



WYNN MACAU SHARES DROP AFTER SCANDAL

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ANGLICAN COLLEGE SUSPENDS CLASSES

Parents refused to bring their children to class following the discovery of asbestos in the vicinity of the school in Taipa

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Lawmakers grilled Teresa Cheng over illegal additions to her home that has highlighted concerns about rule of law

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JULIE ZHU

IC president resigns a month after appointment

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WORLD BRIEFS



TAIWAN refused to allow two Chinese airlines, Xiamen Airlines and China Eastern Airlines, to expand service to the island during the Lunar New Year holiday, a news agency reported yesterday, after Beijing angered Taiwan's government by approving new air routes. *More on p11*

CHINA-JAPAN Chinese Premier Li Keqiang will travel to Tokyo for his country's first joint summit with Japan and South Korea since 2015, the clearest sign yet of improving ties between the three neighbors. *More on p12*

PHILIPPINES The defense chief has recommended that villages in a danger zone around erupting Mount Mayon be turned into a permanent "no man's land" to avoid evacuating thousands of residents each time the country's most active volcano explodes. President Rodrigo Duterte expressed support for the recommendation. *More on backpage*



AP PHOTO



KIM JONG NAM MURDER

Police officer testimony adds mystery to case

P20



Renato Marques

CRIME

Baby in serious condition after suspected mistreatment by maid

A six-month-old baby has been admitted to the Conde de Sao Januario Hospital Center (CHCSJ) bearing clear signs of mistreatment.

The Judiciary Police (PJ) stated at a press conference yesterday that the sole suspect at present is the family's domestic helper, a 32-year-old Vietnamese woman.

On January 26, the domestic helper called the child's parents upon discovering the baby unconscious in their Taipa home.

The family rushed to the hospital, where the attending phy-

sician diagnosed the child's condition as life-threatening and identified several signs of mistreatment. In particular, he stated the child had been violently grabbed and shaken to the point of unconsciousness.

After receiving the report, the

PJ detained the domestic helper for questioning. Although she denied all wrongdoing, the police took the view that there was sufficient proof to commence criminal proceedings and transferred the suspect to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP).

The physician said the child had been shaken to the point of unconsciousness

In a separate case, the PJ has taken into custody a 49-year-old Hong Kong man who swindled a local jewelry shop out of HKD470,000 worth of goods last summer.

The shop owner who filed the complaint stated that the man was a regular customer. He was a familiar enough face that the owner allowed him to take two diamond rings from the shop without immediate payment, at the same time that he ordered a third diamond ring that he claimed he would pick up a few days later.

The man returned a few days later to collect the third ring, handing the owner a check for HKD470,000 to pay for the three items.

When the shop owner tried to deposit the check, he was informed by the bank that the pay-

ment had been rejected as the signature on the check did not match that of the account holder.

The owner tried to contact the man several times, but he repeatedly attempted to postpone payment. The owner eventually filed a report with the PJ on September 25, 2017.

The PJ intercepted the man at the border checkpoint when he tried to leave the region. After being taken into questioning, the man confessed to the crime, explaining to the PJ that he had immediately pledged the rings to a pawnshop in exchange for gambling money.

He also admitted that the check was from his girlfriend and he had taken it without her consent, after which he added that he had lost all the money at the casino.

Couple accused of embezzlement



A couple has been accused of embezzling from a casino where the woman worked as a croupier, the PJ reported yesterday.

The casino is accusing the couple of engaging in fraudulent activities to obtain gaming chips on at least two different occasions, causing HKD415,000 worth of damage in chips.

According to the report, the first incident took place on December 28, 2017, when the man went to play at the table where his wife was working. According to CCTV records, the man exchanged cash for chips on several occasions. Each time, he received chips worth more than the amount he had handed over. At the same time, the woman also tried to cover the surveillance camera trained on her table.

Every time the man won a game, he also received

more chips than what he had actually won.

The couple attempted a repeat of the incident on January 24, leading the casino to file the complaint. Both were detained on the same day.

In another case reported by the Public Security Police Force (PSP), a mainland Chinese male in his fifties was accused of document forgery and illegal entry to the region.

On January 26, police officers approached the man to request identification. The man showed them a forged two-way permit, which he later said he had bought in Zhuhai for RMB800 so he could come to Macau to gamble.

The man was found to have been banned from entering the region previously and that the ban was still in place. There was also no record of his entry at any border checkpoint.

JANUARY PHONE SCAMS CAUSE LOSSES OF MOP190,000

THE PJ announced today that phone scams reported between January 1 and 28 led to losses of MOP190,000 in total. It received reports from 13 victims, all of whom were either local residents or university students.

The PJ added that a popular new scam among criminals is to cite false administrative infractions involving the victims, usually related to a package shipped to mainland China via a logistics company.

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Tse resigns after a month of leading IC

AFTER just over a month at the head of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), Cecilia Tse resigned yesterday citing health reasons.

Kent Iong Chi Kin had served as acting president of the bureau while Tse was on medical leave.

Alexis Tam, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, said on January 17 that he was "worried" about Tse's health as she had been on sick leave for more than two weeks, but had not provided any details of the illness.

IC employees told the Times that Tse had not been seen at the bureau's office since her appointment on December 19.

Yesterday, Secretary Tam recommended Mok Ian Ian - a local writer who has been a civil servant since 1994 - for the post. She previously led the planning department of the IC in 2000, and is reportedly familiar with Macau's cultural sector.



Tse, the former vice president of the Macao Government Tourism Office, took office pledging that a key element of her two-year tenure as leader would be the improvement of the IC's administrative transparency.

She also announced plans for a series of forums and exhibitions to build Macau as a platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

As reported in early December, Tam had proposed Tse's

nomination as IC president to Chief Executive, Chui Sai On.

Tam's office explained that the changes in the IC presidency were a direct result of the March 2017 report by the Commission Against Corruption, highlighting several unlawful hiring practices at the bureau.

In a statement last month, the secretary was quoted as saying, "Compliance with the principles of legality, fairness and good administrative management make it absolutely imperative and indispensable that the public recruitment regime be fully respected."

He expressed hopes that "these changes will restore the credibility that affected the entity as well as to present a new dynamic in the management of the bureau."

During the "Walk for a Million" event, Chui remarked that Tam and his office made a "cautious choice," taking into consideration Tse's qualifications, track record, and ability.

Tse succeeded Leung Hio Ming, who had served as vice president of the IC under former president Ung Vai Meng.

Both Leung and Ung stepped down following allegations of malpractice. **LV**

Man trapped in mid-air while bungee jumping

A Russian male around 30 years of age was trapped mid-air while bungee jumping off the Macau Tower yesterday. He was suspended 55 meters above the ground for approximately one hour and suffered temporary paralysis in one foot. The man was eventually rescued by the Fire Services and has been hospitalized. The accident is believed to have been caused by a system failure.

CNY lights will be turned on Friday

The Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) announced last week that the decorative lights for Chinese New Year (CNY) will be turned on this Friday. In total, 76 decorative light installations will be spread across the districts of Macau: 54 in the Macau Peninsula, 14 in Taipa and eight in Coloane. This year, the budget for the CNY lighting is about MOP5.1 million. A ceremony to mark the unveiling of a new CNY sculpture will take place on February 27. The sculpture will depict a three-meter tall dog and will be painted in yellow. During the CNY, the Panda Pavilion will be free to the public.

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opinion

LUCKY FOR WYNN, WHAT HAPPENS IN MACAU STAYS IN MACAU

David Fickling, Bloomberg

What a difference a few time zones make. Shares in Wynn Resorts Ltd. fell 10.1 percent in the U.S. Friday after the Wall Street Journal reported that dozens of former employees had alleged sexual misconduct by the group's founder and Chief Executive Officer Steve Wynn.

Investors in Hong Kong were far less concerned. Stock in Wynn Macau Ltd. was down just 4.8 percent at publication time yesterday, and only a sliver below its highest level in almost three years. That's not all that much worse than the 1.5 percent fall in SJM Holdings Ltd., or MGM China Holdings Ltd., down 1.9 percent.

How to account for the difference? The two companies are intertwined: Wynn Macau provides about 70 percent of the U.S. parent's revenue and Ebitda. Wynn is founder, chairman and chief executive of both, with his name over the doors in Trump-high letters. It's hard to argue both don't suffer profound key-person risk.

One possibility is just that more water has passed under the bridge, giving investors a chance to reassess how much their holdings are threatened. But the news broke four hours before the market closed in the U.S. on Friday - plenty of time for stateside shareholders to weigh the issue. With valuations for Wynn's Macau stock around their highest level in four years after fourth-quarter results that beat estimates last week, there's good reason to take some profit, even absent the Wynn factor.

It's hard to escape the notion that investors in Hong Kong are simply shrugging off the story. Sin cities have long turned a blind eye to louche behavior, and members of Stanley Ho's complicated family still have key roles in MGM China, SJM and Melco Resorts & Entertainment Ltd., three of Macau's six licensed resorts. Traders seem only moderately interested: Turnover in Wynn Macau's less-liquid pool of shares was about three times the three-month average on Monday, versus a 10-times multiple for Wynn Resorts.

That could prove a costly mistake. The determination behind whether executives are judged "fit and proper" to hold a casino license is notoriously opaque, but regulators do tend to look over each other's shoulders. Wynn has already resigned from his role as finance chairman of the Republican National Committee. Should gaming bureaucrats in Nevada and Massachusetts decide he's no longer squeaky-clean enough to hold a casino license, it's hard to imagine Macau ruling that he is.

Investors are often warned that sexism is a financial, as well as reputational, risk. Companies with all-male boards missed out on about USD655 billion in returns on assets relative to more diverse ones in 2014, according to a study by Grant Thornton LLP.

Those tempted to play down the risks to Wynn Macau as a merely private matter would do well to heed that lesson.

Wynn Macau shares drop after US rout on harassment claims

Carrie Hong, Daniela Wei

SHARES of Steve Wynn's Chinese casino operation fell the most in almost a month after allegations the Wynn Macau Ltd. chairman sexually harassed women.

The Macau unit, which accounts for the bulk of Wynn Resorts Ltd.'s revenue, slumped as much as 6.5 percent in Hong Kong yesterday. They traded at HKD28.40, down 5.3 percent, as of 1:41 p.m. On Friday, U.S. parent Wynn Resorts Ltd.'s shares fell 10 percent in New York, the most in 13 months.

Morgan Stanley and Union Gaming Group LLC downgraded their ratings on Wynn Macau stock yesterday, after the Wall Street Journal reported that Wynn - a casino industry stalwart - pressured massage therapists and a former resort manicurist to perform sex acts. The allegations were denied by the Wynn Resorts' founder.

Wynn assets are "best in class," but the uncertainty surrounding the harassment allegations and the potential for local regulatory review may push investors away from Wynn Macau and toward rivals Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd. and Sands China Ltd., Union Gaming analyst Grant Govertsen wrote in a note yesterday. He downgraded Wynn Macau to a hold from buy. Morgan Stanley lowered its rating to equal-weight from overweight previously.



The long-term impact on the stock may be muted, according to Dickie Wong, Hong Kong-based executive director of research at Kingston Securities Ltd. "The company's overall operation is on a good track," he said. "Wynn's scandal is more

personal-related. The impact to the whole industry should be limited."

Before today's move, shares of Wynn Macau had climbed to an almost 3 1/2-year high as VIPs return to the Chinese gambling enclave. The allegations against

Wynn come just days after Wynn Resorts reported better-than-expected quarterly earnings, with a surge in revenue from the Wynn Palace, a casino located on Macau's Cotai Strip, overshadowing weaker results out of Las Vegas.

While Wynn Resorts is based in Las Vegas, it generates more than 70 percent of its business in Macau, the world's largest gambling hub. The company said early last week it plans to develop the next phase of the USD4.2 billion Wynn Palace on 4.45 hectares. On a conference call, Steve Wynn expressed optimism the business will be able to continue after the gaming licenses of Macau's six casino operators start expiring from 2020.

Representatives for Macau's Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau couldn't be reached over the weekend. **Bloomberg**

GOP senators: Party should consider returning money

TWO Republican senators say their party should immediately consider returning contributions from casino mogul Steve Wynn in light of sexual harassment allegations against him.

Wynn has been a prolific Republican donor. He led the Republican National Committee's fundraising efforts during President Donald Trump's first year, helping the committee rake in more than USD130 million.

Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina tells ABC's "This Week" on Sunday that the money

should be returned if the allegations "have merit." Republicans previously called on Democrats to return contributions from disgraced Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein.

Sen. Susan Collins of Maine tells CNN's "State of the Union" that Republicans should return the money if they've accepted contributions recently that haven't been spent.

Wynn resigned Saturday as RNC finance chairman after a Wall Street Journal report on allegations made by several women.

Wynn's Macau expansion at stake

WHILE investors are transfixed by the sexual harassment allegations swirling around Steve Wynn in the U.S., the key to Wynn Resorts Ltd.'s future sits on the other side of the world in Macau.

The billionaire stepped down as Republican National Committee finance chair over the weekend, following reports that the casino magnate had engaged in multiple instances of sexual harassment. The impact of the claims reverberated yesterday in Macau with Wynn Macau Ltd. shares slipping 6.5 percent in Hong Kong for the biggest drop in more than a year.

With the parent company facing investigations in the U.S. and calls for Steve Wynn's ouster, here are some reasons

why the scandal will be a big deal for Macau too.

CROWN JEWEL

Wynn Macau is the growth engine for its U.S. parent, generating more than 70 percent of Wynn Resorts' business. Last week, the casino operator reported better-than-expected quarterly earnings as a surge in revenue from Wynn Palace on Macau's Cotai Strip overshadowed weaker results out of Las Vegas.

MACAU RESURGENCE

Business is booming in Macau as high rollers have returned to the territory after a government crackdown. Wynn gained the most market share last year among casino operators with the resurgence of the eli-

te gamblers, according to gaming data. Total gambling takings rose 19 percent in 2017, the first full-year of growth since 2013, and analysts are optimistic about the market this year with the opening of new resorts.

INCREASED SCRUTINY

Any fallout from the allegations could have a major impact on Macau. Gaming regulators in Nevada and Massachusetts are looking into the accusations, and punitive actions in the U.S. could prompt Macau watchdogs to ramp up their scrutiny, said Wang Changbin, director of the Gaming Teaching and Research Centre at the Macau Polytechnic Institute. Upsetting the market by ousting an

existing casino operator may be difficult, Wang added. Macau's gaming law stipulates that the reputation of the operator and its controlling shareholder is considered in the bidding process for licenses.

Macau lawmaker Pereira Coutinho said Wynn's situation shouldn't create difficulty with its operating license, as the personal allegations don't hurt the enclave's image as much as more damaging industry scandals in the past that didn't spur changes in the laws. "The former Portuguese colony is not responsible enough to solve problems that have caused negative impact to the society," he said.

FOUNDER'S FATE

Some investors are

calling for the company to oust Steve Wynn, raising the prospect of a volatile transition period. Bloomberg Intelligence analyst Margaret Huang says possible successors to the 76-year-old casino magnate include Linda Chen, chief operating officer of Wynn Macau. Wynn cited Chen as one of the company's executives fit to take over when asked about a potential replacement in 2011.

ASIAN FALLOUT

The repercussions could be felt beyond Macau. Japan is opening up to casino resorts, and government officials are already sensitive to negative perceptions about the industry as they consider regulations and licenses for casino operators.

MDT/Bloomberg



MGM frontline staff protest 'unfair' bonus policy

FRONTLINE workers at MGM China Holdings held a second demonstration yesterday afternoon in another attempt to pressure the management into amending its "unfair" bonus policy.

Citing MGM's "impressive performance in 2017," protest organizer New Macau Gaming Staff Rights Association says that the bonus distribution ratio between staff members and their managers is unfair.

Under MGM's remuneration scheme, shift managers and other senior executives are entitled to a bonus equivalent to three months' salary, while frontline staff members receive a bonus equivalent to one month's salary.

Protesters described the policy as "Fat Top Skinny Bottom" and said they were "very dissatisfied."

They demanded that the casino operator pay all team members a bonus equivalent to two months' salary, every year, to be distributed in installments every January and July.

In a statement to the Times, MGM China said that it "values its team members and as such, accepts that individuals have the right to express their views."

"Consistent with our desire to provide a safe and positive working environment, we continue to be actively engaged in communicating directly with all our team members. We will have ongoing communication with the team members so as to improve the experience for both our team and guests."

The same protestors delivered a petition to MGM China representatives at their first demonstration on Sunday. **DB**

Guangdong to ban coal-boilers

THE Guangdong Environmental Protection Department (GDEP) said that the province will launch firm measures to combat environmental pollution in Guangdong, according to a report by TDM.

During the Guangdong Provincial People's Congress, several of Guangdong's provincial departments organized a joint press conference. At this conference GDEP Chief Lu Xiulu announced that his department will introduce firm measures, including new industrial and energy policies, to combat environmental pollution.

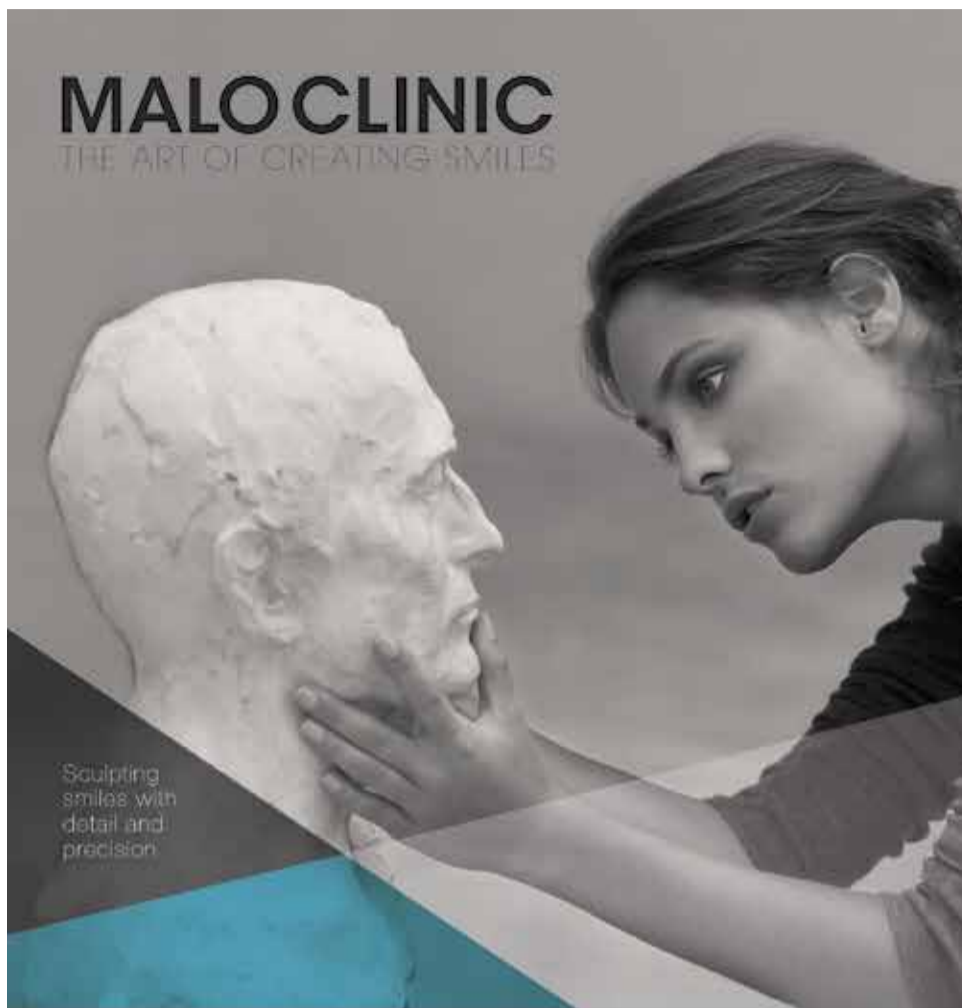
Lu noted that while Guangdong province accounts for about 2 percent of China's to-

tal area, its pollutants account for approximately 3 to 8 percent of all of China's pollutants.

He pointed out that the total number of Guangdong's pollutants is comparatively larger than other Chinese provinces, and that 11 cities in Guangdong still do not meet environment quality standards.

Lu acknowledged that the level of pollution reached serious levels in the years of 2013, 2014, and 2015. The GDEP chief further remarked that heavy pollution clouds occur in Guangdong every two to three years. In the Pearl River Delta, the use of coal boilers and petroleum coke will be banned.

AD



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- B.** For all patients who will be in Portugal during this period, Macau MALO CLINIC will manage the necessary bookings, follow-up and patients' medical records to our colleagues in any MALO CLINIC in Portugal.
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Anglican College suspends classes following asbestos discovery

Lynzy Valles

SEVERAL parents have refused to bring their children to school following the discovery of asbestos in the vicinity of the Macau Anglican College in Taipa.

A rooftop being demolished in the area was discovered to have been filled with the toxic material.

After receiving multiple complaints from parents, the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA) on Friday suspended the unlicensed demolition works being carried out at a plot of land at Avenida Padre Tomás Pereira da Taipa.

The roof sheeting was made of asbestos, which can cause serious chronic respiratory disease. Inhaled asbestos fibers can aggravate lung tissue.

Nearly 50 percent of students missed classes yesterday due to parents' concern over the area's air quality. Classes will be suspended today and tomorrow.

Parents told the Times that they have kept their children at home until tests have been carried out to ensure the school's safety.

According to a parent who asked to remain anonymous, the principal, Robert Alexander, had informed all parents of the school's request for DSPA to cease demolition works and provide a date for the safe removal of the harmful material.

"All was fine until the owner removed the sheeting overnight before the government could attend. Much to our horror as parents, we were [...] faced with the potential risk of asbestos contamination," one parent lamented.

"For me, I don't want to put my kids at unnecessary risk [...] until we don't have a clear idea



from the government and the school on exactly what is happening," another parent said.

In an email to parents dated January 22, Alexander announced that the school had requested the site owner to refrain from further works for the rest of the week and during school hours.

In another email dated January 27, he informed the parents that the removal of asbestos roof sheeting had been suspended on January 19 and rescheduled for January 27.

On January 26, the DSPA notified the school that the owner had been informed to stop the removal of the sheeting.

As cited in the email, the school had instructed its cleaning company to start the pressure cleaning of all open areas on Sunday, and that windows and doors had been kept closed for the weekend and the coming week.

The school resumed its usual outdoor activities yesterday.

However, parents are still dissatisfied with the actions of the school and the government, believing that the school should have been closed until completing safety tests, and that the site owner should be investigated for putting the public in danger.

"I have been told that the government is looking into the site today. Why now and not before [when] they've had all weekend?" said one parent.

"The items may be long gone and disposed of elsewhere, possibly contaminating a new area, and if some debris remains then the risk to our children at school remains. As a parent I want action and investigation, not business as usual."

The concerned citizen said the government had acted "just a little too late" in the removal of

hazardous waste, stressing that children had been attending school while unaware of the hazardous chemical.

The same parent added that the school's winter concerts, Open Day and football training sessions had also been pushed through despite the danger.

"The site owner has a lot to answer [for] and this is where the government and agencies can set an example to others for careless disregard for safety," the parent said.

Alexander informed the Times last night that the DSPA had contacted a Hong Kong company to conduct air quality tests. Testing has begun and the results will be available tomorrow.

"In the meantime, the school has decided to suspend classes for two days until such time that we receive a report about the air quality in the school," said the principal.

The school will still post homework for its students through e-learning platforms so as not to disrupt their learning.

The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) has provided the school with air purifiers and anti-pollution masks.

The DSEJ said it was only alerted to the situation on Sunday night and claimed that it took "temporary measures together with the school."

The school has decided to suspend classes for two days until such time that we receive a report about the air quality in the school.

ROBERT ALEXANDER
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

According to DSEJ head Kong Chi Meng, the school has been ordered to conduct cleaning procedures over the next two days. Kong expressed hopes that the school will suspend outdoor activities until it receives an update on the air quality.

In a phone call to radio show Macao Forum, Kong said that the bureau had sent engineers to the school yesterday morning.

The DSPA and the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau also issued a joint statement yesterday that the unlicensed demolition works have been suspended.

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German automakers face heat over tests on monkeys, humans

David McHugh, Geir Moulson

PUBLIC criticism of the German auto industry has escalated on reports that diesel exhaust tests were carried out on both monkeys and humans.

The chairman of Volkswagen said yesterday that the tests involving monkeys were "totally incomprehensible" and the German government condemned the reported experiments and as well as others involving human volunteers as subjects.

Revelations of the tests add a twist to the German auto industry's attempt to move past Volkswagen's scandal over cheating on diesel tests and the resulting questioning of diesel technology across the industry.

Volkswagen Chairman Hans Dieter Poetsch said tests were "totally incomprehensible" and must be "investigated completely and without reservation," the dpa news agency reported.

A report by the New York Times found that a research group funded by major German auto companies commissioned experiments in which one group of monkeys was exposed to diesel exhaust from a late-model Volkswagen, while



another group was exposed to fumes from an older Ford pickup.

The experiments were carried out in 2014 before Volkswagen was caught using software that let vehicles cheat on emissions tests. They were intended to show modern diesel technology had solved the problem of excess emissions, but according to the New York Times report the Volkswagen car in the tests was equipped with illegal software that turned emissions controls on while the car was

on test stands and off during regular driving.

Volkswagen admitted using the software in 2015. The Volkswagen scandal led to public scrutiny of diesel emissions as regulators discovered that other companies' vehicles also had higher emissions on the road than during testing, though not necessarily through illegal rigging. The industry has had to fend off calls for diesel bans in German cities with high pollution levels.

The New York Times report

was followed by one in yesterday's edition of the Stuttgarter Zeitung daily that the now-closed research group also commissioned tests in which humans were exposed to nitrogen oxides, a class of pollutant. The group reportedly said the tests showed no effect on the subjects.

Revelations of the tests add a twist to the German auto industry's attempt to move past Volkswagen's scandal over cheating on diesel tests

The German government condemned the reported tests on animals and humans. Transport Minister Christian Schmidt "has no understanding for such tests [...] that do not serve science but merely PR aims,"

spokesman Ingo Strater told reporters in Berlin.

He called for the companies concerned to provide "immediate and detailed" responses, and said a ministry commission of inquiry that was set up after the emissions scandal broke will hold a special meeting to examine whether there are any other cases.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman, Steffen Seibert, said that "the disgust many people are feeling is absolutely understandable."

"These tests on monkeys or even humans can in no way be ethically justified," Seibert said. "They raise many critical questions for those behind these tests, and these questions must urgently be answered."

He questioned the aims of the tests. "The automakers have to reduce emissions of harmful substances further and further," he said. "They should not be trying to prove the supposed harmlessness of exhaust with the help of monkeys or even humans."

Seibert said that the supervisory boards of the companies concerned "have a particular responsibility."

The governor of the German state of Lower Saxony, a major shareholder in Volkswagen, added his voice to calls quick answers.

Stephan Weil, who sits on VW's supervisory board, stressed that "the behavior of the company must in every respect fulfill ethical demands." He said he hadn't known about the tests. **AP**

HK seeks to cash in on frenzy for Chinese biotech

CHINESE drug companies have been on a tear in the U.S. stock market. Now, entrepreneurs and investors betting on the Asian country's fledgling biotechnology industry see another reason for optimism.

The stock exchange in Hong Kong - home to the

world's fourth-largest equity market - is in the midst of weighing a proposal that would allow biotech companies to list even before they turn a profit. If those plans go through, it would pave the way for more Chinese health-care firms to raise money via initial public offerings, giving them

easier access to funds for research.

Annual spending on prescription medicines has crossed USD100 billion in China as the incidences of diseases like diabetes and cancer have surged. The Asian country has lagged behind the U.S. and other developed markets on in-

novation, and Beijing has said it wants to build homegrown champions in the health-care industry. The proposed Hong Kong listing rules would provide a boost to those plans, while helping the exchange list more of China's so-called new-economy companies that are particularly attrac-

tive to international investors.

Without access to the Hong Kong market, such pre-profit companies "will likely go to America, but now Hong Kong comes in with its advantages in geography and language," said Lu Xianping, founder of Chipscreen Biosciences

Ltd., a Shenzhen-based drug developer. Chipscreen is preparing for an IPO and weighing options including mainland China and Hong Kong, according to Lu, whose company has one cancer drug on the market in China and is developing other oncology and diabetes therapies. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

SANDS CHINA ANNOUNCES PAY RISE, DISCRETIONARY BONUS



Sands China is increasing the salaries of team members of "eligible grades" effective March 1, the company announced in a statement, "benefitting roughly 99 percent of Sands China's total employment."

According to the statement, employees that earn less than or equal to MOP12,000 per month (before tax) will be given a pay rise of MOP600. Those earning more than MOP12,000 per month

(before tax) will receive an average of a 2.5 percent pay rise.

The company will also pay a discretionary bonus to all eligible full-time employees on February 13, to reward their contributions toward the company's achievements.

From among nearly 28,000 eligible full-time employees, those who have completed a full year of service in 2017 will receive a discretionary bonus on February 13, equivalent to at least one month's salary.

HOTEL ROYAL ANNOUNCES VALENTINE'S DAY OFFER AT FADO

Hotel Royal is offering a special Valentine's Day dinner menu at its Portuguese restaurant, Fado. Under the baton of Executive Chef Luís Américo, the restaurant will turn into a romantic stage featuring an elegant, delicious 4-Course Valentine's Day Wine Pairing Menu, on offer between February 10 and 14.

Among the items included in the Valentine's Day offering are zucchini carpaccio with salmon tartare, mango

and strawberries; baked sea bass with fresh clams, coriander, sautéed shrimp and oven roasted tomatoes; and grilled tenderloin with pumpkin gnocchi and green pea mousse.

Desserts offered include passion fruit parfait with fresh fruits and chocolate textures, as well as complimentary hand-crafted Portuguese heart-shaped cookies made according to a traditional recipe.

ANALYSIS

Tourism industry is only just getting going

Tracy Chen

IF you want to gauge how Chinese consumers are reshaping the world, look at how many of them are leaving China.

For vacation, that is. Outbound Chinese tourism has enjoyed explosive growth over the past decade and there's plenty more where that came from: only 5 percent of the Middle Kingdom's citizens hold a passport, compared with 40 percent in the U.S. That's a lot of ground to make up and suggests this boom has some staying power.

Investors would do well to focus on the beneficiaries, and not just the Chinese companies among them. I'm talking about Marriott International Inc., Ctrip.com International Ltd. and the PowerShares Dynamic Leisure and Entertainment exchange-traded fund.

While much public discourse in the U.S. focuses on things like steel prices and cheap manufactured goods, the really dominant theme in Chinese economics is the power of consumer spending and services. This was initially a domestic phenomenon. It's now increasingly taking place beyond China's shores.

If you worry that Chinese economic data are fake, here are some numbers that may comfort, or startle, you. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, Chinese outbound tourism expenditure grew to USD261 billion in 2016 (21 percent of the world market), an increase of 12 percent from 2015 and 11 times of the amount spent a decade earlier. The number of outbound travelers climbed 6 percent to 135 million in 2016. Numbers like these reinforced China's No. 1 outbound tourism status in the world since 2012.



President Xi Jinping increasingly encourages outbound tourism to project soft power on the global stage

How did all this happen? Like many changes, it can be traced to Deng Xiaoping's opening of the economy in the 1980s. But it didn't really take off in force until 1995 when China launched the Approved Destination Status (ADS) program, which allowed for organized tours to a small

but growing number of approved countries. The industry has had three distinct phases.

First, from the mid-1980s to early 1990s, trickles of outbound tourism to a few Asian neighbors were allowed for family visits only. Also permitted were government-paid or employer-paid business trips and cultural exchanges involving visiting scholars and seminar attendees.

Next, from the mid-1990s to 2010, under the ADS policy, some licensed travel agencies organized self-paid packaged group tours usually involving multiple destinations. Those trips often featured superficial sightseeing in iconic cities, photo snapping, and gift shopping for family and friends. Tourists still didn't have much interaction with the local scene due to low income levels, rigid tour arrangements, rushed itineraries,

language barriers and lack of overseas travel experience.

Lastly, from 2010 to the present, rising income, increasing travel experience, easier visa regulations and marketing efforts by destination countries made things a lot easier. Add to that, self-driving independent tours and off-the-beaten-track destinations with in-depth experience and lifestyle experiments.

The footprints of Chinese tourists are now found across Southeast Asia, Africa, North and South America and even the Polar regions. Millennials dominate the self-driving tourist group, whose interest shifted from merely sightseeing and shopping to learning about history and experiencing culture.

President Xi Jinping increasingly encourages outbound tourism to project soft power on the global stage. Chinese officials are

also known to adjust the flow of tourists to destinations based on the temperature of political relations. All the while, rising Chinese incomes at home mean more is spent each trip.

The explosive growth of the internet, social media, mobile applications and mobile payment provides more convenience for tourists. This isn't unique to China, but it underscores how uniquely the Chinese tourism industry is positioned.

What are the investment implications? This boom has just started and the best is yet to come. Investors should target destinations, industries and companies that can attract Chinese tourists. Multinational hotel chains like Marriott, travel service companies like Ctrip, airlines, and foreign luxury brand retailers should all benefit from this trend. As shown below, the exchange-traded fund for PowerShares has been riding Chinese outbound tourism since 2010, substantially outperforming Standard & Poor's 500 index.

Chinese outbound tourism is a precursor to Chinese overseas investment and consumption. It will help create a significant number of jobs in destination countries. According to the CEO of Ctrip, about 15 million Chinese outbound tourists chose the company annually. Their trips abroad have created up to 100 million jobs worldwide. That will make the greatest splash in small countries like Cambodia.

Despite investors' skepticism about official Chinese economic data, the rising wealth of the population is reflected through the boom in outbound tourism. Can something go wrong? Sure. But the spending refutes, at least in part, the argument that China's growth is a debt-fueled house of cards. **Bloomberg**

BELT & ROAD

Infrastructure push reaches arctic, leaving out US

THE sun never sets on China's trade and infrastructure ambitions.

With the addition of the Arctic and Latin America last week, Chinese President Xi Jinping's signature Belt and Road Initiative has become truly global. Only the U.S., its neighbor Canada and ally Japan have yet to be included in the plan, which seeks to build or upgrade a network of highways, railways, ports and pipelines.

China added the two regions - about 33.7 million total square kilometers - in

the span of five days. First, Xi urged the creation of a "Trans-Pacific Maritime Silk Road" in a Jan. 22 message to a gathering of leaders from Latin American and Caribbean countries. Last week, China also announced a "Polar Silk Road" while unveiling its first white paper detailing an Arctic policy.

While it's unclear how much support the initiative might find in the new geographic regions, the expansion is the latest illustration of Xi's desire to play a greater global role as

the U.S. turns more inward-looking under Donald Trump. As the U.S. president drafts a USD1 trillion plan to overhaul America's aging roads and bridges, Xi's infrastructure-building endeavor is pushing into the U.S.'s backyard.

Xi, seeking to avoid direct competition with Washington, has invited the U.S. to join the Belt and Road Initiative. Trump has not yet accepted the offer. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has expressed an interest in participating. Canada has joined

the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which has investments in Belt and Road projects.

Even before this latest expansion, questions have swirled over the risk and necessity of Chinese investments linked with the Belt and Road Initiative. Still, the project - which China's ruling Communist Party wrote into its constitution - has only grown more ambitious since Xi first proposed restoring ancient Eurasian trade routes in 2013. **Bloomberg**



YU WENSHENG

Rights lawyer charged with inciting subversion

PROMINENT legal activist Yu Wensheng has been charged with inciting subversion of state power after writing a letter calling for democratic reforms, his lawyer said yesterday.

Police informed Yu's wife of the charge on Saturday, lawyer Huang Hanzhong said. Inciting subversion is a vaguely worded charge often used to muzzle dissent.

Earlier this month, more than a dozen police officers grabbed Yu, a lawyer in Beijing, while he was waiting in his car to take his 13-year-old son to school. The seizure came a day after he posted a letter online calling on the ruling Communist Party to reform the Chinese Constitution and allow open presidential elections.

"The president, the head of state, is basically appointed without any meaningful election. It has no credibility for the country, for civil society and for countries across the world," Yu said in the letter.

Huang said police also took Yu's wife, Xu Yan, to the Shijingshan police station in Beijing on Saturday on the same charge, though they released her the next day.

Police searched Yu's home and office and seized computers, USB drives, cellphones and various files documenting cases that Yu had handled in recent years, Huang said.

Reached by phone, an official at the Shijingshan police station directed queries on Yu to its Xingucheng branch. An official at Xingucheng in turn referred questions back to the Shijingshan station.



Chinese lawyer Yu Wensheng with his wife Xu Yan

Police also took Yu's wife, Xu Yan, to the police station on the same charge, though they released her the next day

Xu was told her husband's case would be handed over to a police bureau in the eastern city of Xu-

zhou in Jiangsu province for further investigation though no reason was provided, the lawyer said. Chinese authorities sometimes transfer politically sensitive cases to courts and prosecutors far from where the alleged offenses took place, moves activists say are intended to make it difficult for supporters to pressure the authorities.

Yu gained widespread attention after being detained for three months in 2014, during which he says he was tortured and questioned. He was detained again in 2015 but released after a day when his case received wide publicity. **AP**



Hong Kong Secretary of Justice Teresa Cheng (center) bows before a question-and-answer session at the LegCo yesterday

HONG KONG

Justice chief dogged by property scandal

LAWMAKERS grilled Hong Kong's new justice secretary yesterday over a controversy surrounding illegal additions to her home that has highlighted concerns about rule of law in the semiautonomous Chinese city.

Teresa Cheng faced intense questioning in the legislature about the scandal as well as a separate controversy involving the government's disqualification of a young pro-democracy activist from an upcoming election.

Cheng, who has refused to step down and denies she lacks integrity, becomes the latest senior government official over the years to be dogged by a property-related scandal that underlines rising public distrust.

The 59-year-old Cheng, a veteran arbitrator, was tapped to be the city's top law enforcement officer less than four weeks ago.

Soon after, a steady trickle of local media reports revealed that her suburban mansion was riddled with unauthorized additions, including a rooftop hut and a basement.

News of wealthy officials making illegal additions to their homes has stoked public anger over widening inequality in the Asian financial center, which has been ranked the world's most expensive housing market.

The controversy deepened after Cheng disclosed that the house next door was owned by her husband, founder of an engineering firm, and was also full of illegal additions.

Things got worse when it emerged that Cheng authored a textbook on local construction law and represented clients involved in court disputes over illegal building works.

Cheng said the house already had the additions when she bought it and she was too busy to read the purchase documents.

"It doesn't matter how many apologies you offer. You're still a secretary of justice that breeches the law knowingly," said pro-democracy lawmaker Fernando Chui.

Opposition lawmakers said leeway for Cheng contrasts with the government's stepped-up efforts against the city's pro-democracy movement.

Over the weekend, election officials disqualified Agnes Chow, a member of democracy leader Joshua Wong's Demosisto party, from the March election based on her party's platform advocating "self-determination" for Hong Kong.

"You want us to give you a chance, but who would give a chance to Agnes Chow," said lawmaker Roy Kwong.

Cheng repeatedly apologized but said she has "determination to perform my duties as secretary of justice." **AP**

CNY FLIGHTS

Taipei says military aircraft will transport Taiwanese in China

TAIWAN refused to allow two Chinese airlines, Xiamen Airlines and China Eastern Airlines, to expand service to the island during the Lunar New Year holiday, Focus Taiwan agency reported yesterday after Beijing angered Taipei's government by approving new air routes.

Taipei said military aircraft will be used to transport Taiwanese in China home from Kinmen for the Lunar New Year holiday if both sides of the Taiwan Strait fail to reach a consensus on the controversial issue of the M503 route, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications said yesterday.

Chen Chin-sheng direc-



tor-general of the Department of Navigation and Aviation, said the ministry is prepared "for the worst-case scenario, in which military aircraft will be used to fly Taiwanese home from outlying Kinmen County, the agency said."

To board those flights, however, Taiwanese pas-

sengers will have to use the "mini-three links" mechanism established between the two sides in 2001, meaning that they will have to travel to Xiamen in Fujian Province first in order to take ferries to Kinmen.

In addition to military aircraft, existing civil aviation services between Kinmen

and Taiwan could help ease the increased traffic, Chen said.

Taiwan's Civil Aeronautics Administration announced Jan. 18 that it would hold off on approval of applications for 176 additional cross-strait flights by China Eastern Airlines Corp. and XiamenAir for the holiday period, in response to China launching the M503 northbound route and the W121, W122 and W123 east-west extension routes without consulting Taiwan.

The move is expected to affect 30,000 China-based Taiwanese businessmen planning to return home for the holiday.

According to Focus Taiwan, it is estimated that the peak traffic will occur Feb. 13, when there has been the most flight applications from the two Chinese airlines, offering around 3,310 seats. **MDT/Agencies**

PHILIPPINES

Police admit abuses but resume anti-drug 'visits'

The Philippine police chief says his force will resume visits to the homes of drug suspects to encourage them to reform, despite his acknowledgement that corrupt police have abused the program. National Police Director-General Ronald dela Rosa said yesterday that there will be stricter safeguards on the visits and he pledged that the president's overall anti-drug crackdown will be "less bloody." Dela Rosa said 352 police have been removed from their posts, nearly half of them for drug-related offenses, and 329 others were being investigated in a program to cleanse the force of misfits. President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the national police to desist from involvement in his crackdown on illegal drugs twice last year due to reported abuses by law enforcers. He later allowed them back in drug raids.

JAPAN

No demand for digital currency

Cash is still king in Japan, and that means that the central bank doesn't see a need to mint a digital currency for now, according to the head of the FinTech Center at the Bank of Japan. "We aren't at the stage of considering issuing a digital currency because there is no demand," said Yuko Kawai, the head of the BOJ division. That love of cash is clear from the amount of notes and coins sloshing around in Japan - more than any other major economy. The value of physical currency in circulation was equivalent to 20 percent of Japan's economy in 2016, the highest among major nations, according to a report by the Bank for International Settlements last year.

INDIA

Palestinian official says Modi to visit West Bank

A top Palestinian official says India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi will make what is described as a historic visit to the West Bank next month. Majdi Khaldi, an adviser to President Mahmoud Abbas told the Voice of Palestine yesterday that the visit will take place on Feb. 10, with Modi coming to Ramallah. He says it's the first time an Indian prime minister will visit the Palestinian territories. Modi's visit would come just weeks after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was warmly welcomed during a six-day trip to India. Khaldi says "this is the first Indian PM to visit the Palestinian territories and it is going to be historical."

BLOOMBERG



Taro Kono, newly-appointed foreign minister of Japan

China will join first Japan, South Korea summit since 2015

CHINESE Premier Li Ke-qiang will travel to Tokyo for his country's first joint summit with Japan and South Korea since 2015, the clearest sign yet of improving ties between the three neighbors.

The meeting was announced as Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono concluded a two-day visit aimed at repairing his country's strained relationship with China.

Norio Maruyama, a spokesman for the Japanese delegation, said the summit could set the stage for reciprocal visits by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping - a trip neither leader has made since coming to power in 2012.

"What we are envisaging is

a visit to China by Prime Minister Abe and after that a visit to Japan by President Xi Jinping," Maruyama said.

A three-way summit would demonstrate not only improvement in ties between Beijing and Tokyo, but in their relationships with Seoul, as well. China recently shelved a months-long dispute with South Korea over a U.S. missile shield, and Abe last week announced plans to attend next month's Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang.

Relations between China and Japan have been frosty since a 2012 crisis over disputed islands in the East China Sea reignited longstanding suspicion between the two World War II foes. Kono - the

first Japanese foreign minister to visit China since April 2016 - said the two sides need to work together to deal with issues of global relevance, "in particular the North Korea issue."

"It is important not only to discuss issues related to the two countries, but for Japan and China to stand side by side to deal with global issues," Kono said.

Kenji Kanasugi, director-general of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau at Japan's foreign ministry, will be meeting Kong Xuanyou, China's special envoy for Korean affairs, yesterday in Beijing to discuss issues on the Korean peninsula, Japan's foreign ministry said in a statement.

Kono and his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, exchanged "very frank" views on the East China Sea and reaffirmed their commitments denuclearizing Korean Peninsula and the need to fully implement United Nation sanctions against North Korea, Maruyama said.

The two sides also discussed ways to "improve the business environment" and cooperation in third countries between Japan and China, he said. China is Japan's biggest trading partner, while Japan is China's second-largest single-nation partner after the U.S. Trade between the two countries was worth some USD302 billion in 2016, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. **MDT/Bloomberg**

VOLUNTEERS PAKISTAN

VOLUNTEERS rescued a French mountaineer from a Himalayan peak but called off efforts to retrieve a Polish climber who was declared dead after the dramatic and treacherous rescue effort.

Elisabeth Revol and Tomasz Mackiewicz were climbing Nanga Parbat, the ninth highest peak in the world at 8,126 meters, but called for help Friday, fellow climber Masha Gordon said.

Four volunteers from a separate Polish expedition set out to find them and managed to reach Revol, a renowned female mountaineer who was

Rescuers call off efforts to save Polish climber

suffering from frostbite on her feet and could not walk.

Poor weather prevented the team from reaching Mackiewicz, who had snow blindness and altitude sickness, Karrar Haidri, a top official in the Pakistan Alpine Federation, said Sunday.

Revol was brought down the mountain Sunday to a helicopter that flew her to the mountain town of Sakr-

du, from where she was taken to Islamabad for treatment at Shifa International Hospital, Haidri said.

A physician at the hospital said Revol was in stable condition and her injuries were not life threatening. He spoke on condition of anonymity as per the hospital's policy.

"The rescue of Tomasz is unfortunately not possible - because

of the weather and altitude it would put the life of the rescuers in extreme danger," wrote Ludovic Giambiasi, Revol's fellow climber and trainer who posted regular updates on Facebook. "It's a terrible and painful decision. We are in deep sadness. All our thoughts go out to Tomek's family and friends. We are crying."

The Polish Foreign Mi-

nistry said it would fund the rescue effort, along with 100,000 euros raised online in a crowdfunding effort organized by fellow climber Masha Gordon.

Gordon described to The Associated Press the frantic effort to raise money and get it to the right people, and then organize a helicopter during gaps in rough weather.

"They were not tourists, they were very serious mountaineers," Gordon said of the two climbers. Both had made the ascent before, and were trying the especially challenging feat of doing it in winter. **AP**

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

Australia plans to become leading defense industry exporter

AUSTRALIA'S government announced a strategy yesterday to create high-tech jobs and become one of the top 10 defense-industry-exporting countries within a decade through arms sales to like-minded nations while also keeping those weapons from rogue regimes.

Australia will create a 3.8 billion Australian dollar (USD3.1 billion) fund to lend to exporters that banks are reluctant to finance, a central defense export office and expand the roles of defense attaches in Australian embassies around the world.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said that with AUD200 billion budgeted to increase Australian defense capabilities in the next decade, Australia should rank higher than 20th among arms-exporting countries. The planned Australian military build-up was the largest in its peace-time history, he said.

"Given the size of our defense budget, we should be a lot higher up the scale than that. So the goal is to get into the top 10," Turnbull told reporters.

Defense Industry Minister Christopher Pyne said Australia would focus on growing sales to its biggest markets including the United States, Britain, Canada

and New Zealand, which already import Australian-made equipment including the Bushmaster armored vehicle and the Nulka missile decoy. The five nations belong to an intelligence-sharing network known as the Five Eyes.

"We want to support the United States, the U.K., New Zealand, Canada, our European friends and allies, Japan, South Korea, et cetera, in what is a building up of the global military capability of countries like ourself who support the rules-based international order," Pyne said.

"The defense export strategy is not designed to get into markets where we don't want to be. It's designed to maximize the markets where we perhaps haven't been making the most of our opportunities," he added.

Turnbull said the strategy was about creating hi-tech Australian jobs and not a response to any national threat, such as increasing tensions and the Chinese military build-up in the South China Sea over competing territorial claims.



Australia Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull walks in front of military trucks

"Apart from North Korea, there is no country in the region that shows any hostile intent toward Australia," Turnbull said. "We don't see threats from our neighbors in the region, but, nonetheless, every country must always plan ahead and you need to build the capabilities to defend yourself, not just today, but in 10 years or 20 years hence."

The push to increase Australian defense manufacturing jobs came

after General Motors Co. in October became the last automaker to quit building Australian cars.

Most of the new Australian defense spending is on submarines and frigates that will be largely built in Australia.

Australian law prohibits military exports that are inconsistent with Australia's international obligations or national interests.

Prospective exports are assessed in areas including impacts on hu-

man rights, regional security and Australian foreign policy.

"We've got strict controls and those controls make sure we only supply defense assets in the future to like-minded countries that have a strong human rights record and have protections in place." Trade Minister Steve Ciobo told Nine Network television.

Amnesty International said it has been urging Australia to publicly report on arms transfers to Saudi Arabia and its allies in the war in Yemen.

"While there is reluctance on the government's part to exercise transparency in its arms exports trade, it is unthinkable that it would even contemplate expanding it," the London-based rights group coordinator Diana Sayed said in a statement.

Peter Jennings, executive director of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, a government-established independent think tank, said the top-10 target was achievable and would create an industry base to support the Australian military. **AP**

AD



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Peter Thomas Zabielskis
Associate Professor of Anthropology
University of Macau

THE CHALLENGES OF FAME:
Transformations in Place Identity and Public Space
through Tourism and Heritage Preservation
in Macau and Penang



Despite UNESCO's recent efforts to provide guidance on the protection of intangible heritage, both popular and governmental attention remains fixated on the tangible aesthetics of material structure above all else.

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A member of Afghan security personnel arrives at the site of an attack at a military academy in Kabul

ISLAMIC State militants attacked Afghan soldiers guarding a military academy in the capital of Kabul yesterday, killing at least 11 troops and wounding 16.

The attack was the latest in a wave of relentless violence in Kabul this month unleashed by the Taliban and the rival Islamic State group that has killed scores and left hundreds wounded.

Yesterday's attack started around 4 a.m., witnesses said, and fighting continued long after daybreak.

A suicide bomber first struck the military unit responsible for providing security for the academy, followed by a gunbattle with the troops, said Dawlat Waziri, spokesman for the Afghan defense ministry.

At least five insurgents were involved in the morning assault, according to Waziri. Two of the attackers were killed in the gunbattle, two detonated their suicide vests and one was arrested by the troops, he said.

All roads leading to the military academy were blocked by police, which only allowed ambulances access to the site to transfer the

AFGHANISTAN

11 troops die in IS attack on Kabul military academy

wounded to hospitals.

After the gunbattle ended, the security forces resumed control of the area. They also confiscated one suicide vest, an AK-47 and some ammunition, Waziri said.

Waziri earlier said that five soldiers were killed but later raised the death toll to 11. He insisted, however that "the attack was against an army unit providing security for the academy and not the academy itself."

Afzal Aman, commander of the city's military garrison, confirmed the attack in the area of the Marshal Fahim academy. Hashmat Faqeri, a resident near the site, told The Associated Press he heard sounds of explosions and a gunbattle.

Hours later, the Islamic State group's affiliate in Afghanistan,

known as Khorasan Province, posted its claim of responsibility on the website of its media arm, the Amaq news agency, saying its fighters targeted the "military academy in Kabul."

Neighboring Pakistan condemned yesterday's attack. Islamabad said it "reiterates its strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, especially the series of heinous attacks within the last week in Afghanistan."

The academy, known as Marshal Fahim National Defense University located on the edge of Kabul at the Camp Qargha military base, is sometimes also called "Sandhurst in the Sand" — a reference to the British academy. Named after Mohammed Fahim, the country's late vice-president

and a military commander of the Northern Alliance that fought the Taliban, the academy was inaugurated in 2013 after British forces oversaw building the officers' school and its training program.

The same academy was also attacked in October last year by a suicide bomber who killed 15 officers. The attacker was on foot and detonated his suicide vest as the on-duty officers were leaving the facility, heading home in the evening. That attack was also claimed by the Taliban.

Both the Taliban and IS have stepped up attacks in recent months in Kabul and elsewhere across Afghanistan, including massive bombings staged by militants determined to inflict maximum casualties, instill terror in

the population and undermine confidence in Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's government and the country's security forces.

The recent brutal attacks have underscored the weaknesses of Afghan security forces, more than 16 years after the U.S.-led invasion toppled the Taliban, and raise questions about President Donald Trump's strategy for winning America's longest war.

The Taliban have been waging an insurgency since they were driven from power by U.S. and Afghan forces after the Sept. 11 attacks. In recent years, they have seized districts across the country and carried out near-daily attacks, mainly targeting Afghan security forces and the U.S.-backed government. **MDT/AP**

FINLAND

President skates to overwhelming re-election win

Jari Tanner, Helsinki

FINLAND'S president has crushed his competition to win a second six-year term, scoring a landslide victory in an election that saw the incumbent getting more than five times the support of his closest challenger.

With all ballots counted, President Sauli Niinisto had 62.7 percent of the vote, while his leading rival, Pekka Haavisto of the Greens, had 12.4 percent.

Haavisto, the runner-up in the 2012 presidential election, conceded the race long before the vote count was completed, telling Finnish national broadcaster Niinisto "is the republic's new president with this result."

None of the other six candidates received more than 7 percent of the vote.

Niinisto, 69, needed a majority of Sunday's vote to prevent a runoff and win outright. He is the first candidate to do since the

popular vote was adopted to pick Finland's president in 1994.

The former finance minister and parliament speaker has been a highly popular president since he took office in 2012. He ran as an independent, with no association with the conservative National Coalition Party he once chaired.

Niinisto acknowledged Sunday night that voters had given him a strong mandate to keep governing.

"This result is a surprise to me," Niinisto told reporters, appearing a bit baffled and uncharacteristically emotional. "It's much better than I ever expected. I take it that people have been reasonably happy with my [political] line."

Finland's president designs the blueprint for the country's foreign and security policy together with the government. As head of state, the president is the key foreign policy player, particularly on issues out-

side the European Union.

The president also acts as the supreme commander of military forces and can veto legislation.

To most Finns, the president's key task is to assure friendly ties with both neighboring Russia, which shares a 1,340-kilometer border with Finland, and the West, particularly the United States.

Judging from the election's outcome, voters think Niinisto has done a good job with this fine ba-

lancing act. Finland joined the European Union in 1995, but doesn't belong to NATO.

Niinisto said he does not envision major changes to Finland's policies toward Russia during his second term. He stressed that the countries, though friendly, do have differing views on Russia's annexation of Crimea, among other issues.

He is the 12th head of state since Finland achieved independence from Russia in 1917. **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)

REPRESENTING WOMEN THROUGH MAM COLLECTION – 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY

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

UNTIL: February 25, 2018

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

SEALS OF 108 HEROES OF SHUI HU LEGEND FROM THE MAM COLLECTION

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

UNTIL: February 26, 2018

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

THINK BRICK – PLAY AND LEARN WITH LEGO® EDUCATION

TIME: 10am-6pm (closed on Thursdays; open on public holidays)

UNTIL: February 25, 2018

VENUE: Macao Science Center

ADMISSION: MOP25

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

Offbeat



MORE CAFFEINE, PLEASE: KEURIG IS BUYING DR PEPPER SNAPPLE

Keurig is buying Dr Pepper Snapple Group, bringing together the make-at-home coffee brand with the company behind Dr Pepper soda, Mott's apple juice and Snapple iced teas.

The combination lets the company offer "hot and cold beverages to satisfy every consumer throughout the day," said Larry Young, chief executive of Dr Pepper Snapple.

Keurig Dr Pepper, the combined company, will have about USD11 billion in annual sales. That's still far smaller than PepsiCo Inc. and Coca-Cola Co., which had sales in 2016 of USD63 billion and \$41 billion, respectively.

Keurig Green Mountain Inc., which is a privately held company, is known for its single-serve coffee makers. It also sells coffee pods that are sold in stores under the Green Mountain and Donut Shop name.

The pods, which are placed in the coffee makers and thrown out, have been criticized by environmental advocates as contributing to more waste.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	Miscellaneous
16:10	NOS League: Belenenses x Benfica (Repeated)
17:50	Brazilian Soap Opera (Repeated)
18:40	TDM Sports (Repeated)
19:50	Portuguese Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Interview
21:30	Grimm Sr. 2
22:10	Brazilian Soap Opera
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Europe 30
00:15	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:50	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

25 JAN - 31 JAN



MAZE RUNNER: THE DEATH CURE

ROOM 1
(2D) 02:15, 04:45, 9:345pm
(3D) 07:15pm

Director: Wes Ball

Starring: Rosa Salazar, Thomas Brodie-Sangster

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 142 min



DOWNSIZING

ROOM 2
02:15, 04:45, 7:15, 9:45pm

Director: Alexander Payne

Starring: Matt Damon, Christoph Waltz, Hong Chau

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 135min



FATE/STAY NIGHT: HEAVEN'S FEEL - I. PRESAGE FLOWER

ROOM 3

02:30, 5:00, 9:30pm

Director: Tomonori Sudô

Starring: Ayako Kawasumi, Jôji Nakata, Noriaki Sugiyama

Language: Japanese (Chinese)

Duration: 120 min



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



1952 KOREA TRUCE TALKS HIT STALEMATE

Truce talks aimed at ending the fighting in the Korean War remain deadlocked.

After more than 50 meetings in the past few weeks in Panmunjom, the village which straddles the border between North and South Korea, the two sides seem no closer to agreement.

One of the latest sticking points is deciding where 6,000 displaced Koreans should live.

The Communists have also objected to allied proposals about the composition of neutral nation observer teams.

Initially the truce talks stalled over North Korea's insistence on being allowed to rebuild its damaged airfields.

The allies eventually proposed shelving discussion of the airfields in the hope of making more progress in other areas of the talks.

The row has now focussed on the two sides agreeing the number of observers to be included in the inspection teams. The UN originally put forward a figure of 70,000 - which it later reduced to 40,000.

The Communists have raised their offer from an original 5,000 troops to 25,000.

The composition of the neutral nation observer teams has proved another sticking point. Sweden, Switzerland and Norway have been proposed by the Allies.

The Communists have so far failed to come up with any recommendations of their own but it seems likely they will propose the Soviet Union - which would be totally unacceptable to the Allies.

Although the Soviet Union has not intervened militarily in the Korean conflict, it has offered political backing for North Korea and China.

On 27 November 1951 the two sides provisionally agreed on the 38th parallel as the demarcation line between North and South Korea.

Fighting has continued since then. Figures for the past month show the Allies have lost more aircraft than in any other month since the war began in June 1950.

Allied airmen shot down 31 enemy jet fighters in January - but in the same period the United Nations has lost 52 aircraft. Most of the planes were brought down by ground fire.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

A few days later negotiators were able to claim the two sides had moved closer to an armistice following what was described as "the most productive" of their meetings so far. However, negotiations once again stalled over the Communists' insistence on the Soviet Union being one of the neutral observer nations and there were also problems over the repatriation of Prisoners of War.

In May 1952 the UN Command decided to mount a new aerial offensive in an effort to kickstart the truce talks.

Air raids were launched against enemy airfields, railways and other lines of communication. The strategically-important Suiho hydro-electric plant and other power stations were also hit.

In the end it was two external factors - the election of President Dwight Eisenhower and his threat of nuclear force as well as the death of Soviet leader Josef Stalin - which caused a slight power shift in favour of the UN and the allies and finally secured the armistice.

It was signed on 27 July 1953 - but a peace deal has never been reached. American troops remain stationed in the de-militarized zone on and around the 38th parallel separating North and South Korea.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You need to reorganize your finances today, but make sure to take a few key precautions...

Taurus April 20-May 20 Enjoy all of life's pleasures today, from the greatest to the smallest. It's important that you're open-minded when appreciating the best things in life...

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Take time for yourself by putting your life on hold. Walk around the park, stare at the sky and otherwise refresh your senses with the parts of life that really matter...

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Your energy powers up all the way, and now you feel like you can do anything. You look (and feel) fantastic, and this amazing, dynamic energy helps you in every aspect of your life...

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Your energy is acting like a carnival barker now, exhorting one and all to step right up and check out the magnificence that is you!

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You need to get rid of any unrealistic goals - and while you're at it, give that perfectionism a rest for the time being!

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You're so sweet-natured that others may make accidentally underestimate you. You shake all that up, though, when you turn one of your outrageous ideas into a firm reality...

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Resisting all efforts to change, no matter what, may feel somewhat cool at first, but it becomes increasingly unworkable for you, especially if you let your temper flare up as well...

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 After all the work you've done to give yourself a social life, including making time, finishing chores and (reluctantly) delegating overtime responsibilities, you totally deserve to have as much fun as possible tonight...

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Everything smooths out when you just relax and trust in the universe. It's difficult to believe, but you don't actually have the last word on how things turn out - this time...

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Your freedom means everything to you, so you've set up your work or home life in such a way that you can come and go when you like. Sometimes, though, your lack of roots leaves you feeling a little lonely...

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Extravagance is everything for you now, and you're the best when it comes to living large and having fun. Your energy is stimulating your pleasure centers, but this influence could leave you feeling buyer's regret...

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

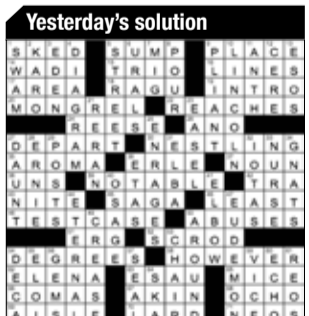
Sudoku puzzles categorized by difficulty: Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard. Each category contains a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Examine by touch; 5- Tortilla chip dip; 10- Bullfight cheers; 14- mater; 15- Actor Ryan; 16- TV handyman Bob; 17- Person, place, or thing; 18- Surgery drug; 20- Barbershop quartet member; 22- More strange; 23- Fast; 25- Sea eagles; 26- Frightens; 27- Intense anger; 28- Salinger girl; 32- OPEC member; 33- Greased; 35- Jack of "Rio Lobo"; 36- Actor Chaney; 37- Singer Damone; 38- SASE, e.g.; 39- Pond organism; 41- Mazda model; 43- Word that can succeed building, web or burial; 44- Venetian blind part; 45- Brit. lexicon; 46- Alliance; 48- Dull sound; 50- Stewart of home tips; 51- More bohemian; 54- Singer Yma; 55- Serve as a commentator; 57- Hades; 61- Hammock holder; 62- Messed up; 63- "The Time Machine" people; 64- Dict. entries; 65- Mrs. Gorbachev; 66- Kissers; DOWN: 1- Devoted follower; 2- "Evil Woman" grp.; 3- Large flightless bird; 4- Portable lamp; 5- Dirty rat; 6- Harass; 7- Lustful look; 8- Airline to Oslo; 9- Changed; 10- Supervise; 11- Actress Vima; 12- Writer Wiesel; 13- German river; 19- Coop denizen; 21- Shoe width; 23- Dead Sea document; 24- Monetary unit of Tonga; 25- Standing up; 26- Eliot's Manner; 27- Troy story; 29- Sled; 30- Woman's loose gown; 31- Roast host; 34- Like some college walls; 40- Occasionally; 41- One in black dress, once; 42- Oakland's county; 43- Small bag; 47- Period of history; 49- Haw; 50- Tones down; 51- Performs; 52- Actor Calhoun; 53- Revenuers, for short; 54- Indian wrap; 56- Song syllable; 58- Quarterback Manning; 59- Cut (off); 60- Fleur-de-;



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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
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GOLF

Woods happy with return post-back fusion surgery

TIGER Woods was never in contention in his return to the PGA Tour yesterday, Macau time.

He didn't dip into the 60s

as he hoped he would on a brilliant sunny — and windy — day at Torrey Pines. He missed three times more fairways than he hit in his four rounds in the

Farmers Insurance Open.

Yet he was "very pleased" with only his second PGA Tour event since he tied for 10th in the Wyndham Cham-

pionship in August 2015. He had two back surgeries that fall, and fusion surgery on his lower back last April.

Woods cooled off after birdies on four of seven holes midway through his round Sunday and finished with an even-par 72 on the South Course that left him tied for 23rd.

"After not playing for a couple years and coming out here on the Tour, playing, you know, a solid four days, I fought hard for these scores," Woods said. "They weren't like drive down the middle, hit it on the green, two-putt, one of those yawners. This was a lot of fight."

They certainly weren't yawners, although Woods once again drew a large, lively gallery as he played the weekend on the PGA Tour for the first time in 29 months.

Woods will be back in his native Southern California in three weekends for the Genesis Open at Riviera.

His to-do list includes "Everything. Just like it was after I played in the Bahamas, have to work on everything. We're going to do the same thing here and I'm excited to get this one under my belt, though."

"I was pleased today. I feel like I played a lot better today. These conditions, they were

tough. I was trying to shoot 65, maybe get to 10 and post, thought that might be a good playoff number. But there are too many guys up there, they've gone past 10 and gone to 11 and 12 and there's a bunch of them up there. So it would have been nice to post it, just see what happens, hang around for a couple hours, but I'll take 72, though."

Woods hit only 17 of 56 fairways in his four rounds, three on the South and one on the North, which is no longer considered easier than its neighboring layout at the seaside muni.

"We can see the swing is out of sync. He can feel it's out of sync," said Nick Faldo, a six-time major champion and CBS Sports analyst. "This is one year out — an awful lot of rust. There were only a couple of holes where he hit it down the middle, on the green and had a look."

"He hasn't been close enough to the flag to say, 'I should have been better.'"

This was Woods' 25th start on the PGA Tour since his last victory in August 2013 at the Bridgestone Invitational. It was only the 3rd time he shot par or better all four rounds and only the eighth time he finished in the top 25. **MDT/AP**

AD



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Sam Johnston, London

EVEN though Pep Guardiola won't admit it, Manchester City has an increasingly serious chance of completing the quadruple this season.

Kevin De Bruyne and Raheem Sterling scored as City advanced to the fifth round of the FA Cup with a 2-0 win over Championship team Cardiff.

It was the second time this week that City had beaten a second-tier opponent. The runaway Premier League leader saw off Bristol City in the semifinals of the League Cup to clinch its first final under Guardiola.

With a commanding 12-point lead in the Premier League and a favorable draw in the form of Swiss side Basel in the Champions League round of 16, every victory from here on will increase talk of an unprecedented quadruple for City.

When asked if City could achieve the quadruple, Guardiola made his feelings clear.

"No. They asked me if we would be invincible in the Premier League and I said no," Guardiola told the BBC. "I do not have enough players, I have players out injured. It is impossible."

Chelsea will join City in Monday's draw after Michy Batshuayi's double paved the way to a comfortable 3-0 fourth-round victory over Newcastle.

De Bruyne's clever free kick gave City an early lead before Sterling doubled the lead shortly before halftime. But City was dealt a blow when Leroy Sane was forced off injured at the break.

Having been put through on goal in first-half stoppage time, Sane was scythed down by Cardiff midfielder Joe Bennett, who was fortunate to receive just a yellow card.

"Referees have to protect the players and not just my players, all players. Where there is fault, there is fault and when it is dangerous, it is dangerous. You are not more brave for kicking," Guardiola said. "Sane will be out, I am not sure how long for, I am not a doctor."

Bennett was eventually sent off



Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne (left) gestures to teammate Kyle Walker after scoring

FOOTBALL | EPL

Quadruple still on for City after FA Cup win at Cardiff

as he received a second yellow card for another poor challenge on City youngster Brahim Diaz in the closing stages.

It took just eight minutes for Cardiff to join a growing club of teams made to look foolish by De Bruyne this season.

With City's chief creator standing over a free kick 25 yards out, Cardiff expected him to attempt to find the top corner. Instead, the Belgium midfielder cheekily rolled his free kick under the jumping wall and into the net.

"They tell us before the game, we know all the details," De Bruyne said. "The wall was not on nine meters for me, so they were very clo-

se, so I thought it was easier to put it under than over."

Bernardo Silva had a thunderous strike harshly ruled out with the linesman appearing to adjudge Leroy Sane offside and interfering with Cardiff goalkeeper Neil Etheridge's

They asked me if we would be invincible in the Premier League and I said no.

PEP GUARDIOLA

line of vision.

But City soon doubled its lead when Sterling continued his prolific season, converting Silva's cross with a precise headed finish eight minutes before halftime.

After exiting the League Cup midweek at the hands of Arsenal, Chelsea ensured it reached the fifth round of the FA Cup for the 18th time in the last 20 seasons.

Marcos Alonso scored a stunning free kick to seal the victory after out-of-favor Batshuayi had given Chelsea a scarcely deserved 2-0 halftime lead against Newcastle.

It was only a second win — inside 90 minutes — in eight

games for Chelsea in what has been a testing January. Various reports have suggested the club is looking to recruit a new striker, but it was the sparingly used Batshuayi who delivered on this occasion.

"For sure the performance for the press [media] depends a lot if a striker score or not score," said Conte of his striker, who has scored 10 goals this season and also been linked with a loan move away from Stamford Bridge.

"For me it's important to score because it means that you have a probability to win, but at the same time it's very important that the striker has to work very well for the team." AP

FOOTBALL | LA LIGA

Suarez, Messi save Barcelona from Alaves setback

LUIS Suarez and Lionel Messi came to the rescue again by scoring late as Barcelona avoided an upset at home and maintained its comfortable lead in the Spanish league.

The duo added to their scoring run in a come-from-behind 2-1 win against relegation-wary Alaves at Camp Nou Stadium, keep-

ing the Catalan club 11 points in front of Atletico Madrid, which earlier defeated Las Palmas 3-0 at home.

The result extended Barcelona's unbeaten streak in the league to 21 matches, its best mark since Pep Guardiola's team did the same in the 2009-10 season.

"It was a complicated match," Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde said. "They made it difficult by taking the lead. We had to keep pressing until the end to get the victory."

Sitting just outside the relegation zone, Alaves surprisingly went ahead with forward John Guidetti scoring midway through

the first half. The visitors threatened constantly on the counterattack until Suarez evened the score with a volley from inside the area in the 72nd minute after a cross by Andre Iniesta.

Messi netted the winner with a well-struck free kick in the 84th, hitting the top corner.

Suarez and Messi have combined to score at least a goal each in seven of Barcelona's last eight matches. Messi is the league's leading scorer with 20 goals, followed by Suarez with 16.

Messi found the net 11 times in his last 12 games, while Suarez scored 12 goals in the last 10.

Philippe Coutinho made his debut as a starter, being replaced in the second half. The newly signed Brazil midfielder had played a few minutes in Barcelona's win over Espanyol in the Copa del Rey on Thursday. Alaves was unsuccessful in two key appeals for hand ball during the game. MDT/AP

opinion

Our Desk
Lynzy Valles



NEVER ENDING TAXI TALES

The idea of complaining about taxis and their drivers has already become such a norm in the city that it is no longer a surprise when drivers refuse to take passengers to their destination, or when they charge exorbitant prices by turning off the meter.

Not to mention the fares a few tourists were hit with when trying to get to the Macau Ferry Terminal when Typhoon Hato hit the city in August.

But it is also frustrating that some are in the habit of smoking – inside their vehicles - while waiting for passengers.

The city's new tobacco control law came into effect from the first day of this month, prohibiting residents from smoking within 10 meters of any bus stop and taxi stands.

This, again, is not a new complaint but there are still several of them continuing to smoke inside their vehicles despite the enforcement of the revised law on smoking areas.

Unsurprisingly, there are still a significant number of residents heavily complaining about the city's taxi services, expressing their concerns over authorities ineffectiveness in handling the long-matter.

Just last year, the total number of taxi infractions increased 32.3 percent annually.

There was an increase of 1,339 cases of taxi infractions, totaling 5,491 cases, compared to the over 4,100 cases filed in 2016.

Figures from authorities show that 3,180 overcharging incidents were reported, representing 57.9 percent of the total number of taxi infractions (5,491) in 2017.

The number of cases related to taxi drivers who refused to take passengers was 1,574, an increase 11.4 percent year-on-year.

The growing number of taxi infractions has become a norm; it is what we are already expecting.

However, it is still worrying that this matter has been ongoing for years yet the city always fails to resolve it.

There is much discomfort in riding a public taxi that smells like cigarette while playing loud opera songs.

If they are not playing those kinds of songs on the radio, that means they are using their mobile phones, listening to all voice messages – at a loud volume – in their WeChat groups.

There are also some who just open a bit of their window to ask where you are going and close it when they do not feel like bringing you to your destination; while there are some who drive you swiftly in the city's narrow streets.

Authorities are not to be blamed for all the discomfort given to riders by taxi drivers. There are still a significant number of them who are friendly and polite despite their struggle in conversing with non-Chinese speakers.

However, we cannot continually see the aforementioned behaviors and consider this a norm compatible with the idea of "Experience Macau."

This is one of the many things that we would like not to experience when we visit other countries.

Transportation matters and so does its service and personnel.

It has been six months since Uber suspended its services in the region after giving residents the ability to travel comfortably.

Residents have blamed the government for the decision taken by Uber as the ride-hailing company clarified that it did what it could to legitimize its Macau operations.

In other regions, ridesharing jurisdictions continue to operate and waiting lounges are even available for people who booked a ride through their ride-hailing app.

Grab, a Singapore-based company, launched its first Grab Lounge for its costumers to wait for their ride in a safe and cozy environment – a dream that would probably not come true in Macau.

THE BUZZ THE THAI STUDENT ACTIVIST FLEES TO AVOID LESE MAJESTE CHARGE

A student activist has become the latest political dissident to flee Thailand, explaining on her Facebook page that she made a snap decision to leave after learning she had been charged with insulting the monarchy because she shared a BBC article about the country's new king.

Leser majeste, or insulting the monarchy, is punishable by three to 15 years in prison per incident, and the case against Chanoknan Ruamsap is apparently the first filed this year.

Leser majeste cases have increased markedly under the military government that has been in power since 2014. Critics say the law is used to punish political dissidents.

Another prominent student activist, Boonpataraksa, was sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison for sharing the same article posted online by the BBC's Thai-language service about King Vajiralongkorn, who succeeded his father, the late King Bhumibol, in late 2016.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	30-50 Good
High Density Residential Area	25-45 Good
Ambient	30-50 Good

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS



CAMBODIA Ten foreigners, including five Britons, charged with producing pornographic photos during a party near famed Angkor Wat temple complex have denied any wrongdoing, a prosecutor said. Still, there is "enough evidence to prove that they violated the law, and therefore, they must face charges," Siem Reap provincial court prosecutor said. The 10 people jailed Sunday include five from the United Kingdom, two from Canada and one each from Norway, the Netherlands and New Zealand.



USA A jealous ex-boyfriend opened fire and killed four people at a car wash yesterday (Macau time) in Pennsylvania, while a woman hiding in the back of a pickup truck suffered only minor injuries, according to police and the wife of one of the victims. Timothy Smith, 28, was armed with a semi-automatic rifle, a .308-caliber rifle and a handgun and was wearing a body armor carrier.

BREXIT Britain's point person on Brexit said the country's status with the European Union during a post-departure transition period will be "not exactly the same as membership – but it's very, very similar." Brexit Secretary David Davis told a House of Lords committee that Britain will continue to be bound by EU rules and the EU court during the transition period, but without a seat on the bloc's decision-making bodies.



DAVOS U.S. President Donald Trump said he would take a "tougher" attitude toward Brexit negotiations than the approach now being used by British Prime Minister Theresa May. "Would it be the way I negotiate?" he said, "I would have said that the European Union is not cracked up to what it's supposed to be."

Police witness: Kim Jong Nam met American before his murder

A police witness said yesterday that the estranged half brother of North Korea's leader met with an unidentified Korean American man on a Malaysian resort island four days before he was murdered, as the trial of two women accused of killing him resumed.

Indonesia's Siti Aisyah, 25, and Vietnam's Doan Thi Huong, 29, are accused of smearing VX nerve agent on Kim Jong Nam's face in a crowded airport terminal in Kuala Lumpur last Feb. 13. They pleaded not guilty to murder charges when their trial began Oct. 2. The two are the only suspects in custody, though prosecutors have said four North Koreans who fled the country were also involved.

Chief police investigating officer Wan Azirul Nizam Che Wan Aziz told the court yesterday that Kim flew from Macau to Kuala Lumpur last Feb. 6 and went to the northern island of Langkawi two days later. He said Kim met with the Korean American at a Langkawi hotel the next day, but he didn't know the man's identity and it wasn't related to the USD138,000 in cash found in Kim's backpack when he was murdered.

Wah Azirul was responding



Indonesian Siti Aisyah is escorted by police to the court yesterday

to questions from Gooi Soon Seng, Aisyah's lawyer, who asked him to confirm a report by the Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun that Kim had met in Langkawi with a U.S. intelligence agent who was based in Bangkok.

"Until now, the identity of the man is not known," Wan Azirul told the court. He said he could not remember the hotel name or whether the room was registered under Kim or the man, prompting a lashing from Gooi for his "severe lapse of memory."

Wan Azirul said an analysis of Kim's laptop showed it was last used on Feb. 9. He said Kim returned to Kuala Lumpur on Feb. 12, a day before he was killed while waiting for a flight back to Macau.

The trial is to resume today.

Gooi has told reporters that Kim's killing was likely a political assassination because of involvement by the North Korean Embassy. A police witness has testified that a car used to take the North Korean suspects to the airport on the day of the murder belonged to the embassy. The court also heard that an embassy official met the suspects before they fled and facilitated their check-in at the airport.

Kim, the eldest son in the family that has ruled North Korea since its founding, had been living abroad for years after falling out of favor. It is thought he could have been seen as a threat to the rule of his half brother, Kim Jong Un. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Andy Wong



The Year of the Dog. Inflatable dog figures on display at a newly opened shopping mall in Beijing as CNY celebrations near.