



CROWN SEES 20PCT SHARE PLUNGE

The devaluation of Crown Resorts shares has wiped more than USD824m from James Packer's wealth

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NG AGAINST VACANT PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Lawmaker Ng Kuok Cheong has questioned the government on the status of three vacant public facilities

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AFTER LONG SURGERY

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PAULO BARBOSA

P3 MACAU GRAND PRIX

WORLD BRIEFS



VIETNAM-RUSSIA

The prime ministers of Vietnam and Russia agreed yesterday to nearly triple their countries' two-way trade to USD10 billion by 2020 from \$3.55 billion last year. [More on p12](#)

EAST TIMOR Scores of people demonstrated in East Timor's capital yesterday to protest the killing of three people at a party, allegedly by a drunken policeman.



PAKISTAN's prime minister [pictured] fired back yesterday after President Donald Trump accused the country of harboring Osama bin Laden despite getting billions of dollars in American aid, saying Pakistan had suffered 75,000 casualties and lost \$123 billion in the "US War on Terror."

[More on backpage](#)



Hong Kong protest leaders warn of threat to civil rights

P11

28 fires triggered by cigarette butts

As of yesterday, the city had recorded 28 fire alarms triggered by cigarette butts, according to a statement by the Judiciary Police (PJ). Six of these cases were reported within 20 days after October 24, 2018, at which point the PJ issued an official warning. The large number of fire incidents in recent weeks exposes a lack of public awareness or attention regarding the dangers of littering with cigarette butts, the PJ noted. They have urged the public to handle flammable materials more carefully.

Upcoming hikes for local water prices

The Maritime and Water Bureau is considering increasing local water prices in the near future, according to director Susana Wong, who revealed the plans during a TDM radio program yesterday. Details of the proposed increase and implementation date have yet to be decided. This new development reflects the rising prices of water from mainland suppliers, which has resulted in higher costs for local water supply and treatment. The smallest increase will target ordinary residential households, while the larger hikes will be for commercial users.

New window safety regulations next year

Starting next year, the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau will implement safety regulations for window maintenance in buildings. The first draft was released at the end of 2017 after a public consultation. Since Typhoon Hato, the Macau Foundation has received more than 5,000 applications for domestic repair subsidies, most of which were related to window damages.

GAMING

Crown sees shares plunge 20pct on weak VIP sentiment

An almost 20 percent plunge in the value of Crown Resorts shares has wiped more than USD824 million from the wealth of casino mogul James Packer since mid-August, as reported in the Australian Financial Review.

Packer, who owns a 46 percent stake in Australian casino group Crown Resorts, saw the value of his shares fall to \$3.7 billion. The price rout reflects investor fears that high-rolling Chinese gamblers are being increasingly deterred from playing casino tables, amid a slowing Chinese economy and the looming specter of an all-out U.S. trade war.

Crown Resorts owns casinos in Melbourne and Perth and was formerly a partner of Melco Resorts & Entertainment, operating several integrated resorts in Macau.



James Packer

The company is not the only one hit by the gaming stock sell-off. Local rival Star Entertainment has come down 21 percent since September 9 and Macau operators such as Wynn Macau have also seen their share price plummet in the last quarter.

In the last Macau gaming

downturn of 2014, operators abroad benefited from Chinese high-rollers looking to jurisdictions other than Macau. The 2014 recession was caused by Chinese President Xi Jinping's anti-corruption campaign, which scared high-rollers away from Macau and made far-off gaming

locations more compelling options.

However, this latest round of weakening gaming sentiment is rooted in long-term economic trends, meaning Australia's casino operators are feeling the brunt as much as their Macau competitors.

Gaming analysts are cautious on Crown Resorts' stock and on the VIP segment in general.

Recent financial reports from the Australian operator missed analyst expectations, with VIP turnover falling below half of some estimates. Crown currently generates almost a quarter of its revenue from the VIP segment.

VIP turnover across Australia and New Zealand for the 2018 fiscal year amounted to \$124 billion, a slight drop from the \$126 billion recorded in 2016.

Sou questions gov't on status of youth public housing

LAWMAKER Sulo has asked the government whether it can complete its research on an apartment project for local youth.

"Over the years, the youth's restlessness has increased because of the difficulties in affording a house. The Chief Executive has repeatedly acknowledged that property prices in the private market are too high," he wrote.

"However, the government remains in the research stage regarding the introduction of a new type of public housing policies for the youth, newly wedded, and middle class. In particular, the government is still just talking about providing the youth with apartments through the 'rent before purchase' mode," he continued.

"Will this government



be able to complete policy research on youth apartments and other types of public houses within its term?"

Sou also criticized the new affordable housing bill, which has increased the eligible age of applicants to at least 25 years old.

"People aged between 18 and 24 years old represent only five out of every 10,000 successful candidates [for affordable housing]," wrote Sou, who asked that the government withdraw its articles to raise the minimum age for housing applicants.

EDUCATION

UM holds 16th Portuguese Speech Contest



Paulo Cunha Alves, consul general of Portugal in Macau and HK, presents the first prize

THE Department of Portuguese of the University of Macau (UM) Faculty of Arts and Humanities (FAH) last week held its 16th Portuguese Speech Contest.

Students from four local tertiary institutions – Macao Polytechnic Institute (IPM), the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST), the University of Saint Joseph (USJ), and UM – participated in the contest.

The contest was divided into two parts. In the first part, each participant delivered a speech on the topic "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." The panel of judges then se-

lected the top six candidates according to the contestants' overall performance for individual interviews, from which they then selected four winners.

Organized by UM's Department of Portuguese, the annual contest aims to promote Portuguese language studies and encourage local college students to showcase their Portuguese language skills.

This year, the top three prizes went to UM students Huang Rui (first prize), Gong Wencheng (second prize) and Hu Tianran (third prize). Ge Yichang from the IPM placed fourth.

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF (DIRECTOR) Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
MANAGING EDITOR Paulo Barbosa paulo.barbosa@macaudailytimes.com
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Eric Sautedé, Leanda Lee, Severo Portela

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Daniel Beittler, Emilie Tran, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Julie Zhu, Juliet Risdon, Lynzy Valles, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Viviana Segui
DESIGNERS Eva Bucho, Miguel Bandeira | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES Associated Press, Bloomberg, Financial Times, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua | SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

SECRETARY Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

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MACAU GP

Flörsch shows signs of motion improvement after long surgery

Paulo Barbosa

LOCAL doctors are hopeful that teenage driver Sophia Flörsch will be able to recover from her injuries, although it is too soon to know if she will be able to resume her racing career.

Flörsch suffered spinal fractures during Sunday's Macau Grand Prix F3 race, after her mono-seat collided at high speed with Japanese driver Sho Tsuboi's car, going through a catch fence at the Lisboa bend. The car then hit a photographers' bunker on the perimeter and dropped to the ground with race marshals immediately on the scene.

The driver underwent a seven-hour long surgery yesterday at the Conde de São Januário Hospital Centre (CHCSJ). The operation lasted all afternoon and a press conference was held during the evening, with doctors involved in the proceedings revealing that Flörsch had shown signs of motion improvement at the last stages of the surgery.

However, surgeon of orthopedics and traumatology Chan Hon Mou cautioned that injuries similar to the ones suffered by



Flörsch goes over Japanese driver Sho Tsuboi's car

We are confident she can recover and perhaps race again.

CHAN HON MOU
SURGEON

the German driver are likely to lead to limited motion. "We are very concerned about this case.

Because of her young age [17] we hope she will get well." Chan explained that the surgery was "minimally invasive" and added that doctors are convinced she will regain the ability to walk after physical therapy, despite the fact that "the injury to her nerve was very serious."

"She received surgery in due course and we are confident she can recover and perhaps race again," he said.

According to Lau Wai Lit, chief of the orthopedics department of the hospital, the fracture suf-

fered by Flörsch caused a major compression of the spinal cord and surgeons were not able to perform artificial spinal cord replacement techniques.

Questioned over how long the driver is expected to remain in Macau, Lau said that it would depend on her condition and the will of the family. "We assume she will be able to move her extremities in a short period of time," he said. Local doctors are expected to monitor the racing driver for around two weeks.

Clinical director of CHCSJ Lei Wai Seng revealed that doctors talked with Flörsch's family and team (the Netherlands-based Van Amersfoort Racing) before it was decided to perform the surgery in Macau. Other options were considered, but doctors ex-

plained that the driver's medical condition required immediate attention and to transport her elsewhere before her injuries are stabilized would be a difficult and dangerous task.

Besides Flörsch, four other people remain hospitalized due to injuries contracted during the GP weekend. Doctors said yesterday that none of them have serious injuries. The race marshal who was hit by debris from Flörsch's car suffered face laceration and went through plastic surgery, remaining hospitalized "in good condition," and will be discharged from hospital this week.

The photographer from mainland China who was at the bunker suffered a liver laceration and is expected to remain hospitalized and under observation for one week.

A British rider who suffered a more serious head injury during the motorcycle GP was subject to a seven-hour surgery and is now stable and conscious, with no brain injury detected. Another rider also remains at the CHCSJ, but his condition is not considered serious.

FIA INVESTIGATING INCIDENT

THE INCIDENT involving Sophia Flörsch prompted an immediate red flag and a delay of around an hour before the race was restarted. FIA president Jean Todt posted a statement on Twitter saying the

sport's organizing body was "mobilized to help those involved and analyze what happened. "All my thoughts are with you @SophiaFlörsch and the others injured. I wish you all a safe recovery."

Macau Daily Times contest



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Tickets-Giveaway

Five sets of two tickets each will be awarded to the five readers who send us the latest correct answers. The contest will run for 5 days (Monday to Friday), each day with a different question to be answered. Each ticket is valued at MOP488 for a total prize value of MOP4,880. Giveaway tickets will be for the show on Nov 30 at 8pm.

Tickets from MOP180 are now available through cotaiticketing.com or 2882 8818.



Due to the popularity of La Parisienne Cabaret Français, the season has once again been extended through until Feb. 3, 2019 at The Parisian Macao's Parisian Theatre, giving guests and visitors a chance to see this wonderful show over the upcoming holiday season. Featuring an international cast of 38 death-defying stunt performers, illusionists, champion skaters, and dancers, the show is suitable for audiences of all ages. The 65-minute performance blends illusion, dance, acrobatics and comedy with classic acts such as can-can and burlesque dancing, along with gravity-defying basketball acrobatics and the world-renowned Globe of Death motorcycle team.

La Parisienne Cabaret Français is one of the world's most entertaining variety shows for audiences, behind the scenes are committed artists with years



of experience taking calculated risks for the sake of their art. The Globe of Death act is performed by a fourth-generation family from Sao Paulo, Brazil, who have been performing death-defying motorcycle acts around the world since the 1960s. The stunt riders race motorcycles inside a mesh sphere, looping vertically and horizontally at high speed. It takes two years to train to be a rider on the team, first learning the routine on a bicycle. The most dangerous part is when the globe actually splits into two sections, leaving zero margin for error.

Ice Skating Adagio is performed by two hugely talented Russian ice skaters, Aleksandr Popov and Elena Efaeva, who have been partnered for more than four years. They both competed at the European Championships and Olympics, and Aleksandr won a gold medal in the Junior Olympics in Slovenia in 2003.

Have been performing in over 80 countries and for many, their beautiful and romantic act includes a spectacular one-hand lift and a "bow spin" which many ice skaters aspire to. One of the more popular performances of the show is Face Team Basketball, from Budapest in Hungary. With six performers using up to 20 basketballs during their act, they jump, shoot and slam dunk their way around the stage. The team currently holds 10 Guinness World Records, including 'most basketball slam dunks by a team using a trampoline in one minute' (46 dunks) and 'highest slam dunk with a backflip' (4.9 metres). They have performed for celebrities including Simon Cowell, Harry Styles, LeBron James, Kobe Bryant and the Prince of Dubai. Not to be missed, the most challenging part of their act is the backflip from the top of the back board, at a height of around five metres.

AD



Visitor spending rises 15 percent

VISITOR spending in the third quarter of 2018 amounted to MOP18.35 billion, according to the latest data from the Statistics and Census Service, up by 15.2 percent year-on-year and 11.2 percent quarter-to-quarter.

Total spending of overnight visitors reached MOP15.24 billion and that of same-day visitors amounted to MOP3.11 billion, up by 17.3 percent and 5.9 percent respectively year-on-year.

During the third quarter, per capita spending of visitors was MOP2,039, representing growth of 5.9 percent year-on-year. Per capita spending of visitors from mainland China rose by 5 percent to MOP2,306, with that of visitors from Fujian

Province (MOP1,668) increasing 1.3 percent while the per capita spending of Guangdong Province (MOP1,753) dropped 6.6 percent.

Meanwhile, per capita spending of visitors from Singapore (MOP2,230) and Taiwan (MOP1,709) grew 6 percent and 2.2 percent respectively, whereas spending of visitors from Malaysia (MOP1,665) dropped 8.4 percent. Per capita spending of visitors from Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States amounted to MOP1,750, MOP1,304 and MOP1,248 respectively.

Analyzed by type of spending, visitors were primarily interested in shopping (50.3 percent of the total), accommo-

dation (24.2 percent) and food and beverage (18.2 percent) in the third quarter.

Regarding visitors' comments during the third quarter, the proportion of visitors who were satisfied with the services of public transport (71.3 percent) edged down by 0.3 percentage points quarter-to-quarter.

The proportions of visitors who were satisfied with the services of hotels (89.7 percent), environmental hygiene (84.9 percent), services of retail shops (82.2 percent) and public facilities (81.1 percent) went up by 1.9 percentage points, 0.2 percentage points, 2.2 percentage points and 0.6 percentage points respectively quarter-to-quarter.

'Boa Vida Weekend Market' next month

GRAND Lapa Macau and the Macau Flea Market Culture Association will hold the Boa Vida Weekend Market on December 8 and 9, featuring "boa vida" activities.

The Portuguese term "Boa Vida" translates to "good life, good living".

In keeping with the theme, the market will showcase "good living" in booths and stands throughout the resort's grounds; showcasing arts and crafts, entertainment and storytelling, vintage clothing and accessories, sustainable workshops for kids, pre-loved books and knick-knacks, traditional local snacks, live music and a picnic area on the lawn.

The event is the first in Grand Lapa's series of "Boa Vida activities", which will be held over the coming months as the hotel celebrates its 35th anniversary in 2019. The activities range from culture to gastronomy, to wellness and art.



The hotel will also hold events such as International Yoga Day, Music and Poetry Jam Sessions, Portuguese Chef's table, wine tastings and cooking classes.

"Boa Vida living is not only about oneself, it's also associated with one's neighborhood and community. It can become a way of living that has the power to positively affect the environment and the people within," said Rutger Verschuren, general manager of Grand Lapa and

Area VP – Macau Operations, Artyzen Hospitality Group.

Meanwhile, the Boa Vida Weekend Market is recruiting special "Little Green Ambassadors", encouraging kids from four to 14 years old to share their creative thinking on "one thing you can do to make Macau greener." The youngsters behind the most innovative submissions will be the hotel's ambassadors for green living.

ONE SHOT NEWS



Actors of Cuba perform yesterday during the 5th China International Circus Festival in Macau.

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Local tour guides complain of sharp drop in business



MACAU'S local tour guides are complaining of a sharp drop in work following a rise in illegal tour groups operated by mainland guides.

Unregistered mainland guides often arrange for their own tour groups to take casino shuttles or public buses in Macau – a clear violation of government regulations which state that all tour guides operating in Macau must be locally registered.

The Hong Kong tour guide industry recently reported similar issues, with clashes between groups of Hong Kong residents and mainland visitors following the opening of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HKZMB).

The Macau Tour Guide Promotion Association said that the situation had been brought to the attention of local authorities even before the opening of the bridge.

The local tour guide industry has recorded a decline in mainland tour groups this month. Each guide only received an average of five tour groups per day,

a drop of 80 to 90 percent compared to previous years when they would usually host 25 to 30 mainland tour groups during the same period.

The Macau Tour Guide Promotion Association accused mainland travel agencies of charging between MOP1,000 and MOP1,200 per person. Most package tours are allegedly from around the Pearl River Delta region, while a small number hail from Shanghai and Jilin.

The local tour guide industry has petitioned the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) to intervene on more than one occasion, but has received no response from MGTO beyond a statement that the bureau is monitoring the situation.

The association believes that the police force, tourism board and labor affairs authorities should work together to combat these violations, and that the local government should report its findings to the Guangdong tourism department and the central tourism authorities.

32 domestic violence cases reported in first half of 2018

PHYSICAL abuse was a key factor in domestic violence cases this year, according to statistics released by the Social Affairs Bureau (IAS).

In the first half of 2018, there were 32 cases of domestic violence reported across Macau: 19 involving spouses, ten involving children and three involving other family members.

As described in the IAS report on the central registry system for domestic violence cases, 22 cases (68.8 percent) of the cases involved physical abuse.

There were five cases of psychological abuse (15.6 percent), two cases (5.3 percent) of sexual assault and three cases (9.4 percent) of multiple kinds of violence.

The region's domestic violence law came into effect on October

5 of 2016.

In 2017, there were 96 confirmed cases out of 2,278 reports on domestic violence. Seventy-three cases involved spouses, 20 involved children, one involved seniors and two cases involved other family members.

Recently, IAS held a training course on handling domestic violence, which drew approximately 400 attendees from government departments and social service organizations.

The IAS expressed its hopes that such courses could help different types of professionals in social services – such as educators, social workers and psychological counselors, among others – to improve their basic knowledge and skills in recognizing, assessing and intervening in domestic violence cases.

MELCO Prioritizing employee work safety

AS part of Melco Resorts & Entertainment (Melco)'s commitment to providing a safe and healthy workplace for its 21,000-strong workforce, significant efforts have been invested over the last 10 years for the company to attain the highest standards of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH).

Melco announced that in August, the company became Macau's first gaming operator to be awarded the ISO 45001 Occupational Safety and Health Management System Certificate across its entire portfolio of properties; including City of Dreams, Studio City, Altira Macau, Mocha Clubs and Melco's Macau and Hong Kong corporate headquarter offices, in recognition of its dedication to managing OSH risks and providing a safe and healthy workplace for employees.

Director of Labor Affairs Bureau (DSAL) Mr. Wong Chi Hong and Director-General of Macau Productivity & Technology Transfer Center (CPTTM) Dr. Suen Ka Hung were among the special guests invited to a recent event at Studio City to witness Melco receive the official certification of the ISO 45001 Standard. "Melco strives to be a responsible entertainment and gaming industry leader, and that starts from within – by providing our employees a safe working environment", said Ms. Akiko Takahashi, Executive Vice President, Chief Officer of Human Resources and Corporate Social Responsibility.

The event further celebrated the achievements of 25 Melco employees who successfully attained ISO 45001 SMS Training Certificates. Among them was Mr. Steve Yeung, Manager of Occupational Safety, who said "becoming the first of Macau's gaming operators to attain the ISO 45001 Certification not only highlights the joint efforts of all Melco colleagues but is a testament of the company's efforts to comply with legal requirements, prevent injuries and illness, and continuously monitor and improve OSH standards. In the long run, it will help improve work efficiency and contribute to the sustainable development of the company."

Mr. Low Chee Ching, Executive Sous Chef, who also participated in ISO 45001 SMS training, expressed that the food and beverage environment is high-risk and complex, and it is therefore especially important to promote OSH awareness for team members' practical implementation, "when colleagues are aware of potential dangers, they are reminded to stay alert and all times to protect themselves and others. As soon as management observe potential OSH risks, immediate steps are taken to show safety demonstrations and enhance supervision to ensure employees adhere to safety guidelines".

Melco's OSH Policy was established in 2008 and endorsed by Mr. Lawrence Ho, Chairman and CEO, demonstrating the company's commitment to workplace safety stems from senior management to all levels of the company. Monthly OSH Committee meetings attended by senior management such as property presidents ensure employees of all levels actively manage related issues.



Melco receives Certificate of Melco ISO 45001, becoming the first gaming operator in Macau to be awarded the globally-recognized standard in Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)



Melco hosts the first on-site Hotel and Catering Industry Safety Card Course in collaboration with DSAL




Monthly OSH Committee meetings attended by senior management including property presidents ensure employees of all levels actively manage related issues



Melco employees awarded ISO 45001 SMS Training Certificates

Further OSH initiatives supported by Melco include educating employees, suppliers and subcontractors in order to prevent work-related incidents. Earlier this summer, Melco became the first local gaming operator to launch an on-site Hotel and Catering Safety Card Training Program in collaboration with DSAL, where topics covered included workplace accident prevention, manual handling, kitchen safety, electricity, fire and heat prevention and emergency response. Regular roadshows promote workplace safety, and OSH awards are presented every quarter to those colleagues nominated for outstanding demonstration of OSH awareness and implementation.



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CRIME

Woman accused of aggravated assault against housemate

Renato Marques

A 49-year-old woman has been accused of aggravated assault causing bodily harm to another woman, a 20-something-year-old who shared the same house with the suspect, the Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesperson informed during yesterday's joint police press conference held at the Public Security Police Force (PSP) facilities.

The case occurred on November 15 at around 11 p.m. and was initially reported to the Taipa Police station, which was informed that two Filipino nationals had had an argument and one of them had injured the other with a knife in an apartment located on Rua de Nam Keng.

Deployed to the location, the officers found out that the two women, both non-resident workers, and five other women also at the venue when the incident occurred shared the apartment.

At about 10 p.m. that evening, the suspect arrived home and went to her room where the vic-



tim and the other residents of the house were socializing.

The suspect claimed that she understood that the victim was gossiping about her and she became angry about it. She then slapped the victim.

Then the argument intensified and, as the victim rushed to her room to hide from the suspect, the suspect went to the kitchen and picked up a knife with a 27-centimeter blade, following the victim into her room.

The police said that the room had a wooden partition installed that separated the beds and so the suspect could not reach the victim. The suspect then made use of the fact that the partition did not go all the way to the ceiling to throw the knife to the other side, hitting the victim in the head.

According to the medical report of the hospital where the victim was taken, she sustained a cut in the head from the

incident.

After concluding the preliminary investigation, the next day the PJ searched for the suspect in the house during the afternoon. Upon finding her, the suspect was taken into custody under the accusation of aggravated assault with a forbidden weapon, with intent to cause bodily harm.

The case was then transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office.

Syndicate arrested following HKD4m scams

A Hong Kong fraud syndicate was arrested last week after scamming victims out of HKD4 million over almost two years.

The 11 fraudsters spun a story of "money men" from mainland China and Macau looking to channel funds into Hong Kong, the South China Morning Post reported.

Hong Kong police underwent a month-long operation called "Jettblast," seizing HKD1.4 million worth of items ranging from cars and phones to luxury clothes and handbags.

"We have successfully dissolved an online investment fraud syndicate. [...] Police arrested four ringleaders including two involved in romance scams, two in charge of investment fraud, two bank account holders and others," said acting chief inspector Billy Ho Yiu-chung of the New Territories North Region squad. The syndicate's scams typically targeted men by creating fake social media accounts featuring pictures of attractive women to lure their victims. "The scammers will use social media platforms or apps and open new accounts using seductive photographs as profile pictures to draw in male victims," Ho said. "Once they build up rapport and are able to establish trust, they will recommend an 'investment expert' to them."

The so-called 'financial experts' would then persuade the victims to transfer their savings or take out loans to put into high-return investment products.

In Hong Kong, there have already been 463 such cases of online financial fraud this year, with losses valued at HKD400 million during the first three quarters – significantly higher than that of last year.

Ng questions usage of vacant public buildings

LAWMAKER Ng Kuok Cheong has questioned the government on the status of three vacant public facilities.

In a written inquiry, Ng said "the public is very disappointed" in the lack of governmental action to repurpose

the buildings, and asked for an explanation.

The facilities in question are the old Information Bureau building at Largo do São Domingos; the Old Area Renovation Advisory Committee Office at the Iao Hon community; and the former Cooked

Food Area of the Iao Hon Market.

The government had previously said that the former Information Bureau building would be used to exhibit Macau-branded recreational and cultural products, as well as policy service facilities. The advisory

committee office site was slated to be used for a public housing project.

The Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau is also responsible for converting the Iao Hon Market area into a football field and leisure space.



Ng Kuok Cheong

corporate bits

MELCO HOLDS GIFT-WRAPPING WORKSHOP



Melco Resorts & Entertainment Limited recently held a workshop on giftwrapping taught by specialists from Morpheus Boutique, as part of its Art of Living lifestyle series.

The series aims to com-

municate the importance of Responsible Gaming specifically to women.

The workshop was attended by 20 women, the gaming operator informed in a statement.

Akiko Takahashi, execu-

tive vice president, chief officer of Human Resources and Corporate Social Responsibility of Melco Resorts & Entertainment, said, "We are pleased to continue Melco's Responsible Gaming initiative The Art of Living to emphasize the message of the importance of responsible gaming to members of the community."

Melco's Responsible Gaming workshops are followed by learning activities to provide exposure to arts and crafts, as well as other lifestyle interests.

Past and upcoming workshop themes include, among others, flower arrangement, social media, fitness and art appreciation.

SHERATON, ST. REGIS AWARD NEW GRADUATES OF ITS PROGRAM



A hospitality education and employment program developed by the Sheraton Grand Macao Hotel, Cotai Central and The St. Regis Macao, Cotai Central to foster learning recently awarded its second group of graduates at a graduation ceremony.

Graduates were awarded

a Bachelor of International Hospitality and Tourism Management from City University of Macau as part of the Sheraton and St. Regis Hospitality Development Program

"We designed the program to provide young people in Macau with a comprehen-

sive education and training program that leads to a clear career path, as well as providing a skills base hotel and hospitality management to the local community," said Janet McNab, managing director of the two hotels.

The ceremony recognized 28 graduates, and of those, 89 percent of students had been promoted to new roles during the course, including two graduates that progressed to Supervisor level.

There are currently 128 students from 27 different high schools enrolled in the Development Program including 20 new students who have joined Sheraton Grand Macao and The St. Regis Macao this year.

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INDONESIA

Postal hell? Delivering e-commerce to 18,000 far-flung islands

Rieka Rahadiana,
Tassia Sipahutar

YOU may have heard the U.S. Postal Service has problems. Well, try delivering the mail in Indonesia, a far-flung archipelago with so many islands the government literally doesn't know how many there are.

Post offices everywhere have to contend with the fact that people send so few letters these days. In Indonesia, though, an online shopping boom that should be helping the postal service is actually hurting because regulators have set parcel delivery prices so low, according to Gilar-si Wahyu Setijono, a former Merrill Lynch investment banker who became post office president in 2015.

"The tariffs are below our commercial costs," Setijono said in a recent interview in Jakarta. "I've asked for adjustment many times."

Indonesia's far-flung geography makes online shopping a godsend for consumers, but it's hard on the people who have to deliver the packages, often over water and mountains. By 2022 the country's e-commerce market will grow to USD65 billion from last year's \$8 billion, according to McKinsey. And the post office will do much of the heavy lifting, shipping 4.4 million online-shopping parcels each day, six times what it does today.

In the U.S., President Donald Trump attacks Amazon.com for treating the Postal Service as a "delivery boy"



and paying less than it should for shipping, but the parcel business is actually a bright spot for the post office. Its losses — \$656 million in the second quarter alone — stem from falling letter volumes and higher costs for health and retirement benefits.

For Indonesia's post office — the state-owned PT Pos Indonesia — the finances aren't so bad now, but Setijono said the burden of shipping packages will make things worse with every passing quarter. Profit fell 18 percent last year.

To put the 272-year-old postal service on more solid footing, Setijono is restructuring.

He's spinning off a logistics unit, building a new business to handle digital payments, and planning the company's first-ever bond sale, a 1 trillion rupiah issuance (\$60 million).

One thing nobody can change is Indonesia's geography. The country has so many islands that the government last year embarked on a census to come up with an official count. At last tally, there were more than 18,000 spread over a chain that would stretch from New York to Alaska.

That — along with poor roads and bridges — is why shipping and other kinds of

logistics consumes 23 percent of the country's gross domestic product, according to government figures. It's also why more than half of the post office's 4,800 branches are in commercially nonviable locations, Setijono says.

The country's far-flung geography makes online shopping a godsend for consumers, but it's hard on the people who have to deliver the packages

Consider a two-kilogram package sent from bustling Jakarta to Waropen, a sparsely populated territory 3,300 kilometers away on the isolated coast of Papua, where roads wind through forested mountains and are often impassable in monsoon season. Government mandates set the post office rate at about 268,000 rupiah (\$16). For the same delivery, private shipper JNE Express charges 430,000 rupiah, according to its online rate calculator.

That kind of discrepancy rankled Setijono from the moment he took the top job at the post office three years ago. He wants rates set by the market, and not by the com-

munications ministry, which hasn't raised tariffs since 2009 — even as the economy clocked an average annual growth rate of about 5.5 percent.

"Far from sufficient," Setijono said. "We have an obligation to operate in nonviable areas. Whether it's mountaintops, or remote islands, we have to operate where our citizens are."

Rudiantara, the minister of communications (like many Indonesians, he goes by one name), says he's sympathetic, but rates can't be changed without a thorough assessment of the post office's costs, which will take time.

"We cannot just amend the tariffs," he said in an interview. "It has to be part of our logistics strategy."

Strictly speaking, rates are only fixed for personal deliveries. The idea is to make sure that regular people can afford to send packages to family and friends. In practice, however, online merchants often take advantage of the government's largesse.

Berliana, a 37-year-old West Java woman who sells clothes on Facebook and Instagram, admits as much. She says she's been in business for four or five years, sending her merchandise via the post office's personal rates whenever possible. "Small post offices don't ask many questions," she said.

For Setijono, the dilemma remains. "The more we improve our performance, the more volumes rise," he said. "The higher the volume, the more I bleed." **Bloomberg**

Benjamin Robertson,
Kana Nishizawa

FOR the second time in five weeks, a cautionary report by David Webb sent stocks in Hong Kong falling.

Some HKD1.8 billion (USD228 million) of market value was wiped from 41 firms yesterday after Webb said they were in danger of falling foul of a proposed rule change by Hong Kong Exchanges & Clearing Ltd. The shareholder activist's goal was not to highlight the companies but draw attention to what he called an "ill-conceived" regulation that would victimize

HONG KONG

Activist's jab at bourse starts USD228m fall

minority shareholders.

HKEX plans to suspend trading in companies that receive a disclaimer or adverse opinion from their auditors about their accounts. The move, the subject of a public consultation ending Nov. 30, would enhance corporate governance and encourage firms to resolve audit issues promptly, the exchange operator's Head of Listing, David Graham, said in September.

"There is a link between the Webb report and

the fall in share prices," Banny Lam, head of research at CEB International Investment Corp., said by phone. "The market follows his performance and think he gives a good take, plus market sentiment is very negative at the moment."

Among the 41 companies named by Webb were China Brilliant Global Ltd. and Asia Energy Logistics Group Ltd., which both plunged more than 20 percent yesterday, while 18 other firms

closed down more than 5 percent. Webb named businesses that had a disclaimed audit opinion in the latest financial year. The average decline among the 41 stocks was 5.9 percent.

Webb sent stocks falling in October after publishing a list of 26 firms "not to own" due to links with China Huarong Asset Management Co., the bad-debt management firm whose former chairman who has since been arrested. **Bloomberg**



TAIWAN

President Tsai defends pro-independence film award winner

Yanan Wang, Beijing

TAIWAN'S president expressed her support for the prestigious Golden Horse film awards after a pro-Taiwan independence director's speech ignited controversy in mainland China.

"We have never accepted the term 'Chinese Taiwan,'" Tsai Ing-wen said in a Facebook post. "Taiwan is just Taiwan."

Director Fu Yue said during her acceptance speech Saturday in Taipei that her biggest hope was for "our country" to be regarded as an "independent entity." Her film "Our Youth in Taiwan" won best documentary at the awards, which are akin to a Chinese-language Oscars.

Taiwan split from mainland China amid civil war in 1949, but Beijing considers the self-ruled island part of its territory.

In recent years, the ruling Communist Party has ratcheted up pressure on other countries to cut diplomatic ties with Taiwan — a prerequisite for establishing formal relations with China. Only 17 mainly small, developing countries still recognize Taiwan as a



Taiwanese director Fu Yue (left) delivers a speech next to producer Hong Ting Yi after she won Best Documentary at the 55th Golden Horse Awards in Taipei

sovereign nation.

Chinese lambasted Fu on the Twitter-like Weibo platform following her win, sharing posts under the hashtag "Not one speck of China can go missing" and a map of China that includes Taiwan and territories it claims in the South China Sea.

The hashtag was used by high-profile actress Fan Bingbing, who disappeared from public life for months this year before being convicted on tax evasion charges in October.

Outraged online commenters also took to Fu's personal Face-

book page, which they littered with derogatory posts. Facebook is blocked in mainland China and can only be accessed through software that circumvents government filters known as the Great Firewall.

Tsai said in her post that the Golden Horse Awards, presented annually in Taipei, highlight the freedoms that set Taiwan apart from China.

"Here [in Taiwan] there aren't people who will disappear or be silenced for expressing differing viewpoints," she wrote, "and we also don't have sensitive terms

that are censored on the internet."

China's government cut ties with Tsai's administration after her 2016 inauguration and has repeatedly denounced her for refusing its demand that Taiwan is a part of China.

"Our Youth in Taiwan" follows a young Taiwanese man and a young mainland Chinese woman who are at the center of student movements in Taiwan.

The Golden Horse Awards, now

in their 55th year, were chaired by Academy Award-winning Taiwanese director Ang Lee, whose films include "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" and "Brokeback Mountain."

Lee appeared to anticipate the backlash to Fu's speech, telling reporters after the ceremony, "I hope that no one will come to interfere [with the awards]. I hope that the Golden Horse Awards will remain very pure."

"Please everyone respect the filmmakers," he urged, according to Taiwan's Central News Agency.

Entertainment industry figures in Taiwan and Hong Kong have routinely been blacklisted and had their work banned from mainland China after they expressed pro-independence or pro-democracy views. **AP**

FAN BINGBING RESURFACES WITH PRO-CHINA POST ON WEIBO

CHINESE ACTRESS Fan Bingbing updated her Weibo timeline by re-tweeting a pro-China post from a state account, making her first mark on the social network since she published a letter of apology for tax evasion in early October. Fan shared the post over the weekend that was first published by The Communist Youth League of China, saying "China cannot miss out on any inch," together with a map of China that includes Taiwan and the South China Sea. With more than 60 million followers

on the Twitter-like Weibo, Fan had vanished between June and October from the press and on social media amid allegations she evaded taxes. Last month, Fan and companies she's affiliated with were ordered to pay about 884 million yuan (USD127 million) in back taxes and fines, which is almost three times her 2017 income as estimated by Forbes magazine. Fan's Weibo history shows more than 1,800 posts, though only the apology letter and retweet are currently visible to the public. **Bloomberg**

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Pence's sharp China attacks fuel fears of Cold War dividing Asia

SINCE the Soviet Union fell in the early 1990s, Southeast Asia has sought to avoid getting caught in a fight between major powers. The Trump administration is making that position look increasingly untenable.

Vice President Mike Pence sharpened U.S. attacks on China during a week of summits that ended Sunday, most notably with a call for nations to avoid loans that would leave them indebted to Beijing. He said the U.S. wasn't in a rush to end the trade war and would "not change course until China changes its ways" - a worrying prospect for a region heavily reliant on exports.

"The language we heard from Pence is quite concerning because it shows we're moving toward a zero-sum game geopolitics in the Asia-Pacific," said Jonathan Pryke, a researcher specializing in the Pacific at the Lowy Institute, a Sydney-based research group. "The great hope of convergence between China and the U.S. is becoming less and less of a likely reality."

The meetings in Singapore and Papua New Guinea produced little to suggest U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping would reach a deal when they meet in a few weeks at the Group of 20 summit in Argentina. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit ended in disarray on Sunday after leaders failed to agree on a joint statement, reflecting tensions after Trump threatened to add to tariffs already in place on USD250 billion worth of Chinese goods. Xi has retaliated with duties on \$110 billion in U.S. imports.

Stocks in Asia kicked off the

BLOOMBERG



week in lackluster fashion after the discord, and the Australian and New Zealand dollars fell from near multi-month highs. Financial markets have swerved in recent weeks as investors gauge whether an end to the trade war is near.

Smaller economies in the Asia-Pacific have long sought to balance ties, reaping the benefits of trade with China's fast-growing economy while relying on American firepower to rein in Beijing's assertiveness over disputed territory. Yet the trade war has raised the prospect that nations will now need to pick sides, particularly as higher U.S. tariffs threaten to alter long-established supply chains.

Earlier this month, former U.S. Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson warned of an "Economic Iron Curtain" dividing the world if the U.S. and China fail to re-

solve strategic differences. That could lead both sides to deny each other technology, capital and investment, reversing decades of gains from globalization.

SINGAPORE WARNING

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong echoed those fears last week, saying tensions between the U.S. and China are rising to a point where Southeast Asia may one day have to "choose one or the other."

For the moment, that day still looks a ways off. Papua New Guinea, an economy smaller than all 50 U.S. states that hosted the APEC summit, signed deals in excess of \$1 billion with both China and a U.S.-led bloc.

"Smaller and middle powers lean to one side or to the other," Richard Maude, a senior adviser at Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, told

an Asia Society event hosted by Bloomberg in Sydney earlier this month. "They don't want to make one big single binary choice between Washington and Beijing. What they want is to find the space to stay in the middle and to prosecute their own interests."

'DESPERATE FENCE SITTERS'

While the U.S. can depend on allies like Japan, Australia and Taiwan, nations such as South Korea and the Philippines that have defense arrangements with the U.S. would try to hedge, according to Minxin Pei, a China scholar and specialist in U.S.-Asia relations.

Southeast Asian countries were "desperate fence sitters" who don't want to make China an enemy, said Pei, who is a professor of government at

Claremont McKenna College in California. "China and the U.S. will try very hard in the next few years to charm the countries in the region."

While in Asia, Pence said the U.S. provides "a better option" for nations in the region and announced a plan along with key Pacific allies to build a \$1.7 billion electricity grid in Papua New Guinea. The U.S. also joined with Australia to redevelop a naval base, and held a meeting of "the Quad" - a grouping that also includes India and Japan - in a bid to balance China's rising economic and military strength.

SEEKING FRIENDS

Pence also had stinging remarks for Xi's Belt-and-Road Initiative, which Morgan Stanley says may total \$1.3 trillion by 2027 - dwarfing the funds the U.S. and allies have mobilized. The vice president said the U.S. doesn't "drown our partners in a sea of debt" or "offer a constricting belt or a one-way road."

Compared with Pence, Xi had a softer message for Asia this week. He voiced support for the multilateral trading system, called for greater cooperation, and said that implementing tariffs and breaking up supply chains was "doomed to failure." He also defended his signature Belt-and-Road Initiative, which dwarfs any infrastructure funding backed by the U.S., saying it's "not a trap as some people have labeled it."

"As the tension with U.S. has risen, China's approach to its neighboring countries has changed," said Shi Yinhong, an international relations professor at Renmin University in Beijing. "China would like to gain as many friends as it can at the moment."

After APEC, Xi is due to visit Brunei and the Philippines, a U.S. ally that has moved closer to China under Rodrigo Duterte. Xi also recently hosted Shinzo Abe in the first bilateral visit by a Japanese leader to Beijing in seven years. **Bloomberg**

HONG KONG

Occupy trial starts for nine accused in 2014 protests

THREE protest leaders and six others went on trial yesterday for their involvement in the "Occupy Central" demonstration that paralyzed Hong Kong's financial district for more than two months in 2014.

Fanned by more than 100 supporters, some holding the yellow umbrellas that came to symbolize the movement, the nine defendants pumped their fists in the air and chanted "Shame to political prosecution!" before entering the West Kowloon cour-

AP PHOTO



Occupy Central leaders (from right) Chan Kin Man, Benny Tai and Chu Yiu Ming shout slogans before entering a court in Hong Kong yesterday

thouse.

Two university professors and a pastor, who together spearheaded the

campaign to press for free elections of Hong Kong's top leader, are charged with conspiracy to com-

mit a public disturbance and incitement to commit public nuisance.

The other defendants - two current and one former lawmaker, two student leaders and a political activist - face charges of incitement to commit a public nuisance. Each charge carries a maximum penalty of seven years.

Three university students prosecuted in 2016 for their leadership role in the protests received community service. But Hong Kong judges have since

faced mounting pressure from Beijing to hand down heavier sentences to deter future protests.

Some in the semi-autonomous Chinese city fear that central government meddling will erode judiciary independence, a bedrock value that undergirds the city's standing as a global business capital.

The protesters, in what was also known as the umbrella movement, laid siege to government headquarters for 79 days but failed to win any concessions. Thousands staked

out encampments on major thoroughfares in the financial district. Several hundred were arrested.

Ranging in age from 30 to 74 years old, the nine defendants span generations of Hong Kong citizens who have been agitating for full democracy as the former British colony transitions to Chinese sovereignty under a "one country, two systems" arrangement that is supposed to preserve the city's civil liberties.

The trial is expected to last 20 days. **AP**

AFGHANISTAN CONFLICT

Taliban hold talks with US envoy in Qatar

Kathy Gannon, Islamabad

THE Taliban have held three days of talks with U.S. envoy Zalmay Khalilzad in the Gulf state of Qatar, where the Afghan insurgent group has a political office, a Taliban official and another individual close to the group said yesterday [Macau time].

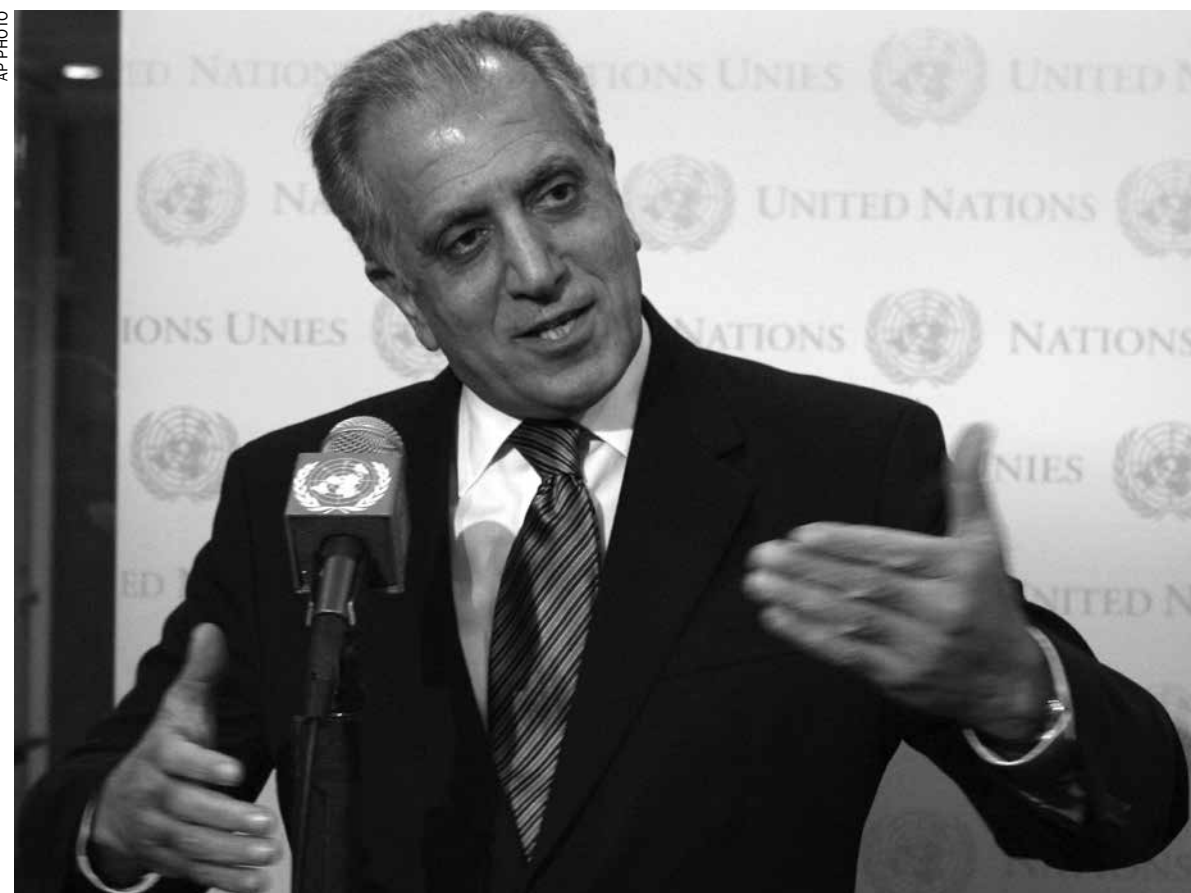
Without referring explicitly to the talks in Qatar, Khalilzad told a news conference in the Afghan capital Kabul "I am talking to all interested parties, all Afghan groups... and I think there is an opportunity for reconciliation and peace."

"The Afghan government wants peace," he said. "The Taliban are saying they do not believe they can succeed militarily, that they would like to see the problems that remain, resolved by peaceful means, by political negotiations."

Peace efforts have accelerated since Khalilzad's appointment as Washington's peace envoy to Afghanistan aimed at eventually winding down America's longest war. Seventeen years after the U.S.-led invasion that ended Taliban rule, the militants control nearly half of Afghanistan and carry out near-daily attacks on local security forces and government officials.

The U.S. administration now appears focused on reaching a political settlement with the Taliban, and has given in to a number of the group's longstanding demands, beginning with the holding of direct talks. The Taliban have long refused U.S. demands to negotiate with the Western-backed government in Kabul, which the insurgents view as a puppet regime.

Pakistan has meanwhile released a number of high-level Taliban prisoners, including the movement's co-founder, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar. The releases are widely seen as



US envoy Zalmay Khalilzad

a U.S.-directed move aimed at encouraging the Taliban to participate in talks.

Khalilzad said he was "cautiously optimistic," a peace settlement, which he preferred to call a "roadmap to Afghanistan's future," could be hammered out among rival Afghans. What that roadmap will look like and what rights and guarantees it will enshrine, including women's rights and rule of law, will be a decision for Afghans to make, said Khalilzad.

The United States has spoken "loudly and proudly" for equal rights for men and women, said Khalilzad, but how - or even if - those rights are woven into Afghanistan's "roadmap for the future," will be decided by Afghans. Saying he would like to see a settlement "sooner rather than later," he urged both sides in Afghanistan's protracted

conflict to consider next year's presidential elections, scheduled for April 20, as the deadline for peace.

The Taliban, who spoke about the talks in Qatar said Khairullah Khairkhwah, the former Taliban governor of Herat, and Mohammed Fazl, a former Taliban military chief, attended the marathon talks. The Taliban spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the sensitive negotiations.

A third individual with knowledge of the discussions said the Taliban pressed for a postponement of next year's presidential elections and the establishment of an interim government under a neutral leadership. Abdul Sattar Sirat, an ethnic Tajik and Islamic scholar, was suggested as a candidate to lead an interim administration.

The individual, who also spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the talks, said Khalilzad wants to reach a settlement within six months, a timescale the Taliban said was too short. Khalilzad also proposed a cease-fire, which the Taliban rejected, the individual said, adding that there was no agreement on the release of prisoners, opening the Taliban office or lifting a Taliban travel ban.

Khairkhwah and Fazl were among five senior Taliban members released from the U.S. prison at Guantanamo Bay in 2014 in exchange for U.S. Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, who was captured by the Taliban after walking off his base in Afghanistan in 2009. The five are now based in Qatar, and are seen as having enough stature

to sell a peace deal to insurgents fighting on the front lines.

President Donald Trump harshly criticized the 2014 prisoner exchange, and in a speech last August pledged to send in additional U.S. forces and redouble efforts to defeat the Taliban. But that strategy has had little if any impact on the ground, with the Taliban keeping up a steady tempo of attacks and an Islamic State affiliate carrying out massive bombings targeting minority Shiites.

I am talking to all interested parties, all Afghan groups... and I think there is an opportunity for reconciliation, peace.

ZALMAY KHALILZAD

In a lengthy statement issued earlier this month, the Taliban had demanded the lifting of sanctions against the group's leaders, the release of prisoners and the recognition of their office in Qatar. The Afghan government is deeply opposed to any recognition of the Qatar office, which the Taliban in the past have billed as a government in exile.

Khalilzad has been touring the region in recent days. In meetings in Kabul, Khalilzad is expected to press Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to cobble together his own negotiating team, which could prove difficult given the deep divisions within the government. AP

Vietnam and Russia aim to triple bilateral trade by 2020

THE prime ministers of Vietnam and Russia agreed yesterday to nearly triple their countries' two-way trade to USD10 billion by 2020 from \$3.55 billion last year.

Speaking to reporters after talks in Hanoi, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said the countries will expand their cooperation in the oil and gas industries and transportation.

"We emphasized that energy companies from Russia and Vietnam have had successful cooperation

and we wish that cooperation will continue to be consolidated," Medvedev said through a translator.

Russia currently invests in over a hundred projects in Vietnam worth \$990 million, many in oil and gas exploration and exploitation, according to Vietnam's Foreign Ministry.

Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc said cooperation in defense and security and other areas has seen positive results.

Russia is Vietnam's main

weapons supplier.

Phuc said the two countries will be able to cooperate more effectively through the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union trade deal which took effect in 2016, and will boost bilateral trade to \$10 billion by 2020.

Medvedev was scheduled to meet with Vietnamese President Nguyen Phu Trong and National Assembly Chairwoman Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan yesterday before concluding his visit. AP



Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev (right) and his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Xuan Phuc, wave to school children in Hanoi yesterday

JAPAN

Nissan's Ghosn arrested after probe for financial violations

Ma Jie

NISSAN Motor Co. Chairman Carlos Ghosn has been arrested over suspected financial violations, the NHK reported, and the carmaker said it will seek a removal of the industry icon as its chairman after an investigation into his alleged misconduct.

Ghosn, among the most prominent auto-industry leaders globally and also the Chief Executive Officer of Renault SA, was detained over a suspected breach of Japanese financial law, NHK said. Based on a whistleblower tip, Nissan has been doing an internal investigation over the past several months into suspected financial misconduct involving Ghosn and director Greg Kelly, the company said yesterday. Nissan seeks to remove both Ghosn and Kelly.

"The investigation showed that over many years both Ghosn and Kelly have been reporting compensation amounts in the Tokyo Stock Exchange securities

BLOOMBERG



report that were less than the actual amount, in order to reduce the disclosed amount of Carlos Ghosn's compensation," Nissan said. "Also, in regards to Ghosn, numerous other significant acts of misconduct have been uncovered, such as personal use of company assets, and Kelly's deep involvement has also been confirmed."

Nissan said it has been providing information to the Japanese prosecutors and is cooperating fully with their investigation. Ghosn voluntarily went with Tokyo prosecutors, Asahi reported.

The company is set to hold a press conference at 9 p.m. in Tokyo. A representative for the Tokyo prosecutors said they

don't comment on individual cases.

A spokesman for Renault declined to comment. Shares of the French carmaker fell as much as 15 percent in Paris, while Nissan global depository receipts sank more than 11 percent.

■ Nissan has been providing information to the prosecutors and is cooperating fully with their investigation

Ghosn, 64, built the three-way union of Renault, Nissan and Mitsubishi Motors Corp. He said in September that he will continue to pare back his roles at the three individual companies, while continuing to head their alliance.

A spokesman for the France's finance ministry declined to comment on the report. The country owns about 15 percent of Renault and supported Ghosn's renewal at the helm of the French automaker.

Among the best paid executives in both Japan and France for several years, Ghosn's compensation has regularly drawn criticism. Ghosn receives numerous paychecks in his multiple roles as chairman of the Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi alliance, CEO of Renault, and chairman of both Nissan and Mitsubishi.

At Nissan, he was paid about 1.1 billion yen (USD10 million) for 2016 and about \$6.5 million in the most recent fiscal year. He took home about \$8.5 million at Renault and about \$2 million from Mitsubishi in the latest period. At Renault, his package for 2017 was narrowly passed by Renault shareholders, but only after he agreed a 20 percent reduction.

Ghosn has been contemplating his career moves as the companies plan to change the pact's structure, possibly through a merger. Ghosn gave up his role as CEO of Nissan last year and has said that he may step down as CEO of Renault before his four-year term ends in 2022, fueling speculation the alliance could lose its architect and main leader for the past two decades. **Bloomberg**

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Tia Goldenberg, Jerusalem

ISRAEL

Netanyahu avoids early elections as coalition is kept intact

ISRAEL avoided early elections after a key coalition partner in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government said yesterday that he would not withdraw his party, keeping the coalition intact despite a crisis triggered by a violent flare-up with Gaza militants.

Education Minister Naftali Bennett said his hard-line, pro-settler Jewish Home party would give Netanyahu another chance to address the security challenges facing Israel, listing off threats from Gaza and Lebanon, among others, which he wanted dealt with more firmly.

"I tell the prime minister here: we are withdrawing right now all of our political demands and will stand to help you in this great mission of getting Israel to win again," he said.

"If the government would really start leading toward the right path, acting like a real right-wing government, it's worth trying," he added. "The ball is in the prime minister's court."

Bennett had earlier threatened to resign and his about-face eased the most serious coalition crisis Israel's government has faced since it was formed in 2015. He acknowledged that the turnaround could hurt him politically, but said he felt it was in the country's interests to give Netanyahu one last chance.

While the move put off early elections for now, it keeps the governing coalition on shaky ground with only a slim 61-seat majority in Israel's 120-seat parliament.

The sudden coalition crisis was triggered by a botched undercover Israeli raid in Gaza last week that led to the most violent fighting between Israel and Gaza militants since a 2014 war.

Israel's hard-line Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman, who had demanded a far stronger

AP PHOTO



Benjamin Netanyahu (center) arrives for the weekly cabinet meeting at his office in Jerusalem

response to the massive wave of rocket fire, resigned in protest of a cease-fire that ended the fighting. Bennett threatened to bolt the government if he wasn't named defense minister, a post Netanyahu said Sunday he was taking over himself.

Netanyahu has come under heavy criticism for agreeing to the cease-fire, especially from within his own political base and in the working-class, rocket-battered towns in southern Israel that are typically strongholds of his Likud Party.

But in an impassioned speech

Sunday announcing his new role as defense minister, Netanyahu sought to brandish his security credentials in the face of the criticism while pinning blame on his coalition partners for trying to force early elections during a sensitive time for Israel's security.

He repeated the claim yesterday, saying it would be "irresponsible" to dissolve the government and call early elections amid a tense security situation.

Netanyahu would have entered any campaign weakened by the recent Gaza flare-up but

heartened by the lack of any real challenger to his leadership.

Most opinion polls, including those after the crisis began, show Netanyahu easily securing reelection, which would grant him a place in Israeli history as the country's longest serving leader.

According to polls, the political map would not change much from the current one, where one of Israel's most hard-line governments faces a fragmented opposition unable to pose a serious challenge.

But Netanyahu may find a challenge to his rule from other

corners, including a potential corruption indictment that could knock him out of contention.

Police have recommended he be indicted on bribery and breach of trust charges in two cases and have questioned him at length on another. The country has been eagerly awaiting the attorney general's decision on whether to press charges.

Netanyahu has angrily dismissed the accusations against him, characterizing them as part of a media-orchestrated witch-hunt that is obsessed with removing him from office. **AP**

SAUDI ARABIA

Iraq's president meets King Salman after visiting rival Iran



Saudi King Salman (right) meets with with Iraqi President Barham Salih in Riyadh

SAUDI Arabia's King Salman received Iraq's president in Riyadh yesterday [Macau time], a day after the Iraqi official visited the kingdom's rival, Iran.

Barham Salih's back-to-back visits to Iran and Saudi Arabia reflect the delicate balance Iraq seeks to maintain in a region where its two powerful neighbors are battling for supremacy.

Salih was received at the airport in Riyadh by the province's governor and other Saudi officials. King Salman held a lunch in

honor of the Iraqi president with ministers and high-level princes in attendance.

The state-run Saudi Press Agency released few details about Salih's talks with the monarch.

On Saturday, Salih was in Tehran where he pledged to improve trade ties less than two weeks after the U.S. restored oil sanctions that had been lifted under the 2015 nuclear accord.

Iran has had major influence over Iraq since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion toppled Saddam Hussein, and is a key supplier of electricity, gas and goods to Iraqi markets. The two countries on Saturday vowed to expand trade to USD20 billion a year, from \$8.5 billion in 2018, despite the punishing U.S.

sanctions against Iran.

Iraq is Iran's second-largest market after China, buying everything from food and machinery to electricity and natural gas.

But Saudi Arabia has been steadily courting Iraq in recent years, following a quarter-century estrangement brought about by Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Earlier this month, Saudi Arabia's oil minister was in Baghdad to discuss stabilizing oil prices in the wake of the latest U.S. sanctions against Iran.

A flurry of meetings between Saudi officials and the new Iraqi government of Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi Riyadh in recent weeks suggest the Gulf kingdom is aiming to counter Iran's economic footprint in Iraq. **AP**

UK

May on collision course with party rebels over Brexit

Jill Lawless
& Raf Casert, London

B RITISH Prime Minister Theresa May was aiming to seal business support for her Brexit deal with the European Union yesterday, but remained on a collision course with a group of lawmakers seeking to unseat her.

The draft agreement has triggered an avalanche of criticism in Britain and left May fighting to keep her job.

She planned to say in a speech to business lobby group the Confederation of British Industry that the deal “fulfils the wishes of the British people” to leave the EU, by taking back control of the U.K.’s laws, money and borders.

May’s Downing St. office said she would confirm the government’s plan to end the automatic right of EU citizens to live and work in the U.K., saying Britain’s future immigration policy will be based on skills, rather than nationality.

“It will no longer be the case that EU nationals, regardless of the skills or experience they have to offer, can jump the queue ahead of engineers from Sydney or software developers from Delhi,” May plans to say.

The deal sealed last week between Britain and the EU after a year and a half of tense negotiations has infuriated pro-Brexit lawmakers in May’s Conservative Party and sparked a leadership crisis. The Brexiteers want a clean break with the bloc and argue that the close trade ties called for in the agreement will leave Britain a vassal state, bound to EU rules it has no say in making.

Two Cabinet ministers, including Brexit Secretary Dominic Raab, resigned in protest, and rebels are trying to gather the signatures of 48 lawmakers needed to trigger a no-confidence vote.

One of the rebels, Simon Clarke, yesterday urged wavering colleagues to help trigger a leadership challenge.

“It is quite clear to me

AP PHOTO



that the captain is driving the ship at the rocks,” he said.

Even if May sees off a leadership challenge, she still has to get the deal approved by Parliament. Her Conservatives don’t have a parliamentary majority, and it’s not clear whether she can persuade enough lawmakers to back her agreement.

■ Britain’s future immigration policy will be based on skills, rather than nationality

May argues that abandoning the plan, with Britain’s withdrawal just over four months away on March 29, could lead to a disorderly and economically damaging “no deal” Brexit — or to a situation in which Britain’s exit from the EU is postponed indefinitely.

Some Conservative Brexiteers, including

Raab, say May should stay in post but try to renegotiate the deal — something May and other EU leaders insist is impossible.

Dutch Foreign Minister Stef Blok said Monday that “the withdrawal treaty is as good as it will get,” while Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn also said there is “no better” Brexit deal for Britain.

“We must make it understood today that this deal which is now on the table is the best one possible. There is no better one for this crazy Brexit,” Asselborn said as EU foreign ministers met in Brussels ahead of a leaders’ summit on Sunday at which the bloc intends to sign off on the deal.

While the 585-page, legally binding withdrawal agreement is complete, Britain and the EU hope this week to flesh out their far less detailed seven-page declaration on future relations.

“A painful week in European politics is starting,” said Austria’s minister for Europe, Gernot Blumel. “We have the divorce papers on the table; 45 years of difficult marriage are coming to an end.” AP

AD

what's ON



ASSEMBLAGE OF TREASURES - EXHIBITION OF THE MACAU MUSEUM COLLECTION FOR CELEBRATION OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY
TIME: 10am-6pm (ticket booth closes at 5:30pm; closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: February 24, 2019
VENUE: Macau Museum
ADMISSION: MOP15 (free admission on Tuesdays and on the 15th of every month)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

"STYLE-ENCOUNTER MOMENT"
TIME: 10am - 8pm
UNTIL: December 30, 2018
VENUE: Macau Fashion Gallery
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 3341

SPARKLING GARDEN - GUAN HUAI BIN WORKS
TIME: 10am-7pm (last admission 6:30pm; closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: February 24, 2019
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

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

LA PARISIENNE CABARET FRANCAIS
TIME: 8pm (except on Mondays)
5pm (Sundays)
UNTIL: November 30, 2018
VENUE: The Parisian Theatre
ADMISSION: MOP188, MOP388, MOP488
COTAI TICKETING: (853) 2882 8818
KONG SENG TICKETING: (853) 2855 5555

Offbeat

GIANT WOODEN TROLL REMOVED IN COLORADO COULD GET NEW HOME



A huge wooden troll that proved to be too popular in a Colorado ski resort town is gone, but it's possible the artwork could find another home.

Workers in Breckenridge used a chainsaw and backhoe to remove the 15-foot (4.5 meter) sculpture known as Isak Hearstone last week.

The Summit Daily News reports that most of the work created by Danish artist Thomas Dambo was discarded or recycled but that some pieces were saved and put in storage in hopes of installing the sculpture somewhere else.

Town manager Rick Holman said officials are talking to Dambo and considering some possibilities but said nothing was imminent.

The work was installed on a hiking trail for a summer arts festival. Since then, throngs of troll-seekers have caused problems for nearby homeowners.

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
19:00	Portugal Fashion
19:35	Portuguese Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:15	You, Me & Apocalypse
22:00	Funny Things To Know
22:25	Portuguese Serie - Liberty 21
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Documentary
00:15	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:30	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

15 - 21 Nov



FANTASTIC BEASTS: THE CRIMES OF GINDELWALD
ROOM 1
2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45pm
Director: David Yates
Starring: Eddie Redmayne, Johny Depp, Jude Law
Language: English
Duration: 130min



THE CURED
ROOM 2
2:30, 4:30, 7:30 9:30pm
Director: David Freyne
Starring: Sam Keeley, Ellen Page,, Tom Vaughan-Lawlor
Language: English
Duration: 130min



CODE BLUE
ROOM 3
2:15, 7:00 pm
Director: Masaki Nishiura
Starring: Yamashita Tomohisa, Aragaki Yui, Toda Erika
Language: Japanese (Chinese, English)
Duration: 112min

MY HERO ACADEMIA
ROOM 3
4:45, 9:30 P.M.
Director: Kenji Nagasaki
Language: Japanese (Chinese, English)
Duration: 112min

this day in history



1951 BRITISH FAMILIES LEAVE EGYPT'S CANAL ZONE

More than 1,000 families of British servicemen have begun moving out of the Suez Canal Zone town of Ismailia.

The move was ordered yesterday following the shooting two days ago which cost the lives of at least five British soldiers. Nine Egyptians were killed.

The women and children are being sent back to Britain because there is not enough room for them in guarded Army compounds.

There was tight security in the centre of Ismailia today as families were herded into lorries which were then given army escorts to the emergency camps which will be their homes until they can be flown back to Britain.

Tensions between the British and Egyptians have been running high since the government in Cairo stepped up its demands for the complete withdrawal of British troops.

Egypt has pulled out of the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty - which included plans for a gradual withdrawal - and has since been trying to undermine Britain's presence with a campaign of civil resistance.

Protesters have disrupted the operation of the Canal ports, beaten up and intimidated people working for the British services and attempted to block fresh food supplies.

The trouble came to a head on Saturday, when, according to British reports, Egyptian police opened fire indiscriminately on a British jeep and the shooting quickly spread to other parts of Ismailia.

Shooting broke out again the following day and took several hours to bring under control.

In a desperate attempt to calm the situation, Lieutenant General Sir George Erskine, commander of the British troops in Egypt and Ibrahim Abdul Hadi Ghazali Bey, Governor of the Canal Zone agreed yesterday that police would not be allowed to carry arms for the time being.

The operation to move families - and all their furniture - to the army compounds is expected to take up to six days.

Once all British families have left Ismailia, the town will become out of bounds to troops in the hope of preventing any further bloodshed.

Britain is still hopeful of negotiating a new four-power organisation for the defence of the Middle East. In the meantime, it does not want to lose its army base in Egypt.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Most British families were moved out of Ismailia in less than four days. However, the anti-British campaign continued with complaints about British behaviour to the International Labour Office and even to the World Health Organisation.

After a military coup in 1952, the period of constitutional monarchy ended in 1953 and Arab nationalist Abdel Nasser came to power in 1954. Two years later he astonished the British and French by nationalising the Suez Canal, provoking an invasion by Israeli and Anglo-French forces. However, the invasion was unpopular with large sections of the British and French public and also drew international condemnation, led by the United States.

The Anglo-French forces quickly agreed to a ceasefire and withdrew. The Suez crisis confirmed Britain and France's lack of superpower status and led to the resignation of Prime Minister Anthony Eden and accelerated the collapse of the Fourth Republic in France.

President Nasser increased his appeal in the Arab world as the leader who had successfully overcome Britain, France and Israel.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Don't point fingers at anyone but yourself. You're the one putting yourself on the back burner. Don't sit around and stew. Take some action, even if it's only exploring the new, unfamiliar terrain.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
Is it a good time to buy, sell or stay where you are? Asking for opinions is a waste of time. Don't take anyone else's word for it. Some things you just need to learn the hard way.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Don't let stress get in the way of something you've always enjoyed. The situation you're in is a whole new ballgame that requires an education of sorts. Consider yourself to be going back to the school of hard knocks.

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22
You're not just projecting your inner fears onto the real world. This time you're right on the money. It's how you handle it that's dependent on the reel playing inside your psyche.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Getting a lot done is admirable, but you're much more likely to make money if you have fun while you're at it. Strange how childlike the universe actually is. Enjoy.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Philanthropy may seem like the first thing to cut out of your budget, but it should be the last. There is always room to care about others as much if not more than you care about yourself. Think of that and be amazed.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
You love a bargain, and prices keep falling. What a good combination. You have all the incentive to shop around. And around and around and around. Keep on taking your time.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You're in a hurry to make money, but being in a hurry won't help. You need to take your time, now more than ever. Check things out thoroughly, whether all the bells go off or you're simply somewhat suspicious.

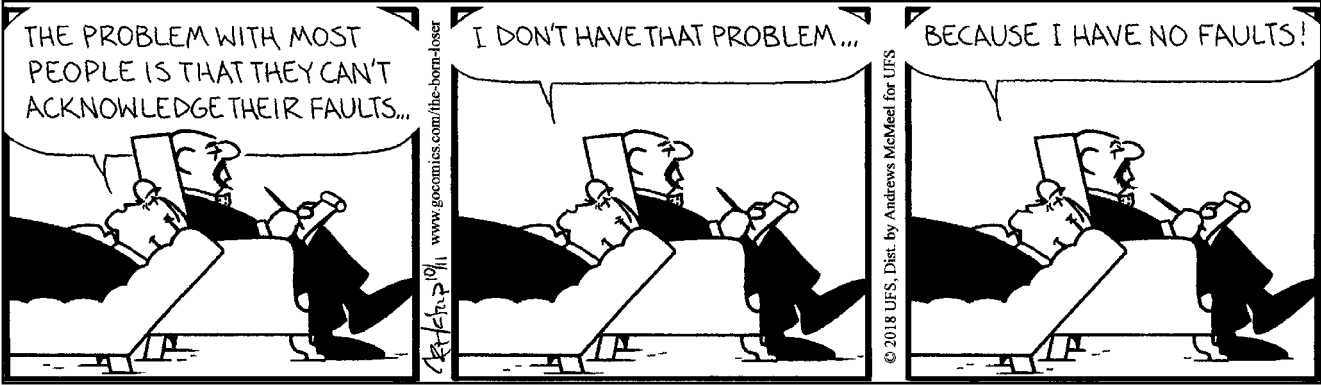
Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Money issues take even more time to decipher than they used to. Not only are they more complicated, but you have more to lose than ever before. It's a tricky combination that should give you a sense of purpose.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
You may not be out for gain, but you can't seem to avoid it. Profit follows you like a shadow today. Go ahead, help others selflessly. You'll get back your investment ten fold.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
If you've been taking care of your responsibilities with some regularity, then all you've lost is fun money. No matter how much it was, pat yourself on the back if you at least still have your security net.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20
There seem to be few lessons to absorb from your financial predicament, but there are actually quite a few. You're just not paying attention in class. Wake up and get your head out of the fog.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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6		3						
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4								3
			8		2			
			1				8	
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				3			7	
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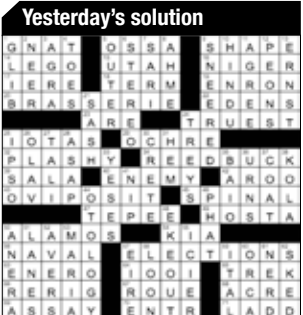
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-2	9	cloudy
Harbin	-11	-4	clear/cloudy
Tianjin	3	11	clear/overcast
Urumqi	-10	-1	clear
Xi'an	0	10	cloudy
Lhasa	-3	14	cloudy
Chengdu	6	12	cloudy
Chongqing	10	13	overcast
Kunming	6	20	clear
Nanjing	7	17	cloudy
Shanghai	10	18	cloudy
Wuhan	5	15	cloudy
Hangzhou	8	16	cloudy
Taipei	19	23	drizzle/cloudy
Guangzhou	17	24	overcast/cloudy
Hong Kong	21	24	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-6	-1	flurry
Frankfurt	2	6	drizzle/cloudy
Paris	2	5	drizzle
London	3	9	drizzle
New York	9	14	drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- ___ Carta; 6- Garfield's pal; 10- Ariel's predecessor; 14- Detective Pinkerton; 15- Hairless; 16- Taboo; 17- Summer ermine; 18- Coloured part of the eye; 19- Intersects; 20- Peninsula in the NE Soviet Union; 22- Tennessee ___ Ford; 23- South American country, famous for Macchu Picchu; 24- Out-of-date; 26- Cinque follower; 29- Castle ring; 31- River inlet; 32- Eccentric; 33- Achy; 34- Jughead's pal; 38- Sub station?; 40- Affirmative reply; 42- Illustrious warrior; 43- Weak; 46- God of thunder; 49- Campaigned for office; 50- Fannie ___; 51- Fine-tune; 52- ___ Plaines, IL; 53- Constrained; 57- Overhaul; 59- ___ evil...; 60- Pertaining to extrusion; 65- Shipping deduction; 66- Wile E. Coyote's supplier; 67- Brooklyn's ___ Island; 68- Party to; 69- In order (to); 70- "Oklahomal" aunt; 71- ___ were; 72- Formerly, once; 73- The Wreck of the Mary ___;

DOWN: 1- Face covering; 2- Neighbor of Sask.; 3- Grab, slangily; 4- Civil rights org.; 5- National songs; 6- Death notice; 7- Like some chocolate; 8- Troy story; 9- Begley and Wynn; 10- Make gradual inroads; 11- Dog; 12- Loosen; 13- Gave a measured amount; 21- Suffix with buck; 22- Chieftain, usually in Africa; 25- Notable period; 26- Pop; 27- Perfect place; 28- Just lying around; 30- Molars, e.g.; 35- Cattle group; 36- Dies ___; 37- Ages and ages; 39- Impending; 41- Least lengthy; 44- Othello villain; 45- So-so grade; 47- Lulu; 48- Decreased; 53- Port of old Rome; 54- Legumes; 55- Vive ___; 56- Furnishings; 58- ___ Mio; 61- December day, briefly; 62- To Live and Die ___; 63- Swerve; 64- Fictional Jane; 66- Peer Gynt's mother;



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PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity – Report 28 339 922
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Customs 28 559 944	
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Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333	
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Ref: 18100690

Ocean Garden Elm Court
Taipa
1,610 sq ft / HKD 11.88M
HKD 7,378 sq ft
Three Bedroom Apartment
Ref: 18105563

Va Long, Central Macau
Macau
Two Bedroom Apartment
Partial Sea View
HKD 29,900 / 1,750 sq ft
Ref: 18100694

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Macau
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Bright and spacious 3 bedrooms
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Manhattan F Unit
Taipa
2 Bedroom Apartment
Fully Furnished
HKD 25,000 / 1,720 sq ft
Ref: 18110695

Taipa, Nam Long
Taipa
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Two Bedroom Apartment
Ref: 18095561

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Ref: 18090200

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Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edf. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

TOP-RANKED Belgium fell to a stunning 5-2 loss against Switzerland yesterday [Macau time], with Haris Seferovic's hat trick lifting his team into the UEFA Nations League finals.

Belgium led 2-0 after 17 minutes thanks to Thorgan Hazard's two goals and was cruising toward the inaugural Final Four mini-tournament to be hosted by Portugal in June.

Only defeat by a two-goal margin could stop Belgium winning the group — and a Swiss team inspired by Xherdan Shaqiri hit back with five unanswered strikes, including three by half-time.

"We all disappeared from the match suddenly," Belgium goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois said. "It leaves us with a lousy feeling."

The shock was on in the 62nd minute when defender Nico Elvedi made up for a bad early error to put Switzerland 4-2 up with a glancing header.

Seferovic sealed the victory by getting his third with a header in the 84th after Shaqiri's trickery set up Kevin Mbabu for a cross.

Switzerland won Group 2 in League A on the head-to-head record because both teams had nine points from four games, and Belgium beat the Swiss by just 2-1 in Brussels last month. Iceland placed last and is relegated.

The tiebreaker option seemed moot when Thorgan Hazard scored after 66 seconds and again in the 17th minute.

But Switzerland struck three times in an 18-minute spell before halftime, and kept up the pressure in the second half.

FOOTBALL

Swiss stun Belgium 5-2 to make semis in Nations League



Switzerland's Haris Seferovic (right) scores past Belgium's goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois

A wild match played out in a noisy, intimate 16,000-capacity stadium in Lucerne gave Swiss fans what they looked for after an infuriating World Cup exit in July, in a lackluster 1-0 Round of 16 loss to Sweden.

The game also recalled Belgium's stunning 3-2 comeback win over Japan in its World Cup round of 16 — only this time it was the Red Devils wasting a two-goal lead.

Belgium quickly led when

captain Eden Hazard's brother Thorgan seized on a bad mistake. Thorgan Hazard had been offside when a forward pass went directly to Elvedi, but the defender misplayed the ball behind him into space. Thorgan Hazard, now onside because of the opponent's pass, pounced to flick the ball over goalkeeper Yann Sommer.

In the 17th, Thorgan Hazard was allowed to move into the Swiss penalty area and fired an angled shot past Elvedi and the

diving Sommer, his teammates at Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Switzerland now had to score at least four goals to edge the tiebreaker — and had three by halftime.

A penalty by Ricardo Rodriguez in the 26th was awarded for Nacer Chadli's foul on right-back Mbabu. Minutes later Rodriguez crossed for Shaqiri to guide a header across the goalmouth for Seferovic to tap in as Courtois scrambled in vain.

Seferovic then swept in a curling shot with his weaker right foot. He now has 17 goals for Switzerland one year after he was booed off the field by home fans in a World Cup playoff despite the team advancing.

Belgium's capitulation had echoes of a 3-1 loss to Wales in the Euro 2016 quarterfinals. It leaves this team still seeking a trophy to justify the "Golden Generation" label that is often a curse in world soccer. **AP**

GOLF

Thompson, Howell close year with victories

LEXI Thompson was the best this week, and Ariya Jutanugarn was the best all season. Neither left any doubt about that Sunday.

Thompson shot a 2-under 70 to finish at 18-under 270 and win the LPGA's season-ending CME Group Tour Championship by four strokes over Nelly Korda. The win makes this the sixth consecutive year that Thompson has won at least once, extending the longest such active streak on the LPGA Tour.

Jutanugarn took the other two big prizes up for grabs, clinching the year-long Race to the CME Globe prize — and the USD1 million bonus that comes with that — as well as the Vare Trophy for winning the season's scoring title.

The world No. 1 already had wrapped up player of the year honors, and finished 2018 with a 69.415 scoring average to edge Minjee Lee (69.747) for the top spot there.

Jutanugarn shot a 66 on Sunday, finishing the week tied for fifth at 12-under 276.

Korda closed with a 71.

PGA TOUR

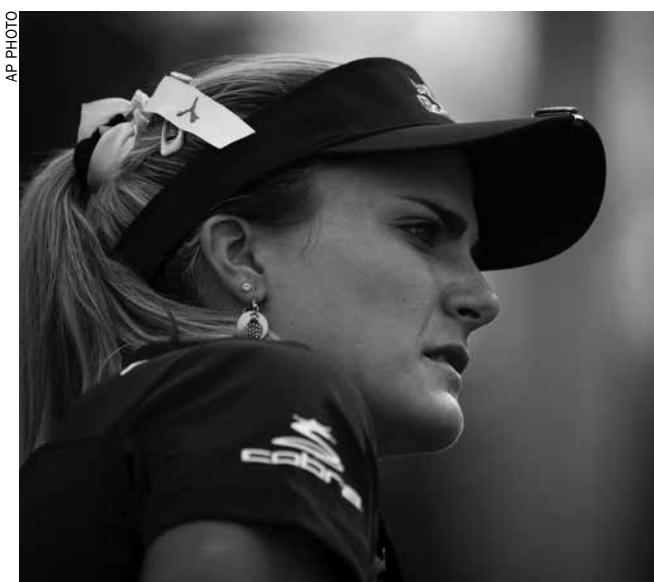
Charles Howell III made a 15-foot birdie putt on the second hole of a playoff with Patrick Rodgers in the RSM Classic to end an 11-year victory drought.

The 39-year-old Howell dropped to his knees and buried his head in his hands, then tearfully embraced his wife and two children. He earned \$1,152,000 and a return trip to his hometown of

Augusta, Georgia, in April to play in the Masters for the first time since 2012.

After Rodgers sent a birdie attempt of 21 feet past the cup on the second extra hole, Howell's putt died in the cup and capped a comeback in which he went bogey-double bogey on his first two holes to lose the lead he had held through the first three rounds.

Howell closed with a 3-under 67, birdieing Nos. 15-17, to match Rodgers at 19-under 263 in the final PGA Tour event of the year. After making the 36-hole cut on the 2-under number, Rodgers shot 61-62 on the weekend. Rodgers' 17-under 123 weekend was one shot off Troy Matteson's PGA Tour record for consecutive rou-



Lexi Thompson

nds of 122 set the 2009 Frys.com Championship.

Howell had a 22-foot birdie attempt on the final hole to win in regulation, but the ball turned away from the cup inches from the edge. Both players had birdie looks on the first playoff hole, with Rodgers missing from 27 feet and Howell from 14 feet off the front fringe.

Howell won for the first

time since the 2007 at Riviera. He also won in 2002 at Kingsmill.

EUROPEAN TOUR

Danny Willett won the European Tour's season-ending DP World Tour Championship by two shots for his first victory since the 2016 Masters.

The 31-year-old Englishman closed with a 4-under 68 to finish at 18-under 270.

Francesco Molinari tied for 26th to take the Race to Dubai prize. The British Open champion secured the title when Tommy Fleetwood failed to win the tournament.

England's Matt Wallace (68) and American Patrick Reed (70) tied for second.

PGA TOUR OF AUSTRALASIA

Mexico's Abraham Ancer won the Australian Open, closing with a 3-under 69 for a five-stroke victory at The Lakes.

Playing for the first time in Australia, Ancer finished at 16-under 272. He earned a spot in the British Open at Royal Portrush by finishing among the top three players who weren't already exempt.

Australia's Dimitrios Papadatos was second after a 67, and countryman Jake McLeod was another shot back after a 66. They also earned spots at Royal Portrush. **AP**

opinion

World Views

Leonid Bershidsky, Bloomberg

GERMANY DOESN'T REALLY WANT AN EU ARMY

For all the recent transatlantic debate about creating a joint European army, Germany has little interest in setting up any kind of supranational force under the EU's command. This reluctance is key to understanding the ineffectiveness of all the bloc's existing military projects.

In a recent op-ed for the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen laid out her vision of "an army of the Europeans" — note the change of accent from "European army." Von der Leyen sees it as "armed forces under national responsibility, closely interlinked, uniformly equipped, trained for joint operations and ready for action, such as the Franco-German Brigade and the German-Dutch Corps." The key words here are "under national responsibility." This means keeping in place the existing procedures for deploying troops — a decision that, in Europe, lies with each member state.

"I consider smart the German institution of parliamentary scrutiny," von der Leyen wrote. "Our troops need the broad support of the population for difficult and dangerous missions."

Of course, parliamentary procedures are slow, especially given the fractiousness of today's European politics. Von der Leyen wants to speed things up by getting domestic legislators specializing in defense to work with European colleagues in a special grouping that would draw up guidelines for the sake of national decision-makers. But I'd be hard pushed to recall a situation in which an EU committee has ever made something faster rather than slower.

The need to decide everything by committee has already de-fanged the closest thing the EU has to a common army — the two EU Battlegroups, each comprised of as many as 2,000 soldiers. Since 2007, one of these multinational rapid response forces has been on permanent standby. They've never been deployed because EU members have never reached unanimous agreement to do so. The closest they came was in 2013, when an intervention in the Central African Republic was discussed, but France ended up leading a mission there that didn't involve the Battlegroups.

The EU has an endless capacity for setting up lots of experimental mechanisms without completely dumping old, failed or unproven projects. This makes for an exceedingly complex defense cooperation landscape, in which much joint training and low-level coordination goes on, but no overarching structure is ever built. New proposals, such as French President Emmanuel Macron's European Intervention Initiative, or EII2, merely add to the jumble of acronyms.

France, with the biggest military in the EU, has a simple system of making deployment decisions: The president has the last word. It's also relatively easy in Italy, where the government decides, and in Poland, where it's up to the president — but, for example, in the Netherlands, Sweden, Hungary and the Czech Republic the prior parliamentary authorization is necessary, as in Germany. A European army would require these different procedures to be harmonized. That looks next to impossible.

Von der Leyen and other European politicians understand this perfectly well. Their comments are largely aimed at American ears. They are a response to U.S. demands for increased military spending, which President Donald Trump frames as contributions to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Europe's militarily strongest nations are keen to show Washington they are investing in their own defense rather than, as Trump has put it crudely, paying the U.S. to defend them.

The U.S. focuses on demanding more military spending from European countries, especially on equipment, while disregarding the inefficiency of the member states' procurement systems, something NATO has tolerated for decades. It bears a share of the blame for the unnecessary variety of military equipment in the EU countries. They use 178 weapon systems compared with 30 for the U.S., 17 main battle tanks compared with just one, and 20 types of fighter planes compared with six.

More spending isn't the answer. Instead, Europeans realize they need more cooperation in procurement to bring down costs and introduce more uniformity. If that's not what NATO, or essentially the U.S., wants from them, they will attempt to do it outside NATO's existing Defense Planning Process. So the coordination of budgeting through a relatively new process, called the Common Annual Review on Defense, is probably the most important part of Europe's plans for an army.

[Abridged]

THE BUZZ

VATICAN HOSTS RUSSIAN ART, ICONS FROM TRETYAKOV GALLERY

The Vatican is hosting an unprecedented exhibition of Russian fine art, bringing treasures from Moscow's famed Tretyakov Gallery to Rome following a sold-out exhibit of Vatican works at the state museum two years ago.

The Tretyakov is loaning some of its most important paintings and religious icons for "Pilgrimage of Russian Art: From Dionysius to Malevich." Many of them are leaving the gallery for the first time.

Organizers said yesterday that the exchange was discussed when President Vladimir Putin met in 2013 with Pope Francis. The Vatican Museums have proposed similar cultural exchanges with China, part of the soft diplomacy the Holy See encourages in places where Catholics are a minority.

The free exhibit runs from tomorrow through Feb. 16 at the Braccio di Carlo Magno gallery, off St. Peter's Square.

Best-picture Oscars up for sale in rare auction

Two Academy Awards for best picture are going up for sale in a rare auction of Oscars.

Auction house Profiles in History announced yesterday that an Oscar awarded to "Mutiny on the Bounty" in 1936 and another given to "Gentleman's Agreement" in 1948 will go up for auction in Los Angeles starting Dec. 11.

The "Mutiny on the Bounty" best-picture statuette is expected to go for between USD200,000 and 300,000. Frank Capra presented the award to Irving Thalberg at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles when the Academy Awards were less than 10 years old. The award is being put up for sale for the first time by the family of Thalberg, an essential figure in the early history of Hollywood.

The best-picture Oscar for "Gentleman's Agreement," the 1947 film starring Gregory Peck that took on anti-Semitism and won three Academy Awards, is expected to fetch between \$150,000 and \$200,000. Its seller wants to remain anonymous.

Hans Dreier's art-direction Oscar for 1950's "Sunset Boulevard" and Gloria Swanson's Golden Globe for best actress in a drama for the film are also on offer in the December auction along with other historic movie awards.



Oscar awarded to "Mutiny on the Bounty" in 1936 (left) and another given to "Gentleman's Agreement" in 1948

Auctions of Oscar statuettes are very uncommon because winners from 1951 onward have had to agree that they or their heirs must offer to sell it back to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for \$1 before selling it to anyone else. The Academy has said it firmly believes Oscars should be won, not sold.

Still, occasionally Oscars beyond the reach of the rules go up for sale and sell

for large sums of money.

The late Michael Jackson acquired David O. Selznick's "Gone With the Wind" Oscar for a record \$1.5 million in 1999.

Orson Welles' "Citizen Kane" statuette sold for \$861,542 in 2011.

And in 2014, James Cagney's best-actor Oscar for 1942's "Yankee Doodle Dandy" failed to sell when no one would meet the minimum bid demand of \$800,000. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



Le Monaco. Prince Albert II of Monaco and his wife Princess Charlene thank the crowd as they attend the ceremonies marking the National Day in Monaco, yesterday.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	70-100 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	55-75 Moderate
Ambient	70-100 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

IRAQ Saudi Arabia's King Salman received Iraq's president in Riyadh, a day after the Iraqi official visited the kingdom's rival, Iran. Barham Salih's back-to-back visits to Iran and Saudi Arabia reflect the delicate balance Iraq seeks to maintain in a region where its two powerful neighbors are battling for supremacy. More on p14



YEMEN A senior leader of Yemen's Shiite rebels said yesterday that the group will halt rocket fire into Saudi Arabia for the sake of peace efforts, answering a key Saudi demand in the first public sign of hope for the latest push to stop the bloodshed and civilian suffering in the Arab world's poorest country.

SYRIA Government forces captured a southern region from the Islamic State group yesterday after weeks of fighting that left scores dead on both sides, a government-linked media outlet reported.



ISRAEL avoided early elections after a key coalition partner in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government said yesterday that he would not withdraw his party, keeping the coalition intact despite a crisis triggered by a violent flare-up with Gaza militants. More on p14

BRITAIN Prime Minister Theresa May sought to seal business support for her Brexit deal with the European Union yesterday, but remained on a collision course with a group of lawmakers seeking to unseat her. More on p15



HAITI Six people were killed and at least five others were wounded during demonstrations across Haiti protesting allegations of embezzlement from a Venezuelan program that provided the country with subsidized oil, police said.