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AD

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HO IAT SENG

# Chinese top officials under watch in casinos

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## Nepal: Plane crashes and catches fire in Kathmandu, kills at least 50

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**WORLD BRIEFS**

**CHINA** Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei said that it doesn't matter whether or not China has a change in leadership, the culture and the system will always remain the same. Ai's comments came a day after the rubber-stamp lawmakers passed a historic constitutional amendment abolishing a presidential two-term limit.  
More on p10



**RUSSIA** Vladimir Putin and his Russia look more invincible today than ever. Since Putin last faced an election in 2012, Russians have invaded Ukraine, annexed Crimea, blanket-bombed Syria, been accused of meddling in the U.S. presidential election and claimed to have a scary new nuclear arsenal.  
More on macaudoailytimes.com

**JAPAN** The Finance Ministry admitted the existence of doctored documents in a widening scandal linked to PM Shinzo Abe's wife that has rattled his government and caused its support ratings to slide. Abe quickly apologized yesterday on behalf of ministry officials but did not mention his wife.  
More on backpage

# Construction sector slows down due to resorts completion

Julie Zhu

**T**HE president of the Macau Construction Association, Tang Hon Cheong, noted that the gradual completion of Macau's hotel and casino projects is leading to a slow season for the construction industry.

"In the past two years, big hotel projects were gradually completed. [...] The competition in the market is fierce; operations [of the construction companies] struggled with small difficulties, [because] the market [for construction] has shrunk, and some jobs were reduced," said Tang last week on the sidelines of a seminar organized by the Macau Construction Association. Tang also noted that the government launched a few public projects during this period in order to fill the extra time left by the hotel projects.

However, the gap between the completion of hotel projects and the launching of government projects still gave a hard time to the construction



Tang Hon Cheong

sector.

"There are too many companies, including management and big scale Chinese companies. When the market's total [demand] is decreasing, naturally, the shares [each small company can get]

get smaller, and the competition becomes fiercer," explained Tang.

Regarding the exact decrease in the number of construction projects, Tang said that he has not estimated the number.

"In the past, hotel projec-

ts alone [involved] 30 to 40 billion patacas [in terms of project prices] per year. In turn, the governmental projects represent approximately 10 billion patacas per year," said Tang. Tang added, "if we add together all projects [in-

cluding other projects], then the previous casino projects alone occupy one third of [Macau's total construction projects per year]."

Furthermore, Tang pointed out that the market's whole projects decreased by more or less one third due to the completion of the casino projects.

In Tang's opinion, the Greater Bay Area development plan and the One Belt One Road strategy will bring some opportunities to the Macau's construction section.

"The One Belt One Road strategy might not bring Macau too many opportunities, but the Greater Bay Area should offer more," declared Tang.

When talking about the construction sector during the period with more hotel projects, Tang said that "there are huge differences between having or not having [hotel projects]."

However, Tang believes that Macau's construction business "has not stopped", only that it has entered "a slowed-down period."

Also during the seminar, the Secretary General of the Macau Construction Association, Lo Chi Hou, suggested that Macau reduce the amount of construction waste, and improve the awareness of the need for environmental protection within Macau's construction sector.

## CRIME

# Man accused of drugging and raping woman

Julie Zhu

**A** mainland resident has been charged for non-consensual sexual offences, the Judiciary Police (PJ) reported yesterday.

According to a PJ report, a 25-year-old mainland woman has said she

was raped after losing consciousness following a dinner with a man she met shortly beforehand.

PJ was notified of the crime in the early hours of Sunday morning. According to PJ, the victim met the suspect, a 37-year-old mainland resident surnamed Chen,

on a casino shuttle bus, on Saturday, while she was going from NAPE to Cotai.

Having become acquainted with each other, Chen invited the victim to have dinner with him and three of his friends that night in Taipa.

During the dinner, the victim had two half-glasses of wine, after which she lost consciousness. When she regained consciousness, she realized she was inside a hotel room and was being raped.

According to PJ's investigation, it has been confirmed that the victim was carried out of the dinner venue by two of the four men she had dinner with. The four men took the victim to the hotel room,

and three of them left the room, leaving Chen inside with her.

Soon after midnight on Sunday morning, the victim woke up and left the room, seeking help from the hotel staff.

When the police arrived at the alleged crime scene, Chen was still inside the room. He denied the accusation.

The victim said that she is a cosmetic professional in mainland China, and

that she came to Macau alone on March 7, during her holidays.

Chen claimed to be a businessman in China. At the time of writing, Chen is the only suspect arrested.

## TWO MEN CHARGED FOR THROWING THINGS OFF BUILDINGS

**A LOCAL** resident and a mainland resident have been charged for disobeying the regulations of public spaces, the PSP said yesterday. The local man, surnamed Lau, is 67 years old, and the mainlander is 46 years old. Both work on

refurbishment projects. The men, while working in a unit located on the second floor of a building, threw more than 20 chairs off the second floor to the ground floor. They chose to throw the chairs instead of carrying them downstairs to save time.

## Thief steals MOP1 million from household

**A** household was reported to have lost at least one million patacas in a robbery, PJ reported yesterday.

The house is located at the Estr. de Sete Tanques. The resident of the property left the house on March 7 and returned on March 10, when she discovered she could not open the house.

After breaking one of the windows and entering the house, the owner noticed that a few of her possessions had been stolen.

A police investigation concluded that thieves entered the house through the backyard.

The owner is unclear about the exact value of the losses, but she claimed to have lost jewelry and jade stones, and some other items, adding up to one million patacas.

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## NPC

# AL head says top officials are under gambling watch

**T**HE president of the Legislative Assembly (AL), Ho Iat Seng, revealed that the mainland government has a system which allows it to closely monitor the gambling habits of mainland civil servants in Macau's casinos.

According to reports in the Hong Kong media, Ho, while in Beijing to take part in the annual legislature meetings, told the mainland media that some casinos have monitoring systems specifically designed to target mainland civil servants.

"Some people, the moment [they] sat down, received a phone call from high officials [from their] Danwei [consists of public service departments in mainland or even state-owned companies]," said Ho.

The AL president said that mainland principal officials using

public money to gamble in Macau has its roots in the past, when Macau was less strict in their management of small casinos.

However, Ho claimed that the majority of the mainland's principal officials have been sighted in the monitoring system in recent years. Consequently, the number of cases of the mainland's principal officials using public money to gamble in Macau has been greatly reduced.

Ho noted that currently it is very difficult for employees of the mainland's banking and finance industries to come to Macau to gamble.

Ho explained that the monitoring system consists of an "internal management method," which ensures the relevant departments are immediately notified once a mainland civil servant enters a ca-



Meeting of Macau deputies during the National People's Congress in Beijing

sino in Macau.

"Other countries in the world also pay attention to [their] principal officials who come [to Macau] to gamble," said Ho.

Yesterday, Ho admitted that no reporting system exists between the mainland and Macau regar-

ding such conduct, according to a report by TDM.

The AL president said that it is the mainland's own monitoring technology that allows mainland authorities to know about their civil servants' gambling activities in Macau.

## Hypertension affects many middle-aged residents

Forty percent of Macau's middle-aged residents suffer from hypertension (persistently elevated blood pressure in the arteries), according to a report by Macao Daily News. During a recent seminar on hypertension, held in Macau, a local medical organization argued that the high percentage might be due to westernized diet habits and the fact that many of Macau's residents work in casinos. More specifically, 11 percent of Macau residents aged under 44 years old, 39 percent of Macau residents aged between 45 and 64 years old, and over 75 percent of residents aged above 65 years old, suffer from hypertension.

## Plan to be delivered to UN before December

The Macau government will deliver a report outlining the protection and management plan of Macau's historical city zone to the United Nations before December. The vice president of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), Leong Wai Man, said the report will highlight Macau's latest efforts to preserve the historical city zone, as well as relevant public opinion and legislation on the topic. According to Leong, the current draft of public consultation is not yet finalized. The IC will duly report to the public, in case significant changes occur.

## Two men accused of selling car owned by third party

Two local men have been arrested for selling a car which did not belong to either of them, according to media reports. The suspects are brothers aged 33 and 28 years old. One works for the public relations department of a local casino and the other is a taxi driver. The victim is a mainland resident who claimed that the brothers had sold his MOP4.8 million car last year without his knowledge. The two denied the accusation, stating that they sold the car because the victim had borrowed two million patacas from the younger brother. The case has been forwarded to the prosecution authorities.

### EDUCATION | TOURISM

## Training program for Lusophone tourism office staff kicks off

**A** training program tailored to civil servants from tourism offices of Portuguese-speaking countries has started. Between March and July this year, three training sessions, lasting two weeks each, will be conducted in Macau, involving a total of around 30 government personnel from tourism authorities of Portuguese-speaking countries.

The program is organized by the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), in cooperation with the Permanent Secretariat of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-Speaking Countries (Forum Macau).

The first batch of civil servants started their training yesterday, with participants from Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe. A second group will arrive in Macau in May and a third in July. The training content includes internships in several MGTO departments, and two days of workshops at the Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) about Managing Attractions Effectively, Consumer Behavior and Destination Branding. There will also be field trips to various sites of tourism-related infrastructure, the city's historical and cultural



heritage areas and other attractions of Macau.

The internship aims to acquaint the trainees with the daily work of MGTO as well as the overall development of Macau's tourism industry. By carrying out the training program, MGTO hopes to enhance mutual learning and exchange between Macau and Portuguese-speaking countries in the field of tourism.

MGTO signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in tourism with

Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique in 2010, with East Timor in 2013 and with Angola in 2015. In addition, in 2016 the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture signed a protocol on cooperation in tourism with the Ministry of Economy of Portugal.

According to a statement issued yesterday, from 2012 to 2017, MGTO provided training to a total of 130 government personnel from Portuguese-speaking countries.

### PPRD REGION DELEGATION VISITS PORTUGAL AND GERMANY

**A DELEGATION** from the Pan-Pearl River Delta (PPRD) Region is on a visit to Portugal and Germany, in order to establish closer ties with the green industry network based in Europe and in Portuguese-speaking countries. The two-nation visit – from 11 to

19 March – has been organised by the local. According to a statement issued yesterday, "the visit is an additional step in the ongoing effort to diversify the PPRD Region's trade and economic cooperation with Portuguese-speaking countries and with European countries."

## Kam says gov't shouldn't worry about Macau's stability

**T**HE President of the New Macau Association (ANM), Kam Sut Leng, believes that the Macau government should "relax a bit," instead of being concerned about Macau's potential internal instability.

Kam expressed her thoughts during a phone interview with the Times, when she was asked to comment on the absence of three authors from Macau's upcoming Literary Festival.

Kam started by noting that she did not have a deep understanding of the situation, and that the Macau government should have a better understanding of the region and acknowledge that "Hong Kong and Macau have differences."

"Actually, there are big [differences between Hong Kong and Macau]. I think Macau should rest assured. [...] They [the government] can relax about Macau. [...] They should have confidence in their own administration and policies," declared Kam, adding that "these insecurities arise because they are not confident in themselves. They are afraid people might cause a little chaos, which they wouldn't know how to handle."

Regarding the Literary Festival incident's effect on Macau's image in the eyes of the world, Kam believes that "there will be some sort of impact." She thinks people might perceive Macau as a controlling society, with a strict and highly political culture. Kam feels other cases, such as the banning of Hong Kong lawmakers and journalists from visiting the city, might also contribute to this effect. **JZ**

# Liaison Office suggested cancelation of writers visit, festival director says

**T**HE director of the Macau Literary Festival, Ricardo Pinto, explained that the decision to exclude three writers from the event was made after advice was received from the China's Liaison's Office in Macau.

Pinto told Portuguese newspaper *Hoje Macau* that the suggestion to cancel the attendance of the three authors came from someone in the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the city and not from the local government.

However, he did not disclose the official's name.

The director further expressed that due to what had happened, the organization is considering whether further continuation of the festival is feasible.

"We need to understand if it makes any sense to continue with the festival and in what terms, circumstances and conditions."

Program director Hélder Beja told local press that authorities had "officially" warned them that they could not guarantee the three authors' entry into Macau.



A session included in this year's Literary Festival

Organizers of the annual event previously announced that the authors' would not be able to attend, as their entry into the city could not be guaranteed due to the political content of their works.

The authors were Jung Chang, James Church and Suki Kim.

Secretary for Security, Wong Sio

Chak and Secretary of Social Affairs and Culture Alexis Tam both denied their involvement in the matter.

The Central People's Government Liaison Office director Zheng Xiaosong told TDM in Beijing that he is unaware of the incident.

## ENVIRONMENT

# Lawmaker concerned about impact of waste policy

**L**AWMAKER Au Kam San questioned the government about its progress regarding Macau's construction waste, in particular the inert waste which is commonly designated as public landfill.

In a written inquiry issued to the government, Au started by reminding the government that, back in 2015, it announced a plan to transport inert construction waste to Guangdong to be reused, as well as to install a construction waste selection facility to select waste for use in Macau's land reclamation.

The plan was expected to be implemented somewhere during 2016. "However, what's puzzling is that [the plan] should have been implemented a long time ago. Furthermore, in view of the daily 2,000 tonnes of processing capacity, the construction waste landfill should

not continue growing," said Au.

"Were there any setbacks in the plan which prevented it from being able to achieve the desired effects? [It seems that] the related construction waste can be used here [in Macau] after being selected [...], which means that using it for Macau's land reclamation will be faster than transporting it to the mainland or other regions, therefore saving a lot of money for shipping operations," Au's inquiry reads.

The lawmaker also addressed these questions to the other mainland destinations where this waste is routinely transported.

"Mainland China announced it will cease the importing of foreign trash. [...] Will this affect the agreement [regarding the shipping of Macau's inert construction waste to mainland]?" Au asked.

AD

APRESENTAÇÃO DO ÁLBUM 唱片展演

OITO . 八

TOMÁS RAMOS DE DEUS E MIGUEL ANDRADE  
PAULO PEREIRA, MARIO VENDITTI, IVAN PINEDA, ADAM KIMONT, PAN HO E KIT LAM

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# Total value of traffic tickets fall 3.7 percent in 2017

**O**FFICIAL figures from the Public Security Police Force (PSP) show that in 2017, the amount of money collected by the force from traffic tickets issued for traffic violations, dropped by 3.66 percent to around MOP175.6 million.

The police force acknowledged that in 2016 a total of almost MOP207 million was received as a result of over 1 million traffic fines. This figure repre-

sented a hike of 10.73 percent year-on-year when compared with 2015, which registered a total of about MOP182 million in traffic fines.

The first three months of the year, especially March, is the time when the most money from fines is received, mainly due to the mandatory payment of all fines from the past year. Paying all fines from the previous year is a requirement to be able to pay the annual

road tax for a vehicle in that driver's name, which is payable during the same period. Vehicle owners who don't pay the annual road tax have their vehicles impounded.

According to a statement issued this week by the Financial Service Bureau, the annual road tax is payable until April 3. Citizens can check whether or not they have unpaid fines at the public services kiosks.

# 'One country, two systems' principle a good example for Sudan

**T**HE "one country, two systems" principle has set a good example for other countries to solve problems, Sudanese experts have said. "Since the application of the principle in Hong Kong and then Macau, the experience has [...] helped in creating political and economic stability in the two (regions)," Hassan al-Saouri, a political science professor at Al Neelain University and chairman of the Sudanese Society for Political Science, told Xinhua.

"Hong Kong has achieved great success in preserving its economic position thanks to the principle. Such flexible self-rule

has contributed to maintaining a stable relationship between the Chinese central government and the Hong Kong administration," he elaborated.

Hassan al-Saouri argued that the principle could also "be applied to Taiwan," adding that "it was a more logical and viable choice than others."

Balla Ali Omer, a Sudanese media writer and China expert, agreed, saying the practical implementation of the "one country, two systems" principle has contributed to the economic and developmental renaissance in Hong Kong and enhanced the special administrative region's political stability. **MDT/Xinhua**

# Replantation intends to cover 70 pct of Hato lost trees

Julie Zhu

**T**HE Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) announced last week it will plant approximately 2,000 trees by the end of 2018.

According to Ung Sio Wai, head of IACM's Division for the Greening of the City of the Department of Gardens and Green Areas, the replantation is one of the steps the authorities are taking to make up for the damage to local greenery during last year's Typhoon Hato.

The replantation will cover between 70 and 80 percent of the number of trees lost during Typhoon Hato.

The new trees will be small as "we are afraid they [the trees] might fall when facing the wind season. We will plant small trees and let them grow slowly; [the trees] will blossom in several years," explained Ung, adding that "the small trees will blossom near main roads and pedestrian walks. In relatively more open places, we will plant middle-sized trees."

According to Ung, trees in the northern district were more heavily damaged by Typhoon Hato than other parts of the city. IACM will plant small or middle-sized trees there in order "to ensure that during the next wind disaster, there will not be too many big trees



RENATO MARQUES

falling."

The replanted trees will also match a new urban landscape. Later in March, IACM will launch a green week, during which hundreds of trees will be planted.

Ung noted that 500 hectares of mountainous area have been reported damage across Coloane. The worst-hit area sits next to Coloane Fitness Walk.

The Macau government has asked the Guangdong Forestry Department to assist with its recovery, as it will take Macau approximately 10 years to restore all trees lost in the mountains.

Ung revealed that the types of trees for

replantation were all recommended by the Guangdong Forestry Department, and that the new trees will also come from the Guangdong province.

Approximately 15 types of trees have been selected which are native to Macau. However, banyan and cotton trees "are no longer suitable" for Macau, according to Ung.

"During the disaster, most of the trees that fell were these ones. They will not go extinct, but [we] will plant less [of these types of trees]," said Ung.

Around 44 ancient trees were damaged during Typhoon Hato, nine of which had to be removed.

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Lynzy Valles

# Creative space provides platform for local designers

**A** Porta da Arte officially opened yesterday, featuring several cultural and creative items that are available for sale.

The site, which used to be a factory, was transformed as a response to the government's call to activate the old district and promote cultural and recreational development.

A Porta da Arte features literature and other art items, and has the aim of providing a platform for the city's cultural and recreational artists, and enhancing local residents' awareness of art, as a means of protecting and expanding local culture.

There are plans to regularly organize cultural and art activities at the site, which features three floors and a rooftop.

The CEO of A Porta da Arte, Fortes Pakeong Sequeira, told the press that the building, which cost MOP600,000 to construct, is a significant development for local artists and designers who want to showcase their products.

"We have no window for us to showcase our talents. That's why we need somebody to get everything together and show residents and travelers what we have," the local artist said.

Explaining how the idea of creating the platform arose, the artist noted that the neighborhood in Rua dos Ervanários is portrayed in the vibe of



Fortes Pakeong Sequeira



Aspect of the venue

the creative space.

"I spent time to get to know the neighborhood and everyone living in this area had passion and love between each other, so it [inspired me] to do something on [the] arts, food and living, here," said Pakeong Sequeira.

The creative space has an added cultural layer, being a historical building that is more than

60 years old.

Through the design of Fortes, the space is now divided into areas, including an artwork exhibition space, a recreational goods retail area, a reading space, a café and a space for workshops.

Currently, A Porta da Arte has Triangle Coffee Roasters and a reading space available on its

ground floor, while cultural and creative products for sale can be browsed on the first floor.

Solo artworks and Fortes' books, as well as clothing created with Denimworks and Fortitude are all available on site.

Postcards of historical buildings in the region sold by local creative retailers are also stationed in the unit, along with Cloé

Jewelry & Art, which provides custom-made jewelry and re-designing services.

A make-up workshop conducted by local make-up artist Mel Ieong, is also stationed on site.

According to organizers, the creative precinct has come to fruition with the cooperation of the city of Hong Kong and many foreign artists.

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Prashant Gopal

US

**T**O understand America's great gun divide, visit Springfield, Massachusetts, birthplace of the USD17 billion-a-year U.S. firearms industry.

In a head-spinning contradiction, famously liberal Massachusetts - with among the strictest gun-control laws and the lowest shooting-death rate - is the king of guns. By the latest annual federal tally, Massachusetts accounted for a quarter of the 11.9 million produced, more than any other state, according to Small Arms Analytics, an industry research firm.

Springfield is the unofficial capital of "Gun Valley," the chain of factories and suppliers that extends from Smith & Wesson and Savage Arms in Western Massachusetts to Sturm Ruger & Co. and Colt in Connecticut.

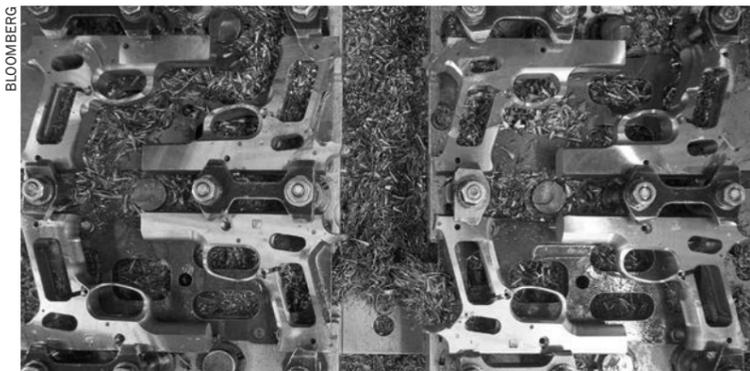
Along with its snub-nosed revolvers and 9 mm pistols, Springfield-based Smith & Wesson makes the popular AR-15-style assault rifles - including the very weapon used to murder 17 students and teachers at Parkland, Florida's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

But residents can't walk into a local gun shop and buy the latest Smith & Wesson's M&P15 "modern sporting rifle," as the company prefers to call it. By and large, Springfield's own elected officials favor those restrictions, and even the town's economic boosters like to deemphasize an export that contributes to 13,000 homicides a year in the U.S.

"The contradiction is striking," said John Rosenthal, a gun owner and founder of Stop Handgun Violence in Massachusetts. "We couldn't be more proud of the results of our gun laws, and we couldn't be more embarrassed that Massachusetts gun makers are wreaking havoc across the nation."

Kevin Kennedy, Springfield's chief economic development officer, calls Smith & Wesson a "good citizen." But he likes to shift the

# One town makes - and hates - guns like no other place



subject to a planned MGM Resorts International casino, which will become the city's biggest employer. Smith & Wesson has slashed its manufacturing workforce by a quarter over the past year. It now employs 1,000 or so, according to Kennedy.

Smith & Wesson gets short shrift in a two-minute city promotional video, called "Springfield Rising." It lauds the casino, restaurants and new rail car factory. No mention of guns.

The camera hovers for a split second over Smith & Wesson headquarters, described only as a "legendary manufacturer." It quickly moves to the parking lot, where cars are sheltered under an array of solar panels. "Innovative Solar Project," it reads, as if Smith & Wesson were in the green energy business.

Symbolizing its isolation, Smith & Wesson's headquarters, a prison-like beige-brick compound encircled by high fences and barbed wire, literally stands apart from much of the city of 150,000 and isn't open to the public. The company, now officially called American Outdoor Brands Corp., declined to comment.

This cold shoulder bothers gun enthusiasts in Springfield, 90

miles west of Boston and 140 miles north of New York City.

Just outside the city limits, Walter Lamon sells guns at Culverine Firearms, where photos of soldiers adorn a store packed with boxes of Smith & Wesson revolvers.

His business, like Smith & Wesson's, boomed under President Barack Obama because of fears of gun confiscation and fell under National Rifle Association booster Donald Trump (Shares of American Outdoor Brands have lost almost two-thirds of their value since the 2016 presidential election.)

Lamon, 70, loathes Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, a Democrat who tightened the state's assault weapons ban. A photo of Healey, with a hand-drawn Hitler mustache, hangs on a wall. "Heil Healey," it reads. In Massachusetts "the gun industry and people like me are vilified," Lamon said. "That's because the majority of folks have a more liberal bent."

For almost a decade, David Upton, 34, managed orders for Smith & Wesson. Even in romance, he experienced the gun divide. When he was dating, some women recoiled in horror at his em-

ployer, while others would ask if he could take them shooting.

"The joke when I was there is that we can't sell 90 percent of the guns we make to people who live in the state," he said.

Upton, who now works at a craft brewer, said his old job has since moved to gun-friendly Missouri. In fact, Massachusetts may be losing its status as a gun leader, as manufacturers ship operations to the South and Southwest, according to Jurgen Brauer, Small Arms Analytics' chief economist.

"Increasingly, these kinds of companies feel they're in a little bit of a foreign land culturally," Brauer said. Employees bristle at being "constantly affronted by anti-gun sentiment when they go to church or the grocery store."

## Massachusetts may be losing its status as a gun leader, as manufacturers ship operations to the South

Springfield's firearms focus dates to the Revolutionary War, when George Washington selected the city for the nation's first armory, which functioned as a U.S. Army gun factory for almost two centuries.

There, inventors transformed the muzzle-loading rifle of the Civil War era into modern breech-loading weapons and then World War II's signature M1 Garand rifle. For the Vietnam War, the

armory was the site of testing for the M16 rifle, the military version of the AR-15.

A half mile away, the Springfield Museums offer visitors the Smith & Wesson Gallery of Firearms History. Sponsored by the company, it features 1890s pistols engraved by Tiffany jewelers and a prized nickel-plated .357 magnum.

"For Mechanical Skill, Strength, Accuracy And Penetration They Are Unexcelled," reads an early Smith & Wesson add featuring a man in a cowboy hat and handle-bar mustache.

But Karen Fisk, the museum's marketing director, says few tourists visit that gallery; they flock instead to the new museum honoring Springfield native and author Dr. Seuss.

Bud Williams, a former school teacher and probation officer, focuses less on the history of guns and more on their impact today. As a state representative, his district includes Smith & Wesson. More often than he likes, he finds himself comforting the families of gunshot victims in a city whose violent crime rate rivals Chicago's.

"This is supposed to be a civilized society, why are there so many guns?" he asks.

To take guns off the streets, Williams, a Democrat, is planning a buyback program. In 2013 and 2016, such efforts netted hundreds of guns that were later destroyed - though a handful of the most valuable are stored at Springfield's famed armory, now a museum run by the National Park Service.

In other words, Springfield celebrates, manufactures, sells - and destroys - guns. **Bloomberg**

### corporate bits

#### WILLIAM SO AND EDMOND LEUNG JOIN FORCES IN 'SO MAN SHOW'



Popular Hong Kong singers William So and Edmond Leung will bring their "So Man Show" to The Venetian Macao's Cotai Arena on April 21.

While both artists have worked in the entertainment industry for many years and are bandmates in the supergroup

"Band Of Brothers", this is the first time they will perform as a duo at Cotai Arena.

William So, nicknamed the "Love Song Prince", launched his music career after winning second place in a major singing competition in 1985 and released his first album in

1989. He appeared in popular TV series "Healing Hands", and also sang its theme song. His later track "Kiss More, Hurt More", led to his first solo Hong Kong concert and his Mandarin song "Man Shouldn't Let Woman Cry" was a big hit in Hong Kong and Taiwan. He has gone on to release more than 20 albums and appeared in dozens of TV series, variety shows and films.

Edmond Leung was the first male singer to receive both Ultimate Top 10 Songs Award and Ultimate Album at the Commercial Radio Hong Kong Ultimate Song Chart Awards. Some of his hits include "The Man in Closet", "Get Lost/Cheating" (with Miriam Yeung), "Lingering Games" and "Three Broken Hearts".

Tickets are now on sale at all Cotai Ticketing box offices.

#### BNU DONATES MOP750,000 TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MACAU



Banco Nacional Ultramarino (BNU) donated MOP 750,000 to the University of Macau (UM). Yonghua Song, UM Rector, and Pedro Cardoso, Chief Executive Offi-

cer of BNU, officiated at the cheque presentation ceremony.

In a statement issued yesterday by the bank, it is stressed that the Universi-

ty of Macau "is the leading university in Macau's higher education sector, with about 1,500 staff members, 10,000 students and over 30,000 alumni."

Thanks to the support of cardholders by using the BNU University of Macau Visa Card since 2013, BNU has already donated MOP3.75 million to the UM. The amount donated annually is based on the percentage of the retail spending of the affinity card.

"The introduction of this affinity card serves as a good example of collaboration between the financial sector and a non-profit organization, for the common good of the local community," BNU stated.

## ANALYSIS

# Xi Jinping's rise shatters already low hopes for democracy

Yanan Wang, Beijing

ORVILLE Schell, a longtime China expert, has vivid memories of his first trip to the country back in 1975. Mao Zedong was leading China through the tumultuous Cultural Revolution, and Chinese were being shamed, beaten and even killed for perceived political mistakes.

Things were vastly different when he returned four years later. Mao was dead, and the country was pulling itself together under reformist Deng Xiaoping. So radical was the transformation that some Chinese felt emboldened enough to plaster posters on a wall in central Beijing criticizing past excesses and advocating democracy.

"China had suddenly gone from being this implacable enemy that was closed to any contact to being quite open and receptive to interacting," recalled Schell, now the director of the Center on U.S.-China Relations at the New York-based Asia Society.

That opening and Deng's subsequent market-style economic reforms fueled speculation that China was destined to become a democracy.

The rise of President Xi Jinping, who is now poised to rule indefinitely after China's rubber-stamp legislature voted Sunday to eliminate presidential term limits, has changed all that, a growing number of Western analysts say.

"In the past, both sides presumed China was trying to become more democratic," Schell said. "What Xi marks so clearly is that there is no longer the pretension ... that China is becoming more democratic and open."

Under Deng, the ruling Communist Party began to allow small-scale free enterprise and eased social controls.

To ensure the party's survival, leaders embarked on a bold experiment in the 1990s to create a formal system of succession. The Chinese public still had no voice in picking their government, but leaders would share power and step down after fixed terms.

Even that has been swept aside under Xi, who is poised to rule for as long as he wants as China's most powerful leader since Mao. The move to scrap presidential limits revives the specter of one-man rule that Deng tried to ward off when he abolished lifetime tenure in 1982.

"The control of public opinion in China right now is much looser than it was in Mao's day, but it's much tighter than it was under Deng Xiaoping," said Sidney Rittenberg, 96, one of the few



Americans to have personally known Mao.

Still, he predicted China would never return to earlier periods of isolation, citing the economy's dependence on openness to the world, Beijing's rising global status and greater awareness among Chinese citizens.

**What Xi marks so clearly is that there is no longer the pretension ... that China is becoming more democratic and open.**

ORVILLE SCHELL  
CENTER ON US-CHINA RELATIONS

"It's not so easy to turn the clock back just by changing the constitution," he said.

According to Rittenberg, becoming China's ruler resulted in a "very clear" change in Mao's personality. He endured the shift, painfully, when he was accused of being part of a foreign spy ring. He spent 16 years in prison, much of it in solitary confinement.

It is precisely a repetition of that history that some still fear.

"My generation has lived through Mao," said Li Datong, a for-

mer editor for the state-run China Youth Daily. "That era is over. How can we possibly go back to that?"

Even if today's China remains far removed from the chaos of Mao's time, it is likewise distant from the massive student-led protests of 1989, when the country had its closest brush with a shift to greater democracy.

The demonstrations, centered on Beijing's Tiananmen Square, gave voice to pent-up frustrations about corruption and

a stifling political system. Deng ordered a violent crackdown that killed hundreds, and possibly thousands, of people.

But even after the crackdown, the party eased controls on travel and the economy began to pick up speed. Reformists remained optimistic that political liberalization might follow.

Hopes rose ahead of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, cast by the party as a coming-out for a confident, modern China.

"One of the things people hoped

for in the run-up to the Olympics was that the exposure to the outside would help to convince more Chinese people and lawmakers that the way things are done outside China isn't necessarily scary or dangerous," said Jeremiah Jenne, a writer and Chinese history teacher in Beijing.

But the global financial crisis that year prompted the leadership to "rethink the extent to which China should be open to the world," Jenne said.

Foreign advocates of democracy had hoped the internet, cellphones and other emerging technologies would erode party control. Instead, Chinese leaders invested heavily in developing web filters and using the internet and video surveillance networks to strengthen their ability to keep tabs on the public.

Since assuming the party leadership in 2012, Xi has overseen a further diminishment of civil society, jailing or otherwise silencing writers, activists and human rights lawyers. Online discussion of the elimination of term limits has been heavily censored.

Beijing has long argued that Western-style democracy is not appropriate for China. It cites political and bureaucratic logjams in Washington and elsewhere as evidence of the superiority of its Marxist-Leninist rule.

"Some key parts of the Western value system are collapsing," said an editorial in the Global Times, a Communist Party newspaper. "Democracy, which has been explored and practiced by Western societies for hundreds of years, is ulcerating."

Many Western analysts have likewise ceased envisioning a democratic China.

"We see now that history is not ineluctably moving toward democracy," said Schell, the American China expert. "History is just moving where it moves." AP

## Ai Weiwei: Even changing leaders won't change China

CHINESE dissident artist Ai Weiwei said yesterday that it doesn't matter whether or not China has a change in leadership, the culture and the system will always remain the same.

Ai's comments came a day after China's rubber-stamp lawmakers passed a historic constitutional amendment abolishing a presidential two-term limit that will enable Xi Jinping to rule indefinitely.

"China has always been, you know, emperor state. ... So a change leader or not change leader, the system and as a culture always stays the same," Ai told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in Sydney, where he was launching an exhibition to highlight the international refugee crisis.

In 2011, Ai was detained by Chinese authorities for his ou-



tspoken views on human rights. Ai's passport was withheld for four years but was returned to him in July 2015. The artist now works from a studio in Germany and has traveled the world to document the plight of refugees and migrants.

The move to scrap term limits has crushed faint hopes for political reforms among China's embattled liberal scholars and

activists, who now fear even greater repression.

China allows no political opposition in any form and has relentlessly persecuted independent groups seeking greater civic participation. Leading Chinese officials have repeatedly rejected any chance of adopting Western-style separation of powers or multiparty democracy. AP

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

HONG KONG

# Democracy movement loses ground in key by-election

**H**ONG Kong pro-democracy candidates won back only two of four seats in a crucial by-election in the semiautonomous Chinese region, final results showed yesterday.

The opposition wasn't able to recapture all its territory, losing some to formidably resourced pro-Beijing rivals and falling short of the number needed to veto most bills in the city's semi-democratic Legislative Council.

The four seats were among six left empty when a group of lawmakers were expelled following a 2016 controversy over their oaths, which they used to defy China.

Little-known activist and neighborhood councilor Au Nok-hin won a key battleground after being enlisted at the last minute. He stepped in after election officials rejected the pro-democracy camp's marquee candidate, 21-year-old Agnes Chow, over her party's platform advocating "self-determination" for the former British colony, which she slammed as "political screening."

The disqualifications of lawmakers and candidates have raised fears among activists and international groups that Hong Kong's Beijing-backed government is taking an increasingly hard line on dissent.

"I won't say the result today is a victory," Au said after his results were announced. "I would say it's only a hollow victory, because we've paid a rather high price for it. The de-



Hong Kong pro-democracy by-election candidate Au Nok-hin (right) celebrates next to his competitor pro-Beijing candidate Judy Chan (left)

mocracy camp has faced huge suppressions due to the political turmoil over these years."

Au had called the vote a referendum on democracy in Hong Kong, but the prospect of democratic development looks increasingly distant after China's rubber-stamp parliament voted Sunday to abolish presidential term limits, allowing

President Xi Jinping to stay in power indefinitely.

Under the "one country, two systems" framework, Beijing promised to let Hong Kong maintain wide autonomy and civil liberties following its 1997 handover from Britain, but fears are rising that China's communist leaders are backtracking.

Hong Kong's pro-democracy camp now holds 26 seats in the 70-seat Legislative Council. Two remaining empty seats will be decided later because they're the subject of ongoing legal action.

About 43 percent of 2.1 million eligible voters cast ballots for three geographical seats, lower than the 58.3 per-

cent in 2016's citywide vote.

"It is significant that we didn't mobilize the people to vote. This is a serious challenge for 2020," when the next round of elections is scheduled, said Joseph Cheng, a retired political science professor, who added that residents "seem to be apathetic."

## Little-known activist and neighborhood councilor Au Nok-hin won a key battleground

Edward Yiu, who was the only one of the disqualified lawmakers to compete again, narrowly lost to a pro-Beijing rival after a nail-biting recount. A third pro-democracy candidate, Gary Fan, won his constituency.

In a fourth race, architects and surveyors elected a pro-Beijing candidate over Dutch native Paul Zimmerman. About half of the council's seats are chosen by mainly pro-Beijing business and trade groups. **AP**

KOREAS

# Seoul praises Beijing's role in nudging North to talks

**S**OUTH Korea's national security director yesterday praised the role of Chinese President Xi Jinping's administration in nudging North Korea toward denuclearization talks, following word of a possible summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Chung Eui-yong briefed China's top foreign policy adviser, Yang Jiechi, on the recent inter-Korean talks and was to meet with Xi later in the day.

"Our president, Moon Jae-in, and the (South Korean) government believe that various advances toward achieving the goal of peace and denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula were made with active support and contribution from President Xi Jinping and

the Chinese government," Chung told Yang.

Yang said China insists on all parties "sticking to solving the issue through dialogue and consultation."

"As long as all parties insist on solving the issue politically and maintain this direction, we can undoubtedly lead the situation on the Korean Peninsula to move forward in the direction in which the global community hopes for," Yang said.

Chung announced last week that Trump said he would meet Kim by May "to achieve permanent denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula.

Chung said Kim told the South Koreans during talks in Pyongyang that he's "committed to denuclearization" and pledged that "North Korea will refrain

from any further nuclear or missile tests."

Suh Hoon, chief of South Korea's spy agency, was also visiting Japan to brief officials there on the progress in talks.

North Korea's foreign trade, more than 90 percent of which passes through China, has taken a major hit since Beijing agreed to increasingly harsh U.N. Security Council resolutions aimed at pressuring Pyongyang into ceasing its nuclear and missile tests and rejoining denuclearization talks.

China's trade crackdown shows how it remains indispensable both in persuading Pyongyang to agree to talks and in fostering and safeguarding a longer-term solution, Renmin University foreign affairs expert

Cheng Xiaohe wrote in the ruling Communist Party newspaper Global Times yesterday.

"China's faithful implementation helped make the Security Council's resolution effective," Cheng wrote, citing a 52 percent decline in trade with South Korea in January against the year before that required "significant sacrifice" on China's part.

While China supports maintaining sanctions for the time being, it is prepared to restore its trading relationship with the North in the event of a breakthrough in order to "create a favorable external environment for North Korea's sustainable economic development," Cheng wrote.

The editorial followed remarks by Chinese Foreign



Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi (right) meets with South Korea's national security director Chung Eui-yong (center) and South Korean ambassador to China Noh Young-min in Beijing

Minister Wang Yi last week that the offer of summit talks was at least a partial result of Beijing's call for a "dual suspension" of North Korean nuclear activities in return for a postponement of U.S.-South Korean war games.

Trump has spoken with

both Chinese President Xi Jinping and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe since Thursday's announcement, and said Xi "appreciates that the U.S. is working to solve the problem diplomatically rather than going with the ominous alternative." **AP**



AP PHOTO

## US officials: North Korea will face no more conditions for talks

Mark Sherman & Robert Burns

**T**RUMP administration officials say there will be no more conditions imposed on North Korea before a first-ever meeting of the two nation's leaders beyond the North's promise not to resume nuclear testing and missile flights or publicly criticize U.S.-South Korean military exercises.

The officials' comments yesterday [Macau time] followed the surprise announcement last week that President Donald Trump has agreed to meet the North's Kim Jong Un by May.

"This potential meeting has been agreed to, there are no additional conditions being sti-

pulated, but, again they — they cannot engage in missile testing, they cannot engage in nuclear testing and they can't publicly object to the U.S.-South Korea planned military exercises," deputy White House spokesman Raj Shah said.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the summit would give Trump a chance "to sit down and see if he can cut a deal" with Kim over the North's nuclear program. "The president has been very clear in what the objective is here. And that is to get rid of nuclear weapons on the (Korean) peninsula," Mnuchin said.

The administration officials credited toughened economic sanctions imposed by the Uni-

ted Nations, and pushed by the United States, with helping bring Kim to the brink of negotiations.

"Our policy is pressure, is pressure from our partners and allies around the world, pressure to the United Nations, pressure through China, these have had an impact. It's impacted Kim Jong Un's behavior. It's impacted his conduct," Shah said.

But some members of Congress said they worry that Trump acted impulsively in agreeing to meet with Kim, before negotiators for both countries had a chance to set some goals the leaders could agree to.

"But the important thing is the diplomatic work that has to go in before such a meeting. A mee-

ting like that would be kind of an afterthought after things are negotiated. Here it looks as if, you know, that's kind of the opening gambit. And that's a little worrisome," said Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., a frequent Trump critic.

The U.S. and South Korea hold military maneuvers every year. They were postponed during the recent Winter Olympics in South Korea. They are expected to be held in April, but no official announcement has been made about when they will take place. In an interview en route to the Middle East, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis declined to discuss the timing and scale of the exercises.

Mattis wouldn't talk at all about

the diplomatic push over North Korea's nuclear program. "When you get in a position like this, the potential for misunderstanding remains very high," he said.

Mattis was among the advisers in the White House on Thursday when Trump decided to accept Kim's offer to meet. The offer was relayed to Trump by a South Korean government delegation that briefed the president on their meeting with Kim last week in North Korea's capital.

**This potential meeting has been agreed to, there are no additional conditions being stipulated.**

RAJ SHA  
WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN

Trump said Saturday that he believes North Korea will abide by its pledge to suspend missile tests while he prepares for the summit. He noted in a tweet that North Korea has refrained from such tests since November and said Kim "has promised not to do so through our meetings."

"I believe they will honor that commitment," the president said.

Later, at a political rally in Pennsylvania, when Trump mentioned Kim's name, the crowd booed. But Trump responded: "No, it's very positive ... no, after the meeting you may do that, but now we have to be very nice because let's see what happens, let's see what happens."

Flake and Mnuchin spoke on NBC's "Meet the Press." Shah was on ABC's "This Week." **AP**

### BANGLADESH

## Court grants bail to former leader Khaleda Zia



Supporters of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party celebrate at the court premises after former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was granted four months bail

**B**ANGLADESH'S High Court yesterday granted bail for four months to opposition leader and former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who was jailed for five years on a corruption conviction and is awaiting an appeal.

Despite the decision, it was not immediately clear if or when Zia would be freed from jail.

Mahbubey Alam, the country's attorney general, said after yesterday's ruling that a move against the bail order would be made in the High Court today.

Lawyers said a two-mem-

ber panel of judges considered the 72-year-old Zia's age and health condition in granting the bail. Zia has had various health complications in the past.

A court convicted Zia on Feb. 8 on charges of misusing her power and embezzling about USD250,000. The conviction means that Zia, the archrival of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, can be barred from running in December elections.

The court also sentenced Zia's son, Tarique Rahman, and four others to 10 years in prison for involvement

in the case. Rahman lives in London and was tried in absentia.

Bangladesh law says anyone imprisoned for more than two years cannot run for office for the next five years, but Law Minister Anisul Huq has said the final decision rests with the higher courts.

Zia faces more than 30 other charges, ranging from corruption to sedition.

Bangladesh politics are deeply fractious, with rivals Hasina and Zia ruling the country alternately since 1991, when democracy

was restored.

Both women came from political dynasties. Zia is the widow of Ziaur Rahman, a general-turned-president who was assassinated in 1981. Hasina is the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the country's independence leader and first president, who was assassinated in 1975 along with most of his family members.

In the last election in 2014, Zia's party and its political allies boycotted the race, allowing Hasina to return to power with a landslide victory. **AP**

Binaj Gurubacharya, Kathmandu

NEPAL

# Plane crashes and catches fire in Kathmandu, kills at least 50

A plane carrying 71 people from Bangladesh swerved erratically and flew dangerously low before crashing and erupting in flames as it landed yesterday in Kathmandu, Nepal's capital, killing at least 50 people, officials and witnesses said.

The exact number of dead and injured remained unclear amid the chaos of the crash and the rush of badly injured people to nearby hospitals, but Brig. Gen. Gokul Bhandari, the Nepal army spokesman, said it was clear that at least 50 people had died. Officials at Kathmandu Medical College, the closest hospital to the airport, said they were treating 16 survivors.

US-Bangla Airlines flight BS211 from Dhaka to Kathmandu was carrying 67 passengers and four crew members, according to an airline spokesman.

An AP journalist who arrived at the scene soon after the crash saw the twin-propeller plane broken into several large pieces, with dozens of firefighters and rescue workers clustered around the wreckage in a grassy field near the runway. Hundreds of people stood on a nearby hill, staring down at what remained of the Bombardier Dash 8.

The plane swerved repeatedly as it prepared to land in Kathman-



du, said Amanda Summers, an American working in Nepal. The crowded city sits in a valley in the Himalayan foothills.

"It was flying so low I thought it was going to run into the mountains," said Summers, who watched the crash from the terrace of her home office, not far from the airport. "All of a sudden there was a blast and then another blast."

Fire crews put out the flames quickly, perhaps within a minute, she

said, though for a time clouds of thick, dark smoke rose into the sky above the city.

The plane had circled Tribhuvan International Airport twice as it waited for clearance to land, Mohammed Selim, the airline's manager in Kathmandu, told Dhaka-based Somoy TV by telephone. The plane was 17 years old, company officials said.

Airport officials said the pilot had been told to approach the airport's

one runway from the south, but he instead landed from the north.

"The airplane was not properly aligned with the runway. The tower repeatedly asked if the pilot was OK and the reply was 'yes,'" said Raj Kumar Chetri, the airport's general manager.

The runway, however, can be approached from both directions.

Nitin Keyal was about to board a domestic flight when he saw the plane coming in.

"It was flying very low," said Keyal, a medical student. "Everyone just froze looking at it. You could tell it wasn't a normal landing."

He said it landed just off the runway, broke apart and burst into flames. "For a few minutes no one could believe what was happening. It was just terrible," he said.

Most of the injured were brought to Kathmandu Medical College, where relatives wept as they awaited news.

Haran Saran was at the hospital hoping for news about his nephew, a medical student.

"He's not on the list of injured

people," said Saran, who did not want to give his nephew's name. "We still have hope that there has been some mistake on the list, or he is in some other hospital."

US-Bangla spokesman Kamrul Islam said the plane was carrying 32 passengers from Bangladesh, 33 from Nepal and one each from China and the Maldives. He did not provide the nationalities of the four crewmembers.

US-Bangla operates Boeing 737-800 and smaller Bombardier Dash 8 Q-400 planes.

The full-service airline is based in the Bangladeshi capital, Dhaka, and flies to several domestic and international destinations. The parent company, part of US-Bangla Group, is involved in a number of industries, including real estate, education and agriculture.

Kathmandu's airport has been the site of several deadly crashes. In September 2012, a Sita Air turboprop plane carrying trekkers to Mount Everest hit a bird and crashed shortly after takeoff, killing all 19 on board. AP

AD

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Jake Pearson, New York

**D**ONALD Trump Jr. has a previously undisclosed business relationship with a longtime hunting buddy who helped raise millions of dollars for his father's 2016 presidential campaign and has had special access to top government officials since the election, records obtained by The Associated Press show.

The president's eldest son and Texas hedge fund manager Gentry Beach have been involved in business deals together dating back to the mid-2000s and recently formed a company — Future Venture LLC — despite past claims by both men that they were just friends, according to previously unreported court records and other documents obtained by AP.

Beach last year met with top National Security Council officials to push a plan that would curb U.S. sanctions in Venezuela and open up business for U.S. companies in the oil-rich nation.

Ethics experts said their financial entanglements raised questions about whether Beach's access to government officials and advocacy for policy changes were made possible by the president's son's influence — and could also benefit the Trump family's bottom line.

"This feeds into the same concerns that we've had all along: The really fuzzy line between the presidency and the Trumps' companies," said Noah Bookbinder, who leads Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, a public policy group. "Donald Trump Jr. sort of straddles that line all the time."

Last February, just as Trump Sr. was settling into office, Beach and an Iraqi-American businessman met with top officials at the National Security Council to present their plan for lightening U.S. sanctions in Venezuela in exchange for opening business opportunities for U.S. companies, according to a former U.S. official with direct knowledge of the proposal.

Career foreign policy experts were instructed to take the mee-



Donald Trump Jr, the eldest son of US President Donald Trump

USA

## Trump Jr. partners with donor who pitched gov't

tings, first reported last April by the website Mic.com, at the direction of the West Wing because Beach and the businessman were friends of Trump Jr., the official said.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive government work, said that inside the NSC lawyers raised red flags about the appropriateness of the meeting.

The U.S. didn't act on the pitch, which would have gone against the president's hard-line stance on the South American nation and its president, Nicolas Maduro.

Seven months after the Venezuela meetings, Beach attended a private lunch in Dallas between Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and Republican donors, including businessmen with petroleum interests, according to a copy of Zinke's schedule.

The Interior Department didn't respond to a request for

comment about the meetings. A White House official said Trump Jr. didn't arrange Beach's visit to the NSC and his proposal was dismissed.

In a statement, the Trump Organization said Trump Jr. has never played a role arranging mee-

**Ethics experts raised questions about whether Beach's access to gov't officials and advocacy for policy changes were made possible by the president's son's influence**

tings "with anyone at the White House or any other government agency."

Alan Garten, the Trump Organization's general counsel, acknowledged that Trump Jr. had invested with Beach in the past, but referred AP to a statement released by the company in April, which said their relationship was "strictly personal."

In a statement provided by a friend, Beach said it was "absolutely not true" that he'd ever "used my longtime personal friendship with Donald Trump Jr." to influence government decision making.

According to his friends, Beach, who has known Trump Jr. since they attended the University of Pennsylvania together in the late 1990s, developed his own relationships during the campaign and inauguration and doesn't need Trump Jr. to broker introductions.

Beach was an avid fundraiser

and campaigner for President Trump, particularly in Texas, where Trump Jr. told donors last March that Beach and another longtime hunting pal, Tom Hicks Jr., raised millions for his father's campaign, according to the Dallas Morning News.

After the election, Beach served as a finance vice chairman for the inaugural committee and faced scrutiny after a nonprofit he started at the time advertised hunting and fishing trips with Trump Jr. and his brother, Eric, to million-dollar donors.

Last October, Beach incorporated a business called Future Venture LLC in Delaware without listing any Trump connection, signing himself as the entity's agent.

But a disclosure report filed with New York City officials and obtained by AP via a public records request shows Trump Jr. is named as the president, secretary and treasurer of the company.

The purpose of the limited liability company could not be determined from the filings. The Trump Organization said it was set up to pursue technology investments.

Previously unreported court documents show that the two men, each a godfather to one of the other's sons, did business together well before they formed Future Venture.

In a 2010 deposition, Trump Jr. testified that he had twice made investments in ventures that Beach had an interest in: USD200,000 in a dry Texas oil well managed by Beach's father and an undisclosed amount in a failed mining stock affiliated with Beach's uncle.

In August 2008, while the two men were golfing together in New York, Beach suggested Trump Jr. sell his shares in the tanking stock "if you need the tax loss," according to a copy of his testimony filed in a long running civil lawsuit between Beach and a former employer, hedge funder Paul Touradji.

Beach's father, Gary Beach, was convicted last month of federal bankruptcy fraud after a seven-day trial in Dallas. **AP**

NEW YORK CITY

## Police confirms five passengers in helicopter crash are dead

**A** helicopter crashed into New York City's East River and flipped upside down in the water, killing all five passengers aboard, officials said.

A spokesman for the NYPD confirmed the deaths to The Associated Press yesterday.

Video taken by a bystander and posted on Twitter shows the red helicopter land hard in the water and

then capsize, its rotors slapping at the water.

The helicopter, a private charter hired for a photo shoot, went down near Gracie Mansion, the mayoral residence. One person, the pilot, freed himself and was rescued by a tugboat, officials said.

The passengers were recovered by police and fire department divers, who had to remove them from

tight harnesses while they were upside down, Fire Commissioner Daniel Nigro said.

"It took awhile for the drivers to get these people out. They worked very quickly as fast as they could," Nigro said. "It was a great tragedy that we had here."

Witnesses on a waterfront esplanade near where the aircraft went down said the helicopter was flying noi-

sily, then suddenly dropped into the water and quickly submerged. But the pilot appeared on the surface, holding onto a flotation device as a tugboat and then police boats approached.

"It's cold water. It was sinking really fast," Mary Lee, 66, told the New York Post. "By the time we got out here, we couldn't see it. It was underwater."

Celia Skyvaril, 23, told



The scene of the helicopter crash in the East River in New York

the Daily News that she could see a person on what looked like a yellow raft or float screaming and yelling for help.

News footage showed one victim being loaded into an ambulance while emergency workers gave him chest compressions. **AP**

Bassme Mroue, Beirut

SYRIA

# More civilians leave rebel enclave as army advances

A small group of Syrian civilians yesterday left the rebel-held enclave of eastern Ghouta just outside of Damascus, using a corridor established by the Syrian army amid the military's gains that have effectively divided the area into three parts.

State-run Syrian TV broadcast footage showing a group of men, women and children it says left the town of Madyara after it was captured by Syrian troops on Sunday. The TV showed several women carrying babies and welcoming the Syrian army, and claiming the rebels were preventing civilians from leaving eastern Ghouta.

Recapturing the enclave would mark one of the most significant victories for President Bashar Assad in the seven-year civil war. It would also be the worst setback for rebels since the opposition was ousted from the eastern half of the city of Aleppo in late 2016 following a similar siege and bombing campaign.

Eastern Ghouta is larger and more populated, with some 400,000 people believed to be living there, trapped under a relentless air and ground bombardment and a crippling year-long siege. More than 1,000

people have been killed since the large-scale government offensive began on Feb. 18.

In rapid advances over the weekend, Syrian government forces split eastern Ghouta in two — a northern and southern part — then cut off key towns of Douma and Harasta from the rest of the enclave, further squeezing the residents inside them. Douma is eastern Ghouta's largest settlement. Local council member Iyad Abdelaziz said residents and local authori-

■ Over 1,000 people killed since the large-scale government offensive began on Feb. 18



ties are now considering evacuating the town.

The largest rebel group in eastern Ghouta, the Army of Islam, said Monday it agreed with Russian forces to evacuate the

wounded from the enclave. Its statement said the deal with the Russians was reached through the United Nations.

The Army of Islam said the wounded will be evacuated in

stages but made no mention if they are rebel fighters or civilians. The group also did not say when the evacuations would begin or where the wounded would be taken.

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## what's ON



## DIN DONG X TAIPA VILLAGE CREATIVE ART EXHIBITION

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

UNTIL: April 13, 2018

VENUE: Taipa Village Art Space

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2857 6118

## 11TH MACAU DESIGN BIENNIAL (HGM)

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

UNTIL: March 31, 2018

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

## THE DINOSAUR HUNT

TIME: Round the clock ("Dino Escape" green-screen experience only available from 12pm-8pm)

UNTIL: April 15, 2018

VENUE: Studio City Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8868 6767

## A CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF MACAU - EXHIBITION

TIME: 10:30am-5:30pm (closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: March 31, 2018

VENUE: Gallery of Carmo Post Office in Taipa

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2837 8138

## DOCUMENTING IMPERMANENCE: AN EXHIBITION OF REPORTAGE PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALICE KOK AND STUDENTS

TIME: 9am-10pm

UNTIL: March 31, 2018

VENUE: Team Building, Institute for Tourism Studies

ADMISSION: Free

## Offbeat

## SAN FRANCISCO TO REMOVE STATUE SOME CALL RACIST



The statue depicts a Native American at the feet of a Spanish cowboy and Catholic missionary in San Francisco

San Francisco arts commissioners have voted to remove a statue that shows a Native American man at the feet of a conquering Spanish cowboy and Catholic missionary.

Yesterday's vote by the San Francisco Arts Commission was unanimous and is the final word on the removal of "Early Days." The sculpture is part of the Pioneer Monument cluster near City Hall that depicts the founding of California.

Native Americans and others have long wanted to remove the statue which they say is racist and demeaning. Advocates for removal clapped and cheered after the voice vote.

The arts commission started the removal process after demonstrators clashed over the removal of a Confederate statue in Charlottesville, Virginia, last August.

Other statues in the cluster would not be affected.

## TV canal macau



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

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

08 - 14 MAR



## TOMB RAIDER

ROOM 1

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

Director: Roar Uthaug

Starring: Alicia Vikander, Daniel Wu, Dominic West

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 118 min



## MARK FELT: THE MAN WHO BROUGHT DOWN THE WHITE HOUSE

ROOM 2

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

Director: Peter Landesman

Starring: Liam Neeson, Diane Lane, Bruce Greenwood

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 103 min

## BLACK PANTHER

ROOM 2

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

Director: Ryan Coogler

Starring: Chadwick Boseman, Lupita Nyong'o

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 134min

## AGENT MR CHAN

ROOM 3

4:30, 9:30pm

Director: Cheung Ka Kit

Starring: Dayo Wong Tze Wah, Charmaine Sheh Sze Man

Language: Cantonese (Chinese &amp; 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 &amp; English)

Duration: 60min

## this day in history



Conservative Party leader Edward Heath, 1970

## 1970 CONSERVATIVE VICTORY IN FIRST TEEN ELECTION

The Conservatives are celebrating a record majority in the Bridgwater by-election. They won by 10,915 votes, the largest in the constituency for 50 years.

It was the first time 18-year-old citizens were allowed to vote since the age of majority was reduced from 21 in January this year.

This was also the first time ballot papers were marked with the name of the party as well as the candidates.

Polling stations stayed open until 2200 BST (2100 GMT)- also a first.

The victorious Conservative candidate Tom King, aged 36, was given a hero's welcome by a crowd of about 100 when he stepped out onto the balcony of the town hall after the results were read out.

He was then carried up the high street on the shoulders of three farmers and a local vet.

The swing from Labour to Tory was 8.6% and the Liberals just managed to save their deposit by less than 50 votes.

Conservative Party leader Edward Heath said the result confirmed his view that Labour had lost touch with the wishes of the electorate.

His deputy, Reginald Maudling, said: "This is a fine result which would give us a massive majority. The sooner the Prime Minister faces the electorate, the better it will be for Britain."

The Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, does not comment on by-election results.

But the assistant general secretary of the Labour Party, J Gwyn Morgan, pointed out that the anti-government swing at Bridgwater was lower than at other recent by-elections.

"The swing against the government reveals the continued narrowing of the Conservative lead since the last series of by-elections," he said.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

On 18 May Harold Wilson called a general election for 18 June.

His Labour Party lost to Edward Heath's Conservatives. The result was totally unexpected as opinion polls had predicted an easy victory for Labour on the back of a healthy economy and large pay rises.

But the Tories' campaign that painted the government as too willing to back down to trade union pressure paid off. Tom King has since been made secretary of state for Employment, Transport, the Environment, Northern Ireland, (1985-1989) and defence (1989 - 1992). In 2001 he took his seat in the Lords as the Right Honourable the Lord King of Bridgwater.

Edward Heath was prime minister until 1974 and lost the Conservative Party leadership to Margaret Thatcher in 1975.



## HOCKEY

# North Korean defector hits Paralympic ice for South Korea

Kim Tong-Hyung, Gangneung

**T**HE most talked-about athlete in the Paralympics barely plays, but who cares? The diminutive but hard-nosed reserve forward on South Korea's sled hockey team proudly admits he's just happy to be here.

After all, Choi Kwang Hyouk has come a long way.

He escaped one of the most brutal and isolated places on Earth as a one-legged teenager and traveled weeks through China on crutches before finding freedom in South Korea. He battled through a sense of desolation for years while struggling to adjust to his new capitalist home before finding rejuvenation in a sport he says now means "everything in life."

Now, 17 years after his escape from North Korea and four years since his first practice on ice, the 31-year-old is living a dream with the South Korean national team, which aims to clinch the country's first ever Paralympic medal in the sport in the games held at home.

"The past is the past and I am all about the present," Choi said during multiple conversations with The Associated Press at the Gangneung Hockey Center. "What's important is that I am wearing the colors of South Korea, not the flag of any other country. I feel that I have arrived 100 percent."

After sitting out South Korea's 4-1 win over Japan on Saturday, Choi briefly saw game action in South Korea's dramatic 3-2 overtime win over the Czech Republic on Sunday.

Choi described himself before the game as a player who likes the taste of hitting and getting hit, and he played like that in the final two minutes of the second period. Right out of the gate, he pinned streaking Czech forward Michal Geier to the boards with a force that knocked him over. Moments later, he made another physical play on the other end of the ice to intercept the puck and lay it off to teammate Jung Seung Hwan, who bounced his shot off the crossbar.

South Korea overcame two late goals by Geier and won after Jung scored 13 seconds into overtime, sending the home crowd of 5,000 into a frenzy. After the game, Jung said his two minutes felt



more like 10.

"I was using all the energy I had — I thought No. 74 (Geier) was the only Czech player who was really threatening us, so I really wanted to press him hard," said Jung. "It would have been great if I got that assist, but what can you do? That's hockey — everything is happening so fast, you're attacking and defending at the same time, and you just have to move on, hoping you will get another chance."

Everything about Choi seems linked to hustle and grit. About 30,000 North Koreans have fled to South Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, producing thousands of stories of heartbreak and dramatic redemption. But the tale of Choi's escape is exceptional even by these standards.

Years after Choi was born in 1987 in a town near North Korea's border with China, his family was hit by a devastating famine that would kill hundreds of thousands of North Koreans in the 1990s. His parents split amid their struggles to survive and Choi and his sister were sent to their grandmother, who died when Choi turned 9. His sister was soon sent to an orphanage.

Left on his own, Choi began

begging at the train station in the town of Chongjin. He eventually settled on a trade of buying cheap ice cream from markets, sneaking into railcars, and selling them at higher prices to passengers during stops.

On a day in May 2000, Choi was pushed off a crowded car just when the train began to pull ahead. The wheels caught Choi's left ankle and crushed it. Choi said he was carried to a local clinic, where a doctor amputated the area below his left knee without anesthesia. Choi said he fainted because of the excruciating pain and lapsed in and out of consciousness for about a week.

On crutches, Choi went back to begging. He lived in crude

**What's important is that I am wearing the colors of South Korea, not the flag of any other country.**

CHOI KWANG HYOUK

air-raid shelters dug into the ground. He used wood scraps to collect the grease off train wheels and made fire with them to withstand the cold which he says left his face blackened with soot.

Choi remembers those days as the toughest time of his life.

"I had no dreams about a future," he said. "I just wanted to live with my family again and eat well."

Things changed in the summer of 2001 when Choi was visited by his long-lost uncle. By then, Choi's father had defected to South Korea and sent his brother, who also escaped, to smuggle out his children. Choi crossed into China with his uncle and traveled through Yanbian and Shenyang before reaching South Korea in August 2001. His uncle was able to bring out Choi's sister months later.

Life in South Korea wasn't always easy for Choi, not just because of the social and cultural differences. In South Korea, defectors from North Korea often face stigma and discrimination based on presumptions of incapacity. So do disabled people.

"If a classmate didn't know something, it was because he didn't know," Choi said. "If I didn't know something, it

was because I was from North Korea."

He said it was also difficult to go through three more surgeries in South Korea because the bones on his severed leg kept growing.

Choi said he slowly began getting his "footing" at Seoul's Yeomyung School, a high school specializing in educating teenagers who defected from North Korea, where he said teachers were more eager to help him. He tried out sled hockey for the first time in 2014, then as a student at the Korea National University of Welfare, and learned to love the physicality of the sport.

"I always have it in my head that I am a relatively small person — if I am pushed, I am overwhelmed by an urge to hit back," Choi said. "Try anything aggressive in soccer, and they will blow a whistle on you. But in hockey, you have much larger freedom within the rules to bang into bodies. I got hooked."

In 2016, Choi made the sled hockey team of Gangwon Province, which governs the Paralympic towns of Pyeongchang and Gangneung. He made the national team last summer.

The Paralympics has so far been an exciting and unusual experience for Choi. He's playing in front of thousands of spectators in a country that never previously showed a passion for hockey, let alone disabled sports. It was also a surreal experience for him to see North Koreans at the athletes' village. North Korea has sent a 24-member delegation to the Paralympics, including two athletes, extending a political outreach it made to the South during the Feb. 9-25 Olympics.

The sudden period of inter-Korean warmth, which follows an unusually provocative year from North Korea in nuclear weapons and missile tests, has now led to discussions about a potential meeting between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un aimed at defusing the international standoff over the North's nuclear program.

Choi said he wasn't closely following the politics between Seoul, Washington and Pyongyang. He said it wasn't discomforting to see the North Koreans at the games, because "they look like us and speak the same language." However, he has no plans to talk to them because he still feels a "distance with them." After all, he feels right at home where he is.

"I don't feel nervous because so many people are cheering for me here," Choi said. "It's like as if I am playing in my living room." AP

Tales Azzoni, Madrid

FOOTBALL | CHAMPIONS LEAGUE PREVIEW

# Chelsea looks for another good showing at Camp Nou

**F**EW teams have caused as much trouble for Barcelona as Chelsea since Lionel Messi started playing with the Spanish club almost 15 years ago.

Barcelona has been dominant with Messi against nearly every opponent it has faced in Europe.

But not against Chelsea.

The English club is even used to doing well against Barcelona at Camp Nou Stadium, where the teams will meet tomorrow [Thursday, 3:45am] in the second leg of their last-16 series in the Champions League.

Chelsea is unbeaten against Barcelona in eight matches, with four straight draws at Camp Nou.

Barcelona earned a 1-1 draw in the first match in England thanks to a late away goal by Messi, who had never scored against the Premier League club.

"It will be a hard match just like in the away leg," Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde said. "They have a strong team that defends well in a block and has a great counterattack. We will struggle."

Thursday, 3:45am

Barcelona v Chelsea  
H 1.44, D 5, A 8.5

Barcelona has been thriving again this season. Its only loss came against Real Madrid in its first match of the season in the Spanish Super Cup final. It has won 18 of its last 20 home matches since then, with two draws — 2-2 against Celta Vigo and 0-0 against Getafe in the Spanish league.

"We have to show great resilience," Chelsea coach Antonio Conte said. "We are playing against one of the best teams in the world. We must pay great attention and have



the same focus and concentration of the first leg."

This is the first time Chelsea and Barcelona are facing each other in the Champions League since the semifinals in 2012, when the English club advanced 3-2 on aggregate after securing an astonishing 2-2 draw in the second leg at Camp Nou, after trailing 2-0 with 10 men for most of the match.

Chelsea also drew at Camp Nou in the Champions League semifinals in 2009, as well as in the group stage of the 2006-07 season and the round of 16 a year earlier.

Chelsea is trying to make the quarterfinals for the first time since 2014, when eliminated by Atletico Madrid in the semis. Barcelona is looking to reach the last eight for a record 11th straight time.

The Spanish league leaders are coming off a 2-0 win at last-place

Malaga on Saturday, when Messi didn't play because of the birth of his third son, Ciro.

It remains unclear if Valverde will be able to count on midfielder Andres Iniesta tomorrow because of a hamstring injury.

Wednesday, 3:45am

Man Utd v Sevilla  
H 1.63, D 4.1, A 6.5

Jose Mourinho may be faced with a dilemma when Manchester United hosts Sevilla today.

With Paul Pogba ruled out of United's Premier League victory over Liverpool on Saturday, Mourinho's side finally managed to find the balance it has been lacking in recent weeks. If the France midfielder is available, Mourinho would have to drop Juan Mata or 21-year-old Scott McTominay to

make room for him.

United, which drew the first leg 0-0 in Seville, is trying to reach the quarterfinals for the first time since 2013-14.

"The next game is very important for us, maybe the most important game of the season," United midfielder Nemanja Matic said.

Sevilla is trying to make the quarterfinals for the first time.

Wednesday, 3:45am

Roma v Shakhtar Donetsk  
H 1.75, D 4.33, A 5.1

Roma will be hoping it has turned its poor home form around when it hosts Shakhtar Donetsk needing to overturn a 2-1 defeat.

Roma beat Torino 3-0 on Friday for what was only its second win at Stadio Olimpico since mid-December.

"Mentally, the lads felt a bit of pressure because we hadn't won at the Olimpico for a while — and I could see that," Roma coach Eusebio Di Francesco said. "Today's win shows that we've cleared the hurdle now."

Thursday, 3:45am

Besiktas v Bayern Munich  
H 5.8, D 4.65, A 1.62

Besiktas is dreaming of becoming the first team to overturn a five-goal deficit in the UEFA competition when it hosts Bayern Munich tomorrow, although restoring its pride will likely be enough after a chastening 5-0 first-leg defeat in Munich.

The Turkish champion, playing in the knockout rounds of the Champions League for the first time, is hoping to extend its 12-game unbeaten run at home in European competitions.

Bayern has made it to the Champions League quarterfinals six years in a row, but hasn't won the title since coach Jupp Heynckes' previous stint in 2013, when he led the side to a treble.

It warmed up for its trip to Istanbul with a 6-0 rout of Hamburger SV on Saturday.

"You can never hide in football, you can never take it easy," said Heynckes, who has 25 wins and just one defeat in 27 games across all competitions since returning to Bayern. **AP / Oddschecker.com**

FOOTBALL

# Greek game abandoned after 'armed' owner protests decision

**A** disputed goal at the end of a Greek league match this weekend between leader AEK and title rival PAOK led to a pitch invasion by one of the team owners, who appeared to be carrying a gun.

Fernando Varela scored in the 90th minute, putting host PAOK ahead 1-0 in the northern city of Thessaloniki. The referee signaled a goal but then seemed to disallow it for offside.

PAOK's owner, businessman Ivan Savvidis, came on the field twice and was accompanied by bodyguards. On the second occasion, without the overcoat he was wearing be-



fore, Savvidis appeared to be carrying a pistol which was in its holder. Savvidis made no move to use the

weapon at any time. AEK officials claimed Savvidis threatened the referee during his first fo-

ray onto the pitch, before being pulled away. They claim he also threatened AEK's operations ma-

nager, Vassilis Dimitriadis. AEK said it will file a complaint with FIFA and UEFA, the world and European soccer governing bodies.

PAOK said in a statement: "After what happened today, PAOK chairman Ivan Savvidis is preparing all necessary procedures to protect the team and all his collaborators from the threats and attacks they have been subjected to. There will be relevant announcements on the issue soon."

The game was finally abandoned after more than two hours and the stadium emptied of fans. Adding to the widespread confusion, there were claims that the referee, Giorgos Kominis, had actually allowed the goal. The score at the time of abandonment remains uncertain — 0-0 or 1-0 to PAOK — with the referee's

report still to come.

AEK claimed that the atmosphere had become too threatening for the game to resume, while the referee was reportedly in favor of resuming.

Earlier, AEK coach Manolo Jimenez had been sent to the stands, in the 83rd minute, for constantly complaining.

PAOK's previous home game — against another title rival, Olympiakos — never started after Olympiakos coach Oscar Garcia was hit in the face by a cash register paper roll.

The latest incident has thrown the outcome of the season into further disarray.

"Images of team owners invading the pitch armed are setting back soccer for years," Deputy Culture Minister for Sports Giorgos Vasileiadis said in a statement after the game. **AP**

opinion

Our Desk

Renato Marques



HARASSMENT, BULLYING AND OTHER FORMS OF ABUSE

“Harassment” is a word that in the last few weeks and months has been written countless times, mostly in relation to the recent (yet old) scandal involving both politics and the movie and entertainment industry.

The #MeToo movement has been stirring up different pots and helping expose some myths. However, at the end of the day, it has showed something that is quite simple in some aspects and complex in others- it has showed how societies from the five continents have been failing their powerless members.

This issue came to me in an interview I recently did in Macau with actress and voiceover artist Victoria Willing, ahead of the opening of the first Biennial of the Woman Artists in Macau, in which she was representing her mother, the painter Paula Rego.

At some point in our interview, the movement was brought up and I remember something that Willing said, “in the end it’s all about power.” Yes, that’s exactly it – power – and above all about the power that the “powerful” exercise over the “powerless.”

She continued with another very simple yet complex fact. After being asked how it was possible to have so many cases coming to light over the past few months, that were kept silent all these years, she said, “it was culturally accepted as normal.” Again, I must agree. This is in fact the core of all these issues with harassment, bullying or any other form of abuse, the fact they are “culturally accepted and seen as normal.”

So, I ask, where does this “culture” come from? Why is it okay for a boss or a chief or a manager or simply an “important person” to exercise their power over the people that are less powerful than them?

My answer is also as simple and as complex as the information that laid the basis to my thoughts: It comes from education! We were told, to different extents, that we should “respect” the orders of the ones that are more “powerful” than us and by that we understood “respect” to mean, “do whatever they tell us to do without questioning.”

This is what we have been teaching in both our schools and our houses. There is a hierarchy of power from top to bottom and this hierarchy in schools usually results in what we used to call “bullying.” When these school kids grow up their attitudes turn into what we call “harassment” and many other forms of abuse. And it just does not stop. In our working careers and throughout our lives we keep encountering these “bullies”, turned into “harassers” and guess what, there are more and more of them and they are everywhere. Many of them get “empowered” simply by using the social media platforms they use to exercise power over others, to bully them and to harass them.

How do we stop this? By starting with the only human form that you can control, yourself!

Stop harassing others! It is as simple as that. Think twice before harassing or bullying a work colleague, a schoolmate or your son or daughter. Teach others how to NOT harass and to use respect instead of power.

I am positively sure if we all start doing this with ourselves, we will create not just “a” positive change but “the” positive change that we all say we want to see happening in the world.

THE HONG KONG HOUSING IN HOT DEMAND AS WHEELLOCK APARTMENTS SELL OUT

Demand in Hong Kong’s red-hot housing market shows no signs of abating, with Wheelock & Co. selling all 750 apartments offered at its new Kowloon project over the weekend.

Based on buyers’ enthusiasm for the project, where 9,800 applications were made for the 750 units, Wheelock is likely to announce the launch of a further 300 to 400 apartments on Tuesday, said Ken Lee, senior princi-

pal regional sales director at Centaline Property Agency Ltd. Wheelock realized about HKD8.1 billion in sales, he said.

Prices for the next batch of units may rise 5 percent to 8 percent, to as much as HKD15,500 per square foot, Lee said. Wheelock Chairman Douglas Woo said during a press conference yesterday that the firm will release 160 additional flats for sale this week, after “favorable response from customers.”

Moon race still on without Google’s prize



GOOGLE called off its race to the moon weeks ago, when it became clear no private explorer would complete the trip by the March 31 deadline. That won’t stop at least three teams from Israel, Japan and the U.S., who say their missions are still a go, with or without the contest’s USD20 million prize.

“We are full steam ahead,” said Yigal Harel, program director at SpaceIL, the Israeli team that plans a soft-landing on the moon later this year.

When the Lunar XPrize was introduced in 2007, interest in moon exploration was at a low. No government had landed there since the 1970s and no businesses had seriously contemplated it. But the contest has had its intended effect, jump-starting a cottage industry of would-be space explorers, even if no one emerged to take Google’s money. Last year, overall investment in space startups by venture capitalists climbed to a record \$2.8 billion, according research firm CB Insights.

One reason the moon is within easier reach is that escaping Earth’s gravity is now so much cheaper. Private launch services like Elon Musk’s Space Exploration Technologies Corp. can put a satellite into orbit for about one-tenth what it would have cost a decade ago. SpaceX last month sent up a rocket

powerful enough to lift the weight of a fully-loaded jumbo-jet.

The team most likely to get to the moon first, the non-profit SpaceIL, is attempting the feat mostly to prove it can be done. With some funding from the Israel Space Agency and billionaire casino magnate Sheldon Adelson, they plan to hitch a ride on one of Musk’s Falcon 9 rockets before the end of 2018.

Other teams see business opportunities in building lunar infrastructure, ferrying supplies to the moon or extracting minerals from its soil. If there are vast lakes of ice frozen in the shadows of the moon’s craters, as satellite imagery indicates, that could prove to be a valuable resource. Of course, any commercial enterprise would face the uncertainty of outdated international agreements that don’t address how private property

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works in space.

Meanwhile, governments are looking at the moon for the first time in years. In the U.S., President Donald Trump requested almost \$900 million in new funding for NASA moon missions, which include building a space station in lunar orbit by the mid-2020s. China this year plans to land a probe on the unexplored dark side of the moon, where radio signals from Earth can’t be received.

Carolyn Belle, an analyst at Northern Sky Research, says government space agencies could end up being important customers for commercial moon explorers, especially in the early days when “there isn’t a large potential customer base.”

Pittsburgh-based Astrobotic Technology Inc. and Japan’s ispace inc., two former XPrize competitors, both aspire to be lunar versions of FedEx, with plans to eventually make money by hauling scientific equipment and commercial goods to the moon.

Ispace last year raised more than \$90 million from investors including Suzuki Motor Corp. and telecom giant KDDI Corp. The Tokyo-based startup plans to test its delivery vehicle in 2019, by orbiting the moon, and to start landing rovers in 2020.

Rival Astrobotic plans its maiden voyage in 2020. MDT/Bloomberg

Station	Air quality
Roadside	50-70 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Moderate
Ambient	50-70 Moderate

WORLD BRIEFS



INDIA A gunbattle between Indian troops and rebels killed three insurgents in disputed Kashmir and triggered more anti-India protests and clashes, officials said. As news of the killings spread, protests and clashes against Indian rule broke out in several parts of the region. There were no immediate reports of injuries.

AFGHANISTAN Security forces recaptured a district headquarters in western Farah province, just hours after the Taliban overran the police and administrative offices, killing eight policemen, a spokesman said.



USA A pilot who survived when his helicopter went down in Manhattan’s East River, killing five passengers, said in an emergency radio transmission that he had engine failure. More on p14



CHAD The United States came to central African nation of Chad seeking to strengthen a key counterterrorism partnership with a country that still can’t figure out why the Trump administration seems adamant about keeping its citizens out of the U.S.

FOOTBALL The first Final Four tournament in the UEFA Nations League will likely be played in Italy, Poland or Portugal. UEFA says the three group rivals expressed interest in hosting the four-team final tournament from June 5-9, 2019. The Nations League kicks off in September to replace most international friendlies.