



VOLLEYBALL NATIONS LEAGUE RETURNS IN MAY

P3 SPORT



GAGGAN RESTAURANT TOPS THE LIST

The winners of Asia's 50 Best Restaurants were announced at a ceremony held in Macau

P4



SECRETIVE TALKS IN BEIJING

The rumors are confirmed: Kim Jong Un held secretive talks with Xi Jinping in Beijing this week

P10,11



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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA The wife of a Taiwanese human rights activist jailed in China vowed yesterday to keep fighting for his release after Beijing allowed her to visit him in prison.

MALAYSIA's Parliament yesterday approved redrawn electoral boundaries despite protests that the ruling coalition was cheating to ensure victory in the upcoming general election.



MYANMAR's parliament yesterday elected as the country's new president (center) a longtime loyalist of Aung San Suu Kyi who is expected to carry on his predecessor's practice of deferring to her as her nation's de facto leader.

NEW ZEALAND is facing criticism for not expelling any Russian diplomats or spies. Many of its allies are doing so in solidarity with Britain after its government blamed Russia for attacking a former spy with nerve agent.



JAPAN Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said yesterday he is worried that North Korean security threats to Japan, including short- and medium-range missiles, may not be discussed at a U.S.-North Korea summit.

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Poon says spam phone calls 'very low tech'

Paulo Barbosa

MACAU is no exception with respect to phone scams, the chief executive officer of Companhia de Telecomunicações de Macau (CTM) said at a press conference yesterday. Vandy Poon was replying to reporters' questions about what the Judiciary Police (PJ) deemed "a new wave of phone scams" targeting Macau phone users earlier this week.

"The telecom fraud has been notorious around the world. Macau is not unique. Every time Macau has a hit, the neighboring regions also have. That is why we have a cooperation mechanism with authorities," the CEO said. Noting that in the past the PJ has been able to crack down some of the cases, he said that, if necessary, CTM can "stop some of the calls," but it is very difficult to end the attacks permanently.

"To my understanding, those calls were not based on data or any database. They were made in a random fashion and are very low tech," Poon said. According to the CEO, it is the police and authorities who have the competence to make public warnings on such matters.

Poon acknowledged that there is a new flow of suspicious calls from numbers based in countries such as Papua New Guinea, Tonga, South Sudan and Somalia. Revealing that CTM has been working since last weekend with authorities, he gave some advice to the public: "The awareness of such danger [phone scams] is very well known to the community. Citizens should pay attention when receiving suspicious calls. There is no harm in receiving the calls. But don't engage with them [the callers]. Basically, don't send any money."

The CEO's allegations that the



Vandy Poon

“Don't engage with them [the callers]. Basically, don't send any money.”

VANDY POON

current wave of attacks is low-tech matches with a statement sent this week to the Times by the Macao Post and Telecommunications Bureau (CTT), which regulates the sector. CTT said there was a "very low possibility that the customer databases of Macau's telecom operators have been breached by hackers" and that "the scammers target

Macau's citizens on a massive scale with randomly generated numbers confirming to Macau's numbering plan."

CTM PROFIT SHRINKS

Prior to the press conference, the telecommunications operator organized a lunch with local journalists. During his speech at the lunch, Vandy Poon reviewed CTM's performance in 2017. Last year, the company recorded revenue of MOP3,585 million. The profit for the year was MOP881 million, which was a 19 percent decrease compared to 2016.

CTM, a company majorly owned by CITIC Telecom International Holdings, attributed the profit decline to "the pressure of multiple tariff reduction."

The company invested MOP385 million over the last

year in projects such as enhancements to the quality of the full fiber-optic network and 4G+ mobile network, as well as expanding the Wi-Fi hotspot coverage. Currently, CTM has around 44 percent share of the mobile phone market in Macau and is the main Internet service provider.

The company's CEO was asked to comment on the motives behind the 19 percent reduction in profit. "A tariff reduction creates a negative impact to our profit, of course. But at the same

time, it popularizes our services. So it has negative and positive impacts," he said. Claiming that the current CTM tariffs are "very reasonable and competitive," Poon added that the company needs to strike a balance between that and the need to introduce new services, which require investments.

"We hope we will rebound a little bit this year with regards to profit," the CEO stated, predicting "a slight increase" in the 2018 results.

SUPPORT TO CYBER SECURITY

CTM HAS expressed a favorable opinion regarding the cyber security bill during the recent public consultation period and requested access to the final draft. Vandy Poon claimed that

the new requirements, introduced to both users and suppliers of network, will enhance safety. "Without a proper law, each user will face risks," he said.

Flights to be launched to Kota Kinabalu, Ningbo and Nagoya this year

THE local airport is expected to launch charter flights to Kota Kinabalu, Ningbo and Nagoya this year.

In addition, earlier this month, the 2018 Routes Asia Development Fo-

rum meetings were held between Macau International Airport Company's (CAM) representatives and counterparts from the Kansai International Airport, the Central Japan International Airport, and

Gold Coast Airport representatives, in order to explore route cooperation opportunities.

The 2018 Routes Asia Development Forum took place in Brisbane, Australia between March 18 and

20. The forum gathered aviation professionals from around the Asia Pacific, bringing together over 800 delegates from airlines, airports, tourism authorities, and suppliers. CAM's director, Eric Fong,

and the manager of the marketing department, Fiona Fong, attended the forum.

According to a statement issued yesterday by Macau International Airport, participation in the

event is expected to help bring more international airlines in to Macau. "The airport has always proactively [sought] opportunities to launch new flight services," the statement reads.

Currently, there are 29 airlines serving 47 routes operating to Macau International Airport, totaling over 1,100 flight movements per week.

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Times

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Sports Bureau: Macao Golf Open may return in the future

Daniel Beittler

THE head of the major events department at the Sports Bureau (ID) told the media yesterday that although the Macao Open has been canceled this year, the prestigious golf tournament may return in the future.

"In the future, I can't say whether it will continue," said Lei Si Leng, who heads the ID department which is responsible for the Macao Grand Prix and other major sporting events. "I can only tell you that we are not planning to have the Macao Open this year. [...] We can't say that in the future, we won't do the event again."

The event was canceled earlier this week on account of a lack of commercial sponsorship. Between 2012 and 2016, its title sponsor was The Venetian Macao, but last year the Macao Open proceeded without a sponsor.

Asked by the Times whether Sands China or the Venetian Macao was interested in stepping in last minute to help reinstate the tournament, a representative of the company said only that "at



An ID representative said the Macao Open has been canceled this year



The Macau round of the FIVB Women's Volleyball Nations League will happen in May

this stage we have no further comments to add."

Lei says that there were other factors that contributed to the decision too. Among them was the implication that her department was overburdened.

"We decided that since we have many other events going on this year we don't have the conditions to have the Macao Open," she said. "But who knows? If one day, we do think we have the right conditions then we might do it again."

The comments were made on the sidelines of a press conferen-

ce hosted by ID for the upcoming FIVB Women's Volleyball Nations League Macau round, to be held in between May 22 and 24. The 16 teams taking part in this year's Nations League will compete in a round-robin format with every core team hosting a pool at least once. The teams are divided into four pools of four teams at each week and compete five weeks long, with a total of 120 matches. The Macau round will pit China, Thailand, Serbia and Poland against each other with the games taking place over three weekdays;

a break from previous years when the competition was held on the weekend.

Asked whether the scheduling change will affect the ability of local spectators to attend, Lei said organizers would only evaluate its effect after the competition. She also said that many tourists continue to enjoy the event, but could not provide the proportion of the spectators who are non-local. "We don't have a very accurate number [for the tourist versus visitor spectators], but we do know that we have a [large] number of visitors,

because they take their luggage with them. We see especially visitors from Hong Kong, Zhuhai and nearby places," she said. "They definitely come to Macau for this event."

Galaxy Entertainment Group return as the title sponsor for this year's FIVB Women's Volleyball Nations league - Macau. "This [sponsorship] has been a great opportunity for GEG to fulfill its corporate social responsibility in supporting the development of sport activities in Macau," said Philip Cheng, director of Galaxy Entertainment Group, at yesterday's press conference. He said that the casino operator wants to introduce "more new elements to broaden the appeal of the event and encourage greater public participation."

Asked about these interactive ideas, Lei said she could not disclose what they are at present. "I cannot mention them now because people are expecting to have some surprises later," she said. "We do want to have some new elements to attract people to come. [...] We will promise that we will have them... but I cannot tell you now because we are still preparing them."

Tickets will go on sale starting from April 2 at designated Circle K Convenience Stores across Macau, with each ticket priced at MOP150 per competition day and valid for both games scheduled on the day.

A YEAR UNTIL BREXIT

Effects on Macau yet to materialize

THERE will be a transition period after Brexit day, but on March 29, 2019, the United Kingdom will formally cease to be a member of the European Union (more on p14). It's what 52 percent of those who voted in June 2016 wanted. Halfway into the two-year process of leaving the European Union, the impact of

Brexit on British nationals living abroad is still yet to materialize.

When the Times interviewed a sample of Macau-based British nationals prior to the 2016 referendum, the consensus view was in favoring of remaining within the economic and political union. Though most in the sample had lost their voting ri-

ghts - due to a ruling that excludes British citizens who have lived abroad for 15 years or more from participating in the vote - the ubiquitous feeling was that, as expats, they felt a stronger sense of internationalism and solidarity with their European neighbors also living abroad.

Today, they say that nothing's yet changed, and

that they will have to wait to find out the specific terms wrought out in negotiations between Britain and the EU.

But cash-rich investors in the two SARs may be benefiting from the effects of the interim negotiation period - most notably the significant decline in the purchasing power of the pound.

In the immediate aftermath of the June 2016 referendum, the value of the British pound plummeted 8 percent against the U.S. dollar, followed several months later by another fall that took the currency to lows not seen in three decades.

While the pound has recovered most of that loss and is now trading at pre-slump levels, the interim period presented an attractive opportunity for Macau and Hong Kong investors faced with discounted but reliable UK-

based assets.

A report by the South China Morning Post suggested that Hong Kong investors are still interested in the British economy despite uncertainty looming in the near and long term.

Quoting UK government officials, the report suggested that the UK property market in particular was benefiting from HKSAR investment; the result of "Britain's core economic approach as a country welcoming investment from around the globe." **DB**

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

FOOD & BEVERAGE

One local establishment included in Asia's 50 Best Restaurants

THE chef who built a menu out of emojis has done it again. Bangkok's Gaggan restaurant has topped the list of Asia's 50 Best Restaurants for the fourth consecutive year. The Indian eatery, renowned for its 25-course tasting menu illustrated only with emoji symbols, eclipsed stiff competition from Tokyo, with Den and Florilege, taking second and third places respectively.

The winners were announced at a ceremony held on Tuesday night at Wynn Palace in Macau. The list is chosen by a panel of more than 300 food writers, food critics, chefs and restaurateurs spanning six geographical regions. Each expert picks 10 restaurants and lists them in order of preference. The judges are to have eaten at every restaurant on their list within the previous 18 months.

Rounding out the top five is modern German spot Suhring in Bangkok and French restaurant Odette in Singapore. Jade Dragon is the only restaurant from Macau included in the list, listed at No 35.

In total, Tokyo had four restaurants in the top 10, doubling its 2017 tally, with Narisawa



The awarded chefs celebrate after the event

coming in at number six and Nihonryori RyuGin at number nine. Bangkok had a respectable showing with Suhring (in fourth place) and Nahm (in tenth) joining Gaggan.

Things were not so rosy for Hong Kong, with Amber slipping from third to seventh, and 8 1/2 Otto e Mezzo Bombana dropping from fourth to number 13.

Odette was Singapore's hi-

ghest ranked establishment, up four places from last year. Restaurant Andre, which placed second last year, was a notable absence after chef-owner Andre Chiang closed the doors in February this year.

After his win last year, Gaggan Anand, owner of Gaggan, shocked the foodie world by announcing that he was going to shut down his award-winning restaurant in 2020. He told

Bloomberg that he planned to move to Japan and open several new restaurants, drawing on Buddhist principles.

"We have really worked hard, hard to be a stronger team," he said today before learning he had won. "So whatever the result is today, we party hard and continue to make our guests lick the plates."

Speaking at the occasion, Macao Government Tourism Office

(MGTO) director, Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, pledged that the department would aim to promote creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable development, seeking exchange, innovation, cross-field collaborations, cheering traditions and training the next generations of culinary talent.

Meanwhile managing director of "Asia's 50 Best Restaurants", Tim Brooke-Webb, commented: "We chose to bring this best-in-class gourmet platform to the region in order to showcase its fast-expanding gastronomic portfolio, as well as celebrate outstanding talent from across Asia"

Macau had one restaurant on the list of "Asia's 50 Best Restaurants 2018" in the first four years of the Asian edition (Robuchon au Dôme), and last year two local restaurants were ranked on the regional list (Jade Dragon and The Tasting Room).

MGTO previously announced that Macau will serve as host destination for the awards presentation ceremony and other related activities in 2018 and 2019. According to the bureau, hosting the award ceremony will provide the region with the opportunity to interact with some of the best chefs and restaurateurs in Asia.

Asia's 50 Best Restaurants is published by William Reed Business Media. The World's 50 Best will be revealed at a ceremony in Bilbao, Spain, in June. **MDT/Bloomberg**

Former 'Best Female Chefs' share their culinary inspiration

Renato Marques

Alunch made by two award winners of the best female Asian chefs from 2014 and 2016 was organized on the sidelines of this year's best 50 Asian Chefs of 2018 awards [see above].

During the event - held at Andrea's restaurant in Wynn Palace - journalists were presented with a six-course meal personally crafted by Chefs Chen Lanshu (Taiwan) and Margarita Forés (Philippines).

Interviewed by the Times, Forés mentioned the main inspiration for her culinary creations. "I'm a Filipina but my exposure and training to work with food started in Italy, so I try to combine both cultures and the techniques from both kinds of cuisine, as well as ingredients from both in the work that I do." Nevertheless, Forés admi-

My mission is to showcase Filipino ingredients and cuisine together with the best of the world.

MARGARITA FORÉS

tted to be on a mission to promote Filipino cuisine. "My mission is to showcase Filipino ingredients and cuisine together with the best of the world."

Winner of the category of Best Female Asian Chef of 2016, Forés is inspired by Filipino's culture as well as by her travels to different locations and countries.

"A lot of it [inspiration] is pulled from my own culture but at the same time what you see when you travel and things [you get] from personal experiences, like things I love eating when I was a child... All that put together is a real well of inspiration to choose from," Forés concluded. "We are like sponges all the time and absorb everything wherever we go."

As for the 2014 winner, Chen's inspiration to create culinary delights is hard to define. "My inspiration comes from everywhere. From the markets, from everything I tasted, no matter if during travel time or at home," she said.

Chen was the first Chinese chef named as "Grand Chef" by "Relais & Chateau," a global fellowship of individually owned and operated luxury hotels and restaurants. "I follow a principle of different

seasons and then I try to [input] something new, for example when I try some sauce from a chef that I admire [and I like it], I will try to incorporate that [by merging it] with my culture and with the [seasonal] ingredients that I can get," she said, adding that it would be followed by a series of tests to refine the dish in order to "try to get some different sensation." "It might come out something really different than what I tasted originally but it's a new sensation inspired from what I experienced," she said, concluding that her purpose is to keep it natural and get the best from the best ingredients. "Nature speaks, we just translate it," she affirmed.

On the challenges of the work, especially on the difficulties of having to consolidate the job with family life, Forés commented: "The work that we do is so



Chen Lanshu (left) and Margarita Forés

much a part of our fiber, I have a son that is now 27 and he understands [always understood] the demands of the job, but I know my situation is less challenging than Lanshu, where her child is very young, but I think [we can handle this] as everything we do is part of enhancing what we do work wise, for instance, when we go on holidays, we do it for vacation but we also still [take the opportunity] to research for food." The chef from the Philippines, who oversees the restaurant chain Cibo in metro Manila, also noted, "at the same time, I think women are more resilient, we have been so used to 'juggling' our roles throu-

gh the years and once you get into a business like the food industry, it is very demanding. I think we are kind of well trained [for that]."

At the lunch table, the chefs presented several of their creations and interpretations, with the highlight dish being from the "Preserved Turnip and Silkie Hen's Egg" and "Paella, Squid, Sea Urchin and Jerusalem Artichoke" by Chef Chen. Chef Forés's highlight dishes were the "Short Rib Balsamico Adobo with Davao Chocolate Jus and Bigas-Mais Polenta," and the "Black Heirloom Codillera Rice Spuma with First Press Coconut Milk, Three-ways".

Macau should take lead in Greater Bay Area plan, says legal consultant

Lynzy Valles

MACAU should better perform its role and take up a leadership position in regards to the Greater Bay Area plan, a legal consultant has suggested. The Greater Bay Area plan aims to further interconnect 11 cities including Hong Kong and Macau, bringing the communities closer together in terms of infrastructure, policy development, and hiring practices. The plan's outline is expected to be announced soon.

Speaking yesterday morning at the sidelines of the French Macau Chamber of Commerce talk, Alexander Kocsis, from Hylands Law Firm, noted that these 11 cities will end up sharing resources. The move will see greater integration of the 11 cities which would be made into one urban area. However, there are a series of challenges that will face this move headed by China's reelected president, Xi Jinping. "I think there [will be] three big difficulties: one is in regards to trade [...]; second, in regards to law [...]; and third, in regards to visas, as Hong Kong and

Macau grant visa-free access to over 160 countries, whereas in China it's different," said the expert.

However, the legal consultant believes that Macau should further make use of its position as "One Platform, Three Centers," noting that the MSAR should adopt a more active role and diversify its gaming-dependent economy. "We've already seen indications. There are rumors that Hainan may be used as a gaming center. I think this is an attempt to light a fire under Macau for them to start thinking," said the expert.

Given the size of Macau, the expert argued that the city is too small to conduct other businesses such as manufacturing and heavy trade, thus it should look at the finance sector, citing Singapore, Bermuda and Saint Kitts and Nevis as examples of successful financial cities.

"There are lots of things Macau could do but they're always looking at the same things. Those same things really don't work here because of the limitation," he said.

Kocsis lamented that Macau's financial regulator has prohibited the city's financial institutions from



Alexander Kocsis

providing financial services to businesses issuing virtual currencies or tokens, noting that Macau has the capability to carve out its own niche in the sector.

"That [cryptocurrency] could be another huge field that doesn't require space. Cryptocurrency is the next revolution, same with block chain and augmented reality. All these things can be done here very easily [but] why aren't they doing it," the counsel questioned.

Questioned on what hinders Macau from being more dynamic business-wise, the expert noted that

local people and the executives "are simply too comfortable." The integration of cities will surely occur more in the future – thus Kocsis is of the view that Macau needs to be more proactive and acquire a proper strategy to ensure that such integration is positive. Otherwise, it would only benefit the "stronger party."

"There are so many favorable policies for Macau and Hong Kong in the mainland, almost nobody is taking advantages of these things," he said.

"Macau has to take a leadership position. [...] They can try to make alliances with Guangdong and Zhuhai and work together. Macau has so many advantages but like everything, you have to do something," Kocsis added.

Being a platform for Portuguese-speaking countries will not be able to hold up Macau's whole economy, thus the city needs to create further projects that will help elevate the city's economy.

"Macau has good people, money, good location – it's got everything so it should be so successful," he added.

The 13 delayed again, this time to June

The 13 Holdings Ltd has again delayed the opening date of its Macau-based luxury hotel, The 13 Hotel, now targeting to open its doors by the end of June this year. The latest revision was explained in a filing to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange this week, according to GGRAsia. Several opening deadlines have already passed for the would-be hotel operator. Most recently the company stated its intention to open the property "on or before" April 30, 2018, with representatives saying it was prepared to open with or without a casino. In February this year, the company said that its casino would probably not start operating until March 2019. The property's name, The 13 Hotel, is an abbreviation of the 17th century French King Louis XIII. It had originally been scheduled to open in the first quarter of 2017.

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Fong Soi Kun to receive MOP80,000 per month

The former director of the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG), Fong Soi Kun, is to receive a pension of approximately MOP80,000 per month. A notice posted in the Official Gazette yesterday said that the government had approved the pension fund and that the amount reflects Fong's 35 years serving in the government. It was previously reported that Fong might receive as much as MOP96,000 per month, provoking a mild backlash in public opinion. Then Secretary for Administration and Justice Sonia Chan floated the idea of revoking the pension fund altogether after she discovered that Fong had failed to give 90 days of notice before resigning. The Chief Executive announced Fong's resignation in August last year in the aftermath of deadly Typhoon Hato. A Commission Against Corruption investigation into Fong's handling of the weather phenomenon is currently underway.

Macao Water doubles expected profit

THE Macao Water Supply Company (Macao Water) has announced its 2017 financial results, recording an after-tax profit of MOP77.5 million, far higher than its preliminary expectation three weeks ago.

The company released its preliminary results at the start of the month, hoping to cash a profit of MOP70 million for last year, which would have marked an increase of 7.5 percent compared with 2016.

The revised figure of MOP77.5 million indicates an annual increase of approximately 19 percent in the company's profits.

Some MOP50.61 million of the profit resulted from its main business, the water supply service, which has seen a decrease of 3 percent when compared to 2016, according to Macao Water.

Meanwhile, for the year of 2017, total investment amounted to MOP233.3 million, with the company's main projects including the preliminary costs and fees regarding the construction of the Seac Pai Van water treatment plant, the laying and

replacement of the water supply pipeline network, the replacement of water supply facilities and the development and improvement of the production and operation systems.

Macao Water expects the total investment amount in 2018 to rise to MOP400 million, mainly for projects such as the Seac Pai Van water treatment plant, a part of the pipeline of the fourth raw water pipe from Zhuhai to Macau, as well as strengthening and enhancing precautionary measures in all water treatment plants against typhoons and flooding.

Annual water consumption in 2017 increased by 2 percent compared with the previous year to 88.44 million cubic meters, which was in line with the firm's expectations.

Water consumption on the Macau peninsula accounted for up to 63 percent of Macau's total water consumption, having recorded a slight increase of 0.9 percentage points when compared with the previous year.

Meanwhile, Taipa, Cotai, Co-

loane and the University of Macau's (UM) campus on Hengqin island accounted for 37 percent of water consumption in the territory, a proportion that reflects a 4 percentage point increase when compared to 2016. The increase was led by the demand in the Cotai area, which expanded 6 percent over the course of 2017.

The daily water consumption now stands at 242,300 cubic meters, according to the company.



Nacky Kuan, executive director of Macao Water

DELEGATION VISITS FOURTH WATER PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION WORKS

IN ORDER to better understand the circumstances surrounding the construction of the fourth raw water pipeline connecting Macau and Zhuhai, Macao Water sent a delegation to the Marine and Water Bureau of the MSAR government (DSAMA) this week. There, the delegation was briefed on the ongoing commitments regarding water supply between the local government and the corre-

sponding authorities in Guangdong Province. "Upon the completion of the two Guangdong-Macau water engineering projects, the protection of the raw water supply in Zhuhai and Macau will undoubtedly be further enhanced, thus effectively safeguarding the water supply and ensuring [Macau's] sustainable development," executive director of Macao Water, Nacky Kuan, said during the event.

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Anima in Numbers

		2016	2017	Notes:
1	Land area (m2)	2,591	2,591	
2	Total of dogs pens (excluding lobbies, free areas, rooms and and halls temporarily occupied)	88	89	
3				<i>in old area</i>
4				<i>in building area (basement)</i>
5				<i>in building area (Ground floor)</i>
6				<i>in building area (Terrace)</i>
7				<i>in Cats' Paradise</i>
8	Number of pens (cats) (inc free outside area)	14	17	
9	Number of rooms in vet area	10	10	
10	Number of rooms in Association area	7	7	
11	Number of Members	669	712	
12	Number of Staff	36	37	
13	Number of Volunteers	777	978	
14	Number of Friends in facebook	-	-	
15	Number of followers in facebook cause pages	22,654	29,030	
16	Number of Godparents	290	347	
17	Number of animals in Anima	584	672	
18				<i>of which dogs</i>
19				<i>of which cats</i>
20	Number of dogs handled by Anima outside	377	390	
21				<i>Of which SPP</i>
22	Number of cats handled by Anima (or Anima vol.) outside (aprox.)	1,900	1,800	
23	Number of rescues	476	643	
24				<i>of which dogs</i>
25				<i>of which cats</i>
26	Number of adoptions	216	174	
27				<i>of which dogs</i>
28				<i>of which cats</i>
29	Number of animals fostered	19	20	
30				<i>of which dogs</i>
31				<i>of which cats</i>
32	Number of visitors	7,519	9,235	
33	Number of Schools, associations and groups visiting Anima	128	137	
34	Number of people visited by us	2,632	2,466	
35	Number of Schools, associations and groups visited by Anima or activities with Animals out of Anima	37	34	
36	Total Income	7,990,187.12	10,322,394.30	
37	Total Current Expenses (no depreciation)	8,728,414.47	10,072,382.82	
38	Total Extraordinary Income	0.00	0.00	
39	Total Extraordinary Expenses	0.00	0.00	
40				<i>Net (Income-Expenses)</i>
41	Total Assets	12,261,568.67	12,204,788.03	
42	Total Liabilities	2,319,704.91	2,409,018.04	
43	Total other animals rescued by Anima up to today			
44				Birds
45				Squirrels
46				Snakes
47				Turtles / Tortoises
48				Hamsters
49				Rabbits
50				Hedgehogs

INSURANCE

Chinese Anbang founder on trial on financial charges

THE founder of the Chinese insurer that owns New York City's Waldorf Hotel went on trial yesterday on charges he fraudulently raised USD10 billion from investors and misused his position to enrich himself.

Wu Xiaohui, chairman of Anbang Insurance Group, was detained last year. Regulators took control of privately owned Anbang in February following a multi-billion-dollar global buying spree that prompted questions about its financial stability.

The case added to an avalanche of scandals for Chinese insurers. The industry's former chief regulator was charged in September with taking bribes. Executives of other insurers have been charged with corruption and mismanagement.

Beijing announced plans March 13 to merge the Chinese banking and insurance regulators in an effort to step up scrutiny of those fast-evolving industries. The ruling Communist Party has made reducing financial risk a priority after a run-up in debt owed by Chinese companies and local governments prompted rating agencies last year to cut Beijing's credit rating for government borrowing.

Wu is accused of fraudulently raising 65 billion yuan (\$10 billion) and abusing his post to divert money for his own use, according to a report by prosecutors on the social media account of the Shanghai No. 1 Intermediate People's Court.



In court, Wu's lawyer argued what he was accused of doing was a violation of regulations but not illegal, according to another post. A third post said Wu objected that he didn't understand the law and didn't know whether what he did was illegal.

Most trials in China last no more than a day, even for complex financial cases. There was no indication when a verdict in Wu's case might be issued.

Anbang discussed possibly investing in a Manhattan skyscraper owned by the family of U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law and adviser, Jared Kushner. Those talks ended last year with no deal.

Regulators said they took control of Anbang on Feb. 23 to protect its solvency and consumer rights. The China Insurance Regulatory Commission said the takeover had no effect on Anbang's financial obligations.

Yesterday, Anbang issued a statement on its social media account saying its business is stable has "sufficient cash flow" to meet policy commitments.

Wu founded Anbang in 2004 and gained a reputation for aggressive expansion in a stodgy industry dominated by state-owned insurers.

The company grew to more than 30,000 employees with 35 million clients. It diversified into life insurance, banking, asset management, leasing and brokerage services.

Questions about Anbang's future have swirled since it announced Wu handed his duties to deputies in June following news reports he was detained for questioning.

Anbang's buying spree stumbled after Beijing tightened investment controls in late 2016. Regulators said they wanted to cool spending on foreign real estate and other assets they said did nothing to de-

velop China's economy.

Following that, Anbang failed to complete several deals, including the proposed purchase of U.S.-based Fidelity & Guaranty Life for \$1.6 billion.

Wu also is accused of ignoring regulatory limits in selling high-interest investment products as short-term insurance contracts, according to yesterday's statement.

Such sales raised 724 billion yuan (\$115 billion) from 10.6 million investors from 2011 to 2017, the statement said. It said some of that money was transferred to companies controlled by Wu for "reckless personal spending."

Regulators warned Anbang and other insurers last year about use of such investment products.

Other insurers have been accused of endangering the financial safety of their industry through reckless speculation in stocks and

real estate. The chairman of a life insurance company was barred from the industry last year in an unrelated case and a third company was prohibited from trading stocks.

Anbang's early investors included a state-owned automaker, an oil company and a mix of rural villagers and small business owners. Its multibillion-dollar string of global acquisitions raised questions about how it paid for its buying spree, including the \$2 billion purchase of the Waldorf.

The company's negotiations with Kushner Cos. about a possible investment in its flagship property, 666 Fifth Avenue, prompted members of the U.S. Congress to raise ethics concerns.

Five lawmakers said in a letter to the White House the possible deal represented a "clear conflict of interest." They asked the Trump administration to confirm Kushner, who transferred his ownership stake to other family members, played no role in the negotiations.

Anbang said it raised 50 billion yuan (\$8 billion) in capital in 2014 by taking on dozens of new shareholders. That increased its registered capital fivefold to 62 billion yuan (\$9.5 billion), the biggest among Chinese insurers.

A prominent business magazine, Caixin, said in May 2017 at least 30 billion yuan (\$4.3 billion) of that money really came from premiums paid by policyholders — a violation of insurance regulations.

Anbang denied that and accused Caixin of publishing negative information about the company and Wu after pressing it to buy advertising.

The CIRC sent investigators to Anbang in June. It said in a statement in February they ordered unspecified improvements in operations and management. **AP**

INDIA is selling a controlling stake in its flagship carrier along with two-thirds of the loss-making airline's about USD7.8 billion debt, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi moves ahead with the nation's most high profile asset sale in decades.

The government will sell 76 percent of Air India Ltd., according to a document uploaded on the civil aviation ministry's website yesterday. The airline's overseas budget carrier will be completely sold in the offer, while the state will sell a 50 percent stake in the ground handling unit separately. The administration may also ask the buyer to conduct an initial public offering.

A successful sale of Air India, which is surviving on taxpayer-funded bailouts, is seen as test case for Modi to burnish his credentials as a reformist

New owners of Air India to get planes and USD5b of debt



attempting to steer the state away from running businesses and boost spending on health and education. The national carrier has five subsidiaries, a joint venture and a combined workforce of as

many as 27,000.

IndiGo, India's biggest airline, is the only company to publicly disclose a desire to buy Air India's airline operations - the most lucrative business that includes prime time

slots at airports from New York to Heathrow, as well as bilateral rights to start flights to most countries. Singapore Airlines Ltd. and India's Tata Group, which run a joint venture airline named Vistara in India, said they were also open to look at the sale, but haven't elaborated yet.

Selling a majority stake in the loss-making, 85-year-old company isn't going to be a cakewalk. At least one attempt almost two decades ago failed amid fierce political opposition. The latest offer will include 333 billion rupees (\$5.1 billion) of debt that the buyer will have to take over with the balance

going to the government.

India intends to sell the remaining stake in Air India, which may include selling shares during an initial share sale. The government will not sell shares in a block, according to the document.

Air India has been unprofitable since its 2007 merger with state-owned domestic operator Indian Airlines Ltd. The company made an operating profit of about 3 billion rupees (\$46 million) in the year through March 2017, primarily due to a slump in oil prices. It still posted a net loss of 57.7 billion rupees, junior aviation minister Jayant Sinha told lawmakers on Feb. 8.

Indian regulations allow a foreign airline to buy as much as 49 percent of a local carrier, while overseas investors other than airlines can buy an entire carrier.

Air India started as Tata Airlines in 1932 and later became state-owned. Founded by Jehangir Ratanji Dadabhai Tata, it took off flying mail between Karachi in then-undivided, British-ruled India and Bombay. Once it turned commercial, the airline quickly became popular with its advertisements featuring Bollywood actresses, high-end champagne and surrealist painter Salvador Dali-designed porcelain ashtrays. **MDT/Bloomberg**

Angola issues entry visas on arrival for citizens of 61 countries

ANGOLA'S Foreigner and Migration Service (SME) has already set up five counters at Luanda International Airport, which, as of the end of this month, will issue tourist visas to citizens of 61 countries upon entry into Angolan territory, the director general of the SME announced on Tuesday in Luanda.

Gil Famoso's statements were made on the sidelines of a verification visit by Interior Minister Ângelo Veiga Tavares and Transport Minister, Augusto Tomás, to Luanda's international airport.

The citizens of 61 countries will, from that date, find it easier to travel to Angola, provided that they remain in the territory for up to 30 days per entry and 90 days per year.

A presidential order from February provides for four African countries (Botswana, Mauritius, Seychelles and



The city skyline and promenade stand illuminated at night in Luanda, Angola

Zimbabwe) and one Asian country (Singapore) to be exempt from tourist visas and 61 countries to benefit from a procedure to simplify the process of granting a tourist visa.

Algeria, Cabo Verde (Cape Verde), Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Lesotho, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland and Zambia are

countries that have benefited from simplification processes and in Europe, in addition to the 28 countries that make up the European Union, Northern Ireland, Iceland, Monaco, Norway, United Kingdom, Russia, Switzerland and Vatican City are included in the presidential order.

Argentina, Brazil, Canada,

Chile, Cuba, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela are the American countries covered by the visa simplification process and in Asia the order specifies China, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, India, Indonesia, Israel and Japan, with Australia, New Zealand and East Timor covered in Oceania. **MDT/Macauhub**

CAPE VERDE

Parliament approves permanent residence card for investors

THE Cape Verdean parliament this week approved a bill that creates tax benefits for foreign citizens who decide to buy a second home in Cape Verde, while also granting a permanent residence card, known as the Green Card, the local press reported.

The Green Card will be awarded to all foreigners who invest more than 180 million escudos (USD2 million) buying a property in Cape Verde, according to the newly approved law.

The PAICV, the largest opposition party, voted against the bill arguing that the tax exemptions outlined for foreigners should, among other areas, cover Cape Verdean emigrants scattered in various parts of the world and who have been investing in the development of the country.

Representing the Movement for Democracy (MpD, in power), member of parliament Miguel Monteiro said his party voted in favour because the bill follows other government proposals, namely visa exemptions to increase the flow of tourists in Cabo Verde, and the law to liberalise foreign exchange relations.

In the last few years Cape Verde has received an average of 500,000 to 600,000 tourists per year, but the country wants to reach 1 million by 2021, with the United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium/Netherlands and Portugal being the main sources of tourists for the archipelago. **MDT/Macauhub**

AD



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開放日2018


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MACAO GOVERNMENT TOURISM OFFICE
NOTICE

The Macao Government Tourism Office hereby announces an invitation to tender for the **Production of Promotional Videos and TV Commercial for "Macao designated as UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy"**, in accordance with the approval of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture dated 12th March, 2018.

From the date of publication of the present notice, interested parties may visit the Macao Government Tourism Office Reception Counter, located in Alameda Dr. Carlos d' Assumpção, no. 335-341, "Hotline" Building, 12th floor, Macao, to view the Tender Process within normal working hours, and pay MOP 200.00 (two hundred patacas) to obtain the copies, including Terms of Tender, General Conditions of the Bid and other relevant enclosures; or visit the Macao Tourism Industry Net website - <http://industry.macaotourism.gov.mo> to download.

Criteria for evaluation and percentage:	
Price	: 15%
Creative concept and storyboard	: 45%
Tenderer experience and CV Portfolio	: 5%
Team experience and CV Portfolio	: 25%
Production Value	: 10%

The maximum price limit for the service is **MOP 2,000,000.00 (two million patacas)**.

For any further enquiries, please visit the Macao Tourism Industry Net website (<http://industry.macaotourism.gov.mo>) to submit enquiries before 2nd April, 2018, all replies will be posted on the same website.

Tenderer must submit the tender within normal working hours **by 13:00 on 23rd April, 2018**, to Macao Government Tourism Office, located in Alameda Dr. Carlos d' Assumpção, no. 335-341, "Hotline" Building, 12th floor, Macao, the tenders should be written in one of the official languages of Macao SAR or in English.

The provisional guarantee fee of MOP40,000.00 (forty thousand patacas), to be paid by 1) Cash, cashier order or cheque deposit directly to Macao Government Tourism Office, cashier order or cheque should be made payable to "Fundo de Turismo" as the payee; or 2) Cash deposit to the account of "Fundo de Turismo", account no. 8003911119 of Banco Nacional Ultramarino of Macau and with designation of the reason for the deposit; or 3) Bank guarantee; or 4) Wired Transfer to the account of "Fundo de Turismo" in Banco Nacional Ultramarino of Macau.

The tender opening session will be held in the Auditorium of the Macao Government Tourism Office, located at Alameda Dr. Carlos d' Assumpção, no. 335-341, "Hotline" Building, 14th floor in Macao, **at 10:00, on 24th April, 2018**.

According to the article no. 27 of Decree-Law no. 63/85/M, of 6th July, the tenderer or the legal representatives of the tenderer should be present during the tender opening session for any complaints and/or to explain any doubts regarding their respective tender.

The legal representative of the tenderer may appoint, by a notary certified power of attorney, an authorized representative to attend the public action of the Opening of the Tenders on their behalf.

In case of closure of the services of Macao Government Tourism Office due to typhoon or force majeure, the deadline for submission, the opening of tender will be postponed until the first working day that follows immediately.

Macao Government Tourism Office, 21st March, 2018.

Director
Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes



In this Sept. 17, 1982 photo North Korean leader Kim Il Sung (right) shakes hands with Deng Xiaoping

Key moments in China-North Korea relationship

OCTOBER 1949 North Korea and China establish diplomatic relations.

OCTOBER 1950 China intervenes in the Korean War and engages in combat with U.S.-led forces, saving North Korea from defeat. The war ends in 1953 with an armistice.

NOVEMBER 1958 North Korea founder Kim Il Sung visits China, shortly after China withdraws troops from the Korean Peninsula. He successfully requests economic aid in meetings with Chinese leader Mao Zedong. Kim goes on to visit China and the former Soviet Union many times through the 1960s while maintaining a balancing act between the competing communist powers and consolidating his leadership at home.

APRIL 1982 Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping visits North Korea to attend celebrations of Kim Il Sung's 70th birthday. Kim visits China five months later to discuss his plans to pass his leadership to his son, Kim Jong Il, and also reassure Beijing that the North wouldn't tilt toward the Soviet Union once he's no longer in power.

AUGUST 1992 China establishes diplomatic relations with South Korea, complicating its relations with the North.

MAY 2000 Kim Jong Il, who took power in 1994 after his father's death, makes the first of his eight visits to China as the North Korean leader. The trip was reportedly aimed at consulting with the Chinese leadership weeks before Kim's summit with then-South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, which opened a temporary era of rapprochement between the rivals. Kim, rumored to have had a fear of flying, traveled to China on a green-and-yellow armored train that was also used by his son this week.

AUGUST 2003 North Korea joins first round of six-nation nuclear talks in Beijing, which include China, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States. The talks continue periodically over the next several years before stalling.

DECEMBER 2011 Kim Jong Un takes power after the death of his father.

May 2013: Senior North Korean official Choe Ryong Hae visits China as Kim's special envoy and meets with Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

OCTOBER 2015 Senior Chinese official Liu Yunshan visits the North and attends a military parade with Kim.

MARCH 2018 Kim visits Beijing for a meeting with Xi, weeks after the announcements of his planned summits with South Korean President Moon Jae-in and President Donald Trump.



In this image taken from video footage run yesterday by CCT, Kim Jong Un (center left) and his wife Ri Sol Ju (left), Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan pose for a photo at Diaoyutai State Guesthouse



Kim Jong Un and wife in Beijing



Kim Jong Un (center) smiles as he

Kim, Xi portray strong ties after

Gillian Wong & Kim Tong-Hyung, Beijing

WITH smiles and firm handshakes, North Korea and China used a surprise summit this week to show that despite recent tensions, Pyongyang still has a powerful backer and Beijing will not be sidelined in discussions about the fate of its unpredictable neighbor.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's secretive talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing appear aimed at improving both countries' positions ahead of Kim's anticipated meetings with South Korean President Moon Jae-in and President Donald Trump in the coming weeks.

A key objective for Beijing is to reassert its relevance to these talks from which it has been excluded. China has appeared increasingly shut out as its relations with the North deteriorated and Pyongyang reached out to Seoul and Washington.

"Kim Jong Un's visit shows that China is not marginalized, but playing a leading role. This saves China a lot of face," said Pang Zhongying, a North Korea expert at Renmin University in Beijing.

Official reports from both countries yesterday depicted in effusive terms warm ties between the two leaders

in an effort to downplay recent tensions over Kim's development of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles.

In these reports, "Kim reaffirms the traditional friendship between the two countries as if nothing had ever happened, when the relationship had plummeted to unprecedented lows," said Bonnie Glaser, an Asia expert at the Center for Strategic and International

Kim Jong Un's visit shows that China is not marginalized, but playing a leading role.

PANG ZHONGYING

Ties in recent months have frayed as China supported tougher U.N. sanctions on North Korea and suspended coal and iron ore imports. Pyongyang last year seemingly sought to humiliate Beijing by timing some of its missile tests for major global summits in China.

Kim made the unofficial visit to China at Xi's invitation, China's official Xinhua

News Agency said, in his first trip to a foreign country since he took power in 2011. Xinhua said the trip ran from Sunday to Wednesday but appeared to include travel time from Pyongyang on the special armored train that Kim traveled in, which secretly arrived in Beijing on Monday and left Tuesday afternoon.

Rumors of the presence of Kim began circulating on Monday night, with the spotting of Kim's special train, Chinese security teams and official delegations at the border city of Dandong and various points in Beijing.

Although China sought to keep Kim's visit secret, and yesterday described it as "unofficial," it accorded him full honors due to a head of state, including a formal welcoming ceremony and troop review at the Great Hall of the People in central Beijing.

Xi and his wife Peng Liyuan also hosted a banquet for Kim and his wife Ri Sol Ju, Xinhua said. They also watched an art performance together, the news agency said.

"We speak highly of this visit," Xi told Kim, according to Xinhua.

For China, the visit also projects to the Chinese public that Xi is firmly in charge of steering Beijing's relations with North Korea in a way that favors China's interests.

"Here is Xi Jinping saying, 'Don't worry, everything is going to be great,'" Glaser said.

Analysts say Kim would have felt a need to consult with his country's traditional ally ahead of summits with Moon and Trump. His famously reclusive father, Kim Jong Il, made his first visit to China as North Korean leader in May 2000, reportedly to consult with Chinese leadership ahead of Kim's summit with the former South Korean leader Kim Dae-jung.

China would also not want Kim's first foreign meeting to be with someone other than Xi.

"This is China asserting its regional hegemony and influence, saying: 'Hey, you talk to me first,'" said Michael Kovrig, senior advisor for northeast Asia at the International Crisis Group.

In footage aired by China's state broadcaster China Central Television, Kim appeared reserved and collected as he sat at a long table across from Xi. Kim wore horn-rimmed glasses and was shown jotting down notes and speaking in a calm manner. In contrast, while meeting with South Korean envoys earlier this month, Kim was shown by his state media frequently smiling, bursting into laughter, proposing toasts and waving at departing limousines.



Kim and Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping attend a banquet



after being squeezed by heavy sanctions.

“At least one of the things that Kim would want out of these meetings is a way forward to begin to ease those sanctions and support from China in that effort,” Glaser said.

China remains North Korea's only major ally and chief provider of energy, aid and trade that keep the country's broken economy afloat.

■ Xinhua said the trip ran from Sunday to Wednesday but appeared to include travel time from Pyongyang on the armored train

In addition to the trip being his first abroad as leader, his talk with Xi was his first meeting with a foreign head of state. Kim's father, late North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, had visited China several times during his rule, lastly in May 2011, months before his death that December.

“It's most proper that my first overseas trip would be the capital of the People's Republic of China,” said Kim Jong Un, according to KCNA. “It's also one of my noble duties to value the North Korea-China friendship as I do my own life.” AP

er N. Korean leader's visit

Kim was described by Xinhua as saying that his country wants “reconciliation and cooperation” with South Korea, with which it is technically still at war. He also said North Korea is willing to hold a summit with the United States, according to Xinhua.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency published Kim's personal letter to Xi dated yesterday, where he said he was satisfied that the leaders confirmed their “unified opinions” on mutual issues.

“For the North Koreans, it is in their best interests to enter any

meetings with Moon or Trump having shored up and repaired to a certain extent their relations with Beijing,” said Paul Haenle, director of the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy in Beijing.

Kim also called for more meetings with Xi and other Chinese

officials and asked Xi to visit North Korea at a time convenient for him, to which Xi “gladly accepted,” KCNA said.

The North's diplomatic outreach this year follows a tenser 2017 when it conducted its most powerful nuclear test to date and tested three intercontinental ballistic missiles designed to target the U.S. mainland.

The developments are being interpreted as the North being desperate to break out of isolation and improve its economy

TWEET DIPLOMACY

Trump: Good chance Kim will do ‘what is right’

PRESIDENT Donald Trump said yesterday there's “a good chance” that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will “do what is right for his people and for humanity” and make moves toward peace.

In a pair of morning tweets, Trump says he received a message from Chinese President Xi Jinping that a meeting Xi had with Kim this week “went very well.”

Trump says that according to Xi, the North Korean leader “looks forward” to meeting the American president. The White House has said Trump plans to meet Kim by May amid nuclear tensions between the two nations.

Trump has agreed to historic talks after South Korean officials relayed that Kim was committed to ridding the Korean Peninsula of nuclear weapons and was willing to halt nuclear and missile tests.

In the meanwhile, Trump says, “unfortunately, maximum sanctions and pressure must be maintained at all cost!” The Trump administration has slapped sanctions on companies across the globe to punish illicit trade with North Korea.

“For years and through many administrations, everyone said that peace and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was not even a small possibility,” Trump twe-

ted. “Now there is a good chance that Kim Jong Un will do what is right for his people and for humanity. Look forward to our meeting!”

NUCLEAR ACTIVITY

Increased activity at a North Korean nuclear site has once again caught the attention of analysts and renewed concerns about the complexities of denuclearization talks ahead of Trump-Kim summit in the coming weeks.

Satellite imagery taken last month suggests the North has begun preliminary testing of an experimental light water reactor and possibly brought another reactor online at its Yongbyon Nuclear Research Center.

Both could be used to produce the fissile materials needed for nuclear bombs.

The findings come at a particularly sensitive time. Trump and Kim are planning to meet by May, according to officials, and denuclearization will likely be the biggest topic on their agenda if they do meet. North Korea tested its biggest nuclear device to date last September. Pyongyang claims it was an H-bomb.

While the North hasn't conducted any tests since, or test-launched any long-range missiles since Nov. 28, the heightened activity at the Yongbyon complex could be ominous.



According to an analysis in Jane's Intelligence Review published earlier this month, a testing program is now underway at the experimental reactor, which means it could become operational with “little warning later in 2018 or in 2019.” It said the preliminary testing follows increased activity throughout 2017.

In a separate report posted on 38 North, a website that specializes in North Korea news

and analysis, experts said they have detected activity at another reactor in the Yongbyon complex, which is located north of Pyongyang, that could be an even bigger concern.

Imagery of Yongbyon's 5-megawatt reactor suggests it was brought into operation very recently. The website said that would mean “North Korea has resumed production of plutonium presumably for its nuclear weapons program.” MDT/Agencies



Japan police arrest Mark Karpeles, the French founder and former CEO of Mt. Gox, in Tokyo, in 2015

JAPAN

Exchanges embracing cryptocurrencies despite big theft cases

Yuri Kageyama, Tokyo

FOUR years after popular Tokyo-based bitcoin exchange Mt. Gox was hacked and went bankrupt, the case still casts a shadow over the regulatory regime put in place to protect Japan's thriving cryptocurrency market.

Mark Karpeles, the French founder and former CEO of Mt. Gox, says he hopes to recoup the millions lost by his customers in the heist. That's now a possibility, given the surge in bitcoin's value in recent years to some 10 times its earlier value.

"What I'm trying to do is to find the best solution," Karpeles said in a recent interview, "because I believe it is my responsibility as CEO of Mt. Gox."

Mt. Gox still had about 200,000 bitcoins left in a separate storage location after 850,000 disappeared in 2014. Those holdings are managed by court-appointed trustees who have sold 35,000 bitcoins, raising 44 billion yen (USD415 million) in cash to reimburse losses from the exchange's failure. Based on today's prices,

the remaining bitcoins are worth far more than the estimated \$620 million in earlier losses.

The trustees deny claims that sale triggered a recent slight drop in highly volatile bitcoin prices.

After Mt. Gox collapsed, Karpeles was detained for months before being released on 10 million yen (\$94,000) bail while awaiting the outcome of his trial for embezzlement and data manipulation, charges unrelated to the hack.

Mt. Gox was a wakeup call for Japan, though the relatively strong regulatory regime set up after the bitcoin dealer has not prevented further hacks. Earlier this year the Tokyo-based Coincheck exchange reported a 58-billion yen (\$547 million) loss of a cryptocurrency called NEM due to suspected hacking.

■ **About half the world's bitcoin trading is estimated to be in yen**

About half the world's bitcoin trading is estimated to be in yen and there are 16 licensed virtual currency exchanges in Japan, where bitcoin owners alone number 2 million to 3 million. That could grow to 10 million this year, said Yuzo Kano, chief executive for BitFlyer, one of Japan's largest licensed cryptocurrency exchanges.

"Japan is now bitcoin's heart, the country that is at the center of its support," said Kano, who helped the government set up its licensing system and other regulations.

Kano heads the Japan Blockchain Association and was recently tapped to head a new organization to beef up regulations, working with the Financial Services Agency.

Financial regulators worldwide are scrambling to catch up with the boom in cryptocurrencies and Japan is treading carefully, seeking to minimize risks while maneuvering to attain global leadership and nurture entrepreneurship in the new financial technology.

Bitcoin has been a legal form of payment in Japan since April

2017, and a handful of major retailers already accept bitcoin payments.

Some governments, such as in China and South Korea, have adopted a more cautious approach, while others, like Switzerland and Canada, are wooing the "miners" whose high-powered computers process the algorithms used to create virtual currency tokens. The U.S. falls somewhere in between.

There have been no arrests for the theft at Coincheck, which has acknowledged that it erred in keeping a stash of the digital money in what's known as a "hot wallet," within reach of hackers. Cybersecurity experts say large amounts of virtual currency should be kept offline, in so-called "cold wallets."

The exchange is reimbursing losses from that heist and strengthening its security.

So far, the cases seem to have done little to discourage Japanese, who have turned to stashing yen at home since banks pay near-zero interest rates, from dabbling in cryptocurrencies.

Giant billboards and TV ads sing praise of Bitcoin. The warnings about buying at your own risk come in tiny print. A band called Kasotsuka Shojo, or "virtual currency girls," in stereotypical housemaid outfits, literally sings praise of bitcoins: "Let's go mining. Dig right there. I'm going to make money to pay my utility bill."

Karpeles is hoping the arrest in July in Greece of a main suspect in the Mt. Gox theft, Alexander Vinnick, will help van-

quish any lingering suspicions that he might have pocketed the missing bitcoins. A California grand jury has indicted Vinnick, a Russian, on allegations he used funds from the Mt. Gox hack for money-laundering, though it's unclear whether he'll be extradited to the U.S. or to Russia.

Karpeles is not overly optimistic about tracking down the missing bitcoin. His lawyers have portrayed the young French man as a convenient scapegoat for Japanese authorities eager to find someone to blame for an embarrassingly massive cybercrime.

He denied any intention of embezzling funds. His defense team has argued that the money and data he is alleged to have handled improperly were used for company operations or actually belonged to him.

Not permitted to leave Japan while still facing trial, Karpeles works at a couple of technology jobs, such as voice-over-internet-protocol and video-game development. Fluent in Japanese after eight years in the country, he appears on YouTube and on a Japanese online streaming video service, offering advice on cryptocurrencies.

He likens how cryptocurrencies work, and the precariousness of their value, to a game of musical chairs — with about 10,000 people around each chair.

"As long as everyone is dancing, it's fine, but if everyone wants to sit at the same time there won't be enough chairs," he said. **AP**

MARVIA Malik has made history in Pakistan by becoming the first transgender newscaster in a conservative Muslim country where members of her community are taunted in public, ostracized by family and targeted in violent attacks.

Pakistan officially recognized transgender as a third gender in 2012, but transgender people are largely confined to the margins of society, with most forced to survive by begging, dancing and prostitution. Sex reassignment surgery requires a court order, family approval, a psychiatrist's note and a medical recommendation.

At just 21 years old, Malik is already breaking down some barriers. Earlier this month, she became the first transgender woman to strut along the catwalk at a fashion show. But she says her true passion is journalism, and she's thrilled to be the face of the evening news on the private Kohenoor network in her native Lahore.

"Our society treats transgender people shamefully, degrading them, denying them jobs, laughing at them and taunting them," Malik said. "I want to change that."

Like many transgender people in Pakistan, Malik had a difficult childhood. She was bullied by classmates, and her parents for-

PAKISTAN

First trans TV anchor hopes to change perceptions



AP PHOTO

Marvia Malik

ced her to leave home after graduating high school. She took refuge with other transgender women and worked as a beautician to put herself through journalism school.

"My parents never accepted me as their child," she said. "They will never accept me."

It's a different story at the television network, where she says she

has been welcomed with open arms.

"I cannot express the love and respect I have received here since I began work," she said. "I have not felt any discrimination."

Some of her colleagues were initially resistant to the idea, said Junaid Ansari, the station manager who hired her, "but I decided to give her a chance."

He said Malik is "doing fine" reading headlines, and promised she would face no discrimination. He said her performance had even inspired him to hire a second transgender woman, to work as a copy writer.

There are other signs of change elsewhere in the country. A boy scout troop in the southern port city of Karachi enrolled 40 trans-

gender youths last month. After the Supreme Court ordered the government to list transgender as a third gender on ID cards, the national agency responsible for issuing them said it would employ transgender people at its offices across the country.

The decision to recognize a third gender was seen as a step in the right direction by transgender women, who previously were forced to identify themselves as men, leading to more severe forms of discrimination. Many hope they will eventually be recognized as women.

Transgender people face greater peril in more conservative areas of Pakistan, where Islamic extremists associate them with homosexuality and prostitution. In the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, 55 transgender people have been killed in recent years and hundreds more assaulted, according to Farzana Jan, the president of Trans Action Alliance, a local rights group. **AP**

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BLOOMBERG

BREXIT IN A YEAR

Divide and wait

Tim Ross

THE fishermen can't wait, the public don't want to wait, but Prime Minister Theresa May says she might need more time.

Just like Brexit itself, the question of how long the U.K. should spend getting ready before finally leaving the European Union's political and legal structures is dividing the country. First there was the argument about the transition period, which was agreed to last week.

Brexit-backing fishermen aren't happy that the U.K. won't "take back control" of its waters – escaping the quotas of the Common Fisheries Policy – until Jan. 1, 2021. Yet it could have been worse for them, as May was exploring a longer transitional phase.

Now the question is what kind of future customs arrangements will apply to trade between the U.K. and the EU (and how will this help avoid a hard border with Ireland). May suggested earlier this week that designing a new customs regime and getting everything ready was turning out to be quite a time-consuming task.

"What's become clear is that sometimes the timetables that have originally been set are not the timetables that are necessary when you actually start to look at the detail and when you delve into what it really is that you want to be able to achieve," May said.

The prime minister's candid comment to Tory MP Nicky Morgan, in evidence to the Commons Liaison Committee, might be seen as a hint that she's planning something. Will the U.K.

ultimately want a longer period of implementation once a new customs plan

has been drawn up? Some Brexit watchers are already saying so, and May did

It's back to the 80s for broadcasters without deal

FOR U.K.-based international broadcasters like Discovery Communications Inc. and Walt Disney Co. concerned about the consequences of Brexit, the European Union has some rather unhelpful advice: look to the 1980s.

If broadcasting isn't covered by a negotiated free-trade deal between Britain and the EU, the fallback is the 1989 European Convention on Transfrontier Television, the European Commission said in a notice on March 19.

Signed in the very year in which Tim Berners-Lee wrote his proposal for what would become the World Wide Web, that convention probably isn't enough to stop the broadcasters from relocating staff and operations to the EU. The treaty excludes seven member states, including Ireland and the Netherlands, lacks a mechanism for dispute settlement and of course doesn't cover online streaming, which is a rapidly

growing source of revenue for broadcasters.

"It's a major problem," said Alice Enders, a former economist for the World Trade Organization and head of research at media research firm Enders Analysis. "The online transmission point is a killer."

At stake for the U.K. in resolving the broadcasting issue is about 1 billion pounds (USD1.4 billion) of annual investment on content, production facilities, wage costs and technology, according to research by media analysis firm Oliver & Ohlbaum Associates commissioned by the Commercial Broadcasters Association.

Akin to global banks, media companies that use London as their European hub are weighing relocating staff and operations due to Brexit. The likes of Sweden's Modern Times Group AB and Time Warner Inc.'s Turner International currently broadcast

Brexit 'seems like it's taking a long time' already

little to suggest she's in a hurry to switch to a new regime.

For 52-year-old Angela Dunstan, a store manager in Lancaster, Brexit "seems like it's taking a long time" already. She's one of more than 130 people in nine locations across the country whom Bloomberg reporters interviewed for a state-of-the-nation portrait of Britain with one year left until exit day, on March 29, 2019.

BREXIT LATEST

BORDER PATROL - The U.K. plans to hire an extra 1,000 customs and immigration staff to ensure the security of the country's border after Brexit. The extra workers will be funded from an additional 395 million pounds (USD560 million) pledged to the Home Office, Philip Rutnam, the top civil servant at the department, told lawmakers on Parliament's Home Affairs Committee yesterday [Macau time]. They're supplementary to 300 new workers recruited in the fiscal year that's about to end, he said.

BREXIT VOTE 'CHEATED' - Whistle-blower Christopher Wylie told a parliamentary committee in London that the 2016 referendum could have gone the other way if rules hadn't been broken during the campaign. "I think it is completely reasonable to say that there could've been a different outcome in the referendum if there hadn't been, in my view, cheating," said Wylie, a former contractor at Cambridge Analytica who is now at the heart of a scandal over alleged misuse of Facebook data. Brexit campaigners have denied wrongdoing.

VOW OF SILENCE - The Conservatives' chief Brexit champion outside the government, Jacob Rees-Mogg, said past examples of prime ministers relying on the votes of opposition lawmakers did not end happily. It was seen as a veiled warning to Theresa May not to use Labour to push through some kind of soft Brexit. Rees-Mogg also revealed that if the referendum result had been different, he might have become a Trappist monk, Alex Morales reports.

IRISH BREAKTHROUGH - The Times reports that a new proposal from the U.K. government for the Irish border question is expected to be announced "imminently."

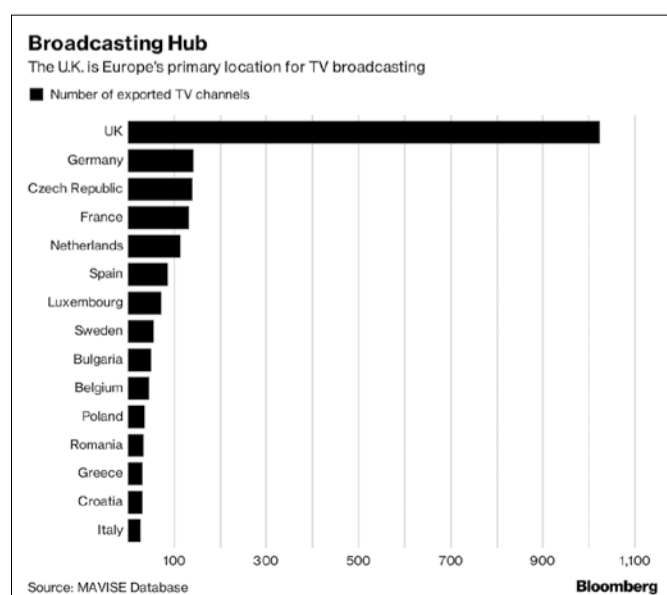
TERROR THREAT - Prime Minister May warns in a report that the threat to the U.K. from terrorism will stay at its current level of "severe" for at least another two years. She wants a close security partnership with the EU after Brexit.

BUS TIMETABLE - Boris Johnson's NHS bus pledge might finally arrive. The foreign secretary has been pushing for May to give the health service a huge boost in funding, after painting a pledge to spend GBP350 million on the NHS instead of sending it to the EU on the side of a big red bus during the referendum campaign two years ago. It looks like she's on board.

MIGRATION NATION - U.K. businesses have become reliant on European Union workers and are concerned about restrictions after Britain leaves the bloc next year, according to a government-commissioned study published this week. "Employers were fearful about what the future migration system might be," the Migration Advisory Committee said in an interim report.

PAPERING OVER CRACKS - The European Commission is considering diverting profits made by the European Central Bank from printing bank notes to plug a hole in the EU's long-term budget once U.K. leaves in 2019, the Financial Times reports.

MAY HOLIDAY - It's been nearly a year since Theresa May took the fateful walking holiday with her husband in Wales during which she decided to call a snap general election. A lost majority later, she told MPs that despite the picturesque scenery, a follow-up visit might be difficult. "I do see the value of Welsh agriculture to the Welsh landscape quite often when I go walking in Wales," she said. "Although, given the decision I took last year when I did that, I'm not sure many would welcome my reference to walk in Wales again."



Nataliya Vasilyeva, Moscow

RUSSIA

Nation mourn victims of deadly mall fire in Siberia

Flags flew at half-staff across Russia yesterday as the country mourned 64 victims — many of them children — of a shopping mall fire in Siberia.

The blaze engulfed the four-story mall in the eastern city of Kemerovo on Sunday while it was packed with parents and children on the first weekend of the school recess.

Investigators identified a short circuit as a possible cause and said the emergency exits were locked shut, hampering any evacuation. Some of the victims, many of them young children, died inside a locked movie theater.

Yesterday was declared a day of mourning in Russia, and thousands of people have been bringing flowers and stuffed toys to makeshift memorials across the country.

The bodies of all 64 victims have been recovered and no one is unaccounted-for, Deputy Emergency Situations Minister Vladlen Aksyonov told the RIA Novosti news agency.

The investigators have released 21 bodies for burial. The first funerals for the victims were held yesterday morning in Kemerovo, a city of half a million people 3,000 kilometers east of Moscow

that has been paralyzed with grief.

Among the first people buried were a grandmother and her two grandchildren— 8 and 10 — who died in the locked movie theater while watching cartoons. They were all buried in the same grave.

Elsewhere in Kemerovo, residents were mourning English teacher Tatyana Darsaliya who also died in the fire. Deputy Principal Irina Borisova told the Tass news agency after the requiem service that Darsaliya was “much loved and pupils loved her classes.”

On Tuesday, thousands of angry, distraught residents rallied on Kemerovo's main square for 10 hours, demanding that local officials conduct a full and transparent probe of the tragedy. Some mistrust the official death toll of 64, saying it must be higher.

A court in Kemerovo is expected to rule later yesterday on the



arrests of one of the mall's tenants, the mall's technical director, two employees of a company maintaining the fire alarm system and a security guard who the investigators said turned off the

fire alarm. Speaking in court yesterday, security guard Sergei Antyushin said in remarks carried by the Dozhd television station that the mall's fire alarm did

go off and that he called emergency services when it did. He did confirm, however, that the mall's public announcement system has not been operational for two weeks. AP

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what's ON



MACAU NARRATIVE BY IU-PUI CHAN
TIME: 11am-7pm
UNTIL: March 31, 2018
VENUE: Macau Tower T1 Art Gallery
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 8330

DISCOVER MACAU: MUSEUM OF TAIPA AND COLOANE HISTORY
TIME: 10am-6pm daily (last admission at 5:30pm; closed on Mondays)
ADDRESS: Rua Correia da Silva, Taipa
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

TREASURE OF SACRED ART OF ST. JOSEPH'S SEMINARY
TIME: 10am-5pm daily (Closed on Wednesdays, open on public holidays)
VENUE: St. Joseph's Seminary and Church, Rua do Seminário
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

MANDARIN'S HOUSE
TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Last admission at 5:30pm; closed on Wednesdays, open on public holidays)
ADDRESS: No. 10, Travessa de António da Silva
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8820

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

Offbeat

HOUSE RANSACKED AFTER BEING MISTAKEN FOR SITE OF ESTATE SALE

A Colorado woman says her house was ransacked by people who mistakenly thought it was the site of an estate sale. The Daily Camera reports Mary Andrews says she left her Longmont home unlocked and came back Friday morning to find people taking items from her house.

Longmont police told Andrews it was a "very, very bad misunderstanding."

Andrews says a house just a few doors down was having an estate sale, and somehow someone got into her house and began spreading the rumor that an estate sale was going on there and that everything was free.

Despite the mix-up, Andrews says people should have found something odd about an estate sale where everything was being given away at no cost.

Police say they have closed the case because they do not have any suspect leads.

Longmont is about an hour north of Denver.

TV canal macau



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

cinema



CINETEATRO

29 MAR - 04 APR



READY PLAYER ONE

ROOM 1

2:30, 7:00, 9:30pm

Director: Steven Spielberg

Starring: Tye Sheridan, Olivia Cooke, Ben Mendelsohn

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 140min

YO-KAI WATCH THE MOVIE: A WHALE OF TWO WORDS

ROOM 1

05:00pm

Director: Shinji Ushiro

Starring: Shōtarō Morikubo, Ai Kayano, Sumire Uesaka

Language: Cantonese



PACIFIC RIM: UPRISING

ROOM 2

2:30, 4:30, 07:30, 9:30pm

Director: Steven S.DeKnight

Starring: John Boyega, Scott Fastwood, Rinko Kikuchi

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 111min

PETER RABBIT

ROOM 3

2:00, 3:45pm

Language: Cantonese

7:45pm

Language: English (Chinese)

Director: Will Gluck

Starring: Domhnall Gleeson, Rose Byrne

Duration: 95min



MARY MAGDALENE

ROOM 3

5:30, 9:30pm

Director: Garth Davis

Starring: Rooney Mara, Joaquin Phoenix, Chiwetel Ejiofor

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 120min

this day in history



1981 TRIUMPH AT FIRST LONDON MARATHON

Thousands of people have jogged through the normally quiet Sunday streets of the capital to compete in the first ever London marathon.

Pounding along the 26 mile (41.84 km) route from Greenwich Park, in south east London, to Buckingham Palace, 6,700 participants turned out in drizzle to complete the gruelling run.

The boom of a 25 lb (11.34 kg) cannon sent the marathon runners, ranging from a 15-year-old girl to septuagenarians, on their way at 0900 BST.

The sportsmanship of the event was evident as American Dick Beardsley, 24, and Norwegian Inge Simonsen, 25, won the race crossing through the tape hand in hand after two hours, 11 minutes and 48 seconds.

Joyce Smith, a Briton was the first female to cross the finishing line, in 2:29:56.

About seven hours after the start Marie Dominique de Groot, 30, from Paris and David Gaiman, 47, from East Grinstead ran past the finish line holding hands as the final contestants across the line.

An estimated 80% of those who took part are understood to have crossed the finish line and participants included celebrities such as Jimmy Saville, who raised £50,000 for charity.

More than 22,000 people wanted to run but the figure was kept to 7,590 by police.

The race, taking in the banks of the Thames and the City of London, contained more turns than its New York sister event and was 30 yards longer than the official marathon distance of 26 miles 385 yards.

At regular intervals 1,000 volunteer helpers marked the route, joined by 500 special constables, 26 first-aid stations and 300 St John Ambulance personnel while cardiac unit was on hand at Constitution Hill.

The marathon is the brainchild of Chris Brasher, former Olympic Steeplechaser and was organised with a budget of £100,000 from which 2,000 foil blankets, 75 portable lavatories, 400 gallons of coffee and 50,000 plastic cups were supplied.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

A mark of the success of that first London Marathon could be seen the following year when more than 90,000 people from across the world applied to take part.

It is now an annual event with the number of participants now averaging more than 30,000.

The event has become synonymous with great athletic camaraderie but many also wear fancy dress costumes and one couple married during one event.

It has evolved into a fun day for those taking on the challenge but is also a major charity fundraising event through sponsorship of participants.

The marathon's founder, Chris Brasher, died in February 2003.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Get up on your feet and share some of what you've got with a neighborhood or a particular someone in need.

Taurus April 20-May 20 It's time to savor the joys that really matter. So slow down and give yourself some space to breathe.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Petty squabbles can get out of hand if you lose sight of what's really important. It's paramount during moments like these to keep a cool head even if others around you are intent on losing theirs.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You're able to sense the truth of the matter before anyone says a word - in fact, you're so astute that you're practically reading minds right now.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Normally you're not the diplomat of the zodiac; in fact, you're more used to being one of the noble leaders, but right now you're all about finding ways to maintain balance and bring as much good feeling as possible.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 It's all about yoga, or tai chi or Pilates - in other words, you're ready to scrap the usual gym routine for a regimen that exercises your body and your mind.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Work on having casual conversations and low-key exchanges with the people around you. Not only will you pick up some great tips and have some enlightening encounters, but you'll notice that your shyness has dissipated.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Set your sights on intriguing career opportunities and promising partnerships. It could just revive your interest in your current job as well as present you with avenues for different opportunities if you so desire.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Going beyond your own national borders is at the top of your must-do list. You're ever so curious about different lands, customs and ways of life.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Just because others are losing their heads doesn't mean that you have to take the same tack. So before you start running around and yelling about how the sky is falling, take a deep breath.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Do you have big plans for the future? If yes, it's time to start laying the framework so you can make those plans come to fruition with a minimum of frustration.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 It's a dandy idea to regularly schedule some time to put your feet up and appreciate all the wondrous things that abound in your life from the very smallest joys (caramel-covered apples and multicolored Post-It notes).

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION

CHINA

Table listing weather conditions for various Chinese cities like Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

WORLD

Table listing weather conditions for various world cities like Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, etc.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Lathered up; 6- Florida citrus center; 11- Use, consume; 14- Thicket; 15- Exhorted; 16- B'way hit sign; 17- Little bits; 18- Peachy keen; 19- Poseidon's domain; 20- Clublike weapon; 22- Beg; 24- Typical; 28- Conductors' rods; 30- Straight; 31- Tennis's Monica; 32- Religion of the Muslims; 33- Place upon pallets; 37- ___ loss for words; 38- Water holes; 39- Airline to Oslo; 40- Boats with sails; 43- Ignited again; 45- Loiter; 46- Literary ridicule; 47- Club; 49- Talk softly; 50- Brainy org.; 51- Historical times; 52- A mean Amin; 53- Authority; 56- Magazine copy; 61- A collection of articles; 62- Perspire; 63- Words of denial; 64- Opposite of NNW; 65- Come next; 66- Flip out;

DOWN: 1- Biol. or chem.; 2- "Hollywood Squares" win; 3- Suitable; 4- Largest book of the OT; 5- Polite agreement; 6- Prevention dose; 7- Algonquian language; 8- Turkish general; 9- Allow; 10- Person with new parents; 11- Ruhr Valley city; 12- Bailiwicks; 13- Tailless amphibian; 21- Cabinet dept.; 23- Couldn't find; 24- Assumed name; 25- Panorama; 26- China's Zhou ___; 27- "Michael Collins" actor; 28- Ringing instruments; 29- ___ well...; 31- Saline; 33- Bit of wisdom; 34- Long Island town; 35- Congo, formerly; 36- Aromatic compound; 38- Had on; 41- Former Fords; 42- Crushed sugarcane; 43- Elevating; 44- "The X-Files" extras; 46- ___ Na Na; 47- Gives up; 48- Join forces; 49- Penned; 50- Fail to hit; 51- Twin in Genesis; 54- Barley bristle; 55- Affirmative answer; 57- ___ Canals; 58- RR stop; 59- Ref's counterpart; 60- Extra-wide shoe size;



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FOOTBALL

With World Cup looming, Messi sees Argentina lose to Spain

TRAILING 6-1, Lionel Messi had seen enough.

The injured Argentine left his seat overlooking the field at the Wanda Metropolitano Stadium in the final minutes of yesterday's friendly match against Spain and headed inside. He didn't miss much. It ended 6-1.

A nagging muscular problem stopped Messi from helping his team avoid a debacle that will magnify concerns about Argentina's ability to finally win a World Cup with one of the best players ever.

Losing in Madrid to a Spain squad that looks as dominant as the 2010 world champion team could have been acceptable. But six goals are far too many for a group of players who must provide Messi with the supporting cast he needs to fill the biggest hole in his stupendous career.

"Spain slapped us around," Argentina coach Jorge Sampaoli said. "Spain took advantage of our disorder and their goals fell fast."



"We must learn from all of this, even if the course of the match shouldn't have resulted in such a lopsided score. We will keep working so that this doesn't happen again in the World Cup."

Following Sampaoli's orders, Argentina tried to beat Spain at its own ball-possession game by pressing high up the field.

The decision to take the match to the Spaniards appeared to work at first. But after striker Gonzalo Higuain, who was back with Argentina for the first time since June, missed an excellent scoring opportunity from point-blank range, Spain did whatever it wanted.

The hosts dictated the match with long possessions, used pres-

sure to recover the ball near the area and score, and caught Argentina off-guard with long balls behind its defensive line.

Argentina's midfield of Javier Mascherano, Ever Banega and Lucas Biglia was left chasing passes by Andres Iniesta, Jorge "Koke" Resurreccion and Thiago Alcantara, while center backs

Marcos Rojo and Nicolas Otamendi were picked apart by substitute Iago Aspas and Francisco "Isco" Alarcon, who scored his first career hat trick.

Sampaoli has less than three months to find some solutions. He soon has to start by picking a final squad, and the sorry showing surely leaves him with more questions than answers.

The one possible hope Sampaoli could grasp was that Messi, and other first-choice players, "would have played" if it had been a competitive match.

Argentina can also look to its 2-0 win over Italy on Friday, which Messi also missed because of a minor leg injury. Sampaoli had hoped to have Messi back to play against Spain, but discarded him after the Barcelona forward still felt bothered during training on Monday.

"But [Messi] stayed with us. I want to underscore his capacity to back his team and help along its young players," Sampaoli said. "I see that he is very committed to the team."

Argentina is a two-time World Cup champion and the soccer-crazed South American nation has long expected Messi to deliver a third title. A winner of 30 club trophies with Barcelona, the same fortune has not accompanied the five-time Ballon d'Or winner with Argentina. **AP**

AD

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Sacramento Kings forward Justin Jackson (25) drives to the basket between Dallas Mavericks center Dirk Nowitzki (41) and forward Harrison Barnes (40)



Protesters calling for justice in the name of Stephon Clark block the entrance to the Golden One Center in Sacramento

BASKETBALL | NBA

Amid protests outside arena, Mavericks beat Kings 103-97

Michael Wagaman

DALLAS Mavericks forward Harrison Barnes didn't see the group of protesters making their way to Golden1 Center for a second round of protests yesterday [Macau time]. He only heard they were coming — and he was perfectly fine with it.

Outside the arena, demonstrators gathered to protest the March 18 fatal police shooting of Stephon Clark, an unarmed 22-year-old black man who was in his grandparents' backyard. Most fans were prevented from entering Golden1 Center and the team later released a statement saying refunds would be given.

It was the second time in six days that protesters forced a

lockdown at Golden1 Center.

Barnes is hopeful the protests stir debate that he believes is long overdue, not just in Sacramento but around the country.

"If they were doing this somewhere else in the city, would they still be garnering the same attention?" Barnes asked following the Mavericks' 103-97 win over the Kings. "Would it be at the front of every opposing team that's coming in here? Would it be national news that the Sacramento Kings are locking fans out of their stadium? Why are they locking fans out of the stadium? Oh, because this young man was killed. Then the dialogue keeps going that way.

"There's never an easy way that's easy for everyone who's

involved to accept it and be on board, but the point is to bring attention to something, to start a debate, and that's what they're doing."

The Mavericks ended their five-game losing streak behind strong performances from Barnes (20 points, six assists, five rebounds) and Dennis Smith Jr. (19 points, six assists), but the focus remained on the protests.

Some fans who arrived early were let in and allowed to move down into the lower bowl of the arena. Although no official attendance was given, the crowd was estimated at around 4,000.

That was twice the number of people who were allowed in last Thursday when protesters formed a human chain around the arena and forced

the start of the game to be delayed.

"Hopefully [the protests] keep the discussion going in all sorts of communities, not only here," Mavericks veteran Dirk Nowitzki said. "It's just unfortunately that things like this continue to happen. Communities need all the help they can get."

The Kings have home games slated for Thursday, the same day as Clark's funeral, and Saturday when a march is scheduled.

"Despite what's going on, we've still got to do our jobs and come in here and hoop," Sacramento's Willie Cauley-Stein said.

Smith played well in his second game back from an ankle injury. Doug McDermott scored seven of his 15 points

during a big run in the fourth quarter, and Aaron Harrison and Johnathan Motley had 10 points apiece for the Mavericks.

Dallas led by 18 with 3:44 remaining before Sacramento went on a 17-4 run. Buddy Hield had six points as part of the spurt and Frank Mason made two free throws to pull the Kings to 102-97 with 21.9 seconds left.

Kyle Collinsworth made one of two free throws for the Mavericks to seal the win.

Skal Labissiere had 19 points and eight rebounds, and Kosta Koufos scored 15 for Sacramento.

TIP-INS

Mavericks: Dwight Powell didn't play because of bursitis in his left knee. ... Nowitzki scored five points on 2-of-9 shooting. He went 1 for 7 on 3s. ... JJ Barea did not make the trip due to personal reasons. Nerlens Noel and Dorian Finney-Smith were also held out.

Kings: Koufos took advantage of Powell's absence and scored 15 of Sacramento's first 29 points. Koufos entered averaging 6.6 points per game. ... Garrett Temple (sprained left ankle) missed his third straight game.

HELPING HAND

Barnes' six assists tied his career high set against Brooklyn last Nov. 29. All six came in the first half.

"Guys weren't making shots [in the second half]," Barnes said, joking. "No, I just thought we had good movement tonight. Guys were making shots, getting into the flow of things."

GLOBETROTTER

McDermott scored on a pair of layups in the fourth quarter, one after Collinsworth made a behind-the-back bounce pass. "Kyle hit him on one of those Mark Cuban's premier club behind-the-back bounce passes," Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle said. **AP**

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opinion

Girl About Globe

Linda Kennedy



CARDIO CABER TOSSING. THE NEW FITNESS TREND?

Britain's Prince Charles has called for Highland Games to be included in PE classes at schools. PE stands for Physical Education; the Prince demonstrates spelling is already taught.

To those not raised in Scotland, Highland Games are gala days with brawn, where men tussle or turn to bagpipes for aerobic exertion. Many towns in the upper reaches of Scotland have their own Highland Games, preferably presented against a delightful background of hills. They are often thought to be a sweaty version of shortbread: something for the tourists.

Highland Games' activities include: Tossing the caber. A caber is a pole. It's heavy and may be made from a larch tree.

The 'Tug-o-War'. Two teams pull on a rope. Scottish gang warfare results in no knife or gun wounds, just blisters.

So, into this Highland swirl of activity, comes Prince Charles and his educational suggestion. The Prince of Wales, like many Royals, isn't popular in Scotland. Some think he's Welsh.

To others, Prince Charles 'plays' at Scotland. He comes up from London, wears a kilt, visits Balmoral, or Birkhall, his estate nearby. And calls in on the local Highland Games where, sitting inside a Harris tweed jacket, he gets ideas.

This particular Royal notion, the inclusion of Highland gaming in the school curriculum, raises questions. First, a suspicion. Is his food company, Duchy Originals, about to bring out a sports drink? Something like Pocari Sweat but tailored for the Wales family brand. Say, PrinceHarry Sweat.

Or does this eschew princely self-promotion, and is just a good idea? In recent years, fitness trends in Europe have looked outward for inspiration. Group exercise class, Body Combat, is martial arts set to music. And let's not overlook a new trend, bungee fitness, which could arguably be claimed by New Zealand. (You're strapped to the ceiling, and bounce through your routine.) And of course, there's yoga. A straight swap for the cricket Britain introduced to India.

Is Prince Charles saying: why doesn't one look within Britain for exercise inspiration? Brexit for the biceps, rather than immigrant exertions.

Sessions that could result from Highland Games might be:

Cardio Caber Tossing – a tree-trunk-based trapezius workout.

HIIT. High Intensity Interval Tug-o-War. Tug for an intense 30 seconds then rest.

Highland Aqua Zumba, in the puddles created by the inevitable Scottish deluge at some point during the Games.

Expanding the theme, in late summer, there might be a Glorious 12K, in homage to the start of the grouse shooting season on August 12th. The running route would be across the moors and guarantee fitness. When you heard gunfire, you would run fast.

I'm already wondering if all this has to be limited to school PE sessions. Group exercise classes in gyms are seeing potential in unexpected areas. There is now a class called POUND (and it's not trying to improve sterling's strength). It's the 'sweat-dripping, infectious fun' of...drums. If exertion can be derived from drumming, surely activities linked to bagpiping also count?

One could dress for CardioCaber or High Intensity Interval Tug-of-War. The fashion for patterned gym leggings might extend to tartan lycra, enabling a Scottish athleisure brand to take on Lulu Lemon with a witty promotional campaign: 'We're flexible and Scottish.' Usually anything made in Scotland is 100% stubborn.

I truly hope Prince Charles meant this suggestion – though proximity to April 1st, and a zany Royal sense of humour – both mean one has to retain an element of scepticism. Still, even if I am standing at the other end of the 'Tug o War' from the Prince, and shouting 'pull the other one', I'll still be getting some exercise.

THE BUZZ 'THAILAND TO GIVE THE BEACH FROM 'THE BEACH' FILM A BREATH'

Authorities in Thailand have ordered the temporary closing of the beach made famous by the Leonardo DiCaprio movie "The Beach" to halt environmental damage caused by too many tourists.

Maya Bay, on Phi Phi Leh island in the Andaman Sea, will be closed to all visitors annually for four months starting this June to allow for the recovery of the island's battered coral reefs

and sea life. The decision to keep visitors away was made yesterday by Thailand's National Parks and Wildlife Department.

Many Thai marine national parks are closed from mid-May to mid-October, but because of tourist demand, Maya Bay has remained open year-round since a Hollywood crew set foot there in 1999 to film the dark backpacker tale based on a novel by Alex Garland.

Playboy latest to delete Facebook accounts amid data handling fallout

Tiago Ramos Alfaro

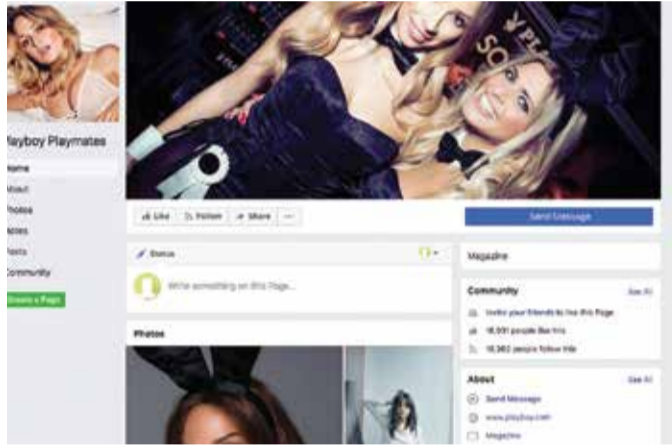
PLAYBOY announced its intention to deactivate its Facebook accounts and leave the social network amid escalating concerns about the platform's mismanagement of user data.

The publisher said that the decision follows the difficulty it has felt for years to express its "values" on Facebook, due to the platform's policy on prohibiting nudity.

"There are more than 25 million fans who engage with Playboy via our various Facebook pages and we do not want to be complicit in exposing them to the reported practices," the company said in a statement yesterday [Macau time].

In a Twitter post announcing the decision to step away from Facebook, Chief Creative Officer Cooper Hefner also described the world's largest social-media platform as "sexually repressive."

Playboy follows other users and companies joining the wider #DeleteFacebook movement - Billionaire Elon Musk's Tesla Inc. and Space Exploration Technologies Corp. have scrapped their



accounts. WhatsApp founder Brian Acton tweeted the hashtag on March 20. Facebook has owned WhatsApp since 2014.

Playboy did not say whether it would also deactivate

There are more than 25m fans who engage with Playboy via our various Facebook pages

any profiles it operates on Instagram, which is also owned by Facebook.

The social-media giant has a detailed policy on nudes, published on its community standards support website. Banned images include photographs of people displaying genitals or bare buttocks.

Facebook says that is "always working to get better at evaluating this content and enforcing our standards" and it reserves the right to remove any content.

In 2015, Playboy announced it would scrap the publication of fully-nude photography - a decision Hefner reversed in 2017. **Bloomberg**

STORMY

Attorney for porn star seeks to depose Trump on payment

An attorney for an adult film star claiming a sexual encounter with President Donald Trump filed a motion yesterday seeking to depose the president and his attorney.

In documents filed in U.S. District Court in California, Michael Avenatti seeks to depose Trump and Trump attorney Michael Cohen about a USD130,000 payment made to Stormy Daniels days before the 2016 presidential election.

Avenatti wants to question each for "no more than two hours." In the filing, he says the depositions are needed to establish if Trump knew about the payment and if he consented to it.

"We're looking for sworn answers from the president and Mr. Cohen about what they knew, when they knew it and what they did about it," Avenatti told The Associated Press.

While he noted that "in every case you always have to be open to settlement," Avenatti said that "at this point we don't see how this case would possibly be settled."

Cohen has said he paid the \$130,000 out of his own pocket, while asserting Trump never had sex with the porn actress.

In a statement to CBS, Cohen's attorney David Schwartz called the filing a "reckless use of the legal system in order to continue to inflate Michael Avenatti's deflated ego and keep himself relevant."

A hearing before Judge S. James Otero in the federal court's Central District in Los Angeles is set for April 30.

As precedent, the motion references the fact that former President Bill Clinton was deposed while in office in 1998 during the Paula Jones sexual harassment suit. That came after the Supreme Court ruled that a sitting president was not immune from civil litigation on something that happened before taking office and was unrelated to the office.

Jones' case was dismissed by a judge, then appealed. The appeal was still pending when Clinton agreed to pay \$850,000 to Jones to settle the case. He did not admit wrongdoing. **AP**

Station	Air quality
Roadside	65-95 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	45-65 Moderate
Ambient	70-100 Moderate

WORLD BRIEFS

PAKISTAN Officials say 13 people have died in two incidents – a landslide in a northern region and a roof collapse at a warehouse in the south.



RUSSIA Flags flew at half-staff across Russia yesterday as the country mourned 64 victims – many of them children – of a shopping mall fire in Siberia.

GREECE Authorities say they are searching for a group of migrants who made an emergency call saying they were in danger while crossing a river marking the border between Greece and Turkey.



CROATIA said yesterday it will purchase upgraded Israeli F-16 fighter aircraft as it seeks to bolster its defenses amid Russia's arming of neighboring Serbia.

GERMANY Police have searched the homes of 10 people suspected of providing support to a far-right extremist group. Officers seized weapons, computer storage devices and Nazi propaganda material in the raids in the states of Saxony, Lower Saxony and Bavaria. No arrests were made.



BRAZIL Gunshots hit two buses in a caravan for former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's campaign tour in southern Brazil, officials in his Worker's Party said. No one was hurt.

ECUADOR Two journalists working with an Ecuadorean newspaper were kidnapped near the country's conflictive border with Colombia.