



FIGHTING GENDER GAP

An art biennale exclusively reserved for the work of female artists will attempt to redress a lack of gender representation

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MORE WOMEN ACCUSE STEVE WYNN

Steve Wynn is accused of sexual misconduct in police reports filed by two women about allegations dating to the 1970s

P3



PROSECUTORS DETAIN DEVELOPER

Prosecutors in eastern Taiwan have detained the developer of a building complex that collapsed in an earthquake earlier this month

P10 TAIWAN

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Times



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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



INDONESIA has seized a luxury yacht on the tourist island of Bali that is wanted by U.S. authorities as part of a probe into alleged multibillion-dollar corruption at Malaysian state investment fund 1MDB.

CAMBODIA Nineteen people, mostly foreigners, were injured and the driver of the bus they were on killed in a collision with another vehicle in eastern Cambodia.



INDIA Lining up for hours and visibly grief-stricken, thousands of mourning fans paid their respects yesterday to Sridevi, the iconic Bollywood actress who drowned accidentally in a Dubai hotel bathtub over the weekend. *More on p13*

ISRAEL An Israeli organization said yesterday it has minted a coin bearing President Donald Trump's image to honor his recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.



LEBANON-S. ARABIA Lebanon's prime minister yesterday made his first trip to Saudi Arabia since he briefly resigned from office during a visit to Riyadh late last year, part of a bizarre series of events that strained relations between the two countries.

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PUBLIC HOSPITAL NEW RATES

Non-residents to pay 9-fold for childbirth

P7 HEALTH



North Korea armed Syria with missile and chemical weapons

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From left: Carlos Marreiros (Albergue), Lei Lai Kio (IC) and Chan Kai Chon (MAM)



Pan Xiaoying (Poon Siu Yen)/ Jardim de Camões/1977

ART

All-female biennale wants to fight gender gap

Daniel Beittler

An international art biennale exclusively reserved for the work of female artists will attempt to redress a lack of gender representation in the world of art, organizers said at a press conference held yesterday.

Jointly organized by the Macau Museum of Art (MAM), the Cultural Affairs Bureau and Albergue SCM, the exhibition "Women Artists - 1st International Biennial of Macao" features artworks by 132 female artists from 23 countries and regions. According to organizers, it seeks to "enhance the reputation of contemporary female artists and show the impact of their creative works on society and culture."

Though it draws inspiration from related events held elsewhere, the concept of the all-female biennale is being explored in depth for the first time in Macau.

At a press conference held yesterday, Margarida Saraiva, curator of the Macau Museum of Art said that the project was a good fit for the institution as they had been studying this concept for some time.

"MAM has been working to study the female presence in the

art world. We started with an exhibition last year representing women through the 19th and 20th centuries," Saraiva told the Times yesterday, referring to the 70 female portraits that decorated the museum's walls during the second half of last year.

For this latest exhibition dedicated to women in art, Saraiva is responsible for contributing selected pieces from MAM's collection.

"[For the Museum's side], we are telling the story of the local art scene. Our collection [recounts] the history of the recent political and social development of our city, starting from the 1970s. From the 1990s our focus was mostly on local artists and from 1999 to the present time, the majority of our works are from China," she said. "So it reveals a little about the history of Macau."

The selected artworks mostly date from a period of female emancipation, covering the second and third waves of feminism. However, the pieces in the coming exhibition will not reflect those changing attitudes, said Saraiva, as the movement only gained traction in China several decades later.

"It is interesting that [Macao artists] were not at first inte-

rested in identity politics," she explained. "That concern became more [prevalent] in Chinese contemporary art starting from [the year] 2000, during the emergence of post-feminism and post-colonial thought. From that time, the [local] work gained a new dimension, exploring female identity issues."

But even today, female artists struggle to have their work exhibited.

According to U.S. agency the National Endowment for the Arts, slightly over half of all visual artists today are women. At the same time, other studies suggest just three in ten of artists represented in commercial galleries are female and their work accounts for only 3 to 5 percent of major permanent collections in the U.S. and Europe.

"It is true that women are underrepresented in exhibitions and biennales in the art world. [...] This is a fact because there

are statistics on this [showing] women are not meaningfully represented," co-organizer and Albergue SCM President Carlos Marreiros told the Times yesterday. "This exhibition is a step toward showing the real value of women in the arts."

Asked why he thinks women are underrepresented in the art world, Marreiros said simply, "because this is a male society."

But fighting unrepresentative exhibitions with other unrepresentative exhibitions might not be the answer. For Saraiva, the issue is more complex.

"I think that the discussion is not a simple one. Either you create discrimination by not including women or you create discrimination by having something that is only for women. So the reaction to these [kinds of projects] vary," she said.

"I think female artists are less neglected presently than they have been before. Nevertheless,

It is true that women are underrepresented in exhibitions and biennales in the art world.

CARLOS MARREIROS
CO-ORGANIZER, ALBERGUE PRESIDENT

when you analyze the presence of women in biennales or exhibitions or museum collections, they are still underrepresented. We think that [in order] for that to change, we need to rewrite contemporary art history taking into consideration what was their [women's] role."

Marreiros said that the international art world would look favorably on the biennale because the initiative was positive, noble and almost unique.

"There are so many biennales today in Asia - particularly in China and [South] Korea. Some of these are very close to us - such as those in [nearby] Shenzhen. [...] How can Macau compete with these [locations]? By doing something different, but also noble."

However, the MAM curator pointed out that the international art world has not reached a consensus and that many female artists reject the concept.

"I have been to international conferences on this topic and listened to artists that totally refuse to be a part of initiatives that are only for women. In a certain way, they consider that this is unnecessary," she said. "But I have also met artists and academics that believe the exact opposite; that a project like this is still required."

"Where do we stand in Macau? That's a very interesting question and I hope visitors will find their own answers."

The exhibition will be inaugurated on March 8, International Women's Day, and will be on display at the Macau Museum of Art until May 13.

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Woman tells police Steve Wynn raped her in '70s

A woman told police she had a child with casino mogul Steve Wynn after he raped her, while another reported she was forced to resign from a Las Vegas job after she refused to have sex with him.

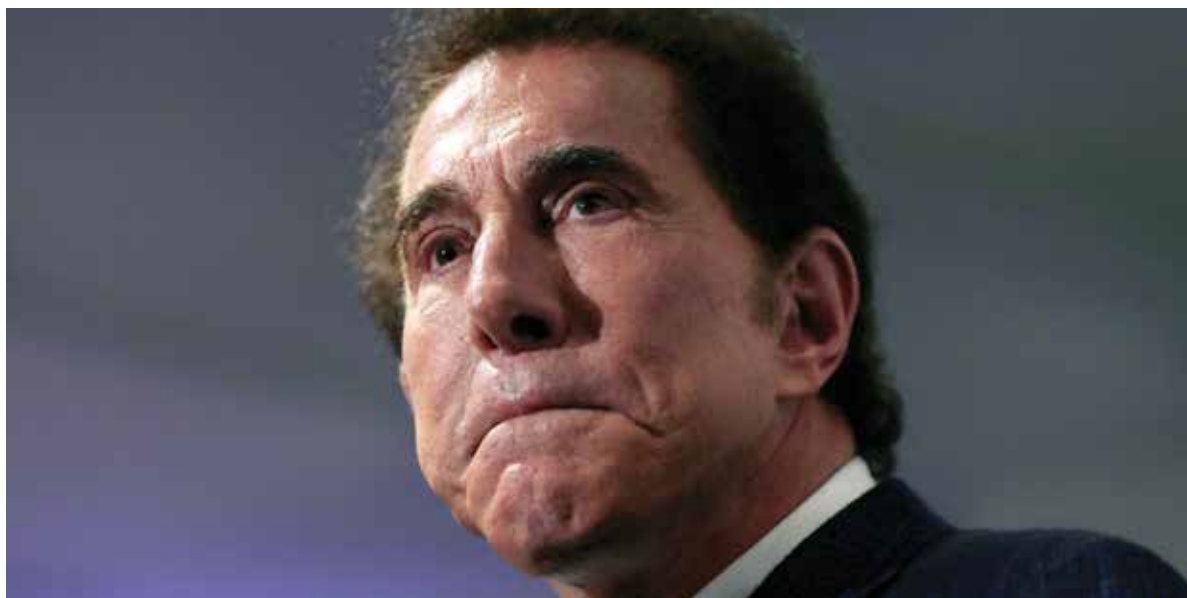
The Associated Press obtained copies of police reports recently filed by the two women about allegations dating to the 1970s. Police in Las Vegas revealed earlier this month that they had taken the statements after a news report in January revealed sexual misconduct allegations against the billionaire.

The allegations are the latest leveled against Wynn by women. He resigned as chairman and CEO of Wynn Resorts on Feb. 6, less than two weeks after the Wall Street Journal reported that a number of women said he harassed or assaulted them and that one case led to a USD7.5 million settlement.

Wynn has vehemently denied the misconduct accusations the newspaper reported and he attributed them to a campaign led by his ex-wife, whose attorney has denied that she instigated the Jan. 26 news story.

One police report obtained by the AP shows a woman told officers that Wynn raped her at least three times around 1973 and 1974 at her Chicago apartment. She reported she got pregnant and gave birth to a girl in a gas station restroom.

AP PHOTO



In one instance, the woman claimed that Wynn pinned her against the refrigerator and raped her. She said he then made a phone call, kissed her on the cheek and left. The report does not explain how Wynn is alleged to have entered the apartment or if they knew each other. The woman claimed she did not give him a key.

The second police report shows

a woman told police she had consensual sex with Wynn "several times" while she worked as a dealer at the downtown Las Vegas casino-hotel Golden Nugget, but "felt coerced to perform the acts." She reported she was forced to resign when she turned him down.

"In the Summer of 1976, Wynn approached her in the back hall and wanted her to go with him,"

according to the report filed Jan. 29. "[S]he told him, "no", she was done and had someone she was seeing. She was soon after accused of stealing \$40.00 and forced to resign."

The women's names are redacted on the reports, and police said they do not identify people who say they are victims of sex crimes.

The Las Vegas case will not be

investigated because the statute of limitations in Nevada is 20 years.

Ralph Frammolino, spokesman for Wynn, yesterday [Macau time] declined comment on the latest allegations.

Wynn Resorts is facing scrutiny by gambling regulators in Nevada and Massachusetts, where the company is building a roughly \$2.4 billion casino just outside Boston. Regulators in Macau, where the company operates two casinos, are also inquiring about the allegations.

The Vegas case will not be investigated because the statute of limitations in Nevada is 20 years

In addition, groups of shareholders have filed lawsuits in state court in Las Vegas accusing Wynn and the board of directors of Wynn Resorts of breaching their fiduciary duties by ignoring what the lawsuits described as a longstanding pattern of sexual abuse and harassment by the company's founder. **MDT/AP**

Economy grows by 9.1 percent in 2017

THE economy of Macau grew by 9.1 percent in 2017, ending the economic contraction seen over the past three consecutive years, according to data released yesterday by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC).

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2017 amounted to MOP404.2 billion while per-capita GDP amounted to MOP622,803 (about

USD77,596).

The economy increased by 11.2 percent in the first half of 2017, followed by a 7.2 percent rise in the second half of the year. DSEC pointed out that although the whole economy experienced positive growth, domestic demand remained weak and decreased by 2.7 percent in 2017. Conversely, private consumption expenditure and government final consumption

expenditure rose by 1.6 percent and 1.7 percent respectively.

The statistical data also indicates that total exports of services increased by 15.4 percent amid growth in the number of visitor arrivals and visitors' spending. Exports of gaming services and other tourism services went up by 16.4 percent and 15.4 percent respectively.

According to DSEC,

in the fourth quarter of 2017, GDP benefited from the uptrend in exports of services and expanded by 8 percent year-on-year in real terms,

higher than the 6.3 percent growth seen in the third quarter.

The implicit deflator of GDP, which measures the overall changes in prices,

went up by 3.4 percent year-on-year in the fourth quarter of 2017. The economic growth rates for the first, second and third quarters of the year were revised upwards to 11.5 percent, 11 percent and 6.3 percent respectively.

PRINCIPAL INDICATORS OF GDP

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
GDP at current prices (billion MOP)	411.9	442.1	362.2	362.3	404.2
GDP growth in real terms	11.2%	-1.2%	-21.6%	-0.9%	9.1%
Per-capita GDP at current prices	692,501	710,895	564,635	560,913	622,803
Per-capita GDP growth in real terms	6.5%	-5.5%	-24%	-1.5%	8.6%

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AL PLENARY

'PRC' should be imprinted on more Macau travel documents, lawmaker suggests

Julie Zhu

LAWMAKER Mak Soi Kun has urged the government to engrave the name of the state, the People's Republic of China, on more types of identity documents of Macau residents.

Mak voiced his suggestion during yesterday's Legislative Assembly (AL). He began by pointing out that a few surveys on the youth of Macau's sense of national identity showed that 72 percent of Macau students identify themselves as "Chi-

nese", whereas the remainder "have clearly not understood their Chinese identity."

"At the same time, they [the surveys] indicate that Macau youth's sense of national identity as well as their knowledge of the state's history need to be strengthened," declared Mak.

"The SAR has been returned to the motherland for more than 18 years already. Among all the identity documents held by Macau residents, only the passport currently marks People's Republic of China," Mak

observed.

He further noted that "People's Republic of China" is not inscribed on Macau residents' ID cards, nor on their Home Visit Permit documents.

"The first documents the young generation comes into contact with are the ID card and the home permit document. The information attached to their documents will accompany them while they grow up, and will directly affect the acquisition of their own identity," said Mak. "If these documents

do not exhibit clear symbols of the state, it might lead the young generation to naturally and firmly believe that they are Chinese from Macau, as opposed to letting them be aware that they are indeed the Macau people from China."

The first documents the young generation comes into contact with are the ID card and the home permit.

MAK SOI KUN

"In order to better train and enhance the sense of 'Loving the Country and Loving Macau' in the next generation, and as suggested by many residents, the SAR government should communicate with the related state's organization in order to study the feasibility of adding the words "People's Republic of China" to Macau residents' ID cards and Home Visit Permits [...] so as to try to allow the Macau SAR's residents to own and use documents with the state's symbol [People's Republic of China], thus allowing the young generation to realize that they are Macau people from China," said Mak Soi Kun.

Birth subsidies to increase in April

THE AL has passed a bill proposing an increase in the birth subsidies during yesterday's plenary meeting.

According to the bill's provision, civil servants' birth subsidies will grow 60 percent based on the index 100 of the Public Administration indices table. The birth subsidy will be fixed at MOP5,100 once the law enters into force.

The birth subsidy granted by the the Social Security Fund to residents working for the private sector will be raised from MOP1,957 to MOP5,000. That means there will be a difference of MOP100 in the subsidies granted to the public and private sectors.

The government intends to encourage residents to have more children in order to boost Macau's birth rate.

Since the bill did not stir many opinions among the lawmakers, yesterday's AL meeting ended comparatively early. A few lawmakers, including Wong Kit Cheng and José Pereira Coutinho, voiced their opinions.

Wong said that "there are two systems now, and the differences [concerning the public and private systems] will appear in the future."

Wong suggests that the government establish one universal system to ensure an equal social security fund for birth subsidies in or-

der to "avoid bigger differences."

However, Coutinho thinks that the bill is not enough to encourage residents to have more children. In order to foster Macau's birth rate, the lawmaker considers that more developments within such aspects as breastfeeding, housing and healthcare will be necessary.

The Secretary for Administration and Justice, Sonia Chan, replied to the lawmakers, saying that the "social security regime and civil servants' [regime] are two different regimes. The social security regime gives residents some basic protections besides the welfare that the employers [already] give them. This is a double security [for the employees]."

According to Chan, the government has done "abundant work" to promote breastfeeding. She hopes that the government's departments can promote and develop speeds of breastfeeding rooms.

After the bill was passed, Mak Soi Kun gave his opinion. "There is an argument in society [that questions] whether civil servants and residents will bear children for a few thousand patacas," Mak said. He also suggested the government follow up on civil servants' birth rate regularly.

The bill will come into effect on April 1.

ON THE LAWMAKERS' AGENDA

TOURISM CAPACITY

Ho Ion Sang "once again urged the government" to manage and make use of Macau's current resources scientifically while building additional tourism and leisure facilities and improving infrastructures to respond to society's concerns about Macau's tourism capacity. Several lawmakers, including Kou Hoi In and Chui Sai Peng, voiced their concerns over Macau's tourism capacity. Their opinions addressed the exploration of more tourism products and the distribution of tourists across different districts.

SAR RESIDENTS' EXCLUSIVE CHECKPOINT

Leong Sun Iok hopes that the Macau government can negotiate with the mainland government to reopen exclusive checkpoints for Hong Kong and Macau residents at the Gongbei border gate. "Many residents complained that, since the Gongbei port cancelled the exclusive manual checkpoints for Hong Kong and Macau residents, [Macau] residents have to share checkpoints with many mainland tourists, which has increased the time [it takes for Macau residents] to cross the border," said Leong, adding "especially during holidays, division of the human traffic flow should be enhanced to reduce the impact of crowds of tourists on Macau residents."

TOURISM SERVICE

Lei Chan U criticized what he characterized as Macau's poor tourism services, including taxi services and restaurant services. "Especially the taxi phenomenon, which has drawn society's attention, despite it being difficult to solve effectively. [...] Even though residents and tourists alike are gradually getting used to the additional service fees during the holidays, it is obviously unreasonable to add an additional fee when the service fee has already been charged," said Lei. Besides the above careless conduct within taxi and restaurant services, residents and tourists have criticized Macau's service quality for a long time.

Wynn Las Vegas Hosts UIM Students

STUDY PROGRAM HELPS LAY FOUNDATION FOR WORLD CENTRE OF TOURISM AND LEISURE

Recently, the senior management of Wynn Las Vegas received a delegation from the University of Macau in the United States, where they shared with the professors and students their considerable experience of building luxury resorts. Senior U.S. personnel attached great importance to this visit, declaring that a close continuing partnership with the university was the surest way of cultivating and nurturing the talent necessary for Macao's development as a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure, as envisioned by the Macau SAR Government.

The "Las Vegas Study Mission" - a tailor-made program initiated by the University of Macau for students majoring in Hospitality and Gaming Management in the Faculty of Business Administration - attended a seminar delivered by a Professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and visits to the most representative casinos and resort hotels in the world famous desert city. Of particular value are the students' opportunities for personal exchanges with senior management of diverse enterprises, from whom they can glean important insights into the practicalities of management.



LAS VEGAS METAMORPHOUS ROLE MODEL FOR MACAO

Professor Jacky Yuk-Chow So, Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration of the University of Macau, believes that the Las Vegas Study Mission can elevate students' professional knowledge and experiences vis-à-vis their studies. In particular, he maintains, the program enables them to observe the stark differences in business models and strategies employed by enterprises beyond Macao's borders, in turn encouraging students to critically deliberate upon the MSAR's own strategy apropos the territory's economic need to both consolidate and diversify.

Professor So remarked that Macao's world-class service standards in tourism had the capacity to act as a training center for hospitality and tourism services, incubating national plans for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and countries along the Belt and Road, making Macao a hub for the cultivation of hospitality industry talent.

Since Professor So started teaching at the University of Macau in 2010 he and his team have invested much effort in making this study program possible predicated on the precept that Macao should make constant improvements in its hospitality

industry. This, he maintains, can only be possible by learning from more cases to facilitate the local industry's upgrade and restructuring. The development of the Las Vegas experience serves as a lesson for Macao and can inspire many students to widen their thinking.

COMMITMENT TO PERFECTION A WINNING FORMULA

In visiting several world renowned universities and successful enterprises the delegation noted that each has its own advantages, with Professor So observing that Wynn's distinctive market orientation is especially conducive to developing a market hoping to attract quality return customers. The company's acclaimed services - recognized by numerous awards from around the world - coupled with a stable of popular performances and entertainment facilities are also elements Macao can learn from, says the Dean, adding that it is yet another reason Wynn was chosen as the final stop of this visit.

VISITING THE PREMIER LAS VEGAS RESORT DESTINATION

Situated on the northeast corner of Las Vegas Boulevard and Sands Avenue directly opposite the Fashion Show Mall, luxury resort and entertainment complex Wynn Las Vegas - the premier Las Vegas resort destination - left an indelible impression on all participants.

Fourth-year students of the Hospitality and Gaming Management Program Amanda Lai, Rita Kou and Beacon Song declared that the visit was indeed an eye-opener for them and that they had drawn different conclusions on what they had experienced during the visit. Wynn Macau, with co-ordination from the University of Macau, had the opportunity to interview these three students and explore what they had achieved during the visit with a view to providing more inspiring guided tours to future delegations.

UM STUDENTS RECEIVE WARM WELCOME



Amanda, a former intern at Wynn Macau, was still very excited about her visit, observing every project there has its own distinctiveness but Wynn Las Vegas, of all the projects visited, was the one that made her realize the importance of attentive hospitality. "We had never thought of being welcomed at the entrance in person by the senior management team of this internationally renowned enterprise," she said. "We also had exchanges with them throughout the guided tour that lasted for several hours, along with their extremely attentive services. It is their meticulous services with the customer-oriented principle that makes Wynn so outstanding from its competitors."



Rita also recalled the unforgettable impression the warm welcome offered by Wynn Las Vegas had on her, adding that visiting the back office was a precious

experience, especially seeing the water effect control panel of their water-themed performance 'Le Rêve' (The Dream). This experience made her realize that the knowledge and technologies required for the operation of a large-scale leisure and recreational project demand far more than mere hotel services. Wynn also escorted its UM visitors to the VIP club casino - Sky Casino - the facilities and services of which were indeed eye-openers for her.

"The most surprising fact was us being received in the US by Ms. Linda Chen," said Rita with undisguised delight. "One of the senior executives of Wynn Macau especially came over to the U.S. to act as our host. I enjoyed the warm hospitality offered by Wynn's members throughout the visit, which gave me a very strong sense of belonging."



Beacon - a UM student from Beijing - zeroed in on the cultural differences apparent during this excursion to the U.S., saying: "In Las Vegas, slot machines, like those in Wynn casino, are very popular. The technical staff there attached great emphasis on developing new games and some of them are indeed very intriguing, which is slightly different from Macao's casinos, where table games like baccarat are dominant".

He also observed that transport facilities are crucial to regional tourism projects, suggesting Macao reference the successful practices of other countries to further enhance the city's tourism development.

SJM results show steep fall in profit

SJM Holdings yesterday announced its 2017 annual results showing that gaming revenue of the group edged up 0.1 percent from the previous year to HKD41.29 billion. On the other hand, adjusted EBITDA amounted to just over HKD3.07 billion, a decrease of 10 percent from the previous year, and profit attributable to owners of the company was HKD1.96 billion, a decrease of 15.6 percent from 2016. The operator had a 16.1 percent share of Macau's gaming revenue, including 20.8 percent of mass-market table gaming revenue and 13.6 percent of VIP gaming revenue. A statement issued by the company noted that a final dividend of HKD0.15 per share has been proposed and will be reviewed at the forthcoming annual general meeting. If approved, the total dividends for 2017 – including an interim dividend of HKD0.05 per share paid in September – would be HKD0.20 per share.



Galaxy Group: 58 percent increase for April dividend

Galaxy Entertainment Group yesterday reported its financial results for the year of 2017. The results show that full-year group revenue increased by 18 percent year-on-year to HKD62.5 billion, with adjusted EBITDA increasing 37 percent to HKD14.1 billion. Part of the rise was attributed by the group to a "lucky" fourth quarter last year that increased adjusted EBITDA by approximately HKD52 million. Meanwhile, full-year net profit attributable to shareholders soared 67 percent to HKD10.5 billion. The company said that its cash and liquid investments amounted to HKD41.4 billion and its net cash was HKD31.7 billion as of December 31. It held liabilities of HKD9.7 billion. GEG paid two special dividends last year, HKD0.26 per share in April and HKD0.33 per share in October. The group subsequently announced another special dividend of HKD0.41 per share payable in April 2018, up 58 percent compared to last year.

Closure of Phuket Airport's runway causes delay in local flights

AIRASIA'S Phuket to Macau flights suffered a 90-minute delay on Monday and Tuesday due to the closure of Phuket's runway, which needed urgent maintenance work.

Phuket Airport was closed from 2 a.m. to 7 a.m. earlier this week and remained closed until Tuesday, as cracks were found on the runway.

Although the maintenance works were only expected to take two days, authorities had to reshuffle arrival and departure times and runway slots.

The works affected 66 flights during the first day of construction while another 78 flights were affected on Tuesday, including 39 arrivals and 39 departures from 22 airlines.

An AirAsia Macau representative replied to the Times that although the Phuket-Macau routes for both days were not canceled, the only daily direct flight, which was recently inaugurated, suffered delays.



The representative did not disclose the number of passengers that were affected.

Currently, the budget airline flies passengers from Phuket to Macau at 5:45 a.m., with a flight returning to Phuket at 10:40 a.m..

According to the Phuket Gazette, about 84 square meters between the runway and taxiway required repairs.

Thai officials said that the cracks were due to wear and tear from the busy Lunar New Year period.

The airport handles about 300 flights and has around 700,000 passengers transiting through per day.

At least four flights to and from Hong Kong were also affected.

As cited in reports, flights between Hong Kong and Phuket were delayed, in both directions, by approximately five hours on both days.

HK Express said two round-trip flights – a total of four sectors – between Hong Kong and Phuket were affected by the closure. **LV**

AD



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HEALTH

Childbirth delivery service fee for non-residents may increase nine-fold

HOSPITAL Conde de São Januário (CHCSJ) has proposed adjusting the fees for the delivery service for non-resident parents, as mentioned in a press conference yesterday.

According to the deputy director of the Health Bureau (SSM) Ho Ioc San, the adjustment concerns two groups of people: non-resident workers and tourists.

According to the proposal, the service fee of natural childbirth for non-local workers

would be increased from the current MOP975 to MOP8,775. The increase for tourists would be bigger than the increase for blue-card holders. The price adjustment proposal for tourists is set at MOP 17,550 from the current MOP1,950.

Regarding a caesarean section (C-section), non-local workers have been suggested to pay MOP17,550 for the service, while they are paying MOP1,950 currently. For tourists, the service fee for a caesarean section would grow to MOP35,100

from current MOP3,900.

Ho noted that in 2017, and since mainland China implemented a two-child policy in 2016, 28 percent of CHCSJ's delivery services were provided to non-local residents, and 20 percent of that 28 percent were tourists.

Moreover, CHCSJ has not adjusted the related surgery fee for 20 years.

CHCSJ has proposed to adjust delivery service fees to near market price based on the aforementioned two factors.

Ho also remarked that the price adjustment would not affect Macau residents; the proposal will only apply in cases where both parents are non-local residents. As long as one of the parents is a Macau resident, the family would not be charged the new price.

There has been no public consultation conducted for the proposal as yet, but the SSM



deputy director claims that the proposal has been agreed to by many local organizations, including the Macau Federation of Trade Unions (FOAM), the Macau General Union of the Neighborhood Associations, and the Women's General Association of Macau.

Unemployed number drops to under 7,000

For the three-month period ending January 2018, the general unemployment rate (1.8 percent) and the unemployment rate of local residents (2.4 percent) both dropped 0.1 percentage points compared to the previous period (ending December 2017), according to the latest data from the Statistics and Census Service. Meanwhile, the underemployment rate was 0.4 percent, up by 0.1 percentage points. At the end of January, the total labor force was 382,800 with some 376,000 people employed. Analyzed by industry, employment in the gaming and junket sector registered small increase, while that in construction decreased marginally. The number of the unemployed was about 6,900, down by 200 from the previous period. Fresh labor force entrants searching for their first job accounted for 9.9 percent of the total unemployed, down by 2.7 percentage points.

UM receives Takuo Sugano Award

The University of Macau's (UM) State Key Laboratory of Analog and Mixed-Signal VLSI has designed an innovative microelectronic chip, which can turn a wireless power receiver into a wireless power transmitter without additional hardware support. According to a statement issued yesterday by the UM, the paper received the 2017 Takuo Sugano Award for Outstanding Far-East Paper at the recently held Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers 65th International Solid-State Circuits Conference.

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Crypto's hottest hires aren't millennials. They're banking cops

Annie Massa

VETERAN Wall Street enforcers are landing new roles on a wild frontier: virtual currencies.

A growing number of crypto startups are adding former regulators and other government authorities to their payrolls, a practice that could help them head off or prepare for stricter rules. Ventures have snapped up ex-prosecutors, national security officials and at least one former senior diplomat - all of whom may prove handy as nations decide whether to embrace or outlaw digital money.

The drumbeat of hires crescendoed in November when Ripple, a venture looking to rewire global banking with its own cryptocurrency, added Ben Lawsky to its board. He earned a tough reputation as New York's top financial watchdog by pushing banks to scrutinize client transactions for illicit dealings. In January, crypto brokerage Omega One enlisted a new adviser, Bart Chilton, a former member of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The agency oversees digital currencies.

"The fact that he's willing to take an advisory role with us is a sign that we pass a certain level of due diligence," Omega One's chief executive officer, Alex Gordon-Brander, said of Chilton.

The hiring spree breaks with the crypto world's dominance by millennials - many with no background in traditional banking. Yet it follows a well



worn path for financial innovators, such as online lenders, that set out to disrupt the industry and then ended up recruiting experts to guide them through its many regulatory pitfalls.

Crypto firms are likely to keep hiring regulatory experts to legitimize themselves, said Dave Weisberger, CEO of CoinRoutes, a cryptocurrency data and order routing company. Still, potential investors shouldn't assume it makes firms a safe bet, he said.

"If putting someone on the advisory board convinces investors that it decreases the regula-

tory risk of a product they'd be sorely mistaken," Weisberger said. "There are a lot of people who could be fooled into thinking it gives them more air cover."

Enlisting former government regulators is a natural progression, according to Arthur Levitt, the former Securities and Exchange Commission chairman. "All new companies try to do that," said Levitt, who advises cryptocurrency ventures including BitPay and Mirror and is a director at Bloomberg LP, the parent of Bloomberg News. "There's nothing unique about cryptocurrencies," he said.

Already, they're tapping a wide range of government expertise.

Board members at Coinbase, one of the largest cryptocurrency exchanges, include former federal prosecutor Kathryn Haun, once nicknamed the "Constable of Cryptocurrency" for helping to break up the Silk Road dark net marketplace used for drugs and other illicit goods. AirSwap, another exchange, gets advice from Clifford Hart, once a senior U.S. diplomat who served as consul general to Hong Kong and Macau until 2016.

Lawsky's jump to Ripple was particularly notable because he

helped pioneer regulation of cryptocurrencies. He introduced the BitLicense, a requirement for digital currency companies that wanted to operate in New York.

Some hires have even helped proselytize for cryptocurrencies, reassuring the public about popular coins or asserting their underlying technology, known as blockchain, will be a force for good.

AirSwap gets advice from Clifford Hart, once a senior U.S. diplomat who served as consul general to Hong Kong and Macau

Days before Omega One announced his hire, Chilton said he wished he had invested in Bitcoin and its major rivals years earlier - back when he was warning people as a CFTC commissioner to be careful while calling for more regulation. Generally, the wild price fluctuations are "mellowing out," he told CNBC on Jan. 11.

In December, a pair of former Homeland Security and Justice Department attorneys, Kiran Raj and John Roth, wrote an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal, making the case that blockchain will keep Americans safe by helping law enforcers and national-security officials track terrorists, hackers and fraudsters.

They too had new jobs in crypto.

One of the headlines on the piece: "Why we left government to join the Bittrex exchange." **Bloomberg**

Toys 'R' Us's UK arm enters administration after failed sale

TOYS "R" Us Inc.'s U.K. unit said it entered into administration yesterday after talks to sell the business fell through.

Simon Thomas and Arron Kendall, partners at Moorfields Advisory Limited, have been appointed as joint administrators of the British division of the U.S. retailer to oversee "an orderly wind-down of the store portfolio over the coming weeks," the company said in an



emailed statement.

Thomas said in the statement that admini-

nistrators will "make the business."

every effort to secure a "All stores remain open until further no-

subject to clearance and special promotions," he said.

The company operates over 100 stores in the U.K., making it one of the country's largest toy retailers.

The company couldn't meet a 15 million-pound (USD21 million) value added tax liability due this month after failing to secure new financing, a person familiar with the matter said on Tuesday.

Weak trading during the crucial Christmas shopping season thwarted the company's plans to restructure the business in the U.K. through store closures and

rent cuts, as agreed in December with creditors, the person said.

Toys "R" Us started bankruptcy proceedings in the U.S. in September as it buckled under debt that dated from a \$7.5 billion leveraged buyout in 2005 led by Bain Capital, KKR & Co. and Vornado Realty Trust and amid increasing online competition. The chain is also in discussions to offload its 85 percent stake in the Asian venture to Hong Kong's billionaire Fung brothers, who own the remainder of the business, separate people familiar with the matter said on Tuesday. **Bloomberg**

opinion

How Hong Kong could scrap income tax and prosper

Andy Mukherjee, Bloomberg Gadfly

It may be a good problem to have, but it's a problem nevertheless.

In his annual budget speech yesterday, Hong Kong Financial Secretary Paul Chan announced a surplus of HKD138 billion (USD17.6 billion) for the fiscal year 2017-18. That's eight times the original government forecast of HKD16.3 billion.

Too much of a good thing plagues both Hong Kong and Singapore. The city economies have a deluge of money coming into government coffers now, but as their populations age, social security and healthcare expenditure will surge just as income taxes start to bring in less. Today's bumper harvests could turn into deficits within a decade.

To ward off that scenario, Singapore plans to increase its 7 percent goods and services tax by 2 percentage points between 2021 and 2025. Hong Kong, which doesn't have a sales tax, would find it almost impossible to adopt a regressive levy now when inequality in the Chinese territory is already at a record high.

What's to be done? Leave GST aside. Hong Kong could take a different leaf out of Singapore's playbook: living off assets.

Starting a decade ago, the island state turned its three reservoirs of wealth - the central bank, the sovereign wealth fund GIC Pte, and the state investment firm Temasek Holdings Pte - into the single biggest contributor to government revenue, more than any tax or levy. The annual budget claims up to half of realized and unrealized investment gains. The rest is reinvested.

The last thing Hong Kong needs is a state investment firm to meddle in the economy. But leaving its accumulated fiscal war chest of HKD1 trillion at the central bank's Exchange Fund to earn measly interest income on the world's safest securities is too conservative.

Without risking the Hong Kong dollar's peg to the U.S. currency (which is what the Exchange Fund protects), the city could set aside some of the funds it garners from land premiums and stamp duties to purchase riskier overseas assets. About HKD221 billion, or 37 percent of total revenue for the coming fiscal year, is expected from those two levies, which are also the most volatile. Sequestering, say, half of the take would mean borrowing to finance HKD86 billion in planned infrastructure spending. It would be wise to do so for several reasons.

First, with gross government debt of 0.1 percent of GDP, there's zero risk to Hong Kong's AA+ credit rating.

Second, higher sovereign and quasi-sovereign issuance would accord wealthy Hong Kongers a wider menu of risk-free investment options. Chan vowed to step up the issue of "silver bonds," which are notes aimed at providing elderly citizens with steady coupons. Singapore, by contrast, is planning to rely much more heavily on the bond market to finance everything from a new airport terminal to a high-speed train link with Malaysia. To maintain its competitiveness, Hong Kong should match its rival's aggressiveness.

Third, pressure to release more land to developers won't go away in the world's least affordable housing market. The government will offer 27 residential plots in the coming financial year alone, so earning more revenue from premiums. That could lead to yet another overshoot on the estimated HKD46.6 billion budget surplus for the coming fiscal year.

Fourth, don't lose sight of population aging. A recent flu epidemic underscored an embarrassing shortage of public health-care facilities. Hong Kongers demanded to know why their rich government couldn't give them shorter hospital waiting times. Chan was forced to earmark HKD6 billion to the Hospital Authority in his 2018-19 budget.

That's just the beginning. Outlays on chronic diseases and elderly care will keep rising. At the same time, however, the ambitious Bay Area project - a seamless urban agglomeration linking Hong Kong with Macau and China's industrial powerhouse of Guangdong - will also need lumpy financing, especially in transport.

With assets financed by borrowing, and a portfolio of overseas holdings earning investment returns, the tension between today's needs and tomorrow's demands can be resolved.

Next year, levies on wages are expected to fetch half as much revenue as stamp duties on property and stock-market transactions: Chan trimmed salary taxes in his budget, forgoing HKD22.6 billion. That's a good start, because higher take-home pay will make an overburdened middle class feel more optimistic about their biggest expenditure: housing. The revenue from land released to meet additional housing demand can also be reinvested in foreign assets.

Eventually, Hong Kong could find itself in a situation where it doesn't even need to collect income taxes.

AP PHOTO



Smoke and steam spew from the sprawling complex that is a part of the Jiujiang steel and rolling mills in Qiana, Hebei province

US proposes anti-dumping duties on Chinese aluminum foil

THE U.S. Commerce Department yesterday [Macau time] recommended raising import duties on Chinese-made aluminum foil it said is being sold at unfairly low prices due to improper subsidies to producers.

The ruling was praised by the Aluminum Association, a trade group that pressed the case and said cheap imports were threatening thousands of jobs.

Beijing faces complaints from the United States, European Union and other trading partners

that a flood of Chinese aluminum, steel and other exports are being sold at unfairly low prices, threatening jobs abroad.

The Commerce Department said it concluded Chinese exporters were selling aluminum foil at 49 to 106 percent below fair value and were receiving unfair subsidies of 17 to 81 percent of the goods' value.

Importers will have to post cash bonds to pay potentially higher duties while the recommendation goes to the U.S. International Trade Commission

for a final decision, said a Commerce statement.

China's Ministry of Commerce complained Washington was harming Chinese exporters and said Beijing was ready to take unspecified "necessary measures" to defend its interests.

Beijing has accused Trump's government of disrupting global trade regulation by taking action under U.S. law instead of through the World Trade Organization.

"China will take necessary measures to defend its interests in response

to the wrong practice of the United States," said a Commerce Ministry official, Wang Hejun, in a statement.

The Trump administration earlier raised duties on Chinese-made washing machines, solar modules and some aluminum and steel products to offset what it said were improper subsidies.

The American Chamber of Commerce in China says Chinese officials have warned of possible unspecified retaliation if Washington took excessive steps in trade disputes. **AP**

TAIWAN

Prosecutors detain developer of building where quake killed 14

PROSECUTORS in eastern Taiwan have detained the developer of a building complex that collapsed in an earthquake earlier this month, killing 14 people.

The office of the Hualien district prosecutor said in a statement that Liu Ying-lin was ordered held over concerns that he was seeking to duck responsibility and could collude with others or tamper with evidence and witnesses.

It said that Liu lacked the professional qualifications to undertake such a project and that the

12-story Yun Men Tsui Ti commercial-residential complex was built far below basic standards for withstanding an earthquake.

The building's architect and the operators of a hot pot restaurant and hotel in the building were released on bail. The two businesses located on the building's lower floors were believed to have carried out considerable renovations, undermining its structural integrity.

A total of 17 people were killed in four buildings that partially collapsed in the Feb. 6 magnitude 6.4



earthquake.

The quake hit two years to the day after an apartment building in the southwestern city of Tainan collapsed in an earthquake, killing 115 people.

That building was found to have been shoddily constructed with only

about half the load-bearing capacity required. Its developer, three employees of his construction company and one outside consultant were charged with professional negligence resulting in death, injury and serious injury. **AP**

Ruling party approves list of nominees to fill top government positions

CHINESE leaders have approved nominees for top government jobs, state media said, as the ruling Communist Party also promised changes to the country's regulatory structure.

The party's Central Committee agreed on the list during a three-day conclave that ended yesterday in Beijing, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. State media didn't release names or their intended posts, which could potentially include the top central bank job.

A broad communique released after the meeting pledged further changes to the economy and to "adamantly remove any restrictions that keep the market from playing a decisive role." The document pledged "institutional reform" of the party, government, military and other public bodies and promised to balance power between the central and local governments.

The closed-door gathering comes before the annual National People's Congress starting Monday, at which President Xi Jinping and other top cabinet figures will be formally appointed to new terms. It was the Central Committee's third such meeting since Xi secured a second term in October, the most in a similar period since the process was standardized four decades ago.

In addition to selecting a successor to People's Bank of China Governor Zhou Xiaochuan, the government is considering a merger of the China Banking Regulatory Commission and the China Insurance Regulatory Commission, Bloomberg News has reported. The moves could be pivotal in attempts to defuse

AP PHOTO



Rising star: Liu He, Xi's top economic policy adviser

the nation's ticking time bomb of debt - which stands at around 260 percent of output and growing - without derailing the economic expansion.

Politburo members mentioned by analysts in connection with the PBOC governor role include Xi's top economic policy adviser,

■ The closed-door gathering comes before the annual National People's Congress starting Monday

Liu He, the head of the banking regulator, Guo Shuqing, and Hubei provincial party chief Jiang Chaoliang. Also unresolved is Xi's pick to lead the Financial Stability and Development Committee, which was established last year to help curb risk.

Liu is visiting the U.S. this week with an expanded role managing the rising trade tensions between the governments in Beijing and Washington.

MORE CURBS ON MONEY-MARKET FUNDS

China plans to expand its unprecedented crackdown on financial risk to money-market funds by capping how much investors can redeem in a day, people familiar with the matter said.

The limit for same-day redemption will be set at 10,000 yuan (USD1,580), said the people, who asked not to be identified as they're not authorized to speak publicly. The same restriction will apply when investors use their assets in money-market funds directly for payment and consumption, the people said.

Such a move would be the latest tightening by China's policy makers, who are making stability job No. 1 as they work to balance continued expansion with defusing the country's debt bomb. Those efforts culminated in the unprecedented government takeover of Anbang Insurance Group Co. earlier this month, just before President Xi Jinping gathered top cadres for a plenum

to select government leaders and the national legislative meeting next week.

The move by regulators brings them into areas once seen as less risky. The country's money-market funds expanded to a total value of almost \$1.1 trillion by the end of 2017, up from \$680 billion the previous year, according to the Asset Management Association of China.

"The financial regulatory crackdown is far from over," Rob Subbaraman, an economist at Nomura in Singapore, said in a note Wednesday. "The unrelenting crackdown on shadow financing, market speculation and corruption has steadily raised the cost of funding and tightened overall financial conditions."

The People's Bank of China and the China Securities Regulatory Commission didn't respond to faxes seeking comment on the matter Wednesday.

Some Chinese money-market funds allow investors to use the money they hold in the fund directly for purchasing online and in traditional retail stores, such as the Ant Financial-controlled Tianhong Yu'E Bao Money Market Fund, China's largest such entity.

The central bank last year urged Ant, a financial affiliate of Alibaba Group Holding Ltd., to reduce the maximum amount individuals can invest in Yu'E Bao to limit financial market risk, people with knowledge of the matter said in May.

The PBOC revised the statistics methodology for calculating the M2 broad money supply last month to better gauge the scale of money market funds. **MDT/Bloomberg**

ECONOMY

Factory index at 19-month low as holiday slows work

CHINA'S manufacturing activity weakened to its lowest level in more than a year and a half as the extended Lunar New Year holiday curtailed production.

The official purchasing managers' index released yesterday slipped to 50.3 in February from 51.3 in the previous month, its biggest drop in nearly six years.

The last time the index was lower was in July 2016. It has now fallen for the third straight month though it remains just

above the 50-point mark signifying expansion on the index's 100-point scale.

Output and new orders grew at a slower pace for the month while new export orders weakened further, contracting for the second straight month, according to the report's sub-indexes.

The China Federation of Logistics & Purchasing's PMI is a widely watched early indicator of health in the vital manufacturing sector, which employs many millions of workers

and is a key component of China's economy, the world's second biggest.

The Lunar New Year tends to distort readings because the holiday falls at different times in the first two months of the year. Factories usually stock up on raw materials and scramble to fill orders before shutting for a weeklong break, which this year began in mid-February.

"The time around the festival is traditionally a slow business season. Enterprises generally stop

work to reduce production and market activity weakens," said senior statistician Zhao Qinghe of the National Bureau of Statistics, which released the data on its website.

But because the drop was so big, economists suspected other factors were also involved. Beijing's intensive anti-pollution campaign likely "played an important role in dampening the headline numbers on top of the holiday effect," ANZ Bank's China Economist Betty Wang said.

A separate report showed



activity also cooled in China's services sector for the first time in four months. The non-manufacturing

purchasing managers' index slipped to 54.4 in February from 55.3 in January. **AP**

AP PHOTO



UNITED NATIONS

N. Korea sent banned items to Syria, Myanmar

Aleppo, Syria

Edith M. Lederer, United Nations

NORTH Korea sent items used in ballistic missile and chemical weapons programs to Syria along with missile technicians in violation of U.N. sanctions — and banned ballistic missiles systems to Myanmar, U.N. experts said.

The panel of experts monitoring sanctions against North Korea said its investigations into Pyongyang's transfer of prohibited ballistic missile, conventional arms and dual use goods found more than 40 previously unreported shipments to Syria between 2012 and 2017.

It said an unnamed U.N. member state also reported evidence of Myanmar's receipt of a range of conventional weapons from North Korea including multiple rocket launchers and surface-to-air missiles in addition to ballistic missile systems.

The Associated Press reported on Feb. 2 that according to the experts' report, North Korea was flouting U.N. sanctions on oil and gas, engaging in prohibited ballistic missile cooperation with Syria and Myanmar, and illegally exporting commodities that brought in nearly USD200 million in just nine months last year.

AP obtained details from the more than 200-page report yesterday [Macau time], including the panel's findings related to chemical weapons in Syria. The

U.S. and other Western nations have accused Syria of using chemical weapons against rebel-controlled areas including recently in the Damascus suburb of eastern Ghouta, which President Bashar Assad's government denies.

The report to the U.N. Security Council, which diplomats expect to be made public in mid-March, details "substantial new evidence" about North Korea's dealings with Syria, dating back to 2008.

According to an unidentified member state, the North's Ryonhap-2 Corporation was involved that year in a Syrian ballistic missile program, the "maneuverable re-entry vehicle (MARV) Scud D (MD) project," the report said.

More recently, it said the August 2016 visit by a technical delegation from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — the country's official name — "involved the transfer to Syria of special resistance valves and thermometers known for use in chemical weapons programs."

That information came from another member state which also reported that North Korean technicians "continue to operate at chemical weapons and missile facilities at Barzeh, Adra and Hama," the report said.

It quoted Syria's reply to the panel about the reports: "There are no DPRK technical companies in Syria and the only presence of some DPRK individuals are con-

finied in the field of sports under private individual contracts for training athletics and gymnastics."

The experts added that they have not yet received a reply for documents supporting this claim and a list of all North Koreans who have traveled to Syria.

The panel said it also examined shipments interdicted by member states that were sent by the Chinese company Cheng Tong Trading Co. Ltd. to Damascus-based companies in 2016 and 2017.

The experts said 13 shipping containers were filled with "acid resistant tiles" which would cover 5,000 square meters, enough for a large-scale industrial project.

One country's analysis concluded that the tiles "were to be used for activities conducted at

high temperatures," the panel said, while another country said the material "can be used to build bricks for the interior walls of a chemical factory."

The panel also said it continued its investigations into activities of Ryu Jin, a senior official in Syria for the Korea Mining Development Trading Corporation known as KOMID, who is on the U.N. sanctions blacklist. He listed his rank as a major general in a letter with an official proposal to Syrian Major General Ali Salim of the Army Supply Bureau for "an air defense command and control system," it said.

KOMID is the DPRK's primary arms dealer and main exporter of goods and equipment related to ballistic missiles and conventional weapons.

The report said among other activities Ryu Jin shipped ball bearings and fiber-optic cables to Syria and earned 56,000 euros and 48,000 euros respectively, which was transferred through Tanchon Commercial Bank.

The panel said its investigations into several cases of previously unreported arms shipments and cooperation with front companies for those under U.N. sanctions between 2010 and 2017 "showed further evidence of arms embargo and other violations, including through the transfer of items with utility in ballistic missile and chemical weapons programs."

For many years, the panel

said the DPRK Corst Company acted on behalf of the Second Economic Committee, which is under sanctions, to ship goods to Syria for use in prohibited programs.

The panel said it received documents in July 2017 showing Corst shipped banned goods to a researcher at Syria's Scientific Studies Research Council, which the U.S. says is the government agency responsible for developing and producing non-conventional weapons and the means to deliver them.

As for Myanmar, the panel said an unnamed member state reported that its Directorate of Defense Industries "maintains a sophisticated global procurement network" and "is seeking equipment from overseas suppliers for its DPRK-linked missile program."

The panel said it previously concluded that Myanmar's So Min Htike Co. Ltd. "was the consignee in the attempted transfer of prohibited nuclear-related items in 2012."

While Myanmar told the panel in 2015 that it only had "normal diplomatic ties" with the DPRK, it reported on July 26, 2017 that it expelled Kim Chol Nam, a DPRK diplomat "for acting on behalf or at the direction of KOMID." And on Jan. 24, 2018, the panel said "Myanmar added that it was investigating the panel's latest request for information." AP

■ The report to the UN Security Council details 'substantial new evidence' about North Korea's dealings with Syria, dating back to 2008



INDIA

Grieving Bollywood fans pay their respects to Sridevi

Rafiq Maqbool, Mumbai

LINING up for hours and visibly grief-stricken, thousands of mourning fans paid their respects yesterday to Sridevi, the iconic Bollywood actress who drowned accidentally in a Dubai hotel bathtub over the weekend.

Sridevi's body was flown home late Tuesday night in a private plane owned by Anil Ambani, a Mumbai industrialist and entertainment baron.

By yesterday morning, people

had begun lining up along a security fence outside the private club near Sridevi's home where the body had been laid out. A string of Mercedes and Audis ferried family members, Bollywood stars and VIPs in through another gate, with squadrons of private guards ensuring things stayed under control.

One mourner, a man who gave his name only as Prashant, arrived at about 7 a.m., hours before anyone was to be allowed in.

"No matter how long I have to wait, I will wait," he said, clutching a small bouquet of flowers. "I'll wait

until I'm able to pay my respects."

"I saw all her movies," he said, grief clearly visible on his face.

Inside the club, the actress's body was placed on a raised platform in a hall decorated with flowers. Her extended family, including her husband, producer Boney Kapoor, and her two daughters, stood by the platform as fans and colleagues walked past in respect.

While the family had requested that all media leave their cameras outside while viewing her body, some photographs emerged on news sites and showed Sridevi's

body dressed in a vibrant magenta and gold sari with a heavy gold necklace around her neck and a large red bindi, the decorative forehead marking many Indian women wear. The red bindi is traditionally a sign that the woman wearing it is married.

By late afternoon, her body, wrapped in an Indian flag, began its journey from the club to the crematorium where her funeral was to take place according to Hindu customs. The body was carried in a truck decorated with flowers and a giant poster of the actress.

Sridevi, 54, was in Dubai for a wedding in her extended family when she died Saturday. Investigators in Dubai closed their case Tuesday and handed the body to her family.

Condolences have poured in since the death of the actress, who redefined the importance of the female lead in India's largely male-dominated film industry.

Sridevi, who used only one name onscreen, began her film career as a child actress and went on to star in regional films in southern India before making her Bollywood debut in the late 1970s.

By the late 1980s, she was a name to reckon with in mainstream Hindi-language films and was able to command top billing and dominate screen space in a film industry in which the heroine's role was largely relegated to a few songs and a handful of romantic scenes as the leading man's love interest.

Despite a life spent entirely in the movie business, colleagues described Sridevi as quiet and shy on the sets until she faced the camera, when several of them recalled how she would "transform" into the character she was playing.

In 1997, she got married to Kapoor, a producer on many of her films, and stepped away from cinema for many years while she raised her two daughters.

Her Twitter bio read: Actor-MOM-Housewife-Actor Again!

Over the last few years, Sridevi had been grooming her older daughter, Janhvi Kapoor, for her debut Bollywood film slated for release later this year.

Sridevi returned to films in 2012 with "English Vinglish," where she played a quiet housewife who remains largely in the background until she decides to learn English to fit in with her family.

In 2017, she starred in "Mom," playing a woman out to seek vengeance for the rape of her teenage stepdaughter. **AP**

BANGLADESH

Nobel laureates blame Suu Kyi for Rohingya crisis

THREE Nobel Peace laureates yesterday accused Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi and the nation's military of genocide for their role in violence that has forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims to flee to Bangladesh.

The laureates, who are on a weeklong trip to Bangladesh to visit the sprawling refugee camps where the Rohingya are living, said at a news conference in Dhaka that their fellow Nobel Peace laureate Suu Kyi cannot avoid responsibility.

One of the laureates, Yemen's Tawakkol Karman, urged Suu Kyi to "wake up" or "face prosecution."

Her two colleagues — Northern Ireland's Mairead Maguire and Iran's Shirin Ebadi —



Nobel Peace laureates (from left) Yemen's Tawakkol Karman, Iran's Shirin Ebadi and Ireland's Mairead Maguire address a press conference after their visit to the Rohingya refugee camps in Dhaka

read Maguire and Iran's Shirin Ebadi — promised to work to bring those responsible to justice.

All of them were emotionally charged as they unanimously called the

violence against Rohingya "genocide."

"There is no other definition, it is genocide, genocide against innocent people," Karman said. "Millions of people [have]

been displaced from their cities, women [have] been raped, all the women, we met like 100 women, all of them [have] been raped."

She said they were overwhelmed as they talked to the children.

"Most of the children we met [...] fled to Bangladesh without their families. Their fathers, their mothers [have] been killed, been murdered," Karman said.

Karman said that as Myanmar's leader, Suu Kyi should not be silent.

"She did not tell the truth to the world. She should stop her silence, she should wake up and stop this genocide," she said.

She urged Suu Kyi to resign, saying otherwise she will "face prosecution."

Maguire said they were looking for legal options to ensure justice. "We plan to take Myanmar's government to the International Court of Justice," she said.

Ebadi blasted her native country, Iran, and other Middle Eastern Islamic nations, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, for not doing enough for the Rohingya.

The laureates also met Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and promised to work toward solving the crisis.

Some 700,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh since late August, when Myanmar's military retaliated following attacks on security posts by a Rohingya insurgent group.

In November, Myanmar and Bangladesh signed an agreement to gradually repatriate Rohingya in "safety, security and dignity," but the process has been delayed.

Buddhist-majority Myanmar doesn't recognize the Rohingya as an official ethnic group, and they face intense discrimination and persecution. Myanmar authorities maintain that security operations in Rakhine state have been aimed at clearing out insurgents.

Bangladesh says it will not repatriate any Rohingya against their will, but has urged the international community to continue to pressure Myanmar to create conditions for a sustainable repatriation. **AP**



USA

White House downgrades Kushner's security clearance

Zeke Miller, Jonathan Lemire & Deb Riechmann, Washington

THE security clearance of White House senior adviser and presidential son-in-law Jared Kushner has been downgraded, significantly reducing his access to classified information, according to two people informed of the decision.

Kushner had been operating with an interim clearance at the "top secret/sensitive compartmented information" level for more than a year. Now he is authorized to access information only at the lower "secret" level, according to a White House official and a person familiar with the decision, both of whom spoke on condition of anonymity. Neither source was authorized to discuss the decision publicly.

The news set off rampant speculation among Trump allies that Kushner's days in the White House might be numbered. On the same day, the departure of a third Kushner ally in the West Wing in as many months was announced. And the selection of a Kushner ally to serve as Trump's 2020 campaign manager appeared to suggest the campaign could provide Kushner with a convenient place to land after his White House duties end.

Kushner lost his access to the nation's deepest secrets after chief of staff John Kelly ordered that White House officials with interim clearances pending since before June 1, 2017, be cut off if they hadn't received permanent

clearances by last Friday. A White House official confirmed to The Associated Press that Kelly's order has been implemented.

President Donald Trump could have reversed Kelly's decision and unilaterally offered Kushner a clearance, but deferred to Kelly. Kushner is one of dozens of White House aides who have been working without permanent security clearances for the better part of a year.

His attorney told the AP that Kushner's ability to do his job won't be affected by any change to his clearance.

"Those involved in the process again have confirmed that there are dozens of people at Mr. Kushner's level whose process is delayed, that it is not uncommon for these clearance reviews to take this long in a new administration, and that the current backlogs are now being addressed," said Peter Mirjaniyan, a Kushner spokesman.

■ Kushner had been operating with an interim clearance at the 'top secret/sensitive information' level for more than a year

Kushner's portfolio once included the U.S. relationships with China and Japan and a host of domestic priorities, including infrastructure, trade and economic development. But his freewheeling reach in the foreign policy space — which was viewed as undermining Secretary of State Rex Tillerson — already had been curtailed somewhat under Kelly.

Still, Kushner is reportedly said to have reviewed the highly secret presidential daily brief and has been in the room for some of Trump's most consequential domestic and foreign policy decisions.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders told reporters yesterday [Macau time] that she would not comment on individual security clearances but called Kushner "a valued member of the team, and he will continue to do the important work that he's been doing since he started in the administration."

The Washington Post reported this week that officials in at least four countries had privately discussed ways they could manipulate Kushner by taking advantage of his complex business arrangements, financial difficulties and lack of foreign policy experience.

The nations included the United Arab Emirates, China, Israel and Mexico, the Post reported, citing current and former U.S. officials familiar with intelligence reports on the matter. The newspaper said it was unclear if any of those countries had acted on the discussions, but said Kushner's contacts

with foreign government officials had raised concerns within the White House and were among the reasons Kushner had not yet been able to obtain a permanent security clearance.

Intelligence officials expressed concern that Kushner's business dealings were a topic of discussion in conversations he was having with foreign officials about foreign policy issues of interest to the U.S. government, a former intelligence official said.

The official, who spoke only on condition of anonymity to discuss Kushner's security clearance review, said there was a difference of opinion among intelligence officials about the significance.

Some believed Kushner knew his business dealings would likely come up in the conversations and was too naive or inexperienced to know how to exit the topic in light of his position as Trump's adviser, the official said. Others thought Kushner knew the topic would likely surface and used the opportunity while talking to the foreign officials to engage in conversations about his business interests.

Either way, intelligence officials were concerned because there were instances where the discussions either crossed the line or straddled the fence of what would be appropriate given his White House position, the official said.

The official said Kushner's conversations themselves were not surveilled, but details about what was discussed in meetings with the president's son-in-law came from surveillance conduc-

ted on certain foreign individuals abroad. According to the official, the information was known from the beginning of the FBI's background investigation work, which started after Kushner joined the White House. In some cases, the intelligence revealed discrepancies in the information Kushner disclosed on his security clearance application about foreign contacts, the official said.

Kushner's contacts with foreign officials also have been a part of special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation, a former U.S. official told the AP. Mueller's team, in its interviews for the ongoing Russia probe, has asked people about the protocols Kushner used when he set up conversations with foreign leaders.

The Kushner Cos., for example, had attempted to raise money for its struggling 666 Fifth Avenue skyscraper in New York from a large Chinese insurer with ties to the ruling Communist Party. Those talks ended after lawmakers and government ethics experts expressed worry that China could be using a deal to curry favor with the White House.

Kushner stepped down as CEO of his family's real estate company to join his father-in-law's administration.

With a top-secret clearance, Kushner would have had access to information about covert operations and intelligence sources and methods. With a secret clearance, he would still have access to intelligence assessments, but not necessarily the information behind why the U.S. knows what is being shared with him.

The downgrade would mean that anyone giving top-secret material to Kushner could be accused of mishandling classified material, according to David Priess, who wrote a history of the President's Daily Brief, the highest-level intelligence document produced in the United States. Still, a president has the ultimate authority to classify or declassify information, so he could show the brief — covering hot spots around the globe, U.S. covert operations and intelligence about world leaders — "to whomever he damn well pleases," Priess tweeted.

The White House's handling of security clearances has come under intense scrutiny in the wake of revelations that former White House staff secretary Rob Porter had worked for more than a year with only interim clearance. Porter, whose job gave him constant access to the most sensitive of documents, had been accused of domestic abuse by his two ex-wives. The White House has repeatedly changed its timeline about who knew what and when about the allegations.

Kushner has been forced to repeatedly correct omissions in his "SF-86," the government-wide form used to apply for clearances, as well as his financial disclosure forms, which experts said could delay or even nix his chances of earning a clearance through the normal process. **AP**

Ryan Nakashima

USA | SHOOTINGS

Infowars says YouTube dinged it for slamming survivors

INFOWARS, a conspiracy website that suggested survivors of the Florida school shooting were coached on their pleas for gun control, said its video account was temporarily frozen by YouTube.

The suspension for harassment and bullying was subsequently lifted, the site said. YouTube, which is owned by Google, did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

Infowars said yesterday [Macau time] it had multiple videos removed from YouTube, including one in which host Owen Shroyer alleged that Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School student David Hogg "can't remember his lines" during a TV interview following the Feb. 14 shooting that left 17 dead. Among other videos it said were removed was one titled, "The Truth About Crisis Actors In The Florida Shooting."

The site said it also received a strike, or warning, for harassment and bullying. It said a second strike that was assessed Tuesday was removed hours later. According to YouTube policy, two strikes results in the creator being unable to upload videos for two weeks. Infowars

continuously uploaded videos to its "Alex Jones Channel".

"There's a major purge going on," Alex Jones, the well-known right-wing conspiracy theorist and radio show host who owns the site, said in an interview. He has called the 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School a hoax. "If you want to live in communist China, we're almost there."

YouTube has had trouble flagging inappropriate content and keeping the site a place where advertisers feel comfortable spending money. Earlier this month, it suspended all ads from videos of one of its biggest stars, Logan Paul, after he posted video showing a suicide victim in Japan and a later one in which he used a Taser on a dead rat. YouTube also updated its policies to toughen steps it would take against creators who violate its policies.

Separately, online recommen-



Infowars host Alex Jones

dation platform Taboola said it had disabled use of its technology to serve ads to Infowars via a third party distributor. Use of its technology to serve ads to Infowars was an "oversight" that

was corrected "within hours" of being notified by a reporter for the ad-industry trade publication Digiday earlier this month, Taboola CEO Adam Singolda said by email.

Use of its technology on Infowars violated Taboola's acceptable use policy, which prohibits publishers from posting content that is "offensive," "abusive," or "vulgar," he said. AP

AD

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what's ON



DISCOVER MACAU: MUSEUM OF TAIPA AND COLOANE HISTORY

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

ADDRESS: Rua Correia da Silva, Taipa

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

LANGUAGE & THE ART OF XU BING

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

UNTIL: March 4, 2018

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

NAPE

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

THE GOLDEN PARADE - IMPERIAL WEAPONRY FROM THE PALACE MUSEUM

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

UNTIL: March 11, 2018

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

NAPE

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

EXHIBITION "FICTION AND DRIFT - PAINTINGS BY JORGE MARTINS"

TIME: 10am-9pm daily

UNTIL: March 4, 2018

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4017

TREASURE OF SACRED ART OF ST. JOSEPH'S SEMINARY

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

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

MANDARIN'S HOUSE

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

ADDRESS: No. 10, Travessa de António da Silva

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8820

Offbeat

AT FLAG DAY CEREMONY, MEXICO'S 'TRI-COLOR' FLIES UPSIDE DOWN

A Flag Day ceremony in Mexico has gone awry, with troops flying the country's red, white and green "tri-color" upside down.

Local media show images of the giant flag fluttering over Mexico City's Campo Marte parade ground last Saturday with its iconic eagle inverted.

President Enrique Peña Nieto acknowledged the gaffe, but he added that, "Upside down or right side up, backward or forward, the flag is a symbol that gives us a sense of identity, of belonging, of pride in being Mexicans."

In some countries flying a flag upside down can be considered a desecration, a distress signal or a form of protest. Some Mexicans took to social media to mock it as emblematic of Peña Nieto's unpopular government.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	Miscellaneous
16:30	Zig Zag
17:50	Miscellaneous
18:40	What's Up
19:00	Brazilian Soap Opera (Repeated)
19:50	Portuguese Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:35	Non-daily Portuguese News
21:40	Yes, Chef! Sr 2
22:10	Brazilian Soap Opera
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Macau Documentary
23:55	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:30	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

01 - 07 MAR



MONSTER HUT 2

ROOM 1

2:30, 7:30pm

Director: Raman Hui

Starring: Tony Leung Chiu-wai, Bai Baihe, Jing Boran

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 110 min

AGENT MR CHAN

ROOM 1

4:30, 9:30pm

Director: Cheung Ka Kit

Starring: Dayo Wong Tze Wah, Charmaine Sheh Sze Man

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)



BLACK PANTHER

ROOM 2

02:15, 04:45, 9:45pm

Director: Ryan Coogler

Starring: Chadwick Boseman, Lupita Nyong'o

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 134min



CONCERTO OF THE BULLY

ROOM 3

2:15, 4:00, 9:30pm

Director: Fung Chi-Chiang

Starring: Ronald Cheng, Cherry Ngan, Jacky Cai

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

IS THE ORDER A RABBIT? DEAR MY SISTER

ROOM 3

5:45, 7:00, 9:15pm

Director: Hiroyuki Hashimoto

Starring: Ayane Sakura, Inori Minase, Risa Taneda

Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 60min

this day in history



1966 BRITAIN TO GO DECIMAL IN 1971

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, James Callaghan, has confirmed the "historic and momentous" decision to change over to decimal coinage.

It was just one of a number of proposals announced in his "little Budget" statement in the Commons. Other proposals included a new gambling tax - the proceeds from which will be used to fund cheaper mortgages for the less well off.

Loud cheers greeted Mr Callaghan's announcement of the switch to decimal currency.

He said: "It is the government's conclusion, shared I know by large sections of industry, commerce, science and banking, that the change to a decimal coinage will bring considerable benefit to the economy at large."

Preparations for the change-over will begin at once, with the introduction of a Decimal Currency Bill. One of its functions will be to establish a new Decimal Currency Board to oversee the switch which will take place in February 1971.

There were more cheers as Mr Callaghan confirmed the pound would remain the major unit of currency. It will be divided into 100 units, to be called either cents or new pennies.

Preliminary estimates suggest the cost of switching to decimal coinage may be as much as £120m. However, Mr Callaghan said he hoped the long change-over period may mean the total cost was lower than this.

Companies obliged to invest in new equipment will not be compensated, but they will be entitled to tax relief.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The United States pioneered decimal coinage in 1786 with one dollar worth 100 cents. At one time, the British system of pounds, shillings and pence was a major currency in the world. Many former Commonwealth countries switched to decimal once they gained independence.

On 15 February 1971, otherwise known as "D Day" for Decimal Day, the United Kingdom adopted a decimal currency.

This replaced the £.s.d. - pound shilling and pence system - in which there were 20 shillings in each pound and 12 pence in each shilling. The existence of 240 pence in each pound was a legacy from Anglo-Saxon times when a Roman pound in weight of silver was divided into 240 silver pennies.

Plans to introduce a decimal currency in the UK had been over delayed over disagreement about whether to retain the pound or replace it with a smaller unit as South Africa, Australia and New Zealand had done.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19

At the moment, there's nowhere else you'd rather be than home, and while you can't click your heels together and get yourself there, probably because of a work situation.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21

Speaking of making a move, if you don't do it first - and you know how fond you are of that sort of thing - they will. Enough with thinking about it, mulling it over and trying to decide which moment would be best.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22

A long-distance invitation is about to arrive from a dear friend you haven't seen in far too long. Does this mean you'll definitely be the one traveling? Not necessarily.

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22

Order in some rich, sinful food, get yourself a nice bottle of wine and choose some romantic movies. You probably haven't had a chance to be alone together like this for centuries. Enjoy it.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Hopefully, you got happy hour out of your system last night, because you won't be in the mood for it today. Believe it or not, you - yes, you - will wake up in the mood to make lists.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18

You adore your family, but your friends? Your friends are very, very special to you. They're always there for you, and vice versa - and you undoubtedly share an awful lot of memories.

Taurus
April 20-May 20

If there's something out there you've been gazing longingly at while window-shopping, you won't be willing to wait until it's half price. Full price will do just fine.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Some quality time alone with yourself, or, if you're attached, with your one and only, is definitely in order. That means you need to do something to start with that's particularly tough for you...

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22

You're golden now - in several departments. For starters, career matters will go along exactly the way you'd planned, provided that you stick to your plan. When it comes to relationships, the news is even better.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

You may have superhuman abilities when it comes to focusing on the task at hand, but you also know when it's time to quit. So after days of pounding away at a project, now that it's done, you may be tired.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Now here's a day you can live with. Everyone will be acting solid, practical and responsible - the way you are all the time. This certainly could mean that you'll be moved to make a business decision.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20

Each and every word you utter will have a solid, grounded tone to it, so when you're asked for your opinion - or even if you're not - you'll be more than happy to give it.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-2	8	clear/cloudy
Harbin	-12	-8	heavy snow/snow
Tianjin	-1	8	shower
Urumqi	0	8	clear/cloudy
Xi'an	9	16	clear
Lhasa	-1	16	overcast/cloudy
Chengdu	12	20	cloudy/clear
Chongqing	12	17	overcast/cloudy
Kunming	6	22	cloudy/overcast
Nanjing	7	14	clear
Shanghai	7	14	cloudy
Wuhan	7	17	overcast/cloudy
Hangzhou	7	18	clear/drizzle
Taipei	16	22	clear/cloudy
Guangzhou	18	27	clear/drizzle
Hong Kong	19	24	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-19	-10	flurry
Frankfurt	-11	-4	flurry/overcast
Paris	-8	4	flurry/drizzle
London	-4	-2	flurry
New York	3	9	cloudy/drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Couldn't find; 5- Hang with cloth; 10- Concordes, e.g.; 14- Golden Rule word; 15- Caught congers; 16- Dynamic intro; 17- Neeson of "Rob Roy"; 18- Military chaplain; 19- Sinn ___; 20- Disclose; 22- Sad; 24- Not emp.; 25- Sun. talk; 26- Jewelled crown worn by women; 29- Doctors' org.; 32- Hosiery thread; 36- ___ account (never); 37- In ___ (sort of); 39- Actress Zadora; 40- In spite of; 43- Brian of rock music; 44- Roman general; 45- Hurler Hershiser; 46- Psychics claim to have a sixth one; 48- TV's "Science Guy"; 49- Night noise; 50- Play on words; 52- FDR program; 53- Like barber poles; 57- Between sunrise and sunset; 61- Gen. Bradley; 62- Apple juice; 64- Worshiped one; 65- Stuffing herb; 66- Massage; 67- Ancient Greek coin; 68- Blame; 69- Visionaries; 70- Fiddling emperor;

DOWN: 1- Corker; 2- Getting ___ years (aging); 3- Thrust with a knife; 4- The day following today; 5- Station; 6- 500 sheets; 7- City official; Abbr.; 8- South American country, famous for Macchu Picchu; 9- Paradises; 10- Adventurous expedition; 11- Ooze; 12- Stumble; 13- Walkman maker; 21- Poseidon's domain; 23- Troy beauty; 26- Musical sounds; 27- Combined; 28- Composer Bruckner; 29- White as a ghost; 30- Unordered; 31- Architectural piers; 33- Hubert's successor; 34- Cruise ship; 35- Bald, golden, or harpy; 37- One ___ time; 38- Mediterranean isl.; 41- Freeze over; 42- Contribution; 47- Steeples; 49- Bond, for one; 51- Head supporters; 52- Hospital rooms; 53- Just okay; 54- Govt. agent; 55- Newman's Own competitor; 56- Take a meal; 57- Expensive; 58- ___ delighted; 59- Heath; 60- London greeting; 63- Gidget portrayal Sandra;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222	Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
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Steve Douglas

TENNIS

Davis Cup revamp plans get mixed response

THE Australians are surprised. The Brits are skeptical. The French are downright angry.

"They have just killed the Davis Cup," French tennis player Nicolas Mahut said in reaction to bold plans to transform the 118-year-old competition into a one-week, 18-nation World Cup of Tennis.

The International Tennis Federation is trying to bring some glamor and relevance to the team event, as well as lure back top players who often choose to skip Davis Cup matches amid a crowded tennis calendar.

In this latest attempted revamp, the World Cup of Tennis would be played in one location over seven days in the traditional week of the Davis Cup final in November, rather than across four weekends in February, July, September, and November. There would be a total purse of USD20 million.

"The essence of this historic competition is to play away or at home," Mahut, a member of France's Davis Cup-winning team last year, told French newspaper L'Equipe. "I was the first to say we needed to reform it. But not to destroy it."

Mahut's captain, Yannick Noah, tweeted yesterday [Macau time]: "They sold the soul of an historic event. Sorry mister Davis."

Proposals for the World Cup of Tennis have been devised in conjunction with investment group Kosmos, which was founded by Barcelona and Spain soccer player Gerard Pique. The partnership is worth \$3 billion over 25 years.

AP PHOTO



Pique personally presented the proposal to the ITF board in Barcelona on Saturday, and ITF President David Haggerty told The Associated Press that Pique has had a "positive" response from top players like Andy Murray and Novak Djokovic.

Those two players have yet to comment publicly on the plans, but second-ranked Rafael Nadal has been quoted

by Spanish newspaper Marca as saying: "It's a good initiative and it could work."

Craig Tiley, chief executive of Tennis Australia, said his organization was "taken by surprise by the announcement."

"As one of the founding nations of Davis Cup, we have a lot of unanswered questions," Tiley said.

"Will this proposal effecti-

vely extend the season for a large section of the playing group? What are the players' thoughts generally? Does this ultimately end the 'home and away' nature of the current competition? There's just so much we don't know."

The ITF said the proposal, which was unanimously endorsed by its board, is "subject to further development" before it is submitted at the

body's annual general meeting in Florida in August. It needs approval by a two-thirds majority.

Britain captain Leon Smith acknowledged that change was necessary to "ensure longevity and status" of the Davis Cup, which was established in 1900, and was glad to see the ITF looking at significant investment from other sources.

He still had reservations, though.

"Of course one of the first things that came to mind is the loss of the home and away tie," Smith said. "It works in other sports but remains to be seen if it could work in Davis Cup."

"For now," Smith added, "we'll just have to keep an open mind as we start to learn more about this proposed new structure and whatever the outcome, I hope the Davis Cup remains the most important team event in world tennis."

This is Haggerty's second attempt at what is widely viewed as a necessary revamp of Davis Cup, with the ITF forced last year to shelve its initial proposal for a World Cup of Tennis in an effort to "build consensus" for the idea. There had also been plans — now aborted — for the Davis Cup and Fed Cup, the equivalent for female players, to be brought together under one roof to raise the profile of the competitions.

Former American player Mardy Fish backed the latest proposal.

"Davis Cup moving to a 1 week event at the end of the year is LONG overdue," he wrote on Twitter. "Now just make it every other year and we are cookin." AP

GOLF

Five female golfers to take part in men's European Tour event

FIVE female golfers will compete in a men's European Tour event in May as part of more innovations to the GolfSixes tournament.

Suzann Pettersen and Mel Reid will form a European Women's team and Georgia Hall and Charley Hull will combine for an England Women's team in the six-hole match-play tournament at Centurion Club, England, on May 5-6.

In another team, Ryder Cup captain Tho-

mas Bjorn will join forces with Solheim Cup captain Catriona Mathew.

"It is hugely important to try and break down the barriers that have existed in golf between the men's and women's games," Bjorn said.

The female players will play off forward tees.

It is not the first time women have been included in a European Tour field, however.

American golfer Michelle Wie played in the European Masters in 2006, missing the cut

at 15 over. From 1988-91, the Benson and Hedges Trophy was a mixed strokeplay event on the tour.

It was announced last year that Laura Davies will play in The Shipco Masters on the European Seniors Tour in Denmark in June.

The move to include women in GolfSixes has the full backing of the European Tour's all-male tournament committee, said Keith Pelley, the tour chief executive.

There will be a fourth

"wild card" team, which will be revealed next month, to play alongside the 11 men's national teams who will qualify automatically from the European Tour ranking list. Denmark pair Lucas Bjerregaard and Thorbjorn Olesen are the defending champions.

Teams will be split into four groups of four, with the top two in each advancing to the knockout stage. Both players tee off before choosing the better of the two drives and com-

AP PHOTO



pleting each hole with one ball, hitting alternately. There will be a 40-second shot clock in play.

"All tours are trying to think of ways to make golf different and encourage a new and younger audience," Matthew said, "and so I think this whole concept is very exciting."

The European Tour said data from the inaugural GolfSixes last year showed a 42 percent increase in new golf fans at the event compared to regular European Tour events. Those attendees were also 14 percent younger than those seen during the rest of the golfing calendar. AP

opinion

Girl About Globe

Linda Kennedy



THE POLITICAL BITE OF DOG YEAR

Just two weeks in, and I have high hopes for the Year of the Dog. It has the potential to help with world peace, feminist issues and the emergence of satire in China. Am I barking mad? I don't think so.

Donald Trump was born in a bygone Year of the Dog, 1946. This fact was unknown to me until a shopping mall in Taiyuan, Shanxi province, erected a Trump dog statue, which was posted on social media by the People's Daily and went viral under the hashtag #TrumpDog. The statue is half-hound, half Trump. Imagine a mythical faun, which has the legs of a goat and the torso of a man, moved to a fairytale rust-belt kingdom with no industries, and evolved accordingly. Or, shorter, it's like a cartoon cross-breed called Donald Dog.

I checked out what it means when the Chinese Zodiac animal under which you were born comes up again on the 12 year repeated cycle. The general opinion is that it results in bad luck. Happy Dog Year indeed. Can the rhythms of lunar new years succeed where everything else has failed – by piling up enough misfortune to finally get rid of Trump? Is China actually all-powerful and, if Zhongnanhai can't work against you, the Zodiac has a bash? Trump might have been able to befriend Xi Jinping, but you can't have a hamburger to neutralise the power of the Dog.

Me, I'm keeping an eye on what transpires over the next few months. Trump once wanted to label China a currency manipulator. If he changes that to a luck manipulator, we'll know Dog Year 2018 has bitten.

As for that statue - did it actually look like Trump? I was going to Hong Kong's Pet Fair, a festival of fur where the animals wear costumes to rival Glastonbury. (They're more 'glam-imals' than animals.) There, I showed dog owners the TrumpDog statue. Yes, most pronounced, it looked like the President. And did their dogs show any similarities to Trump, I asked, curious about a physical as well as a zodiacal link between the President and pooches. One owner surveyed her pram, which was filled with dogs, and pointed. 'This one.' 'Why?' 'He's naughty'.

Many owners immediately dismissed any likeness. And perhaps the clearest judgement on whether or not any dogs in attendance resembled Trump came from the cats. There were a few pussies at the Pet Fair, none of which looked remotely worried about being grabbed.

Hong Kong dogs, it turned out, are more likely to resemble the women in Trump's life rather than the President himself. Whenever a poodle with long blonde fur strolled by, it was hard not to shout Ivanka and see if it came to heel. And there was one tawny dog that wore a tiara with a rosette, yet issued not even a yelp in protest at this attire. Over-dressed, silent? Surely....Melania?

Other issues. The TrumpDog statue establishes Shanxi province as a new, and unlikely, centre of satire. It's something I hope they take further. Would it be too much to hope for a sign in Mandarin encouraging actual dogs to mount the statue? #HumpLikeTrump

Lastly, feminist matters. Even if none of those dogs were called Ivanka or Melania, the plural term for the female of the species could totally work for human women. Given the amplification of female voices in 2017, might Year of the Dog be renamed Year of the Bitch? It reclaims the word and, given Trump is a dog, there will never be a better year to harness the power of the Chinese Zodiac for feminist ends.

**THE PHILIPPINES' CHIEF JUSTICE EXPECTS
 BUZZ IMPEACHMENT, TAKING LEAVE**

The Philippine Supreme Court's chief justice — who has drawn the ire of President Rodrigo Duterte — expects to be impeached by the House next month and will go on leave to prepare for the trial she's confident of winning, her spokesman said.

International rights groups and local critics have accused Duterte of drifting toward authoritarianism after declaring martial law in the south. He has overseen a drug war marked by thou-

sands of killings of mostly poor suspects and has publicly threatened his opponents.

Last year, he said he wanted Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno and a top anti-graft prosecutor impeached and accused them of allowing themselves to be used to discredit his administration.

Sereno will start an indefinite leave today but will not resign amid reports that rival justices demanded she quit in a closed-door meeting, her spokesman Jojo Lacanilao said.

BORDERLINE

EU unveils Brexit draft, ramping up pressure on Britain

Lorne Cook, Brussels

CONCERNED that time is fast running out, the European Union moved yesterday to force Britain's hand in Brexit negotiations by publishing a draft text that provocatively distills into legal language what they have — and even what they have not — agreed so far about Britain's departure.

Britain officially leaves the EU on March 29 next year but Brexit talks must conclude this fall so that parliaments have time to ratify the final withdrawal agreement. The new text summarizes all aspects of the talks so far, but takes a tough line on issues where British input is lacking.

"If we want to succeed in these negotiations, and I want to succeed, we must accelerate," EU chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier said yesterday as he unveiled the document. "In 13 months the U.K. will no longer be a member of the European Union. That's what it wanted."

While rumors about the document's content has already angered some on the other side of the English Channel, Barnier told reporters that "this draft text contains no surprises for our British friends."

EU leaders have been pushing Prime Minister Theresa May to provide more details about how she sees the border between Ireland and Northern Ireland operating, how long a transition period should last to help ease Britain out from next year, and to explain her government's vision of their future relations.

But they have been frustrated by the lack of feedback, with negotiations essentially at the half-way mark.

By translating progress, or the lack of it, into a legal text, the EU is ramping up pressure on May, whose government is creaking amid divisions from within and growing opposition pressure from across the aisle in parliament.

By far the most contentious section of the 120-



page text — which is a draft and likely to be significantly altered — concerns the transit of goods, services and people across the border between EU member state Ireland and Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom.

EU leaders have been pushing May to provide more details about how she sees the border between Ireland and N. Ireland operating

Britain and the EU agreed in December that the all-but-invisible border would remain open after Brexit in 2019, but they left it unclear how that would happen in practice

Lacking "agreed solutions" so far, the EU draft suggests that Northern Ireland would remain within the bloc's customs union, essentially creating a border in the Irish Sea between Britain and its own territory where customs checks would have to be carried out.

British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has accused Brexit opponents of using the border to tie Britain's hands "so we cannot really leave the EU."

Another point likely to rile

London is the transition period aimed at avoiding any policy cliff edge next year that would upset businesses, trade and markets. The text states that it will end on Dec. 31, 2020, a practical deadline as the EU's current long-term budget, to which Britain contributes, expires then.

May's government is seeking more time, but because it has suggested no other date and because legally the period cannot remain open-ended, the EU's preferred date is the one being used.

Beyond that, EU leaders want to endorse a set of guidelines at their next summit on March 22-23 for negotiating the shape of future relations between the 28-member bloc and Britain, the first country ever to leave.

EU Council President Donald Tusk, who chairs summits of heads of state and government, said Friday that the EU will do that in three weeks "whether the U.K. is ready with its vision of our future relations or not. Naturally it would be much better if it were, but we cannot stand by and wait."

Adding to the pressure, Tusk holds talks with May in London on Thursday, on the eve of a major speech she plans to give which officials say will set out her government's vision of future relations with the EU.

Meanwhile, Brexit talks have plodded on at a lower, technical level since December. A new round is scheduled for next week, as are EU talks on the guidelines for negotiations concerning future ties. **AP**

Station	Air quality
Roadside	50-70 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	45-65 Moderate
Ambient	45-65 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

ROMANIA's besieged anti-corruption chief says the agency last year prosecuted a record number of cases, at a time when political attacks on the anti-corruption fight have escalated.

CYPRUS' president says a resumption of talks to reunify the ethnically divided island nation is unlikely any time soon because of Turkey's blockade of an offshore gas search and "unacceptable" demands by breakaway Turkish Cypriots.



NIGERIA's president says police and civil defense forces are ordered to defend all schools in "liberated areas" of the northeast to avoid further attacks on schools by Boko Haram extremists.

SUDAN President Omar al-Bashir has reshuffled his military command, naming a new chief of staff, as well as leaders of the ground, naval and air forces.



BRAZIL Don't carry a long umbrella. Don't make any sudden movements. Don't leave home without receipts for anything valuable you're carrying. Those are three of the many suggestions offered in a popular video that was posted online amid a military takeover of Rio de Janeiro's security forces.

US Infowars, a conspiracy website that suggested survivors of the Florida school shooting were coached on their pleas for gun control, said its video account was temporarily frozen by YouTube. **More on p15**