



MSAR OUT OF EU TAX HAVEN 'BLACKLIST' SOON
Macau is soon to leave the tax haven "blacklist," as part of an EU proposal to remove eight out of 17 jurisdictions from it

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RECRUITMENT AGENCY BILL PASSES AMID CONCERNS
The law was passed with 30 votes in favor at the Legislative Assembly amid concerns over domestic helpers and tourists

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OIL SPILL FROM SUNKEN TANKER IS EXPANDING IN SEA

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WORLD BRIEFS



MYANMAR-BANGLADESH The two countries have agreed that they will try to complete the repatriation of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslim refugees who fled from violence in Myanmar within two years, Bangladesh's Foreign Ministry said yesterday. [More on p12](#)

INDONESIA Authorities are struggling to contain a months-long outbreak of measles in easternmost Papua province that has killed dozens of children.



PHILIPPINES Glowing-red lava spurted in a fountain and flowed down the Philippines' most active volcano yesterday in a stunning display of its fury that has sent more than 34,000 villagers fleeing to safety and prompted police to set up checkpoints to stop tourists from getting too close.

SRI LANKA's president has ordered the reinstatement of ban on women buying alcohol and being employed in places where the drinks are produced and sold.



PAKISTAN A Pakistani health official says a special anti-polio drive has been launched in the country's eastern Punjab province.

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Sulu Sou
cases adjourned

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GAMING

Analysts divided over VIP performance this year P4

editorial

Paulo Coutinho



A RULING AGAINST VONG RESOLUTION

A judge at the Court of First Instance (TJB) decided to adjourn the trial of Sulu Sou (and Scott Chiang) sine die pending a decision by the Court of Second Instance (TSI) over a request filed by the defendant with the TSI to suspend a deliberation made by the Legislative Assembly last month – namely, the plenary vote for the suspension of the lawmaker's mandate.

Interestingly enough, Judge Cheong Weng Tong of TJB rejected the opinion of Sou's lawyer by stating loud and clear that the two cases are related and therefore her court cannot go ahead with the proceedings while an appeal stands at a higher instance

court (see report on these pages).

Indeed, as Jorge Menezes argued, the cases are of a totally different matter and it would not be uncommon if all the actions run concurrently.

Indeed, the cases are related and therefore, as lawyer Pedro Leal put it, it would be "a waste of time" if they continue with the proceedings "and even conclude the trial" of the criminal offense at the first instance if the second instance rules in favor of the appeal.

It is a conundrum, that the public prosecutor recognized at the trial, "We are at a crossroads here. We don't know what the decision of the TSI will be."

Yes we are and no we don't.

What came out of this first hearing over an alleged offense of civil disobedience by the two New Macau activists has far larger political implications that reaches Sou's suspension and reverberates to Vong's controversial draft resolution on parliamentary immunity. The debate and vote concerning these topics was postponed for today by the AL.

The decision to adjourn by Judge Cheong implicitly says that the courts have the authority to scrutinize the legislative branch actions and their compliance with the law.

Judge Cheong just ruled out the Vong bill – in a first reading.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Vote on 'immunity resolution' postponed for today

DELIBERATIONS at the Legislative Assembly (AL) on Vong Hin Fai's 'immunity resolution' and whether lawmaker Sulu Sou's suspension should be regarded as a political act or not have been postponed to today.

Yesterday's AL agenda was piled up with five issues, including the establishment of the laws of Macau's sea management and administration, the amendment of the regulations of civil servants' holidays, and the immunity resolution in regards to Sulu Sou's December 4 suspension.

Several lawmakers managed to pose their questions regarding the amendment of civil servants' work regulations, however, after a first round of questions, government representatives did not have enough time to answer all the lawmakers' questions.

Under these conditions, and given the potential for debate over Sou's suspension, the vote scheduled last on the AL's agenda was postponed.

The last item of the agenda also resolved to discuss Vong Hin Fai's controversial immunity resolution. The immuni-



Lawmaker Pereira Coutinho

ty resolution seeks to classify these suspensions as "political acts", barring administrative courts from ruling on whether they – or presumably the procedures leading up to the decisions – are lawful.

Before yesterday's AL commenced, Vong claimed that Macau's judiciary operation will not be affected by the results of the vote.

Lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho said, in his speech before the agenda, that "I hope that we all understand the importance of the independence of the courts and the judges, and we

all [need to] not interfere, restrict or damage the courts and judges' work as well as Macau's judiciary system."

The immunity resolution contains just two articles. The first states that "deliberations of the Legislative Assembly that lead to the suspension or loss of a lawmaker's mandate are acts of a political nature that are excluded from administrative, fiscal or customs appeal."

The second article establishes that the measure would have retroactive effects dating back to December 1999, when the MSAR was created. JZ

THE FIRST 120 DAYS

SULU SOU was elected as one of Macau's 33 legislators approximately 120 days ago, but formally took up his seat in the Legislative Assembly just three months ago. In that time, the young democrat has developed a reputation for breaking with tradition and unnerving the city's political elite. Now he stands on the brink of expulsion from the legislature. Here's a look at his turbulent first 120 days:

- September 17** • The night of the election. Dozens of young activists gather at the New Macau Association headquarters to await the results and find out whether 26-year-old Sulu Sou has won a seat.
- September 18** • It is officially confirmed that New Macau Progressives has won a seat in the Legislative Assembly with a total of 9,212 votes. Sou says that he wants to see 100 percent of legislature seats filled via direct elections and warns Chief Executive Chui Sai On not to "underestimate the power of young people."
- October 16** • The 33 elected lawmakers take their oaths at the government's headquarters in the presence of the chief executive. The ceremony passes without incident.
- November 2** • Sou irritates his fellow lawmakers by pledging to broadcast comments made in their closed-door meetings on social media. He follows through on this pledge on several occasions.
- November 13** • It emerges that Sou might have his mandate suspended via a vote in the Legislative Assembly. The suspension will allow for his prosecutorial immunity to be lifted so that he may stand trial accused of "aggravated disobedience" dating back to a 2016 demonstration.
- November 15** • Sou calls on Chui to take more accountability over the handling of Typhoon Hato during a Legislative Assembly debate, in what becomes an embarrassing public episode for the chief executive.
- December 4** • Lawmakers resolve to suspend Sou's mandate with a secret ballot vote; 28 in favor and four against. Legislator Pereira Coutinho points out several procedural irregularities with the vote.
- January 4** • Sou appeals to the Court of Second Instance to determine whether the irregular procedures leading to his suspension were lawful.
- January 9** • Sou is expected to begin his trial on aggravated disobedience at the Court of First Instance, but asks for a postponement while his new lawyer, Jorge Menezes, studies the case documents and has them translated into Portuguese. The postponement is approved.
- January 11** • Lawmakers Vong Hin Fai and Kou Hoi In submit their 'immunity resolution', which seeks to classify suspensions as "political acts", barring administrative courts from ruling on whether they are lawful. The proposal is widely criticized by lawyers, political analysts and other lawmakers.
- January 16** • The Court of First Instance says it cannot rule on the charges of aggravated disobedience until the Court of Second Instance has handled Sou's appeal. Meanwhile, lawmakers postpone a detailed discussion on the immunity resolution until today. DB

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COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE

Judge adjourns Sou's trial pending appeal

THE trial that puts lawmaker Sulu Sou and former president of the New Macau Association (ANM) Scott Chiang in the defendants' seat finally started its first session yesterday morning at the Court of First Instance (TJB).

Contrary to what was initially planned, the session, which only lasted for 50 minutes, did not serve as an opportunity to hear any of the accused but instead, only to facilitate a discussion between the Judge, Cheong Weng Tong, and the defense lawyer of Sou, Jorge Menezes.

At the beginning, Judge Cheong requested explanations from Menezes regarding the two appeals filed by the lawyer regarding the suspension of his client's mandate as a lawmaker by the Legislative Assembly (AL), and the appeal filed to the Court of Second Instance (TSI) calling for a suspension on the decision that removed Sou from the status of lawmaker so that he could be tried. According to the Judge, the TJB was only informed yesterday morning (just before the court session's commencement) that an appeal was running in TSI, an issue that Judge Cheong said was due the fact that Menezes had not informed the TJB in advance that he had filed a request for an appeal.

Judge Cheong called on Menezes to explain.

Menezes explained to the court that he had not informed the TJB "in order to avoid hassle and confusion between cases," as, in his opinion, the two proceedings are unrelated. He noted that at the time, he



Sulu Sou (center) is seen exiting the Court of First Instance

thought that both proceedings could take place simultaneously without disrupting the hearing that was already scheduled in the TJB.

The Judge in charge of the criminal case disagreed and noted that in the court's opinion the cases are quite related and one could influence the procedures and outcomes of the other.

After the exchange of arguments and opinions, Menezes asked to have a quick word

with his client. Chiang and his newly appointed lawyer, Pedro Leal, participated in this conversation.

Menezes, representing Sou, then addressed the Court saying, "My client wishes to express that if, in order not to delay this case [hearing], the court would accept a declaration of his withdrawal [from the TSI appeal] he [would be] willing to do that."

The declaration did not elicit any comments from Judge

Cheong; the minutes for the session do not record any comment. Cheong decided to suspend the trial until the TSI arrives at a final decision on the appeal submitted by Sou.

Menezes said that his client has decided to withdraw the appeal and that this should allow for the main case to proceed.

Judge Cheong's decision was followed by a call for the opinion of both defendants' lawyers as well as the Public

Prosecutor who said, "Since the appeal [for the TSI] of the decision involves an immediate effect - that is the [revoking of the] suspension decision - that means that he can take back his position immediately and if this happens the criminal process cannot continue."

"We are at a crossroads here," he continued. "We don't know what the decision of the TSI will be. It's not that we cannot continue today [as Menezes advocated] but we do take a serious risk and besides we need to follow the principle of the continuity of the process."

His comments thus make it clear that he was advocating for the trial's suspension.

The lawyer of the first defendant, Leal, agreed with the Public Prosecutor, noting that it was possible to continue if the judge thought she could finish the trial before a sentence is reached by the TSI on the appeal.

In the end, Menezes agreed that the position from the prosecutor was "very lucid" and acknowledged that he had mistakenly not accounted for all factors in the concurrent cases.

Menezes said, "eventually I ended up interfering with the work of this court [but] that was actually the opposite of my intentions," and he went on to note that it is sometimes difficult to understand the correct procedures "as the regulations of the AL do not have very clear rules [and this] gives way to different interpretations."

After these developments the court sessions on the case have now been halted and according to the Judge in charge of the process, a new hearing will only be scheduled after the TSI's decision on the appeal.

MEANWHILE IN HONG KONG...

Activists will have to wait for prison appeal outcome

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

THREE Hong Kong activists will have to wait to learn the outcome of their final appeal to overturn prison sentences for their roles in sparking 2014's massive pro-democracy protests in the semiautonomous Chinese city.

Judges at Hong Kong's top court said yesterday they would issue their decision at a later, unspecified date following the appeal hearing for Joshua Wong, Nathan Law and Alex Chow against the sentences of up to eight months. Bail for the three was extended.

The three were initially let off with suspended or community service sen-

tences after they were convicted of taking part in or inciting an unlawful assembly by storming a courtyard at government headquarters to kick-off the protests.

But the case sparked controversy when the justice secretary requested a sentencing review that resulted in stiffer sentences, raising concerns about rule of law and fears that the city's Beijing-backed government is tightening up on dissent.

The trio's lawyers said the lower court overstepped its boundaries and put too much emphasis on the need for deterrence in handing down the revised harsher sentence.

"Laying down a heavy sentence will have a deter-

rent effect, but a balance has to be held between a deterrent and stifling young idealistic people," Law's lawyer, Robert Pang, told the judges.

Wong's lawyer also argued that under Hong Kong law, the 21-year-old shouldn't have been sent to prison because he was a minor at the time.

Speaking on the courthouse steps before the hearing, Wong estimated he had a 50-50 chance of going back to prison. "However I still believe that when people are united we will not be defeated."

Wong made world headlines and starred in a Netflix documentary after leading the "Umbrella Movement" protests which



Pro-democracy young activists Joshua Wong (left), Nathan Law (center) and Alex Chow leave Hong Kong's Court of Final Appeal yesterday

le still a teenager. The protests, which brought parts of the busy Asian financial hub to a halt over Beijing's plan to restrict elections for top leader, ended without resolution

after 11 weeks.

The three were given revised sentences ranging from six to eight months of prison time in last year's ruling but were bailed par-tway through when they

won permission to appeal.

Wong could end up back in prison as soon as today, when he is due to be sentenced in a separate court case also related to the 2014 protests. AP



Macau to leave tax haven 'blacklist' after complying with EU

MACAU is soon to leave the European Union's (EU) tax haven "blacklist." This change is part of a proposal on the part of EU officials which aims to remove eight out of 17 jurisdictions from the list, which was most recently updated last month.

Under the proposal, several

news agencies reported that problematic jurisdictions - including Panama, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, Barbados, Grenada, Mongolia, Tunisia and Macau - will be tentatively delisted this month.

Citing documents included in the proposal, Reuters say that Bahrain was another of the

jurisdictions initially considered but then rejected from the group of territories recommended for de-listing.

Although there is no indication as to what the jurisdictions improved or changed in order to comply with the EU regulations, it is implied that a significant advance has been

made to justify the removal.

Reuters also noted that the proposal will be discussed at a meeting of EU ambassadors today and that it is expected that EU finance ministers will adopt the resolutions when they meet next week in Brussels for their regular monthly talk.

In the meanwhile, and as proof that there was definitely something achieved by Macau in complying with EU regulations, another group, which includes American Samoa, Bahrain, Guam, the Marshall Islands, Namibia, Palau, Saint Lucia, Samoa, and Trinidad and Tobago, is set to remain on the blacklist.

The proposal for the de-listing was made by the Code of Conduct Group, which gathers tax experts from the 28 EU member states to constantly monitor the commitment of countries and regions to abide by EU standards on tax matters.

The 'blacklist' was initially drawn in a bid to discourage the most aggressive tax dodging practices. It is expected that the strongest critics of the taxing policies that are conducted in some of the jurisdictions may see this de-listing as a blow to their campaign against tax avoidance.

Most notably, the shrinking of the blacklist is likely to be criticized by tax transparency groups. In December, some activists denounced the listing process as a whitewash and called for the inclusion in the blacklist of even some EU countries accused of facilitating tax avoidance, such as Luxembourg, Malta, Ireland and the Netherlands.

In response, EU officials said the purpose of the blacklist is to convince jurisdictions to become more transparent. They say that having fewer on the list means more countries have committed to change. **RM**

GAMING

Bernstein predicts VIP slowdown this year

BROKERAGE firm Sanford C Bernstein is predicting a deceleration in Macau's VIP gaming growth this year on the back of a number of political and economic factors in mainland China.

A report by Bernstein analysts Vitaly Umansky, Zhen Gong and Cathy Huang warned that there is a "rising risk" to VIP gaming brought about by tighter capital controls, Xi Jinping's ongoing anti-corruption campaign and increased local regulation of Macau's junket promoters.

"VIP strength was largely driven by stronger than expected macro environment, robust liquidity,

and strong consumer/business confidence environment coupled with a robust junket capital base with increasing credit issuance to players," the Bernstein analysts noted.

"Although it is likely to continue to show strength over the next few months (or even the next two quarters in 2018), the VIP model is likely to face structural headwinds [...] from instituted cooling measures on Chinese real estate, a credit tightening in China, an increasing regulatory environment in Macau and continued Chinese government focus on capital outflows in China," their report continued.

The analysts also warned that, "to some extent", the premium mass segment might also be affected by the politico-economic situation in mainland China.

The VIP segment grew approximately 26 percent in 2017, while total gross gaming revenue increased by 19.1 percent year-on-year to MOP265 billion, the highest posting since 2014. This implies that the VIP segment remained the driving force behind last year's gaming recovery.

Though December 2017 registered a slight weakening in the segment, Bernstein expects VIP growth to hold steady in the first

few months of 2018 and for the slowdown to become more noticeable as the year progresses.

All in all, the analysts predict full-year VIP growth to slow to around 8 percent, while mass-market revenue may record 11 percent growth as its contribution to gross gaming revenue is on the rise.

"While growth will decelerate from 2017, 2018 will still show respectable growth (driven more by mass)," the report said.

Meanwhile, a contrary report was released by Morgan Stanley indicating that the VIP segment might perform stronger than most analysts are anticipating. The firm said that it expects VIP gaming to grow 20 percent in 2018 and mass-market growth to trail with a 12 percent rise. **DB**

Tourist Price Index increased 0.77 percent

INFORMATION from the Statistics and Census Service indicated that the average Tourist Price Index (TPI) for 2017 rose by 0.77 percent year-on-year to 131.87; representing a fourth quarter year-on-year increase of 5.59 percent.

Following two consecutive years of decline, the increase can be primarily attributed to rising prices for hotel accommodation and restaurant services, as well as local Chinese food products.

The price indexes of restaurant services and accommodation grew by 5.11 percent and 4.97 percent respectively year-on-year, whereas those of clothing and footwear and transport and communications fell by 7.16 percent and 6.52 percent respectively.

Among the various sections of goods and services, the price index of accommodation (+20.84 percent) recorded notable growth, followed by indexes of transport and

communications (+6.83 percent) and restaurant services (+4.09 percent); meanwhile, the price index of clothing and footwear (-4.84 percent) registered a decrease.

In comparison with the previous quarter, TPI for the fourth quarter of 2017 increased by 9.95 percent. The price index of accommodation surged by 40.84 percent due to higher hotel room rates during the National Day holidays, the Macao Grand Prix and Christmas holiday.

Moreover, new arrivals of winter clothing and the elevated prices of airfares drove up the price indexes of clothing and footwear, and transport and communications; by 6.9 percent and 3.99 percent respectively quarter-to-quarter.

The price indexes of miscellaneous goods as well as medicine and personal goods decreased by 0.67 percent and 0.49 percent respectively.

HOUSING

JLL calls on government to implement 'property ladder' for home upgrading

Lynzy Valles

REAL estate firm JLL Macau is calling on the government to focus on social housing, and to take economic housing as supplementary when formulating public housing policies rather than imposing new restrictions or measures.

The firm urged the government to set up a 'property ladder' that provides opportunities for home upgrading – for example, moving from the public housing segment to private housing.

Managing director of the firm, Gregory Ku, suggested that the government should work on solving the region's long-term housing problems using sustainable development principles by re-examining the existing ratio between social and economic housing.

"Given that Macau doesn't have land supply or good planning for future land supply, the total supply for social housing or public housing, which is 49,000 – [should be] well planned," Ku said, during a press conference held by the firm.

The managing director proposed that these housing units therefore should be available as leasing units in different categories



rather than simply putting them up for sale to applicants.

"Once sold, you don't have new supply [to replace it]. But if you lease it, once the occupants have income and improved housing income, they can go out into the private market to buy," he added.

JLL believes these measures would mean that housing is more adaptable, which is especially important given the small size of the region.

Under the current system, owners of public houses must own the unit for 16 years before being able to sell it to the market.

The real estate and consultancy firm considered this timeframe too long, adding that owners should release their property back to the public housing pool once they vacate their premises, rather than sell it to the private market.

Meanwhile Jeff Wong, head of residential at JLL Macau reiterated the importance of addressing the issue of housing shortage through setting up regular land sales programs in accordance with other measures.

The executive believes that one of the reasons why property pri-

ces continue to surge is due to the "rational expectations" of the public. To evidence this claim, he cited the public's awareness of the land shortage, which causes property price growth in the future.

The total residential sales transaction volume in Macau continued to grow in the second half of 2017, while for the leasing market, rental values for high-end and mass-to-medium residential properties grew by 8.4 percent and 8.1 percent year-on-year respectively.

Wong recalled that the mort-

gage ratio tightening measures targeting non-first-time homebuyers, which the government implemented in the first half of 2017, have not proved sufficiently effective.

Jeff Wong says that public perception of Macau's land shortage is leading to soaring property prices

Wong also mentioned the unsuccessful initiative proposed by the government at the end of 2016; the government announced it would put some sites up for sale by means of public auction in 2017 but this did not eventuate.

"To address the problem of housing shortage, perhaps the government can consider setting up regular land sales programs, promoting urban renewal and refining the procedures and timeline requirements on construction work," he said.

YESTERDAY, the Law of Employment Agency Activity was passed with 30 votes in favor at the Legislative Assembly. The law comes in response to the worries of many lawmakers over tourists independently seeking jobs when they are traveling in Macau.

The law proposed that an employment agency should charge a maximum of 50 percent of the monthly salary of a job seeker (later referred to as an employee) as a service fee. The service fee should be collected within 60 days from the date that the employee commences work.

The law also bans employment agencies from providing services to those who live in Macau but are not Macau residents, further proposing fines against agencies that engage in illegal conduct.

Many lawmakers, including Leong Sun Iok, Lei Cheng I, and Song Pek Kei, want the government to explain how it can prevent tourists from applying for

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Employment agency law approved amid concerns over domestic helpers, tourists

a job when they are traveling in Macau.

Song suggested that the government should merge this law with other laws concerning non-local employees.

Chan Iek Lap proposed that employment agencies should charge fees to workers earlier, not 60 days after they start working as is currently being done.

Equally, Ho Ion Sang thinks that the law "cannot solve the problem thoroughly." In his opinion, the law will only reduce the number of possibilities for non-local employees to change jobs; it will not diminish the recruitment of non-locals. He also wondered whether domestic helpers will be hired through employment agencies.

The Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, admitted that this law will not ensure all situations can be prevented or solved.

"Problems cannot be stopped thoroughly through this law, nor can they be solved entirely," declared Leong.

The Deputy Director of the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL), Ng Wai Han, said "[we] have considered the situation regarding tourists who seek jobs in Macau but that is an issue that involves the amendment of non-local workers employment laws, and it will only be considered when such an amendment is done."

The law bans employment agencies from charging customers for blue card renewals and also bans these agencies from

charging any fees to employees.

Ip Sio Kai thinks that employment agencies cannot survive without charging for blue card renewal services.

Kou Hoi In believes that currently, employers can only hire employees by selecting them from online profiles. He further questioned that if candidates cannot even afford to visit Macau, surely they would not be able to attend an interview.

In light of Kou's opinion, local employers are unable to hire an employee under the aforementioned situation.

Angela Leong and Mak Soi Kun raised questions concerning domestic helpers, with the former lawmaker deeming this law unable to solve several



pressing issues.

Secretary Leong, when replying to the lawmakers, reaffirmed that matters related to the recruiting of non-local employees are regulated by other laws, but that the gover-

ment will listen to the lawmakers' opinions when it comes to law amendments.

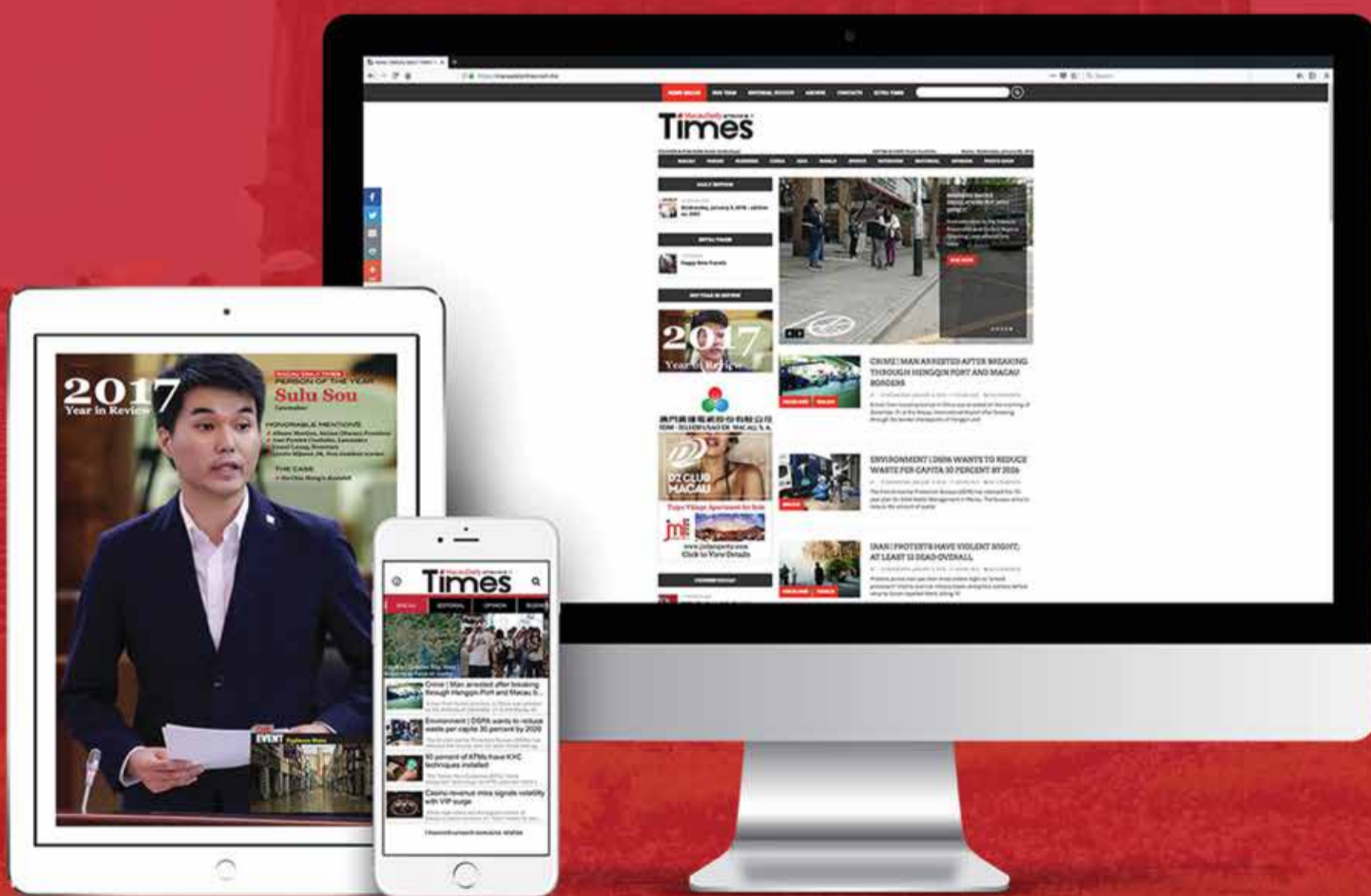
According to DSAL deputy director Ng Wai Han, Macau currently has 146 employment agencies. **JZ**

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“ THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’ ”

THE trial of former Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) vice president Chan Chak Seng will be reopened and repeated as the Court of Second Instance (TSI) have ruled in favor of an appeal. The appeal was requested by the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) and is in relation to the previous decision of the Court of First Instance (TJB). TJB judged Chan Chak Seng to be innocent of the charges of abuse of power and breach of confidentiality in the case that involved the public tender for maintenance services at Macau's Central Library. In the ruling of the TSI it is noted that the re-trial will be judged by a collective court. The repetition of the trial is, as mentioned in the appeal by the MP, brought on by "notorious mistakes" in analyzing the case evidence as well as errors in the interpretation of the law.

To recall, the case goes back to 2008 when Chan was accused of helping a direct family member to obtain a contract for several maintenance services in the public venue, making use of his privileged position to share classified information on the tender.

Cultural Affairs VP to be retried, TSI orders



▲ The original trial involved errors in the interpretation of the law

The IC headquarters at Tap Seac Square

The case reached the courts in 2016 but at that time the TJB ruled for the acquittal of the defendant from most of the accusations, convicting

him only on two charges of false declarations of his assets report in 2008 and 2010. He was told to pay a fine amounting to MOP420,000.

In the statement from the TSI summarizing their ruling, it was highlighted that the TJB "performed mistakes" in their assessment. **RM**

Escola Oficial Zheng Guan Ying opens new campus

The Escola Oficial Zheng Guan Ying opened its new campus this month at the Rua Marginal Do Canal Das Hortas/ Terminal. The expanded campus now occupies an area of 2,417 square meters. School director Wu Kit said the new campus will conduct classes in Portuguese and Chinese, with 30 students selected for enrolment to date. The director described the outcome of the opening as "satisfactory." Established in July 2011, the Zheng Guan Ying school currently has 12 grades and 19 classes, with a total of approximately 360 students.

UM proposes medical research, teaching cooperation

The University of Macau (UM), the University of Oxford's Saint Anne's College and Center for Personalised Medicine, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Dr Stanley Ho Medical Development Foundation recently held a seminar where representatives of the organizations discussed opportunities for collaboration in teaching, research and the training of professionals. According to a statement from the UM, the university's council chair, Lam Kam Seng, shared the institution's educational philosophy with the participants. He said that information technology and medical research were advancing rapidly and so it was important to push Macau towards international standards in this area, as well as promote collaboration between different education institutions.

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Casino company: Boat that caught fire had no past problems

A casino company said yesterday it never had a problem with the shuttle boat that burst into flames off Florida's Gulf Coast, leading to the death of a female passenger.

Tropical Breeze Casino spokeswoman Beth Fifer said the company does not know what caused Sunday's huge blaze, which gutted the 12-year-old shuttle boat and forced about 50 passengers to jump into chilly waters off Port Richey.

"We are deeply saddened for the loss of our passenger, the 14 injured and anyone else who was affected by this tragedy," Fifer said.

Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point spokesman Kurt Conover said that the passenger arrived at the hospital's emergency room at 10 p.m. Sunday and died shortly afterward. He said she had apparently gone home after the fire but became ill.

The Tampa Bay Times reports that the Pinellas-Pasco Medical Examiner's Office identified the

AP PHOTO



woman as Carrie Dempsey, 42, of Lutz, Florida. Her cause of death has not been released.

Conover said eight other passengers were treated at the hospital and released.

Authorities originally said no

injuries were life-threatening.

Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Michael De Nyse said investigators will determine the cause of the fire and examine the history of the boat and Tropical Breeze Casino.

Helicopter video taken by WTSP-TV early Monday shows the boat was burned down to its hull, with only an American flag on its bow uncharred.

The shuttle boat regularly carried people back and forth from

the Tropical Breeze's offshore casino, about a 45-minute ride into international waters. There, passengers would play games such as black jack, which is illegal at non-Indian casinos in Florida, and roulette, which is illegal statewide.

The shuttle boat caught fire about 4 p.m. Sunday, quickly engulfing the boat close to shore near residential neighborhoods. Officials said the boat was headed out to the casino ship at the time.

Port Richey Police Chief Gerard DeCanio said the shuttle boat experienced engine problems after leaving the dock at Port Richey, a suburban community about 35 miles (55 kilometers) northwest of Tampa. But as the vessel turned back, flames kicked up and people began jumping overboard into shallow water, according to witness accounts.

Larry Santangelo, 57, said he had just driven into his neighborhood when he saw smoke and fire and thought a house — possibly his own — was ablaze. But then he realized it was the boat just about 90 meters offshore.

He told the Tampa Bay Times that he then saw people wandering about confused, wet and cold, after they reached land. One woman collapsed upon reaching shore and vomited, he said. AP

PROPERTY

Hong Kong way ahead of Singapore, topping Asia expat rental List

HONG Kong retained its title as Asia's most expensive rental city for expatriates, while Singapore fell further down the ranking due to a slower economy and fewer relocations, according to consultancy firm

ECA International. Hong Kong sat atop the list with an average price of USD10,461 per month for an unfurnished, three-bedroom apartment in expatriate neighborhoods, according to results from ECA's

September 2017 accommodation survey. Tokyo held onto the No. 2 spot. Singapore slipped one spot to eighth.

"This is due to a slowing of economic growth and a net reduction in inbound assignments, ex-

acerbating the surplus of higher-end properties on the market that would normally attract expatriates," Lee Quane, a regional director for Asia with ECA, said yesterday in a release on Singapore's cost decline. "This oversupply has reduced average rent levels in Singapore for the past three years."

Rents in many cities in China were on the rise. Shanghai was the most expensive city in the country, and Asia's third most-costly, according to ECA. Bloomberg

	2018 Ranking	2017 Ranking
Hong Kong	1	1
Tokyo	2	2
Shanghai	3	5
Seoul	4	3
Mumbai	5	8
Beijing	6	6
Yokohama	7	4
Singapore	8	7
Osaka	9	N/A
Metro-Manila	10	10

Source: ECA International Bloomberg

Asia's most expensive rentals

corporate bits

SHERATON ANNOUNCES CNY FESTIVE MENU



Sheraton Grand Macao Hotel, Cotai Central is presenting a variety of dining offers to celebrate the Year of the Dog, where guests can take their pick from traditional Chinese New Year dishes to family-style feasts.

This Lunar New Year, Xin at Sheraton is adding a number of hot dishes that can be ordered as part of its traditional hot pot buffet, for both lunch and dinner. Highlights include "Abundance," (braised pig feet and lotus root

with sea moss), "Perennial Joy" (Wok-fried prawns with Sichuan-style) and "Happiness" (Braised lamb shank with bamboo shoots and black mushroom).

Meanwhile Feast will offer an array of dishes from fresh seafood and sushi to pizzas and a live waffle station.

Between February 15 to 20, guests can celebrate Chinese New Year throughout the day with Palms' "Prosperous Afternoon Tea Set."

The menu features all-time favorites, such as Parma ham rosettes, pear and gorgonzola chutney; hokkaido scallop, black pudding and apple jam; and Mini Breton tartlets with almond cream and apricots.

MERCEDES-BENZ DELIVERS 5,400 NEW VEHICLES IN 2017 TO HONG KONG, MACAU



Mercedes-Benz recorded its most successful year in 2017, the company announced in a statement, increasing its unit sales by 9.9 percent to almost 2.29 million vehicles.

The car division's growth last year was driven in particular by the new E-Class Saloon and Estate and the SUVs.

As a result of its success in all three core regions —

Europe, Asia-Pacific and NAFTA — Mercedes-Benz was the best-selling premium brand in the automobile industry for the second consecutive year.

In Hong Kong, Mercedes-Benz delivered more than 5,400 new vehicles in Hong Kong and Macau.

In its first full year, the new E-Class became the best-selling model in its class with more than 1,390 units sold.

SUV stayed strong in 2017. With more than 1,000 units sold, the new GLC has achieved more than 23 percent increment in sales.

To celebrate its 50th anniversary, AMG has completed its GT family with the GT C Roadster and GT R.

REPLICANTS

Lifelike robots made in Hong Kong meant to win over humans

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

DAVID Hanson envisions a future in which AI-powered robots evolve to become “super-intelligent genius machines” that might help solve some of mankind’s most challenging problems.

If only it were as simple as that.

The Texas-born former sculptor at Walt Disney Imagineering and his Hong Kong-based startup Hanson Robotics are combining artificial intelligence with southern China’s expertise in toy design, electronics and manufacturing to craft humanoid “social robots” with faces designed to be lifelike and appealing enough to win trust from humans who interact with them.

Hanson, 49, is perhaps best known as the creator of Sophia, a talk show-going robot partly modeled on Audrey Hepburn that he calls his “masterpiece.”

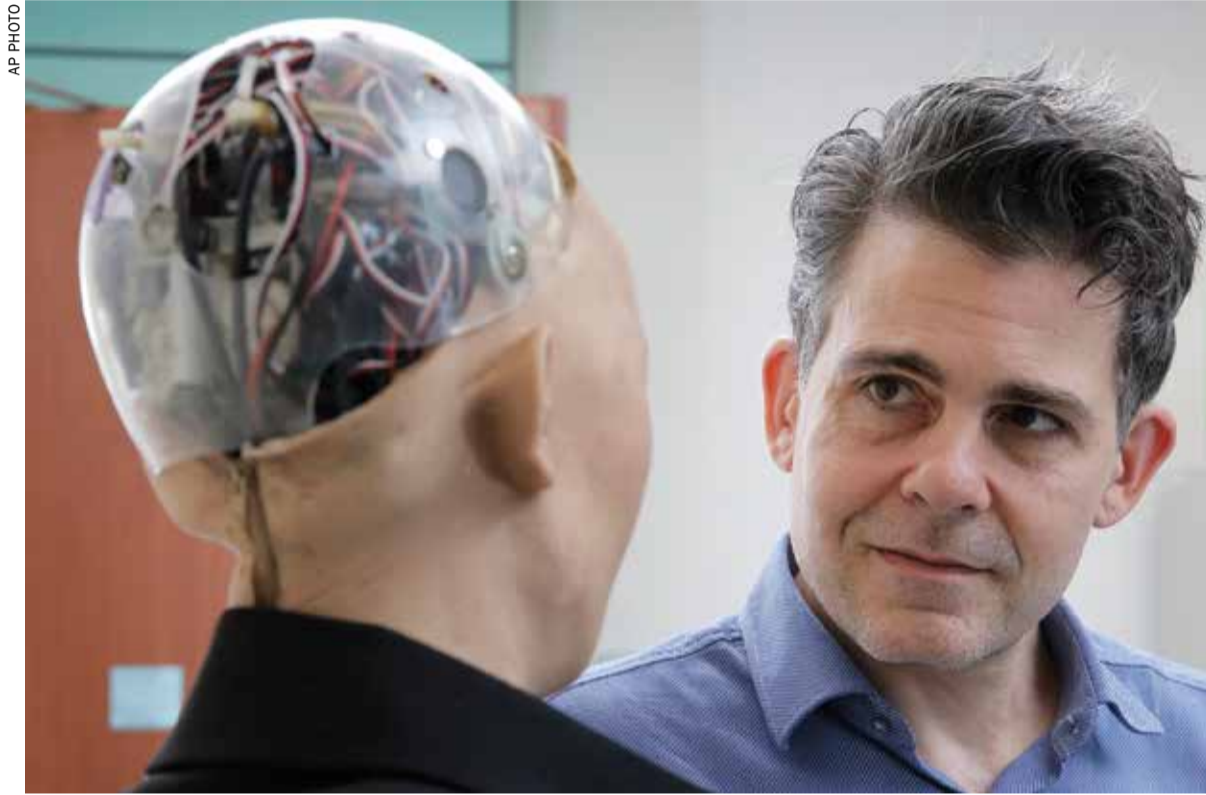
Akin to an animated mannequin, she seems as much a product of his background in theatrics as an example of advanced technology.

“You’re talking to me right now, which is very ‘Blade Runner,’ no?” Sophia said during a recent visit to Hanson Robotics’ headquarters in a suburban Hong Kong science park, its home since soon after Hanson moved to the city in 2013.

“Do you ever look around you and think, ‘Wow I’m living in a real world science fiction novel?’” she asked. “Is it weird to be talking to a robot right now?”

Hanson Robotics has made about a dozen copies of Sophia, who like any human is a work in progress. A multinational team of scientists and engineers are fine tuning her appearance and the algorithms that enable her to smile, blink and refine her understanding and communication.

Sophia has moving 3D-printed arms and, with the help of a South Korean robotics com-



David Hanson, the founder of Hanson Robotics, talks with his company's flagship robot Sophia, a lifelike robot powered by artificial intelligence in Hong Kong

pany, she’s now going mobile. Shuffling slowly on boxy black legs, Sophia made her walking debut in Las Vegas last week at the CES electronics trade show.

Her skin is made of a nanotech material that Hanson invented and dubbed “Frubber,” short for flesh-rubber, that has a flesh-like bouncy texture. Cameras in her eyes and a 3D sensor in her chest help her to “see,” while the processor that serves as her brain combines facial and speech recognition, natural language processing, speech synthesis and a motion control system.

Sophia seems friendly and engaging, despite the unnatural pauses and cadence in her speech. Her predecessors include an Albert Einstein, complete with bushy mustache and white thatch of hair, a robot named Alice whose grimaces run a gamut of emotions and one eerily resembling the late sci-fi author Philip K. Dick, which won an award from the American Association

of Artificial Intelligence. They variously leer, blink, smile and even crack jokes.

Disney’s venture capital arm is an investor in Hanson, which is building a robot based on one of the entertainment giant’s characters.

■ Hanson Robotics has made about a dozen copies of Sophia, who like any human is a work in progress

An artist and robotics scientist, Hanson worked on animatronic theme park shows, sculpting props and characters for Disney attractions like Pooh’s Hunny

Hunt and Mermaid Lagoon. He studied film, animation and video, eventually earning a doctorate in interactive arts and technology from the University of Texas at Dallas.

Hanson says he makes his robots as human-like as possible to help alleviate fears about robots, artificial intelligence and automation.

That runs contrary to a tendency in the industry to use cute robo-pets or overtly machine-like robots like Star Wars’ R2-D2 to avoid the “uncanny valley” problem with human likenesses such as wax models and robots that many people find a bit creepy.

Some experts see Sophia as mainly a clever marketing gimmick.

“It’s a good advertising tool, whatever that company produces as a business plan,” said Roland Chin, chair professor of computer science at Hong Kong Baptist University.

Global market revenue for service robotics is forecast to grow from USD3.7 billion in 2015 to \$15 billion in 2020, according to IHS Markit. That includes both professional and domestic machines like warehouse automations, smart vacuums and fuzzy companion robots.

Hanson Robotics is privately owned and has a consumer-oriented business that sells thousands of shoebox-sized \$200 Professor Einstein educational robots a year. Chief Marketing Officer Jeanne Lim says the company is generating revenue but won’t say whether it’s profitable.

For now, artificial intelligence is best at doing specific tasks. It’s another thing entirely for machines to learn a new ability, generalize that knowledge and apply it in different contexts, partly because of the massive amount of computing power needed to process such information so quickly.

“We’re really very far from the kind of AI and robotics that you see in movies like ‘Blade Runner,’” said Pascale Fung, an engineering professor at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. “Sorry to disappoint you.”

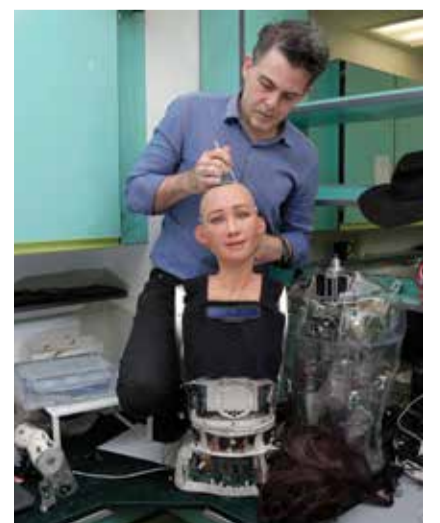
Unlike toddlers, who use all five senses to learn quickly, machines generally can handle only one type of input at a time, she noted.

While Sophia’s repartee can be entertaining, she’s easily thrown off topic and her replies, based on open-source software, sometimes miss the mark.

Hanson and other members of his team like Chief Scientist Ben Goertzel have set their sights on a time when the computer chips, processing capacity and other technologies needed for artificial general intelligence could enable Sophia and other robots to fill a variety of uses, such as helping with therapy for autistic children, caring for seniors, and providing customer services.

As for tackling challenging world problems, that’s a ways off, Hanson acknowledges.

“There’s a certain expression of genius to be able to get up and cross the room and pour yourself a cup of coffee, and robots and AI have not achieved that level of intelligence reliably,” Hanson said. **AP**





Oil spill from sunken tanker is expanding in East China Sea

SEVERAL oil slicks have been found in waters around a sunken Iranian tanker ship in the East China Sea in a spill that is growing and whose potentially major impact on the marine environment is still being assessed.

The State Oceanic Administration said late Monday oil slicks around the site of the sunken

ship were much larger than the previous day. The Sanchi sunk on Sunday after burning for more than a week following a collision with a Hong Kong-registered tanker. All 32 members of its crew — 30 Iranians and two Bangladeshis — are believed dead.

The State Oceanic Administration said a 15-kilometer-long oil slick was found southwest of the

site of the sinking and another slick stretched 18 kilometers to the east. The site is about 530 kilometers from Shanghai and 310 kilometers from Naha, Japan.

The administration said two ships and an aircraft were on the scene monitoring developments, but described no further action being taken at present.

The ship was carrying natural

gas condensate, which continued to burn on the ocean surface. Condensate is highly toxic but readily evaporates or burns off in a fire. If trapped underwater, however, it could seriously harm the marine environment.

The cause of the Jan. 6 collision between the Sanchi and the Chinese freighter CF Crystal, which was carrying grain, remains un-

clear. The ship's voice data recorder was reportedly recovered Saturday, possibly helping reveal how the collision and resulting fire occurred.

Authorities need to first assess the amount of condensate leaked and the size of the area contaminated, said Paul Johnston, of Greenpeace International's Science Unit at Britain's University of Exeter.

"Surveillance and assessment by authorities is critical to understand the extent of the potential environmental impact and for deciding on the appropriate next steps in terms of salvage and recovery of the potential condensate spill," Johnston wrote in a Greenpeace news release.

Because most of the condensate would have burned off or evaporated, the disaster will not result in the sort of thick, black oil slick typical of crude oil spills, Greenpeace said.

However, it will be much more difficult to separate from water because the condensate is so light, colorless and partially soluble. "A major concern is that, now that the tanker has sunk, any condensate which did not yet burn off could continue to leak underwater, disperse and break down quite quickly, significantly complicating clean-up operations," Greenpeace said.

Authorities and environmentalists have said it's too early to know the impact on fisheries, although Greenpeace said the area is spawning ground for bluefin leatherjacket and swordtip squid and the winter habitat of blue crab, chub mackerel and yellow croaker. **AP**

CHINESE automaker GAC Motor will scrap the brand name it uses in China when it enters the U.S. market next year because it could be confused with President Donald Trump's surname.

For the past eight years, GAC has sold cars and SUVs under the brand Trumpchi in its home market, but is now researching new names before the company's expected U.S. debut in the fourth quarter of 2019.

"We want to provide the best service for American customers, so we want to not be closely linked with politics," Wang Qiuqing, president of GAC Engineering Institute China, said through an interpreter in an interview at the Detroit auto show. "This is the reason we want to rename the brand."

GAC picked the Chinese name Trumpchi in 2010, well before Trump was elected. The similarity to Trump is just a coincidence, Wang added. GAC will continue to use Trumpchi

Guangzhou automaker to scrap Trump-sounding brand for US market

in China, where the word means legend and good fortune.

GAC's first vehicle in the U.S. will be the GS8, a loaded-out full-size SUV that will cost about USD35,000. Two more vehicles are being researched for U.S. sales, but have not been selected yet.

The company showed seven different of its models on a video and unveiled two more at the Detroit show. One is a gull-wing compact electric SUV called the Enverge, which is still in the concept phase. The automaker says it will go over 370 miles on a single charge. Also unveiled was the GA4 midsize sedan that will go on sale in China later this month.

The GS8 would be comparable to a big luxury SUV, many of which go for more than \$60,000. Wang said he didn't know what

the brand's lowest-price vehicle would be in the U.S. GAC sold just over 500,000 automobiles in China last year, up 37 percent from 2016.

The company says it is negotiating with partner Fiat Chrysler about possible distribution of vehicles. Wang said GAC is the top-ranked domestic brand for initial quality in China in J.D.Power and Associates surveys, and it ranks fourth or fifth when joint ventures with foreign automakers are included. He says the company's vehicle quality will be ready for U.S. buyers, and it will work with U.S. partners to meet stricter U.S. safety standards.

Chinese automakers are advanced and have expertise in mass production but the American market may not be ready yet to accept GAC, said Jake Fisher,



GAC unveils the Enverge concept vehicle during the North American International Auto Show

Consumer Reports' director of auto testing.

Other Chinese companies showed vehicles at the CES gadget show in Las Vegas last week such as Byton, which unveiled an electric prototype that's like a Tesla Model X SUV but costs thousands less, Fisher said.

"There will be Chinese automakers at the top of the market and at the bottom of the market, and it will be very interesting to see how they are received," he said.

GAC already has a research center in Silicon Valley and is working on another one in Detroit, as well as a

Los Angeles design center. Initially it will import vehicles from China but depending on sales, plans to build a factory in the U.S.

GAC, which stands for Guangzhou Automobile Group Co., also plans to enter other global markets after the U.S., including Europe. **AP**

Bangladesh, Myanmar aim to finish Rohingya return in 2 years

BANGLADESH and Myanmar have agreed that they will try to complete the repatriation of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslim refugees who fled from violence in Myanmar within two years, Bangladesh's Foreign Ministry said yesterday.

The ministry said a joint working group from the two countries finalized an agreement on Monday on the physical arrangements for the repatriation of the ethnic Rohingya. It said they agreed that the process "would be completed preferably within two years from the commencement of repatriation."

Myanmar and Bangladesh signed an initial agreement in November to repatriate the Rohingya, and the 30-member working group was set up last month to oversee the process. Many have questions whether Rohingya would return to Myanmar under the current circumstances, and whether Myanmar would accept them and allow them to live freely.

Under the November agreement, Rohingya will need to provide evidence of their residency in Myanmar in order to return — something many say they do not have.

More than 650,000 ethnic Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh since August, when Myanmar's military launched a brutal crackdown in Rakhine state after a militant group attacked police posts. Myanmar's

AP PHOTO



army described it as "clearance operations" against terrorists, but the United Nations and the U.S. have called it "ethnic cleansing."

Despite having lived in predominantly Buddhist Myanmar for generations, Rohingya Muslims have been denied citizenship, freedom of movement and access to basic social rights. They are generally called "Bengalis," a reference to the belief that they

migrated illegally from Bangladesh.

Myanmar officials said the length of the repatriation will depend on how quickly Bangladesh can provide documentation of refugees' previous residency and how fast applications are submitted.

"Even though we are talking about a two-year process, it totally depends on how the two countries cooperate," Myanmar

government spokesman Zaw Htay said. "Bangladesh authorities also need to proceed with the paperwork and documents for refugees and send it to us fast."

Since the November agreement, Myanmar's civilian government led by Aung San Suu Kyi has pledged to take measures to halt the outflow of Rohingya to Bangladesh and restore normalcy in the Rakhine region.

Myanmar officials plan to start the repatriation process next Tuesday. Zaw Htay said at least 500 Hindus and 500 Muslims will be in the first group to return.

State-run media in Myanmar reported Monday that a camp is being prepared that can accommodate about 30,000 people in 625 buildings, and that at least 100 buildings will be completed by the end of the month. It would be the first camp built in the repatriation process.

The international community and rights groups have stressed that the Myanmar government must guarantee the "safe and voluntary" return of the refugees, and urged that international organizations be allowed to participate.

However, the U.N. refugee agency said yesterday that it has not been invited to take part or given full access to the areas where refugees are to return.

"UNCHR and our partners need urgent, unhindered access in Rakhine state, in order to assess the situation and provide support to those in need," UNCHR spokesman Andrej Mahecic said in Geneva.

U.S.-based Human Rights Watch said the discussions between Myanmar and Bangladesh failed to include any understanding of what the Rohingya want.

"Where are considerations for protection of the Rohingya from Myanmar security forces who months ago were raping and killing them?" said Phil Robertson, deputy director of the group's Asia Division. "Why are basic issues like citizenship, freedom of movement, and livelihoods not discussed now so refugees can make informed choices?" AP

North Korea scoffs at Trump's 'nuclear button' tweet

Eric Talmadge, Tokyo

NORTH Korea's state-run media say U.S. President Donald Trump's tweet about having a bigger nuclear button than leader Kim Jong Un's is the "spasm of a lunatic."

Rodong Sinmun, the ruling party newspaper, lashed out at Trump in a commentary yesterday that took issue with the U.S. commander in chief's Jan. 3 tweet that "I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my Button works!"

A summary of the commentary by North Korea's official news agency described the tweet as "the spasm of a lunatic."

"The spasm of Trump in the new year reflects the desperate mental state of a loser who failed to che-

AP PHOTO



ck the vigorous advance of the army and people of the DPRK," the Rodong Sinmun commentary said, using the acronym for North Korea's formal name, the Democratic People's

Republic of Korea. "He is making a bluff only to be diagnosed as a psychopath."

That tone is not uncommon for the North Korean media.

But Trump's willingness to respond in kind — he has repeatedly called Kim "little rocket man" — is rare for an American leader and has led to several fiery verbal barrages since he took

office nearly a year ago.

Trump has more recently suggested he might be willing to meet with Kim, and reportedly told the Wall Street Journal the two "probably have a very good relationship."

If so, however, the North's propaganda machine doesn't seem to have gotten the memo.

Trump's controversial "nuclear button" tweet was in response to Kim's New Year's Day warning that North Korea's nuclear arsenal is a real threat and that he has a nuclear launch button on his desk at all times.

Rodong Sinmun also recently ran a story about the book "Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House," which casts the president as a leader who doesn't understand the weight of his office and whose com-

petence is questioned by aides. Trump and other White House officials have blasted it as inaccurate.

The title of the book comes from a Trump quote about North Korea.

Last summer, Trump threatened North Korea with "fire and fury like the world has never seen" in an exchange of taunts with the North, which claimed it was examining plans to launch missiles toward the American territory of Guam.

The book's sales reflect "rapidly surging anti-Trump sentiments in the international community," the article said. "The anti-Trump book is sweeping all over the world so Trump is being massively humiliated worldwide."

The book's popularity "foretells Trump's political demise," it concluded. AP



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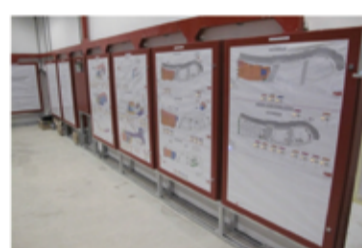


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USA

Seized ivory probed for clues that could help save elephants

Mary Esch, Albany (N.Y.)

SCIENTISTS are using information gleaned from both illegal ivory art and elephant dung to provide clues that could help save the lives of pachyderms that are being slaughtered for their tusks in Africa.

The wildlife detective work involves cutting up seized artifacts including bangle bracelets and statues of Chinese deities and subjecting them to carbon dating to determine when the elephants were killed. DNA from the ivory art is then compared to a DNA database derived from elephant dung to pinpoint where they lived.

What scientists learn may not put a particular poacher in jail, but will tell the story of where and when an elephant died on an African savannah so its tusk could be carved in Asia to make a goddess statue priced at USD72,000 in a Manhattan antique shop.

"It's going to be really helpful not only for scientific purposes, but also to be able to tell people about the individual lives of elephants that ended up as artwork on our streets," said Wendy Hapgood, director of the Wild Tomorrow Fund, which supports African wildlife preserves, anti-poaching enforcement and efforts to shut down the ivory trade.

The group cut chips from 21 statues, bracelets and mounted tusks that were among \$4.5 million in illegal ivory artifacts seized from a Manhattan antiques shop and dramatically des-



trayed in a rock crusher in Central Park last August. The chips will be analyzed by scientists at Columbia University and the University of Washington.

Previous work by the researchers has provided valuable information to focus poaching law enforcement in Africa and prosecute ivory traffickers elsewhere.

Once numbered at more than a million, the population of African elephants fell 30 percent between 2007 and 2014, to about 350,000, according to the Great Elephant Census funded by wildlife organizations. The decline, at a rate of 8 percent per year, is attributed mainly to poaching for ivory.

The sale of ivory across international boundaries has been ban-

ned since 1990. Last year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service instituted a near-total ban on the domestic commercial ivory trade and barred sales across state lines.

Hapgood and colleague John Steward were in Albany recently to saw samples from two massive tusks that were spared the Central Park crusher and locked in a state Department of Environmental Conservation warehouse. The chips will be sent to Columbia University geochemist Kevin Uno, whose radioisotope analysis measures carbon-14 deposited by atomic bomb tests to date the ivory and determine when the elephant died.

Samples were also sent to biologist Sam Wasser, of the Univer-

sity of Washington, who extracted DNA from elephant dung all over Africa in the 1990s to map elephant genetics across the continent. Now he compares DNA from seized ivory to the map to determine where it came from.

Uno and colleagues published a study in 2016 looking at 230 elephant tusks from 15 seizures of shipping containers being illegally transmitted out of Africa. The goal was to determine whether the ivory was from older stockpiles held by African national governments or from elephants recently poached.

"We found 90 percent of the ivory was coming from elephants that died within three years of the seizure date," Uno said.

In a study published in 2015,

Wasser's DNA studies on large seizures of ivory found shipments tended to come from a few poaching hotspots. Identification of areas of Tanzania and Zambia as hotspots helped persuade a United Nations agency to deny requests from those countries to sell their ivory stockpiles.

Once more than a million, the population of African elephants fell 30 percent between 2007 and 2014, to 350,000

The DNA and radioisotope analysis can also help prosecute traffickers. In 2013, Wasser's lab helped convict an ivory trafficking kingpin in Togo by providing evidence that his ivory came from Cameroon and Gabon, two of the hardest hit countries in the elephant slaughter. Radioisotope analysis by Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California showed the ivory came from elephants killed as recently as 2010, not before the 1989 ban as the trafficker claimed.

"The big study we did was on shipments leaving Africa," Uno said. "Now we're coming at it from the retail side, so if they seize pieces from a shop, how much of it is recent and how much is old."

The ultimate goals are to help law enforcement and policymakers shut down the ivory market and raise public awareness of the plight of pachyderms.

"The extension of that is to slow the killing of elephants and prevent their extinction," Uno said. **AP**

USA

Parents of 13 locked-up kids held on hefty bail

THE parents of 13 children found locked up in a California home each were being held on USD9 million bail and could face charges including torture and child endangerment.

It wasn't immediately known if they had attorneys.

Yesterday [Macau time], authorities say a 17-year-old girl called police after escaping from her family's home where her 12 brothers and sisters were being held captive.

The Riverside County Sheriff's Department says several children were

shackled to their beds with chains and padlocks. Some were so malnourished that officers at first believed all were children even though seven are adults.

The siblings range in age from 2 to 29.

State records show the home has the same address as Sandcastle Day School, where one of the suspects, David Turpin, is listed as principal. In the 2016-17 school year it had an enrollment of six.

Authorities say an emaciated teenager led deputies to a California home

where her 12 brothers and sisters were locked up in filthy conditions, with some of them malnourished and chained to beds.

Riverside County deputies arrested the parents at the home in Perris east of Los Angeles.

Officials say the girl who managed to escape and call 911 was 17 but appeared to be about 10 because of her poor condition.

Deputies assumed the 12 other children were juveniles but seven were actually adults, ranging from 18 to 29.



Suspects David Allen Turpin (above left) and Louise Anna Turpin

A press release says 57-year old David Allen Turpin and 49-year old Loui-

se Anna Turpin could face charges including torture and child endangerment.

It wasn't immediately known if they have attorneys. **MDT/AP**

CHILE

Pope begs forgiveness for 'irreparable harm' from sex abuse

Peter Prengaman & Nicole Winfield

POPE Francis begged for forgiveness yesterday for the "irreparable damage" done to children who were raped and molested by priests, opening his visit to Chile by diving head-first into a scandal that has greatly hurt the Catholic Church's credibility here and cast a cloud over his visit.

Francis also faced controversy on another front: Overnight three more Catholic churches were torched, two in the southern Araucania region where Francis will visit today [Macau time] to meet with Chile's indigenous peoples. While not causing any injuries, the nine church firebombings in the past few days have marked an unprecedented level of protest against history's first Latin American pope on his home turf.

In Santiago, though, tens of thousands of jubilant Chileans turned out in droves for his first public Mass, a massive gathering in the capital's O'Higgins Park



where St. John Paul celebrated Mass three decades ago. Before the service began, Francis took a long, looping ride in his popemobile through the grounds to greet well-wishers, some of whom had camped out overnight to secure a spot.

In his first event of the day, Francis met privately with Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and addressed lawmakers, judges and other authorities at La Moneda palace. They interrupted him with applause when he

said he felt "bound to express my pain and shame" that some of Chile's pastors had sexually abused children in their care.

"I am one with my brother bishops, for it is right to ask forgiveness and make every effort to support the victims, even as we commit ourselves to ensuring that such things do not happen again," he said.

Francis didn't refer by name to Chile's most notorious pedophile priest, the Rev. Fernando Karadima, who was sanctioned

in 2011 by the Vatican to a lifetime of "penance and prayer" for sexually molesting minors. Nor did he refer to the fact that the emeritus archbishop of Santiago, a top papal adviser, has acknowledged he knew of complaints against Karadima but didn't remove him from ministry.

Overnight three more Catholic churches were torched

Karadima had been a politically connected, charismatic and powerful priest who ministered to a wealthy Santiago community and produced dozens of priestly vocations and five bishops. Victims went public with their accusations in 2010, after complaining for years to church authorities that Karadima would kiss and fondle them when they were teenagers.

While the scandal rocked the church, many Chileans are still furious over Francis' subsequent decision, in 2015, to appoint a Karadima protege as bishop of the southern city of Osorno. Bishop Juan Barros has denied knowing about Karadima's abuse but many Chileans don't believe him, and his appointment has badly split the diocese.

"Sex abuse is Pope Francis' weakest spot in terms of his credibility," said Massimo Faggioli, a Vatican expert and theology professor at Villanova University in Philadelphia. "It is surprising that the pope and his entourage don't understand that they need to be more forthcoming on this issue."

The Karadima scandal and a long cover-up has caused a crisis for the church in Chile, with a recent Latinbarometro survey saying the case was responsible for a significant drop in the number of Chileans who call themselves Catholic, as well as a fall in confidence in the church as an institution. **AP**

AD

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what's ON



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TIME: 10am-7pm, last admission at 6:30pm (closed on Mondays, open on public holidays)

UNTIL: March 11, 2018

VENUE: Macao Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, NAPE

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

LANGUAGE & THE ART OF XU BING

TIME: 10am-7pm, last admission at 6:30pm (closed on Mondays, open on public holidays)

UNTIL: March 4, 2018

VENUE: Macao Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, NAPE

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

MONKEY KING

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

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ADMISSION: MOP420, MOP480, MOP680, MOP880, MOP1080

COTAI TICKETING: (853) 2882 8818

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IMAGINARY BEINGS – ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANA ARAGÃO

TIME: 12pm-8pm (closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: February 21, 2018

VENUE: Taipa Village Art Space

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2857 6118

Offbeat

WHAT ROBOT STRIPPERS SAY ABOUT SEXISM AND TECH



Two robot strippers that made an appearance at a strip club in Las Vegas during the CES technology show last week have raised questions about gender diversity in the tech industry.

While it was a classic Vegas stunt to draw in gawkers from the world's largest tech convention, their appearance struck a nerve among women who've been speaking up against sexual harassment and for greater participation in the tech industry.

CES organizers say only about 20 percent of this year's attendees were women, along with just two of the 15 keynote speakers.

Organizers said the show had no affiliation with the strip club or the robots and have promised to redouble efforts to add women's voices to the speaker lineup next year.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	Miscellaneous
16:30	Miscellaneous
17:25	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	You, Me and the Apocalypse Sr 1
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 JAN - 17 JAN



THE COMMUTER

ROOM 1

02:30, 04:30, 07:30, 9:30pm

Director: Jaume Collet-Serra

Starring: Liam Neeson, Vera Farmiga, Patrick Wilson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 104 min



KIDNAP

ROOM 2

02:30, 04:30, 9:30pm

Director: Luis Prieto

Starring: Halle Berry, Sage Correa, Chris McGinn

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 95min

INSIDIOUS: CHAPTER 4

ROOM 2

07:30pm

Director: Adam Robitel

Starring: Lin Shaye, Angus Sampson, Leigh Whannell, Josh Stewart

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 103 min



UNLOCKED

ROOM 3

02:30, 07:30, 9:30pm

Director: Michael Apted

Starring: Noomi Rapace, Orlando Bloom, Toni Collette

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 98min

COCO

ROOM 3

7:15pm

Director: Lee Unkrich

Starring: Anthony Gonzalez, Gael García Bernal, Benjamin Bratt

Language: Cantonese (English)

Duration: 105 min

this day in history



1983 BBC WAKES UP TO MORNING TV

People have been switching on their televisions a little earlier than usual to catch Britain's first breakfast news programme.

The BBC's new Breakfast Time programme went on air at 0630 GMT, presented by Nationwide's Frank Bough and former ITN news reader Selina Scott.

Nick Ross, who has presented a range of BBC radio news programmes, will also be hosting the show.

The two-and-a-half hour programme - presented live from the BBC's refurbished Lime Grove studios - is costing a reported £6m a year.

It is the corporation's biggest investment since BBC Two went on the air.

The battle for ratings will really hot up next month, when TV-am launches its new breakfast news programme.

The BBC's Director General, Alasdair Milne, was full of praise for this morning's show: "It was a terrific start. The first Tonight programme was not as good as this."

Breakfast Time editor Ron Neil said the show was intended to be relaxed and informal - and he dismissed suggestions it would fail to draw a big audience.

One survey in this morning's papers claims only four out of 10 people will watch the programme. Mr Neil said "That's an awful lot of people. If four out of 10 are watching, I will be delighted."

He added: "It isn't costing the licence fee payer any more money, the licence fee hasn't gone up. I think we will give people a very entertaining and informative two-and-a-half hours every morning."

The programme is catering for a wide variety of tastes - with its own resident astrologer, Russell Grant, and a regular exercise slot led by "Green Goddess" Diana Moran.

Families around the country got up especially early to watch the first programme. The BBC says it received 1,500 calls from well-wishers phoning to offer their congratulations.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Newspaper critics at the time claimed there was no demand for breakfast TV.

Richard Ingrams writing in The Spectator said: "There is no earthly reason why anyone of intelligence should want to watch it."

TV-am's Good Morning Britain launched two weeks later and the battle for ratings quickly heated up.

Personalities on both programmes came and went - but TV-am faced financial ruin when ratings plummeted to 200,000 in May.

Greg Dyke was brought in from London Weekend Television to save the programme. The original five presenters were sacked and he promoted a puppet, Roland Rat, to help read the news. His tactics paid off.

A year later, the BBC and TV-am were bringing in weekly audiences of 1.5m and 1.2m respectively.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Some accuse you of being excessive and unwilling to stop at just one - of anything. Yet this also means that you aren't short on company for the next day or so, as if you ever really are.

Taurus April 20-May 20 Check into your recent financial adventures, and you should find that someone hasn't been entirely honest in the cash flow department - which could mean that it's time for some real changes.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 There's only one person you can always count on to be able to keep up with you - or at least to want to try. Right now, with the energy flowing pretty much everywhere, you're finally at a loss.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Right now, with some boss or big customer also demanding your attention, you've got to do much more than simply apply butt to chair and nose to the grindstone. You've got to concentrate!

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 This is probably the start of a sweet relationship, or maybe a section of existing relationship, but you're ready to dive in, and that feeling may have gotten started some time ago.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Your energy puts you in a much less detail-oriented frame of mind right now than you usually find yourself in. This might leave you feeling a bit confused, but only if you try to struggle.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 The other day you were so full of good vibes and diplomacy that you could have easily hit the U.N. and negotiated a win-win peace treaty for almost any conflict. Today, though, things are a little different.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You're not usually so excessive when it comes to money - everyone knows that. Still, every once in a while, you do have one of your days, and this is probably one of them.

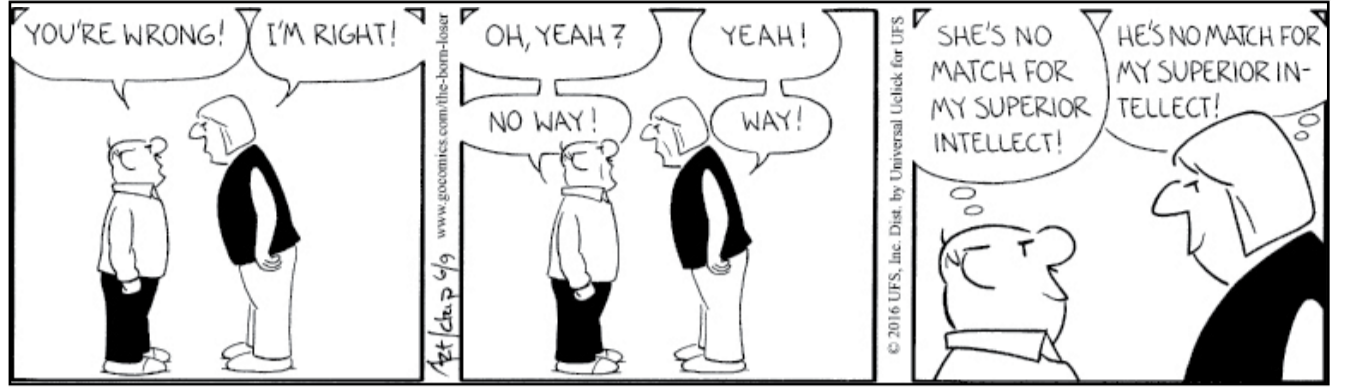
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Now is just about the best possible time to be you. First of all, the rest of the world is feeling just as hyped up as you, at least for the time being. Going overboard is kind of your thing, after all.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Ordinarily, today's energy would inspire you to plan a crazy day - and maybe a romantic evening. With the mood you're in, though, focus may not be at the top of your list of assets.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You're hoping for a return on your emotional investments right now, particularly when it comes to your relationships. Regardless of who you're invested in, you want to devote everything to them for the time being.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Head home today as early as you can. You just aren't in the mood to deal with that one boss or important client who doesn't see things the same way, and you may feel the need to tell them off.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle.

WEATHER

Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION for various cities in CHINA and WORLD.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Large-scale; 5- Moral principle; 10- K-6; 14- Furthermore; 15- Sporty Mazda; 16- Adopted son of Claudius; 17- 500 sheets; 18- Comprehend; 20- Model Campbell; 22- Precious stone; 23- European capital, in song; 24- Alleviates; 26- Moo goo pan; 27- Vacuum bottle; 30- Shackles; 34- Baggage porter; 35- First person; 36- out (dress up); 37- "Splendor in the Grass" screenwriter; 38- Abbreviated time off; 40- Must've been something; 41- Wind dir.; 42- "Shane" star; 43- Soup spoons; 45- Small fish; 47- Most strange; 48- Lennon's lady; 49- Electromagnetic telecommunication; 50- Classic Alan Ladd western; 53- Some MIT grads; 54- Kate & ...; 58- Having a chainlike form; 61- Dublin's land; 62- Suffix with concession; 63- Unit of volume; 64- "The Godfather" Oscar nominee; 65- Mardi ...; 66- Funny Anne; 67- Deuce beater;

DOWN: 1- Bring home; 2- This can be guilty or not guilty; 3- Golfer Aoki; 4- Trade; 5- Flightless bird; 6- Tints; 7- Mythical hell; 8- Thing; 9- Automobile; 10- Involve; 11- Cordelia's father; 12- Fish-eating eagle; 13- Fashion; 19- Sudden convulsion; 21- Camera; 25- Highest singing voice in women; 26- Twisted; 27- Attempts; 28- Reddish brown; 29- Gardener's tool; 30- Actor Byrnes; 31- Start of a Dickens title; 32- Elects; 33- Discharge; 35- Not to mention; 39- Citrus drink; 40- Person's individual speech pattern; 42- Fabric woven from flax yarns; 44- Diva's solo; 46- Gift recipients; 47- Christian festival; 49- Gaucho's rope; 50- Heroin, slangily; 51- Salon sweepings; 52- Big name in razors; 53- Writer Wiesel; 55- Make-up artist?; 56- Dies ...; 57- Start of a counting rhyme; 59- Einstein's birthplace; 60- Period;



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PSP 28 573 333
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Despite doping scandals, Olympic fever grips Russian cinemas

James Ellingworth, Moscow

RUSSIA'S going crazy for the Olympics. The 1972 Olympics.

Even as the Russian team faces up to being barred from next month's Winter Games for doping offenses, audiences are flocking to see a movie about Soviet glory on the Olympic basketball court 46 years ago.

"Going Vertical" tells the story of the Soviet Union team which won gold in 1972, becoming the first basketball team in history ever to beat the United States at the Olympics.

It's a tale of Cold War rivalry, inspiring speeches and something very familiar to Russian sports fans after recent scandals — a gold medal decided by officials.

After pulling in crowds throughout the holiday season, last week "Going Vertical" became the highest-earning Russian movie ever in domestic cinemas with 1.84 billion rubles (USD32.5 million) in takings, according to a government-backed statistics service.

At a screening in central Moscow on Thursday, audience members whooped and applauded as Alexander Belov sank the winning Soviet basket to beat the U.S. 51-50, and then cheered again when the original 1972 footage was played alongside the credits.

"I was crying tears of joy," cinemagoer Nina Parshikova



Sunday, Sept. 10, 1972. The Soviet Union basketball team player, Alexander Belov scores the winning basket to push his team past the United States 51-50 during the summer Olympics in Munich, Germany

said. To the millions of Russians who consider their country unfairly persecuted over doping allegations, even the Cold War can seem a simpler time. Audience member Yegor Druzhinin said: "Now politics plays more of a role. Then it

was sport."

Actor Kuzma Saprykin used his childhood basketball experience to play Ivan Edeshko, who threw what Russians still call the "golden pass" for the Soviets' winning basket.

"I didn't think there would

actually be this kind of colossal success," he told The Associated Press. "It's surprising when people send me videos, how at practically every screening people are clapping, with some kind of patriotism and spirit awakening in people."

In Russia, the game has similar significance to the U.S. "Miracle on Ice," its defeat of the Soviet hockey team at the 1980 Olympics.

The U.S. remembers the 1972 basketball gold medal game very differently — as a robbery.

The last three seconds of the final were replayed twice after the Soviet team protested their signal for a timeout had been ignored, and the U.S. players twice celebrated victory before being told to play again. On the third and final play, Soviet player Ivan Edeshko threw a full-court pass for Belov to score a last-second layup.

The result prompted days of wrangling between officials from both nations and the international basketball federation. That's left out of the movie, as is the U.S. players' decision to reject their silver medals, which still lie unclaimed with the International Olympic Committee.

The script also suggests the Soviets were facing top U.S. pros, when in fact the U.S. fielded college players including future NBA stars like three-time All Star Doug Collins, and Tom McMillen, later a congressman. The Soviet team, while techni-

cally amateurs under the then-current Olympic rules, was effectively composed of full-time pro players several years older than most of the Americans.

"Going Vertical" plays up its Cold War rivalry, portraying the U.S. team and fans as brash, overconfident rule-breakers, though ultimately courageous. The movie also takes some digs at the Soviet system's rationed healthcare and the cultural divides between what would later become independent countries. Edeshko says it's a "just and honest" view.

Some family members of deceased players have objected to the way it portrays the team. Belov, who scored the winning basket, spends much of the movie balancing romance with news he's terminally ill. However, his widow told Russian media outlet Meduza that the real Belov, who died of a rare cancer in 1978 aged 26, was single and healthy in 1972.

The upcoming soccer World Cup in Russia provides more fodder for sports movies, with a biography of Soviet goalkeeper Lev Yashin in the pipeline, as well as a fictionalized story of a modern-day coach.

For Saprykin, the actor, "Going Vertical" illuminates Russia's ongoing love and respect for Soviet sports stars. He says he and Edeshko are now "like grandfather and grandson" after bonding on set — and a nagging feeling that modern athletes don't match up.

Looking at photographs of the 1972 team, "you get goosebumps because you understand that there's three people left [who played in the 1972 final] and that's it," he said. They're leaving and there aren't any new legends. That's the worst." AP

BASKETBALL

NBA opens investigation into Rockets-Clippers events

THE NBA is planning to speak with players from both the Houston Rockets and Los Angeles Clippers to determine the specifics of late-game and postgame events involving the teams.

NBA spokesman Tim Frank said yesterday that the league would look into the matter. Tempers boiled over Monday night late in the Clippers' 113-102 victory, to the point where several security guards were needed outside the Houston locker room postgame.

Citing anonymous NBA sources, ESPN reported several Rockets players headed toward the Clippers' locker room afterward, seeking a con-

frontation, but were escorted away by security before anything got physical.

There were late-game incidents as well in Chris Paul's first game in Los Angeles since he was traded to the Rockets this past summer. Clippers star Blake Griffin appeared to bump Houston coach Mike D'Antoni, and they exchanged words. Griffin and Houston's Trevor Ariza were later ejected after another incident.

Postgame, neither team offered specifics on what happened, if anything, in the Clippers' locker room.

"We were where we were supposed to be," Griffin said. "We were in our locker room."

Paul was asked postgame about what happened, and dodged the question.

"I don't know," Paul said. "We took our loss. Tough loss."

It seems almost inevitable that the NBA will have to take some disciplinary action against players. Paul is also the president of the National Basketball Players Association, which did not immediately respond to a request for comment Tuesday morning.

Both teams are off Tuesday, which means the NBA will have some time to sort out all the various messes. The Clippers next play Wednesday against Denver, and Houston is off until it plays host to Minnesota on Thursday.



Clippers coach Doc Rivers also said his team was in its own locker room.

"Their entire team was

not in their locker room," he said, referring to the Rockets. Walking into his postgame interview, Ri-

vers joked, "We're honoring Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we're non-violent." AP

opinion

Macau Matters

Richard Whitfield



ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT STUPIDITIES

Mostly for fun and to “keep my hand in” I teach a few undergraduate courses each year at a local university. I have recently been “asked” to use faculty guidelines that say that ½ of my examination should be multiple choice questions to revise my proposed examination for the current course I am teaching. I find this incredibly stupid and insulting and so this article will be a bit of a rant on this general topic.

Education, including university, is largely about instilling knowledge, skills and attitudes. Historically, the university emphasis has been on knowledge transmission – the typical image of a professor pouring book knowledge into the skulls of students and having them parrot it back in examinations. The Internet – Wikipedia and Google – have certainly made this view obsolete and is shifting the emphasis much more towards university as a collaboration between staff and students to pass on skills and attitudes with knowledge being pervasively available.

This new situation necessitates a fundamental rethinking of student assessment. The traditional examination to test a student’s recall about a subject has very little value – continuous monitoring of student work and feedback regarding their skills/competency and attitudes becomes primary. I see little value in the typical recall based multiple choice question in the future of education, and not much value in traditional examinations. However, they certainly have a place where you need you need a lot of drill and practice to develop skills, such as when learning a language – a totally different situation.

Multiple choice, gap fill and similar test questions are also problematic because they are tedious and difficult to properly design – great care must be taken with the wording of the question and the answers to eliminate bias and to ensure that common misconceptions are included (as well as correct and incorrect answers). Then they should be validation tested – shown to many students and checked to see that they actually work as expected. This is often not feasible and is too much effort for “once only” use in an examination. Even in reusable formative assessment situations they are still problematic because a great deal of effort must be put into preparing remedial information to correct all possible misconceptions about topics. Mostly, it is just much easier to talk to students asking them questions and directly addressing their misconceptions and the gaps in their knowledge.

In most countries, you need to be certified (and to have completed extensive university level studies) to be a kindergarten, primary or secondary school teacher, but unfortunately this is rarely a requirement for being a university professor. From personal experience, I know that proficiency in a subject’s content is very poor preparation for teaching it. After several initial disasters, I put a lot of man-hours and effort into being taught how to teach; much more than most of my academic colleagues. Luckily, the universities where I initially taught recognized this problem and made considerable resources available so that their academic staff could learn how to teach. Very unfortunately, universities in Macau do not seem to recognize this issue and provide minimal support for their academic staff in this area.

To me, the examination guidelines I just received clearly demonstrate an old-style “knowledge stuffing” approach to university learning and teaching and a total lack of understanding of good student assessment. It is a band-aid to cover up the poor teaching knowledge, skills and attitudes of the academic staff. If local universities want to become world class they must put a great deal of effort and resources into teaching their academic staff how to teach, and misguided advice on what should be in examinations does not address this core issue.

THE BUZZ JAPAN PUBLIC TV SENDS MISTAKEN NORTH KOREAN MISSILE ALERT

Japan’s public broadcaster mistakenly sent an alert warning citizens of a North Korean missile launch and urging them to seek immediate shelter, then retracted it minutes later, days after a similar error in Hawaii.

NHK television issued the message yesterday on its internet and mobile news sites as well as on Twitter, saying North Korea appeared to have fired a missile at Japan. It said the government was telling

people to take shelter.

The false alarm came two days after Hawaii’s emergency management department sent a mistaken warning of a North Korean missile attack to mobile phones across the state, triggering panic.

NHK deleted its tweet after several minutes, issued a correction and apologized several times on air. It said a mistake in using the alert system caused the error.

Kosovo Serb politician is gunned down; police start manhunt

A leading Serb politician in northern Kosovo was gunned down yesterday in broad daylight, an attack that raised ethnic tensions in the Balkans and prompted the suspension of EU-mediated talks between Kosovo and Serbia.

Assailants opened fire on Oliver Ivanovic, 64, close to the offices of his political party in the Serb-controlled northern city of Mitrovica. He was taken to a hospital but doctors were unable to save him.

The doctors said Ivanovic had received at least five gunshot wounds to his upper torso. The assailants escaped in a car that was later found burned out. Kosovo police sealed off the area of the shooting and began a manhunt for the attackers.

Ivanovic was one of the key politicians in Serb-dominated northern Kosovo, a former Serbian province where tensions still remain high a decade after it declared independence in 2008. Serbia does not recognize that independence.

Ivanovic was considered a moderate who maintained relations with NATO and EU officials even after Serbia lost the control of its former province following NATO’s 1999 bombing to stop a deadly Serb crackdown against ethnic Albanian separatists.

A Kosovo court convicted



AP PHOTO: Oliver Ivanovic (center) leaving the prison in February 2017, in the Serb-dominated part of Mitrovica, Kosovo

ted Ivanovic of war crimes during the 1998-99 war. That verdict was overturned and a retrial was underway.

In Pristina, the Kosovo government strongly denounced the slaying, saying it considers the attack a challenge to “the rule of law and efforts to establish the rule of law in the whole of Kosovo territory.”

In Belgrade, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic held a top security meeting to discuss the shooting. Afterward, he called the killing “a terrorist act” and said Serbia is demanding that international missions in Kosovo include Serbia in their investigation into the slaying.

“Serbia will take all necessary steps so the killer or killers are found,” he said.

At the news of Ivanovic’s

slaying, the Serb delegation at the EU talks in Brussels immediately left to return to Belgrade.

Delegation leader Marko Djuric said “whoever is behind this attack [...] whether they are Serb, Albanian or any other criminals, they must be punished.”

European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini called the presidents of Serbia and Kosovo to express the EU’s condemnation of the killing. She appealed for both sides “to show calm and restraint.”

The head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Ambassador Jan Braathu, said he was “shocked and deeply saddened” and considered Ivanovic “among the most prominent Kosovo Serb representatives for almost two decades.” AP

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	65-95 Moderate	☹️
High Density Residential Area	50-70 Moderate	☹️
Ambient	60-80 Moderate	☹️

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

SOUTH SUDAN Sixteen people have been killed, including three children, since South Sudan’s cease-fire started less than a month ago, say international monitors.



CYPRUS’ president says the fight against extremism necessitates even closer cooperation with Greece and Jordan. Nicos Anastasiades was speaking yesterday during talks that were billed as the cornerstone of a new partnership.

ROMANIA’s president yesterday appointed the defense minister as interim prime minister after Premier Mihai Tudose unexpectedly resigned.



KOSOVO Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj has called for a meeting of the country’s National Security Council following the killing of Oliver Ivanovic, leader of an ethnic Serb political party, as he entered his party offices in the northern city of Mitrovica.

FRANCE President Emmanuel Macron traveled yesterday to the epicenter of France’s migrant crisis, the northern port of Calais, to lay out a new approach to immigration: help for those who want to stay, expulsion for those using France as a transit point and sanctions for any poor behavior by security forces.



CHILE Pope Francis begged for forgiveness yesterday for the “irreparable damage” done to children who were raped and molested by priests, opening his visit to Chile by diving head-first into a scandal that has greatly hurt the Catholic Church’s credibility here and cast a cloud over his visit. More on p15

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



Wish they were here. A visitor admires an installation part of the Pink Floyd Exhibition: “Their Mortal Remains”, in Rome, yesterday. The exhibition will run from the Jan. 19 to April 29.