



CHINESE PORCELAIN EXHIBITION SHOWCASED AT CASA GARDEN

P5



AUDIT REPORT SLAMS YET ANOTHER 'DERAILMENT'
The report yesterday added to previous criticisms of delays and budget blowouts in the construction of the light rail

P7



US MEETS CUBA ON MYSTERY 'HEALTH ATTACKS' IN HAVANA
U.S. and Cuban officials meet today to find out the method and motive behind mystery incidents in Havana which injured American diplomats

P15

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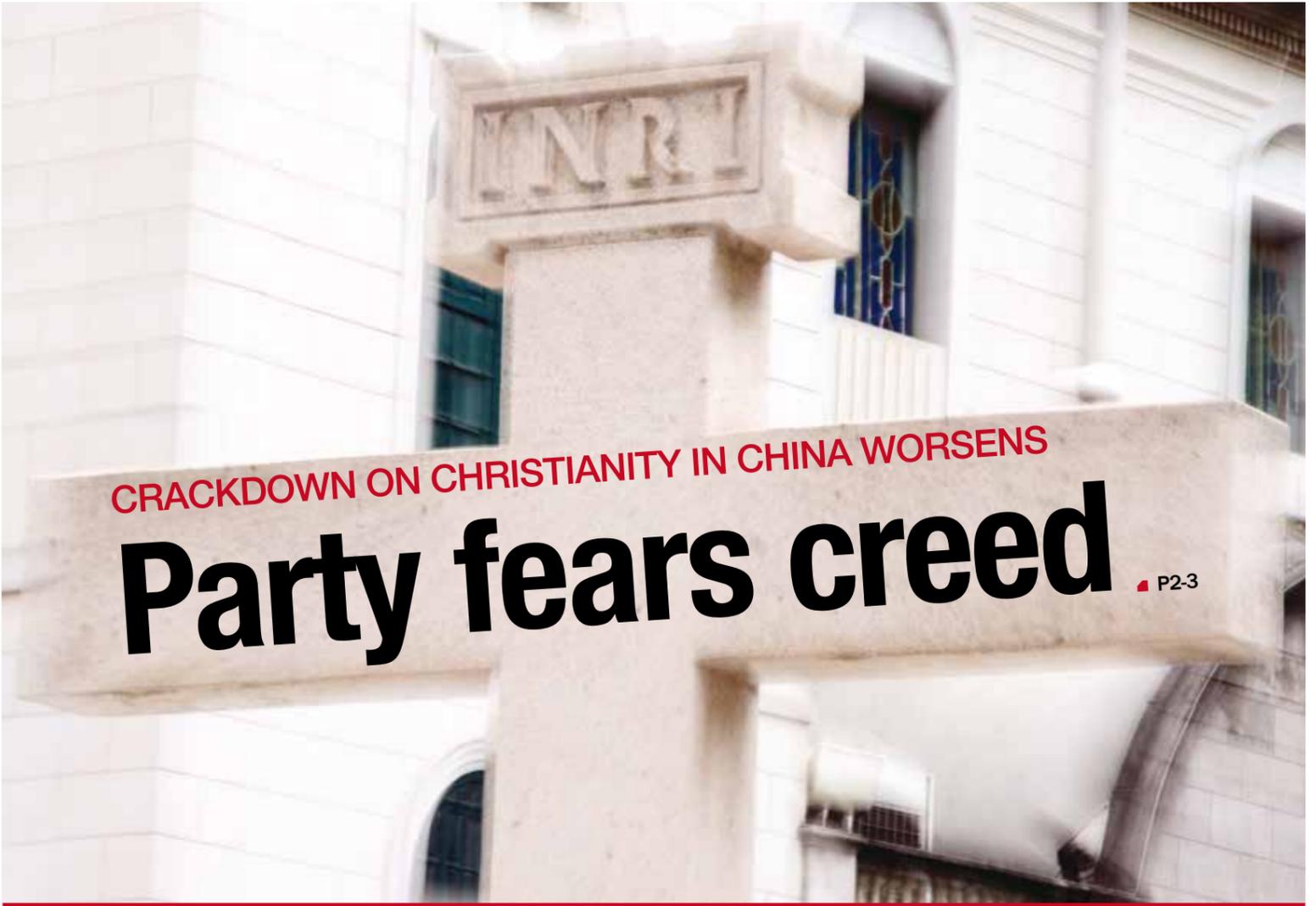
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RENATO MARQUES



CRACKDOWN ON CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA WORSENS

Party fears creed

P2-3

WORLD BRIEFS

JAPAN is gearing up to accept more foreign workers as its own population is on the brink of a steep decline, Foreign Minister Taro Kono said.

AP PHOTO



INDONESIA A court sentenced an Islamic militant yesterday to 11 years in prison after finding him guilty of conducting training in preparation for a terrorist attack.

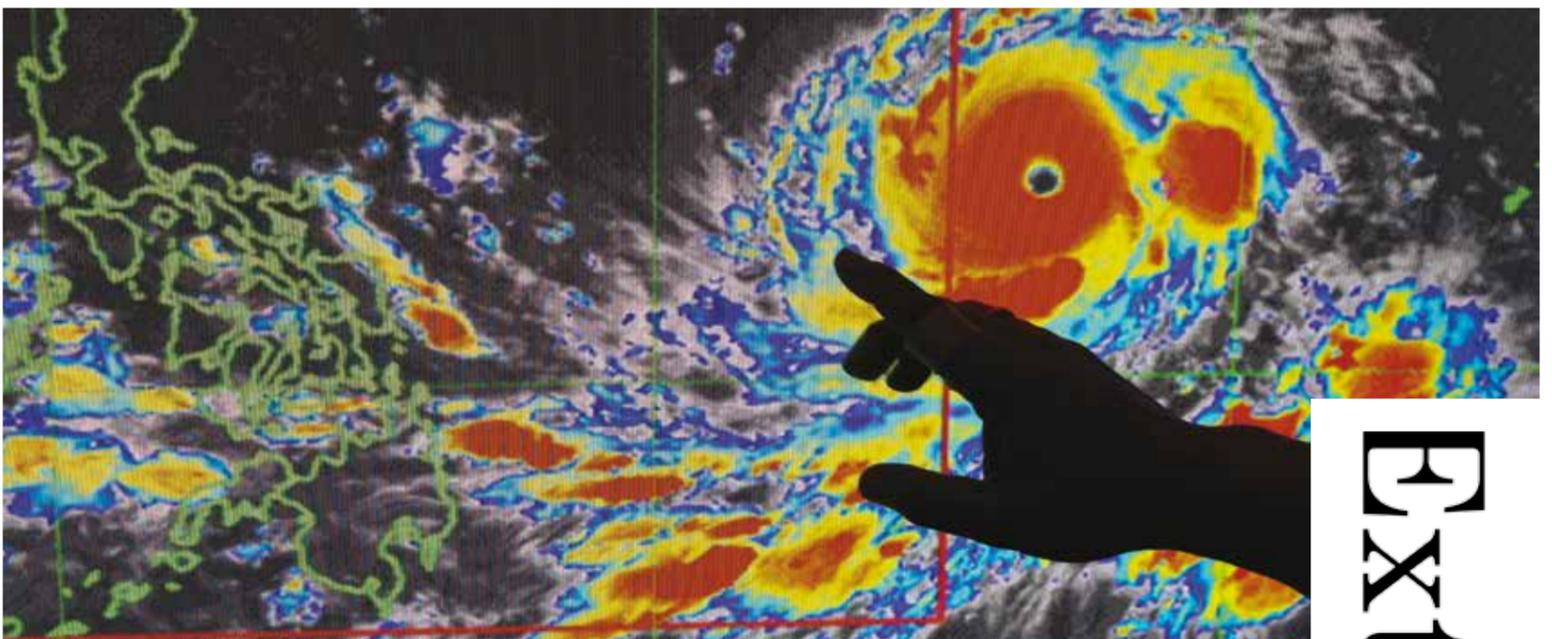
AP PHOTO



MYANMAR In the face of global condemnation, Myanmar's leader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday said that the handling of Rohingya Muslims, 700,000 of whom have fled to Bangladesh amid a brutal military campaign, could have been better.

More on backpage

AP PHOTO



Super typhoon heads to Northern Luzon, then Macau

P4,13

Extra times
weekend Guide

INSIDE

Religious crackdown endangering goal of

Lynzy Valles

PERSECUTION of the Christian community continues in China, with some watchdog groups expressing that ongoing pressure against religious groups is at its most intense since the Cultural Revolution.

Although the communist country constitutionalized freedom of religious beliefs, including the protection of "normal religious activities" in its Article 36 in 1982, the ongoing crackdowns seem contradictory to this law.

A local expert believes that such destructive behavior seems to be based on fear, insecurity and incompetence in dealing with religion and spirituality, which endangers the goal of a "harmonious" China.

Fr. Franz Gassner, coordinator for the Department of

Catholic Theology at the University of Saint Joseph, believes that the crackdowns are without justified cause.

"The crackdown reveals the other side of the coin; the lack of knowledge and acquaintance of party and state in matters of religion and spirituality," he told the Times.

"In the long run, by this thinking and practice, the party will again harm China's people and their development, similar to the one-child policy, which is turning out to be a disaster in the near future. In fact, both policies have the same father and mother: a lack of consistent philosophy and science," Fr. Gassner added.

He believes that such a movement would not explicitly occur in Macau, as it would create an impediment to the positive integration of religion and spirituality into society. That is not what people

want, he continued, stressing that religion and spirituality are important for society.

In June, Pope Francis voiced optimism on the Vatican and China's relationship, noting that the relationship was "at a good point."

Yet according to several reports, the Central Government has been raiding Christian congregations in Beijing and several provinces, burning crosses and bibles, closing down churches and forcing believers to renounce their faith.

China's Catholics are split into two camps: an official church led by a state-supervised organization, and a so-called 'underground church' run by a bishop appointed by the Pope.

On Sunday, China banned a popular underground Protestant church in Beijing as part of the crackdown to eradicate underground churches.

DANIEL BEITLER



In this 2016 archive photo, a Catholic procession is seen walking through central Macau



Many observers [have] noticed that this may be a reaction to control the huge religious awakening in China.

AURELIO PORFIRI
ACADEMIC



[There is a] lack of knowledge and acquaintance of party and state in matters of religion and spirituality.

FR. FRANZ GASSNER
THEOLOGIAN, USJ



Religion can be very powerful. [...] These ideologies really change the people's minds and behaviors.

LARRY SO
POLITICAL COMMENTATOR

According to the Beijing Chaoyang district civil affairs bureau, the church was breaking rules as it organized events without first registering.

Chinese law stipulates that worshipers can only conduct activities in congregations registered with the authorities. Yet a significant number still defy government restrictions, conducting underground or

home church gatherings.

Although a constitutional article was created to supposedly protect these nationals' right to choose their religion in the communist country, churches are facing a wave of harassment and pressure as new regulations targeting these Christian churches came into force in February.

This new set of regulations heightened punishments for

SUSPECTED ARSON IN ABANDONED CATHOLIC CENTER

THE CATHOLIC Center located near Rua do Campo caught fire on Tuesday, with the Judiciary Police (PJ) deeming the fire suspicious. Authorities are investigating the suspected arson case, as cigarette butts were found on the ground floor of the abandoned building. Pieces of wood inside the metal

shutter were set alight. The PJ statement recalled that a passer-by witnessed smoke coming from inside a metal trellis shutter on the ground floor, yet it was already extinguished when firemen arrived at the scene. The center has been reportedly empty for more than 20 years.

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'harmonious' China, say analysts



author of books and articles about China and Christianity, believes that there are some regions in China where control is tighter than others.

"In Chinese tradition, religion was also in control of the Emperor, the central power. So I guess that for the Chinese government, [it] may be difficult being relaxed about religious independence," said Porfiri.

"Being underground is a reaction to the central power that is seen as hostile. For Catholics that was and is a way to remain faithful to the Apostolic See," Porfiri explained.

Porfiri recalled that the Chinese government recently introduced a major impediment to online evangelization, which shows that there has been no progress in China's freedom to evangelize.

"Many observers [have] noticed that this may be a reaction to control the huge religious awakening in China. [...] I hope that it will be possible to put an end soon to all difficulties," he added.

Yet for political commentator Larry So, such crackdowns occur because religion remains a powerful form of ideology. He said that religion threatens the government's control as these ideologies affect the behavior of people.

"China will look at any groups if they were not in accordance with the Chinese religious regulations. Basically, the philosophy of China in terms of how they look at religion is that they look at it as some kind of ideology guiding people towards everything good, equality and all these things," So said.

"In terms of the political angle and community level,

religion can be very powerful. [...] These ideologies really change the people's minds and behaviors," he added.

So further expressed that from the communist party's point of view, "brainwashing" could also occur.

He noted that there could be fears the Christian community may not be in favor of the country's political development, highlighting the crackdowns that occurred against the Tibetan independence movement, which is based on religious ideology.

"It is political. [It is seen] as a kind of [replacement for the] Chinese government. They do not want to see some other kind of grassroots opposition forces [that lead] towards some kind of independence," said So.

When questioned on whether there would be progress regarding full freedom of religious activities, So explained that the Chinese government is trying to compromise with the Roman Catholic church, as all other religions are properly coordinated in China, including Buddhism and Taoism.

"[The Roman Catholic] church is the only religion that has something like a worldwide leader, and that worldwide leader is not under the auspices of the communist party. So they are trying to extend a friendly hand, but on the other end, they are trying to pressurize all these kinds of religious groups," said So.

Many argue that this is the most severe systematic suppression of Christians since religious freedom was written into the constitution in the 80s, yet So disagrees, pointing out that it has been more or less the same since Mao Zedong's rule ended.

355 taxi infractions seen in August

In August, a total of 355 taxi offences were recorded by the Public Security Police Force (PSP), according to a statement released by the PSP earlier this week. Among them, 220 offences (62 percent) were related to overcharging and refusing to carry passengers. There were 68 cases (19 percent) of taxi drivers refusing to accept passengers and 67 cases involving other violations. During the same period, the police recorded 24 cases involving unauthorized taxis, none of which were related to mobile taxi hailing services.

22,000 fake products seized in August

The Macau Customs Service (Customs) seized a total of 22,000 counterfeit products in August, according to a statement released by Customs. The products included food, alcohol, watches, sports equipment, phones, leather products and jewelry. The original products were worth MOP6 million in total. On Tuesday, Customs seized 259 counterfeit products from a clothes shop located in the Central district. The goods, which consisted of hats, clothes and flip-flops, were labeled Adidas, Nike, Gucci and Balenciaga. The real products would cost MOP100,000. These products were purchased in mainland China for between RMB25 to RMB60 each, and were being sold in Macau for between MOP60 and MOP130.

Foreign exchange reserves hold strong

The Monetary Authority of Macao yesterday announced that the preliminary estimate of the city's foreign exchange reserves amounted to MOP159.5 billion (USD19.73 billion) at the end of August 2018. The reserves increased by 1.7 percent from the revised value of MOP156.9 billion for the previous month. According to the Authority, Macau's foreign exchange reserves at end-August 2018 represented 10 times the currency in circulation. The trade-weighted effective exchange rate index for the pataca rose 0.87 points month-to-month and 1.34 points year-on-year to 105.7 in August 2018, implying that overall speaking, the exchange rate of pataca grew against the currencies of Macau's major trading partners.

unofficial churches, leading 30 churches in Beijing to issue a joint statement complaining of "unceasing interference" and the "assault and obstruction" of believers' regular activities since the law came into effect.

"The churches - underground or over ground - should keep going to engage in an honest and deep dialogue on many levels, wherever possible. This is most crucial, a sort of Chinese ecumene," said Fr. Gassner.

"Here in Macau we should treasure the freedom we experience in spiritual and religious matters. We should increase our efforts to assist other people and societies in this regard, especially in mainland China," he added.

Meanwhile, some argue that these ongoing crackdowns are nothing new as they have been going on for decades.

Aurelio Porfiri, Rome correspondent for Catholic newspaper O Clarim and

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TYPHOON MANGKHUT

T10 may be hoisted this weekend

TYPHOON signal number 10 may be hoisted this weekend as Typhoon Mangkhut approaches the city, Acting Deputy Director of the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) Tang Io Man revealed yesterday.

Yesterday, Chief Executive Chui Sai On and Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak attended an emergency meeting at the Civil Protection Center (the Center), where they discussed the arrangements made by the government to deal with the arrival of Typhoon Mangkhut with 29 civil protection-related officials.

“It is estimated that the typhoon will be at its strongest on the afternoon of September 16, with a probable typhoon signal number 8 level,” said Tang, adding that: “The prediction carries some uncertainty. There is still a chance that Macau might hoist typhoon signal number 9 or even number 10. [...] The typhoon route may slightly change its trajectory due to the topography of the Philippines, or due to other factors. At the current stage, typhoon signal number 10 cannot be complete-



ly excluded.”

Typhoon Mangkhut will closely approach Macau on Saturday and Sunday (September 15 and September 16), said Ma Io Kun, Unitary Police Service (SPU) Commissioner-General, on the sidelines of an emergency meeting at the Civil Protection Center yesterday.

“In terms of central pressure and wind force, both were rarely

registered in recent years,” said Ma, adding that the typhoon “is slightly deviated from Macau. But since the storm circulation is still huge, [the government] will not rule out its severe impact on Macau upon its approach,” said Ma.

The sea level may also rise, causing flooding in low-lying areas, the SPU head noted.

In the last two days, Macau’s

civil protection authority has been carrying out tests at the Center and other places, together with local organizations.

“Due to Typhoon Mangkhut’s rather large circulation, [the government] does not exclude [the possibility of] storm surges affecting Macau. [The Center] will keep in close contact with the security sector and the Social Affairs Bureau.”

In the last two days, supplies of bottled water from the most popular brands were sold-out in several supermarkets.

The Consumer Council issued a statement on Wednesday, noting that the Council and the Economic Bureau had met with local wholesalers and retailers of both groceries and bottled water to understand the current inventory.

The meeting was said to be a tentative move to ensure continuous supply of water and other vital products.

On the note of people flocking to shops to buy water, Ma called on residents to not buy large quantities of water and encouraged them to save some from their domestic water supply.

According to the SMG’s forecast of Super Typhoon Mangkhut, from September 15 until 17, rainfall will likely reach levels between 150mm and 250mm. The storm surge is expected to cause waters to rise by 0.5 to 1.5 meters above road level in Porto Interior between noon on September 16 and the evening. The wind force scale is forecasted to range from 8 to 11 (between 63 km to 11 km per hour). **JZ**

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2nd Annual Street Food Festival coming Sep 29

THE second annual Michelin Guide Street Food Festival Macau will be held from Saturday, September 29 to Tuesday, October 2, with Michelin-acclaimed food stalls and eateries serving their famed signature creations at Studio City's Macau Gourmet Walk.

The festival will once again feature some of the biggest names in street food, as well as one of the only Michelin-starred hawker stalls in the world.

Liao Fan Hawker Chan Soya Sauce Chicken Rice from Singapore, led by chef Chan Hon Meng, is the first hawker stall in the world to earn a coveted Michelin star for street food.

The Song of India, also from Singapore, has upheld its one Michelin star rating and will be coming to Macau for the second year in a row with chef Manjunath Mural at the helm.

Keng Eng Kee Seafood returns for its second year at the festival, and is known for serving the best 'tze char' in Singapore, with chef Wayne Liew specializing in wok-fried dishes and a mish mash of Hainanese and Cantonese cuisines.

The four-day event will see chefs from Asia's Michelin-starred restaurants and celebrated Michelin-recommended eateries serving their street food creations and signature delicacies under one roof.

Food is served between 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Chinese porcelain exhibition showcased at Casa Garden

Renato Marques

IN an initiative of the Orient Foundation, an exhibition of Chinese porcelain dating back to the Qing Dynasty was launched yesterday evening at the Casa Garden venue.

The event, hosted by the Macau delegation of the Portuguese foundation, includes a high number of porcelain pieces by the antiques dealer Luis Alegria, a Porto-based dealer who brings to the region many pieces that have been on display in several parts of the world, from Europe (Brussels, London, Lisbon, Porto, Paris, Basel, Monte Carlo and Maastricht) to Brazil (São Paulo), as well as in the U.S. (New York and West Palm Beach) and Hong Kong.

Among the high number and diversity of pieces on display, and besides the porcelain ones, there are also paintings and furniture; some with connections to Macau as well as the larger,



surrounding region.

As an example, there is a set of gouache paintings presented on paper dating from the 19th Century that illustrate views of Macau's Praia Grande area, as well as of the city of Canton (now known as Guangzhou) and Singapore.

Among the objects that the art dealer considers the most rare are examples of China porcelain, painted with western motifs or representations of western life. Alegria thinks these can only have come about from special requests made by wealthy families in the West

to Chinese artisans at the time. These pieces are adorned with royal motifs as well as representations of Portuguese vessels and French women.

The exhibition will be on display at the lower ground floor of Casa Garden until September 21.

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RENATO MARQUES



Audit report slams LRT delays and cost overruns

THE most recent report from the Commission of Audit (CA) released yesterday added to previous criticisms of construction delays and budget blowouts in the construction of Macau's Light Rail Transit (LRT) system.

In the report, the CA noted that until December last year, the only construction said to be complete was that related to the Taipa line.

The route is 9.3 kilometers long and represents, according to the CA's calculations, only 44.3 percent of what was initially planned to be built within this time, meaning that the construction rate of the project was less than

50 percent of what had been projected.

On the other hand, regarding the Peninsula line, the CA noted "only preliminary works on the Barra Station were started."

The CA also noted that at the end of 2016, the Transportation Infrastructure Office (GIT) had made new plans for the construction of the LRT, at the time outlining a total of 11 routes to be built in the short, medium and long term. However, the report said, "five of the 11 routes predicted [to be completed in] the short term will only be concluded, in the best case scenario, by 2026. As for the date of completion for the remaining short

and medium term projects, the schedules for these have not yet been defined."

Additionally, there was also criticism of cost overruns, with the report noting that back in 2007, "it was forecasted that for the first phase, the LRT would cost some MOP4.2 billion, however, in September 2012 the budgeting costs rose exponentially to MOP14.3 billion."

Delays and inaction from authorities were also noted in the report. On the administrative aspects of the project, the CA noted the government's announcement that in June 2016, the GIT would be extinct and replaced by a private company to be

established in 2017, and that the company would be in charge of coordinating all LRT operations. However, until July this year, "the company had not yet been created." Instead, the government decided to hand over the preparatory works for the Taipa line center of operations (in 2019) to another company on a five year contract, which will cost some MOP5.9 billion.

The CA also noted the GIT's faults in the approval of requests for the extension of construction periods to contractors, and failure to strictly observe the laws for inspections and timely procedures.

In the opinion of the CA, these flaws not only contributed to the constant "unjustified" delays to construction, but also budget overruns, pointing the finger at the GIT and their analysis and judgement of several requests from contractors, many of which were unjustifiable, as well as failing to enforce existing laws

for timely reports on incidents that might have caused delays to construction.

Citing several examples of particular situations where CA said that the GIT acted wrongly and caused delays to the construction, one situation related to the lack of coordination of preparatory works was of note in particular. The CA recalled a delay in the assignment of the worksite, due to the installation of a yard related to another public service.

The Commission of Audit criticized the ballooning costs that more than tripled in the five-year period between 2007 and 2012

In this case, "the GIT issued a letter requesting the removal of the construction only four months after the starting of the works, impacting its progress by about a year," the CA said, adding, "although the site for the works was clearly not in a condition to be assigned, the GIT had signed the corresponding consignment order and had subsequently authorized the extension of the deadline for that yard. This shows that the GIT was not proactive in coordinating the preparatory work."

The CA called on the GIT to promptly address the recommendations of the report and take measures to prevent them from reoccurring. **RM**

HK gov't can evict Foreign Correspondents' Club with 3 months' notice

DETAILS of the government's lease of the current premises of the Hong Kong Foreign Correspondents' Club were released this week, amid a freedom of speech scandal engulfing the institution.

Under the terms of the lease, the Club can be asked to vacate its premises with three months' notice if the building is "not being used to the satisfaction" of the government, or if the Club does anything that could be seen by the authorities as "a danger, a nuisance or annoyance."

As of yesterday, the local government in Hong Kong has not asked the Club to vacate the premises.

The Hong Kong Foreign Correspondents' Club came under scrutiny last month after it agreed to host a talk by HKSAR separatist Andy Chan, despite protests from both Beijing and the local government.

Chan, the leader of the Hong Kong National Party, advocates for independence for the territory of 7.4 million. He was controversially banned from standing for

election in Hong Kong after the local government determined that his stance ran contrary to provisions in the Basic Law concerning Chinese sovereignty.

Despite government pressure, the Club refused to cancel Chan's speech, attracting both praise and condemnation from the public.

After the speech, HKSAR Chief Executive Carrie Lam weighed in on the matter, saying the feelings of both the Hong Kong and Chinese people had been bruised by the suggestion of independence and that the Club had

violated a moral red line.

The lease for the building, which is located on Lower Albert Road in Central, was signed in December 2015 and would have lasted until 2023, providing its terms were not breached. The club pays HKD580,000 per month to rent the space.

According to the South China Morning Post, under the terms of the lease, the government would not have to pay any compensation to the Club in the event of the lease termination.

CANIDROME

Elderly residents complain about greyhound relocation

THE residents of the Asilo Vila Madalena are opposing the Macau Yat Yuen Canidrome's plan to relocate retired greyhounds next to the senior citizens' home.

Vice President of the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) Lei Wai Long said IACM had already arranged for one member to meet with the home's residents. IACM will also provide assistance to concerned parties, said Lei. According to the official, IACM offered opinions to the Canidrome based on the city's animal protection law. Lei believes that the Canidrome has also asked

for opinions from other government departments and further believes that these opinions should be respected.

Social Affairs Bureau (IAS) Director Vong Yim Mui said that the bureau had sent staff to the senior citizens' home to learn their opinions.

IAS's biggest hope is that placing the greyhounds at the aforementioned site will not affect the elderly residents' life in any way, particularly in terms of hygiene, health and noise.

Currently, there are about 80 senior citizens living at Asilo Vila Madalena.

REAL ESTATE MATTERS Selling your home

Sam Lee is a marketing manager and property consultant at JML Property. JML was established in 1994 and offers Investment Property & Homes. It specializes in managing properties for owners and investors, and providing attractive and comfortable homes for tenants.



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SAM LEE

Regardless of what the reason may be, selling your own home can be an emotional process for many. It's hard to reconcile the sentimental value of your own home from its market value as a property, which might or might not be as high as you would like. One way to channel your sentimental emotions and close this discrepancy is to take simple steps to add value to the property and increase its value in the marketplace. Below are some simple strategies.

Walls
One of the best and easiest ways of making your apartment aesthetically appealing is to repaint its walls. It's simple, cost effective and if done properly it can give the impression of newness in the eyes

of potential buyers and tenants. Choosing the right color is very crucial since colors have the power to set the mood in your home. Colors such as red tend to increase excitement, while light blue tends to help one focus. When it comes to choosing a color for potential buyers and tenants its safer to go with neutral colors such as beige and gray, since they both reflect light well and leave the buyer with the possibility of repainting later.

Lighting
Another important hack to improving your property before the sale is to give it the right ambiance and lighting by simply purchasing and installing the right type of lamps or light bulbs. It is important to consider the interplay and balance

between the natural and artificial lighting of the property with the color of your walls and furniture.

Flooring
Unlike repainting the walls or improving the lighting in the property, changing the flooring can require a heavier capital investment. If you are going to replace the flooring before putting your home on the market, you need to carefully weigh the investment against the added value that it would bring. If the flooring of the property is very old or damaged, another option that sellers often miss is to simply rip out the flooring and leave it up to the potential buyer to install new flooring. Of course, this will have to be reflected in the sales price.

Toyota ready to share hybrid-car secrets with China



TOYOTA Motor Corp. is preparing to divulge details of the hybrid-car engine technology it pioneered with the Prius to China in an attempt to catch up with rivals in the world's biggest auto market.

Chinese officials asked Toyota to share its gasoline-electric technology to help local companies meet stricter emissions targets, people familiar with the matter said, asking not to be named because the talks are private. Seeing this as a chance to make inroads in China,

Toyota has engaged in advanced talks to license its hybrid system to Chinese carmaker Geely Automobile Holdings Ltd., two of the people said.

Government backing for hybrid vehicles would be a boon for Toyota's ambitions to boost sales in China. Hybrids have been a success for Toyota in Europe and Japan for years, but China has so far placed more focus on so-called pure electric vehicles, promoting them through subsidies and tax breaks.

Gradually, though, China

is starting to see hybrids as a means of reducing emissions on the way toward a pure-electric future, part of a plan to reach ambitious environmental goals and reduce the country's reliance on imported oil. Trade tensions emanating from America are giving added impetus for Toyota and China to work together.

Geely's shares jumped 8.4 percent yesterday in Hong Kong, their biggest gain in 11 months. Toyota rose 1.8 percent in Tokyo, the most in two weeks. **MDT/Bloomberg**



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Apple bows to the Chinese market again with latest iPhones



APPLE Inc.'s latest iPhones show how even the world's largest company has to surrender to the dictates of a crucial Chinese market.

The iPhone Xs models unveiled Wednesday come with an "eSIM" feature that supports two cellular services and easier switching between carriers, but that technology won't be available in China, Hong Kong and Macau. Instead, it will offer slots for dual physical SIM cards, which identify and authenticate a user's phone number.

It's rare for Apple to tailor its products for specific markets because it likes to standardize as much of its designs as possible to make manufacturing efficient. But the U.S. company has much at stake in China, its largest market after the U.S. as well as the main production base for the world's iPhones and iPads. Its market position there is now under attack from savvy domestic players like Huawei Technologies Co. and Xiaomi Corp., which employ more locally oriented services.

"The use of eSims will let customers change carriers much easier, a situation that Chinese carriers do

not want to see," said James Yan, an analyst with Counterpoint Research. "Also, negotiations between Apple and the carriers aren't finished yet, making the physical cards a better option."

The dual-SIM concession shows the world's most valuable public company is willing to make sacrifices to access the world's largest smartphone and internet market. Apple generated USD45 billion in revenue from Greater China in its 2017 fiscal year, about 20 percent of total annual sales.

Apple didn't say why its eSIM technology isn't available in the country, and a spokeswoman didn't respond to an email seeking

comment. It may be related to Chinese market restrictions or regulations.

The smartphone market is thoroughly dominated by a trio of state-backed carriers led by China Mobile Ltd., which strictly control and monitor smartphone usage as well as registration by individuals - just one aspect of Beijing's obsession with monitoring all online activity.

Last year, the Wall Street Journal reported that wireless carriers abruptly shut off cellular access to Apple's third-generation Watch for new users. The Watch has its own eSIM technology and industry analysts told the newspaper this could have made it harder for carriers and re-

gulators to track the device user's identity.

Apple has made concessions in the past to comply with Chinese law and support its business. In 2016, Beijing ordered the company to shut down the iBooks Store and iTunes Movies. Last year, Apple was ordered to remove hundreds of applications from its Chinese app store that let people mask their location and circumvent official efforts to block certain websites.

Apple has also agreed to shift storage of data for Chinese users of Apple's iCloud services to server farms operated by Guizhou Cloud Big Data, a company with local government ties. **Bloomberg**

Analysis

APPLE FINALLY GETS HOW TO PLAY THE CHINA MARKET

Tim Culpan, Bloomberg

Five years ago Apple Inc. released a device it thought would appeal to consumers in one of its most important emerging markets.

The iPhone 5c was a failure. The c was alternatively supposed to stand for color, or China. In China, it just stood for cheap.

Two years later, Apple brought out the iPhone SE. What was special about the "special edition" was that it came out mid-cycle — in March 2016 — and had many of the same high specs Apple had introduced in its most recent September offering, notably the processor and camera.

As I wrote at the time, Apple had clearly learned the lesson from the 5c and made a move to cater to emerging markets by combining the cost savings on components for a six-month-old phone with a mid-cycle release that allowed it to be the "latest." But it was still a cheap phone, and didn't alleviate Apple's struggles in Greater China. Revenue went on to decline for two straight years amid renewed nationalism and a preference for the flexibility offered by Android devices.

It would be a stretch to call any of Apple's latest iPhones cheap. That's deliberate. The most inexpensive is \$749, almost double the price of the \$399 iPhone SE when it was released two and a half years ago. What Apple seems to have taken from the experience of the iPhone 5c and SE is that consumers around the world don't necessarily want a cheaper alternative. Many in emerging markets like China even balk at the idea, with a lower-spec phone bringing a loss of face.

Cupertino learned with the iPhone X that there's a strong market for high-priced devices, as long as value for money is demonstrated. In Greater China, for example, last year's December quarter revenue — the period after the X was launched — climbed 11 percent, and has increased 21.4 percent and 19.3 percent in the quarters since then.

An important part of Apple's new strategy is that the lowest-priced device released this week, the XR, has the same processor and a camera resolution as high as its pricier counterparts. The major difference is in the screen type and quality. That's enough of a difference to justify the price premium, but not so much that an XR buyer would look like a loser sporting one.

But where Apple has really tapped into emerging-market needs is with its long-overdue move into dual SIMs. As my colleague Alex Webb noted, allowing two subscriber identity modules in the same device sucks for telcos.

Consumers in emerging markets love them, though. Not only can they shop around for the best carrier deal, they get the convenience of having two phone numbers — work and play, local and international, spouse and partner. In China and many other emerging markets, customers routinely use prepaid accounts and top them up.

Each of the devices offered by Apple this week allows for one nano-SIM and one eSIM. The former is a physical card, the latter just a virtual device, but both allow for one account and one phone number each.

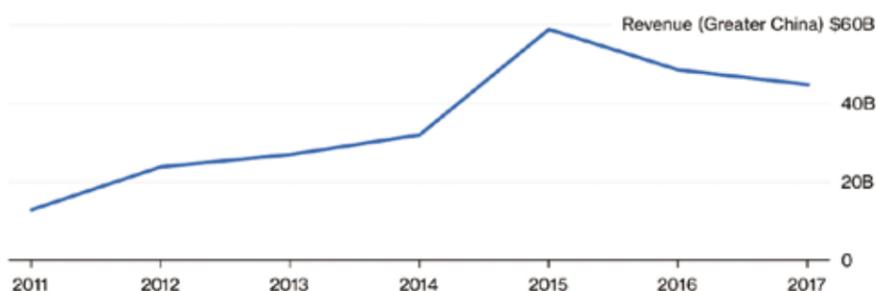
In China, Hong Kong and Macau, however, Apple is offering a model with two nano-SIM cards. This is likely to get around local restrictions on the use of eSIMs. On its English-language website, Apple mentions dual nano-SIMs only for the top-end XS Max model, whereas the China website also shows availability for the low-end XR. That's a very interesting strategy, nodding to the fact that some customers want two SIMs to chase better telco prices, while others want them for the dual phone numbers.

So let's recap. Five years ago, Apple chased the Chinese market by offering a cheap, colorful device with inferior specs. Today, its cheapest device is almost as good as its top-end offering, and it's tweaking the China product by offering dual nano-SIMs (to cater to local regulations) and popping them in the most expensive models on the market.

Apple certainly has come a long way in understanding what Chinese consumers really want.

Middling Performance

Apple undoubtedly wants to reverse the slide in Greater China sales. Its latest phones may help accomplish that



Source: Bloomberg

BloombergOpinion

TRADE WAR

Beijing says Washington asks to resume talks on tariff fight

Joe McDonald, Beijing

WASHINGTON has invited Beijing to hold new talks on their escalating tariff dispute, the Chinese foreign ministry said yesterday, ahead of a decision by President Donald Trump on whether to raise duties on USD200 billion of Chinese imports.

The announcement followed reports by American and European chambers of commerce that foreign companies in China have been hurt by earlier tariff hikes by both sides in the fight over Beijing's technology policy.

"We have indeed received an invitation from the U.S. side. We welcome it," said a ministry spokesman, Geng Shuang. "Now the two sides are in communication on relevant details."

Envoys from the two countries last met Aug. 22 in Washington but reported no progress.

Beijing has rejected pressure from the United States to roll back plans for state-led development of Chinese global champions in robotics, artificial intelligence and other fields.

Washington, Europe and other trading partners say those plans violate China's market-opening commitments. American officials also worry they might erode U.S. industrial leadership.

The two governments have imposed 25 percent tariffs on \$50 billion of each other's goods.

Two-thirds of American companies that responded to a survey said they have suffered lost sales or lower profits due to that increase, two chambers of commerce reported.



More companies say they will suffer if Trump goes ahead with his planned tariff hike and Beijing retaliates, according to the American Chambers of Commerce in China and in Shanghai.

In addition to retaliatory tariffs, companies report China is slowing down customs clearances and stepping up inspections and other bureaucratic processes, the chambers said.

Forecasters have warned that the worsening conflict between the world's two biggest traders could cut up to 0.5 percentage point off global economic growth through 2020 if all threatened tariff hikes go ahead.

"American companies are suffering both from China's retaliatory tariffs, and — ironically — from U.S. tariffs designed to harm the Chinese economy," the two chambers said in a statement. "AmCham China and AmCham Shanghai urge both governments to return to the negotiating table."

Beijing has issued a list of \$60 billion of American products for retaliation if Trump's next tariff hike goes ahead.

The chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China warned the Trump administration might be underestimating China's resolve to fight back.

"The U.S. administration runs the risk of a downward spiral of attack and counterattack, benefiting no one," William Zarit said in the statement.

To avoid the tariffs, 30 percent of U.S. companies are looking at moving assembly out of the United States or China or finding new suppliers, the chambers said. They said nearly one-third are thinking about canceling or postponing investment decisions.

Also yesterday, the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China said one in six of its members that responded to a survey are delaying investment or ex-

pansion. It said the conflict is "causing significant disruptions to global supply chains."

China is running out of American imports for retaliation due to their lopsided trade balance, but threatened unspecified "comprehensive measures" in June. That prompted worries it would use regulatory controls to disrupt U.S. business operations in China.

Another business group, the U.S.-China Business Council, said this week Chinese officials told it they were postponing accepting license applications from American companies in financial services and other fields until relations improve.

Some 63.6 percent of more than 430 companies that responded to the American chambers' survey said profits and customer demand have fallen due to the U.S. tariffs and 62.5 percent said the same about retaliatory Chinese tariffs.

About 74.3 percent said they would be affected if Washington's tariff increase on \$200 billion of Chinese goods goes ahead. Some 67.6 percent said the same of China's planned retaliatory tariffs on \$60 of American goods.

The survey was conducted between Aug. 29 and Sept. 5.

Some 52.1 percent of companies said Chinese authorities are slowing customs clearances, increasing inspections or imposing other "qualitative measures."

The European chamber said about 5 percent of companies reported shifting production out of the United States and about 7 percent were moving out of China.

We have indeed received an invitation from the US side. We welcome it.

GENG SHUANG
FOREIGN MINISTRY

That shows "neither side is 'winning,'" because "both are equally prone to losing companies," the chamber said.

China has tried without success to recruit Germany, France, South Korea and other governments as allies against Washington. Some of them have criticized Trump's tactics but many echo U.S. complaints about Chinese market barriers and industrial strategy.

"We share the concerns of the U.S. regarding China's trade and investment practices, but continuing along the path of tariff escalation is extremely dangerous," the European chamber president, Mats Harborn, said in a statement. **AP**

HENGYANG

Death toll at 11 in vehicle attack, 44 in hospital

THE death toll has risen to 11 with another 44 people hospitalized after a man allegedly drove an SUV deliberately into a crowd in central China before jumping out and attacking victims with a dagger and shovel, local authorities said yesterday.

The Hengyang city government said the suspect in the case had previous convictions for crimes including drug trafficking, theft and assault and, acting alone, had sought to "get revenge on society."

That appeared to rule out terrorism, although vehicles have previously been



used in attacks blamed on militant Muslim separatists from the Uighur ethnic minority group.

Police identified the suspect as 54-year-old Yang Zanyun from Hengyang's Hengdong county in the

largely agricultural province of Hunan.

Tuesday night's attack happened in a public square where Chinese typically gather to dance in groups or enjoy the cool evening breezes. The

SUV apparently appeared without warning, jumping the curb before plowing into the crowd.

China has experienced violent attacks in public places in recent years, including bombings and arson of buses and buildings.

Occasionally, the attacks are attributed to militant separatists, though such incidents have become less common in recent years amid a stifling security crackdown.

In 2013, an SUV plowed through a crowd in front of Beijing's Forbidden City before crashing and

catching fire, killing five, including the vehicle's three occupants. Police blamed the attack on Uighur extremists inspired by jihadi ideology.

More commonly though, the motivation is identified as mental illness, alienation from society or a desire to settle scores.

Chinese law restricts the sale and possession of firearms, and mass attacks are generally carried out with knives or homemade explosives. Many of those incidents have occurred at schools, including several in 2010 in which nearly 20 children were killed,

prompting a response from top government officials and leading many schools to beef up security.

However, in June, a man used a kitchen knife to attack three boys and a mother near a school in Shanghai, killing two of the children. Last year, police said a man set off an explosion at the front gate of a kindergarten in eastern China, which struck as relatives gathered to pick up their children at the end of the day, killing eight people. Death toll at 11 in China vehicle attack, 44 in hospital **AP**

AP PHOTO



Putin attends Russia-China war games

PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin yesterday attended Russia's biggest-ever war games, which involved some 300,000 troops as well as a significant contingent of Chinese forces.

The weeklong Vostok (East) 2018 maneuvers span vast expanses of Siberia and the Far East, the Arctic and the Pacific Oceans and showcase the military might of Russia and China at a time of simmering tensions with the U.S.

As well as the troops, some 1,000 Russian aircraft and 36,000 tanks and other combat vehicles are involved. The exercise surpasses even the biggest Soviet maneuvers in 1981.

China sent about 3,200 troops, 900 combat vehicles and 30 aircraft to join the drills at a Siberian firing range, a deployment that reflects its shift toward a full-fledged military alliance with Russia.

Speaking at the Tsugol firing range about 130 kilometers north of the border with China, where Russian and Chinese troops performed joint drills, Putin lauded the troops for their skills, saying they "demonstrated their capability to deflect potential military threats."

He emphasized that "Russia is a peaceful nation," but noted that the country needs to strengthen its mi-

litary capability to "be ready to protect its sovereignty, security and national interests, and, if necessary, support our allies."

The Chinese media have described the People's Liberation Army involvement in the drills as the country's largest-ever dispatch of forces abroad for war games.

From China's perspective, the emerging military alliance with Russia sends a strong signal to the U.S. and its ally Japan. China is intent on defending its interests in the South China Sea, which Beijing claims virtually in its entirety, as well as Taiwan and the Senkaku and Diaoyu islands controlled by Japan but claimed by Beijing.

For Russia, the increasingly robust alliance with China is particularly important in light of the strained relations with the U.S. and its allies and the looming threat of more biting U.S. sanctions.

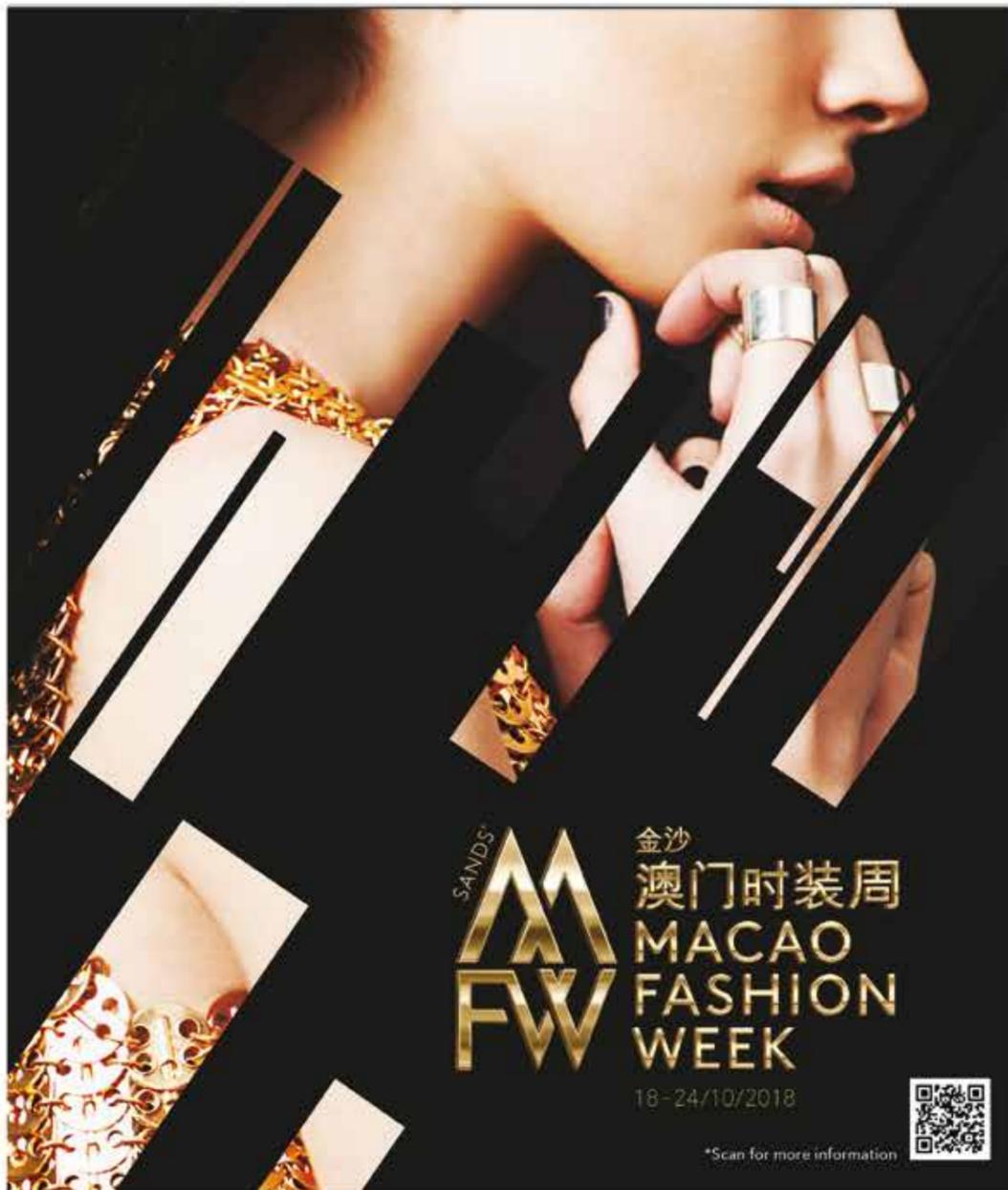
The drills come amid tensions over Syria, where the U.S. and its allies threatened to launch strikes against President Bashar Assad's government if it uses chemical weapons to reclaim control of the rebel-held northwestern province of Idlib.

Russia, which has waged a military campaign in support of Assad, strongly warned the U.S. against military action in Syria. **AP**

ADVERTORIAL

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All the glitz and glamour of this season's style will be showcased from 18 to 24 October when Sands Macao Fashion Week returns for the second year. Featuring fashion-forward runway shows from leading luxury and lifestyle brands, as well as group catwalk presentations of current ready-to-wear collections, there will also be special promotions and other hip happenings across Sands Shoppes. Style mavens stay tuned!



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*For more details, please visit <https://www.sandscotai.com/offers/conrad-macao/pink-inspired-2018.html>

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PHILIPPINES

Authorities start massive evacuations as huge typhoon nears

Jim Gomez, Manila

PHILIPPINE authorities began evacuating thousands of people yesterday from the path of the most powerful typhoon this year, closing schools, readying bulldozers for landslides and placing rescuers and troops on full alert in the country's north.

More than 4 million people live in areas at most risk from the storm, which the Joint Typhoon Warning Center in Hawaii categorized as a super typhoon with powerful winds and gusts.

Typhoon Mangkhut could hit northeastern Cagayan province on Saturday. It was tracked about 725 kilometers away in the Pacific with sustained winds of 205 kilometers per hour and gusts of up to 255 kph, Philippine forecasters said.

With a massive raincloud band 900 kilometers wide, combined with seasonal monsoon rains, the typhoon could bring heavy to intense rains that could set off landslides and flash floods, the forecasters said. Storm warnings have been raised in 25 provinces across the main northern island of Luzon, restricting sea and air travel.

Office of Civil Defense chief Ricardo Jalad told an emergency meeting led by President Rodrigo Duterte that about 4.2 million people in Cagayan, nearby Isabela province and



President Duterte observes the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council operation center in metropolitan Manila yesterday

outlying provincial regions are vulnerable to the most destructive effects near the typhoon's 125-kilometer-wide eye. Nearly 48,000 houses in those high-risk areas are made of light materials and vulnerable to Mangkhut's ferocious winds.

Across the north, residents covered glass windows with wooden boards, strengthened houses with rope and braces and moved fishing boats to safety.

Cagayan Gov. Manuel Mamba said by telephone that evacuations of residents from risky coastal villages and island municipalities north of the rice-and-corn-producing province of 1.2 million people have started and school classes at all levels have been canceled.

"The weather here is still good but we're moving them now because it's very important that when it comes, people will be away from peril," Mamba said.

A change in the typhoon's track prompted authorities to rapidly reassess where to redeploy emergency teams and supplies, Mamba said.

Duterte asked Cabinet officials from the north to help oversee disaster-response work if needed, and told reporters it was too early to consider seeking foreign aid.

"It would depend on the severity of the crisis," Duterte said. "If it flattens everything, maybe we need to have some help."

The typhoon is approaching at the start of the rice and corn

harvesting season in Cagayan, a major agricultural producer, and farmers were scrambling to save what they could of their crops, Mamba said. The threat to agriculture comes as the Philippines tries to cope with rice shortages.

Officials said other northern provinces started evacuating residents yesterday from high-risk areas, including in northern mountain provinces prone to landslides.

Duterte canceled his appearance at a missile test firing aboard a navy ship off northern Bataan province due to the approaching typhoon.

On Guam, where Mangkhut already passed, residents dealt with flooded streets, downed

trees and widespread power outages. Government agencies were conducting damage assessments and clearing roads, according to the Pacific Daily News.

Residents covered glass windows with wooden boards, strengthened houses with rope and braces and moved fishing boats to safety

About 80 percent of the U.S. territory was without power but it was restored by yesterday.

Mangkhut, a Thai word for the mangosteen fruit, is the 15th storm this year to batter the Philippines, which is hit by about 20 a year and is considered one of the world's most disaster-prone countries. Typhoon Haiyan left more than 7,300 people dead or missing and displaced over 5 million in the central Philippines in 2013. **AP**

NEW ZEALAND

Dairy giant posts loss after China stake sours

NEW Zealand's largest company, which sells dairy products, said yesterday it will completely review its business investments after a disastrous financial year saw it post its first-ever loss.

Fonterra lost hundreds of millions of dollars on its investments in China and also had to pay a large arbitration settlement following a 2013 botulism scare. The company has a new leadership team, which is promising to turn things around, after both the chief executive and board chairman recently quit.

Fonterra is the world's largest exporter of dairy products and controls more than 80 percent of New Zealand's milk supplies. Its largest market is China, which uses New



Zealand's sought-after milk powder to make infant formula.

New Chief Executive Miles Hurrell said Fonterra failed to meet the promises it had made to the more than 10,000 farmers who own the company under a cooperative structure.

"Throughout our business, we underperformed," he said.

Many farmers worry that Fonterra has lost touch with its agricultural roots by employing thousands of high-paid executives and making large, opaque investments in foreign markets.

Fonterra announced an after-tax loss of 196 million New Zealand dollars (USD129 million) for the year ending July, compared to a profit in the previous year of \$745 million New Zealand dollars (\$489 million).

Much of the loss was due to a write-down of NZD439 million on Fonterra's investment in China-based infant food company Beingmate.

Fonterra also lost NZD232 million in an arbitration payout to Danone of France, for recall costs from the 2013 food scare. The recall was made out of concerns, which proved later to be untrue, that some Fonterra products supplied to Danone in Asia were tainted by bacteria that can cause botulism.

Board chairman John Monaghan said the company would be reviewing all its investments over the next few months, starting with its stake in Beingmate. Fonterra plans to reduce its debt by NZD800 million, in part by selling some of its investments.

The results came during a year when farmers benefited from relatively high milk prices. One bright spot was that Fonterra's revenue was up 6 percent to NZD20 billion thanks to the higher prices, despite a drop of 3 percent in the volume of products sold.

Former chief executive Theo Spierings announced in March he was quitting, followed by former chairman John Wilson who left in July. Spierings' compensation last year of NZD8 million angered

many farmers, who thought it was too high.

Monaghan said Hurrell's pay, which would be disclosed next year, would be "substantially less" than what his predecessor was paid and would be in line with market forces.

Chris Lewis, the dairy chairman for farmer's lobby group Federated Farmers, said in a statement that Fonterra must do better, something he's hopeful will happen under the new management.

"I hope those two have a new broom for the shop floor," Lewis said.

Hurrell said he saw an opportunity to turn the company's fortunes around.

"It's a tough job, and I don't hide from that," he said. "We've got a challenge in front of us." **AP**



Flames and smoke rising from a Syrian government airstrike, in Hobeit village, near Idlib



Civil defense workers clean rubble from a house damaged in Hobeit village

FAQ

Idlib battle a climactic end to Syria rebellion?

Zeina Karam, Beirut

THE Syrian army, backed by allies Iran and Russia, is preparing for a military offensive to retake the country's last major rebel stronghold — the province of Idlib.

The battle could bring an end to a seven-year-old uprising-turned-civil war, but at the cost of a humanitarian disaster on a scale yet unseen in the bloody conflict. Some 3 million civilians are trapped in Idlib, along with tens of thousands of opposition fighters, including hard-core militants.

In recent days, Syrian and Russian warplanes stepped up bombings, targeting the southern edge of the province and signaling a slow start to the campaign.

Here's a look at the issues involved:

WHO IS IN IDLIB?

Idlib is located in the northwestern corner of Syria. It is ringed by Turkey to the northwest, the Turkish-controlled Afrin region to the northeast and government-controlled territory to the southwest and southeast. A vital highway linking the cities of Aleppo and Damascus, known as the M5, cuts through Idlib's eastern flank.

The province fell into rebel

hands in early 2015. It is now home to a dizzying array of opposition fighters, Islamic militants and jihadis. An alliance known as Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, spearheaded by al-Qaeda affiliates formerly known as the Nusra Front, dominates the province. Another rebel umbrella group called the National Front for Liberation is backed by Turkey.

An estimated 50,000 rebels, including more than 10,000 hard-core militants and al-Qaeda-linked fighters, are cornered in Idlib. With nowhere left to go, some might opt to fight till death rather than surrender.

Turkey also maintains a troop presence — hundreds of soldiers deployed at 12 observation posts in Idlib. Syrian government forces have massed to the south and southwest of the province.

WHY IS IT A POTENTIAL CATASTROPHE?

An estimated 3 million people live in Idlib, nearly half of them having arrived there after being displaced by fighting elsewhere in Syria. Among the civilians are close to 1 million children, according to rights groups.

The province saw its population swell drastically as rebels and civilians were being sent there from other opposition strongholds after they capitula-

ted to government forces.

A full-scale air and ground offensive is likely to send waves of refugees surging toward the sealed Turkey border, coinciding with the onset of winter. A top U.N. official has warned that an attack on Idlib could lead to this century's worst loss of life.

Even a partial offensive focusing on specific areas of Idlib could displace hundreds of thousands of people and cut off aid access to the province. Most aid currently enters through the Bab al-Hawa crossing with Turkey.

WHAT HAPPENS IF CHEMICAL WEAPONS ARE USED?

U.N. investigators have previously attributed several chemical attacks in Syria to government forces, including one attack using the nerve agent Sarin gas against the Idlib town of Khan Sheikhoun in April 2017.

In the run-up to a possible Idlib offensive, the Syrian government and Russia have alleged that rebels in Idlib are planning to use chemical weapons to frame the government and induce Western punitive airstrikes.

The U.S. has pushed back, with Defense Secretary Jim Mattis saying this week that "right now we see zero evidence that the opposition has any chemical ca-

pability, notwithstanding what Russia has been broadcasting repeatedly."

The U.S. says it will retaliate harshly to any chemical weapons attack by President Bashar Assad's forces and has suggested such internationally prohibited weapons are being readied for the battlefield.

Twice before, the U.S. has resorted to missile strikes in response to chemical weapons attacks, only to see them used again.

CAN BLOODSHED BE AVERTED?

The presidents of Russia, Iran and Turkey met last week in Tehran to consider alternatives, but failed to reach a consensus. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani back military action, despite a cease-fire call by their Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The U.N. envoy for Syria has told the U.N. Security Council there are signs the three leaders intend to continue talking.

Turkey stands to lose the most from a battle on its border that is sure to have a destabilizing effect on the country and areas it controls inside Syria.

In an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal this week, Erdogan warned that an Idlib offensive would "create serious humanitarian and security risks for Turkey, the rest of Europe and beyond." He said it would amount to "indiscriminate attacks to wipe out its opposition and not a genuine or effective campaign against terrorism."

For Russia and Iran, recapturing Idlib would deal a decisive defeat to the opposition and

stamp out the last remains of the rebellion against Assad that began in 2011.

While an assault to retake Idlib appears to be inevitable, there are ongoing talks on ways to separate the militants from the civilians.

Proposals include urging Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham to dissolve itself or join the Turkey-backed rebels. This would supposedly bring the group more under Turkish control and make it easier to deal with. But there are thousands of foreign jihadis among Idlib's fighters, including Chechens and Chinese.

Another proposal is to open humanitarian corridors through which civilians could leave to government-controlled areas, although that suggestion has yet to gain any traction.

WHAT IS THE US ROLE?

Despite dire U.S. warnings and fears of a humanitarian disaster, the Trump administration has little leverage to stop Russia, Iran and Syria from pressing ahead with the Idlib offensive.

Washington has threatened military action in case of a chemical weapons attack but its mixed messaging on retaining a U.S. presence in Syria and a cut in aid has diminished its already limited influence over the conflict.

American airstrikes launched against Assad government assets have had limited impact in the past.

Another tool in the U.S. arsenal is economic pressure, but sanctions have been ineffectual since they first began to be applied during the Obama administration. **AP**

US, Cuba to meet on mystery 'health attacks' in Havana

Matthew Lee, Washington

U.S. and Cuban officials will meet later today in an effort to determine the method and motive behind mystery incidents in Havana that have injured American diplomats.

The meeting comes amid widespread frustration among national security agencies and in Congress at the lack of answers about what the U.S. describes as "health attacks" that began nearly two years ago and affected some two dozen people, including some diagnosed with brain damage. It also comes amid a flurry of reports suggesting investigators have narrowed their suspicions as to the cause and culprit.

The department said today's meeting [Macau time] is "part of our ongoing effort to investigate and better understand the health conditions of our diplomats." It said the Cuban delegation would "receive a general medical briefing about the injuries experienced by U.S. personnel who served in Havana."



The US Embassy in Havana

The State Department has downplayed or denied reports that investigators have focused on a microwave device as the source of the attacks and that Russia is the leading suspect. The reports have also raised protests from Cuba, which does not dispute the symptoms but insists there is no evidence to support any assertion that they were caused by premeditated at-

tacks on its soil.

Twenty-five U.S. Embassy workers in Cuba — as well as one at the U.S. consulate in Guangzhou, China — have been affected by mysterious health incidents, suffering a range of symptoms and diagnoses including mild traumatic brain injury, also known as concussion, that began in the fall of 2016.

The last case from Havana was

confirmed in June, when the department said two embassy staffers had been affected in a single occurrence in late May in a diplomatic residence at which both officers were present. Those were the first confirmed cases in Havana since August 2017.

One U.S. official said the meeting was organized after Cuba complained that Washington has been withholding key de-

tails about the affected Americans' medical conditions. The official was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter and spoke on condition of anonymity. But, in congressional testimony last week, State Department medical personnel suggested they had shared more information with China about the incident in Guangzhou than they had with the Cubans about the incidents in Havana.

Officials at the Cuban Embassy in Washington, who have repeatedly denounced the U.S. accusations as politically motivated and unproven, has no immediate comment.

Several officials from the State Department and other agencies involved in the U.S. investigation last week testified before a House Foreign Affairs Committee panel but were unable to provide any new information about the probe and its potential findings. In two closed-door, classified briefings with congressional aides and lawmakers, the officials repeated that they had not come to any conclusions about what caused the injuries or who might be responsible for them.

Initial speculation had centered on some type of sonic attack, owing to strange sounds heard by those affected, but an interim FBI report in January found no evidence that sound waves could have caused the damage. **AP**

AD

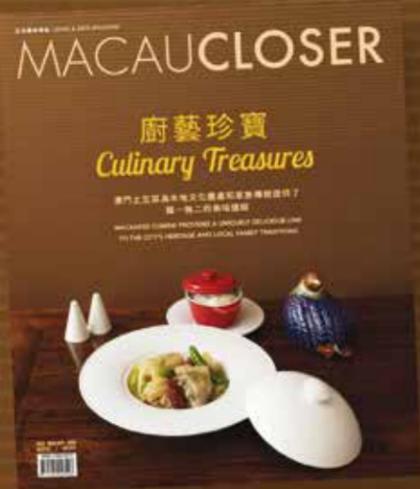
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FRIDAY

- 13:00 TDM News (Repeated)
- 13:30 News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
- 15:00 Portuguese Soap Opera
- 18:15 Miscellaneous
- 19:00 Hato Documentary (Repeated)
- 19:35 Portuguese Serie
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report
- 21:15 Portuguese Mini Serie (100% Portuguese)
- 22:25 Portuguese Serie - Liberty 21
- 23:15 TDM News
- 23:50 Movie
- 02:05 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
- 02:50 RTPi Live

SATURDAY

- 10:30 Zig Zag
- 11:35 Miscellaneous
- 12:30 Miscellaneous
- 13:00 TDM News (Repeated)
- 13:30 News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast (PT)
- 14:30 Miscellaneous
- 18:10 Macau Festivities Documentary
- 19:05 Lusa Music Box
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
- 21:15 Grimm Sr. 4
- 22:45 Miscellaneous
- 23:15 TDM News
- 23:50 2 FIMM - UNICEF Concert
- 00:45 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
- 01:30 RTPi Live

SUNDAY

- 10:25 Kids Serie
- 11:00 Sunday Mass (Live)
- 12:00 Miscellaneous
- 13:00 TDM News (Repeated)
- 13:30 News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
- 15:30 Mozambique Jazz Festival
- 17:25 Got Talent Portugal
- 19:40 Portuguese Serie
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report
- 21:15 Documentary
- 23:15 TDM News
- 23:55 Miscellaneous
- 00:35 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
- 01:20 RTPi Live

Offbeat

SUSPICIOUS ITEM TURNS OUT TO BE SCIENCE EXPERIMENT

Police officers spent two hours investigating a suspicious plastic container found behind a Missouri sandwich shop before determining it was a high school science experiment. KMBC-TV reports that police were summoned Tuesday to a Jimmy John's in Platte City on the northern edge of the Kansas City metropolitan area. The plastic container they encountered was filled with blue fluid attached to other items. Officers eventually determined it was an experiment meant to demonstrate how hydrogen can be used as power. The student who built the project demonstrated it to friends inside the Jimmy John's then left it behind the store so other friends could see it. But a worker at a nearby convenience store spotted the gadget and called 911. No charges are expected.

cinema

CINETEATRO

13 SEP - 19 SEP



THE PREDATOR
 ROOM 1
 2:30, 4:30, 7:30 9:30pm
 Director: Shane Black
 Starring: Boyd Holbrook, Trevante Rhodes, Jacob Tremblay
 Language: English (Chinese)
 Duration: 107min



THE EQUALIZER 2
 ROOM 2
 2:30, 4:45, 7:15 9:30pm
 Director: Antoine Fuqua
 Starring: Denzel Washington, Pedro Pascal, Ashton Sanders
 Language: English (Chinese)
 Duration: 121min



WHEN I GET HOME, MY WIFE ALWAYS PRETENDS TO BE DEAD
 ROOM 3
 2:30, 4:45, 7:15 9:30pm
 Director: Toshio Lee
 Starring: Nana Eikura, Ken Yasuda, Sumika Nono
 Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)
 Duration: 115min

this day in history



Marcus Sarjeant being subdued after firing blanks

1981 QUEEN'S 'FANTASY ASSASSIN' JAILED

A teenage boy who fired blank shots at the Queen during a Trooping of the Colour ceremony has pleaded guilty to a charge under the 1848 Treason Act and been jailed for five years. The Queen was startled when 17-year-old Marcus Sarjeant fired several shots in her direction as she was riding in a parade down the Mall in June, but was unharmed. Lord Chief Justice Lane said the teenager's original intention was to use a real gun, but when he could not get hold of one he carried out a "fantasy assassination". Sarjeant - described as a shy loner haunted by failure - was inspired by attempts on the lives of US President Ronald Reagan and the Pope. The court heard the teenager from Capel le Ferne near Folkestone in Kent was also obsessed with the murders of President John F Kennedy and John Lennon. Lord Lane said there was little doubt the incident could have been far worse. "You tried to get a licence, you tried to get a gun - you were not able to obtain either," he told the court. But he made it clear Sarjeant was being sentenced for what he did, and not what he might have done. The prosecution said documents taken from the would-be assassin's home indicated he had planned to kill the Queen for some time. He had written in a diary: "I am going to stun and mystify the whole world with nothing more than a gun - I will become the most famous teenager in the world."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Marcus Sarjeant wrote to the Queen from prison to apologise for firing the blanks, but he never received a reply. He was released in October 1984 aged 20, changed his name and started a new life.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Try to pitch in when you see something that's not working out at the office or at home — you don't need to wait for the distress signal before snapping into action. Your initiative earns kudos.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
You need to get out there and enjoy the nightlife — or daytime — of your city, town or village. A concert would be perfect for your energy, even if it's just the lull of a low-key jukebox.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
Don't let anything accumulate in your inbox for long today — you need to answer messages as soon as you get them, or you risk losing out on great opportunities. Make it fast!

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Your ability to communicate is heightened today, so reach out to an old family member or make a new friend — use that social energy before it dissipates! It's a good time to build bridges.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
How does your budget look? If you don't have one to check on, now is a great time for you to draw one up — with the help of a smart friend, of course. You may be surprised by what you find.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
You find yourself on the receiving end of some serious praise — or maybe an award of some kind. You know you deserve it, but it's hard to take this in the right way. You can make it work!

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22
You're facing far too many details today — you need to make sure that you can cover them all, or maybe get them covered by someone else. Things don't have to get too crazy, right?

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Your secrets are starting to come out — but only the ones that you want to make public! Your strategic release of information should come as a surprise to at least one key player.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
This is not the time to rush ahead — you have to cover all the details of your new work or home situation first. One step at a time gets it all done, whereas impulsive behavior moves you backward.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You need to spend some time online or in a good, old-fashioned library today — the information you need isn't going to come to you! Ask questions and follow up leads until you know it all.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You feel a little closer to normal today, and better able to see things through a prism of responsibility rather than freaked-out worry or wild fantasy. It may not be as fun, but it's closer to the truth.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20
You need to get to work on a new project — and today is perfect for picking out new things to do. You may find that your energy is better spent on intense and focused tasks than diffuse brainstorming.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	20	28	cloudy/drizzle
Harbin	11	25	cloudy
Tianjin	21	27	cloudy/overcast
Urumqi	5	16	clear
Xi'an	15	26	overcast
Lhasa	9	22	shower/cloudy
Chengdu	17	23	shower/clear
Chongqing	21	25	drizzle
Kunming	17	23	shower
Nanjing	21	30	overcast
Shanghai	24	31	cloudy
Wuhan	21	32	cloudy
Hangzhou	23	30	cloudy
Taipei	25	30	cloudy
Guangzhou	25	33	cloudy
Hong Kong	27	33	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	8	21	cloudy
Frankfurt	16	22	drizzle
Paris	14	20	drizzle/cloudy
London	9	19	cloudy
New York	24	28	drizzle/cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Give out; 5- Easy ___; 10- Suffragist Carrie; 14- Blood fluids; 15- Allude; 16- Lotion ingredient; 17- Strong as ___; 18- Danny's daughter; 19- Civil disturbance; 20- Unreachable; 23- Rapture; 24- Out of order; 25- Round of voting; 28- Salt tree; 30- Nebraska City's county; 31- Armed resistance; 36- Male offspring; 37- Rubella; 39- Peer Gynt's mother; 40- Fag; 42- Will-___-wisp; 43- Woes; 44- Cheerful; 46- Caterpillar competitor; 49- The Younger and The Elder; 51- Churchly; 56- Play part; 57- Bring together; 58- Western Indians; 60- Collections of anecdotes; 61- More delicate; 62- Gather, harvest; 63- Small children; 64- Anatomical passages; 65- Start of a counting rhyme;

DOWN: 1- Conductor ___-Pekka Salonen; 2- Course list; 3- Wrinkle remover; 4- Subject to tax; 5- Axilla; 6- Singes; 7- Big dos; 8- Actor Lugosi; 9- Gator's cousin; 10- A chewy candy; 11- Excuse; 12- Implements; 13- French beans?; 21- Arafat's org.; 22- Assembly rooms; 25- Pear type; 26- Yours, in Tours; 27- Protracted; 28- Skilled; 29- Driving peg; 31- Phooey!; 32- Phila. clock setting; 33- Must've been something ___; 34- Dept. of Labor division; 35- Nair rival; 37- 1957 hit for the Bobbettes; 38- Sushi option; 41- Lacking oxygen; 42- Unknown; 44- Speaks; 45- Luau chow; 46- Clear of vermin; 47- Low-budget prefix; 48- Brilliance; 49- The ___ Mutiny; 50- Late bloomer; 52- Mystical Muslim; 53- Monogram ltr.; 54- Suit to ___; 55- The Tower of Pisa does this; 59- Engage in espionage;



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- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- 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
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
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Ref: 18065557

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Ref: 18070685

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Taipa
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HKD 7,800sq ft
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Ref: 18075558

Lakeview, Macau
Macau
3 Bedrooms Apartment Front Balcony
HKD 30,000 / 3,430 sq ft
Ref: 18060680

Violet Court, Helene Gardens
Coloane
2,530sq ft / HKD 20M
HKD 7,905sq ft
Beautifully Designed Apartment
Ref: 18035546

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FOOTBALL

No rest for Son after grueling summer of soccer

Steve Douglas

A grueling summer of soccer for Son Heung-min took in the World Cup in Russia, a pre-season tour to the United States, then the Asian Games in Indonesia where he played six games in 18 days in stifling conditions.

The South Korea superstar returned to Tottenham yesterday [Macau time] with a gold medal, an exemption from military service in his home country, and likely some tired legs.

Yet, the hard work doesn't end there.

Son is faced with the tough task of battling back into the Tottenham team, with fellow winger Lucas Moura having excelled in his teammate's absence during the last three matches in the English Premier League.

Moura's three goals — two of which came against Manchester United at Old Trafford — helped him win the Premier League player of the month award for August, and handed Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino something of a dilemma now Son is back.

Does Moura's form give Pochettino the option of even giving Son a well-earned rest? After all, the winger has barely stopped since linking up with South Korea in late May for warm-up games ahead of the World Cup finals. As if he hadn't played enough this summer, Son played almost every minute of the national team's friendly games



South Korea's Son Heung-min (7)

against Costa Rica and Chile over the past few days.

It seems the 26-year-old Son doesn't want that, though.

"Fatigue is an excuse," Son said after the 0-0 draw with Chile on Tuesday.

Tottenham's hectic upcoming schedule may require Pochettino to throw Son straight into action.

A home game against Liverpool on Saturday starts a run of seven fixtures in 22 days across three competitions for the Lon-

don club. That includes the start of the Champions League and it's hardly a slow introduction to the group stage: Spurs play Inter Milan and Barcelona in their first two matches.

There's a chance Son will not start against Liverpool at Wembley Stadium — although the absence of Dele Alli because of a hamstring injury does leave an available spot in the forward line — but will return for the trip to Inter three days later.

Moura will not be easy to oust. The Brazilian has more goals than Harry Kane this season, often finding himself further forward than the England striker as he cuts in from the right wing. It seems to be a similar tactic to Liverpool, where right winger Mohamed Salah often plays in advance of central striker Roberto Firmino, who can drop deeper like Kane.

Son is coming off his best season for Tottenham, scoring 18

times in all competitions and proving as adept at filling in as a striker in the absence of Kane as playing in his usual position on the left wing.

With Erik Lamela also providing competition in attack and both Alli and Christian Eriksen seemingly mainstays in Pochettino's team, Pochettino has never had such a wealth of options up front.

Tottenham started the Premier League with three straight wins before losing at Watford 2-1 before the break for international matches.

MORATA'S MISSION

Alvaro Morata might be running out of opportunities to convince Maurizio Sarri that he should be the first-choice striker at Chelsea.

Morata has one goal in his first five games of the season — after a preseason when he failed to score at all — and looked off the pace in Chelsea's most recent games, against Newcastle and Bournemouth.

Olivier Giroud, who scored a spectacular volley for France in the international break, has impressed as a substitute for Chelsea and might have convinced Sarri he is worthy of a start against Cardiff on Saturday.

Alternatively, Sarri could repeat what he did to such good effect at former club Napoli last season and play three smaller, more energetic forwards in the front line in Eden Hazard, Pedro Rodriguez, and Willian. At Napoli, Sarri used Jose Callejon, Dries Mertens, and Lorenzo Insigne.

Either way, Morata's spot looks up for grabs as he struggles to prove worthy of the club-record fee of 58 million pounds (now USD80 million) that Chelsea spent to sign him from Real Madrid in the offseason of 2017. **AP**

AUTO RACING | F1

Vettel needs to find a way to hit back at Singapore GP

SEBASTIAN Vettel needs a return to form at the Singapore Grand Prix, the night race where his Formula One championship challenge started crumbling last year.

Vettel was perfectly poised to regain the overall lead from Lewis Hamilton at the Marina Bay street circuit last year, but caused a multi-car crash from pole position and spiraled out of the race. Hamilton avoided the first-lap chaos and, despite starting fifth, went on to win.

The crash affected Vettel's momentum badly. Hamilton won two of the next three races and sealed the title by a com-



Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel of Germany (left) is flanked by his teammate Kimi Raikkonen of Finland

table 46 points. It could be deja vu for the German driver as he already trails Hamilton by 30 points heading into

Sunday's race. Hamilton has won three of the past four races and outscored Vettel 93-55 during that span.

Still, Vettel is confident he can turn the situation around — providing he keeps his composure. "The biggest enemy is

me. We have a great car," Vettel said yesterday. "Obviously, [Hamilton] is ahead at the moment, the one to beat, but we have all the chances. We need to look after ourselves and if we do that we have a good chance to do well."

The sweltering heat and humidity makes for grueling driving on Singapore's sinewy street track — even late at night.

"I think it's the toughest race we have all year, mentally and physically," Vettel said. "You have a feeling you can never be prepared enough."

He will need to be on Sunday, given how many points he's thrown away this season.

Considering Hamilton has won six races to Vettel's five, the margin between them should be much closer. But, just like in 2017, Vettel has been throwing away points and his composure is again being called into question.

The slump started when the Ferrari driver crashed in the rain while leading the German GP in July, then botched qualifying — again in the rain — at Hungary despite being faster than Hamilton's Mercedes.

"For sure, the worst one was Germany," Vettel said. "[But] there's not much point trying to dig into the race again." **AP**

opinion

Bizcuits
Leanda Lee



THE LAST STRAW

Recently we have seen some concerted single-use plastic and waste activism locally; and not before time. From a petition seeking a plastic-bag ban to “plogging”, individuals and groups have been raising the profile of the plight of our environment caused by waste in our economic system. Most disturbing has been the realisation that very little of any effect has been done about it.

The momentum has been visible on social media since the Plastic-Free July challenge this year with Macau joining the initiative started in Perth in 2011 which now galvanizes over 2 million people in 159 countries. Facebook groups like Macau Sustain Tips are starting to encourage individuals in their quest towards sustainable and zero-waste lifestyles.

Efforts like these are made difficult in an economic environment like Macau that remains largely unaware of the impact of our waste-ignorant business models. There are few viable alternatives to packaging and presenting goods that are both economically and environmentally sustainable – too many entities sacrifice one for the other, in both directions. Some of us curb our consumer choices or spend more money on the few and mostly artisan non-packaged options, while the majority sacrifice environmental sustainability for convenience or economic and financial reasons. Melding the two so that environmental sustainability is economically viable is the way forward but to do so requires some help from a higher authority.

As I finish writing this column 5,134 people have signed an ongoing on-line petition presented to the Government on 30th August by a group fronted by Annie Lao. This petition is in reaction to the State of the Environment of Macau 2017 report published by the Environmental Protection Bureau which revealed that Macau produces more solid waste (comprised of food and plastic) per capita than Singapore, Hong Kong, Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai. It petitions the government for immediate action to “reduce waste and promote zero waste” by firstly “banning single use plastic and unnecessary plastic packaging at local supermarkets”; a jolly good start because it builds awareness by confronting the community with major behavioural shifts. It calls for the ban of single-use plastics – the ones that get thrown away after very little use. This would rebrand plastic as a resource, not a consumable.

Rather than recycling or incinerating, such waste can be stopped from entering the system in the first place. Recycling is not a panacea, but a moral hazard. We think we are doing the right thing by recycling but it is currently inefficient and resource-heavy and does not prompt a change in producer, supplier or consumer behaviour. The right thing is to change the paradigm of how and how much we consume.

The petition sought a response from the government by September 13th. As of midday yesterday, the government had not replied. The petitioning group argue that typhoon preparations may have taken precedence, but the typhoon is sure to bring to the surface the severity of our waste problem - all around us.

Such activism is not new. Cities and countries have banned plastic bags, straws, non-biodegradable take-away containers and even all single-use plastics.

One word of warning: Activism comes with its dangers. There is no-one so blinded than a newly minted ideological activist, as referred to in a letter to the editor this week telling the story of teen-age girls being berated for drinking with plastic straws. Emotion is a powerful tool in behavioural change but shame is far weaker than encouragement, understanding and the shock that comes from awareness of the outcomes of current behaviour. We only need 10 percent of our population to show by example how uplifting it is to live a cleaner, healthier and uncluttered life for others to become aware and change. This is where our Integrated Resorts - without resorting to green-washing - could genuinely lead the way, rather than bring us down. Kudos to MGM on their decision to replace single-use plastics. Lead on so that others shall follow!

**THE TROPICAL BANDS FROM FLORENCE
BUZZ BEGIN LASHING CAROLINAS**

The outer bands of wind and rain from a weakened but still lethal Hurricane Florence began lashing North Carolina yesterday as the monster storm moved in for a prolonged and potentially catastrophic stay along the Southeast coast that could drench the homes of as many as 10 million people.

Florence's winds had dropped from a peak of 225 kph to 165 kph by midmorning, reducing the hurrica-

ne from a Category 4 to a Category 2. But forecasters warned that the widening storm – and its likelihood of lingering around the coast day after day – will bring seawater surging onto land and torrential downpours.

“It truly is really about the whole size of this storm,” National Hurricane Center Director Ken Graham said. “The larger and the slower the storm is, the greater the threat and the impact – and we have that.”



SOURCE: D5M/G

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	20-40 Good	
High Density Residential Area	20-40 Good	
Ambient	25-45 Good	

WORLD BRIEFS

INDIA Health authorities are rushing medical supplies to north Indian towns and villages where at least 50 people have died from fever over the past two weeks

SYRIA The army, backed by allies Iran and Russia, is preparing for a military offensive to retake the country's last major rebel stronghold – the province of Idlib. More on p14



TURKEY's central bank yesterday raised its key interest rate sharply, from 17.75 percent to 24 percent, to contain inflation and stem the currency crisis that has been destabilizing the country this summer.

ROMANIA's prime minister has requested financial help from the European Union to deal with the financial effects of a serious outbreak of African swine fever.



GERMANY Police forcibly removed protesters from tree houses yesterday as they sought to free the way for parts of an ancient forest to be cleared next month for new coal strip mining.

ANGOLA-S. AFRICA The remains of a former rebel commander were repatriated from South Africa yesterday in an effort by Angolan President Joao Lourenco to reconcile with the opposition.



US A San Francisco board has voted unanimously to remove a 19th century statue that activists say is racist and demeaning to indigenous people.

BRAZIL In his first full day as the presidential candidate for Brazil's Workers' Party, Fernando Haddad pledged to be his own man if elected and not bow to financial markets or the interests of other countries, including the United States.

CHENWEI GUO MURDER

Ex-convict pleads guilty in Chinese student's shooting death



Austin Boutain looks on during a court hearing

Lindsay Whitehurst, Salt Lake City

An ex-convict pleaded guilty to killing a University of Utah student from China using a gun stolen after another slaying.

Austin Boutain, 24, was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole in the plea agreement that allowed him to avoid the death penalty. He pleaded guilty to murder and kidnapping charges.

He and his wife were charged with hatching a carjacking plot that led to the October 2017 death of Chenwei Guo, whose parents live in Beijing and were devastated over the death of their only son at age 23.

He “was a perfect son to them,” said prosecutor Chou Chou Collins.

Boutain stood in the courtroom shackled, surrounded by guards. He also pleaded guilty to attacking another inmate and damaging a sprinkler in jail.

“I know sorry doesn't mean much, but I am truly sorry,” he said.

His wife Kathleen Boutain, 24, has been charged with criminal solicitation, theft and other counts. She has yet to enter a plea.

They were drifters who fled to Utah after cutting

the throat of Mitchell Ingle, 63, in Golden, Colorado, in a plan to steal his trailer home, authorities said.

After Ingle's death, they drove his truck to Salt Lake City, ditched it and set up camp in a canyon near the university campus, police said.

■ Austin Boutain, 24, was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole in the plea agreement

There, they decided to find a car, force the driver to drive to Tennessee, using the driver's money to fund the trip before killing the person, according to charging documents.

After hours of looking for potential victims, Kathleen Boutain got frustrated and left, prosecutors said.

Austin Boutain walked up to Guo's car and kno-

cked on the window to ask if he had seen her. When Gou, who was with a female friend, didn't answer, Boutain “became enraged” and fired at the car until the gun was empty, documents state. Guo was fatally struck in the neck.

The woman escaped and Boutain ran away, setting off a manhunt in the foothills near Salt Lake City. He eluded police for hours by crawling on his belly through thick underbrush and circling back to the city, authorities said.

He was caught when an alert librarian spotted him at the downtown library.

The couple has also been charged with murder and other counts in Colorado, though it's not clear when they'll face those charges. The two states are still negotiating whether Austin Boutain would be brought to Colorado following his Utah sentencing or would have to first complete his sentence there, said Pam Russell, a spokeswoman for Utah prosecutor Peter Weir.

Austin Boutain's criminal history includes drug, car theft and weapons charges dating to when he was a juvenile. He was released from an Alabama prison in spring 2017. **AP**