



NEW DAY, NEW GAME
Benfica wants to do much better against a N. Korean side in today's Asian Football Confederation match

P2 FOOTBALL



'MACAU IS VERY REGIONAL-ORIENTED'
Interview with Olivier Verschelde, a senior consultant at Lausanne Hospitality Consulting

P5



BLEU RASCALS BRING THE BLUES BACK TO TOWN

P7



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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



KOREA As North and South Korea prepare for their first summit in more than a decade this Friday, the world's largest annual military maneuvers between Seoul and the U.S. have been postponed, probably shortened, and certainly toned down. They have not, however, been canceled. More on p12

PHILIPPINES The country's ambassador to Kuwait has offered a public apology after he made comments about his diplomatic mission's efforts to help abused Filipino housemaids in the Gulf nation.



INDONESIA An Indonesian court sentenced a politician praised by President Donald Trump to 15 years in prison yesterday for his role in the theft of USD170 million of public money.

PAKISTAN Police yesterday arrested the father and the uncle suspected in an "honor" killing of a 25-year-old Italian citizen, a woman of Pakistani origin who refused to marry the man they chose for her.

IRAN-SAUDI ARABIA Iran's foreign minister said that neither Iran nor Saudi Arabia can be the dominant power in the Middle East and what's needed most is for countries in the Persian Gulf region to talk to each other.

More on backpage

WeChat Pay eyes Macau expansion

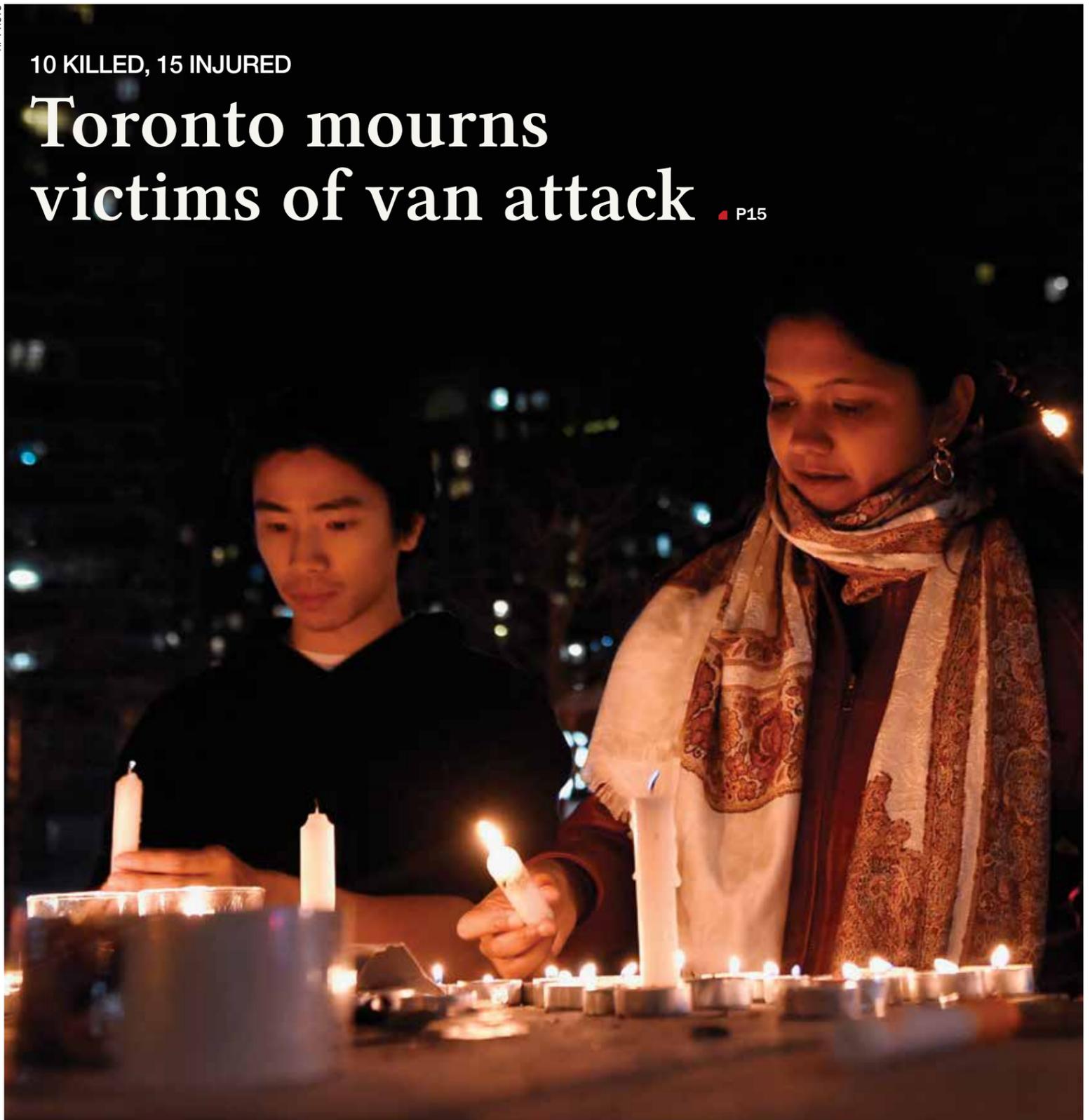
P3

AP PHOTO

10 KILLED, 15 INJURED

Toronto mourns victims of van attack

P15



Owners of abandoned cars criticized for evading fees

The fees relating to abandoned cars stored in government facilities have been piling up, according to the Transport Bureau (DSAT). DSAT issued a statement reporting that the bureau and the Public Security Police Force have already removed 819 vehicles since last year. Taxes for these have not yet been fully settled. Nearly 60 percent of the vehicles have been claimed or their registrations canceled by owners. DSAT noted that despite drivers claiming or forfeiting their cars, they are still obliged to pay fines and other fees.

No schedule for specific office to supervise lift safety

The Office of the Secretary for Security said that the government does not have a schedule concerning the establishment of a specific department to supervise elevator safety. In a response to lawmaker Lei Cheng I's written inquiry regarding the supervision of large-scale entertainment facilities, the office said that the government has already completed a draft law in relation to enhancing supervision over elevators, and further notes that the authority is now consulting the industry's opinion. The reply also disclosed that the relevant government department will consult a licensing department concerning the operation of entertainment facilities.

IACM clarifies vendors regime amid controversy

The Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) made further clarifications to the proposed regime for street market and vendors' management in light of industry dissatisfaction. The regime currently suggests for vendors or street market stalls to not close business for a period of three consecutive days and to not close business for more than 30 days in a year. IACM explained that these suggestions only relate to days for which vendors or stalls do not provide an application for closing business - that is, business closures without a reason.

RENATO MARQUES



Bernardo Tavares (second from right) shakes hands with the N. Korean coach

Benfica wants to 'leave a good impression' of team and local football

Renato Marques

AFTER an unusually disappointing result obtained by Benfica Macau in Pyongyang on April 11, losing 0-8 against North Korean champion 4.25 Sports Club, the local team is looking to "change that image" in today's Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Cup's group stage match. Benfica wants to "show that the team and its players have enough skills to do much better," the head coach, Bernardo Tavares said yesterday at the pre-match press conference at the Macau Olympic Stadium in Taipa.

"What we have been trying to do is to play each match by giving our best and to collect as many points as possible," Tavares said. The coach stated that the team's current challenge is to play among the best in Asian football, "one match at one time" and "with no expectations beyond tomorrow's [today's] match."

The head coach also explained that it is because of this

philosophy that they received such a heavy result in North Korea. "Maybe another team losing 2-0 at break time would just try to manage the result and not get more goals, but we didn't, we fought as much as we could and tried to score and maybe that's why we got to that result (8-0)," said the head coach.

For today's fixture, Tavares said that the main aim is, "to give dignity not only to Benfica Macau but also to the football we play here [in Macau]. It's a 'nice picture' that we want to leave and not the one left by the last game in North Korea."

"We want to give a good image of our team, match after match. Of our players, but also of Macau football," Benfica's coach remarked.

Commenting on the difficulties expected for the game, Tavares has no doubt that playing against teams like 4.25 Sports Club, which have more skills, more experience and more resources than Benfica Macau, is what makes the local team and players grow.

"It's by playing against these teams that we can grow and develop," he said, noting, "this will eventually be very good for us [...]. I know that all players that saw that happening, they learned a lot and we want to be in together with the best."

For the match against the North Korean team, coach Tavares also noted that the team continued to have several pro-

blems with injured players that will influence the choice for the 11 players who will take to the pitch tonight.

"We have several doubts there are a couple of players we know can't play; that's Filipe [Duarte] and Vitor [Almeida] and also there is another group that we will only know after the match warm-up and those are Cuco, Edgar [Teixeira] and [Lei] Chi Kin." Nonetheless, Tavares noted that "I can guarantee that those that will rise to the pitch will put in 100 percent... Everybody wants to play this game."

Tavares also called for the people of Macau to attend the match. He said it is an unique opportunity to watch football of this caliber in Macau.

4.25 SC HEAD COACH AIMS FOR THE AFC CUP TITLE

AS COMFORTABLE winners in the first match played in home soil, head coach, Hwang Yong-Song of the April 25 Sports Club (4.25 SC) told the press yesterday that the team is confident for today's match. Hwang Yong-Song said in a press conference yesterday, "We are ready for the match. It is our first time coming to Macau to play and we expect difficulties but we have had enough preparation for this match." Questioned on whether a win in today's match against Benfica

Macau would grant the North Korean club a spot in the next stage, Hwang acknowledged, "If we win this match, we will [move] most probably into the next stage and our next goal will be to win the matches also in the next stage." Questioned by the Times about how far the team could go in this competition, the head coach of 4.25 SC said, "it will be difficult to win the [overall] competition and to be champions, but we want that and we are aiming for that this year."

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WeChat Pay hopes to expand business in Macau

Julie Zhu

WECCHAT Pay hopes to extend its range of operations in Macau, according to Grace Yin, operations director of WeChat Pay's International Business division, who spoke to the Times yesterday during an interview.

"This year, we hope to enhance operations in Macau, and to achieve a rather high level of permeability in any specific business," Yin told the Times yesterday on the sidelines of a press conference about the WeChat overseas payment service.

According to Yin, more than 10,000 businesses in Macau have already installed WeChat Pay, with "the majority of business from the retail industry, including big business, places where tourists frequently go, and the ferry terminals."

"I think that mainstream [businesses] are all using WeChat Pay," said Yin.

When asked about the amounts that have been transacted be-



Grace Yin

tween businesses and tourists through WeChat Pay in Macau, Yin said that "temporarily, we do not have statistics that can be published, but we will report to the public once we have them."

In Yin's report, the development of WeChat Pay in Macau is still in a relatively early stage, although current developments are approaching a mature status.

The company is said to be connecting more Macau businesses to WeChat Pay as well as teaching business operators

how to use more of the service's functions.

The director of WeChat Pay's international business operations pointed out that her company wishes to communicate with Macau's local e-payment operators, in addition to help them operate and develop their own applications, "because they [the local ones] know more about the needs of Macau locals. We still hope that, in the short term, Macau's local [e-payment applications] can become the ones providing services to Macau's local users."

During an event organized at the Macau Tower, yesterday, WeChat reported that one of the WeChat Pay applications is helping to connect tourists with taxi drivers and vice versa.

The WeChat Pay function, which launched approximately one month ago, has 3,300 registered users and 130 registered taxi drivers.

Nowadays, a growing number of Chinese tourists is traveling abroad.

When talking to the Times about WeChat Pay's future expansion overseas, Grace informed that "WeChat Pay is available in 25 countries and regions, and it is available in 13 mainstream currencies. In those regions and countries where Chinese tourists are mainly visitors, [we] can see WeChat Pay terminals. Australia and South West Asia are our main target markets."

"This year, we will have [additional operations] in the western market," announced Yin, adding that her company will study a business expansion to occur after June of this year.

GGCT following up on Toronto attack

The Tourism Crisis Management Office (GGCT) is following up on the truck attack that occurred in Toronto, and maintaining contact with the Macau travel industry for further developments. According to a statement issued yesterday, GGCT gathered information among the Macau travel industry and no requests for information or assistance were received from local residents.

High school math levels in decline

The math skills of local high school students are in decline, according to Leong Ieng Tak, the associate professor of the Faculty of Science and Technology at the University of Macau. Leong's comments came after a high school chemistry, math and physics competition this week. Leong said students' performance was "not bad" this year but that their overall math skills had dropped. Leong believes the drop is related to the students' lack of competitive experience and the possibility that participating high schools had not invested in training their top students.

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Q&A OLIVIER VERSHELDE
LAUSANNE HOSPITALITY CONSULTING

'Macau is close to being a producer of gastronomy'

Daniel Beitler

OLIVIER Vershelde visited Macau recently to present a two-day educational program on concepts and sustainability in the food and beverage sector.

Vershelde is a senior consultant at Lausanne Hospitality Consulting, a subsidiary of Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne. The education institution, which is located in Switzerland's canton of Vaud, is widely regarded as the most prestigious hospitality management educator in the world.

This week's program, developed in partnership with Macau's Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT), dealt with concepts such as front and back of house efficiency, how waste and energy consumption can be tapered, as well as why longevity in the business is the best way to ensure sustainability.

"A confusion in your offer of concept and services is going to create a short lifespan," Vershelde told the Times in an exclusive interview. "Because people stop being interested and investors start getting worried. But many mono-concept products have been around for 30 or 40 years and are still fully booked."

The hospitality management consultant sat down with the Times to talk about the food and beverage sector in Macau and what he makes of the recent designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy.

Macau Daily Times (MDT) - Is Macau a mature food market? How is the F&B sector maturing?

Olivier Vershelde (OV) - The offer in Macau is almost endless. There is a lot of F&B [food and beverage] offerings; from coffee shops to bars, from restaurants to fast food kiosks. But I believe it's going to consolidate at some point. We will see people looking for a fixed identity. Because a lot of restaurants now are doing a little bit of this, and then also saying... let's have a Chinese menu. The problem is that the other restaurants in the same hotel are doing exactly the same. They're doing a little bit of Italian and then there's [also a bit of] Chinese.

At some point decisions will be made to say, rather than having all of this mix and match, we are going to create one



good working Chinese restaurant and one good working Italian restaurant, with clearly defined design aesthetics and identities. This is still not 100 percent the case today. Macau is also closing in on the time when it stops being a consumer [of gastronomy] and starts being a producer. Today, Macau is consuming every possible concept and brand that it can get its hands on. At some point this is going to turn around, and these [local] brands will be exported around the world, just as they were in Hong Kong.

MDT - How significant is the recent designation of Macau as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy? Can it really influence consumers, as well as educators and those working in the culinary world?

OV - It's definitely a good starting point that gives credibility [to Macau]. We can use it [...] but if we overuse it then that credibility might be a bit lost. But if it is used wisely, [the designation] can be helpful in the promotion of Macau and the flourishing of [this sector]. Macau is benefiting from the reputation

[of being a UNESCO City of Gastronomy], which today is something that is happening in a very closed environment. When you look at the rest of the world, there is very little influence coming out [from Macau].

If you look at when Peru and Chile were called 'gastronomic hotspots', now we see Peruvian cuisine being blended with Japanese cuisine and showing up at more and more upscale places as being the latest trend. People now go and visit - not only to see the country - but to go and live that [gastronomy] experience.

Macau can start to export its signature dishes and signature kitchen style in the same way... and begin to see it copied around the world. And being copied remains the biggest form of flattery.

MDT - Can gastronomy be used as a marketing tool to attract tourists, and if so, does the cuisine need to be tailored to the Chinese?

OV - I think that if we look at the touristic profile of Macau, it is still very regional-oriented. Macau is very strong in the Asian market,

but not so much in the western market. The Chinese customer is changing and we always have this responsibility to educate. We know that the Chinese customer, in terms of eating habits, is quite strong [stubborn]. So where can we contribute in terms of education?

Apart from cooking and serving, there is more to it [hospitality]. It is about educating and bringing general culture [together]. The customer also feels satisfied when they have learnt or discovered something new. The 'wow' effect is not only in food quality and service quality, it is also about the capacity to tell a story and [inform] people about what is behind [the food]. I think exporting [gastronomy] from Macau will help with that external marketing.

“If we look at the touristic profile of Macau, it is still very regional-oriented.**”**

MDT - Can Macanese cuisine, as a halfway house between East and West, be used as a bridge to entice Chinese customers to try European cuisines?

OV - Yes - absolutely. But then that will be a concept on its own. In terms of food fusion, there can be Macanese food, then there can be a 50-50 fusion between Portuguese and Chinese food, then [and] there can be Portuguese food with Asian influences. Or we can go more Asian with a Portuguese twist. All of these are [separate] identities, but the blend is very interesting. I would go as far as saying that there is still something to be done in regards to Mediterranean/Middle Eastern food with an Asian twist. [That] could be the next big thing.

MDT - The Institute for Tourism Studies was ranked second-best for hospitality in the Asia region last year. Coming from the most renowned hospitality school in the world, how do you regard

the development of this institution?

OV - Of what I have experienced... staying in their hotel and eating in both restaurants, I can only say that I am very impressed. I am very impressed with the overall organization, which is always meticulous. The standard is working here. It's very professional and they [the lecturers] are close to their students. They understand the game.

I have also experienced the mentality of the students. They are very open [...] and are able to compete in any type of market [around the world], especially as they speak multiple languages. [The IFT] is creating some very impressive young professionals and I think the market will keep buying them. I believe for the time being, IFT's output of graduates is still feeding the need in the local market. But I am sure that some students want to discover some other markets - and this is great because they will get best practices and [further] knowledge from abroad and bring that back to Macau.

MDT - There has been considerable alarm in recent years over the growing number of tourists traveling from East Asia to European destinations. Some are calling this 'tourism saturation'. Do you consider this a problem and is Macau reaching that stage?

OV - This will be different for each region and will need to be evaluated [individually]. I don't think that Macau is saturated yet and I don't think it will be for some time. But if we look at Paris - the world's most visited city - it is reaching the point where I think they may start putting [visitor] quotas in.

Maybe access to certain cities will become even more exclusive in the future.

At some point, it's just going to be unpleasant for the population [if there are too many tourists] - but also for the tourists. I know that if I were a tourist, then this [phenomenon] would affect my experience of the city.

MDT - The development of the Cotai Strip is supposed to alleviate congestion in Macau's central district. Was this a wise move?

OV - Yes, there is space in Cotai. But the problem is that you don't go to Paris to visit the outskirts of Paris. If you visit Paris, are you going to be happy to hear that [they] have developed a whole new Paris [in the suburbs]? 'You can visit that - but the Eiffel Tower is unfortunately going to be for next time.' That's going to be impossible.

Lawmaker calls for teacher pay rise

Lawmaker Wong Kit Cheng has questioned the government over whether it is considering increasing the salaries of the city's teachers, according to a report by Macao Daily News. "In order to stabilize and push forward the development of the city's team of teachers, does the government authority have plans to increase the professional development subsidy for teaching staff in private schools? Will the government establish a systemic adjustment mechanism [concerning said subsidies], to allow teachers' salaries and welfare to be better secured?" asked Wong. Wong hopes the government will provide both financial security to teachers and also medical protection.

Civil servant suspended over secret bathroom recording

A former employee of the Macao Customs Service has been officially suspended for secretly recording people showering inside a men's changing room in a local university. The man, surnamed U, was an administrative worker when he committed the crime and was caught last September. In total, three men spotted U sitting strangely in the bathroom. Upon questioning, U admitted that he was taking videos of people showering. In U's phone, approximately 400 photos taken without consent were found, all being male victims.

MGTO submits F&B licensing bill to Legal Affairs Bureau

THE Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) has confirmed that a draft bill - which proposes to issue a temporary license to restaurants - has been submitted to the Legal Affairs Bureau (DSAJ).

Temporary licenses are taken as a measure to speed up the licensing process, MGTO told local broadcaster TDM, noting that the draft bill is still subject to adjustment by DSAJ.

It is still unknown when the bill will be delivered to the Executive Council.

The Times contacted the tourism body to request further information about the draft bill but no reply was provided by press time.

Currently, MGTO grants licenses to restaurants, bars and nightclubs.

In a session at the Legislative Assembly last month, lawmakers Kou Hoi In and Si Ka Lon questioned the progress of simplifying license application procedures for restaurants, in



response to which MGTO director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes explained that the bureau is planning to revise the license application law.

The revised procedure would allow the bureau to give temporary licenses to applicants.

Fernandes also explained

that license application procedures for restaurants in hotels take time to be approved due to the complicated procedures involved, as it would need to reach the quality standards of both hotel and restaurant.

Thus, the director of the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP), Kou

Peng Kuan, said that the bureau is implementing a new system of temporary licenses that will allow establishments to start operating conditionally while the licensing process is ongoing.

Currently, only the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) can grant general restaurants a temporary license with a six-month validity period.

Back in December, it was announced that MGTO and IACM would issue licenses to restaurants as separate administrative entities.

Fernandes said restaurants inside hotels or shopping malls will be licensed by MGTO, whereas all other restaurants will be licensed by IACM, and she believed that only a few restaurant licenses would be transferred to IACM.

She also said that the tourism body is reviewing its own licensing mechanism, with the department having already approved the first draft of the review.

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ANALYSIS

Wynn Resorts' next battle: Friends of Steve who remain on board

Christopher Palmeri

STEVE Wynn may be gone from the casino company that bears his name, but he still has friends in high places, including the chairman of the board.

D. Boone Wayson took over as chairman of Wynn Resorts Ltd. in February after Wynn stepped down, a shake-up spurred by reports that Wynn sexually harassed female employees over decades. The Wynn and Wayson families go way back, to a bingo parlor operated by Steve and Boone's fathers in the 1960s.

Now those longstanding ties may become a liability for Wayson and other so-called legacy directors. Steve Wynn's ex-wife Elaine, who has become the company's largest individual shareholder, made it clear this week that she intends to go after board members who were close to her former husband.

To start, she is withholding her votes for John Hagenbuch, a director since 2012. He sits on the company's compensation committee and the special committee of the board investigating the allegations against Steve Wynn. Hagenbuch is a real estate investor from Ketchum, Idaho, near where Steve Wynn has vacationed for years.

"I am deeply concerned by what I view as the lack of independence and responsible oversight demonstrated by the current board of directors," she said in a letter to shareholders on Monday. "My opposition to Mr. Hagenbuch's re-election serves as a referendum on all of the longstanding legacy directors."

In response, the company noted that it has added "three new experienced and distinguished



Elaine Wynn, ex-wife of Steve Wynn, listens during a hearing in Las Vegas

directors" since Wynn's departure. Neither the company nor any board member is providing information to, or accepting information from, the former chief executive officer, according to an e-mailed statement. Wayson "is an experienced, seasoned and accomplished gaming and real estate professional and the right person to lead the refresh of the board," the company said.

Wynn Resorts has implemented many changes since Steve Wynn stepped down two months ago. Three longtime board members have left the company or announced plans to retire. And the three new directors, appointed last week, are all women. That means four of the company's 10 directors are now women, well ahead of the 23 percent average of Fortune 500 companies, according to the corporate research firm Equilar Inc.

Among those not on the board: the company's new chief execu-

tive officer, Matt Maddox. That puts him in the minority among CEOs of large corporations.

"The board believed that it was important to appoint independent and diverse directors as a first step," Wynn Resorts said in a statement. "As we move forward to further strengthen the company and board, we anticipate adding additional directors this summer including insiders."

Elaine Wynn is opposing Hagenbuch because his term on the board is up at this year's annual meeting, slated for May 16 in Las Vegas. Under the company's current rules, he'd serve until 2021 as part of Wynn's staggered board - a situation she would also like to change.

Among her other complaints, Maddox's compensation of USD24 million is "exorbitant," and a possible sale of a still under-construction casino near Boston, which the CEO has said he is contemplating, is "short-si-

ghted."

In an April 19 letter to Elaine Wynn, Wayson said that the deadline for nominating directors had passed. The board didn't see fit to reopen the process, he said, but would "look forward to engaging with you constructively in the future."

The Wayson and Wynn families have a long history. After Steve Wynn's father Michael died unexpectedly in 1963, Steve Wynn stepped in take over the bingo hall near rural Lothian, Maryland, that was co-owned with Edward Wayson Sr., according to a 1981 casino filing in New Jersey.

Steve Wynn used cash from the bingo operation to begin his legendary rise in Las Vegas. D. Boone Wayson, 11 years younger than Steve, tagged along for much of it, working with the casino mogul at the Golden Nugget casinos in Las Vegas and in Atlantic City, New Jersey, where he served as president.

Wayson was involved in one of the more colorful moments in Wynn's career, when an alleged drug trafficker named Anthony Castelbuono, aka Tony Cakes, came in to gamble at the New Jersey resort. Wayson was questioned by federal regulators about his contact with the gambler, but his conduct was not an issue, Massachusetts officials concluded.

The relationship between Wayson and Wynn could still play a role in the company's future. Regulators in Nevada, Macau and Massachusetts are investigating the allegations of sexual harassment, including questions of what other Wynn executives and board members knew about the behavior.

On April 12, the Massachusetts

Gaming Commission declined to immediately remove Steve Wynn's name from the company's gambling license, despite his having left the company and sold all of his shares.

Commission Chairman Stephen Crosby said he wanted to make sure the former CEO won't have any "residual influence" over Wynn Resorts. Through a spokeswoman, the commission declined to comment on Wayson's ongoing role at the company, saying it's preparing for an upcoming hearing on Steve Wynn's license status.

Anne Sheehan, who formerly ran the corporate governance program at the California State Teachers' Retirement System, said it would be difficult for a company the size of Wynn Resorts to replace its entire board at once. Sheehan said she recommended one of the new members, author and former executive Betsy Atkins, to the Wynn board.

"This is a good first step," Sheehan said in an interview. "I'm confident we'll see additional changes with some of the long-tenured board members."

Hal Shear, a management consultant who said he is friends with gaming commissioner Crosby, said the ties between Steve Wynn and current board members such as Wayson are worth examining.

"You'd like to see as few entanglements as possible," Shear said in an interview. "The fact that he knows the person from long ago needs to be looked at in the context of the recent past. Do they vacation together? Do they have houses next to each other? Do they do anything that creates any conflicts of interest?" **Bloomberg**

ENTERTAINMENT

The Roadhouse hosting blues band until weekend

Lynzy Valles

THE Roadhouse Macau has once again invited a blues band, Bleu Rascals, to perform at its sports bar for two weeks.

Following the band's win at the Cotai International Jazz & Blues Festival back in 2013, the Filipino band, composed of three young performers, has been receiving a series of international jazz festival invitations abroad.

Bleu Rascals bested some 118 competitors during the



festival.

Back in Macau with a solo vocal performer Caesar Salcedo, the band will be playing live at The Roadhouse until Saturday.

Speaking to Times, vocalist and guitarist of the band, Paul Marney Leobrera, shared that Macau remains their favorite destination to perform,

following performances in regions including Hong Kong, Japan, Guam, Tennessee and Vietnam.

According to the frontman, winning the festival in Cotai was the band's most glorious moment.

"We've been here at The Roadhouse for many times already. We were here at the opening; The Roadhouse is like family to us," he added.

"It's always been amazing. It really feels like home. You always feel like it's family just by playing

music and having a good time.

The jazz band plays covers of artists including John Mayer and Jimi Hendrix.

At The Roadhouse, the band also plays their original compositions from their first album, released several years ago.

"It really is our favorite place to perform. There's a sort of vibe that The Roadhouse gives and makes us want to go back every time," the vocalist said.

According to Leobrera,

the invitations the band receives abroad are all unexpected. As he recalls, he was just 17 years old when he dreamt of forming a band that would perform in crowds.

The band also plays as a resident performer in the sports bar's branch in Manila.

Although The Roadhouse still has not disclosed further information about when the band will perform at its restobar, it hinted that the band would return to the SAR this year.

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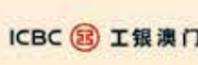
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Sarah Frier

FOR the first time, Facebook Inc. is letting people know its specific rules for taking down content once it's reported to the social network's moderators.

The 27-page document governs the behavior of more than 2 billion users, giving Facebook's definitions of hate speech, violent threats, sexual exploitation and more. It's the closest the world has come to seeing an international code of conduct that was previously enacted behind closed doors. The release of the document follows frequent criticism and confusion about the company's policies.

The community standards read like the result of years of trial and error and are used to provide workers with enough specificity to make quick and consistent judgments. While fully nude close-ups of buttocks aren't allowed, they are permitted if "photoshopped on a public figure." Content from a hacked source isn't acceptable "except in limited cases of newsworthiness."

Facebook published the policies to help people understand where the company draws the line on nuanced issues, Monika Bickert, vice president of global policy management, said in a blog post. The company will for the first time give people a right to appeal its decisions.

The release of the content policies comes just days after Chief Executive Officer Mark Zuckerberg testified to Congress, where he faced frequent questions

Facebook publishes content removal policies for the first time



about the company's practices. They included lawmakers asking if Facebook unfairly takes down more conservative content than that from liberals or why bad content - such as fake profiles and posts selling opioid drugs - stay up even though they have been reported.

"Our policies are only as good as the strength and accuracy of our enforcement - and our enforcement isn't perfect," Bickert said. "In some cases, we make mistakes because our policies are not sufficiently clear to our content reviewers. More often than not, however, we make

mistakes because our processes involve people, and people are fallible."

The company has 7,500 content reviewers, up 40 percent from a year earlier, working in 40 languages. Facebook also has said it's working to increase the number of workers who speak the various languages that require more attention. But with 2.2 billion users around the world, that means each reviewer is responsible on average for a userbase that is equivalent to the population of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In his testimony to Congress, Zuckerberg promised that the

application of standards would improve with artificial intelligence. Those systems, however, are trained by humans and are likely to also be fallible.

While Facebook aspires to apply its policies "consistently and fairly to a community that transcends regions, cultures and languages," it frequently fails to do so. Recent reports in the New York Times have detailed how the company has been slow to respond to posts that incite ethnic violence in countries including Myanmar and Sri Lanka. In many cases, people have reported content that Facebook has allowed to remain

up, even though it violates standards.

The policies are detailed when it comes to specific problems the U.S. has experienced - especially gun violence. The profiles of mass murderers are taken down if they've killed four people at once, as defined by whether they were convicted or identified by law enforcement with images from the crime, or whether they were taken their own life or were killed at the scene or aftermath.

One of Facebook's definitions about harassment involves "claims that a victim of a violent tragedy is lying about being a victim, acting/pretending to be a victim of a verified event, or otherwise is paid or employed to mislead people about their role in the event." That definition applies only when a message is sent directly to a survivor or immediate family member - as occurred with victims of the Sandy Hook and Parkland shootings.

Now that Facebook has published the policies, it's asking for feedback to edit them. The company will host a series of events around the world to solicit advice, starting in May.

"Our efforts to improve and refine our Community Standards depend on participation and input from people around the world," Bickert said. **Bloomberg**

Singapore's reputation seen at risk as Noble Group battle rages

Krystal Chia

NOBLE Group Ltd. dissident shareholder Goldilocks Investment Co. says the Singapore regulator's handling of the trader's drawn-out battle for survival is being closely followed by overseas investors, highlighting the importance of the case for the city-state's reputation as a financial hub.

"This was our first investment into Asia: we were looking at this as making an investment into Asia, especially in Singapore," Ajit Vijay Joshi, a fund manager at Abu Dhabi-based Goldilocks, said in a phone interview. He added: "I'm sure a lot of other people are watching what they will do."

Once Asia's largest commodity trader, Noble Group has imploded over

the past three years, losing billions, defaulting on USD3.4 billion of debt, and shredding its market value. That decline has been marked from the outset by allegations of improper accounting by long-time foe Iceberg Research, which the company has denied. While Noble Group Chairman Paul Brough is now pushing a debt-for-equity rescue, Goldilocks is resisting, saying it's unfair in its current form, and appealing to Singapore Exchange Ltd. to address its concerns.

"We're closely watching how the whole regulatory regime responds to the minority shareholder rights," Joshi said on Monday in his first media interview on the dispute. "I'm sure a lot of other people are looking at SGX's respon-

se to some of the allegations that have been put forward."

The Singapore exchange, the front-line regulator in the city-state, did not immediately provide a comment on Joshi's remarks. Earlier on Monday, an SGX spokesperson said the exchange remains in active engagement with Noble Group when asked about the fight between the company and Goldilocks.

An external spokesperson for Noble Group declined to comment yesterday, referencing past announcements to the SGX, including last week's letter from the chairman setting out the case for the debt-for-equity rescue. In that note, Brough said if shareholders don't approve the plan, the company would opt for a pre-packa-

ged administration in the U.K. to implement the restructuring.

"Our regulators need to rethink their strategy on when to intervene and investigate," Associate Professor Mak Yuen Teen, co-director of the Corporate Governance and Financial Reporting Centre at the National University of Singapore Business School, said by email yesterday. "Not limited to this case, but there's a sense that until something escalates to a huge public scandal, the regulators are quite content to stay on the sidelines."

Goldilocks bought into Noble Group in mid-2017, and now has 8.1 percent, the largest holding after founder Richard Elman and China's sovereign wealth fund. Since then, Goldilocks's relationship

with Noble Group has soured as it objected to the rescue plan. In March, it sued the company and its executives, alleging managers paid themselves inflated salaries and then attempted a cover-up. Noble Group has said the allegations are without merit.

While the fund has been battling the debt-for-equity proposal, more than 80 percent of senior creditors are in support, according to Noble Group. The next key date comes Monday, when the annual general meeting is scheduled. A separate special meeting will be held for a shareholder vote on the rescue. Over the past 12 months, the shares have collapsed more than 90 percent.

Goldilocks says Brough's plan will leave existing equity holders with too small a share of a new company. The latest row flared this week, when Noble Group rejected a submission from Goldilocks to nominate five directors, saying the paperwork was invalid. Goldilocks descri-

bed the move as unprecedented.

Iceberg has also sought to draw the regulators into the fray. In August, the Monetary Authority of Singapore said it will investigate any potential breaches of the law flagged to it, responding to allegations from Iceberg that authorities failed to make adequate checks on the trader.

"I see so many cases of bad behavior harming minority shareholders that it is seriously damaging trust in our market," said Associate Professor Mak. "Regulators cannot only step in and investigate where there is incontrovertible proof of wrongdoing - by then everyone is dead metaphorically."

Joshi said that he's optimistic that the company can still be saved, and the fund is working on an alternative to Brough's current plan. At the same time, he said that lots of overseas investors are keeping tabs on its struggle. **Bloomberg**

ANALYSIS

Aimed at China, Trump's tariffs are hitting closer to home

Richard Lardner, Washington

PRESIDENT Donald Trump's escalating dispute with China over trade and technology is threatening jobs and profits in working-class communities where his "America First" agenda hit home.

The Commerce Department has received more than 2,400 applications from companies seeking waivers from the administration's tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, which may result in duty payments of millions of dollars for larger businesses. The department has begun posting the requests online for public comment; several of the applications released so far suggest deep misgivings with Trump's protectionist strategy, especially in areas where he won strong support during the 2016 election.

The tariffs are aimed primarily at China for flooding the global market with cheap steel and aluminum. But they've also led to confusion and uncertainty, according to Associated Press interviews and a review of records. In Oklahoma, Texas and Wisconsin, for example, businesses operating in the furniture, energy and food sectors have outlined the financial difficulties they'd face if they're not excused from the steel tariff.

In Okmulgee, Oklahoma, dozens of jobs hang in the balance as office furniture giant Steelcase waits to hear back from the Commerce Department.

A Steelcase subsidiary, PolyVision, operates a plant in Okmulgee that uses a special type of steel from Japan to manufacture a durable glass-like surface for whiteboards and architectural purposes. PolyVision "cannot and will not be able to procure" from U.S. companies the cold-rolled steel it

AP PHOTO



China, which was left on the target list, retaliated by imposing tariffs on USD3b in U.S. products

requires "in a sufficient and reasonably available amount or of a satisfactory quality," Steelcase said.

Trump won most of the votes cast for president in Okmulgee County. Without a waiver, Steelcase warned, the "economic viability of PolyVision [and] the small town of Okmulgee" would be jeopardized.

The waiver request also indicates that a USD15 million plant expansion may be at risk. Steelcase and PolyVision are on the verge of making the investment, which

would create new construction and manufacturing jobs, according to the request.

Roger Ballenger, Okmulgee's city manager, said he and other local officials are "very concerned about the situation with PolyVision."

The tariffs — 25 percent on imported steel and 10 percent on imported aluminum — are designed to protect and rebuild the U.S. companies that manufacture the metals. The U.S. temporarily exempted several major trading partners, including the European Union, Mexico and Canada.

China, which was left on the target list, retaliated by imposing tariffs on \$3 billion in U.S. products, including apples, pork and ginseng.

Trump responded by adding more protectionist measures as punishment for Chinese theft of U.S. intellectual property. And Beijing punched back by proposing tariffs on \$50 billion in U.S. products including small aircraft

and soybeans — a direct threat to rural areas that were key to Trump's victory.

John Hritz, CEO of JSW Steel USA in Baytown, Texas, said his company is in lockstep with Trump's approach. "We're in favor of growing the steel industry in this country," Hritz said. JSW Steel, owned by Indian conglomerate JSW Group, is embarking on a \$500 million overhaul of the plant that it says will create hundreds of jobs.

The growth would be welcomed in Baytown, where unemployment is 9.8 percent, more than double the national rate. Baytown is located partly in Harris County, which Democrat Hillary Clinton won, and partly in Chambers County, which Trump handily won.

The future is much murkier for another Baytown steel business, Borusan Mannesmann Pipe. Without a waiver, Borusan may face tariffs of \$25 million to \$30 million annually if it imports steel

tubing and casing from its parent company in Turkey, according to information the company provided to the AP.

Borusan said the Baytown production line would no longer be competitive and "jobs would be threatened" if it cannot import 135,000 metric tons of steel annually over the next two years. The pipes Borusan produces are used primarily as casing for oil and natural gas wells.

But if Commerce says yes, Borusan will be able to unlock a \$25 million investment in the Baytown facility as it seeks to become a "100 percent domestic supplier," according to the waiver request. An additional \$50 million expansion in pipe fabrication capacity would follow, the company said, leading to as many as 170 new jobs.

Seneca Foods Corporation, the nation's largest vegetable canner, said in its waiver application that it's unclear, at best, if U.S. suppliers have the ability or willingness to expand their production in the long term to meet the company's annual demand for tinplate steel.

But "clearly they cannot meet demand in the short term," Seneca told Commerce officials. That means Seneca has to buy a portion of what it needs from overseas.

A person with knowledge of Seneca's situation said the company would face a \$2.25 million duty if the Commerce Department doesn't approve its waiver request for 11,000 metric tons of tinplate it already agreed to purchase from China. The material is to be delivered this year and next, according to the waiver request. The person was not authorized to speak publicly and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

Seneca said it employs more than 400 people at can-making facilities in Wisconsin and Idaho and near its headquarters in New York's Wayne County, where Trump bested Clinton. The company doesn't warn layoffs are imminent if the waiver isn't approved. Instead, the tariffs would likely come out of Seneca's bottom line, the person said. **AP**

Beijing says terrorism tops meeting of Central Asian states

CHINA'S defense minister said yesterday that fighting the threat of terrorism is a top concern to be discussed by a Beijing-led group of Central Asian states at a meeting this week that highlights Chinese ambitions to dominate the Asian security agenda.

Wei Fenghe told fellow defense officials from the eight-member Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Beijing that the group stood as a force for peace.

Foreign ministers from the group were also meeting in Beijing and a heads of state summit is planned for June in the Chinese port of Qingdao.

Chinese President Xi Jinping also plans to meet with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for an informal summit Friday and Saturday in the central city of Wuhan. Their two nations are rivals for Asian leadership and share a disputed and often tense Himalayan border.

The focus on terrorism reflects China's hopes to use the grouping to stamp out threats of cross-border support for low-level separatist insurgencies particularly in the predominantly Turkic-speaking region of Xinjiang.

Along with China and Russia, the SCO includes the Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan as well as close Chinese ally Pakistan and its arch-rival India.

Cooperation among

member nation defense ministries "has made important contributions to maintain peace in the region and the world," Wei said.

Wei said the meeting would also discuss the South China Sea, where China has rapidly been consolidating its claim to virtually the entire strategic waterway through the construction of man-made island military bases.

China has encouraged Central Asian countries to play a bigger role in

AP PHOTO



regional affairs as part of the SCO. Apart from stepping up security cooperation, China has funneled significant economic investment into Central Asia, a critical hub in President Xi Jinping's Belt-and-Road infrastructure

initiative connecting the Eurasian continent.

Beijing has also sought a bigger role in Afghanistan's political future, pushing for settlement talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government. **AP**



Taiwan company plans USD9.4b chemical complex in Louisiana

A company based in Taiwan plans to build a USD9.4 billion chemical manufacturing complex on a 970-hectare site in Louisiana, officials announced yesterday.

Gov. John Bel Edwards and Formosa Petrochemical Corp. Executive Vice President Keh-Yen Lin announced the plans for the plant in St. James Parish, between Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

The project is expected to provide 1,200 permanent jobs with average salaries of \$84,500 and up to 8,000 construction jobs, according to a state news release.

The plant will be the parish's largest industry, Parish President Timmy Roussel said.

It will add about \$28 million a year in property taxes once the exemption offered as an industrial incentive expires, Roussel told The Advocate. The parish now gets about \$60 million a year in various taxes, he said.

Part of Louisiana's standard incentive package is, with local approval, a full property tax exemption for five years, followed by an 80-percent exemption for three years. That alone would add up to about \$207 million in tax breaks over eight years.

Gary Perilloux, spokesman for Louisiana Economic Development, said he was working to get dollar figures for the exemptions.

Construction is expected to take 10 years, possibly beginning as soon as 2019 if all permits are approved. The work would be in two phases, with the first permanent jobs expected to be filled in 2021. That hiring would trigger the first of four \$3 million installments of a performance-based grant to offset infrastructure costs, the news release said.

The complex downriver from Donaldsonville would take natural gas and make ethylene, propylene, ethylene glycol and associated polymers used in many plastic products. It's the latest big petrochemical expansion in Louisiana motivated by cheap natural gas produced by the American fracking boom.

At least one such project, however, has been dropped. South African energy and chemical company Sasol called off plans last year for an \$11 billion to \$14 billion plant to convert natural gas to liquid fuels. Sasol continued with plans for an \$11.1 billion ethane cracking plant in southwest Louisiana.

Formosa has 410 employees at three existing Louisiana facilities.

Three U.S. subsidiaries agreed to pay \$12.8 million in remediation costs and fines in 2009 after a long-running battle over air, water and hazardous waste violations at two petrochemical plants in Texas and Louisiana.

The project is expected to provide 1,200 permanent jobs with average salaries of USD84,500

The proposed plants would be run by a Louisiana-registered subsidiary of Formosa, called FG LA LLC, with Lin as its CEO.

Since the site is just downriver from the Sunshine Bridge, Formosa has dubbed it the Sunshine Project.

The bridge — opened in 1964 in what was then a sparsely populated area and described by detractors as a bridge to nowhere — got its nickname from then-Gov. Jimmie Davis' song, "You Are My Sunshine." These days, it is heavily used.

"For more than 50 years, the Sunshine Bridge has connected the river parishes in a strategic fashion that has enabled tremendous industrial growth and thousands of new jobs along both sides of the Mississippi River in Louisiana," Edwards said. "The new Sunshine Project continues that bridge into a brighter economic future for Louisiana." AP

Kim meets Chinese envoy after deadly bus crash

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un has met with China's ambassador and visited a hospital where Chinese tourists were being treated after a deadly bus crash.

The crash Sunday evening killed 32 Chinese and four North Koreans, and two Chinese were seriously injured. China's official Xinhua News Agency said that the tourist bus fell from a bridge in North Hwanghae province in southern North Korea.

Photos provided by the North Korean government yesterday showed Kim meeting with Ambassador Li Jinjun at the hospital and at the Chinese Embassy.

China's Foreign Ministry said a medical team and diplomats were sent to help. It described the North Korean casualties as "workers." All visitors to North Korea must be accompanied by minders.

Chinese tourists make up the vast majority of visitors to North Korea, where they often pay homage at sites related to China's participation in the 1950-53 Korean War.

China and North Korea



Kim Jong Un (left) meets China's ambassador Li Jinjun (right) at the hospital where injured Chinese tourists are treated, in North Korea

share a lengthy border and a traditional friendship. China remains Pyongyang's largest trading partner, although commerce has dropped off by about 90 percent under United Nations sanctions.

Only about 5,000 Westerners visit the isolated, hard-line communist state each year. Americans have been banned from traveling to North Korea without special permission from the U.S. State Department since September amid concerns about the fate of those detained there in the past.

The cause of the crash wasn't mentioned. Chinese state broadcaster CCTV showed the mangled wreckage in the dark with rain falling and rescue vehicles on the scene.

North Korean roads are often bumpy and poorly maintained. There is usually no lighting other than headlights at night, even on major roads outside of the cities. Drivers tend to travel at whatever speed they feel is safe, making the roads even more dangerous, particularly when the weather is bad. AP

Police arrest suspect in arson attack that killed 18

POLICE in a southern Chinese city have caught a man suspected of setting a fire at a three-story building yesterday that killed 18 people and injured five others.

The public security bureau of Qingyuan City in Guangdong province said authorities arrested a 32-year-old man named Liu Chunlu in the county-level city of Yingde, which Qingyuan oversees.

Police had offered a 200,000 yuan reward for the man they accuse of starting the fire early yesterday morning.

The bureau said the man had burns on his hips. It did not provide a motive for the arson, but state broadcaster China Central Television reported the suspect had set fire to a karaoke parlor after an argument with others.

The suspect blocked the entrance of the joint with his motorcycle and then ignited it, setting it ablaze,



This aerial photo shows the fire accident site of a karaoke bar in Yingde City, Guangdong Province

CCTV said. The parlor had only one passage for entering and exiting, the report said.

Police, fire, health and other departments sent rescuers to the site after receiving a call around half-past midnight about the fire, the Qingyuan police said.

The fire was put out at 12:55 a.m. and the injured had been sent to the hospital, the bureau said on its official account on the mi-

croblog site, Sina Weibo.

China suffers frequent deadly fires and industrial accidents, often blamed on negligence.

Last year, police arrested a man suspected of setting fire to a two-story house in eastern China, killing 22 people. At that time, investigators discovered traces of gasoline at the scene of the pre-dawn fire in Jiangsu province and found all the doors of the house locked.



South Korea's Hyunmoo II Missile system (left) and a U.S. Army Tactical Missile System (right) fire missiles during a combined military exercise in 2017

KOREAS

Ahead of summits, US tones down war games with South

Eric Talmadge, Seoul

SPRING on the Korean Peninsula is normally the season of D-Day-style beach landings with big guns thumping in the distance and skies crisscrossed by the contrails of fighter aircraft.

But as the North and South prepare for their first summit in more than a decade this Friday, there is something different in the air: the hope of detente. Or at least of a much-needed respite.

Korea has for decades been the site of the world's largest annual military maneuvers between the U.S. and its ally South Korea. This year, the exercises have been postponed, scaled back, probably shortened and certainly toned down. They have not, however, been canceled. Here's why:

WHAT THE EXERCISES ARE

This year's exercises began on April 1 and are expected to continue through the end of the month, possibly longer.

Normally they begin in March or earlier.

At their height in the late 1980s, 200,000 troops participated in Team Spirit, making them the largest annual maneuvers in the world. The head count for Foal Eagle/Key Resolve, as the exercises are known today, is lower, but the military assets and the

kind of training involved are fine-tuned for the outbreak of a new Korean war and the possible scenario of a takedown of the Kim Jong Un regime itself.

The exercises often feature the latest and most capable weapons the U.S. military has to offer. This year it was the USS Wasp, an amphibious assault ship, which joined in the exercises for the first time.

The Wasp is capable of carrying F-35B stealth fighter jets, which can make vertical takeoffs and landings. The jets are especially sensitive for North Korea because they would likely figure into any attack in its territory, including precision "decapitation" strikes on Kim and his top lieutenants.

The USS Carl Vinson aircraft carrier and its battle group, which joined in last year and drew a threat of "merciless, ultra-precision strikes" from the North, were absent. Weather also reportedly squelched plans for the two sides to stage a D-Day-style landing operation near the coastal city of Pohang.

The lower-key exercises have so far generated nothing like the heated threats of last year.

But as a reminder of the underlying tensions, training to evacuate Americans from South Korea during a contingency was also held this month, though not formally part of the Foal Eagle program. To augment computer simulations and reflect the

possibility of a larger battle area, about 100 volunteers were flown from bases in the South all the way to the U.S. mainland, instead of only flying to Japan as they had in previous drills.

MOON'S DIPLOMATIC GAMBIT

Getting a postponement of the maneuvers appears to have been South Korean President Moon Jae-in's idea.

Moon told reporters in December that he urged Washington to put the war games off until after South Korea's Pyeongchang Winter Olympics and Paralympics, which wrapped up in March. In exchange, North Korea appears to be observing a temporary halt in missile launches and other provocative activity.

U.S. military officials have cautiously downplayed the postponement as due primarily to the logistical problems of having the war games and the Olympics at the same time. They also insist that the basic nature of the exercises hasn't changed. Kim, meanwhile, has also kept his public response guarded. He reportedly expressed to South Korean intermediaries his "understanding" that the exercises would not be canceled, just delayed.

The spirit of compromise surrounding the exercises hasn't gotten much attention. But it's a big deal.

Without it, there would likely

have been no summit, which Moon desperately wanted. The catch is that while Moon hasn't publicly suggested he's ready to squelch Foal Eagle/Key Resolve as a carrot for Kim, his willingness to postpone them for the Olympics opened the door for Kim to push for the same in the future.

The spring war games have been used as a bargaining chip before.

To entice the North to sign on to a non-nuclear agreement, Seoul and Washington called off Team Spirit in 1992. But, annoyed with North Korea's refusal to allow inspections, they revived the exercises the following year. Budgetary problems spelled the end to Team Spirit after that, but it was replaced by a series of other, gradually expanding maneuvers that have once again become a major headache for Kim.

POSSIBLE NEXT MOVES

In the run-up to Friday's North-South summit, Washington and Seoul hinted at "ending the war" on the Korean Peninsula.

The 1950-53 Korean War ended in an armistice — essentially a temporary cease-fire. A formal peace treaty would require not only an agreement between South and North Korea, but probably also the approval of their wartime allies, Washington and Beijing.

Officials in Seoul have walked

back the expectations somewhat, saying what they are really after is an agreement "ending hostilities between the South and North." That's almost verbatim what the two Koreas agreed to do at their previous summit in 2007 and at the first one in 2000.

If they want to really get serious about it, they will need to bring Washington in to take a hard look at the U.S. military presence on the peninsula, which now stands at about 28,000 troops. Though that's generally seen as taboo, President Donald Trump has suggested he is willing to consider pulling troops out. President Jimmy Carter did too, back in the 1970s.

Actually doing so would have major ramifications for regional security, particularly Washington's alliance with Japan, which could get very sticky and in the end tip the power balance toward Beijing and Moscow. South Korean officials have indicated Kim hasn't explicitly raised the North's long-standing demand for the troops to be withdrawn. But that could change quickly as negotiations progress.

Still, there are lots of small steps the North and South could take in the meantime.

Communications between the leaders, who have now established a phone hotline, and their military brass could be augmented to help diffuse tensions before they can get out of hand, along with other trust-building measures, including a serious negotiation to significantly scale back or even end for good the annual maneuvers.

That, however, is a chip best saved for after Kim completes his summit circuit, when the real bargaining is likely to begin. **AP**

MYANMAR

Asian elephants said at risk from Chinese demand for skin

A report by a British-based conservation group says rising Chinese demand for products made from elephant skin is driving poaching and posing an even greater threat to Asia's wild herds than the ivory trade.

The group Elephant Family says the threat is currently greatest in Myanmar, but warns that the Asian elephant could become extinct in half of the areas where it now ranges in the region if the problem escalates. It says the threat exceeds that from the ivory trade because poachers are targeting any elephant, not just those with tusks, and threatens elephants that are scattered in poorly protected areas.

The report's authors say their research shows that the elephant's skin is ground into powder and sold in China as a cure for stomach ailments, as well as being fashioned into beads for necklaces, bracelets and pendants.

The products are sold in physical markets and increasingly

AP PHOTO



In this photo provided by conservation group Elephant Family, a skin stripped elephant limb lies in southern Ayerawady division, Myanmar

over the internet, where the report says sellers post videos showing workers in backyards in Myanmar and Laos cutting up and carving elephant carcasses, to vouch for the authenticity of their wares.

Belinda Stewart-Cox, Elephant Family's director of conservation, told reporters at a news

conference yesterday that from the time the group started monitoring in 2014, there has been "a major ramping up of the advertising, the promotional pitches and the apparent sales."

She said it seems as if "there are marketers and profiteers behind this looking to ratchet up what has, I think, long been a very,

very minor incidental or local market trade of no great scale, or no scale that was threatening, anyways."

Researchers identified 50 individual Chinese traders selling through social media forums. They said labels are printed in Chinese, prices are quoted in Chinese currency and sales on-

line are conducted in Mandarin.

The report — "Skinned: the Growing Appetite for Asian Elephants" — also said that China's State Forestry Administration has apparently licensed some products that contain elephant skin.

"At a time when China has shown commitment to ending its domestic trade in elephant ivory, it would be troubling and perverse to find that, at the same time, it is creating a new, legal demand for elephant skin products," it said.

Stewart-Cox said her organization has reached out to Chinese officials and has worked closely with Myanmar officials to address the issue.

"It is our intention to facilitate collaboration if possible," she said. "I think we should pull together on this, there is no time, Myanmar is losing too many elephants, too fast."

Elephant Family puts the current size of Myanmar's wild population at approximately 2,000. Quoting figures from Myanmar's Forest Department, the group says that wild elephant deaths there have risen significantly in recent years, from 26 in 2013 to at least 61 in 2016, most of them due to poaching. Many were found with the skin stripped from the carcasses. The timescale fits in with the appearance of elephant skin products online. **AP**

AD

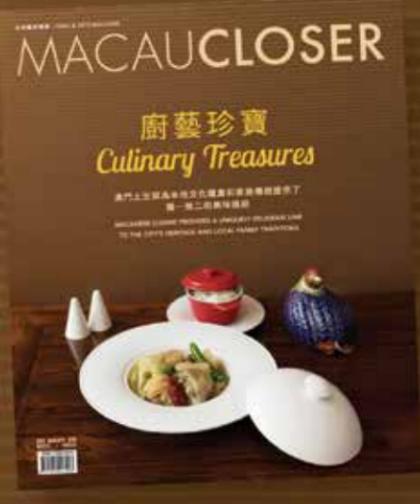
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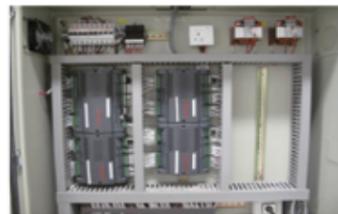
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Charmaine Noronha, Toronto

CANADA

Motive elusive after van driver kills 10 on Toronto sidewalk

POLICE in Canada's biggest city are piecing together witness accounts and surveillance video trying to determine why a driver plowed a rented van along a crowded sidewalk, killing 10 people and injuring 15 in what many said seemed a deliberate attack.

A 25-year-old suspect was quickly captured in a tense but brief confrontation with officers a few blocks away from where his van jumped the sidewalk yesterday [Macau time] and continued for a mile, leaving people bloodied and dead in his wake. But authorities so far had not disclosed a possible motive or cause even as the police chief agreed with witnesses that it seemed intentional.

"The incident definitely looked deliberate," Police Chief Mark Saunders told reporters at a late-night news conference.

Saunders said the suspect, Alek Minassian, who lives in the Toronto suburb of Richmond Hill, had not been known to police previously. An online social media profile described him as a college student.

Officials would not comment on a possible motive except to play down a possible connection to terrorism, a thought that occurred to many following a series of attacks involving trucks and pedestrians in Europe and the presence in Toronto this week of Cabinet ministers from the G7 nations.

Asked if there was any evidence of a terrorist link, the chief said only, "Based on what we have there's nothing that has it to compromise the national security at this time."

A senior national government official said earlier that authorities had not turned over the investigation to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, a sign that investigators believed it was unlikely that terrorism was the motive. The official agreed to reveal that information only if not quoted by name.



■ **'The incident definitely looked deliberate,' Police Chief Saunders told reporters at a late-night news conference**

Authorities released few details in the case, saying the investigation was still underway, with witnesses being interviewed and surveillance video being examined.

"I can assure the public all our available resources have been brought in to investigate this tragic situation," Toronto Police Services Deputy Chief Peter Yuen said earlier.

Police said the suspect was scheduled to appear in court last night [Macau time], and that information on the charges against him would be released at that time.

The incident occurred as Cabinet ministers from the major industrial countries were gathered in Canada to discuss a range of international issues in the run-up to the G7 meeting near Quebec City in June. Canadian Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale called the incident a "horrific attack" and said the G7 foreign ministers extended their condolences.

The driver was heading south on busy Yonge Street around 1:30 p.m. and the streets were crowded with people enjoying an unseasonably warm day when the van jumped onto the sidewalk.

Ali Shaker, who was driving near the van at the time, told Canadian broadcast outlet CP24 that the driver appeared to be

moving deliberately through the crowd at more than 30 mph.

"He just went on the sidewalk," a distraught Shaker said. "He just started hitting everybody, man. He hit every single person on the sidewalk. Anybody in his way he would hit."

Witness Peter Kang told CTV News that the driver did not seem to make any effort to stop.

"If it was an accident he would have stopped," Kang said. "But the person just went through the sidewalk. He could have stopped."

Video broadcast on several Canadian outlets showed police arresting the driver, dressed in dark clothes, after officers surrounded him and his rental Ryder van several blocks from where the incident occurred in the North York neighborhood of northern Toronto. He appeared to make some sort of gesture at the police with an object in his hand just before they ordered him to lie down on the ground

and took him away.

Witness Phil Zullo told Canadian Press that he saw police arresting the suspect and people "strewn all over the road" where the incident occurred.

"I must have seen about five, six people being resuscitated by bystanders and by ambulance drivers," Zullo said. "It was awful. Brutal."

Police shut down the Yonge and Finch intersection following the incident and Toronto's transit agency said it had suspended service on the subway line running through the area.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau expressed his sympathies for those involved.

"We should all feel safe walking in our cities and communities," he said. "We are monitoring this situation closely, and will continue working with our law enforcement partners around the country to ensure the safety and security of all Canadians." **AP**

TORONTO MEETING

Johnson: G7 officials focus on Russia's 'malign' behavior

CABINET ministers from the G7 countries have committed to taking Russia to task for what Britain's foreign secretary described yesterday as a broad range of "malign" behavior.

Boris Johnson said the G7 ministers agreed during their weekend discussion on the need to address the disruptive influence of Vladimir Putin's Russia.

The G7s foreign and interior ministries are holding

talks in Toronto, where Chrystia Freeland, Canada's foreign affairs minister, has pushed Russia to the top of a packed agenda that includes North Korea, Iran and the ongoing Syrian crisis.

The talks are part of a series of ministerial-level gatherings in the run-up to the G7 leaders' summit which Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will host in June in Charlevoix, Quebec.

"What we decided [...] was that we were going to set up a G7 group that would look at Russian malign behavior in all its manifestations, whether it's cyberwar, whether it's disinformation, assassination attempts, whatever it happens to be, and collectively try and call it out," Johnson said.

"Russia is so unbelievably clever at kind of sowing doubt and confusion and spreading all this fake

news and trying to muddy the waters. We think there's a role for the G7 in just trying to provide some clarity."

The ministers will also be tackling the issue of how best to deal with foreign fighters who are returning from Middle East battlefields.

Canadian Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale said that the defeat of Islamic State militants last year in Syria has caused



British Foreign Minister Boris Johnson (center left)

them to spread out — geographically as well as on the internet — and pose a renewed and potentially more insidious threat.

Other security issues include the nuclear stan-

doff with North Korea, the crisis in Venezuela, possible war crimes committed against Rohingya Muslims and ongoing civil unrest in Syria and the Middle East. **AP**

what's ON



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Offbeat

AT TRIBECA, THE NIGHT BELONGS TO PATTI SMITH AND BRUCE



The night belonged to Patti Smith at the Tribeca Film Festival — and to her friend Bruce Springsteen, who thrilled the crowd with a surprise visit to perform the hit they co-wrote, “Because the Night.”

The occasion was Monday night’s premiere of a new concert documentary about Smith, “Horses: Patti Smith and Her Band,” directed by Steven Sebring. After the film, which documents the January 2016 Los Angeles concerts where Smith performed her album, “Horses,” to mark its 40th anniversary, the curtain rose at Manhattan’s Beacon Theater. Standing there was Smith, 71, and her band — this time in the flesh.

They performed several hits, including “Dancing Barefoot” and “Gloria.” After Smith introduced her band members, she said she had one more person to introduce — and out strolled Springsteen, to the roaring of the crowd. Together, they performed “Because the Night,” for which Springsteen wrote the music and chorus, and Smith the verses. Springsteen stayed around for the finale, too, a spirited rendition of Smith’s “People Have the Power.” On that one, they were joined another friend — former R.E.M. frontman Michael Stipe.

During the concert, Smith paid tribute to the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, and their fight against gun violence, calling them “the hope of this planet.”

“We have to be with them — pray with them, march with them,” she said, before launching into a rendition of “For What It’s Worth.” “Their cause is our future.”

Again at the end of the set, Smith called on “our young people to lead us.”

“People, we have to make change NOW,” she said.

Sebring’s documentary will become available for streaming in May.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	Miscellaneous
15:40	Miscellaneous
17:30	Miscellaneous
18:25	Brazilian Soap Opera (Repeated)
19:15	TDM Interview (Repeated)
19:50	Portuguese Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Portuguese Program
22:10	Brazilian Soap Opera
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Highlights
00:35	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:10	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

25 APR



AVENGERS: INFINITY WAR

ROOM 1
2:30, 6:00, 9:00pm

ROOM 2
4:30pm

Director: Anthony Russo, Joe Russo

Starring: Robert Downey Jr, Chris Evans, Chris Hemsworth

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 149min



RAMPAGE

ROOM 2
2:15, 07:30, 9:30pm

Director: Brad Peyton

Starring: Dwayne Johnson, Naomie Harris, Malin Akerman

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 107min



ISLE OF DOGS

ROOM 3
2:30, 9:30pm

Director: Wes Anderson

Starring: Bryan Cranston, Koyu Rankin, Edward Norton

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 101min

COLOR ME TRUE

ROOM 2
2:30, 4:30, 9:45pm

Director: Takeuchi Hideki

Starring: Ayase Haruka, Sakaguchi Kentarou

Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)

this day in history



1974 REBELS SEIZE CONTROL OF PORTUGAL

Army rebels are in control of Portugal tonight after an almost bloodless dawn coup ended nearly 50 years of dictatorship.

Shortly after midnight, tanks rolled into the centre of Lisbon. The Salazar Bridge over the River Tagus was seized and the airport, radio and television centres were taken.

Troops armed with machineguns stormed the barracks where the Prime Minister, Dr Marcello Caetano, and several of his ministers had taken refuge.

The former deputy armed forces minister, General Antonio de Spínola, received the surrender of the prime minister, who has now fled into exile to the Portuguese island of Madeira.

By sunrise the Movement of the Armed Forces, or MFA, was in control. It issued an immediate proclamation appealing for calm and patriotism.

After almost five decades of dictatorship, it promised to restore civil liberties and hold general elections to a national assembly as soon as possible.

The MFA condemned Portugal’s foreign policy. After 13 years of fighting, it said, Portugal had been unable to achieve peace “between Portuguese of all races and creeds”.

It also called for a clean-up of state-run institutions which had legitimised the abuse of power.

A seven-man junta, led by General Spínola, would oversee the transition period until democracy could be established.

General Spínola and his troops received a hero’s welcome from crowds, who gave them cigarettes, food, newspapers and carnations which were in full bloom at the time.

In one violent outburst, up to six civilians were killed after shots were fired from the headquarters of the police station - and troops responded by storming the building.

The Democratic Elections Commission group, which contested last year’s parliamentary elections against the Government, issued a statement today saying that the group considered as positive “an act which could lead to the overthrow of a regime which for 50 years has oppressed the people of Portugal.”

The majority of Portuguese troops, nearly 140,000 out of 204,000, are posted overseas, propping up Portugal’s tottering colonial empire in Angola, Guinea and Mozambique.

General Spínola was sacked from his job as deputy armed forces minister last month after writing a book, Portugal and the Future, in which he argued that the Portuguese could not win its African wars by military means alone.

He was Governor and Commander in Chief of Portuguese Guinea between 1968 and 1972 and was widely respected for trying to win over the hearts and minds of the local population.

His book was regarded as heretical by the country’s right-wing establishment - in particular his stated claim that Portugal was not defending the West and its civilisation by colonising African states.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The 25 April coup became known as the Carnation Revolution. It ended the longest dictatorship in Europe, the Estado Novo.

The new regime pushed through a rapid and hasty programme of decolonisation. Over the next few years Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Cape Verde Islands, Sao Tome and Principe, and Angola all became independent.

General Spínola served briefly as interim president and was succeeded by General Francisco da Costa Gomes.

Between them they nationalised about 60% of the economy and carried out a major redistribution of land.

Hundreds of political prisoners were released.

Over the course of the next decade a stable two party system was established.

Caetano spent the rest of his life in exile in Brazil.

Freedom Day is now celebrated as a national holiday on 25 April.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Trying to eat your feelings instead of dealing with them? That's dangerous for both your emotional and physical health.

Taurus April 20-May 20

Speak up if you've got a problem. It's important that you're able to accurately identify and voice areas in your life that aren't working.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21

You weren't on your game last week, mostly because you were concentrating on a certain someone, and quite unable to think about much else.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22

You're the center of attention in a big way right now. It's a good thing that the stars give you a double dose of communication skills.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Astrological influences are working as busily as bees to push your agenda, refine your ideas and polish your reputation with the powers that be.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Isn't it time you connected with some people who want to change the world as much as you do? Eclectic, creative types like yourself thrive when they're surrounded by thrival mental and emotional energy.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22

It's important to remember that not everyone will be able to grasp the immediate importance of your thoughts, so temper your words and suggestions to suit your audience.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

If you'd rather be at home, don't try to be the life of the party. Current celestial influences encourage quiet contemplation and deep thinking.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Some pretty combative personalities might be playing in your personal sandbox, and the resulting noise is enough to make you want to duck and cover - permanently.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Right now, you feel like you're in limbo but think of it as more of an astrological waiting room rather than a grey area.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Expect some changes at work. You may receive a promotion, an offer you can't refuse from a rival firm or see an opportunity to strike out on your own.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20

Is there a whole lotta shakin' going on? Well, that's no surprise, especially since you've seen fit to start making some big changes in your life.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

Easy Sudoku grid with numbers 2, 9, 3, 5, 4, 6, 1, 7, 6, 7, 6, 8, 6, 9, 1, 5, 5, 9, 2, 8, 3, 5, 2, 8.

Easy+

Easy+ Sudoku grid with numbers 9, 2, 4, 1, 1, 4, 8, 6, 9, 4, 7, 2, 3, 5, 7, 2, 1, 8, 1, 7, 6, 7, 3, 6, 3, 5, 9.

Medium

Medium Sudoku grid with numbers 1, 6, 5, 5, 3, 6, 9, 4, 1, 5, 1, 7, 5, 7, 4, 9, 8, 9, 2, 4, 8, 1, 7, 2, 6.

Hard

Hard Sudoku grid with numbers 4, 2, 1, 6, 1, 3, 4, 8, 2, 3, 7, 8, 5, 4, 1.

WEATHER

CHINA

Weather table for China with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Rows include Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, Urumqi, Xi'an, Lhasa, Chengdu, Chongqing, Kunming, Nanjing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Hangzhou, Taipei, Guangzhou, Hong Kong.

WORLD

Weather table for World with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Rows include Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, London, New York.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Young cow; 5- Clear the board; 10- Spy; 14- Cameo shape; 15- Second king of Israel; 16- In a bad way; 17- Soup with sushi; 18- Cabinet department; 19- Cartoonist Silverstein; 20- Abroad; 22- Aboriginal; 24- Sick; 25- ___ extra cost; 26- Some sculptures; 29- Postal carrier's tote; 33- Role for Clark; 34- Fail to include; 36- Compass dir.; 37- Musical ability; 38- Look happy; 39- From ___ Z; 40- Altar constellation; 41- River to the Ubangi; 42- Church council; 44- Converting to leather; 47- Zero; 48- South American Indian; 49- CPR expert; 50- Place of contentment; 53- Most lucid; 58- Monumental; 59- Swift; 61- ___-Tass (Russian news agency); 62- Don't look at me!; 63- Related on the mother's side; 64- Magazine founder Eric; 65- Slippery ___ eel; 66- Gave a measured amount; 67- Church service;

DOWN: 1- Singer Perry; 2- Tel ___; 3- Emit coherent light; 4- Retailer of flowers; 5- Ford flops; 6- Pro ___; 7- Gardner and others; 8- Join a poker game; 9- Toothless; 10- Firearm; 11- K through 12; 12- Mtn. stat; 13- "South Park" kid; 21- Type of machine found in Las Vegas; 23- Black cuckoo; 25- Miss by ___; 26- Rare delight; 27- Scarlett of fiction; 28- Aired again; 30- Game of chance; 31- Composer Bruckner; 32- Crystal-lined rock; 34- Last letter of the Greek alphabet; 35- Wire measure; 38- Preserved by exposure to the sun; 42- Body of an organism; 43- Rare metallic element; 45- Nicotinic acid; 46- Not Rep. or Dem.; 47- Required; 50- Lucy Lawless role; 51- Mil. addresses; 52- Actress Talbot; 53- Tax experts: Abbr.; 54- Lo-cal; 55- Jazz singer James; 56- Without; 57- Very, in Versailles; 60- Year abroad;



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RUGBY

Habana, World Cup winner & Springbok record-holder, retiring

Gerald Imray

BRYAN Habana, the lightning-fast South Africa wing and World Cup winner with an insatiable hunger for scoring tries — a record 67 for the Springboks — announced yesterday he will retire from rugby at the end of the season.

The 34-year-old Habana, who played 124 tests for South Africa and whose try tally is the second-most by a player in international rugby, made the announcement on his Twitter and Instagram accounts.

Habana wrote that he would officially retire at the end of the season but conceded that after battling a knee injury for over a year he probably won't get the chance to play one more time for his French club Toulon.

"It's been more than a year of hoping, trying, pushing and willing to get back on the field for one last time, to taste the sweet victory or encounter that gut-wrenching despair," Habana wrote on his social media post. "To hear the roar of the crowd or grab the pill out of the air. To make that last bone crunching tackle or score that last game winning try."

"But it's unfortunately just not to be. I, like most, would have liked my career to have ended differently, but sometimes things don't turn out quite the way we hope for."



Bryan Habana (center) South Africa's Bryan Habana (center) and teammates wave after receiving their bronze medal Rugby World Cup at the Olympic Stadium, London, in 2015

Habana continued: "So at the end of this season, it's time to say goodbye and thank you to the game I so dearly love."

Despite not being able to finish the way he wanted, Habana won just about everything a South African could: The World Cup, a Tri-Nations title and a series against the British and Irish Lions with the Springboks. At club level in South Africa, he collected two Super Rugby titles and two Currie Cups and, in

Europe, the Heineken Cup and France's Top 14 league title with Toulon.

He was world player of the year in 2007, the year he won the World Cup with the Springboks.

Habana's career was in many ways defined by the number of tries he scored: His national record of 67 for the Boks is the most by any player from a top-tier nation and second only to Japanese winger Daisuke Ohata's 69.

He scored a try on his test debut against England at Twickenham and also in his 124th and last test against Italy in Florence in 2016. Ironically, both games ended up being losses for South Africa. But in between them, Habana's lethal finishing helped the Springboks to win the 2007 World Cup, the 2009 southern hemisphere title, and a 2009 series over the Lions.

He also helped the Pretoria-based Bulls become the first

South African team to win the southern hemisphere's Super Rugby club title.

In that 2007 World Cup triumph with South Africa, Habana scored eight tries, equaling the record for one World Cup by the late, great Jonah Lomu of New Zealand. Habana also later equaled Lomu's record of 15 career tries at World Cups.

Yet Habana had more than just his "jet shoes," a term used by an Australian TV commentator early in the South African's career when he came to prominence with two blistering length-of-the-field tries against the Wallabies in 2005.

Habana, only 5-foot-11 and small for a rugby player, had bags of courage in defense. He would often pull off try-saving tackles or put his body on the line to help his team hold out the opposition. He was also ultra-professional and seldom injured in his 16-year career, despite the knee struggles at the end.

"We have been privileged to have witnessed the career of Bryan Habana, who will undoubtedly be remembered as one of the great legends of Springbok rugby," said South African rugby president Mark Alexander. "During a career that spanned more than a decade and a half, he stood out as one of the most professional players ever to don the Springbok jersey, and over the years Bryan has been central to many of the most memorable occasions in the era of professional rugby."

"We will never forget every time he delighted us by crossing the try-line or putting in yet another bone-crunching tackle, but those close to him will also remember the Bryan that was a true professional, always going about his task giving 100%." AP

FOOTBALL

FIFA subjects 2026 Morocco World Cup bid to fresh scrutiny

MOROCCO'S World Cup bid is facing fresh scrutiny this week with the arrival of another delegation from FIFA after an initial task force found deficiencies in the proposals for the 2026 tournament.

In a downbeat conclusion to the visit by the inspectors last week, Morocco's bid leader acknowledged it had to improve the quality of the submission made to FIFA in March because inadequacies were identified by football's governing body.

The previously unplanned second inspection of Morocco is an indication of the more rigorous pro-

cess introduced by FIFA following criticism in 2010 that World Cups were awarded to the riskiest nations in 2018 (Russia) and 2022 (Qatar).

There will also be closer scrutiny of human rights of the bidders before the vote on June 13 when Morocco is currently due to be taking on a joint challenge from the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The Associated Press revealed last week Morocco did not declare its anti-LGBT law to FIFA in the human rights risk assessment included in the bid book. The documents — along with the North American submission —

will now be scrutinized for any gaps by human rights experts.

"That process involves an expert third-party assessment of the robustness of the human rights content of both bids that will directly inform the administration's own evaluation," Rachel Davis, who sits on FIFA's human rights advisory board, told the AP.

"We are confident that the process will result in a fair assessment of the human rights situation in all four countries involved in the bids, and a roadmap for how to deal with any deficiencies that FIFA will then require the successful bidder to commit to."

Davis, who is managing director of the Shift human rights organization, said an evaluation of the human rights in the bidding nations will be included in a report to the FIFA Council, which will also assess the verdict of the evaluation task force. A bid with low scores can be blocked by the council from advancing to a vote of up to 207 football nations at the FIFA Congress on June 13.

While Morocco has said it needs to spend almost USD16 billion on infrastructure for the 48-team World Cup, including building or renovating all 14 stadiums, North Ameri-



Head of Morocco's Bid Committee Moulay Hafid Elalamy speaks during a press conference to promote Morocco's bid

can does not require any tournament-specific building work. Morocco bid president Moulay Hafid Elalamy said at the end of the FIFA inspection that officials "made some remarks on the conditions of some of the stadiums."

The new batch of technical staff being deployed from FIFA HQ to Morocco did not make a similar follow-up visit to North

America after the task force inspected the rival bid's facilities this month.

"Following the visit of the 2026 bid evaluation task force to Morocco last week, it was decided to have an additional working visit this week to complement the initial analysis of the task force and clarify some aspects of the bid," FIFA told the AP. AP

BASEBALL

A tale of two bats, and Babe Ruth's 60th home run in 1927

Vin A. Cherwoo, New York

As part of its collection of Babe Ruth items, the Baseball Hall of Fame says it has the bat the slugger used to hit his then-record 60th home run in 1927.

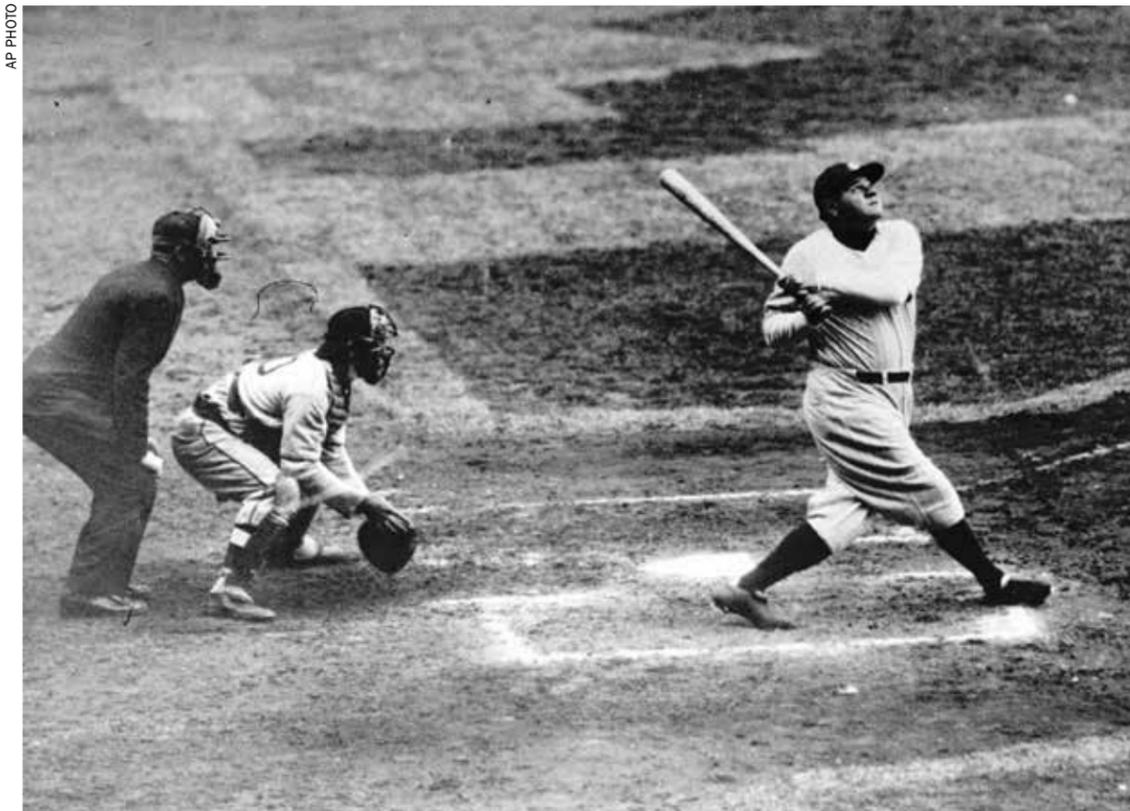
A private collector also claims to own the bat, and he's selling it at auction. PSA/DNA, one of the leading sports memorabilia authenticators, supports his assertion.

The dispute dates back more than 90 years to the original owner of each bat and how he professed to acquire it.

The bat being sold by the anonymous collector can be traced back to Joe E. Brown, the entertainer and vaudeville comedian with whom Ruth had a friendship. Brown said Ruth, who had presented him with the bat the slugger used to hit three home runs in the 1926 World Series, personally gave him the bat used to hit his 60th homer in 1927. The bat is signed, "To Joe E. Brown From Babe Ruth."

Brown then passed the bat down to his son Joe L. Brown, who was general manager of the Pittsburgh Pirates from 1955-76. The younger Brown then sold the bat to a collector.

"There is documentation back to [Joe L.] Brown's ownership and his talking about the bat that goes back to a sports writers' luncheon in 1948," PSA authenticator Jon Taube told The Associated Press in a phone interview. "Even before that the bat is mentioned from his collection in a 1939 baseball centennial celebration. [...] We also have a letter that continues the story from his



In this undated file photo, New York Yankees' Babe Ruth hits a home-run

grandson Ty Brown that talks about the bat coming out at Christmas time."

The bat in the Hall of Fame was given to the museum by sports writer James Kahn in 1939, and Kahn was quoted in the Otsego Farmer — a newspaper in Cooperstown, where the Hall of Fame is located — as saying at the time that then-Yankees manager Miller Huggins gave him the bat after the game on Sept. 30, 1927.

Taube, who has done extensive research on Ruth's bats, doesn't dispute Kahn was given a bat after that game, but he doesn't believe it was the one used for the record-breaking homer.

"It's very unlikely that on Sept. 30, Miller Huggins comes down into the locker room and says, 'Babe, give me the bat that you broke the record with' and then he hands it to a beat writer," Taube said. "And we just think it was very unlikely Huggins came out of the dugout and handed him

The dispute dates back more than 90 years to the original owner of each bat

THE bat. He handed him a bat, there's no question about that. Was it the bat that hit the 60th home run? I doubt that very highly."

Another complicating part of Kahn's story is that he changed the details. Challenged by Brown at the luncheon, Kahn then said he got the bat from Ruth.

"The relationship [Ruth] had with Joe Brown, and the fact he had already gifted him with the 1926 World Series bat," Taube said, "and especially that the season wasn't over yet when Kahn says Miller Huggins and/or Ruth gave him the bat — we just don't see that happening."

The Hall of Fame reiterated it is confident the bat in its possession is the one Ruth used to hit the historic homer.

"The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum is dedicated to preserving baseball's history," Jon Shestakofsky, the Hall's vice president of communications and education, said in an email to The Associated Press. "One of the institution's primary responsibilities is to ensure that artifacts in our collection are portrayed accurately. When research shows that an object is incorrectly labeled, or when we have been presented with evidence that proves an artifact is misattributed, we resolve the matter appropriately and with transparency.

"The Hall of Fame remains very comfortable with the sound provenance and authenticity of the bat in our collection. The Museum's stance on the bat has not changed since it was accessioned in 1939. Given the lack of proof to the contrary, we will continue to maintain that the bat in our collection is the one Babe Ruth used to hit his 60th home run of 1927."

Taube said he was not aware of any other instance where there were multiple claims of such a high-profile item. He also wanted to make it clear he wasn't trying to challenge the Hall of Fame.

"I respect them. It's a baseball shrine," he said. "You have to understand, during the day, there was no provenance. Many of the items that were given to the Hall were presented as, 'Here's the bat that did this, here's the glove' and there was no follow-up.

"Nobody is perfect." Bidding on the bat being sold by the anonymous collector through Heritage Auctions runs through May 18. In full disclosure for potential buyers, the story of the existence of the bat in the Hall of Fame is detailed on the item's listing. AP

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

opinion

Macau Matters

Richard Whitfield



CONSULATE WOES

I do not know if it is nature or nurture, but many men seem to need regular “alone time” or the company of other men. My paternal grandfather spent many hours alone working in his home vegetable patch with periodic sojourns to the chicken coops at the end of the garden to drink warm beer - grandma was firmly against alcohol and refused to permit it in the house, but seemed to turn a blind eye to the brown bottles hidden in the chicken feed. Visiting the local golf club to play each week seems to satisfy my father and brother, and I like spending Friday evenings chatting at Norman’s Pub at Hac Sa Beach.

For the longer term, though, I like working with my hands and want a wood working shop so I can make furniture, for fun and to annoy my wife (who does not seem to want an apartment filled with stuff I have made). Unfortunately, this is not really possible for me in Macau because adequate workshop space at a reasonable price is simply not available, and there are no Bunnings/Home Depot stores full of wood and tools to buy and use.

To resolve this long term problem, I have partnered with two old like-minded university friends to buy a 220m2 factory in Braeside in Melbourne. We are in the process of closing the deal but the lawyers tell me I must get my identity verified for the transfer of title. In Australia this is simply done by taking some personal identification documents to the local post office and completing a form. It is not so easily done elsewhere.

On instructions from our Australian conveyancing lawyers I spent six hours recently visiting the Australian Consulate in Hong Kong only to be told that they had no idea what Land Title Identity Verification is and could not help me. I spent an inordinate amount of money for them to create certified true copies of my passport and Macau ID card, and fingers crossed, this will hopefully satisfy the Australian Land Registry as to my identity.

Generally, I find the Australian Consulate to be a total waste of space. When I first moved to Hong Kong I diligently registered with them, and when I asked what kind of assistance I could expect, I was informed that in the event of an invasion they would attempt to tell me it was happening. After 26 years in the region, I have yet to be invited to any Australian consular functions or activities.

On several occasions the Australian government has wanted me to do things and in every case the Consulate has been clueless. When I visit them to deal with whatever matter the Australian government wants me to handle, they invariably respond by saying “we know nothing on this matter and cannot advise you on how to proceed”. They never offer any suggestions, and just look at me blankly and ask what I would like to do. In my experience, Australian consular officials are a lot of well paid bureaucrats that perform no useful function except to go to parties to talk to similarly useless officials from other countries.

By contrast, my wife is a US Warden in Macau so at least the US Consulate regularly invites me to their parties, and have taken me visit two of their aircraft carriers, which was a lot of fun. She also seems to do much more to help US citizens who have problems, whereas Australian officials seem to leave citizens to fend for themselves. As an Australian taxpayer in good standing I really do not understand why we bother having any Consulates. Closing them down would save a lot of money.

THE BUZZ US AGENCY CRACKS DOWN ON JUUL E-CIGARETTE POPULAR IN SCHOOLS

Federal health officials are cracking down on underage use of a popular e-cigarette brand following months of complaints from parents, politicians and school administrators.

The Food and Drug Administration said it has issued warnings to 40 retail and online stores as part of a nationwide operation against illegal sales of Juul to children.

Like other e-cigarettes, Juul is an electronic device that vaporizes liquid nicotine into an inha-

lable vapor.

Thanks in part to its resemblance to a small computer flash drive, Juul has become popular with some teenagers as a discrete way to vape at school and in public.

As part of the FDA initiative, regulators are asking Juul Labs to turn over documents about the design and marketing of its devices.

The San Francisco-based company says it monitors retailers to ensure they are following the law.

Business and pleasure on menu for Macron’s second day in US

A sit-down between President Donald Trump and French President Emmanuel Macron followed by a joint news conference highlight the business portion of the French leader’s second day in Washington.

The pageantry of Macron’s official state visit, the first of the Trump presidency, comes Tuesday night [this morning in Macau] with a lavish state dinner at the White House. About 150 guests are expected to dine on rack of lamb and nectarine tart and enjoy an after-dinner performance by the Washington National Opera.

The previous night was more relaxed, featuring a helicopter tour of Washington landmarks and a trip to the Potomac River home of George Washington with their wives for dinner. The presidents and their spouses hopped on a helicopter bound for Mount Vernon, Washington’s historic riverside home, for a private dinner one night before the leaders sit down for talks on a weighty agenda including security, trade and the Iran nuclear deal.

“This is a great honor and I think a very important state visit given the moment of our current environment,” Macron said after his plane landed at a U.S. military base near Washington.



The Trumps and Macrons at the White House yesterday

Macron’s pomp-filled three-day state visit to Washington underscores the importance that both sides attach to the relationship: Macron, who calls Trump often, has emerged as something of a “Trump whisperer” at a time when the American president’s relationships with other European leaders are more strained. Trump, who attaches great importance to the optics of pageantry and ceremony, chose to honor Macron with the first state visit of his administration as he woos the French president.

For all their camaraderie, Macron and Trump disagree on some fundamental issues, including the multinational nuclear deal, which is aimed at restricting Iran’s development of nuclear weapons. Trump, skeptical of the pact’s effectiveness, has been eager to pull out as a May 12 dea-

line nears. Macron says he is not satisfied with the situation in Iran and thinks the agreement is imperfect, but he has argued for the U.S. sticking with the deal on the grounds that there is not yet a “Plan B.”

The Trumps and Macrons helped plant a tree on the White House grounds together before boarding Trump’s Marine One helicopter for a scenic tour of monuments built in the capital city designed by French-born Pierre L’Enfant as they flew south to Mount Vernon, the first U.S. president’s home along the Potomac River.

The young oak is an environmentally friendly gift to the White House from Macron, and one that also bears historical significance. It sprouted at a World War I site in France, the Battle of Belleau Wood, that became part of U.S. Marine Corps lore. AP

Mummified body found in Iran could be father of last shah

A mummified body discovered near the site of a former royal mausoleum in Iran may be the remains of the late Reza Shah Pahlavi, the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty and the father of the country’s last shah.

The recent find of the gauze-wrapped body — and the speculation it triggered — puts new hurdles in the way of the Islamic Republic’s efforts to fully erase the country’s dynastic past, which includes the jack-hammered destruction of the autocrat’s tomb immediately after the 1979 revolution.

Yet, as disaffection and economic problems grow ahead of the Islamic Revolution’s 40th anniversary, mystique



Reza Shah Pahlavi (1878-1944)

around Iran’s age of monarchies persists even with its own history of abuses.

Reza Shah’s grandson, the U.S.-based exiled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi, already tweeted about it as forensic experts in Iran try to determine whose body they found.

Construction workers discovered the mummified remains while working at the Shiite shrine of Abdul Azim,

whose minarets once rose behind Reza Shah’s own mausoleum. A digger pulling away dirt and debris uncovered the body, according to the semi-official ISNA news agency.

Pictures of the body, as well as construction workers posing with it, quickly ricocheted across social media in Iran.

A spokesman for the shrine dismissed the idea of a mummy being found there. However, Hassan Khalilabadi, the head of Tehran City Council’s cultural heritage, was quoted by the state-run IRNA agency this week that it’s “possible” the mummy is the body of Reza Shah.

Authorities say they’ll need to conduct DNA tests to confirm whose body it is.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	35-55 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	35-55 Moderate
Ambient	25-45 Good

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS



ARMENIA The government and the country’s opposition are putting their differences aside to mark the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians a century ago by Ottoman Turks.

BALKANS A senior European Union official said yesterday that the road to membership in the bloc for Albania and Macedonia would be tough but “worth the effort.”



GERMANY Bavaria’s conservative government is ordering Christian crosses to be placed at the entrance of all state administrative buildings, saying the crosses shouldn’t be seen as religious symbols, but are meant to reflect “cultural identity and Christian-western influence.”

CHILE-ITALY The key whistleblower in Chile’s clerical sex abuse scandal has arrived in Rome for his audience with Pope Francis and said he will urge the pope to get rid of the “toxic” bishops and cardinals.



BRAZIL Hundreds of indigenous Brazilians set up camp in the nation’s capital at the start of a week of speeches, protests and celebrations as they lobby the government to protect their rights.

NICARAGUA Tens of thousands of Nicaraguans marched in the capital to protest government repression and call for peace after several days of violent demonstrations set off by a social security overhaul.