Association said in a Dec. 8 statement. The southern province is highly likely to face gas shortages if the weather turns colder and supply from the north shrinks further, it said.

Switching industrial and residential users to gas pushed demand up 19 percent during the first 10 months of the year, according to data from the national development commission. China faces a daily shortfall of 40 million cubic meters of gas, the energy administration of Guizhou province said Friday. **Bloomberg**

BANGLADESH

Gov't condemns US attack in which national is suspect

BANGLADESH'S government condemned an attack on New York City's subway system, as it emerged that the suspect is an immigrant from the South Asian nation.

"Bangladesh is committed to its declared policy of 'Zero Tolerance' against terrorism, and condemns terrorism and violent extremism in all forms or manifestations anywhere in the world, including Monday morning's incident in New York City," the government said in a statement.

Police in Bangladesh said yesterday that they were not in a position to comment on the suspect, identified by U.S. authorities as Akayed Ullah, a 27-year-old Bangladeshi immigrant. Ullah is accused of strapping a crude pipe bomb to his body and detonating it during rush hour Monday in an attack in which only he was seriously wounded.

Ullah arrived in the United



States in 2011 and the Department of Homeland Security said he's a lawful permanent resident of the U.S. who was living in Brooklyn. He came to the U.S. on a visa issued to him based on a family connection to

a U.S. citizen.

Law enforcement officials familiar with the investigation said Ullah had looked at Islamic State group propaganda online and told investigators he was retaliating against U.S.

military aggression, but had no direct contact with the group. The people spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak publicly about the blast.

Ullah's family in the U.S. said in a statement that it was heartbroken and deeply saddened by the suffering the attack has caused.

Bangladesh, a Muslim-majority country governed by largely secular laws, has struggled with a rise in radical Islam over the last few years.

In July last year, the country was shocked when five young men belonging to the domestic militant group Jumatul Mujahdeen Bangladesh, or JMB attacked a popular restaurant frequented by foreigners and wealthy Bangladeshis and left 20 hostages, including 17 foreigners, dead. During the attack the men sprayed bullets and threw grenades, and slaughte-

red the hostages.

But even before that smaller attacks had been taking place targeting secular academics, atheist bloggers and members of the country's tiny Hindu minority and foreigners.

Police stand guard inside the Port Authority Bus Terminal following an explosion near Times Square

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for most of those attacks, including the one at the restaurant, but the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has denied that the Sunni extremist group has any presence in the impoverished country. The government has blamed the attacks on local radical groups.

Over the last year, the government has reinforced a crackdown to crush Islamist militants and killed dozens of suspects, including some accused of being the masterminds of the restaurant attack. **AP**

Sopheng Cheang,
Phnom Penh

CAMBODIA

EU suspends aid to election commission

THE European Union said yesterday it has suspended assistance to Cambodia's election commission following last month's dissolution of the country's main opposition party, and warned that next July's general election will not be legitimate if the opposition is not allowed to participate.

The Supreme Court on Nov. 16 ordered the Cambodia National Rescue Party, the only opposition group with seats in parliament, to be dissolved, in

the latest move by authoritarian Prime Minister Hun Sen's government to remove threats to his power ahead of the vote.

July's election will be the first national polls since 2013, when Hun Sen narrowly retained office after the opposition made unexpectedly strong gains.

The government has accused the party of involvement in a plot to topple it. The opposition staunchly

denies the allegations — a position backed by international rights groups and independent analysts who say no credible evidence has emerged to back the claims.

The EU said in a statement that it had provided assistance to the National Election Committee for local elections in June that were viewed as reflecting the will of the people, but that a series of actions

taken by authorities since then, including the reallocation of the opposition party's seats to other parties, denied voters their choice. It noted that the CNRP won 43.8 percent of the vote in the local elections.

"The dissolution of the CNRP also means that it will not be able to run in the National Assembly election in 2018," it said. "An electoral process from which the main opposition party has been arbitrarily excluded cannot be seen as legitimate."

Last week, the military filed a lawsuit against former opposition leader Sam Rainsy, a day after Hun Sen said he should be charged with treason over a social media post.

Sam Rainsy was charged with inciting the military to disobey orders and with insulting military leaders because of a Facebook post in which he called on soldiers not to obey any "dictators" if they are ordered to shoot innocent people. He also mentioned that Egypt's former leader was removed from power by the armed forces.



In this June 2, 2017, file photo, opposition party Cambodia National Rescue Party leader Kem Sokha greets his supporters at a rally in Phnom Penh

Sam Rainsy has been in self-imposed exile since late 2015 to avoid a two-year prison sentence for a criminal defamation conviction. He has been the target of several lawsuits by Hun Sen and his ruling party.

Kem Sokha, who took over the opposition party earlier of this year, has since been detained on treason charges and is awaiting trial.

The government has also intensified restrictions on civil society groups and independent

media, often through the country's pliant courts.

The campaign to neutralize political opponents and silence critics has prompted international condemnation.

The U.S. announced last Wednesday it will restrict visas for Cambodians "undermining democracy." The State Department said it was a response to "anti-democratic actions" by the Cambodian government, but did not disclose which individuals would be affected. **AP**

AD

New Sunshine Cleaning Services Ltd.



Portable Chemical Toilet Hiring

- Regular Units, Flush Units
- Units with Sanitizers, Sinks
- Deluxe Units
- Daily, Weekly or Monthly
- Deliver, Pick-Up & Pump Out of Portable Toilets

FREE DELIVERY

Call: 2883 3008

Member of General Association of Macao Cleaning Service Industry

Nick Perry, Bahadurgarh

WEARING nothing but loincloths, a group of boys warm up by climbing sturdy ropes that take them high into the trees. One teenager walks around the wrestling pit swirling incense, blessing the arena and preparing it for battle.

On this November evening, as the dusk thickens and the bugs venture out, a couple of dozen young devotees of kushti, the ancient Indian style of wrestling, have gathered to face off. They range in age from 10 to 16. The earth in the pit has been prepared as it has been for centuries, turned over and mixed with sawdust, turmeric and ghee, or clarified butter. It's mildly fragrant and soft to the touch, making it easier on the wrestlers' skin.

These devotees, or pehelwans, have made a commitment that extends beyond the hours they spend practicing each morning and evening. They live an ascetic lifestyle, eating specific foods like almond milkshakes and chapattis slathered with ghee. They don't eat meat and refrain from smoking, drinking and dating.

The sport, thought to be 2,000 years old, is mentioned in ancient Hindu texts and depicted in temple carvings. Although women wrestlers have made strides recently in India, the vast majority of participants are men.

But like many traditions in a country that's rapidly modernizing, kushti wrestling faces the threat of being left behind. It remains popular in states like Haryana, where these pehelwans are training. For many poor families, wrestling provides a glimmer of hope. Those who succeed can earn money, respect in their communities and even particular jobs. They're often employed by the police force or India's railways.

Fifteen-year-old Ankur Bhavadwaj says it's his dream to win an Olympic medal, like his idol Sushil Kumar, who has won two

Ancient wrestling offers a future for some in modern India



Kushti wrestlers practice rope climbing, during their daily training at an akhada, a kind of wrestling hostel in New Delhi



Wrestlers prepare the ground in the ring for a training session

Olympic medals for India in freestyle wrestling. Bhavadwaj says he gets up at 4 a.m. and jogs to the wrestling pit before going to school.

"Hard work makes a man perfect," he says. "That's why we are practicing so regularly. There are no breaks if you want to be a wrestler."

Inside the pit, Bhavadwaj and the other wrestlers rub their hands with the earth and toss it over their bodies. Under the watchful eye of their coach, they lock arms with their opponents, lunging for their legs as they try to flip them onto their backs and into submission.

The boys aspire to be accepted into an akhada, a kind of wrestling hostel where they're given a bed and can devote themselves to the sport fulltime if they choose. Akhadas come with shrines to the Hindu god Hanuman, who is seen as a kind of patron saint to the sport.

At dawn at a small akhada in the suburbs of Delhi, a man circles the arena dragging a thick

piece of wood to smooth the earth. Another crushes almonds with a large mortar and pestle. A poster on the gate advertises a local wrestling bout with a first-place prize of about USD3,000. The gate swings open and a cow noses its way inside, breaking into a trot when the wrestlers try to shoo it away.

Coach Hemand Kumar, 35, says wrestling has always been his passion. Even before he started at age 10, he would get up before dawn and watch his father wrestle. The boys who take it up are saved from "the nonsense" of the streets, he says. But he worries about the sport's future in a country with a rapidly rising middle class.

"The rich kids, they don't want to do it," he says. "Those people who don't have the money, they're interested. But they don't have the resources."

Jai Prakash, a former Olympic wrestler who is president of the Delhi Amateur Wrestling Association, says it's getting more difficult to find the land needed to

set up new akhadas. And unlike the nation's most popular sport of cricket, he says, it's tough to find sponsors for kushti.

"Wrestling bouts in villages used to be like the festival season, with a joyous mood and crowds celebrating victories of their favorite wrestlers," he says.

Still, he's upbeat about the future of the sport, which is also known as pehlwani. He says wrestling authorities want to make kushti a part of some international wrestling competitions, something he hopes might begin next year.

At the renowned Guru Hanuman Akhara in Delhi there are about 25 resident pehelwans, most of them hulking men in their 20s and early 30s. Some train with giant clubs that they swing behind their backs. Others grab a rope that's threaded through a pulley and haul into the air a bucket that's filled with concrete.

Sitting in a chair watching the men practice is Naveen Mor,

who has won a number of international wrestling fixtures, including a gold medal at the 2011 World Police and Fire Games in New York. He says his wrestling prowess helped him land a job with the Haryana state police, where he works as an inspector.

Like many Indian wrestlers, Mor started in the pit and later became proficient wrestling on a mat, which provides the standard arena for most international bouts.

He says his first love remains the pit, where bouts can sometimes last an hour until somebody finally gives up.

As he cuts back on competitions and does more coaching, Mor says he still follows the strict dietary rules of kushti, although he is more relaxed about other rules and has recently gotten married.

He says he doesn't regret dedicating his youth to the sport.

"No working. No shopping," he says with a grin. "Only wrestling, wrestling, wrestling. My life is wrestling, wrestling. I love wrestling." AP

THAILAND

Military junta welcomes easing of EU political sanctions

THAILAND's military junta has welcomed the European Union's decision to ease political sanctions imposed against it for overthrowing an elected government in 2014.

The EU's announcement is "good news" that underscores positive developments under military rule, Thai Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai said yesterday.

The EU's Foreign Affairs

Council announced Monday that it was "appropriate to pursue a gradual political re-engagement with Thailand" because it had improved human rights conditions, adopted a new constitution and set an election date for 2018.

The EU suspended official visits with Thailand in response to the coup. It said it would continue to review its relationship with Thailand while watching for the lifting of

media restrictions and ban on political activities, and "the installation of a democratically elected civilian government."

The EU also urged the junta not to try civilians in military courts on charges of insulting the royal family, or lese majeste. Thailand's lese majeste law is the harshest in the world, providing punishment of up to 15 years in prison per offense.

The EU also called on the

military government to respect its promise to hold elections next November. The junta has already postponed elections several times.

Last month, police said they found a stash of weapons they suspect belonged to supporters of the government that was ousted in the coup. The junta has given the arms discovery as a reason to prolong its ban on political activities, raising speculation

from critics that it does not want to relinquish power.

"Once again the military government seems to be finding every excuse to try to curtail political parties and their ability to start mustering support ahead of the planned elections in less than a year from now," Bangkok Post editor Umesh Pandey said in a Dec 3 op-ed column about the weapons discovery. Officials have denied

accusations that the discovery was a set up.

Don, the foreign minister, told reporters that he now expects there will be more communication between Thailand and the EU over the next year, which he said could be a good opportunity to explain why elections might have to be delayed if any incidents occur.

"But today we are sticking to the roadmap," Don said. AP

Nataliya Vasilyeva, Moscow

BEFORE he was killed by a sniper in Syria at age 23, Ivan Slyshkin wrote a poignant message on social media to his fiancée: “We will see each other soon — and I will hold you as tight as I possibly can.”

But Slyshkin’s name won’t be found among the Russian Defense Ministry’s official casualties in the fight against Islamic State extremists.

That’s because the young man who left his hometown of Ozyorsk in the Ural mountains was one of thousands of Russians deployed to Syria by a shadowy, private military contractor known as Wagner, which the government doesn’t talk about.

Slyshkin’s gravestone depicts him holding a machine gun, according to a local news website Znak.com that sent a reporter to his March 2 funeral in Ozyorsk, where friends said he joined Wagner to earn money to pay for his wedding.

“He was in Wagner’s group,” his friend Andrei Zotov told The Associated Press, adding that Slyshkin was killed as the security forces were advancing on the Al-Shayer oil field north of Palmyra.

“There are many good guys there. He volunteered to join the company,” Zotov said. “Like many Russian fighters, he wanted to solve his money issues.”

The St. Petersburg-based website Fontanka reported that about 3,000 Russians under contract to the Wagner group have fought in Syria since 2015, months before Russia’s two-year military campaign helped to turn the tide of the civil war in favor of Syrian President Bashar Assad, a longtime Moscow ally.

When Putin went to a Russian air base in Syria on Monday and told Russian troops that “you are coming back home with victory,” he did not mention the private contractors. Russian troops are expected to remain in Syria for years while the contractors are likely to stay to guard lucrative oil and gas fields under a contract between the Syrian government and another Russian company allegedly linked to a businessman known as “Putin’s chef” for his close ties to the Kremlin.

Proxy fighters like Slyshkin have played a key role in Syria. In addition to augmenting troops officially sent by Moscow, their secret deployment has helped keep the official Russian death toll low as Putin seeks re-election next year.

The Russian Defense Ministry has said 41 of its troops have died in Syria. But according to Fontanka, another 73 private contractors have been killed there.

The Kremlin and the Defense Ministry have stonewalled questions about Russians fight-

Thousands of Russian private



Visitors and Russian military police officers walk toward the Citadel, Aleppo’s famed fortress

ing in Syria in a private capacity. Private contractors have been used by countries like the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan for years; Russian law forbids the hiring of mercenaries or working as one.

But Russia has used such proxies before — in the conflict to help pro-Moscow separatists in eastern Ukraine since 2014. One Russian commander boasted of working alongside Russian troops who said they were “on vacation” while fighting in Ukraine.

The Defense Ministry has refused to say how many of its troops are in Syria, although one estimate based on absentee ballots cast in the Russian parliamentary election last year indicated 4,300 personnel were deployed there. That number probably rose this year because Moscow sent Russian military police to patrol “de-escalation zones.”

“The Russian people are not very enthused by the idea of an empire that would involve their boys coming home in body bags. There’s clearly a lack of enthusiasm for this conflict,” said Mark Galeotti, senior researcher at the Institute of International Relations in Prague.

“By having this military company Wagner, they can have a force they can actually deploy ... but when people die, it doesn’t have to be announced,” Galeotti said.

Fontanka, which is respected for its independent reporting, has obtained what it described

as Wagner’s spreadsheets and recruitment forms that indicate thousands of Russians have fought in Syria. Of about 3,000 Wagner employees deployed to Syria over the years, the single largest contingent at a given time has been about 1,500, said Denis Korotkov, a reporter for Fontanka.

The most important proof is people, dead and alive, who have said they are mercenaries and their relatives say there are mercenaries.

RUSLAN LEVIEV
CIT FOUNDER

Since 2015, at least 73 of them have died, he said.

Another investigative group, Conflict Intelligence Team, or CIT, put the number of private contractor deaths at 101. Both outlets say those are conservative estimates.

“The most important proof is people, dead and alive, who have said they are mercenaries and their relatives say there are

mercenaries,” said CIT founder Ruslan Leviev. “How would hundreds of people all over the country collude and come up with the same story?”

Activists with CIT made a name for the group by combing social media and other records for Russia’s involvement in Ukraine and are doing the same for Syria.

Both Fontanka and CIT published photos from what they called a Wagner training base in the Krasnodar region of southern Russia. Some of the facilities look identical to those seen in official Defense Ministry photos of a military base in Molkino, in the same area.

Agreements signed with the security companies have kept the private contractors and members of their families from speaking to the media about their activities. Survivors receive generous compensation for keeping silent, and most attempts by AP to contact relatives and friends of those killed have been unsuccessful.

Media in southern Russia reported the death of Alexander Karchenkov in Syria in November 2016. The BelPressa website showed the mayor of his hometown of Stary Oskol giving a medal to Karchenkov’s tearful widow, Marina, and mother.

Marina Karchenkova said her husband went to Syria as a contract soldier because he “had children to raise.”

In a handwritten form dated December 2015, Karchenkov said he was unemployed, ser-

ving in the Soviet army in 1989-1991 and as a volunteer in Kosovo in 1998-2000.

In October, the Islamic State group released video of two Russian captives it said had been fighting in Syria, and one of them identified himself as Roman Zabolotny and said the other was Grigory Tsurkanu. The Defense Ministry denied they were Russian servicemen, and media reports said they were working for Wagner. Their fate at the hands of the extremists is unknown.

The Wagner group was founded by retired Lt. Col. Dmitry Utkin, who came under U.S. sanctions in June after the Treasury Department said the company had recruited former soldiers to join the separatists fighting in Ukraine. Utkin was photographed a year ago at a Kremlin banquet thrown by Putin to honor military veterans.

Also under U.S. sanctions is Yevgeny Prigozhin, the St. Petersburg entrepreneur dubbed “Putin’s chef” by Russian media because of his restaurants and catering businesses that once hosted the Kremlin leader’s dinners with foreign dignitaries. In the more than 10 years since establishing a relationship with Putin, his business expanded to other services for the military.

Earlier this year, an anti-corruption foundation run by opposition leader Alexei Navalny detailed how Prigozhin’s firms have come to dominate Defense Ministry contracts. The U.S. State Department put

contractors fighting in Syria

Prigozhin on its sanctions list in 2016 related to the Ukrainian conflict, citing his "extensive business dealings" with the Defense Ministry.

Among the firms linked to Prigozhin is Evro Polis, a Moscow-registered company that Fontanka reported has become a front for Wagner's operations in Syria.

In 2016, Evro Polis listed the sale of food products as its core activities, according to the Spark Interfax database. But this year, it listed mining, oil and gas production, and opened an office in the Syrian capital of Damascus.

The AP obtained a copy of a 48-page contract between Evro Polis and Syria's state-owned General Petroleum Corp., which said the Russian company would receive 25 percent of the proceeds from oil and gas production at fields its contractors capture and secure from Islamic State militants. While the five-year contract could not be authenticated, Fontanka reported the same deal in June.

"The link between Evro Polis and Prigozhin is significant and is not in doubt," said Fontanka's



A car covered in a collage showing portraits of Vladimir Putin (right) Syrian President Bashar Assad (left) and Assad's brother, Gen. Maher Assad

Korotkov. "We believe that this firm is just a cover for the private company Wagner, and it could be an attempt to legalize

this group, possibly for a commercial use later on."

Both Evro Polis and Prigozhin's Concorde Management

and Consulting were unavailable for comment, and the Defense Ministry did not reply to AP's request for comment.

An AP reporter who went to Evro Polis' Damascus office in November found it closed, with no sign on the door.

Syria's Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources declined comment when asked about the Evro Polis deal. Asked about the contract, the Russian Energy Ministry told Fontanka it cannot divulge "commercial secrets," and declined comment to the AP.

Private contractors have been used by countries like the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan for years

As the Russian campaign in Syria draws to a close, the private contractors will probably stay, analysts say.

Wagner is "is likely to cement its footing because we saw that there were not only military goals to pursue [...] but there is a commercial motive," Leviev said. "Someone needs to guard the oil fields." AP

AD

SATURDAY SUPERSTACK

STILL THE BIGGEST POKER NIGHT OF THE WEEK

PokerStars LIVE Macau hosts the Saturday SuperStack with a HK\$100,000 guaranteed prize pool. With a buy-in of HK\$3,000, you start with a huge 15K starting chip stack.

Don't miss out on the biggest tournament of the week. Every Saturday from 4th November to 30th December.

POKER STARS LIVE MACAU

Level 2, Estrada do Istmo, Cotai
All tournaments are subject to regulatory approval.

IDA 2016 WORLD CHAMPION DJ BEARBOMBERS

Dec 16th
TEL 2872 3700

D2 CLUB
www.d2club-macau.com

Macau Fisherman's Wharf, Edf. New OrLens III
澳門漁人碼頭新奧爾良館 III
Tel: (853) 2872 3777

what's ON



TEAMLAB FUTURE PARK

TIME: 1:30pm-10pm (Mondays to Fridays)

10:30am-10pm (Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays; 90 minutes per session, maximum capacity is 150 people at one time)

UNTIL: February 28, 2018

VENUE: MGM Art Space

ADMISSION: MOP150 (MOP120 for Macau residents; free admission for children aged 2 or under)

DISCOVER MACAU: MUSEUM OF TAIPA AND COLOANE HISTORY

TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Last admission at 5:30pm; closed on Mondays)

ADDRESS: Rua Correia da Silva, Taipa

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

A PROMENADE IN THE SMALL CITY: AN ILLUSTRATION EXHIBITION OF THE MACAU CULTURAL AND CREATIVE MAP

TIME: 11am-10pm

UNTIL: December 31, 2017

VENUE: Lakeside Gallery, Anim'Arte

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

MONKEY KING

TIME: 4pm & 8pm daily (Except on Thursdays)

VENUE: Sands Cotai Theatre

ADMISSION: MOP420, MOP480, MOP680, MOP880, MOP1080

COTAI TICKETING: (853) 2882 8818

KONG SENG TICKETING: (853) 2855 5555

AFFECTION FOR LOTUS – EXHIBITION OF PAINTING AND CALLIGRAPHY FOR THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF JAO TSUNG-I

TIME: 10am-6pm (Last admission at 17:30; closed on Mondays; open on public holidays)

UNTIL: December 31, 2017

VENUE: Jao Tsung-I Academy

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2523

Offbeat

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT CARRIES COLLAPSED MARATHONER TO VICTORY



In just 24 hours, her face and name have become world famous for what's seen as a supreme act of sportsmanship.

Dallas-area high school student Ariana Luterman was finishing the anchor leg of a girls' relay in Sunday's Dallas Marathon when she saw the legs of the women's marathon leader, Dr. Chandler Self, start to buckle from exhaustion yards from the finish line.

Acting apparently instinctively, Luterman helped Self to her feet and half-carried her to the finish line, giving the New York City psychiatrist the women's championship. Self's family later told her she'd been credited with the win.

Self said Luterman came alongside her two miles from the finish and encouraged her to finish the race. Video of the finish has gone viral.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	RTPi News (Delayed Broadcast)
15:00	Miscellaneous
15:35	Miscellaneous
17:20	Zig Zag
18:25	Brazilian Soap Opera (Repeated)
19:15	TDM Interview (Repeated)
19:50	Portuguese Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Miscellaneous
21:30	Non-daily Portuguese News
22:10	Brazilian Soap Opera
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:15	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:50	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

11 DEC - 13 DEC



MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

ROOM 1

2:30, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30pm

Director: Kenneth Branagh

Starring: Penelope Cruz, Willem Dafoe, Judi Dench, Johnny Depp, Michelle Pfeiffer, Daisy Ridley and Josh Gad

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 114 min



THE FOREIGNER

ROOM 23

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

Director: Martin Campbell

Starring: Jackie Chan, Pierce Brosnan, Katie Leung, Rufus Jones

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 113min



WONDER

ROOM 2

7:15pm

Director: Stephen Chbosky

Starring: Julia Roberts, Owen Wilson, Jacob Tremblay

Language: Chinese (English)

Duration: 113min

TAKE ME TO THE MOON

ROOM 3

2:30, 4:30, 7:30, 9:30pm

Director: Chun Yi Hsieh

Starring: Jasper Liu, Vibian Sung, Vera Yen, Chih-tian Shih, Pipi Yao, Chuan Lee

Language: Mandarin (English & Chinese)

Duration: 105min

this day in history



2001 SUICIDE ATTACK ON INDIAN PARLIAMENT

A group of gunmen has broken through tight security to attack the parliament building in the Indian capital, New Delhi. At least 12 people have been killed and 22 injured in the attack.

There were about 100 members of parliament in the building at the time, although none is believed to have been hurt.

The gunmen are thought to have used a fake identity sticker to get through tight security surrounding the parliament complex.

Wearing military-style fatigues, they burst into the area in front of the parliament just before noon local time (0630 GMT).

Witnesses said one was wearing explosives strapped to his body and blew himself up soon after the men broke in.

A gun battle began between the attackers and police, in a dramatic hour-long standoff broadcast live on television. Indian government officials said the remaining four gunmen were killed in the fighting, along with six police officers and a gardener.

Parliamentarian Kharbala Sain was in the building when the attack began. "I heard a cracker-like sound near the entrance, then I saw people running helter-skelter," he said. "I saw many people firing at the same time. I couldn't make out who was who. I couldn't understand who the terrorists were and who the police were. My mind went blank."

The Indian Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, made a televised address to the nation shortly after the attacks, and was quick to denounce the militants. "This was not just an attack on the building, it was a warning to the entire nation," he said. "We accept the challenge."

No group has admitted carrying out the attack, which comes just two months after a similar assault on the Kashmir state assembly in Srinagar, in which 38 people died. Many have suggested that Kashmiri militants may also be behind today's attack.

Some politicians have called for action against Pakistan, suspected in some quarters of arming and training the militants.

The two countries have fought two wars over the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir since independence in 1947, and came to the brink of a third war in 1999. But Pakistan has condemned the attack and denied any involvement. It says it will act on any credible proof of the involvement of militant groups based on their soil.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Three men, suspected Kashmiri militants Mohammed Afzal and Shaukat Hussain Guru, and college professor SAR Geelani, were convicted and sentenced to death in December 2002 for supporting and helping to plan the attack on parliament.

The High Court later overturned the conviction against Mr Geelani, who had spent two years in prison, and also freed Navjot Sandhu, Hussain's wife, sentenced to five years in prison for withholding information from police. The acquittals have been challenged by Delhi police.

In early 2004, the Supreme Court delayed the execution of the two remaining men pending appeals.

The five were the first to be sentenced under India's new draconian anti-terrorist laws, which were being debated at the time of the attack. Relations between India and Pakistan deteriorated badly after the attack. A massive build-up of troops along their common border during 2002 led to international concern about a possible war.

Relations have since thawed again, however, and in January 2004 the two sides renewed their peace talks over Kashmir.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Flying high doesn't even begin to describe what you're experiencing (and enjoying) right now.

Taurus April 20-May 20 There's no use getting your dander up when you're not really sure what this new person's intentions really are.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 The great man said that all the world's a stage, and right now, you've got the lead!

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 If you're dreaming about taking a risk but feel frozen by fear, now is the time to address your feelings before they keep you from fulfilling a long-held ambition.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 This opportunity hasn't just landed in your lap - it practically leaped up of its own volition!

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Painters know that it's all about perspective, and at least for now, that's what matters in your life, too.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You've had quite a long journey to get here, so give yourself some much-needed downtime and just enjoy the view.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Remember that as you deal with a complex situation that crops up later today.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You're generally honest, straightforward and avoid hidden motives - but you think everyone around you is exactly the same way!

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You keep trying to swim upstream, but you could end up using all your energy just to stay still - or, worse, to slow your pace as you're dragged backwards.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Some people say that they're one thing and then demonstrate the opposite. You might be disappointed in them, but cut them a little slack today, especially if it's the first time.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 It's easy (and tempting) to just vent today, but that doesn't bring you the understanding or the peace you really need.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Easy' level with some numbers pre-filled.

Easy+

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Easy+' level with some numbers pre-filled.

Medium

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Medium' level with some numbers pre-filled.

Hard

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Hard' level with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION

CHINA

Table listing weather conditions for various Chinese cities like Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

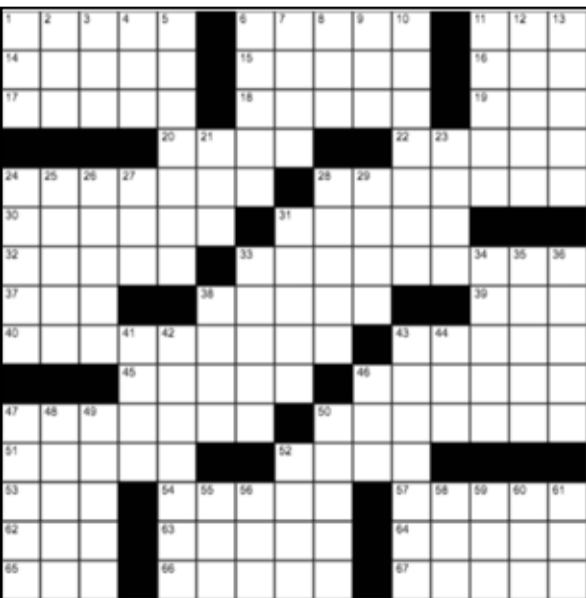
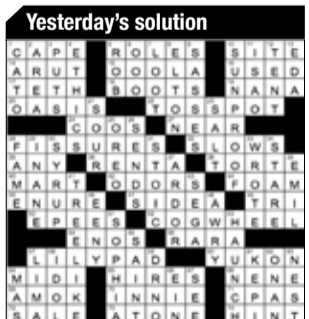
WORLD

Table listing weather conditions for world cities like Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, London, New York.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Govt. security; 6- Floating platforms; 11- It's not PC; 14- Four-door; 15- Sir ___ Newton was an English mathematician; 16- Old English letter; 17- Fish illegally; 18- Apple juice; 19- Spanish aunt; 20- Contented sighs; 22- Homerun king Hank; 24- Official permit; 28- Scram!

DOWN: 1- Cookbook abbr.; 2- Prefix with classical; 3- Room within a harem; 4- Tic Dough; 5- Improve; 6- Nouveau ___; 7- Sale sign; 8- Craze; 9- ___ kwon do; 10- Deal with poison ivy, in a way; 11- Paris subway; 12- "Farewell!"; 13- Repeat rhythmically; 21- Invite; 23- Sheltered, nautically; 24- Monetary gain; 25- Small bay; 26- Fabric; 27- Ages; 28- First American to orbit Earth; 29- Leprechaun land; 31- Birdlike; 33- Mixed bags; 34- Excuse; 35- Gum; 36- Joltin' Joe; 38- Basilica area; 41- Very small quantity; 42- Brother of Electra; 43- Ancient Egyptian king; 44- Slender bar; 46- Seed of a legume; 47- Goatlike antelope; 48- Spanish hero; 49- Link with; 50- Mob scenes; 52- "Stay" singer Lisa; 55- Turkish general; 56- Bikini part; 58- Law enforcement agency; 59- Purge; 60- Suffix with Capri; 61- Conspicuous org.;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
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 Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
Tourism 28 333 000
Airport 59 888 88



Scan QR Code to Download the JML app
- Find the right property for you
- See property location and details
- Find your JML contact and request viewing





20,000 square feet of privacy

At Villa Frangipani impeccable service means knowing when you want to enjoy a private moment.

Whether that is in the Private Spa, your suite, the garden bale, or any other area, our Villa Staff anticipate your needs at all times.

Please visit www.privatevillasofbali.com to get an idea of what we offer.

...wish you could stay forever...

PRIVATE VILLAS OF BALI

VILLA TIRTA KENCANA - VILLA FRANGIPANI

info@privatevillasofbali.com
www.privatevillasofbali.com
skype ID: privatevillasofbali
+62361 8468513



RCR Electronics (Macau) Ltd.

中葡電子(澳門)有限公司

ELV Systems Specialists
專業的弱電系統



Surveillance Systems
監控系統

Design & Budgets
設計和預算

Intrusion Alarm Systems
入侵警報系統

Project Management
項目管理



Access Control Systems
門禁系統

Maintenance & Service
維修和服務

AV/TV, Telephone & Display Systems
AV/TV, 電話和顯示系統

Risk Assessment & Management
風險評估和管理



Fire Detection & Suppression Systems
火焰偵測和滅火系統

Survey & Troubleshooting Services
檢驗和故障診斷與維修服務

Network & Structure Cable
網絡和綜合佈線

澳門馬場東大馬路25-69號福泰工業大廈12樓B座

Avenida Leste do Hipodromo N.S 25-69, Edif. Industrial Fok Tai, 12 Floor "B", Macau

TEL: + (853) 2822 1341

FAX: + (853) 2822 0824

www.rcr-macau.com

email: contact@rcr-macau.com

BOXING

Horn wants to show Pacquiao win was no fluke

John Pye, Brisbane

JEFF Horn's reward for a successful first title defense since a contentious win over Manny Pacquiao could be a bout with Terence Crawford. A failure could send him back into boxing obscurity.

Horn wants to use his WBO welterweight title defense against Gary Corcoran today to dispel any notion that he got a hometown decision against Pacquiao in Brisbane last July. If he gets his way, it could set him up for a big 2018.

Top Rank promoter Bob Arum attended yesterday's weigh-in and said a win here "will lead to massive fights coming next year."

"I think Pacquiao is going to return to the ring. Terence Crawford will be the mandatory for this fight. The biggest building in Las Vegas is on hold for this fight," Arum said. "Going to have a tremendous year in the welterweight division and these two participan-



Boxer Jeff Horn wears a pair of boxing gloves on top of earmuffs

ts [...] will be giving it their all to see who will go ahead as part of these major programs that will take place next year."

Horn, now unbeaten in 18 bouts, knows what it's like to be given no chance of beating the champion, so he is trying to think only about Corcoran at the Brisbane Convention Centre. That's not far from where he beat Pacquiao in front of more than 51,000 fans in an outdoor bout at a regular rugby venue.

"I've got until after this fight to start having discussions," he said. "He's definitely a possibility if I can manage to get through Gary first."

The Australian former schoolteacher was written off before taking on Pacquiao (59-7-2), but pressured the eight-division champion for 12 rounds in an upset that changed the trajectory of his career.

Pacquiao's camp disputed the unanimous decision, which was widely panned

by critics but later confirmed after further scrutiny by the World Boxing Organization. Pacquiao had a rematch clause for the Horn fight, but so far hasn't committed to a date or venue.

Corcoran is 17-1 since turning pro in 2011 and is ranked 10th by the WBO. He is the underdog and is fighting outside of Britain and Ireland for the first time for his first world title.

Trainer Peter Stanley said his boxer would not be intimidated by the situation.

"We've fought away from home before in front of bigger, more hostile crowds against bigger boys," Stanley said. "There's nothing new here."

I think Pacquiao is going to return to the ring. Terence Crawford will be the mandatory for this fight.

BOB ARUM
TOP RANK PROMOTER

The buildup to the fight has been overshadowed by accusations from the Corcoran camp that Horn resorted to head-butting Pacquiao, and claims from

the British-based boxer that he would resort to biting if confronted with the same circumstances. At the official news conference, one of Corcoran's trainers held up a laptop computer to show images of Horn clashing heads with opponents and later wore a cap with a glove attached at the top in a swipe at the head-butting claims.

Horn and his trainer Glenn Rushton responded by wearing caps with a pair of boxing gloves on top of earmuffs to protect from biting.

Both boxers were expecting an aggressive, walk-up style of fight.

Rushton said Horn would be furious but fair.

"It is boxing. It's not table tennis — it's tough," Rushton said. "Stop [complaining] — Jeff's one of the fairest fighters in the world."

Corcoran doesn't have a high profile, and even ring announcer Michael Buffer mistakenly called him by the wrong name at the weigh-in. "Does it matter?" Stanley said. "He'll know his name afterward, I promise you that — he won't forget it."

"Gary's a consummate pro. He's come here to fight and win. They both made weight, they're both fit. The only difference is Jeff's got the world title and Gary wants it." AP

RUSSIA

Olympic Committee approves competing as neutrals

THE Russian Olympic Committee formally gave its blessing yesterday for the country's athletes to compete under a neutral flag at the upcoming Pyeongchang Games.

Under International Olympic Committee sanctions announced last week in response to Russian doping at the 2014 Sochi Games, Russians will compete under the Olympic flag as "Olympic Athletes from Russia."

"The opinion of all taking part was united, and that was that our athletes need to go to South Korea, compete and win," ROC president Alexander Zhukov said after the organization held a closed congress on yesterday. Russian President Vladimir Putin gave his backing last week.

Some Russians will formally be invited by the IOC to compete as individual athletes, though the ROC will submit rosters of its preferred teams.

"I think the IOC will make sure that the strongest Russian athletes get the invitations, so that, for example, our hockey team consists of the best players," Zhukov said, adding that 200 athletes could end up competing in South Korea.

The ROC's approval, however, doesn't mean Russia is abandoning legal challenges



Russian Olympic Committee President Alexander Zhukov


against the IOC sanctions, Zhukov said.

Twenty-five athletes have been banned for doping at the 2014 Sochi Olympics, all of whom have filed appeals to the Court of Arbitration for Sport. IOC rules bar Russians from Pyeongchang if they have previously served doping bans.

Russia national hockey team captain Ilya Kovalchuk welcomed the ROC's approval, saying it would calm athletes after a period of turmoil.

"Thank god it's all behind us and we're going to the Olympics," Kovalchuk said. AP

AD

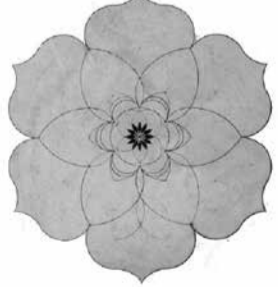


CASA DE PORTUGAL
EM MACAU 澳門葡人之家協會

Escola de Artes e Ofícios
School of Arts and Crafts

aulas | classes

YOGA



<p> turma / class 1</p> <p>Terças Tuesdays 20h30 - 21h30 11 horas/hours 11 sessões/sessions</p> <p>datas/dates: 02, 09, 16, 23, 30 Jan. + 06, 27 Feb./Feb + 06, 13, 20, 27 Mar.</p> <p>propina . fee: MOP 440 *</p>	<p> turma / class 2</p> <p>Sábados Saturdays 10h00 - 11h00 9 horas/hours 9 sessões/sessions</p> <p>datas/dates: 06, 13, 20, 27 Jan. + 03, 10, 17, 24, 31 Mar.</p> <p>propina . fee: MOP 360 *</p>
--	--

monitor:
André Chaves

língua/language: Português e Inglês/Portuguese and English** patrocínio/sponsor: Fundação Macau

local/venue:
Avenida do Dr. Francisco Vieira Machado n° 431-487 Edf. Industrial Nam Fung 8°B , sala 2, Macau
número máximo de participantes/maximum number of participants:
15 (Será respeitada a ordem de inscrição sendo esta efetiva mediante o pagamento de propina).
15 (The registration order will be respected and registration is considered when payment is done).

Permitida a utilização do subsídio do Programa de Desenvolvimento e Aperfeiçoamento Contínuo da DSEJ.
DSEJ continuous education subsidies can be used for the payment.
* Contactar a sede da CPM para informações sobre modalidades de pagamento, caso não utilize o subsídio atribuído pelo PDAC/DSEJ./Please contact CPM's headquarters for payment information, should you not be making use of the CEDP/DSEJ subsidy.
** Aulas com tradução em Cantonense sempre que o número de alunos o justifique.
Sessions with Cantonese translation when the number of students justifies it.

morada/address: Rua Pedro Nolasco da Silva, n° 28, R.A.E. de Macau www.casadeportugal.org
tel: (853) 28 726 828 fax: (853) 28 726 818 portugal@macau.ctm.net

opinion

World Views

Nisha Gopalan, Bloomberg

SAIGON BEER - AN UNACQUIRED TASTE, UNLESS YOU'RE THAI

In Asian deals, fundamentals can often matter less than connections. The latest illustration: Thai tycoon Charoen Sirivadhanabhakdi's emergence as the sole bidder for a stake in Saigon Beer Alcohol Beverage Corp.

Sabeco ranks as the world's most richly valued major brewer after surging 58 percent on the Ho Chi Minh Stock Exchange this year, including a 6.8 percent jump on Tuesday. So it shouldn't be much of a surprise that a unit of Charoen's Thai Beverage Pcl was the only one of about half a dozen foreign companies to register an interest in buying 25 percent of Vietnam's largest beermaker - even if the country offers the growth potential that international brewers crave. Other companies may still bid for smaller stakes.

Beer giants Anheuser-Busch InBev NV and Heineken NV, and Japan's Asahi Group Holdings Ltd. and Kirin Holdings Co. are grappling with flat or falling sales in their home markets. Vietnam, as my Gadfly colleague David Fickling has noted, is Asia's third-largest beer producer after China and Japan with a working-age population that will overtake the latter's by 2030 - and Sabeco has almost half the market. The Southeast Asian country could be home to the world's second-largest increase in beer sales by volume between 2016 and 2021 after India, according to Bloomberg Intelligence analyst Thomas Jastrzab.

But the price would have been hard to explain to shareholders of these multinationals, especially given the low level of control that was on offer. A 25 percent stake would be worth USD2.3 billion based on the initial price guidance. While the government is selling 53.6 percent of Sabeco, Vietnam has a 49 percent cap on foreign investor stakes in public companies. With 10.4 percent of Sabeco already in overseas hands, any acquirer faced being stuck with a minority interest.

That's clearly not a concern for a Southeast Asian tycoon like Charoen, who's been cultivating connections in Vietnam and appears content to play a long game.

Charoen came to global prominence four years ago when he beat Heineken and Indonesia's Riady family to a multibillion-dollar takeover of Singapore's Fraser & Neave Ltd. He's since been building up stakes in regional assets through ThaiBev and several privately held companies. These include the acquisition of Thai supermarket chain Big C Supercenter Pcl from French grocer Casino Guichard-Perrachon SA last year and a deal to buy half of Myanmar's largest spirits maker from U.S. private equity firm TPG Capital.

Fraser & Neave is already a major shareholder in Vietnam Dairy Products JSC, or Vinamilk, Southeast Asia's biggest milk producer. Charoen also acquired German retailer Metro AG's wholesale stores in the country three years ago. Sabeco would further extend his interests in one of Asia's most dynamic and fast-growing economies.

That looks like a smart strategy - provided the price doesn't leave him with a nasty hangover.

THE SAN FRANCISCO MAYOR EDWIN LEE DIES SUDDENLY AT 65

Mayor Ed Lee, who oversaw a technology-driven economic boom in San Francisco that brought with it sky-high housing prices despite his lifelong commitment to economic equality, died suddenly yesterday at age 65.

A statement from Lee's office said the city's first Asian-American mayor died at 1:11 a.m. at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital. Lee was surrounded by family, friends and colleagues. No

cause was given.

Lee, the child of immigrants, was a staunch supporter of San Francisco's sanctuary city policy toward people who are in the country illegally. Supervisors and other public officials were stunned and saddened by his sudden death. They praised the low-key mustachioed mayor who was better known as a former civil rights lawyer and longtime city bureaucrat than a flashy politician.

Follow the money: investors lead charge on climate change

Frank Jordans, Berlin

AN international summit yesterday to mark the second anniversary of the Paris climate agreement has drawn world leaders, celebrities, companies and environmental groups to the French capital, all aiming to keep up momentum on efforts to curb global warming.

Financial institutions are using the meeting to highlight the need to ensure that their investments don't suffer from, or contribute to, the effects of climate change, such as rising sea levels and more extreme weather around the world.

Here are some of the major announcements and plans being considered at the Paris summit:

LEANING IN

A group of institutional investors calling themselves Climate Action 100+ said it would use its financial clout to raise the issue of climate-related risk with companies.

The group, which comprises 225 investment funds managing more than USD26 trillion in assets, said it will focus its efforts on 100 of the world's largest corporate greenhouse gas emitters.

The idea is that companies will heed the concerns of major funds because they don't want to be considered a bad investment due to the financial risks that climate change might pose for their business.

GREEN TRANSPARENCY

Over 200 companies have pledged greater transparency on reporting climate-related risks in their businesses as part of a voluntary program led by U.S. billionaire Michael Bloomberg.

The former New York mayor and Mark Carney, the governor of the Bank of England and chairman of the Financial Stability Board, said Tuesday that the number of companies supporting the program had more than doubled since its recommendations were first published in June.

The 237 companies, with a combined value of over \$6.3 trillion, include construction firms, energy companies and financial institutions from 29 countries.



Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates (center) Sir Richard Branson (right) and special envoy to the U.N. for climate change Michael Bloomberg (second right)

Carney said the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures plans to report on its efforts when leaders of the Group of 20 leading industrialized and emerging economies meet in Argentina in a year.

COAL GOAL

Dutch bank ING plans to have zero investments in coal power generation by 2025.

The company said Tuesday it expects fossil fuels to remain a key source of energy in the coming decades but wants to see the most polluting kind - coal - phased out.

ING said that rather than walk away from clients who don't meet its environmental risk policies, the bank will try to work with them to help improve their climate footprint.

It added, though, that "when engagement and improvement don't work, we don't provide financing."

FOSSIL-FREE FUND

Norwegian pension fund Storebrand said it's expanding its portfolio of fossil fuel-free investments to over \$3 billion.

Storebrand, which has \$80 billion in assets under management, said Tuesday that the move reflected growing public concern over climate change.

The company has recently tightened its rules, ditching investments in companies deemed to be among the most polluting as a result

CARBON SHOCK

French President Emmanuel Macron, who is hosting the summit, is proposing an increase in the cost of carbon emissions.

Macron said he believes the global economy needs a "shock" if the goal of keeping glo-

bal warming below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) is to be achieved.

Macron told French daily Le Monde that he doesn't favor outright bans on gasoline vehicles, for example, but rather financial incentives for companies to invest in renewable energy and new modes of production.

One such incentive would be to raise the minimum price of per metric ton of carbon dioxide to 30 euros (\$35.39) - a position Macron acknowledged not all European countries agree on yet. Current prices for the greenhouse gas in Europe are up to five times lower. He told the newspaper that while carbon-intensive industries won't welcome such a move, "without this shock to change productive behavior, we will not get results."

LIFE SAVINGS

Among the issues being discussed in Paris is how to increase financial support for poor countries, including for a U.N. fund meant to help put their economies on a climate-friendly track. The fund, agreed on in 2009, aims to raise \$100 billion a year by 2020 but is currently about a third short.

The prime minister of the Pacific island nation of Fiji warned Tuesday that climate change should be considered a life or death issue for millions of people around the world.

Frank Bainimarama, who chaired last month's U.N. climate meeting in Bonn, Germany, said the financial resources required to shift the world economy onto a low-carbon path were there, but that the money needs to flow faster if it's going to make a difference on the ground. AP

Station	Air quality	Icon
Roadside	60-80 Moderate	☹️
High Density Residential Area	60-80 Moderate	☹️
Ambient	60-80 Moderate	☹️

WORLD BRIEFS

TURKEY-RUSSIA Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan are meeting to discuss developments in Syria and the Middle East, as well as bilateral relations. Putin and Erdogan have already met several times this year and are reportedly in regular communication.

ISRAEL A new survey released yesterday shows just how divided the country has become. The annual Israeli Democracy Index found that 45 percent of Israelis, believe the country's democratic system of government is in serious danger.



AUSTRIA An explosion yesterday at a major natural gas facility near Austria's border with Slovakia left one person dead and 21 injured, and caused some gas flow disruptions to other countries, authorities said.

THE NETHERLANDS The Dutch capital, with its World Heritage-listed canals, narrow streets and web of alleys in its red light district, is pushing back against excessive tourism in an attempt to keep the city attractive to visitors and residents alike. The government is considering a "tourist tax" among other disincentives.



US-MEXICO Advocates for a Mexican journalist detained in a remote West Texas facility asked the U.S. government to grant him asylum instead of deporting him to a country where he believes he'll be killed.

UNITED NATIONS The global economy is growing by about 3 percent - its highest rate since 2011 and a significant acceleration from last year, the United Nations said.