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The weather bureau has forecast that the air quality in Macau will worsen over the next few days

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FOCUS ON FOSTERING CATHOLIC VALUES

Interview with Athanasius Chan, who will be the director of Saint Paul School starting from next month

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WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA-MALAYSIA

Multibillion-dollar China-financed projects in Malaysia have been canceled because they aren't needed and will saddle the country with an unsustainable amount of debt, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad told reporters on the final day of his visit to Beijing. [More on p10](#)



INDONESIA A court has sentenced a woman who complained about a noisy mosque to 18 months in prison for blasphemy. [More on p13](#)

AUSTRALIA Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull called on his government to unite behind him after he survived an internal leadership challenge yesterday, but several ministers who backed the failed challenger offered their resignations instead. [More on p13](#)



AFGHANISTAN Rockets were fired yesterday toward the presidential palace in Kabul as the Afghan president was delivering his holiday message for the Muslim celebrations of Eid al-Adha, police said, prompting a ferocious aerial response, with helicopter gunships bombing the house from where the rockets were reportedly launched.

ISRAEL-PALESTINE The Israeli military says it is investigating two recent cases of lethal fire along the Gaza border that killed Palestinian teen protesters. [More on backpage](#)

BEIJING ISOLATES ISLAND FOE

El Salvador shifts from Taiwan to China

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ASIAN GAMES

Wushu athlete Huang Junhua collects 1st gold medal for Macau

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Football bettors tend to be younger

From the beginning of this year until now, the Social Affairs Bureau (IAS) received 11 football betting participants looking for assistance from the bureau. The number represents a slight increase year-on-year, and it also represents 10 percent of the total number of people who sought help from IAS due to a gambling disorder. IAS says that it will analyze the relationship between the increase and this year's World Cup once the department has the statistics for third quarter. The gamblers tend to be younger, and are between the ages of 30 and 39. Some are part-time students.

Doctor wants regulation on medical aesthetical devices

The president of the Plastic Surgery Division of the Macau Surgical Association, Io Shun, wants the government to regulate matters concerning devices for medical aesthetics. According to Io, in recent years, medical practitioners administering unqualified drugs to patients have been reported frequently. However, Io said that the medical practitioners normally don't know that the drugs are spurious products, and the patients can only notice problems five years later. Io also highlighted that medical aesthetics is not an independent subject in Macau.

Gov't to hold 96 percent of LRT company shares

The Macau SAR government will control 96 percent of the city's Light Rapid Transit company's shares. The LRT public company will be set up before the LRT operation starts and will have three shareholders: the Macau SAR government, the Industrial and Commercial Development Fund (three percent share) and the Science and Technology Development Fund (one percent share). The city's law requires a company to have a minimum of three shareholders. The two funds were selected because the field that they are involved in relate to the LRT operation.

URBAN RENEWAL

Gov't launches public consultation on plan for temporary housing



Lao Pun Lap

Renato Marques

THE government, through its Policy Research Office, has officially launched from today and for a period of 30 days, a public consultation on the "Juridical Regime of the temporary housing and trade housing units regarding Urban Renewal." The legal framework will be used to implement the government projects for the renewal of old neighborhoods.

The interdepartmental group responsible for its creation presented the public consultation document yesterday in a press conference held at the Policy Research Office in Taipa.

The document presents two different methods on how residents can make use of the plan for the reconstruction of the old buildings (over 30 years old), and also establishes rules that will allow the buyers of the "Pearl Horizon" development in Areia Preta to acquire some of the housing units that the government plans to build on the very same land plot.

Although the document is one of significant relevance for the implementation of the Urban Renewal project, in fact it does not present many concrete measures, being mostly a general draft of the scope of the government's intentions.

The office coordinator, Lao Pun Lap, during the presentation of the public consultation document, said that the document aims to establish "a balance between the public interest and the rights of the private owners" in the process of "revitalizing the old neighborhoods."

As Lao said also in reply to the media's questions, the government hopes that in the large majority of cases, the owner can proceed with the renewal of their

housing buildings and continue to live in them, and "If they can go back to the original place that would be the ideal," he noted while remarking that in some cases that might not be possible due to "matters of public interest."

These matters of public interest would be land plots that might be targeted with government projects to add value to the city, such as the creation of new or widening of streets and roads, or the establishment of social equipment or public services.

In such instances, the government proposes two options: the payment of compensation to the owners who would use the money to find a new home in another building or another area of the city; or a trade-off, in which they would, instead, acquire one of the public housing units built by the government which would become privately owned units under this instance.

The document raised many questions, most of them unanswered despite the presence of several government officials from different bureaus. They justified their silence, saying that "such details should be a matter to be addressed by the legal regime or urban renewal," in the words of Lam Chi Long, assistant commissioner for the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC).

Questioned also about the expropriation of the land plots for reasons of public interest, Lam replied, "The amount of the compensation to pay to the owner will be calculated according to the market value of the unit," noting once more that details regarding the procedures of compensation or rehousing would, again, "be addressed by the legal regime of the urban renewal and not by this one, that

is now in public consultation." Although he admitted, "the owners might not have financial capacity to acquire a new housing with the [amount granted] by the compensation."

On the topic, the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) director Li Canfeng hinted that more than simply removing whole buildings, what is more likely to happen is the reduction of the living areas of some buildings following the restoration or rebuilding works. According to Li, "the rebuilt [houses] can suffer a reduction in 20 to 30 percent in terms of size; this is a normal thing."

Questioned by the media on which land plots the government would consider for building these temporary lodging houses or trade housing units for the project of Urban Renewal, Li noted that for the time being, the only land plot available which met the conditions is the former "Pearl Horizon" development. He added, "in the future we will claim back more [land plots] and there will be some land plots that we can consider."

Lam added also that the houses to

The amount of the compensation to pay to the owner will be calculated according to the market value of the unit.

LAM CHI LONG

be built by the government will have different rules from "normal" public housing in terms of the possibility of trade, sale and rentals, Lam also added the government "admits to giving some benefits and will not follow strictly the market criteria" as well as "the criteria for decoration will also be different when compared to the public housing units built."

As a final note, addressing the topic of whether the government was establishing a criteria of preference for Pearl Horizon buyers, Lao added, "It's not a preferential regime for Pearl Horizon, we are just creating the legal basis including the case [of Pearl Horizon] and other similar developments that might occur in the future."

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DESPITE a series of initiatives to control major pollutants, Hong Kong's ozone pollution has recorded a 20 percent surge since 2013, the highest figure for the past two decades.

The SAR's NGO Clean Air Network notes that the figure had climbed to 45 micrograms per cubic meter of air, up from 25 in 1997.

The average concentration in the air of major pollutants, including tiny particulates of nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide, dropped between 28 and 36 percent from 2013 to 2017.

These results may not differ from neighboring regions, including Macau and Guangdong province.

The latest results released in June from the joint Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network run by the governments of Hong Kong, Macau and Guangdong province showed that average annual ozone concentrations increased by 16 percent year-on-year, hitting a six-year high last year.

However, Hong Kong's policymakers and scientists are still seeking a solution as the SAR continually chokes from deadly pollutants.

As cited in South China Morning Post, Alexis Lau, a veteran atmospheric scientist at the Hong

Tackling ozone pollution remains a challenge

RENATO MARQUES



Kong University of Science and Technology, said that ozone remains a huge problem.

"But our understanding of the components that cause it, and how to control them, is just not adequate," he said.

Although researchers are training people who can deal with this, and marshaling resources to address the issue, studying ozone remains a challenge.

This pollutant irritates the eyes, nose and throat, and can worsen existing heart and respiratory

conditions, such as asthma.

There is still no solid evidence to demonstrate how the ozone can affect cardiovascular sys-

tems, but scholars suggest that the pollutant is a highly reactive gas that cannot be filtered even by wearing a facemask.

AIR QUALITY WORSENS IN MACAU

THE METEOROLOGICAL and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) has forecast that the air quality in Macau will worsen over the next few days. Yesterday morning, all air quality monitoring stations

detected a sharp increase in fine particles (PM 2.5), which are harmful to health. The SMG says that sun and the lack of rain will cause an increase in ozone pollution.

Lawmakers want explanations over sacking of senior legal advisers

LAWMAKERS Pereira Coutinho, Ng Kuok Cheong and Sulu Sou have sent a letter to the board of the Legislative Assembly (AL) asking for explanations regarding the dismissal of senior legal advisers Paulo Cardinal and Paulo Taipa.



Paulo Cardinal

The news broke Saturday on Plataforma Media news outlet and caused a general sense of incredulity within the legal community.

Paulo Cardinal, 53, came to Macau in 1990 and Paulo Taipa, 50, arrived here in 1997. Cardinal moved to the AL in 1992 and Taipa followed in his colleague's footsteps and joined the parliament in 2001. Cardinal was the longest-serving legal adviser in the AL.

"Through countless contacts in the past in various degree, we felt that the two advisors made countless input

in legal discussion, providing the AL with different opinions and pluralistic interactions. Like many other legal advisers, they have used their deep understanding in the law to implement the values of the Basic Law and various legal documents. The quality of the legislation and deliberations of the AL have been improving over the years because of their input," the lawmakers said in the letter.

Coutinho, Cheong and Sou continue stating that "the unexpected dismissals of the two are completely opposi-

te to the goal of improving the work of the AL. Furthermore, the whole process is highly untransparent. Even the legislators were never informed or consulted in the decision-making process. Many of us in the AL, the legal community and the public are deeply concerned and confused."

The lawmakers jointly urge the AL board to explain the reasons the two senior advisers were dismissed, the procedures by which the decision is made, and the people involved in the decision-making process.

Visitor spending soars 20 percent in Q2

TOTAL spending of visitors (excluding gaming expenses) in the second quarter of 2018 soared by 20 percent year-on-year to MOP16.5 billion, according to information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), and edged up by 0.5 percent quarter-to-quarter.

Total spending of overnight visitors (MOP13.36 billion) and same-day visitors (MOP3.14 billion) increased by 17.4 percent and 32.7 percent respectively year-on-year.

In the second quarter of 2018, per-capita spending of visitors was MOP1,996, up by 11.6 percent year-on-year and 3.9 percent quarter-to-quarter.

Per-capita spending of visitors from mainland China rose 9.5 percent year-on-year to MOP2,367 with spending of visitors from Guangdong Province (MOP2,178) increasing by 20.7 percent, and spending of those from Fujian Province (MOP1,260) decreasing by 2.1 percent.

Per-capita spending of

visitors from Singapore (MOP1,704), Japan (MOP1,681) and Taiwan (MOP1,510) grew by 4.2 percent, 9 percent and 4.8 percent respectively year-on-year, whereas spending of those from Malaysia (MOP1,476) dropped by 17.7 percent.

Per-capita spending of visitors from Australia (MOP1,461), the United States (MOP1,284) and the United Kingdom (MOP1,187) all registered marginal growth.

With regard to type of spending, visitors spent mainly on shopping (46.3 percent of the total), accommodation (27.8 percent) and food and beverage (18.7 percent) in the second quarter of 2018.

Per-capita shopping spending of visitors grew by 20.2 percent year-on-year to MOP924. Among the various types of purchases, spending on cosmetics and perfume (MOP287) was relatively high, up significantly by 50.2 percent year-on-year, followed by spending on local food products (MOP231), up slightly by 0.7 percent.

Science Center to increase wind resistance capacity

The Macau Science Center has planned to increase the wind resistance capacity of its external walls. The work is expected to be completed before October 2019. Furthermore, the center's curator, Pan Sio, noted that waterproofing works have already been finished. According to Pan, the damage to the Center's external walls which was caused during last year's Typhoon Hato, is systematic, and will need to be repaired entirely.

Jiangsu dismantles online gambling syndicate

Jiangsu Province dismantled an online gambling syndicate which had been operating an online gambling site using the names of two casinos in Macau. Sixty-three suspects have been arrested. The crimes involved more than RMB500 million. Jiangsu's police authority started taking action in June 2017, when it arrested some suspects in Guangdong, Fujian and Yunnan provinces, as well as in Laos, Cambodia and the Philippines. The syndicate opened an online gambling site in Laos, and was accepting bets from mainland China through bank cards and online payment platforms.

Sunday saw new record in border crossings

For the 24 hours between August 18 and August 19, the city's border crossings broke new records, with over 600,000 crossings registered on Sunday alone. On Saturday, all ports registered a total of more than 580,00 crossings, exceeding the previous record of 570,00 which had been set on April 21. The next day, more than 300,000 entries were recorded, which broke the record (290,000) registered on April 21. Regarding the busiest border (Border Gate), more than 220,000 entries were recorded, which also broke the record.

HUMAN RESOURCES

MGM marks accomplishments of employees

GAMING operator MGM held a graduation ceremony at MGM Cotai last week in recognition of the accomplishments of nearly 900 employees who had participated in various training courses.

Grant Bowie, chief executive officer and executive director of MGM China, said during the event: "Certainly, it is my privilege and our privilege to be able to create the opportunities that allow our team members, allow citizens of Macau, to be able to grow and develop to contribute to our community."

In 2017, MGM offered over 200 training courses and provided more than 569,000 training hours, with an average of 62 hours per team members.

Wendy Yu, senior vice president of MGM's Human Resources department, told the Times a specific team from her department, consisting of more than ten people, are responsible for the development of these training programs, and in the company, some 60 people are certified trainers responsible for delivering these training courses.

According to Yu, these training programs helped the company



Wendy Yu

fill job vacancies within a short period of time, when MGM planned to open new facilities.

In addition to having contributed to the meeting of MGM's job demand, the courses were initially established with the purpose of improving the competence and knowledge of the company's employees.

"MGM hopes that the members can get promoted, and that they can learn while being in the company, which is the most important aspect," said Yu.

MGM's training programs offer

the company's workers opportunities that range from theoretical learning to practicing abroad, both across gaming and non-gaming sectors.

In the past, graduates were sent to the US, Singapore and Hong Kong to gain practical experience and participate in internships.

Yu revealed that MGM will continue to organize these courses, and will send employee students to more places, including mainland China.

In October, MGM will also launch new training programs for

the benefit of both the company and its employees.

Glen Wai, chef de cuisine of In Room Dining of MGM Cotai, praised MGM for providing learning opportunities to its employees.

"I have been in the culinary industry for more than 30 years. I had moved to the States for a while, but now I am back here and have been working at MGM for more than four years. I am pleased to be given the opportunity to partake in the intensive 15-month PRIDE program,

and have visited hotels of MGM Resorts International in Las Vegas, where I have acquired loads of management knowledge which I have put into practice. I am also grateful to the company for rearranging my work schedule to accommodate my study, which allows me to achieve balance between work and family life."

As an integrated resort hotel in Macau, over 85 percent of MGM's management team are Macau locals. MGM has consistently put an emphasis on developing local talented people through its wide range of training programs.

Graduates of MGM's talent development programs are from three major categories: Local Leadership Development – MGM Management Associate Program (MAP) and PRIDE Program; Continuing Education – MGM Academy, MGM eAcademy and other diploma courses in collaboration with tertiary and secondary educational institutions; Professional Skills and Vocational Training in partnership with Labor Affairs Bureau, Macau Federation of Trade Unions and other educational institutions. **JZ**



Glen Wai

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DSSOPT says Sin Fong Garden can be demolished soon

The Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) director Li Canfeng said that the demolition of Sin Fong Garden could begin soon.

The Macau Jiangmen Communal Society is calling on the government to approve the reconstruction of the Sin Fong Garden. Earlier, Chief Executive Chui Sai On said that the local government had granted consent to reconstruct Sin Fong Garden in 2017, and further noted that the Sin Fong Garden is currently involved in two lawsuits.

According to the CE, the law does not allow Sin Fong Garden to be demolished before

the judicial authority completes the inspection of the site.

However, the Macau Jiangmen Communal Society claimed that there is no judicial order or judicial measure preventing Sin Fong Garden's demolition and consequent reconstruction.

"The Court of First Instance already issued a notice to the owners informing that there is no judicial order or judicial measure preventing the reconstruction of Sin Fong Garden," said Chan Pou Sam, executive-vice chairman of the Macau Jiangmen Communal Society.

"It means that there are no issues concerning lawsuits regar-

ding Sin Fong Garden's reconstruction," said Chan. "It is really difficult to understand why the Land, Public Works and Transport has not issued a work permit yet."

The total contract cost of the reconstruction of Sin Fong Garden is estimated at MOP190 million.

Owners have already sought financing from the bank, together with the MOP100 million loan provided by the association.

According to Li Canfeng, the relevant judicial procedure is almost completed, and DSSOPT has already approved the demolition and reconstruction plans.

GREATER BAY

China ups the pressure on Taiwan sports independence

EVEN as China charms Taiwan with the promise of inter-strait sporting competitions, the Central Government is stepping up pressure on international organizations to isolate the island-state and force Taiwanese athletes to remain "locked to China."

That's according to Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party lawmaker Tsai Shi-ying who, speaking to the Taipei Times, said that the efforts seek to tie sports on the Chinese island to the mainland.

On July 25, the East

Asian Olympic Committee announced that it was revoking Taichung's right to host the East Asian Youth Games in August next year, on the basis of Chinese fears that Taiwan's Olympic team will change its name to suggest a distinct nationality.

But the pressure comes in the context of an increasing number of inter-strait sporting competitions - including the Cross-Strait Exchange Games - some of which also call on the participation of the two special administrative regions of

Hong Kong and Macau. "China's strategy is to keep Taiwanese [athletes] 'locked' in China," Tsai told the Taipei Times. "Cross-strait exchanges are not everything. Our athletes need to participate in international competitions."

According to the newspaper, Taichung mayor Lin Chi-lung said that the city will take whatever steps possible in order to regain the right to host the East Asian Youth Games. At present, there is no indication that the Games will be held next year.

Macau wins first gold medal at Asian Games

MACAU picked up its first medal at the Asian Games currently being held in Indonesia. Wushu athlete Huang Junhua won a gold medal in the men's Nanquan-Nangun category in the Asian Games 2018, with a total score of 19.43 points.

During the competition held yesterday morning, Huang scored 9.73 points in the Nangun category, 0.03 higher than his earlier score of 9.70 points in the same category.

A silver medal went to Quoc Khanh Pham from Vietnam, and a bronze medal was awarded to Yongmun Lee, from South Korea.

From the host country, wushu athlete Harris Horatius failed to secure a medal in the category after he only scored 19.21 points. In the Nanquan category, he managed to improve his score to 9.71 points from an earlier 9.50 points.



Huang Junhua receives the gold medal

A total of 28 gold medals were awarded yesterday, including seven in swimming, the women's water polo final, weightlifting, wrestling and taekwondo.

On Monday, more athletes set new records for Macau in swimming. Ngou Pok Man, in the Men's 50-meter ba-

ckstroke category, set the local record of 26.53 seconds. In the men's 4x200 freestyle relay, Lin Sizhuang, Ngou Pok Man, Chao Man Hou, and Chou Kit set a new Macau record of 7 minutes and 51 seconds, although they failed to advance in the competition.

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Q&A FR. ATHANASIOS CHAN
FUTURE SAINT PAUL SCHOOL DIRECTOR

New principal of St. Paul to focus on fostering Catholic values

Lynzy Valles

SAINTE Paul School is set to focus on nurturing students' character and promoting Catholic values within the school's teaching and learning environment this new academic year.

The school, which has fully embraced e-learning, will be directed by Fr. Athanasios Chan, as its current principal Fr. Alejandro Salcedo is set to step down in September after heading the school for 21 years.

Fr. Chan has been with Saint Paul School for nearly 10 years as a chaplain, holding other duties with student services, such as overseeing school's clinic, library and religious department.

Speaking to the Times, Fr. Chan said that he will focus on promoting Catholic values in the school's environment in a bid to provide a higher level of service to students.

Currently, the school has some 3,000 students, along with 350 staff.

Macau Daily Times (MDT) - As the new principal of the school, what are your plans and visions for this upcoming academic year?

Fr. Athanasios Chan (AC) - I will not implement many plans or big changes during the first year of the school. There are some things that take time. St. Paul is a Catho-

lic school, thus it is based on the gospel of Jesus. He is our good example, so my goal and vision is to look at how Jesus served those who were around him during his time. For me, education is like service. We serve our students; likewise, we also serve the parents and our community.

DSEJ asked our school to open more classes, or accept more students but we cannot make it because there are no more seats.

FR. ATHANASIOS CHAN

MDT - So the school will first focus on nurturing Catholic values amongst its students?

AC - Yes, that is my major concern. Nowadays in different careers, especially in a small city like Macau, we always talk about providing the best services to the people.

But education is not like any other career, it's really something very dedicated. We understand the theory very well but to put it into practice is a big challenge.

MDT - How do you plan to provide the best kind of education services to the students?

AC - That is the main goal that we cannot forget. We will continually improve the teaching and learning environment. We try our best to provide the best place for teachers, staff and students, and that is an ongoing action that we need to do.

I already mentioned to our senior managers, even some of the staff and teachers that they should be the ones to serve and provide the best services to students and parents.

But we can only guarantee the quality of our service based on ourselves. [We] have to continually develop ourselves across two aspects: your profession as a teacher and also your own character. If we guarantee these two things, then it means we can deliver the best quality of our service to the students and teachers.

MDT - The school has fully implemented the ICT, making the school "paperless." Is the school continually progressing in this system?

AC - Since 2011, we already implemented these ICT [mea-

asures]. Today we can say that we are more mature about this. In the future, we will continue to provide the best technology for our students, meaning that we will provide the best services and bring more convenience to our teaching staff, students and parents. We know that ICT is a future education type. We will continually make our things more innovative. [With that], they will easily adapt themselves and be more confident in the society. Our goal is to help our students develop a good foundation so they will be competitive in the market in the future.

MDT - During the first quarter of this year, the school received a total of MOP64 million from the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) Are we seeing an increase in the latest or next quarter to come?

AC - We are surprised that they have supported us a lot for the incoming school year. We'll do our best to properly use this money to bring out the best in our students, and contribute to the society.

MDT - Fr. Salcedo had previously said that the school will likely soon adapt the 6-6-3 system. Can we expect that in this upcoming academic year?

AC - Yes. We're moving towards this system step by step.

Nowadays, the international community is more concerned with childhood education. We have read many materials on this and we have already prepared something to implement. For the early childhood education, it's really important for us to make a good foundation for them. From Primary 4, they will start to use the ICT system, and then in the last three years of their studies, which is Form 3, we dedicate ourselves to help students prepare themselves to enter university.

MDT - How about the new English curriculum?

AC - We have already invited experts from England, with a research team, and they will continue to evaluate the curriculum and help our teachers decide upon and implement a new project. We already have an English project from Kindergarten 1 to Primary 3, so step by step we will fully implement it across the whole school. Some of them have been involved in our school for many years already but starting from September, they [the team] will only take the English project, according to the new school system.

MDT - Are there any plans to increase the number of students?

AC - We don't have any more classrooms. In fact, we want to have more classrooms. Two months ago, DSEJ asked our school to open more classes, or accept more students, but we cannot make it because there are no more seats, unless we have a new building. My other plan is to provide more functional classrooms both for teachers and students [in a bid to] improve the teaching and learning environment.



Billionaire Sheldon Adelson and his wife Miriam Adelson

Adelsons spent USD55 million to help GOP win battle for Congress

Bill Allison, John McCormick

BILLIONAIRE casino owner Sheldon Adelson and his wife, Miriam, delivered USD25 million to help Republicans try to hold the Senate in November's congressional elections, adding to the \$30 million they previously gave to bolster the GOP's campaign to keep the House.

The Las Vegas Sands Corp. chairman and chief executive officer and his wife were among the big-dollar donors who lavished millions on political committees in July ahead of the first major political test of Donald Trump's presidency, disclosures filed by Monday night with the Federal Election Commission show.

Their donation went to the Senate Leadership Fund, a super political action committee, and follows the couple's earlier contribution to the Congressional Leadership Fund, a super PAC aligned with House Speaker Paul Ryan.

The two parties and their allied political committees are furiously raising money as the campaign for control of Congress enters a crucial phase. The main Democratic committee that backs House candidates has built its biggest cash-on-hand advantage over its Republican counterpart so far in the 2018 campaign, the filings show.

July was the sixth consecutive month the Democratic Congress-

sional Campaign Committee has raised more than the National Republican Congressional Committee. The DCCC ended the month with \$4.7 million more in its bank account.

SPECIAL ELECTIONS TOOK TOLL

That marks a turnaround from early in 2017, when the NRCC raised more in the first four months of the year on its way to building a \$14.7 million cash advantage, before a series of expensive special elections drained its coffers.

Democrats need a net gain of 23 seats to win a majority in the House, while they have to gain two seats in the Senate to control that chamber.

The House Majority PAC, which supports Democrats, reported \$3.7 million in donations and started August with \$22.8 million in the bank. Renaissance Technologies LLC board chairman James Simons contributed \$1.7 million. Michael R. Bloomberg, the founder of Bloomberg LP, the parent of Bloomberg News, made an in-kind contribution of polling data worth \$456,975. He has pledged to give millions of dollars in 2018 to help Democrats retake control of the House.

Other large donors on the Democratic side included Karla Jurvetson, a psychiatrist and the ex-wife of venture capitalist Ste-

phen Jurvetson, who donated \$1 million to SMP, a super PAC that supports Senate Democrats. Qualcomm Inc. co-founder Irwin Jacobs and his wife, Joan Jacobs, combined to give \$1 million to the group, while Deborah Simon, an Indianapolis philanthropist ranked among the top ten donors this cycle by the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics, gave \$500,000. SMP raised \$7.4 million in July and ended the month with \$23.9 million in the bank.

Priorities USA, a Democratic super PAC focusing on voter engagement and turnout, reported raising \$4.1 million, with \$2 million of that coming from hed-

ge fund manager S. Donald Sussman of Paloma Partners Management Co. It spent \$5.2 million and ended July with \$8.2 million in the bank.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD'S EFFORT

Planned Parenthood Votes raised \$2.5 million, including donations of \$1.1 million from philanthropist Richard Rosenthal of Ohio, and another \$1 million from Andrea Soros Colombel, the daughter of billionaire George Soros. The super PAC ended July with \$6.5 million in the bank.

Richard Uihlein, a packing supply magnate and a descendant of one of the founders of the Schlitz beer company, gave \$900,000 in July to Restoration PAC. The group was one of several entities he funded in a losing effort to try to help businessman and Marine Corps veteran Kevin Nicholson win the Aug. 14 Republican primary for U.S. Senate in Wisconsin.

Uihlein also contributed \$200,000 to the Tea Party Patriots Citizens Fund, which has supported Nicholson and nine other Republican candidates.

Billionaire Robert Rowling and his company, TRT Holdings Inc., each gave \$250,000 to the super-PAC Texans Are, set up by allies of Senator Ted Cruz of Texas. The group ended July with \$2.6 million in the bank.

■ **The Adelsons gave USD82.5 million to conservative causes and candidates in the 2015-16 election cycle, according to the Center for Responsive Politics**

Cruz's Democratic opponent in November, Representative Beto O'Rourke, has out-raised the incumbent by more than \$10 million.

The DCCC said it raised a record for July, \$13.5 million. The committee said it has raised \$191 million so far this election cycle and had \$72.6 million in the bank, compared with \$133.9 million raised at the same point in 2016, when it had \$62 million in the bank.

"There is no question that the grassroots are united around the goal of taking back the House," said Representative Ben Ray Lujan of New Mexico, the DCCC chairman, in a statement.

The NRCC took in \$10.2 million, according to its FEC filing, \$4 million of which came from the Republican National Committee. The campaign of Representative Steve Scalise of Louisiana, the No. 3 House Republican and one of several potential successors to Ryan after he leaves Congress, gave \$1 million to the NRCC, which ended the month with \$67.8 million in the bank.

Protect the House, a joint fundraising committee that's drawn donations from billionaire Elon Musk, the Tesla Inc. chief executive officer, gave the NRCC \$797,840 in July. That's down from the \$2.1 million it provided the previous month.

RYAN EFFECT?

Some GOP donors have suggested that Ryan's announced retirement without a successor in place has hurt fundraising, although Trump and the RNC have helped fill the gap. Until July, the NRCC hadn't raised more than \$10 million since Ryan said in April that he would not stand for re-election in his Wisconsin district.

The RNC raised \$14.2 million in July, which it said was a record for any month in a non-presidential year. That included \$4.7 million from small-dollar donors giving \$200 or less. Trump Victory and Trump Make America Great Again, which benefit the party and the president's re-election campaign, transferred \$4 million to the RNC.

The national committee, which ended July with \$41.9 million in the bank, spread the wealth around, transferring \$10 million to other party committees. The National Republican Senatorial Committee, like the NRCC, received \$4 million from the RNC, while state GOP committees split a little less than \$2 million.

The Democratic National Committee reported raising \$7.2 million in July and ended the month with \$7.9 million cash on hand but \$6.7 million in debt.

The Adelsons gave \$82.5 million to conservative causes and candidates in the 2015-16 election cycle, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. That ranked them second in the U.S. for individual donors, behind liberal billionaire Tom Steyer, for that cycle. **Bloomberg**

China Railways takes on rail project connecting Mozambique to Zimbabwe

CHINA Railways has proposed the construction of a rail link connecting Mozambique to Zimbabwe via Zambia, a project costing an estimated USD2.5 billion that will give companies in the latter two countries easy access to Mozambique's ports.

The Trans-Zambezi line project led a delegation from China Railways, headed by Vice President Shao Gang, to contact with the local government in late July along with local partner Global Power Bridge International, according to a report in the Harare press.

The first phase of the project will consist of a 400-kilometre link between Shamva in Zimbabwe and Moatize in Mozambique, from where a 900-kilometre line will reach the port of Nacala (Nacala Logistics Corridor, where coal is transported from the Moatize mine, produced by Brazilian company Vale), a project inaugurated in May 2017 by the President of Mozambique.

The construction of new sections of this line and the reconstruction of others began in 2012 and include a 200-kilometre stretch that runs through neighboring Malawi.



The China Railways project also involves the construction of a 1,700-kilometre line directly connecting Binga, on Zimbabwean border with Zambia, to the port of Nacala.

China Railways stated its interest in the project in March this year in a letter to the Zimbabwean government signed by Gang Shao, according to the Financial Gazette. "We have been working closely with Global Power Bridge International to establish the

foundations of the rail project and we are ready to start it," said Shao.

The project also involves China's New Century Energy International, which has a US\$500 million large-scale soybean production project in Zimbabwe. The president of Mozambique's port and railway company CFM, a state-owned company that has stakes in all the country's ports, recently announced that the company intends to invest

US\$200 million in the modernisation of its rail network over the next three years.

A recent article in China-Lusophone Brief (CLBrief), a news service on China and the Portuguese-speaking countries, suggests Mozambique may have a role to play in the new generation of railways in Africa.

The article notes that the new wave of railway construction pays more attention to the real needs of African coun-

tries, such as those being built to connect the ports of Mombasa and Dar-es-Salaam in the Indian Ocean, to countries without direct access to the sea in the Great Lakes region.

Mozambique could be one of the major players in this second railway revolution as, while its railways serve primarily to carry coal, they could also serve to support the growth of cross-border trade.

Railway lines carrying coal from South Africa and Botswana for export may be used to transport other products and the lines that exist in the north-central region of the country may also be used to transport the products that the landlocked countries in the region, such as Malawi and Zimbabwe, need to export.

In addition to the Sena line linking Moatize to the port of Beira, in Sofala province, there is another line that was built in the colonial period linking the port to Zimbabwe, Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which although it is in operation as far as Zimbabwe needs a massive investment in order to serve its original purpose. **MDT/Macauhub**



ANGOLA

Gov't requests financial support from the IMF

THE Angolan government has asked the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to adjust its support program, including a financing component, Angolan state news agency Angop reported.

The financial support stems from the need to cope with the most recent economic developments for the im-

plementation of the Macroeconomic Stabilisation Program and the 2018-2022 National Development Plan, according to a press release from the Ministry of Finance.

The request from the Angolan Government is part of a working visit to Angola by a mission of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

from 1 to 14 August, and which was invited to visit Angola again in October 2018, in order to start negotiations under a two-year Extended Fund Facility (EFF), which may be extended for another year.

The Ministry of Finance notes that the IMF's working visit concluded that the ma-

croeconomic stabilization policies and reforms implemented by the Angolan government are adequate to promote economic growth and diversification of economic activity despite the adverse environment.

For two weeks, the Angolan Government and the IMF mission analysed recent economic developments and economic and the financial outlook and addressed issues related to the Policy Coordination Instrument (PCI).

The PCI is a non-financial program that provides technical assistance for the implementation of measures in the country's main macroeconomic management documents such as the Macroeconomic Stabilisation Program, initiated in January 2018, also serving to increase Angola's external credibility, with positive effects on attracting Foreign Direct Investment. **MDT/Macauhub**

Beijing interested in entering Brazilian aviation market

CHINA announced at the LABACE 2018 aviation exhibition in Congonhas, São Paulo, that it is interested in selling in Brazil its Harbin twin-engine turboprop airplane with a capacity of 18 passengers, a reach of 3,000 kilometers and cruising speed of 250 kilometers per hour.

José Santos, a representative of the Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC), said during the biggest business aviation fair in South America that the possibility of opening a factory to build the Harbin in Brazil has not been ruled out.

Santos said that there are huge air connections between the big Brazilian cities but there are no connections between

the small cities of the interior of Brazil.

AVIC presented at the event, which had more than 100 companies, a model of the Y-12 turboprop that has a sale price in the order of US\$5 million. Santos also said that this type of airplane along with the Y-12F and Y1-2E models are suitable for use as air taxis and in the medical transport and agriculture sectors.

The export version of the turbo-prop plane is called the "Twin Panda" and the largest buyers are located in Africa and Asia. LABACE was attended by Brazilian aviation company Embraer, which presented 47 different types of aircraft with prices ranging from \$2 to \$60 million. **MDT/Macauhub**



Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad (center)

Malaysian PM says China-financed projects canceled

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

MULTIBILLION-dollar China-financed projects in Malaysia have been canceled because they aren't needed and will saddle the country with an unsustainable amount of debt, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad told reporters on the final day of a visit to Beijing yesterday.

Mahathir told Malaysian reporters that both Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang understood the reasons behind the cancellations and "accepted them."

The projects, comprising a USD20 billion East Coast Rail Link and two energy pipelines worth \$2.3 billion, had already been suspended pending renegotiation.

"It's all about pouring in too much money which we cannot afford, we cannot repay and also because we don't need these projects for Malaysia at this moment," Mahathir said.

While the projects could be restarted in the future if considered necessary, Malaysia's current focus is on reducing the national debt, he said.

"With that debt, if we are not careful we can become bankrupt," Mahathir said, blaming the "stupidity" of the administration of his predecessor, Najib Razak, whom he ousted in elections earlier this year and now faces charges of massive corruption.

Malaysia will still have to

pay "substantial" penalties to extract itself from the projects and also needs to "find out where money that has been paid for the projects have gone to," Mahathir said.

Both President Xi and Premier Li understood the reasons behind the cancellations and 'accepted them'

Trade and economic cooperation between China and Malaysia have provided tangible benefits to both, although "it is inevitable for countries to encounter various problems and have disagreements in different stages," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang told reporters at a daily briefing on Tuesday.

Such disagreements should be handled "in a proper manner through friendly consultation," Lu said.

Days before heading to Beijing, Mahathir was already saying Malaysia didn't need the projects, part of Xi's Belt and Road initiative to build ports, railways and other trade-rela-

ted infrastructure across Asia, often built by Chinese contractors and financed by loans from Chinese state banks.

At a news conference with Li on Monday, Mahathir said he appreciated China's understanding of Malaysia's need to deal with its "internal fiscal problems," but also hinted at the threat of Chinese economic domination.

"We should always remember that countries' level of development ... are not all the same," he said. "We do not want a situation where there is a new version of colonialism happening because poor countries are unable to compete with rich countries in terms of just open free trade. It must also be fair trade."

Belt and Road projects in Thailand, Sri Lanka and other countries have run into complaints that they are wasteful, too costly, give too little work to local companies or might facilitate embezzlement and other graft.

Also during his news conference, Mahathir said he didn't raise the issue of fugitive financier Low Taek Jho during his visit. He said Low is "probably" hiding in China but he has no proof of this.

The U.S. Justice Department alleges Low was a key figure in the theft and international laundering of \$4.5 billion from Malaysia's 1MDB investment fund by associates of Najib. AP

FBI reveals Chinese man kidnapped after business meeting in Los Angeles

THE FBI is looking for three suspects who kidnapped a Chinese man after a business meeting in the Los Angeles area last month, but authorities haven't heard from the kidnappers since they demanded a USD2 million ransom and the man remains missing, investigators said yesterday [Macau time].

Ruochen "Tony" Liao, 28, was abducted by three men on July 16 in San Gabriel — about 16 kilometers east of downtown Los Angeles — according to Gene Kowel, an assistant special-agent-in-charge at the FBI's office in Los Angeles.

Liao, who owns a Southern California car dealership that sold high-end cars, such as Porsches and Bentleys, had just finished an evening meeting with several business associates when three men pulled up in two vehicles — a Toyota minivan and a Range Rover — and abducted him, officials said.

After they kidnapped him, the abductors contacted Liao's family and demanded that they pay a \$2 million ransom, but the money was not paid, Kowel said.

On Monday, the FBI released a sketch of one of the men they believe was involved in the kidnapping, who they suspect

may have been an acquaintance of Liao. The man, who the FBI identified only as "David," had attended the business meeting with Liao, according to Matthew Lombard, an attorney for Liao's family.

Investigators are examining several theories in the case, including the possibility that Liao was involved in a business dispute and Liao had previously been involved in business deals with people who "were not the most reputable," Kowel said.

Although the kidnappers had reached out initially to demand the ransom, Liao's family has not heard from them in about a month, he said.

"Our hope is that Tony is still alive. We're operating under the premise that he is still alive," Kowel said. "However, we do become concerned as these cases progress the chance of someone remaining alive can diminish."

Liao's relatives, who live in China, are offering a \$150,000 reward, in addition to a \$25,000 reward being offered by the FBI for information that could lead them to locating Liao.

"He is a deeply loved person by his family," Lombard said. "He's their only child and they are very, very concerned for him." AP



This photo provided by the FBI shows Ruochen "Tony" Liao, who was kidnapped in San Gabriel, Calif. by three men on July 16

TAIWAN broke off diplomatic ties with El Salvador yesterday as the Central American country defected to rival Beijing in the latest blow to the self-ruled island. China has been trying to isolate on the global stage.

The break in ties means Taiwan is recognized as a sovereign nation by only 17 mainly small, developing countries. In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi announced that his government had established ties with El Salvador.

"History will prove that establishing diplomatic relations with China is in full accordance with the fundamental and long-term interests of the country and the people of El Salvador," Wang said.

Taiwan split from mainland China amid civil war in 1949, and Beijing, which considers Taiwan its territory, campaigns relentlessly to isolate the island globally. It cut off relations with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen's government shortly after she took office in 2016 and has been steadily ratcheting up both diplomatic and economic pressure.

Earlier this year, the West African nation of Burkina Faso and the Dominican Republic broke ties with Taiwan and resumed or established diplomatic relations with China.

Taiwanese Foreign Minister Joseph Wu condemned what he called China's campaign of luring away Taiwan's allies with promises of vast financial aid and investment.

Taiwan is willing to consider cooperating with its allies in education, farming or even infrastructure initiatives, Wu said, but refuses to compete with China in buying diplomatic support.

Wu said that El Salvador had repeatedly sought large amounts of funding from Taiwan for a port project that a Taiwanese team of engineers dispatched by the government thought wasn't economically feasible.

"We think this is an inappro-

AP PHOTO



El Salvador's Foreign Minister Carlos Castaneda signs documents at a signing ceremony to mark the establishment of diplomatic relations between El Salvador and China in Beijing

HARD POWER

El Salvador, Taiwan break ties as Beijing isolates island foe

appropriate development plan that risks causing both countries to fall into great debt," Wu said, noting that some developing countries were increasingly concerned about the risks of unsustainable debt linked to Chinese investments.

Wu said El Salvador's ruling party was also expecting Taiwan to provide funds to help it win in elections, but Taiwan refused.

"It is irresponsible to engage in financial aid diplomacy or compete with China in cash, or even in providing illegal political money," Wu said. "My government is unwilling to and cannot do so."

Some analysts say Chinese President Xi Jinping, one of the most powerful Chinese leaders

in decades, seems determined to bring Taiwan under Beijing's control during his time in office, which would place him in the

Taiwanese FM Wu condemned what he called China's campaign of luring away Taiwan's allies with [money]

history books alongside Mao Zedong.

The island's 23 million residents are strongly in favor of maintaining their de facto independent status, but Xi has previously warned a Taiwanese envoy that the issue of unification cannot be put off indefinitely.

Salvadoran President Salvador Sanchez Ceren said on national television that China and El Salvador would discuss ways to cooperate in trade, investment and infrastructure development.

"It will give great benefits to the country and provide extraordinary opportunities on a personal level to each one of you," he said.

The move comes just a day after China's foreign ministry said

it had complained to the U.S. over Taiwanese President Tsai's visits this month to Los Angeles and Houston while in transit to diplomatic allies Paraguay and Belize.

The administration of President Donald Trump has been boosting relations with Taiwan amid a brewing trade war with Beijing.

Tsai urged the island's people to unite despite the pressure the government was facing diplomatically.

"Taiwan will not yield because of pressure," Tsai said in a televised address. "We will be stronger and more united, and this will strengthen Taiwan's determination to go out." AP

XU LIN

Image-conscious China appoints new global propaganda czar

CHINA'S increasingly image-conscious government has appointed a trusted member of the ruling Communist Party to head up its international propaganda operation.

Former top internet regulator Xu Lin will be in charge of efforts to portray China as a progressive force for good in the world at a time when it's facing criticism over its allegedly unfair trading practices, human rights abuses and

militarization of island claims in the South China Sea.

Xu's appointment to the position of head of the Cabinet-level State Council Information Office was announced by state media outlets yesterday.

Since President Donald Trump took office in 2017, Beijing has sought to draw a contrast with his administration by emphasizing its role in promoting free trade and addressing glo-

bal issues such as climate change. Critics say that contradicts China's roles as the most restricted major economy and a leading polluter.

Chinese President and party leader Xi Jinping has also gone to lengths to promote his trademark, trillion-dollar "Belt and Road" initiative that seeks to link China with other parts of Asia, Europe, Africa and beyond through transport and infrastruc-

ture projects.

Meanwhile, China's entirely state-controlled media has been aggressively expanding overseas in hopes of countering unflattering images of the country and promoting Beijing's take on global political, economic and cultural matters.

Xu, 55, had earlier been brought in to enforce China's strict regulations on the internet after predecessor Lu Wei was ousted in a corruption scandal. AP

AP PHOTO



Xu Lin



North Koreans arrive to meet their South Korean family members during a separated family reunion meeting at the Diamond Mountain resort in North Korea

KOREAS

Separated families have second day of emotional reunions

Kim Tong-Hyung, Seoul

A mother wails as she embraces a son she hasn't seen since the 1950-53 Korean War. A woman weeps as she greets a grandfather she never got to know.

The scenes of Koreans meeting this week, likely for the last time before they die, are heartbreaking, but they often bely a highly political and tightly controlled event in which participants often struggle to have genuine conversations.

Much of the awkwardness centers on the defining fact of the Korean Peninsula: For decades it has been divided between the authoritarian North, originally backed by the Soviet Union and then, during the war, communist China, and the U.S.-backed capitalist South. Citizens from both nations, especially the elderly who remember the bitterness and bloodshed of the war, often wear their nationalism on their sleeves, and some South Koreans have complained that their relatives take every chance to score propaganda points for their authoritarian nation.

About 200 South Koreans and their family members crossed the border on Monday for three days of meetings with their North Korean rela-

tives. The relatives have been given a total of 12 hours together, including three hours in private. Another 337 South Koreans and accompanying family members will participate in a second round of reunions from Friday to Sunday.

After the initial tears at North Korea's Diamond Mountain resort, Cha Jae-geun, an 84-year-old South Korean, and his 50-year-old North Korean nephew began an awkward exchange Monday over international politics surrounding the Korean Peninsula and the origins of the war that split their family apart and killed and injured millions.

The Koreans should "drive the American bastards out," Cha Song Il, the nephew, said, according to South Korean pool reports. He accused the United States of being unfaithful to the commitments of a June summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and U.S. President Donald Trump, in which they expressed an aspirational goal for a nuclear-free peninsula without describing when or how it would occur.

The elder Cha reminded his nephew that it was North Korea's founder, Kim Il Sung, the grandfather of the current leader, who triggered the war by ordering a sneak attack on the South in June 1950.

"That's a lie," the nephew replied, waving both hands. "The Korean War was something the Americans did. We fought against (our enemies) with our own strength."

Cha Jae-geun smiled and quickly changed the subject, as South Korean officials urge their reunion participants to do if politics come up. South Korea's government instructs participants not to criticize the North's leadership and economy during the reunions.

Some North Korean participants, who are reportedly chosen for the reunions based on their loyalty to their authoritarian rulers, were eager to show their government commendations to their South Korean relatives. In at least one case, this resulted in another awkward exchange.

Ju Yong Ae, a 52-year-old North Korean who came to meet her 86-year-old South Korean aunt, steadfastly refused when a South Korean official who had come to the North to help manage the meeting repeatedly asked her to put her "Kim Il Sung commendation," a public service medal, below the table.

"How can you put down our supreme dignity?" Ju asked.

A North Korean official intervened, telling the South Korean official, "She's just trying to show it to her family;

leave her alone."

After sleeping separately Monday night, the relatives had private meetings at hotel rooms yesterday morning before meeting again in group sessions later in the day. Yesterday's exchanges were less emotional and more amicable than Monday's.

“ [My aunts] praised the leadership of Kim and life in North Korea so frequently that any genuine conversation became impossible.

HONG YONG-GEE
SOUTH KOREAN

"Isn't my younger sister pretty?" 88-year-old South Korean Kim Byung-oh said of his 81-year-old sister from North Korea, Kim Sun Ok. He smiled and fed his sister a snack bar.

During their first encounter Monday, Kim Sun Ok wiped

away her tears when she said, "Let's live together even at least one minute after unification before we die."

South Korean participants at past reunions have complained that the heavy monitoring presence of North Korean officials and intense media coverage made genuine conversations difficult or impossible.

The North sees the reunions as a crucial tool to win concessions from the South, but it has rejected the South's demands to increase the number of reunions and the people participating in them.

The North also ignores the South's proposals for letter exchanges and hometown visits, something currently banned. Pyongyang doesn't want the reunions expanded because it fears they would give citizens a better awareness of the outside world and weaken its grip on power, analysts say.

The North uses the reunions for propaganda purposes, carefully choosing participants based on loyalty and instructing them to praise the authoritarian leadership during the meetings. But Koh Yu-hwan, a North Korea expert at Seoul's Dongguk University, said it could become harder for the North to maintain previous levels of control because the participants are so old now that it's harder to train them to do what the government wants.

Nearly 20,000 people have participated in 20 rounds of face-to-face reunions held between the countries since 2000. No one has had a second chance to see their relatives. Past participants express frustration and anger that their final conversations with North Korean relatives included so little genuine conversation.

Hong Yong-gee, who went with his mother for a 2015 reunion at Diamond Mountain and met his three North Korean aunts, said that it seemed his North Korean relatives were working off a script.

"They praised the leadership of Kim Jong Un and life in North Korea so frequently that any genuine conversation became impossible," Hong said. "It was difficult for my mother and aunts to talk freely when several North Korean officials stationed themselves so close to our table, listening in to whatever we were saying."

Choi Ho-seok, 83, also said that his 76-year-old sister kept praising the North's government when they met in 2015 under the watchful eyes of North Korean officials.

"There were things closer to our hearts that we couldn't talk about because we were being watched closely at all times," he said. "It would be painful if that's the last time I get to see her." AP

AP PHOTO



AUSTRALIA

Ministers resign after leader survives challenge

AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull called on his government to unite behind him after he survived an internal leadership challenge yesterday. But several ministers who backed the failed challenger offered their resignations in a move that widens the rift in government ranks.

His challenger, Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton, resigned from the Cabinet after the vote but the amount of support he gained surprised many people. Turnbull ruled out any retribution against ministers suspected of supporting Dutton and said he had invited Dutton to remain in the senior security portfolio. "I don't bear any grudge

against Peter Dutton for having stood up and challenged me today," Turnbull said at a news conference with deputy party leader Julie Bishop, who retained her position unopposed in the ballot.

"We know that disunity undermines the ability of any government to get its job done and unity is absolutely critical," Turnbull added.

But Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister James McGrath, Minister for International Development and the Pacific Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, and Assistant Treasurer Michael Sukkar confirmed within hours that they had offered their resignations after backing Dutton. **AP**

INDONESIA

Woman irked by mosque noise convicted of blasphemy

AN Indonesian court has sentenced a woman who complained about a noisy mosque to 18 months in prison for blasphemy.

The ethnic Chinese woman, Meiliana, burst into tears as presiding Judge Wahyu Prasetyo Wibowo announced the sentence yesterday. She was taken from the court in handcuffs.

Prosecutors said the 44-year-old defendant violated the criminal code by committing blasphemy against Islam, the dominant faith in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation.

Mobs burned and ransacked at least 14 Buddhist temples throughout Tanjung Balai, a port town on Sumatra, in a July 2016 riot following reports of Meiliana's complaint about a mosque's noisy loudspeakers.

The woman's lawyer, Ranto Sibarani, said the sentence would be appealed. A conservative group, Islamic Community Forum, said Meiliana's



Ethnic Chinese woman Meiliana weeps during her sentencing hearing

sentence was too light.

The maximum sentence for blasphemy is five years.

Indonesia's Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and religion, but in recent years blasphemy cases have been filed against people perceived as offending Islam in a possible sign of a more conservative brand of the religion gaining ground in Indonesia. The overwhelming majority of cases end with guilty verdicts.

Since 2004, 147 people have been imprisoned under blasphemy or related laws, according to monitoring

by Human Rights Watch. The number of cases has slowed since 2014 under President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo's administration.

Last year, the minority Christian and ethnic Chinese governor of Jakarta, the capital, was convicted of blasphemy and imprisoned for two years after massive street protests over comments seized upon by his political opponents.

Judges imposed the sentence despite prosecutors downgrading the blasphemy charge to a lesser offense. **AP**

AD



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CYBERSECURITY

Microsoft uncovers more Russian attacks ahead of midterms

Matt O'Brien

MICROSOFT said yesterday it has uncovered new Russian hacking attempts targeting U.S. political groups ahead of the midterm elections.

The company said that a hacking group tied to the Russian government created fake internet domains that appeared to spoof two American conservative organizations: the Hudson Institute and the International Republican Institute. Three other fake domains were designed to look as if they belonged to the U.S. Senate.

Microsoft didn't offer any further description of the fake sites.

The revelation came just weeks after a similar Microsoft discovery led Sen. Claire McCaskill, a Missouri Democrat who is running for re-election, to reveal that Russian hackers tried unsuccessfully to infiltrate her Senate computer network.

The hacking attempts mirror similar Russian attacks ahead of the 2016 election, which U.S. intelligence officials have said were focused on helping to elect Republican Donald Trump to the presidency by hurting his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton.

This time, more than hel-



AP PHOTO

ping one political party over another, "this activity is most fundamentally focused on disrupting democracy," Brad Smith, Microsoft's president and chief legal officer, said in an interview this week.

Smith said there is no sign the hackers were successful in persuading anyone to click on the fake websites, which could have exposed a target victim to computer infiltration, hidden surveillance and data theft.

Both conservative think tanks said they have tried to be vigilant about "spear-phishing" email attacks because their global pro-democracy work has frequently drawn the ire of authoritarian governments.

"We're glad that our work is attracting the attention of bad actors," said Hudson Institute spokesman David Tell. "It means we're having an effect, presumably."

The International Republican

Institute is led by a board that includes six Republican senators, and one prominent Russia critic and Senate hopeful, Mitt Romney, who is running for a Utah seat this fall.

Microsoft calls the hacking group Strontium; others call it Fancy Bear or APT28. An indictment from U.S. special counsel Robert Mueller has tied it to Russian's main intelligence agency, known as the GRU, and to the 2016 email

hacking of both the Democratic National Committee and the Clinton campaign.

"We have no doubt in our minds" who is responsible, Smith said.

Microsoft has waged a legal battle with Strontium since suing it in a Virginia federal court in summer 2016. The company obtained court approval last year allowing it to seize certain fake domains created by the group. It has so far used the courts to shut down 84 fake websites created by the group, including the most recent six announced yesterday.

The hacking attempts mirror similar Russian attacks ahead of the 2016 election

Microsoft has argued in court that by setting up fake but realistic-looking domains, the hackers were misusing Microsoft trademarks and services to hack into targeted computer networks, install malware and steal sensitive emails and other data.

Smith also announced that the company is offering free cybersecurity protection to all U.S. political candidates, campaigns and other political organizations, at least so long as they're already using Microsoft's Office 365 productivity software. Facebook and Google have also promoted similar tools to combat campaign interference. **AP**

CHECHNYA

IS claims responsibility for deadly attack on Chechen police

THE Islamic State group has claimed responsibility for a series of attacks on Chechen police in Russia's Northern Caucasus.

The attacks yesterday [Macau time] in three locations in Russia's predominantly Muslim Chechnya left several policemen injured. Five militants, aged between 11 and 16, were killed.

IS claimed responsibility later on for the attack in the regional capital Grozny and in the Shali area just south of Grozny.

Radical Islamic militants, some of whom have sworn allegiance to IS, have conducted spo-

radic raids in Chechnya in the past, defying the rule of the Kremlin-friendly leader Ramzan Kadyrov.

The violence indicated the Islamist insurgency remains active in the mostly Muslim province despite authorities' claims that it has been eradicated. It follows an attack on a Russian Orthodox church in May that left four attackers, two policemen and a churchgoer dead.

Chechnya's regional leader, Ramzan Kadyrov, sought to downplay the attacks, saying they were quickly fended off by police. He insisted the young att-

ackers were brainwashed by Islamic militants and don't have any public support in Chechnya.

Dzhambulat Umarov, the information minister in the regional government, told the Tass news agency the attackers were aged between 11 and 16. He said the Islamic state has increasingly focused on teenagers in its efforts to recruit supporters in the region.

The regional police said in a statement that two knife-wielding attackers broke into a police station in the southern town of Shali and stabbed two officers. Police shot and killed them.

In another clash in

Shali, two attackers tried to blow up a truck loaded with gas canisters in a suicide attack, but the vehicle failed to explode, Kadyrov spokesman Alvi Karimov said on Kommersant FM radio. He said the two were shot dead by police.

Russian news agencies also reported an attack in the village of Mesker-Yurt, outside Shali, in which an attacker blew himself up near a police checkpoint. Police were unhurt and Kadyrov said the suicide bomber survived and was hospitalized.

And in yet another attack in the regional capital of Grozny, an attacker



In this video grab provided by the RU-RTR Russian television, investigators inspect a car that was allegedly used to attack police in the regional capital, Grozny

driving a car hit two traffic police officers, injuring them, officials said. Police later shot and killed the driver.

The Kremlin has relied on the strongman Kadyrov to stabilize Chechnya after two separatist wars in the 1990s and has provided generous subsidies to help rebuild the region.

International human rights groups, however,

have accused Kadyrov of rampant rights abuses, including arbitrary arrests and extrajudicial killings by his feared security forces.

Radical Islamic militants, some of whom have sworn allegiance to the Islamic State group, have conducted sporadic raids in Chechnya, defying Kadyrov's assurances that the region is stable. **MDT/AP**

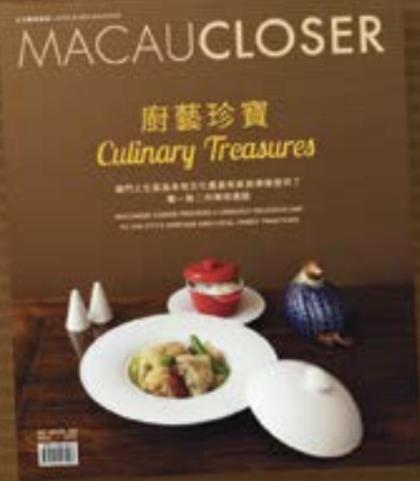
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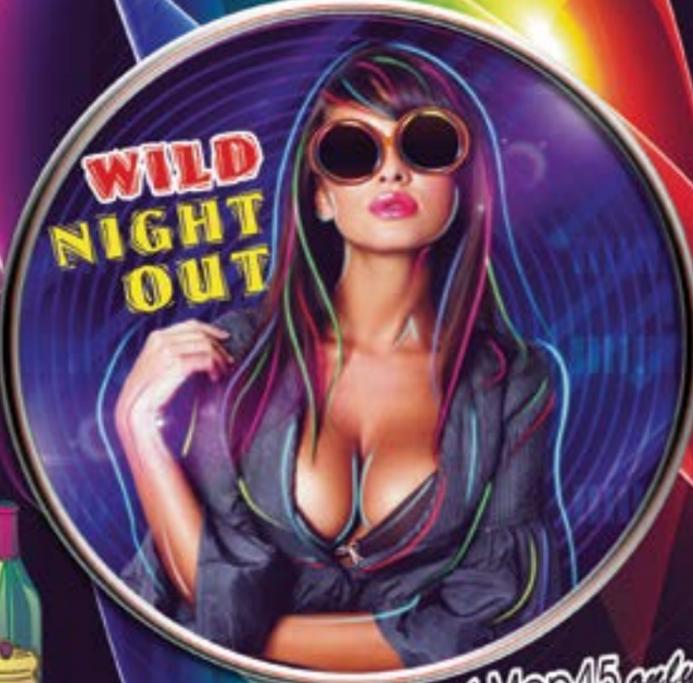


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what's ON



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MOP980, MOP1280

COTAI TICKETING: (853) 2882 8818

KONG SENG TICKETING: (853) 2855 5555

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

VENUE: Macau Science Center

ADMISSION: MOP25 (Exhibition Centre)

MOP60 (Planetarium 2D dome or 2D

sky shows)

MOP80 (Planetarium 3D dome or 3D

sky shows)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

ANNUAL ARTS EXHIBITION BETWEEN CHINA AND PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING COUNTRIES - ALTER EGO

TIME: 10am-7pm (closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: September 9, 2018

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art, Old Court Building,

Tap Seac Gallery, Taipa Houses Museum

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

Offbeat

MADONNA'S RAMBLING ARETHA FRANKLIN TRIBUTE EARNS BACKLASH

The backlash was swift for Madonna's rambling, egocentric tribute to Aretha Franklin at the MTV Video Music Awards, with media and Queen-of-Soul fans wondering why she got the gig in the first place.

Dressed in flowing black with grandiose flourishes of African jewelry, Madonna's send-off came before she presented the video of the year award to Camila Cabello yesterday [Macau time].

She spoke at length about her own start in the business and her own career before thanking Franklin for "empowering all of us. R.E.S.P.E.C.T."

Cabello then collected the biggest award of the night for her "Havana" video with a bow to Madonna, dedicating the trophy to, you guessed it, Madonna.

There was a short video of early Franklin that played before Madonna said that the icon who died Thursday "changed the course of my life," and Franklin's "Respect" played as the night's closing credits rolled. But there was no live musical performance honoring the legend.

Some accused Madonna, in her spiky silver headpiece, heavy necklaces and beaded bracelets, of cultural appropriation. Far more accused her of making the show's only tribute to Franklin all about herself.

"I'm so lost," radio host Charlamagne Tha God tweeted. "I thought Madonna was supposed to be paying homage to Aretha but all I heard was her paying homage to herself."

After describing her teen exit from Detroit to make her name in show business, Madonna said at one point, "So, you are probably all wondering why I am telling you this story."

Why, yes. Before she got to the point (she sang "You Make Me Feel Like) a Natural Woman" acapella at an audition of yore), Madonna meandered through references to Paris, poverty, guitar lessons and finally her backside hanging out at a VMAs show after breaking a stiletto.

"Does Madonna know Madonna didn't die?" ESPN's Katie Nolan tweeted.



TV canal macau



| | |
|-------|--|
| 13:00 | TDM News (Repeated) |
| 13:30 | News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast |
| 15:00 | Portuguese Soap Opera |
| 15:50 | Cartoons |
| 16:15 | Portuguese Comedy |
| 17:40 | Micellaneous |
| 18:15 | Miscellaneous |
| 19:00 | Portugal Fashion |
| 19:35 | Portuguese Serie |
| 20:30 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report |
| 21:15 | Hato Documentary |
| 21:45 | Around the World |
| 22:20 | Portuguese Serie - Liberty 21 |
| 23:15 | TDM News |
| 23:50 | Miscellaneous |
| 00:20 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated) |
| 01:05 | RTPi Live |

cinema



CINETEATRO

16 Aug - 22 Aug



HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 3: A MONSTER VACATION

ROOM 1

2:15, 4:00, 7:30pm

Director: Genndy Tartakovsky

Starring: Adam Sandler, Andy Samberg, Selena Gomez

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 97min

ALONG WITH THE GODS:

THE LAST 49 DAYS

ROOM 1

9:30pm

Director: Kim Yong-hwa

Starring: HA Jung-woo, JU Ji-hoon, KIM Hyang-gi

Language: Korean (Chinese & English)



THOMAS & FRIENDS

BIG WORLD! BIG ADVENTURES! THE MOVIE

ROOM 1

5:45pm

Director: David Stoten

Starring: Dona Adwera, Peter Andre, Richie Campbell

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 85min

DORAEMON THE MOVIE:

NOBITA'S TREASURE ISLAND

ROOM 2

2:30pm

Director: Kazuaki Imai

Starring: Wasabi Mizuta, Megumi Ohara, Yumi Kakazu

Language: Cantonese (Chinese)

Duration: 109min

THE MEG

ROOM 2

4:30, 7:30, 9:30pm

Director: Jon Turteltaub

Starring: Jason Statham, Bingbing Li, Rainn Wilson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 113min

THE DARKEST MINDS

ROOM 3

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

Director: Jennifer Yuh Nelson

Starring: Amanda Stenberg, Mandy Moore, Harris Dickinson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 104min

this day in history



1966 ICI ANNOUNCES BIG NYLON JOB LOSSES

Britain's largest manufacturing company Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) is cutting 1,000 staff at its nylon-fibre producing factories.

Six hundred jobs will go at Doncaster, 200 at Gloucester and 250 at Pontypool in Monmouthshire. About half the staff will be given notice on Friday - the other half will be told a week later.

The company has blamed the government's tough economic measures for a fall in demand for nylon. Prime Minister Harold Wilson announced a pay and price freeze last month in an attempt to control runaway inflation.

A statement issued by ICI said: "Economic conditions are unlikely to improve for some time and further, the tax changes and the various deflationary measures are beginning to be felt and will subject industry and commerce to a period of considerable financial stringency."

The redundancies come as a surprise after the company said last year it wanted to take on 2,200 extra staff to cope with an expected growth in demand for nylon.

It means many of the staff being laid off will not qualify for severance pay - but they will be given a week's wages - about £15 to £18 for someone who has been employed six months.

The union representing nylon workers, the Transport and General Workers, says it has not been consulted about the reductions.

Ron Mathias, South Wales regional organiser, said: "It is the old story of areas like South Wales, the North-East and Scotland being hit first of all by a government measure.

"Already there is a scarcity of skilled men and if, as usually happens, some of the workers move away to the Midlands it could put us in a worse position," he said.

ICI still makes more nylon than all the other British producers put together - but it is facing growing competition from Courtaulds, British Enkalon and Chemstrand. In addition, there are new manmade fibres coming onto the market with a wide range of uses from clothing to industry.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Emergency talks between management and unions followed but ICI pressed ahead with the cuts.

Speculation in the newspaper business pages was that ICI had misread the economy and gone ahead with big capital investment in new machinery - aimed at cutting production costs long term - when all the signs were profits were about to be hit in the short term.

The government's pay and price freeze failed to halt inflation. In November 1967, the government was forced to devalue the pound and tighten the credit squeeze by raising borrowing rates and taxes.

Nylon became less popular as a fabric and it was not until 1983 when it was re-designed and launched as Tactel that it became fashionable again.

The Tactel brand became so successful it was a major attraction for the American giant DuPont which bought out the ICI Fibres business in 1992. ICI now employs more than 36,000 people worldwide. Its main products include paints, food and fragrances.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Your instincts may be right - there is something going on around you that you need to investigate further. Put on your private detective hat and dig in to uncover the information you need.

Taurus April 20-May 20 There is a lesson for you to learn, although it might not be evident exactly what it is for a few more days. In order to help this lesson sink in better, you need to slow the heck down!

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 If you're not feeling comfortable with the general direction things are headed in, don't worry - a lot is still up in the air. Keep the lines of communication open and remember that honesty is the best policy.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 If you have been waiting for someone to come around to your way of thinking - or share more about how they are thinking - this could be the day when all your patience pays off.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 The proof is in the pudding as they say, but you have got one heck of a recipe ... so have no fear that people will not be impressed with your efforts. Even if the reception isn't as dramatic as you wanted.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You have been waiting for this phase in your life to begin for a long time - a phase where you can be yourself and not worry about editing your behavior to impress anyone.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Get out your calendar and a big eraser - some schedule changes may be necessary today. You won't have to be more flexible than you want to be, so hold firm on certain deadlines.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You should be able to sense something new starting today - the efforts you have made over the past several months are finally starting to create exciting changes. Get ready for more responsibilities.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Listen closely when a friend suggests a nutty idea today - especially if it is something that strikes you as out of character for them. They might be working on a plan that could benefit you richly.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 After going through a long period of thinking more objectively, today you will be back on a more self-involved track. Don't worry about coming off as being too egomaniacal.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 The mystery is how to access that energy and push it in the direction you want it to go. Solve that mystery with clues from your past. What you may not realize is that every day contains these germs of possibility ...

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Friends or family members may be talking about you behind your back - but not in a bad way! They are just wondering what (or who) has put such a bounce in your step and gleam in your eyes, that's all.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Kett and James; 6- Open wide; 10- Dudley Do-Right's org.; 14- Distributed cards; 15- Env. notation; 16- Pennsylvania port; 17- Bandleader Shaw; 18- Actor Neeson; 19- Wait; 20- Abuse; 22- Tarzan, e.g.; 24- Slippery swimmers; 25- Serving no function; 26- Solid alcohol; 29- Part of MIT; 30- Buddhist monk; 31- Concerned with childbirth; 37- Somewhat; 39- Clay, today; 40- Pine; 41- Paddle wheel; 44- Spitting sound; 45- Long and Peebles; 46- Take into custody; 48- Bantu language; 52- Manhattan neighborhood; 53- Hardy's partner; 54- Doubleday's legacy; 58- ___-European; 59- "Rhyme Pays" rapper; 61- Actress Shire; 62- Driving aids; 63- ... ___ saw Elba; 64- Furry swimmer; 65- IRS IDs; 66- ___ Fein; 67- Peruses; DOWN: 1- Dutch cheese, wrapped in red wax; 2- Actress Garr; 3- Makes lace; 4- One who is able to read but rarely does; 5- Sound system; 6- Festive occasions; 7- Squabbling; 8- School grp.; 9- All together; 10- Insurgent; 11- Serious wrongdoing; 12- Golden-touch king; 13- Hammer parts; 21- London greeting; 23- Small-minded; 25- Free laces, say; 26- Deli side; 27- Writer Janowitz; 28- Give off; 29- Capri and Man; 32- Religion founded in Iran; 33- Depraved person; 34- Must've been something ___; 35- Leg unit between tarsus and femur; 36- Bad mood; 38- Tennessee ___ Ford; 42- Jitters; 43- Neighbor of Cambodia; 47- Daniel Webster, e.g.; 48- Narrow cuts; 49- Declines; 50- "The Age of Anxiety" author; 51- ___ Perot; 52- Glossy fabric; 54- "It's ___ real"; 55- Neighbor of Sask.; 56- Fibbed; 57- Metallica drummer Ulrich; 60- Dernier ___;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
Tourism 28 333 000
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Jose Mourinho and Paul Pogba

Steve Douglas

FOOTBALL

BY placing the captain's armband on Paul Pogba, Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho might have thought he would quell growing speculation about the World Cup-winning midfielder's future at the English club.

Comments by Pogba himself, and the player's outspoken agent, over the last two days have only added to the uncertainty.

After what he acknowledged was a poor individual performance in United's 3-2 loss at Brighton in the Premier League on Sunday, Pogba said he "should have done much better" and that his "attitude wasn't right."

United's sloppy display — and Pogba's central role in it — invariably attracted plenty of criticism, as with anything involving Britain's biggest soccer club. One of its greatest players of recent years, Paul Scholes, lamented the "lack of leaders in the team," a not-so-subtle condemnation of Pogba.

That prompted back-to-back

tweets yesterday from Mino Raiola, Pogba's larger-than-life representative, who said Scholes "wouldn't recognize a leader if he was in front of Sir Winston Churchill." It was a reference to the British prime minister during most of World War II.

Raiola followed that up with a post that was as scathing as it was intriguing.

"Paul Scholes should become sports director and advise Woodward to sell Pogba," he wrote, referring to United vice chairman Ed Woodward, the most powerful figure at the club besides members of the Glazer family. "Would be sleepless nights to find Pogba a new club."

The fact that Raiola veered toward the topic of Pogba's future is significant. The midfielder

could still be sold to a leading European club this month — the transfer window remains open in Spain, for example — and Barcelona have been linked with a move for Pogba.

Raiola knows his tweets will be widely picked up and only serve to fuel talk of Pogba's reported unrest at United. "Mino Raiola" was trending in Britain throughout yesterday.

The relationship between Pogba, signed for a then-world record fee of USD116 million from Juventus in 2016, and Mourinho appeared strained last season. The midfielder was dropped for crucial matches, notably home and away against Sevilla in the last 16 of the Champions League when United exited in meek fashion.

In discussing Pogba's impressive displays for France at the World Cup, Mourinho tempered praise of the player by saying: "I don't think it's about us getting the best out of him, it's about him giving the best he has to give."

Mourinho's decision to give Pogba the captaincy for the start of the season, while regular captain Antonio Valencia is injured, was notable. Pogba responded by scoring in United's opening-day 2-1 win over Leicester in the Premier League on Aug. 10, but muddied the waters when responding to reporters' questions after the game about his current situation.

"There are things and there are things that I cannot say," he said, somewhat cryptically,

"otherwise I will get fined."

Mourinho insisted last week that he "couldn't be happier" with Pogba, but the midfielder's explanation for his performance against Brighton didn't shine a positive light on his manager. It has come at a time when Mourinho is back under scrutiny after being at odds with United's board over the club's transfer strategy in the offseason, having failed to get the center back he craved.

Throughout his managerial career, Mourinho's third season at a team is usually when problems begin to surface. It happened in both of his spells at Chelsea, and also at Real Madrid.

It is also Pogba's third season back at United. The debate is on: Who will survive longer? **AP**

ASIAN GAMES | SWIMMING

Liu breaks 50-meter backstroke world record

LIU Xiang swam a world-record time of 26.98 seconds to win the women's 50-meter backstroke gold medal yesterday night at the Asian Games.

The 21-year-old Liu, who prefers swimming the freestyle, became the first woman to break 27 seconds in the event, lowering the record of 27.06 set by fellow Chinese swimmer Zhao Jing at the world championships in Rome in 2009 before the contentious rubberized suits were

banned.

"My main focus is actually the 50-meter freestyle," Liu said through a translator. "I didn't expect to break the world record at all."

"Because the focus is on freestyle, I didn't have any pressure. I could concentrate on my own performance."

Fu Yuanhui took silver in 27.68 in a 1-2 finish for China and Japan's Natsumi Sakai, the 2017 world junior champion, won

bronze in 27.91.

Fu won the 50 and 100 backstroke titles at the 2014 Asian Games, was world champion in the 50 backstroke in 2015 and picked up an Olympic bronze in the 100 backstroke at Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

Liu, who had a previous best of 27.40 and was a bronze medalist in the 50 backstroke at the 2015 world championships, said she still had other events so wouldn't celebrate for a while.

"This gold medal and world record will give me more confidence when competing in the freestyle," she said.

The 50 backstroke is not raced at the Olympics, so the world and continental championships hold some significance for those who enjoy the one-lap sprints.

"Still kind of an achievement in swimming," Liu said, adding that the event's absence from the Olympic program, "doesn't make any difference." **AP**



Women's 50m backstroke gold medalist China's Liu Xiang (center) stands with silver medalist China's Fu Yuanhui, (left) and bronze medalist Japan's Natsumi Sakai on the podium

opinion

Animal Farm
 Albano Martins



DOES ANYONE UNDERSTAND?

1. The non-renewal of contracts for two lawyers of the Legislative Assembly is, if nothing else, at least strange. First, because they are two well-known legal professionals, both widely recognized by the legal fraternity. Secondly, there is nothing known to indicate any doubt about their professional honesty. Finally, it is absurd to invoke a potential restructuring of the legal framework to justify the non-renewal of the two most experienced lawmakers of the Legislative Assembly who could prepare new generations for future challenges.

This is, I repeat, at the very least, strange when the Assembly will demand even more quality in the very near future, with new, more complex laws shimmering on the horizon and the tender for the gaming licenses to descend soon.

We are still in the second system, but sometimes I have the impression that we are already in the first and a half system, with less than half of this 50-year showdown!

The rest will eventually come as people persist in renouncing their authenticity.

China will not gain anything from it. On the contrary. And, of course, Macau loses much more, if it marches quickly towards a de-characterization!

Patriots, we all should be, but this is something else!

2. I have read for a couple of days now in two local newspapers, including the Macau Daily Times, about an insinuation in the Chinese press regarding the Chief Executive's wife's intervention in the Canidrome issue, apparently due to the fact that she may have some relationship with Anima. It's the silly season. There is no fresh news or imagination.

Anima and this matter with Mrs. Winnie Chui, I personally never addressed. Nor would it be in good form or taste. I have already said this to the written press itself.

Anima has long been calling for greater involvement in the greyhound issue, and the fact that it has been invited to take an active part in the adoption process is due only to its proven ability to have options that nobody else has.

3. When I wrote this piece, late yesterday morning, data on inflation in July were not yet available. I recall what I wrote in July 2018: "In July, the inflation rate is expected to be between 2.32 and 2.34 percent! Even if I miss a hundredth of a point, it was always going to be 2.3 percentage points!" Or, did I? I remember that in June the official inflation rate was 2.13 percentage points!

4. The recent disclosure of losses of semi-public or public companies and the non-existence of standards that compel them to accountability does not entertain me, being only a cause to cry. First, because they do not necessarily have to make a profit, and secondly because it is one thing to make losses and another to be managed financially in the best way with properly organized accounts.

It seems we have people who do not understand about these matters. Maybe they are just "innocent" or maybe sufficiently incompetent!

THE TRUMP PLAN SCALES BACK OBAMA'S COAL EMISSIONS STANDARDS

The Trump administration yesterday came out with new rules scaling back Obama-era constraints on coal-fired power plants, striking at one of the former administration's legacy programs to rein in climate-changing fossil-fuel emissions.

The Environmental Protection Agency called the Obama-era regulations on coal power plants "overly prescriptive and burdensome."

The Trump administration plan broadly increases the leeway given states to decide how and how much to regulate coal power plants. The EPA says

it "empowers states, promotes energy independence, and facilitates economic growth and job creation."

Combined with the EPA's proposal earlier this month to ease mileage requirements for vehicles, the move may actually increase the country's climate-changing emissions, according to some former top EPA officials, environmental groups, and other opponents.

The Natural Resources Defense Council called the replacement proposal Trump's "Dirty Power Plan."

CINEMA

'Crazy Rich Asians' hoopla elicits mixed feelings in Asia



Director John Chu and his wife Kristin Hodge pose for photographers as they arrive for the red carpet screening of the movie "Crazy Rich Asians" in Singapore yesterday

Derek Cai, Singapore

THE craze for "Crazy Rich Asians" is hitting Asia, with a premiere in Singapore followed by openings in several neighboring countries later this week.

Much of the movie was set in this wealthy city-state. The red carpet premiere yesterday night for the over-the-top romantic comedy was expected to draw an enthusiastic crowd after its box-office bonanza in the U.S.

Directed by John M. Chu, the film was adapted from Singaporean author Kevin Kwan's best-selling novel of the same name. It follows Chinese-American Rachel Chu as she travels with her boyfriend Nick Young to Singapore to meet his family and discovers they are ultra-wealthy.

The movie is drawing a mixed reaction. Admirers of the film say that as the first majority Asian-cast film in over two decades to be released by a major Hollywood studio it upends Hollywood's usual stereotypes of Asian characters. Critics say it misses a chance to showcase the city's ethnic diversity.

The USD30 million Warner Bros. film has grossed more than \$35 million since its Aug. 15 world debut in Los Angeles and came out tops with its release in U.S. theaters over the weekend. That surpassed expecta-

tions, said Fiona Xie, who plays the starlet Kitty Pong as one of 12 Singapore-based members of its cast. It's "liberating to just be part of a powerful positive movement," she told The Associated Press.

"As an Asian actor, I think it's great, and a step in the right direction," Nat Ho, who plays a small role in the film, told The AP.

Critics say it misses a chance to showcase Singapore's ethnic diversity

The film has drawn criticism for its inaccurate portrayal of Singapore's ethnic diversity, with some calling it a misrepresentation of the country's minority races. Even though a majority of its residents are Chinese, a quarter of its population are Malay, Indian, or Eurasians, with many migrant workers from surrounding countries like Bangladesh or the Philippines.

"There's this whole notion of the movie being a triumph for representation, which is very problematic. The only Indians and Malays you see

are servants," said Nicholas Yong, a Singaporean journalist and author who saw the movie before its Singapore premiere.

Even though its glamorous depiction of Singapore could give its tourism a boost, it was not entirely welcomed.

"To us, 'Crazy Rich' should not just be about the opulence and luxury showcased in the film, but Singapore's actual richness in terms of our diversity," said Singapore Tourism Board's spokesperson Lynette Pang.

While the country has enjoyed economic progress, the wealth gap in the city is widening, and the super rich with their extravagant lifestyle are a tiny, privileged minority.

Writing in the South China Morning Post of Hong Kong, which has more than its share of tycoons and elite wealthy families, commentator Alex Lo said he enjoyed the film with "guilty pleasure."

"But amusement aside, it strikes me the whole purpose of the film exercise is to glamorize and legitimize the super-rich in Asia, many of whom are ethnic Chinese in real life," he said. "Should we, as the audience and hoi polloi, be tantalized and awed by the display of mega wealth, which has been described, by most accounts, as accurate. Or should we rather be repelled?" AP

| Station | Air quality | Icon |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------|
| Roadside | 65-95 Moderate | ☹️ |
| High Density Residential Area | 65-95 Moderate | ☹️ |
| Ambient | 75-105 Bad | ☹️ |

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

SERBIA Its air force yesterday took the delivery of two Russian MiG-29 fighter jets, part of an arms purchase that could heighten tensions in the Balkans and increase Moscow's influence in the region.

GREECE The government has launched a new bid to engage Britain in talks over the return to Athens of a celebrated group of ancient sculptures originally ornamenting the Parthenon Temple on the Acropolis.



MALTA-ITALY The Italian coast guard ship Diciotto has made port in the Sicilian city of Catania with 177 migrants awaiting word on which countries will take them following another standoff between Malta and Italy.

IRELAND The Vatican said yesterday that Pope Francis is expected to meet with victims of sexual abuse during his weekend visit to Ireland and speak out about the problem.



BRAZIL At least 11 suspects and two soldiers died during shootouts with military personnel and police in greater Rio de Janeiro as violence erupted in several areas of the city that hosted the Summer Olympics two years ago.

US At least three dozen immigrant recruits who were booted from the U.S. Army after enlisting with a promised pathway to citizenship are being brought back to serve, according to court records.

UNITED NATIONS The outgoing U.N. human rights chief said that the Security Council's five permanent members wield too much power at the United Nations, warning the imbalance must change to avert possible "collapse" of the world body.