



**IMPERIAL PALACE HOTEL GETS HEFTY FINE**  
The Court of First Instance ruled that the Beijing Imperial Palace Hotel will be fined MOP4.43 million

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**DECORATIONS 2017: THE FACES OF HONOR AND MERIT**

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**GIRL BAND LEADER HEADS N. KOREAN TEAM**  
Hyon Song Wol, head of a North Korean art troupe, arrived at the Seoul Train Station yesterday

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“THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’”

**WORLD BRIEFS**



**SOUTH CHINA SEA**  
The Philippines said yesterday that it won't get embroiled in a fresh spat between the U.S. and China involving Beijing's protest of an American warship passing near a Chinese-controlled shoal also claimed by the Philippines.  
More on p12

**MYANMAR** A military tribunal has sentenced six soldiers to 10 years in prison with hard labor for killing three civilians in war-torn Kachin state, officials said Saturday, in a move welcomed by rights groups. More on p14



**PAPUA NEW GUINEA**  
An island volcano in Papua New Guinea erupted again yesterday, sending plumes of steam and ash into the air. Thousands of people have been evacuated from islands surrounding Kadovar Island off the South Pacific nation's north coast since the volcano there began erupting this month.  
More on p13

**CONGO** Police used tear gas and gunfire to disperse thousands of anti-government demonstrators across the nation yesterday, leaving five people dead and injuring more than 33 who marched after church services calling for President Joseph Kabila to step down, the United Nations said.

More on backpage

**CASINO HEIST**

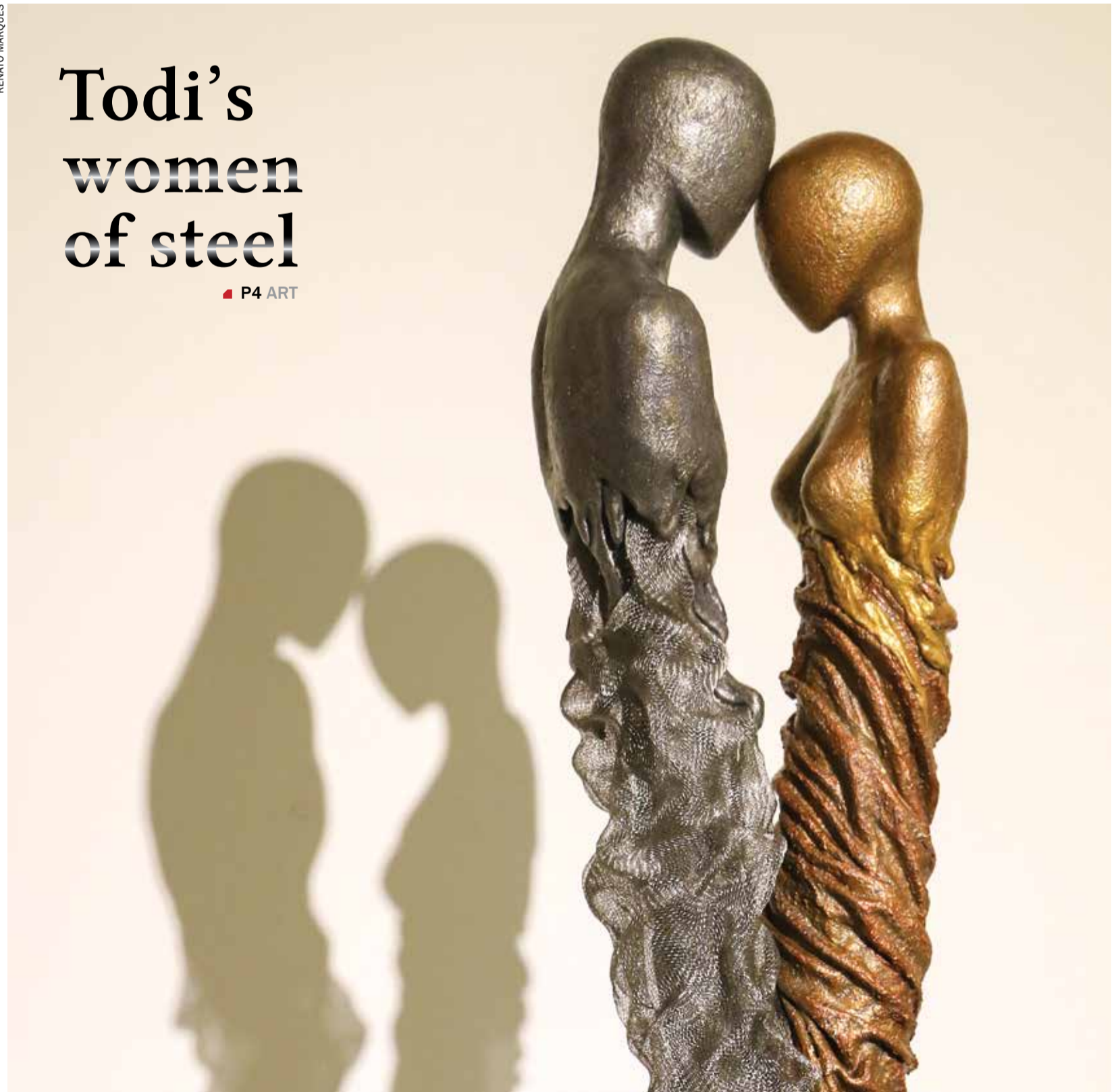
# 3 arrested for posting suspect's picture

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RENATO MARQUES

## Todi's women of steel

■ P4 ART



# Imperial Palace Hotel fined MOP4.43 million

**T**HE Court of First Instance has ruled that the Beijing Imperial Palace Hotel – formerly known as New Century Hotel – will be fined MOP4.43 million and will have to make additional financial reparations worth over MOP20.7 million to its former employees.

The Imperial Palace Hotel, which has already ceased operations, has been ordered to pay its former employees their outstanding salaries, as well as compensation for mandatory holidays, annual leave, overtime and severance.

Of the 24 individual cases involving the Imperial Palace Hotel's violations of labor law, 614 local and non-local workers are thought to have been affected, either directly or indirectly.

The hotel owners, Casino Greek Mythology and Empresa Hoteleira de Macau Lda., along with four members of the company's board, were fined a combined MOP4.43 million.

The trials took place between March 2016 and October 2017, with the last case's verdict announced on October 26, 2017.

At a press conference on July 23, 2016, Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) director Helena de Senna Fernandes



The Imperial Palace Hotel being closed down in July 2016

announced that the hotel would be temporarily closed based on "serious administrative irregularities that constitute threats to public safety."

She stated the measures would take effect that day and be in force for a period of six months, adding that members of the pu-

blic would be prohibited from entering the premises during that period and that any person to do so would be considered in "violation of an order."

Senna Fernandes added that the decision was based on a number of unlawful activities at the hotel, such as illegal cons-

truction work.

Although many of these infringements have been ongoing for at least two years, MGTO said it had given a deadline to the company responsible for the hotel management to correct these problems and make improvements.

According to the Labor Affairs Bureau (DSAL), the hotel employees were all overseas workers. There were 29 full-time workers, as well as 30 housekeeping staff working on either a part-time or full-time basis.

## Serious administrative irregularities that constitute threats to public safety.

HELENA DE SENNA FERNANDES  
MGTO DIRECTOR

DSAL deputy director Ng Wai Han said that the department would "communicate with them to understand their needs" and that "besides [protecting] the rights of the workers, we are also concerned with the reemployment of these [people]."

Ng added that hotel staff can also seek assistance at the government helpdesk. **JZ**

## ASK THE VET

by Dr Ruan Du Toit Bester



### DOG FOOD SUPPLEMENTS TO ENSURE HEALTHY DOGS

**A**dding a dog food supplement to your dog's diet can help ensure that he gets the vitamins and minerals that he needs. But don't just give your dog a dog food supplement without doing the proper research. Factors that can influence your dog's supplement needs include age, breed, and level of activity.

#### WHAT IS A DOG FOOD SUPPLEMENT?

A dog food supplement is simply a little something extra that improves your dog's diet. Dog food supplements often come in the form of vitamins but can also include items such as salmon oil. Dog food supplements can help your dog live longer, give him more energy, improve his appearance, and help him recover from specific ailments.

#### DOES MY DOG NEED A DOG FOOD SUPPLEMENT?

Your dog's supplement needs may vary widely based on breed, size, health, age and many other factors. Most dogs require different nutrients at different

stages of life. Puppies and older dogs are most likely to require dog food supplements. A dog food supplement may also be recommended to help your dog recover from illness.

Dog food supplements such as glucosamine can be very effective in the treatment of conditions such as arthritis. Dog food supplements containing Omega-3/6 fatty acids can keep your dog's skin healthy and make his coat shine. Vitamin dog food supplements ensure that your dog is getting the nutrients that his dog food may lack. Peppermint and spearmint oils can be used as dog food supplements to improve your dog's breath; just add a drop to your dog's water.

#### CHOOSING A DOG FOOD SUPPLEMENT

There are a wide range of dog food supplements available on the market; if you're choosing a vitamin supplement, all-natural options are best. If your dog eats all-natural dog food, it's unlikely that he needs a further dog food su-

pplement, as all-natural dog foods are more nutritionally balanced than most conventional foods. Remember, eating too many vitamins can harm your dog just as much as not eating enough!

If you are choosing a dog food supplement to ease symptoms of illness, first consult your vet for a proper diagnosis. Your vet can give you the best advice about the use of dog food supplements for the treatment of illness.

#### ADMINISTERING A DOG FOOD SUPPLEMENT

Many dog food supplements come in pill form. The easiest way to adminis-

ter these is to wrap the pills in a piece of cheese or lunch meat, and then feed them to your dog. Other types of dog food supplements may be mixed with your dog's food or water.

Hope this info helps  
Till next week  
Dr Ruan Bester

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

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

SEND NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION AND PRESS RELEASES TO: NEWSROOM@MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM WEBSITE: WWW.MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM.MO

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

SECRETARY Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

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

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**T**HE Judiciary Police (PJ) announced at a press conference last week that the man who stole almost HKD48 million in gaming chips from the VIP room of a casino in the Novos Aterros do Porto Exterior (NAPE) area has been arrested together with another suspect.

The man who stole the chips, surnamed Lei, is a 49-year-old dealer at the casino VIP room. The second suspect is Lei's uncle, a 70-year-old security guard surnamed Ho. Both men are Macau residents.

At 7 a.m. on January 16, the VIP room where Lei was working was empty save for another female dealer. Lei ordered his colleague to be silent and lean over her table, after which he removed all the chips from his own table and left the premises.

**CRIME**

# HKD48 million casino robber arrested, chips still missing

Some media reports suggested that Lei threatened his colleague with a knife in order to ensure her compliance. However, Macau police authorities have refuted these suggestions, which do not align with their own account of the crime, and said that there was no weapon used in the heist.

The PJ later found Lei's motorcycle in the Rua da Praia do Manduco district, and at 6 p.m. on January 18, Ho and Lei

**■ All of the missing chips are unmarked and could be exchanged for cash**

were caught meeting at a garden in the Taipa district.

The police found HKD40,000 and MOP4,000 in cash in Lei's possession, and seized HKD22,000 in cash and HKD20,100 worth of casino chips from Ho.

Lei admitted guilt but refused to reveal the whereabouts of the chips. He claimed that he had committed the crime to settle a personal debt, and that he has had a gambling habit since his teens.

Ho denied involvement in the robbery.

The two suspects have been charged with robbery and transferred to the Prosecutions



Office. The PJ has not ruled out the possibility of other individuals' involvement.

According to the PJ, no chips from this batch have been exchanged. Nevertheless, all of the missing chips are unmarked and could be exchanged for cash.

Thefts from VIP rooms or junket operators are not unheard of in Macau.

In 2015, an unidentified junket

operator was reported to have lost HKD1.2 million to a VIP room low-level scam. In the following year, SJM Holdings confirmed that a junket company operating at L'Arc Macau had been the victim of an alleged theft amounting to HKD99.7 million.

Croupiers and junket account managers have been thought on several occasions to be behind the thefts. **JZ/DB**

**THREE CHARGED FOR SHARING 'CONFIDENTIAL' DOCUMENT**

**THREE PEOPLE** were charged with the violation of confidential judiciary material after they shared an official investigation document for one of the suspects, Lei, on social media. The document in question was leaked by the casino security and surveillance departments, according to the Chinese press. Following the robbery, the PJ issued an "Important Searching" notice to the

casino security and surveillance departments, calling for their assistance in catching the dealer. The notice, which included a photo of the dealer and some of his personal details, was considered a confidential document, however the PJ later discovered that the notice had been published online. The PJ arrested a 51-year-old male administrative employee and two female dealers aged 34 and 54.

**CRIME**

# Las Vegas gunman was germophobe, possibly bipolar

**A**FTER three months of investigation, police have learned more about Las Vegas gunman Stephen Paddock: He was a high-stakes gambler on a losing streak, obsessed with cleanliness, possibly bipolar and was having difficulties with his live-in girlfriend.

The Las Vegas gunman meticulously planned the worst mass shooting in modern U.S. history, killing 58 people and wounding more than 800 others with a barrage of bullets from the Mandalay Bay casino-hotel. He researched SWAT tactics, rented other hotel rooms overlooking outdoor concerts and investigated potential targets in at least four cities, authorities disclosed Friday.

Investigators found 23 rifles and a handgun in his hotel suite and more than a dozen of the rifles were fitted with "bump stock" devices that allowed rapid-fire shooting similar to fully automatic weapons. Dozens of guns were strewn around the room, some left inside a bassinet.

Paddock fired more than 1,100 bullets, mostly from

two windows on the 32nd floor of the hotel, into a crowd of 22,000 people attending the Route 91 Harvest Festival music below. That includes about 200 shots fired through his hotel room door into a hallway where an unarmed hotel security guard was wounded in the leg and a maintenance engineer took cover.

But almost four months after Paddock meticulously carried out his killing spree investigators still have not answered the key question: Why did he do it?

Paddock, who killed himself before police reached him and did not leave a suicide note, told friends and relatives that he always felt ill, in pain and fatigued, authorities said.

The 64-year-old retired accountant and real estate investor had lost a "significant amount of wealth" since September 2015, which led to "bouts of depression," the sheriff has said.

Paddock had become "distant" in the year before the shooting and their relationship was no longer intimate, his girlfriend said during an interview with

investigators. She described him as germophobic and said he had strong reactions to smells.

His doctor thought he may have had bipolar disorder but told police that Paddock refused to discuss the possibility, the report said. The doctor offered him antidepressants, but Paddock accepted only a prescription for anxiety medication. He was fearful of medication and often refused to take it, the doctor told investigators. **MDT/AP**



This October 2017 photo released by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Force Investigation Team Report shows the interior of Stephen Paddock's 32nd floor room at the Mandalay Bay hotel

## Macau authorities to conduct armed robbery simulation

**M**ACAU authorities are planning to conduct a drill simulating a violent armed robbery at Galaxy Macau between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. on Tuesday, January 23.

The drill will involve several government departments and be conducted in partnership with integrated resort owner Galaxy Entertainment Group.

Codenamed "Wolf Capture", the simulation exercise is a response to last year's Las Vegas killing spree, which left 58 dead and more than 800 injured.

Wolf Capture aims to test the capacity for cooperation between the police, various public entities and the integrated resort operator.

According to a police statement, it will involve a hostage scenario, simulated injuries and the "suspicion of explosives", allowing authorities to assess the effectiveness of crisis response mechanisms.

While the simulation is being carried out, the section of Marginal Flor de Lótus Avenue between the left turn that gives access to the JW

Marriott Hotel and the roundabout of the same hotel will be closed to traffic.

The main departments involved are the Unitary Police Services, the Judiciary Police, the Public Security Police Force, the Fire Services Bureau and the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau.

According to the statement, police authorities are also counting on the participation of the Health Services and the Tourism Crisis Management Office.

PHOTOS BY RENATO MARQUES



## Todi de Sousa exhibits on the feminine timeline

Renato Marques

**CUSTODIA** “Todi” Kong de Sousa is a Mozambique-born Portuguese artist who has been living in Macau for over 30 years.

She drew extensively in her childhood, during which she developed an appreciation for several different art forms. She discovered sculpture by using epoxy sculpting putty, fabric, fabric hardener and stainless steel mesh to give form to her creative ideas. “I realized that this form of art, by modeling forms, movements and textures, made it possible for me to convey my emotions and messages in a more expressive manner,” she says.

Her latest exhibition, “Moments” (Momentos), opened last Friday evening at the Rui Cunha Foundation (FRC) Gallery in Praia Grande.

The exhibition shows a collection of 14 art pieces, including two from the artist’s private collection.

As explained to the Times, “Moments” portrays significant stages during the progres-

sion of a woman’s life, “since birth until she becomes a mother herself,” Todi explained. The 11 main pieces of this exhibition tell that story, which Todi says is not “my own story, but a fictional story that can be the one of any woman.”

The collection is the result of a two-year period of work in which the artist created and perfected this “feminine timeline”, guiding viewers through the different emotions of every life stage.

Todi’s work is characterized by attention to detail and a delicate touch. Her finesse is evident in all her pieces, especially the one that the artist describes as having had “the most” impact on her – “The Bride” – which was also chosen as the main image of the exhibition.

“It’s an important piece and one that I had put a lot of effort into. Besides, when I was younger, in my drawings I always liked to draw brides in their dresses, so it’s a kind of tridimensional materialization of my childhood drawings. It has a special meaning,” she said.

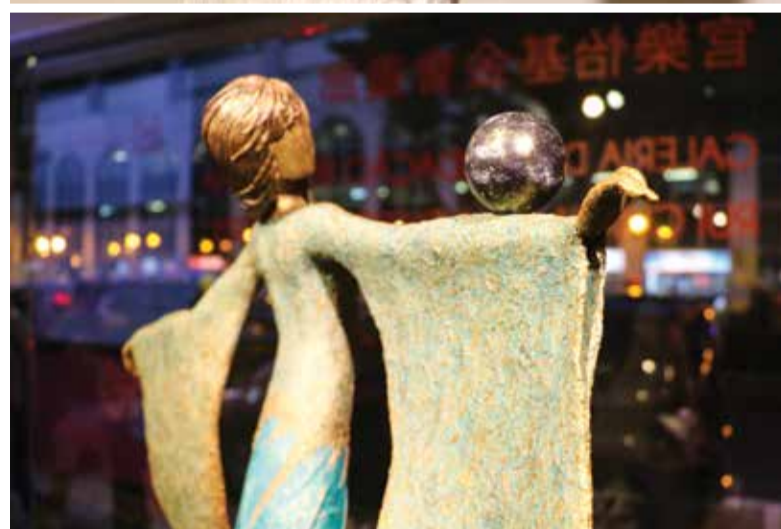
“I decided to include this piece also because [a] wedding is a very important moment and celebration in Macau. [It] may be the most important of them all, so an art piece that marks that special moment makes perfect sense.”

When asked about the common characteristics of her work, the artist said she “creates ‘faceless’ sculptures or figures with a particular and characteristic facial expression” that she always sees in her imagination. She sculpts this expression onto her works as a kind of signature.

The main characteristic of these faces is often the Asian eyes, although her sculptures sometimes bear other features that are more evocative of European or African populations.

“The Bride” is now on display and for sale at the FRC. Speaking with the Times, the artist said she was “very happy with the response from the public” and indicated that there are “several pieces that have been already reserved or sold.”

The exhibition will be on display until February 3.



# Neto Valente says new judicial law is discriminatory

**T**HE President of the Macau Lawyers Association (AAM), Jorge Neto Valente, has criticized some of the government's proposed inclusions in the new Judicial Organization Framework Law. The proposed changes suggest that matters of national security should only be judged by permanently appointed Chinese judges, a measure that Neto Valente described as discriminatory and against Macau's Basic Law, as reported by TDM Radio on Friday.

He added that "preventing foreign judges from prosecuting national security cases is a euphemism for the creation of a special court", which he emphasized is outside the boundaries of the current legislation.

"The Basic Law says [in] article 85 that courts [can have] specialized competence, but it doesn't say that we can have special courts [...]"



to create a body of special judges for a certain kind of crime, is, in the end, [to] create a kind of special court."

Neto Valente said the "special court" is only under consideration because some see it as a "solution" but that, in his opinion, would be a "bad solution."

He also noted that the proposal does not specify the selection criteria for judges. "Judges have the duty to apply all laws. If a judge cannot apply a particular law, whatever it may be [security or any other], he cannot be a judge. What we cannot do is discriminate [against] jud-

ges [among their peers]," he concluded.

Separately, the former Judge of the Court of Second Instance, Gil de Oliveira, told TDM Radio that he believes Sulu Sou will have a fair trial, free of any political pressure.

**■ ■**  
[It] is a euphemism for the creation of a special court.

NETO VALENTE

"I believe so. If I said that I didn't believe, I would be in denial [of] my former role and what I am. I think it will be very bad if people don't believe that the MSAR is able to provide a fair trial [on such a case]," he said. **RM**

## Escalator crash at Studio City injures 7

An escalator crash at Studio City Hotel and Resort yesterday injured seven people, six of which were treated at the public hospital. All the injured were tourists from Taiwan. Of the six persons assisted in the hospital one is male and five are female, all aged 61-78 years. The preliminary diagnosis identified slight injuries, mainly abrasions. After being treated all the injured are in a stable condition and were discharged from the hospital. No information was disclosed about the cause of the accident.

## Mak Soi Kun questions UM tunnel's quality

Lawmaker Mak Soi Kun delivered a written inquiry to the government questioning the responsible authority about the repairs that are being conducted on the tunnel which connects the University of Macau's (UM) campus to Taipa. Mak revealed that his team recently visited the tunnel and they found loose concrete and peeling paint on walls, as well as water leakages inside the tunnel. Mak is worried about the tunnel's safety issues and the impact it could have on Macau's image. He pointed out that despite the facility being used for less than four years, it has already sustained significant damage. Mak urges the related government department to disclose the maintenance fees of the tunnel.

AD



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Fabulous newly renovated one bedroom furnished apartment. Modern fitted kitchen with western style oven & cooktop. Great location in Taipa across the road from CuppaCoffee. Available from 5th December 2017



#### Modern Apartment Central Taipa - Nam Long

(Ref: 17120663)  
820 sq.ft. HKD 11,500

Newly renovated 2 bedroom apartment. 1 x Double bedroom. 1 x Box guest room with large wardrobe. Modern shower room. Open plan kitchen / living area. Window treatments to be installed (on order). Located on 2nd floor of walk up within 15 min walk of Cotai, 2 mins from CuppaCoffee, bus stop directly outside building.



#### Car Park, Manhattan, Taipa

(Ref: 17075528)  
sq.ft. HKD 1,800

Single Car park available for rent in Manhattan.



#### Va Nam, Taipa Village

(Ref: 18010667)  
680 sq.ft. HKD 12,800

Top floor apartment Taipa Village. Fully renovated 4 years ago from a small two bedroom property to a large one bedroom. No on site parking however parking is available to rent or purchase in the Manhattan complex, a two minute walk from the property.



#### High Floor B Unit in The Buckingham

(Ref: 18010668)  
1,433 sq.ft. HKD 22,000

Unique 2 bedroom fully furnished apartment with private terrace. Open plan kitchen with built in appliances. Two bathrooms one en suite. Views of Cotai Strip, China & Macau. Convenient location in central Taipa.



#### Apartment B, Sakura Court, Ocean Garden

(Ref: 10020165)  
3,700 sq.ft. HKD 35,000

Mid - floor, 4 bedroom apartment located in Taipa. Nice apartment for family. Unfurnished, but all appliances built-in. Large and bright living room with balcony with amazing seaview. Carpark included. Clubhouse facilities can be available gymnasium, outdoor pool, mini theatre, function rooms etc.



#### Cheoc Van House, Coloane

(Ref: 17060651)  
6,222 sq.ft. HKD 79,800

Combining dazzling sea views, stylish interiors and cavernous comfort, this multi-storey property is a rare find in Macao. There are 3 bedrooms on the second floor for family and guests, and the top floor is reserved for a personal studio with a full-size closet and en suite bathroom.

### FOR SALE



#### Grande Plaza, Taipa

(Ref: 17115537)  
980 sq.ft. HKD 8.88M  
Rate: HKD 9,061

Superb bright & quiet three bedroom apartment in Taipa just off the main road. Three good size bedrooms with two shower rooms, on W suite off the master room. The location is fantastic right next to the escalator off the main road in Taipa, easy for transportation and shopping.



#### Brand New 2 Bedroom Nova Park, Taipa

(Ref: 18015541)  
8203 sq.ft. HKD 10.98M  
Rate: HKD 9,556

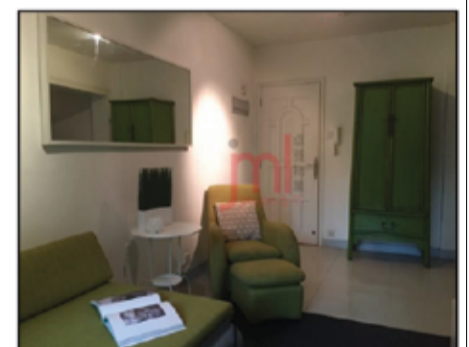
Brand new apartment in central Taipa, never been occupied. Views over Central Park in Taipa, very convenient for shops, restaurants and transportation. High quality fittings and fixtures, new owners can move straight in and start enjoying the facilities and club immediately.



#### Nam Long, Taipa Village

(Ref: 17085534)  
691 sq.ft. HKD 4.485M  
Rate: HKD 6,490

Lovely apartment on the second floor of a three storey building in Taipa Village. Renovated 10 years ago from a two bedroom property to a great size one bedroom apartment, well maintained and managed by JML of the last ten years, historical maintenance data available on request. The bedroom has ample space for double bed and plenty of storage.



#### Va Fat, Taipa Village

(Ref: 17085533)  
638 sq.ft. HKD 4.25M  
Rate: HKD 6,661

Lovely apartment on the third floor of a five storey building in Taipa Village. Renovated 3 years ago the apartment has two good size bedrooms and separate walk in shower room. The apartment has been well maintained and managed by JML of the last eight years, historical maintenance data available on request. The main bedroom has ample space for double bed and plenty of storage.

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# SMEs thank MGM for Hato disaster relief

**M**ANY SMEs have expressed their gratitude to MGM for their tremendous contributions to small businesses that sustained varying degrees of damage during typhoon Hato.

Soon after Typhoon Hato, MGM initiated a SME Relief Program to help local businesses affected by the typhoon to get back on track and recover from damage they sustained.

As a first step, MGM conducted a survey to help assess the impact on the businesses. The survey extended to over 220 of MGM's SME vendors, under the categories of micro, young entrepreneurs and Made-in-Macau SMEs as they were the most susceptible to losses brought by the typhoon.

MGM's SME Committee, comprised of representatives from MGM and Macau business and community leaders, held a meeting to review the survey results and formulated the MGM SME Relief Program, which aims to provide continuous support and reduce the pressure on operations of those affected.

The program consists of comprehensive measures that address short, mid- and long-term needs of SMEs. The initiative includes expedited payment processing and upfront payment to alleviate cash flow needs and assistance with both minor and major damage to the businesses.

Johnny Fong, the owner of Small City Vegetable and Fruit, which was one of the SMEs helped by MGM, recorded substantial losses to his business.

"The loss was really big-scale, besides goods and documents. Actually, I can say everything was lost" said Mr Fong, spokesperson of the company.

"The most important thing is the loss of documents. [...] Losing the computers especially all the data is the most difficult part, we lost all our client data especially our account receivables and it is the most difficult part for us to restart as well," said Fong,

who also thanked MGM for contributing to the regeneration of his company.



"MGM explained to us that the Cloud Backup Service can prevent loss of data when there is flooding or an accident," said Fong. In his words, learning from MGM about the benefits of the Cloud has helped to bring them up with the times.

Fong fruit shop lost all of its produce, two motorcycles, one truck, and two refrigerators.

Like Fong's shop, Ng Kee Metalware-Machine Tool Co. found the loss of data recorded on computer hard-drives to be the most significant one.

"The most important was the data in the computers, which were all lost, as this [the data] is more important than any other goods," said Matthew Ung, the spokesperson of the company.

Ng Kee Metalware-Machine Tool Co was immediately helped by MGM.

Simon Leong, Director of Pur-

chasing for MGM, revealed that approximately 80 companies asked for help from MGM after Hato, and, according to Leong, MGM met 70 percent of the total requests. Not only did MGM help SMEs in the aftermath, but it also helped some of the employees' family SME businesses, advised Leong.

Besides having familiarized some of the SMEs with the Cloud Backup Service, MGM's efforts in repairing equipment for many SMEs has been praised highly by those who were helped.

Elin Ung, Manager of Tin Seng Cleaning Machine and Equipment, said that her company gained sufficient confidence to continue operations upon receiving help from MGM after typhoon Hato caused losses of MOP300,000 to her company.

"Besides the goods, equipment, and a desk below our warehou-

se, all our documents have gone. MGM told us that they could help us, [...] we are lucky," said Ung, adding that "fortunately, with MGM's massive support we recovered faster."

## 80 companies asked for help after Hato, and MGM met 70 percent of the total requests

A shop called O Moon, a conceptual gift shop in Macau, was also one of the companies helped by MGM.

O Moon also sustained heavy losses during Hato. The shop lost some of its goods, and its cashier

systems were damaged.

However, with timely help offered by MGM, O Moon saved possibly more than MOP100,000 in replacement of damaged equipment.

"A lot of news has come out after Hato which reported how many people were being helped by gaming companies. I did not see MGM appearing on the front page claiming it helped, despite having indeed visited us and delivered knowledge and stuff to help us," said Ng Kam Seng, operation director of O-Moon.

Moreover, Ng also praised MGM for respecting and caring about art to a greater degree than the other companies.

Jet Wu, Creative Director of O-Moon, who once was invited by MGM to organize art exhibitions on their premises, hopes he "can do more productions for MGM in the future."



# Leong predicts steady gaming revenue in 2018

**T**HE Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, has predicted that gaming revenue is likely to increase at a steady pace this year, similar to what was recorded in 2017.

According to a government statement, "in any year, the city's gaming revenues could easily be affected by a number of external factors, including the respective economies in Macau's visitor source markets; the global economy; and competition from gaming industries in other areas."

Leong cautioned that it is not an easy task to project the future performance of the gaming sector, which has experienced fluctuations in revenue over the years.

However, given predictions for sustainable growth in Macau's visitor source markets this year and a lack of significant changes to the global economy on



the horizon, the Secretary believes 2018 gaming revenue should build on last year's strength.

The government reiterated its intentions to redouble efforts on two fronts; first, to "enhance the overall competitiveness" of Macau's gaming sector, vis-à-vis emerging rival jurisdictions in the Asia-Pacific region, and second, "to cope with challenges arising regionally and internationally."

Macau gaming revenues climbed 19.1 percent last year to reach over MOP265 billion (USD32.78 billion), the highest posting since 2014.

Analysts broadly credited the VIP segment as the driving force behind the recovery's strength, after data showed the segment expanded approximately 26 percent in 2017.

Many analysts expect the VIP segment to wane - in relative terms - in the next

few years, pointing to the increasing relevance of the mass and premium mass segments on the back of a 'family-friendly' rebranding of Macau and the on-going effects of President Xi Jinping's anti-corruption campaign, which continues to deter high-rollers from visiting the MSAR.

Whether these factors will prove to have a dampening effect on the VIP segment remains to be seen. Brokerage firm Sanford C Bernstein predicts an 8 percent expansion in the segment, while Morgan Stanley said it expects about 20 percent.

Separately, Leong confirmed that the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau has received an application for MGM Cotai regarding new-to-market live-dealer gaming tables. The government will announce the results in due course.

MGM Cotai is expected to open on January 29. **DB**

## Four bids accepted for second Macau Master Plan draft

**L**AST Friday the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) opened the second phase of bidding in which companies tendered their proposed contracts regarding the draft of the Macau Master Plan.

The DSSOPT accepted four of the five bids, the fifth of which was rejected for lacking the required documents. All five were cooperative bids with the participation of mainland companies.

The four successful bids offered prices ranging from MOP11 million to MOP88 million. They will be evaluated based on the duration of their services, the companies' capabilities

and track record, and human resources distribution.

The second phase of bidding on the Macau Master Plan draft was delayed until last Friday because the evaluation committee had doubts regarding some of the bids.

The first open bidding was carried out in October 2017, with a proposed service period between 90 to 730 days.

This time, the Macau Master Plan will feature Macau's administrative areas; namely, the Macau Peninsula, Taipa, Coloane, the New Urban Zone, the Macau port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, Macau's seas and the University of Macau Hengqin Campus.

AD



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HONG KONG WATERS

# Fisherman dead in Volvo Ocean Race collision



A yacht in the around-the-world Volvo Ocean Race collided in the dark with a fishing boat near Hong Kong, leaving one fisherman dead while nine others were rescued.

The yacht, Vestas 11th Hour Racing, was about 30 nautical miles from the finish line of Leg 4 of the bluewater classic.

None of the crewmembers with the American-Danish team was injured in the collision early Saturday, race officials said. The 65-foot sloop, which had a hole in the port side of the hull near the bow, retired from the leg and reached port on its own power.

Vestas 11th Hour Racing reported the collision minutes before Hong Kong-based Team Sun Hung Kai/Scallywag sailed into its home port ahead of the fleet to win the leg.

According to a statement from race organizers, Vestas 11th Hour Racing issued a distress call on behalf of the fishing vessel, alerting the Hong Kong Marine Rescue Coordination Centre, and began a search and rescue mission.

A Hong Kong police spokeswoman who declined to give her name told The Associated Press that "a mainland fishing boat crashed into a sailing boat" and all 10 fishermen were thrown into the water. The South China Morning Post reported that the fishing boat sank.

The Government Flying Office said in a statement that one fisher-

man was unconscious when pulled from the water by the Vestas crew. The Hong Kong Marine Rescue Coordination Centre said that fisherman was airlifted to a hospital and was the one who died. The nine other fishermen were rescued by a commercial vessel.

Race Control asked team Akzo-Nobel to divert to the scene. Not long after, AkzoNobel resumed racing.

No other details about the collision were immediately available.

The first confirmation that Vestas had collided with a fishing boat came from Charles Caudrelier, skipper of Dongfeng Race Team, which was second into Hong Kong on the leg from Melbourne, Australia.

"Our first thought is that this is terrible news," Caudrelier said shortly after his crew arrived in Hong Kong. "We are of course very sad to hear it and very concerned about the fishing boat. It is always very dangerous when sailing in these fishing areas when there are so many boats and some have no lights. Obviously this is very bad news for these fishermen, the Volvo Ocean Race and for Vestas."

Before the collision, Vestas 11th Hour Racing was in position to finish second in the leg. The retirement dropped it to seventh.

Vestas 11th Hour Racing skipper Charlie Enright missed Leg 4 because of a family medical situation. Mark Towill skippered the team in Enright's absence. **AP**

AD

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DECORATIONS 2017

# 42 individuals and institutions



Medal of Merit - Professions – lau Kam Hoi



Medal for Community Service – Choi Chun Heng



Honoric Title - Merit – Loreto Jr. de Guia Mijares



Honoric Title - Valor –Cheong Heong San



Honoric Title - Val



Medal of Merit - Professions – He Haiming



Medal of Merit - Industry and Commerce – Tai Fung, S.A. Bank (Zhou Peng)



Decoration of Honour - Silver Lotus – Lei Loi Tak



Decoration of Honour - Golden Lotus – Choi Lai Hang



Medal of Merit - Industry and Commerce – Estrada para Veiculos Ki-Kuan, Limitada (Zeng Yunqiang)



Medal of Merit - Industry and Commerce – Fong Son Kin



Medal of Merit - Professions – João Augusto Gil de Oliveira



Medal of Merit - Culture – Associação dos Escritores de Macau (Lei Kun Teng)



Medal of Merit - Culture – João Vicente Botelho Guedes



Medal of Merit - Tourism – Lawrence Ho Yau Lung



Medal of Merit - Tourism – Luís Lui



Medal of Merit - Education – Lei Heong lok



Medal of Merit - Education – Lo Sio Va



Medal of Merit - Sport – Associação de Reabilitação "Fu Hong" de Macau (Maria de Fátima Ferreira)



Medal of Merit - Sp de Macau (Che Ku)



Medal of Merit - Tourism – Lam Chan Kuok



Medal of Merit - Education – Vong Chuk Kwan



Medal of Merit - Philanthropy – Instituto de Acção Social (Vong Yim Mui)



Medal of Merit - Sport – Seleção de Dança de Dragão e de Leão de Macau (Cheang Kuok Hang)



Medal of Merit - Sp Jesus Junior

# received decorations last week



Medal of Merit - Dedication - Lam Kai Heng



Honorary Title - Valor - Chan Sio Man



Honorary Title - Valor - Chau Hou Tin



Honorary Title - Valor - Secondary School Pui Ching (Leong Chon Hou)



Medal of Merit - Dedication - Equipa de Fiscalização do Centro de Segurança Alimentar do Instituto para os Assuntos Cívicos e Municipais (Cheong Kuai Tat)



Medal of Merit - Dedication - Sou Tim Peng



Medal of Merit - Dedication - Lao Wai Han



Medal for Community Service - Augusto Nogueira da Associação de Reabilitação de Toxicodependentes de Macau



Decoration of Honour - Silver Lotus - Vong Kok Seng



Medal for Community Service - Associação dos Jovens Cristãos de Macau (Kuan Sok Leng)



Medal of Merit - Culture - Chou Cheong Hong



Medal of Merit - Culture - Poon Kam Ling



Medal of Merit - Professions - Zhao Guoqiang



Medal for Community Service - Gabinete Coordenador dos Serviços Sociais Sheng Kung Hui Macau (Canon Peter Douglas Koon Ho-ming)



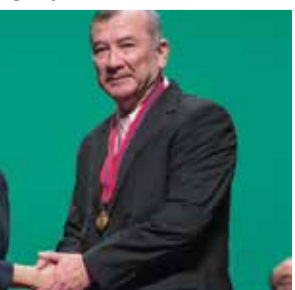
Medal of Merit - Culture - Federação de Karate-do de Macau (Ip Kuok Pang)



Medal for Valor - Equipa de Mergulhadores dos Serviços de Alfândega de Macau (Ip Kuok Pang)



Medal for Valor - Equipa de Operações Especiais de Socorro do Corpo de Bombeiros (Fong Sio Meng)



Medal of Merit - Culture - Eduardo Armando de Sousa



Medal for Valor - Grupo de Patrulha Especial do Corpo de Polícia de Segurança Pública (Wong IoLong)



Medal for Valor - Centro de Prevenção e Controlo da Doença dos Serviços de Saúde (Lam Chong)



The ceremony to award the Decorations, Medals and Certificates of Merit to the recipients was held last week at the Macau Cultural Center. According to the government, "the Decorations, Medals and Certificates of Merit awarded for 2017 by the MSAR are being given to 42 individuals and organizations in recognition of, respectively, achievement, outstanding contribution and distinguished service."

The list follows recommendations from the Committee of Nomination of Medals and Honorary Titles.

The awards for Decorations of Honour include the Decoration of Honour - Grand Lotus; the Decoration of Honour - Golden Lotus; and the Decoration of Honour - Silver Lotus. "Such awards are for individuals or entities that have made outstanding contributions to the image and reputation of the MSAR," a note from the government explains.

This year the highest honour was the Golden Lotus awarded to Choi Lai Hang, recently appointed as coordinator for the Security Forces Co-ordination Office. Decoration of Honour - Silver Lotus was awarded to two businessmen, Lei Loi Tak and Vong Kok Seng.

The awards, which were announced on December 19, also include seven types of Medal of Merit, covering professions, industry and commerce, tourism, education, culture, philanthropy and sports as well as medals for Distinguished Service.

Secretary Sonia Chan officiated the ceremony in lieu of Chui Sai On.

## SOUTH CHINA SEA

# Philippines says it won't be embroiled in US-China spat

Jim Gomez, Manila

**T**HE Philippines said yesterday that it won't get embroiled in a fresh spat between the U.S. and China involving Beijing's protest of an American warship passing near a Chinese-controlled shoal also claimed by the Philippines.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said that "the United States can take care of its own interest" and added "we do not wish to be part of a U.S.-China intramural" in the disputed South China Sea.

The Chinese government on Saturday accused the U.S. of trespassing in its territorial waters when a U.S. guided missile destroyer sailed near Scarborough Shoal to promote freedom of navigation in the disputed waters.

The Philippines also claims the shoal, which is a tiny, uninhabited reef that China seized from the Philippines in 2012 after a tense maritime standoff.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has revived once-frosty relations with China since taking power in 2016 and often criticizes U.S. security policies. He has rejected planned joint patrols by the U.S. and Philippine navies in disputed South China Sea waters along with joint combat exercises that could of-



fend China.

His predecessor, Benigno Aquino III, backed a continued U.S. presence in the region to serve as a counterweight to China.

Under Aquino, the Philippines brought its disputes with China in the South China Sea to international arbitration in 2013 and overwhelmingly won the case three years later. China refused to participate and ignored the decision.

Duterte has refused to demand immediate Chinese compliance with the 2016 arbitration ruling, which invalidated China's vast territorial claims to the South China Sea on historical grounds. He has promised, however, to take up the arbitration ruling with China at a still-unspecified time during his six-year presidency.

China claims virtually the entire South China Sea and has carried out extensive land reclama-

tion work on many of the islands and reefs it claims, equipping some with air strips and military installations that have alarmed rival claimant countries and Western governments led by the United States.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said Saturday that China would take "necessary measures" to protect its sovereignty after the USS Hopper sailed within 12 nautical miles of Scarborough Shoal

on Wednesday evening without China's permission.

Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said the U.S., Manila's treaty ally, did not notify the Philippines of its naval operation near Scarborough.

"We have no say over whatever the Americans do in the South China Sea. They do not inform us beforehand of their activities there," Lorenzana said.

Asked if the passage of the U.S. warship in Philippine-claimed waters was a concern, Lorenzana said: "No, for as long as they are on innocent passage. International law allows innocent passage even in territorial waters."

The United States does not claim territory in the South China Sea but has declared it has a national interest in ensuring that the territorial disputes there are resolved peacefully in accordance with international law.

The U.S. Navy regularly sails through the area to assert freedom of navigation.

Lt. Cmdr. Nicole Schwegman, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet, said Saturday that such operations are "not about any one country, nor are they about making political statements." Instead they aim to "demonstrate our commitment to uphold the rights, freedoms and lawful uses of the sea and airspace guaranteed to all nations under international law."

Scarborough is known in Chinese as Huangyan Island and called Panatag or Bajo de Masinloc by the Philippines. It lies about 200 kilometers west of the main Philippine island of Luzon, and about 600 kilometers southeast of China. **AP**

## Prosecutors to seek death penalty in Chinese scholar case

**U.S.** prosecutors will seek the death penalty for a former physics student charged with the kidnapping and killing of a University of Illinois scholar from China, they told a judge in a last week filing that also made a new allegation that the 28-year-old suspect once choked and sexually assaulted someone else years ago.

The filing in U.S. District Court in central Illinois provides several reasons for why the death penalty is called for in Brendt Christensen's case, including because he allegedly tortured 26-year-old Yingying Zhang before killing her. It didn't say how.

The new allegation is that Christensen "choked and sexually assaulted" someone referred to only by the initials "M.D." in 2013 in central Illinois.

He has not been charged in that alleged assault. Christensen also once expressed his aspiration "to be known as a killer," the filing says.

Zhang disappeared June 9 on her way to sign an apartment lease off campus in Urbana, some 225 kilometers southwest of Chicago. She had arrived on campus in April and had just missed a bus when Christensen lured her into his car, prosecutors say. They say Zhang is dead, though her body hasn't been found.

Christensen, who earned a master's degree in physics from the University of Illinois, has pleaded not guilty to kidnapping resulting in death. His trial is scheduled to begin on Feb. 27, though his attorneys have said previously they would need more time to

prepare, especially if the government intended to seek the death penalty.

Illinois abolished the death penalty in 2011, years after then-Gov. George Ryan declared a moratorium on executions, citing doubts about the guilt of several of those on death row. While capital punishment is available under federal law, prosecutors have sought it infrequently and it's rarely been carried out.

There have been just 37 federal executions — from 1927 to 2003, when the last federal execution occurred, according to the U.S. Bureau of Prisons website. The last was of Louis Jones, executed by lethal injection in Terre Haute, Indiana, on May 18, 2003, for a kidnapping resulting in death. Federal authorities have only exe-

cuted one person in Illinois, in 1938 by hanging, according to the bureau.

Among other factors the five-page filing says justifies the death penalty was the "heinous, cruel, or depraved manner" of the crime and that it involved "planning and premeditation," as well as what the document says is Christensen's "lack of remorse."

"The victim was particularly vulnerable due to her small stature and limited ability to communicate in English," the filing says.

A message seeking comment from Christensen's attorney, Robert Tucker, wasn't immediately returned.

Zhang, who received her master's degree in environmental engineering in China in 2016, had hoped to eventually land a professorship and help



This photo provided by the Macon County Sheriff's Office in Decatur, Ill., shows Brendt Christensen

her family in China out financially. Her father, a sometime-semitrailer driver, traveled from China to Illinois in June to help look for his daughter.

Her disappearance prompted a massive search that drew international media attention, particularly from China.

Other disturbing details in the case emerged after Christensen's arrest last year.

Months before Zhang went missing, his phone was used to visit the website FetLife.com, in-

cluding to view threads titled "Perfect abduction fantasy" and "planning a kidnapping," prosecutors say.

FetLife described itself as "the Social Network for the BDSM, Fetish & Kinky Community," stressing in policy statements that it's a place for consenting adults. The acronym BDSM stands for bondage, dominance, sadism and masochism. Users provide their ages, genders and roles they wish to play, but otherwise remain anonymous. **AP**

AP PHOTO



Black smoke rises from the Intercontinental Hotel after an attack in Kabul

AFGHANISTAN

# Taliban attack on Afghan hotel ends after 13 hours, 18 dead

Rahim Faiez, Kabul

A Taliban assault on the Intercontinental Hotel in Afghanistan's capital killed at least 18 people, including a foreigner, and pinned security forces down for more than 13 hours before the last attacker was killed yesterday, with the casualty toll expected to rise.

The heavily-guarded luxury hotel is popular among foreigners and Afghan officials. Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish said the six killed included

a foreigner and a telecommunications official from the western Farah province who was attending a conference.

More than a dozen other people, including three security forces, were reported wounded and more than 150 people, including 41 foreigners, were rescued from the hotel, Danish said.

The Taliban claimed the attack, which began around 9 p.m. Saturday, saying five gunmen armed with suicide vests targeted foreigners and Afghan officials. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the insurgents ini-

tially planned to attack the hotel Thursday night but postponed the assault because there was a wedding underway and they wanted to avoid civilian casualties.

The attack unfolded almost six years after Taliban insurgents launched a similar assault on the property, which is not part of the InterContinental chain of worldwide hotels.

The Interior Ministry said a private firm assumed responsibility for securing the hotel around three weeks ago. The ministry says it is investigating how

the attackers managed to enter the building.

Afghan security officials confirmed that 34 provincial officials were gathered at the hotel to participate in a conference organized by the Telecommunication Ministry.

A fire broke out at the hotel as the fighting raged, and the sound of explosions could be heard throughout the standoff. Live TV footage showed people trying to escape through windows on the upper stories.

Capt. Tom Gresback, spokesman for NATO-led forces, said

in a statement that Afghan forces were leading the response efforts. He said that according to initial reports, no foreign troops were hurt in the attack.

Neighboring Pakistan condemned the "brutal terrorist attack" and called for greater cooperation against militants. Afghanistan and Pakistan routinely accuse each other of failing to combat extremists along their long and porous border.

Afghan forces have struggled to combat the Taliban since the U.S. and NATO formally concluded their combat mission at the end of 2014. They have also had to contend with a growing Islamic State affiliate that has carried out a number of massive attacks in recent years.

In the northern Balkh province, insurgents burst into a home where several members of a local pro-government militia were gathered late Saturday, leading them outside and killing 18 of them, said Gen. Abdul Razeq Qaderi, the deputy provincial police chief. Among those killed was a tribal leader who served as the local police commander, he said.

In the western Farah province, a roadside bomb killed a deputy provincial police chief and wounded four other police early yesterday, according to Gen. Mahruf Folad, the provincial police chief.

The Taliban claimed both attacks.

In the western Herat province, a roadside bomb struck a vehicle carrying 13 civilians, killing all but one of them, said Abdul Ahad Walizada, a spokesman for the provincial police chief. No one immediately claimed the attack, but Walizada blamed Taliban insurgents, who often plant roadside bombs to target Afghan security forces. **AP**

## Island volcano in Papua New Guinea erupts with ash, steam

An island volcano in Papua New Guinea erupted again yesterday, sending plumes of steam and ash into the air.

Thousands of people have been evacuated from islands surrounding Kadovar Island off the South Pacific nation's north coast since the volcano there began erupting on Jan. 5. Flights nearby have been canceled due to the risk posed by ash plumes and ships were warned to stay away from the island.

Experts warned last week that seismic activity beneath the volcano meant that a major eruption could be im-

minent.

Prime Minister Peter O'Neill has previously said state resources were being made available to support evacuations and he has warned northern coastal communities to be alert for possible tsunamis.

Kadovar is off the northern coast of New Guinea, the larger island that includes Papua New Guinea's capital, Port Moresby.

Papua New Guinea sits on the "Ring of Fire," a line of seismic faults encircling the Pacific that has frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. **AP**

AP PHOTO



## SPORTS DIPLOMACY

# Head of popular girl band leads N. Korean team to S. Korea

Hyung-Jin Kim, Seoul

**T**HE head of a hugely popular North Korean girl band crossed the heavily fortified border into South Korea yesterday to check preparations for rare performances by an art troupe she also leads during next month's Winter Olympics.

Appearing live on South Korean television, Hyon Song Wol didn't speak when she walked past a crowd of reporters, on-lookers and a barrage of camera flashes before boarding an express train at Seoul's railway station for the eastern city of Gangneung, where her art troupe is to perform during the Pyeongchang Olympics.

She is the leader of Pyongyang's all-female Moranbong Band, which was hand-picked by leader Kim Jong Un. She's been the subject of intense South Korean media attention since she attended last week's talks at the border that struck an agreement on the 140-member Samjiyon art troupe's two performances — one in Seoul and the other in Gangneung, where some of the games will take place. After the talks, North Korea said Hyon would also lead the Samjiyon art troupe, whose performances would be the first by a North Korean group in South Korea since 2002.

With no official media access given to Hyon, TV stations broadcast live footage of her bus moving on Seoul's roads before arriving at the railway station, where hundreds of police officers were mobilized to maintain order. Photos showed a smiling Hyon shaking heads with a South Korean official upon arrival at the border. Later yesterday, wearing a dark winter coat and fur scarf and with half her hair tied to the back, she looked



North Korean Hyon Song Wol, head of North Korea's art troupe, arrives at the Seoul Train Station in Seoul yesterday

more serious with an expressionless face.

Hyon's arrival came hours after the International Olympic Committee allowed 22 North Korean athletes to take part in the Olympics in exceptional entries given to the North. Among the 22 are 12 women who will join South Korea's female hockey team in the Koreas' first-ever unified Olympic team. The other sports events the North Koreans will compete in are figure skating, short track speed skating, Alpine skiing and cross-country skiing.

The 22 North Korean athletes will march together with South Korean players under a single "unification flag" depicting their peninsula during the opening ceremony in Pyeongchang. "Such an agreement would have

seemed impossible only a few weeks ago," IOC chief Thomas Bach said in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The current mood of reconciliation between the Koreas flared after Kim abruptly expressed his willingness to improve ties and send a delegation to the Olympics during his annual New Year's address. Outside critics dismissed Kim's overture as a tactic to use improved ties with Seoul to weaken U.S.-led international sanctions over North Korea's advancing nuclear and missile programs.

Hyon, who is also an alternate member of the ruling party's Central Committee, is travelling with six other North Koreans. Her delegation had been expected in South Korea on Saturday, but North Korea canceled that

plan on Friday night before it proposed a two-day trip starting yesterday. It wasn't clear why the visit was rescheduled.

Hyon's advance team is to inspect a venue for her art troupe's performance in Gangneung later yesterday. The team is expected to stay overnight at Gangneung before returning to Seoul to check another venue in the capital on Monday, according to Yonhap news agency.

The Samjiyon art troupe, which comprises orchestra members, singers and dancers, is part of North Korea's Olympic delegation that also includes athletes, officials, journalists and a taekwondo demonstration team.

Meanwhile, North Korea offered to send another advance team across the border on Thur-

sday to look at accommodation facilities, a press center and the venue for the opening and closing ceremonies, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry. South Korea is to send its own advance team to North Korea on Tuesday to review logistics for a joint cultural event at the North's Diamond Mountain and their non-Olympic skiers' joint practices at the North's Masik ski resort, the ministry said.

Hyon was a popular singer before she was appointed to lead the Moranbong Band, which serves as the "soft" public face of the Kim government. Its members in short skirts and high heels or stylish military uniforms sing and dance odes to Kim.

**■ Song Wol is the leader of Pyongyang's all-female Moranbong Band, which was hand-picked by Kim Jong Un**

There is speculation that some of the Moranbong members may also appear in the Samjiyon art troupe, which observers say was likely hastily formed ahead of Olympics-related talks with South Korea.

Under a deal with South Korea, the Samjiyon group is to play folk songs and classic masterpieces that are well-known to both Koreas and fit in with the theme of unification. An attempt by the group to perform any propaganda piece would trigger protests from conservatives in South Korea. The Moranbong Band canceled its planned 2015 performance in Beijing at the last minutes after Beijing wanted to replace a missile launch scene from the background of the stage, according to South Korea media. **AP**

## MYANMAR

## Soldiers jailed for killing civilians in rare trial

**A** Myanmar military tribunal has sentenced six soldiers to 10 years in prison with hard labor for killing three civilians in war-torn Kachin state, officials said, in a move welcomed by rights groups.

The Kachin state police office said the tribunal handed down the sentence last week after finding the soldiers guilty of killing three ethnic Kachin civilians in September. The

prosecution came after an internal investigation by the military.

Min Zaw, a Kachin state police officer, said that during the hearing the six confessed that they were responsible for the killings.

Kachin state is home to an ethnic rebel army that has been fighting the Myanmar military for more than seven years. More than 100,000 peo-

ple have fled the fighting and live in refugee camps.

Calls to the military information office rang unanswered Saturday.

The three civilians were among a group of five detained by soldiers last May while they were heading back to their refugee camp after gathering firewood near Hka Pra Yang village. Two of the men were released and returned to the camp, while the bodies of

the other three were found in a shallow grave three days later.

Rights groups said the prosecution of the six soldiers was rare and the first step down a long road to ending military impunity. Still they raised concerns about the trial being held behind closed doors.

"There's a good reason for the military to keep these trials behind closed doors. It makes it a

lot easier to cover up widespread and systematic abuses," said David Baulk, Myanmar human rights specialist for Fortify Rights.

Myanmar's military has been accused of violating human rights with impunity for decades, including in its conflicts with rebel groups.

Most recently it has been accused of abuses during what it calls "clea-

rance operations" against ethnic Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine state. More than 650,000 Rohingya have left Myanmar for Bangladesh, fleeing what the United Nations calls ethnic cleansing.

Myanmar's military last week made a rare public admission of killing 10 Rohingya Muslims whose bodies were found in a mass grave in a village in northern Rakhine. **AP**

SYRIA

# Turkish troops attack Kurdish enclave in northern Syria

Lefteris Pitarakis & Sarah El Deeb, Hassa

**T**URKISH troops and Syrian opposition forces attacked a Kurdish enclave in northern Syria yesterday in their bid to drive a U.S.-allied Kurdish militia from the region.

Turkish officials said the troops entered Afrin a day after dozens of Turkish jets and artillery units at the border pounded Syrian Kurdish targets. A spokesman for the Kurdish fighters said the attack was repelled.

Turkey considers the Syrian Kurdish militia, known as the People's Protection Units, or YPG, a terror organization and a security threat because of its affiliation to Kurdish rebels fighting in southeastern Turkey.

The group controls Afrin, in Syria's northwestern Aleppo province, as well as a swath of territory to the east along Turkey's border.

The YPG also forms the backbone of the Syrian Democratic Forces, the main U.S. ally against the Islamic State group in Syria.

The state-run Anadolu Agency said the Turkish-backed fighters had penetrated 5 kilometers into Afrin as part of the offensive, code-named Olive Branch.

In a statement, the Syrian opposition fighters battling alongside the Turkish troops said the combined force seized Shankal, a village on the northwestern edge of Afrin district.

SDF spokesman Mustafa Bali denied that Turkish troops had entered Afrin, saying Kurdish forces had been repelling attacks since Saturday. Bali said the SDF had sent reinforcements to Afrin.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says the Kurdish militia and Turkish forces have clashed on the northern and western edges of Afrin. The Observatory said the Turkey-backed forces have entered Shankal and are

clashing with the Kurds.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has vowed to expand the offensive to Manbij, a town to the east that Kurdish forces seized from the Islamic State group in a costly battle with the aid of the U.S.-led coalition. The town has since emerged as a model for U.S.-backed Kurdish rule of largely Arab areas.

An advance on Manbij by NATO member Turkey would pit two close U.S. allies against one another, adding another front to the already complex Syrian civil war.

Turkish troops first crossed into Syria after the Kurds captured Manbij in 2016, in part to prevent them from expanding westward and linking up to Afrin. At least 70 Turkish soldiers have been killed since then, most in battles with the Islamic State group, which has since been driven from nearly all the territory it once held in Syria.

Prime Minister Binali Yildirim told a group of journalists yester-

day that Turkey aims to create a 30-kilometer deep "secure zone" in Afrin, according to Turkish media reports. He told reporters that there were between 8,000 and 10,000 "terrorists" in Afrin.

Earlier yesterday, four rockets fired from Syria hit the Turkish border town of Kilis, prompting Turkish artillery to return fire, Gov. Mehmet Tekinarslan said. The rockets hit two houses and a workplace, and slightly wounded one person.

Associated Press journalists on the border saw a convoy of trucks, believed to belong to Syrian opposition fighters, carrying pick-up trucks mounted with arms. Artillery shelling could be heard in the distance.

Turkey has prepared around 10,000 Syrian fighters to storm Afrin, according to Rami Abdurrahman, director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitoring group.

A Syrian commander speaking



to the AP by phone from northern Syria said there were thousands of fighters positioned in Azaz, at the frontier with the Kurdish enclave, awaiting orders. Another commander said hundreds more were stationed in Atmeh, south of Afrin. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Turkish leaders were infuriated by an announcement by the U.S. military this week that it was going to create a 30,000-strong border force with the Kurdish fighters to secure northern Syria. Days later, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson announced that the U.S. would maintain a military presence with the Kurds for the foreseeable future. **AP**

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## what's ON



## TEAMLAB FUTURE PARK

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

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

UNTIL: February 28, 2018

VENUE: MGM Art Space

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

## PATANE LIBRARY AN OASIS OF FILM AND MUSIC LORE

TIME: pm-8:30pm (Mondays)

9:30am-8:30pm (Tuesdays to Sundays; closed on public holidays)

ADDRESS: No. 69 - 81, Rua da Ribeira do Patane

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2825 9220

## TREASURE OF SACRED ART OF ST. JOSEPH'S SEMINARY

TIME: 10am-5pm (Closed on Wednesdays, open on public holidays)

VENUE: St. Joseph's Seminary and Church, Rua do Seminário

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

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TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Last admission at 5:30pm; closed on Wednesdays, open on public holidays)

ADDRESS: No. 10, Travessa de António da Silva

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8820

## EXHIBITION "FICTION AND DRIFT - PAINTINGS BY JORGE MARTINS"

TIME: 10am-9pm daily

UNTIL: March 4, 2018

VENUE: Tap Seac Gallery, No. 95, Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4017

## MONKEY KING

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

VENUE: Sands Cotai Theatre

ADMISSION: MOP420, MOP480, MOP680, MOP880, MOP1080

COTAI TICKETING: (853) 2882 8818

KONG SENG TICKETING: (853) 2855 5555

## Offbeat

## IN A WHILE... RUSSIAN POLICE FACE THE UNEXPECTED: CROCODILE IN BASEMENT



Russian police had an unexpected encounter while searching a house in St. Petersburg — a crocodile in the basement.

The Fontanka.ru news portal said the incident happened last week while detectives were looking for undeclared weapons in the house of a man involved in staging reconstructions of historic military battles with period uniforms and antique weaponry.

When they went down, they saw a crocodile resting in a small pool of water dug in concrete basement. The owner of the house explained that he got the crocodile years ago.

City prosecutors said they were checking whether the man was complying with local laws.

## TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	Miscellaneous
16:30	Miscellaneous
17:25	Zig Zag
17:40	Brazilian Soap Opera (Repeated)
18:25	Non-daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:50	Portuguese Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Sports
22:15	Brazilian Soap Opera
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Maias Serie
00:35	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:05	RTPi Live

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

18 JAN - 24 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



## PITCH PERFECT 3

ROOM 2

02:30, 04:15, 6:00, 9:45pm

Director: Trish Sie

Starring: Anna Kendrick, Rebel Wilson, Hailee Steinfeld

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 93min

## INSIDIOUS: CHAPTER 4

ROOM 2

07:45pm

Director: Adam Robitel

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

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 103 min



## NAMIYA

ROOM 3

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

Director: Han Jie

Starring: Kary Wang, Dilraba, Dong Zijian, Lee Hong Chi

Language: Putonghua (Chinese & English)

Duration: 118min

## COCO

ROOM 3

7:15pm

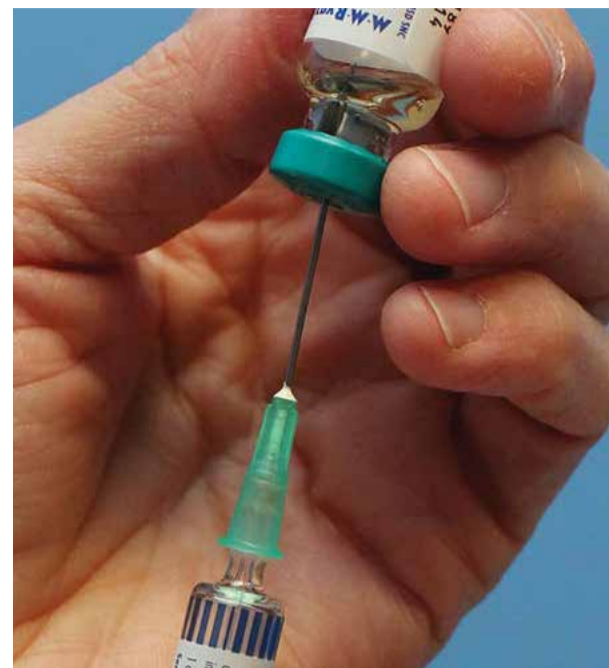
Director: Lee Unkrich

Starring: Anthony Gonzalez, Gael García Bernal, Benjamin Bratt

Language: Cantonese (English)

Duration: 105 min

## this day in history



## 2001 MMR TRIPLE VACCINE DECLARED SAFE

The government is launching a £3m campaign to convince parents the controversial MMR triple vaccine is safe.

Fears have been raised the vaccine against measles, mumps and rubella could trigger the developmental disability known as autism in some children.

But the Chief Medical Officer, Sir Liam Donaldson, insists there is no evidence to link the MMR with autism.

Vaccination rates have gone down by 5% in the past three years and there are fears a measles epidemic could follow.

Doubts were first raised about the safety of MMR in 1998 by Dr Andrew Wakefield, who works at the Royal Free Hospital.

He's calling for parents to be offered individual jabs: "For the moment there is doubt and where there is doubt further investigation is required and until that time that it is resolved scientifically, then the parents absolutely deserve the choice."

Autism was first diagnosed in the 1940s. It is a disorder which affects a child's ability to relate to other people and can lead to anti-social behaviour.

Dr Wakefield's theory is that the triple vaccine damages the gut, triggering inflammatory bowel disease which allows dangerous toxins to seep out into the bloodstream and up to the brain, triggering autism.

The biggest scientific study to date has been carried out in Finland where around two million children were tracked for 14 years. No link was found between MMR and autism.

Janice Ballard has an autistic son, Jamie. He had his MMR jab after being diagnosed as autistic.

Mrs Ballard says it is a difficult condition: "His behaviour can be quite distressing sometimes with head banging and hand biting."

"It takes a while to come to understand how he is and if he wants to do something, it's very difficult to channel him into other directions. He's absolutely obsessed with doing that thing."

Sir Liam says: "The vaccine has got a terrific record over the years. It's been in operation around the world for decades."

"Millions of children have been vaccinated and hundreds of thousands of lives have been saved."

"We've looked carefully at Wakefield's claims. He's a lone voice but nevertheless we haven't ignored him, but we can't substantiate his claims."

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The MMR vaccine was introduced into Britain in 1988 - but until 1999 it was still possible to get single measles vaccines.

Single vaccines were also available for mumps and rubella but were not routinely given to all children.

Since August 1999, the government has banned importation of the single measles vaccines on the grounds that different types of vaccines may produce different levels of immunity and therefore leave children open to other strains of the disease.

Dr Wakefield's research in February 1998 was the first to suggest a link between the MMR, bowel disease and autism.

Since then, there have been numerous studies contradicting his findings - but fears persist and there have been mounting calls for the single vaccines to be made freely available.



YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You're in a lovely mood, and the universe is more than willing to help.

Taurus April 20-May 20 There's a fantastic (if somewhat woo-woo) schedule of events working for you right now, and it's definitely set to help bring out your skill at smoothing rough edges.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Expect a sweet surprise later today - possibly quite a romantic surprise! You're all set for emotional communication of the nicest, most enduring kind, so if you and someone close got in a fight recently.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 There's quite a bit of activity going on in the heavens above you today, but it's all going to be good - with the possible exception of some leftover feelings about yesterday's argument, maybe.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Today's energy is casting a spell over everyone you meet today, urging them all (and you) to compromise, work together and keep calm.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Today's energy is soft and gentle, and it's set to cast a spell on you - the kind that makes it hard to keep your routines alive.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You're in the mood for romance, so you're making sweet connections that could be long-lasting.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You're in a dreamy state of mind and - more importantly - emotional state.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You're in the mood to hang out with unique individuals, or at least those interesting enough to present some kind of mental challenge.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 There may be some fireworks coming, but you can tamp your flashier emotions down quickly.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You're definitely in the mood for whispering, not shouting, which means that social situations tire you out.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 All your feelings are on the surface today as soon as they pop up, but you may want to hide them instead of sharing them with your people.

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.

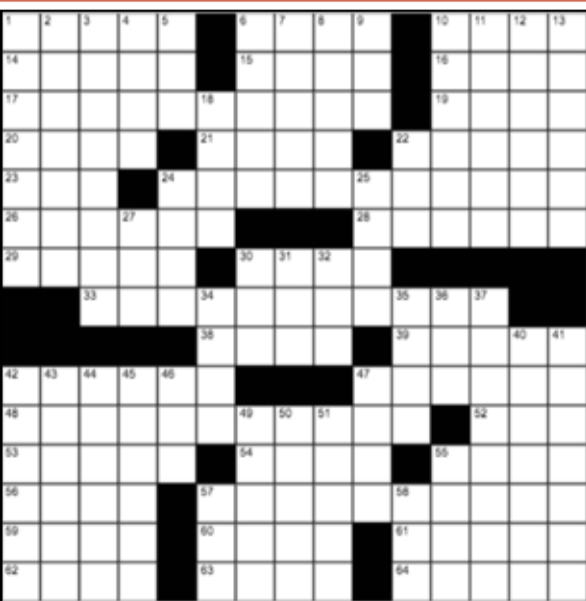
WEATHER

Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION for various cities in China and the World.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Sean of 'The Lord of the Rings'; 6- \_\_\_-European; 10- Pro (proportionally); 14- \_\_\_ evil...; 15- Smoke deposit; 16- Oomph; 17- Convert to Christianity; 19- Jazz flutist Herbie; 20- Sunday seats; 21- Urn; 22- Small tuned drum; 23- Lilt syllable; 24- Briefly; 26- Ditto!; 28- Rubs out; 29- Duplicate; 30- Loop; 33- Patriotism; 38- 'Barton Fink' director; 39- Mob scenes; 42- Bring into being; 47- Drinking glass; 48- The act of restoring; 52- Guido's high note; 53- Colorado resort; 54- City on the Rhine; 55- Con game; 56- When said three times, a 1970 war movie; 57- Pen name; 59- New Haven students; 60- That's haven't heard; 61- Part of the large intestine; 62- Nerve network; 63- 'Star Wars' princess; 64- Hammer parts;

DOWN: 1- Germfree; 2- More than two; 3- Teacart; 4- Taverns; 5- Holiday quaff; 6- Religion of the Muslims; 7- Racket; 8- Group of 12; 9- Suffix with Capri; 10- Sucking fish; 11- Singer Morissette; 12- Snarl; 13- Bugs; 18- Bacchanalian cry; 22- Place for ordering alcoholic drinks; 24- Encounter; 25- Narrate; 27- Genetic messenger; 30- Dove's sound; 31- Small bill; 32- 007 creator Fleming; 34- Cake decorator; 35- Pressing need; 36- Bro or sis; 37- Very small particle; 40- Column in the form of a man; 41- Pollen producers; 42- Orifice of a volcano; 43- Fix, as a shoe; 44- Lively wit; 45- Comfortable; 46- Unit of weight; 47- Vanished; 49- Have \_\_\_ to pick; 50- Marisa of 'My Cousin Vinny'; 51- Gandhi's land; 55- Plumlike fruit; 57- Cambodia's Lon \_\_\_; 58- Angel dust;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
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Rugby Academy

# Macau Bats U9, U10 teams promoted to Hong Kong top division

Donald Shaw, Hong Kong  
Special to MDT

**T**HE Macau Bats participated last week in the Valley Fort rugby festival held at Sandy Bay in Hong Kong. A glorious sunny day was the backdrop for another enjoyable and generally successful round of matches for the Bats. The U7s team were first up and were involved in two high scoring games with the Bats going down 3-4 to East Kowloon and 4-6 to Sai Kung Stingrays. Two tough games against HK Football Club and Sandy Bay followed and despite the defeats valuable tournament experience was gained.

The under 8s had a group of tight games, winning 3-2 against Flying Kukris and 2-1 against the Discovery Bay Pirates, a very creditable 4-4 draw against Sandy Bay and a 2-4 loss against HK Football Club.

The U9s and U10s teams continued their fine form with both teams posting four wins. The U9s beat Tsuen Wan Rhinos 7-0, Causewaybay Monkeys 5-1, Discovery Bay Pirates 4-3 and HK Football Club 6-0. The U9s remain unbeaten for the season so far.

U10s similarly recorded a set of impressive wins, USRC Tigers 10-0, Discovery Bay Pirates 6-0, Tung Chung 7-0 and Sai Kung Stingrays 2-1. The U10s have a record of played 16, won 16 for the season. Given the impressive performance of the U9 and U10 teams both have been promoted to the top division in Hong Kong for their age groups. No doubt the next festival will be more difficult.

The U12s played another round of the Richard Hawkes Cup at Happy Valley, losing narrowly 2-1 to a strong USRC Tigers and 3-2 against Flying Kukris. However, the team fought back to record a 3-0 win against Tung Chung and a 1-1 draw against HK Football Club. The results means that the Bats will continue to play in the Plate competition.

Meanwhile the U16s were playing against HK Football Club at Tai-Po. The Football Club established a 10-0 lead at half-time and despite a comeback which saw the Kukris/ Pirates/ Bats team lead 14-10 in the second half, HKFC ran out winners by 29-14.



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BOXING

# Spence stops Peterson in first welterweight title defense

Brian Mahoney, New York

**E**RROL Spence Jr. was even more dazzling in defending his title than he was while winning it.

Spence battered Lamont Peterson until the fight was stopped a second into the eighth round yesterday [Macau time] in the first defense of the welterweight title he won last year.

Spence had controlled the fight and both of Peterson's eyes appeared swollen as doctors checked him after the seventh round. The bell rang to start the eighth, and Peterson moved toward the center of the ring before his corner told the referee to call it.

"I didn't know I would dominate like that," Spence said. "I expected to get the knockout, but this was a great performance."

Spence (23-0, 20 KOs) pitched a shutout in his first attempt



Errol Spence Jr. (right) hits Lamont Peterson during the second round of an IBF welterweight championship boxing match

defending the IBF 147-pound crown he won last May when he went to Sheffield, England, and stopped Kell Brook in his hometown, breaking the champion's orbital bone and knocking him down in the 10th round before Brook went to a knee in the 11th and the fight was stopped.

Spence won every round on

all three scorecards in a performance that easily backed up the accolades he earned in his title-winning victory.

He knocked Peterson (35-4-1) down in the fifth and hurt him in many other rounds, ripping punches into his ribs to set up hard shots to the head.

Spence landed more punches

(161) than Peterson threw (158) according to final CompuBox stats and connected with over 100 more power punches — landing 35 alone in the fifth round.

"I could tell Lamont was wobbling before I got him down," Spence said. "It was just a great feeling to put on a strong performance."

Spence confidently threw his jab to get warmed up in the first, and then hurt Peterson with a body shot along the ropes in the second. They traded hard shots in the third with Spence continuing to go to the body and Peterson getting him upstairs.

The 2012 U.S. Olympian knocked Peterson down in the fifth when a right hand set up a solid left to the head. Peterson fought back gamely later in the round, easily the best one of the fight, but his right eye was closing by the sixth, making it even harder to stop the punches that had been pummeling him.

"He was getting the shots on me early. He was the better man tonight," Peterson said.

He wanted to keep going but trainer Barry Hunter decided otherwise.

"I know Lamont, he's a tough fighter. He's willing to die in there," Spence said. "You saw his coach had to stop the fight because he wanted to keep fighting."

Peterson, a 33-year-old former champion at 140 and 147 pounds, hoped a victory could get him into the mix for a couple more big fights to help further a boxing Hall of Fame case that he acknowledged this week isn't strong enough. **AP**

AD



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opinion

Views on China

Daniel Moss, Bloomberg

**BIG NEWS FROM CHINA IS ITS IMPLOSION DIDN'T HAPPEN**

China's economic performance is all about what hasn't happened. That's huge.

The world's No. 2 economy didn't implode under a mountain of debt, nor did trade tensions with the U.S. bring exports undone. And there certainly hasn't been the trade war many feared a year ago. The country's growing reliance on services and consumption as an engine of growth - a little-understood phenomenon in the West - wasn't reversed. Kudos.

All of these non-events add up to a big deal: The place that accounts for more than a third of global growth is showing remarkable economic resilience and is even picking up a tad. That's in part a product of, part a contributor to, the synchronized global upswing we hear so much about. Gross domestic product rose 6.9 percent in 2017, up from 6.7 percent a year earlier. Things looked pretty good as the year drew to a close; GDP gained 6.8 percent in the final three months of the year.

Sure, there are folks who say the numbers are cooked and that it's all just a matter of time before the Chinese model comes unglued. And it might happen. The figures do, to be fair, show a remarkable stability at the headline level, as my colleagues in Bloomberg Economics have pointed out. It's also true that China critics have been singing the same tune for a while now and the country hasn't collapsed. The worst hasn't come remotely close to passing.

So China has gone from a swing factor in the global economic order to something more like the rock underpinning the global outlook. A great reason for policymakers around the planet to fire off some thank-you notes before People's Bank of China Governor Zhou Xiaochuan's likely retirement this year.

There are two lessons from all this. The first is that the global economy is an incredibly interconnected and complex place and can't just be undone by slogans like "the end of globalization" that were so trendy a year ago.

The second is broader than economics: China puts experienced policy practitioners in charge, from the president's office on down. They do the hard work and don't rejoice in sowing chaos and confusion. As a result, China is a source of stability, not a threat to it.

Acknowledging this is not the same as becoming a China cheerleader. China faces significant challenges, not least of which are environmental degradation along with an aging and shrinking workforce. But as one travels around the world and talks to policymakers, investors, and current and former officials, there is the unmistakable sense that China is on the rise and the West ... well, "muddling through" is probably a charitable way to put it.

Few serious people think that the U.S., a proxy for the West, is remotely capable at this juncture of launching something on the scale of the Belt and Road Initiative. More corrosive is an idea becoming fashionable that democracies just can't do big things any more. We'll see how that plays out. Declinism is rife throughout American history - and yet the U.S. keeps bouncing back.

Still, this moment does belong to China. Economics numbers like those we saw this week undergird that notion. On my wish list: stirrings of inflation. They'll have to come eventually. Want to bet they'll emanate from China?

THE PJ EXPRESSES SORROW OVER THE DEATH OF FORMER DIRECTOR

The Judiciary Police (PJ) in a statement expressed its sadness and sorrow for the death of its former director António Francisco Marques Baptista, who passed away in Lisbon on January 19 after a prolonged illness.

Baptista had been director of the force from November 30, 1995 until the handover in December 1999. This period was a particularly sensitive time in Macau, marked by the frequent activity of several triad groups.

In the statement, the PJ acknowledged his "great respect for his profession" as well as his "skills and ability" at a time when "Macau's security went through a period of instability." The police authority also noted that thorough his leadership, the force was able to "fight all types of crime that were influencing negatively the security of this city."

The PJ staff extended also their solidarity and sympathy with Baptista's family.

FILM SHOWN IN IFFAM 2017

**'The Shape of Water' wins top Producers Guild Award**

**W**OMEN and inclusivity continued to dominate the awards season conversation yesterday [Macau time] at the Producers Guild Awards, where Guillermo del Toro's fantastical romance "The Shape of Water" won the top award and honorees like Jordan Peele and Ava DuVernay gave rousing speeches to the room of entertainment industry leaders.

The untelevised dinner and ceremony, held at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif., is closely watched for its capacity to predict the eventual Oscar best picture winner, but this year the "awards race" seemed to be the secondary show to the more urgent questions facing the industry, including the crisis of representation and sexual misconduct.

The Producers Guild last week ratified guidelines for combating sexual harassment in the entertainment industry, and everyone from DuVernay to Universal Chair Donna Langley and television mogul Ryan Murphy made mention of the changing times and the work that still needs to be done.

"If we want more brilliant films like 'Get Out' [...] we need to have many different perspectives including equal numbers of women, people of color, people of all faiths and sexual orientation involved in every stage of filmmaking," Langley said in accepting the Milestone Award - noting that she was only the third woman to do so.

It was not the only time "Get Out" got a special mention, despite not winning the top award. Peele also won the



Sally Hawkins (left) and Doug Jones in a scene from the film "The Shape of Water." Guillermo del Toro's Cold War fantasy romance is a contender for the Oscar for best picture

Stanley Kramer Award.

Del Toro was not present to accept the PGA's Darryl F. Zanuck Award for Outstanding Producer of Theatrical Motion Pictures, due to the health of his father.

His film was up against 10 others this year, including "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri," which won big at the Golden Globes earlier this month, "Lady Bird," "Get Out," "Dunkirk," "The Post," "Call Me By Your Name," "The Big Sick," "I, Tonya" "Wonder Woman" and "Molly's Game" - many of which were represented by actors and directors in attendance like Timothee Chalamet, Christopher Nolan, Margot Robbie, Patty Jenkins and Greta Gerwig.

Other presenters included the likes of Tom Hanks, Reese Witherspoon, Mary J. Blige, Gwyneth Paltrow, Kerry Washington and Morgan Freeman in the ceremony that saw Disney and Pixar's "Coco" pick up best animated

feature and Brett Morgen's Jane Goodall film "Jane" win best documentary.

In television, "The Handmaid's Tale" picked up best drama series, "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" won best comedy series, "Last Week Tonight With John Oliver" won best TV variety series, "Black Mirror" for long-form TV, "Leah Remini: Scientology and the Aftermath" for nonfiction television, "Sesame Street" for children's program and "Carpool Karaoke" for best short-form program.

The pre-announced honorees stole most of the show, however.

Norman Lear presented the Stanley Kramer Award to Peele invoking the award's namesake in speaking of "Get Out," which Lear proudly said he's seen three times.

Peele said he was proud to call Lear a friend.

"I want to say, you can use my body for your brain anytime," Peele laughed, before taking a more serious turn in his speech.

The Producers Guild's choice for top film has eight times in the last 10 years matched the eventual Academy Award best picture winner. Last year, its nominees predicted all 9 best picture nominees, although the PGA went to "La La Land" which lost out to "Moonlight" at the Academy Awards.

Oscar nominations will be announced Wednesday [Macau time] in advance of the ceremony on March 4. MDT/AP



Presenters at the 29th Producers Guild Awards at the Beverly Hilton included Tom Hanks, Morgan Freeman, Reese Witherspoon (pictured), Mary J. Blige, Gwyneth Paltrow and Kerry Washington

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	55-75 Moderate	☹️
High Density Residential Area	55-75 Moderate	☹️
Ambient	60-80 Moderate	☹️

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS



**AFGHANISTAN A** Taliban assault on the Intercontinental Hotel in Afghanistan's capital killed at least 18 people, including 14 foreigners, and pinned security forces down for more than 13 hours before the last attacker was killed yesterday, with the casualty toll expected to rise. More on p13

**TURKEY-SYRIA** Turkish troops and Syrian opposition forces attacked a Kurdish enclave in northern Syria yesterday in their bid to drive a U.S.-allied Kurdish militia from the region. More on p15



**ROMANIA** Tens of thousands of Romanians on Saturday protested against legislation passed by Parliament which critics say will make it harder to prosecute crime and high-level corruption.

**CZECH REPUBLIC** Officials say the death toll in a hotel fire in downtown Prague has increased to four after two of those injured died in a hospital.



**HONDURAS** Clashes have broken out in Honduras as demonstrators protesting President Juan Orlando Hernandez's re-election blocked roads in several locations and police moved into to break up the barricades.

**BRAZIL** The government of Brazil's southeastern state of Minas Gerais has decreed a state of emergency for its public health system due to an outbreak of yellow fever in 94 of its 853 cities.