



**LISTING OF IEC LONG FIREWORK FACTORY**  
The Cultural Affairs Bureau is studying the possibility of listing the former IEC Long Firework Factory in Taipa

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**ANOTHER RECORD YEAR**  
The Philippines is expected to see another record year in terms of gross gaming revenue, with 8.5 percent growth forecast

P7 GAMING



**HUAWEI EXTRADITION REQUEST**  
China yesterday demanded the U.S. drop a request that Canada extradite a top executive of the tech giant Huawei

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**WORLD BRIEFS**

AP PHOTO



**JAPAN-RUSSIA** Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe sat down for talks yesterday with Russian President Vladimir Putin focusing on a decades-long territorial dispute between the two nations.

**VIETNAM** won't devalue the dong to boost exports even as the U.S.-China tension starts to hurt Southeast Asia's trade-reliant economies.

AP PHOTO



**THAILAND** DNA tests show that two bodies found washed up on the shore of the Mekong River in Thailand's northeast are the corpses of anti-government activists, police said yesterday, in what are feared to be political killings.

**AUSTRALIA's** prime minister said yesterday he would be disappointed if radical cleric Abu Bakar Bashir were released from prison early and urged Indonesia to show respect for the victims of the 2002 Bali nightclub bombings that the firebrand preacher inspired. *More on p12*

AP PHOTO



**AFGHANISTAN** Officials confirmed yesterday that dozens of victims killed the previous day in a brazen Taliban attack on a military base not far from Kabul were members of the country's intelligence agency — a severe blow to the government which has already lost control of nearly half of Afghanistan to insurgents. *More on p13*

More on backpage

# Inflation rate reaches 3 percent in 2018

P7 MACAU

AP PHOTO



## ‘Roma,’ ‘The Favourite’ lead Oscar nomination with 10 nods

P14 FILM

## Lotus checkpoint expected to be relocated by end of 2019

Deputy director of the Macau Liaison Office, Zhang Rongshun, hopes that the relocation of the Lotus checkpoint can be completed within the year. Earlier this week, the government said that Macau and mainland China had reached a consensus regarding the relocation of the Lotus checkpoint to Hengqin. According to Zhang, the new checkpoint in Hengqin is under construction, but he is unaware of its progress. He also stated that the relocation needs to be approved by the National People's Congress, and that Macau also needs to establish laws to allow the relocation to be completed smoothly.

## Musicians can apply for album subsidy until January 31

The deadline for applications for the 2018 subsidy program for the production of original song albums is January 31. Organized by the Cultural Affairs Bureau, the scheme aims to cultivate more talented musicians, producers and music creators in Macau. Each selected album will be granted a subsidy of up to MOP 150,000 as well as be given opinions and professional advice from the members of the jury. The subsidy will be given to a maximum of eight beneficiaries.

## UM holds calligraphy and painting exhibition

A calligraphy and painting exhibition titled 'The Fusion of the Chinese and Portuguese Cultural Horizons in the Painting' has opened at the University of Macau (UM). The event was co-organized by UM's Confucius Institute and the Macau Orient Painting and Calligraphy Association, with assistance from UM's Chinese-Portuguese Bilingual Teaching and Training Centre, Department of Chinese Language and Literature, and Department of Portuguese, and support of the Philosophy and Religious Studies Program. The exhibition includes 58 paintings by eight renowned artists from Macau, Portugal, and Japan.

# IC new vice-president inaugurated

**T**HE new vice president of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), Chan Kai Chon, took the oath of office yesterday in a ceremony presided over by the president of the bureau, Mok Ian Ian.

At the inauguration ceremony, Chan thanked the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, and leaders of the IC for their trust and support, and for giving him the opportunity to perform new duties in the cultural sector of Macau.

Chan added that he will fully assist Mok Ian Ian and work together with his colleagues of the Bureau, making every effort for self-improvement and meeting challenges with wisdom and humility.

Chan Kai Chon had served as director of the Macao Museum of Art since 2017. He obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Economics at Jinan University, a Master's Degree in Fine Arts at



Chan Kai Chon

the Nanjing Normal University and a PhD at the Central Academy of Fine Arts. In 1992, he worked in the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau and served as the head of the Division

of Continuing Education of this Bureau from 1994 to 2003.

According to a statement issued by the IC, during his tenure as director of the Macao Museum of Art, Chan devoted

himself to promoting the development of visual arts and museums and planning various annual art exhibitions. As the bureau's vice president, he will have the task of supervising the works in the areas of exhibitions and museums, cultural and creative industries and arts education, and carrying out the mission of promoting culture and the arts.

Regarding the leadership of the Macao Museum of Art (MAM), Mok Ian Ian told journalists on the sidelines of the event that an acting director would fill the position temporarily. "The MAM is also an organizational subunit under the tutelage of Vice President Chan Kai Chon. For the time being we will look into the people currently performing duties at MAM to replace him. For now, the person that would perform such duties would be Loi Weng I [Dora Loi Weng]," Mok confirmed.

## Paid arsonist placed under preventive arrest

**A** 26-year-old Hong Kong man who was paid to set two cars on fire has been placed under preventive arrest, according to a statement released by the Public Prosecutions Office.

On Sunday, the 26-year-old Hong Kong man was transferred to the prosecution authority after deliberately setting two cars on fire, according to the Judiciary Police (PJ). He also wounded a security guard.

After a preliminary investigation, the man is suspected of having violated the laws against arson, assault, and the use of drugs.

"According to the law, the aforementioned crimes can be punished with a maximum of one to ten years of imprisonment or a penalty," the statement reads.

"After the first judicial interrogation, and in response to the nature and seriousness of the



The Windsor Arch

case, especially considering the suspect's illegal acts which threaten public safety and the fact that no other suspects have been intercepted in the case, and in order to prevent the suspect from escaping, the judge of the criminal court accepted the prosecutor's suggestion and enforced compulsory measures to arrest the suspect," the statement reads.

On Sunday, around midnight, the Hong Kong resident arrived at the Windsor Arch parking

lots, where he left burning substances on top of two cars, setting them alight.

Prior to this attempt, the suspect had previously tried to set the cars on fire by dousing them in flammable liquid, but he was unsuccessful.

On Sunday, he broke one of the car's windshields with an object, set the cars alight and left the scene.

The suspect was paid HKD20,000, in Hong Kong, to perform the crime in Macau.

## Restaurants, retailers report business improvement in Nov

**A**ROUND 36 percent of interviewed restaurants and similar establishments reported a year-on-year growth in receipts in November 2018, according to the latest business climate survey. The survey, conducted by the Statistics and Census Service, also indicated that 44 percent of interviewed retailers saw an increase in business during November, representing a 3-percentage-point rise from October.

Meanwhile, 30 percent of restaurants and 38 percent of retailers reported a year-on-year decline, representing a decrease of 9 percentage points and increase of 5 percentage points, month-to-month respectively. The remaining establishments from both industries noted effectively no change to their businesses from the previous month.

At the time of the survey, over half of the sam-

pled restaurants expected their business to hold steady year-on-year in December 2018, up 3 percentage points from the proportion who held the same expectations for the month of November. Twenty-seven percent expected a year-on-year decline in receipts, down by 6 percentage points from November.

Retailers were slightly more cautious about their business prospects for December than restaurants. Just under half expected their revenue to be in line with the same month in the previous year, while 30 percent anticipated a year-on-year sales decrease, up 2 percentage points from November.

The survey's sample comprises 186 restaurants (accounting for 53 percent of industry's receipts) and 136 retailers (accounting for 70 percent of the industry's receipts).

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HERITAGE

# IC to study listing of Iec Long Firework Factory

Renato Marques

**T**HE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) is studying the possibility of listing the former Iec Long Firework Factory in Taipa, the Bureau's president Mok Ian Ian revealed yesterday.

"The IC is going to do a study aiming to classify this [Iec Long Firework Factory] property asset," Mok said. "We know that the ownership of the factory is not yet clarified, so we do not yet have a development plan [for that area]," Mok said, also noting that the matter is not one of great priority to the IC, since at the moment "there [is] not any danger of [severe] degradation or ruins."

The president of the IC justified the lack of a concrete plan and a timeline from the government for the site by drawing attention to the



Mok Ian Ian

issues regarding the several court procedures that are still running, which involve the clarification of the land ownership, saying "there are still a series of issues to solve, namely the question of land ownership, which leads us to not yet have a precise answer on that topic."

As stated in a warning notice posted at the entrance gate of the Iec Long Firework Factory in Taipa, the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau initiated on January 14 the removal of all objects and construction works from the site. The notice also specifies that this task is being carried out

in fulfillment of the Chief Executive order from April 24, 2017, which gave to the owners of such materials and objects a period of 60 days for the removal of all objects and constructions, and to vacate the land site. According to the notice, such works would cost the government MOP600,000.

## Association claims former leader has no influence on operations

**T**HE Macau Historical Districts Developments Promotion Association has expressed its confidence in the association's service despite the case involving the real estate agency owner, Isabel Chiang, who used to be the president of the association.

The current chairman of the association, also surnamed Chiang, said that he started serving at his current post in December 2018. He further claimed that the change in leadership poses no influence on the association's operation.

Currently, approximately ten shops at Rua dos Ervanários are tenants of Isabel Chiang's real estate agency.

These shops are currently in a stable situation and reportedly have not been affected by Isabel Chiang's case. Moreover, no shop owners have suspended their leases because of the case.

The association chairman said that the shops are more concerned about whether the association can continue to organize activities to attract more people to their premises.

The association's chairman said that the association aims to serve the entire Macau community, not specific individuals.

According to the Judiciary Police, as of 5 p.m. yesterday the number of victims of Chiang's case had increased to 51, involving more than HKD227 million.

The victims include one Hong Kong resident and one mainland resident.

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# Times App

## News At Hand



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# 39 suspects arrested in illegal POS scheme involving RMB30b



**I**N an update to a case earlier reported by the Times, a total of 39 suspects have now been arrested in an underground money laundering scheme involving more than RMB30 billion (USD4.4 billion). According to Xinhua, the investigation is ongoing and involves assistance from various police entities in Macau and mainland China.

In the latest development in the case, it was found that a criminal gang led by a suspect surnamed Xu registered point-of-sale (POS) machines on the mainland and illegally brought them to casinos in Macau for gamblers to cash out using their credit cards.

Illegal point-of-sale terminals have been used as a method for mainland punters to circumvent Beijing's capital controls for years, allowing them to gamble with the funds or send them further abroad. In response, Macau authorities last year stepped up efforts to crack down on the method.

Mainland police authorities established a forward office base in

Zhuhai as part of the investigation, which began in November last year. The purpose of the base was to monitor border crossings by the gang members and gather evidence leading to their arrest.

Mainland authorities sent over 100 officers for a coordinated strike in Beijing, Hebei, Hubei, Guangdong and Macau, according to the latest reports on the case, simultaneously arresting three dozen operatives and freezing bank accounts and other assets worth billions. In addition, four vehicles, 32 illegally converted POS machines, and a large number of computers and bank cards were confiscated.

The Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau said that the success-

fully coordinated strike has created a precedent for the Beijing and Macau police to jointly crack down on cross-border underground banks. It is a sign, they said, of Beijing's determination to tackle economic crimes and prevent emerging financial risks.

According to the South China Morning Post, mainland authorities say they disrupted more than 380 underground banks in 2016, detaining more than 800 suspects with over RMB900 billion involved. Official data for 2017 is yet to be released, but police authorities indicated that there were fewer than 100 such cases during the year.

## Former BNU head turned down for Bison Bank CEO



Pedro Cardoso

**T**HE former Banco Nacional Ultramarino (BNU) Chief Executive Officer, Pedro Cardoso, has been appointed to head the International Branch of Chinese Bison Capital owned Bison Bank, the Portuguese economy specialist "Jornal Economico" reported.

According to the media outlet, Cardoso's name was previously on a shortlist to be the new CEO of the bank, but the company decided to turn down Cardoso in favor of Bian Fang, in the list that was sent for approval of the Portuguese banking regulator Banco de Portugal.

This decision has been reported by the newspaper as occurring due to "fears that the Portuguese regu-

lator would not accept the proposal due to an audit that was being carried out on the accounts of Caixa Geral de Depósitos (the owner of BNU), that pointed out a series of decisions from Cardoso that led to losses to the bank."

In a statement, Bison Bank acknowledged the change and stated that it was justified in light of "the increasing challenges and complexities in the relation between China and Europe in the financial sector, especially in the area of investment banking and asset management." The bank noted in the same statement that it decided to nominate Cardoso to lead the international branch of the bank instead. **RM**

## Gongbei recorded 12,098 smuggling cases in 2018



**T**HE Gongbei Customs authority has announced that 12,098 smuggling cases were investigated last year, an increase of 1.56 percent year-on-year. The amount involved in the cases increased by nearly 20 percent to RMB3.162 billion.

Gongbei Customs also cracked down on 17 large-scale smuggling rings. 647 people were brought in under compulsory measures, and the bureau arrested 69 suspects.

According to Gongbei Customs, in 2018 Macau

and Zhuhai joined hands for cross-border law enforcement actions. Gongbei Customs, the Zhuhai police department, the Macau Judiciary Police and the Macau customs authority jointly carried out cross-border actions. During this cooperative exercise, the four departments seized 54 kilograms of drugs, which were shipped using postal parcels. thirteen smuggled guns were also seized while the weapons were being shipped from Macau to mainland China.

## Mainland, Hong Kong sign judicial assistance arrangement

**T**HE Supreme People's Court (SPC) signed a document with Hong Kong's Department of Justice on judicial assistance over civil and commercial matters.

The document titled "The Arrangement on Reciprocal Recognition and Enforcement of Judgments in Civil and Commercial Matters between the Courts of the Mainland and of Hong Kong SAR" is the sixth judicial assistance arrangement between the two sides since 1997, said an SPC statement, adding that it covered the broadest range of matters and was the most significant.

With this document and a pre-

vious arrangement on marital and domestic matters, about 90 percent of civil and commercial judgments may be reciprocally recognized and enforced between courts of the two sides, the statement said.

The document included 31 articles, covering issues such as application for reciprocal recognition and enforcement, and grounds for refusal and procedural matters.

The two sides have worked together to extend the scope of judicial assistance so re-litigation can be reduced and people can benefit from simpler judicial procedures,

SPC said.

The arrangement also included regulations on intellectual property rights cases, which aimed to serve the development of innovative industries in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area, it added. A few civil and commercial judgments were excluded from the arrangement, such as arbitration cases, bankruptcy, and certain patent cases.

The arrangement will take effect in Hong Kong in the form of local laws and in the mainland in the form of judicial explanations. **MDT/Xinhua**

# Secretary and lawmakers tour Chinese Medicine Park

**T**HE Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, and 23 lawmakers toured the Chinese Traditional Medicine Park at Hengqin Island on Monday. During the visit, the Secretary said that progress on the work of the Traditional Chinese Medicine Park has allowed further development in the traditional Chinese medicine industry, noting that both local and mainland Chinese enterprises are integrated and working cooperatively in the park, creating and improving job opportunities for young people graduating in this field. In that sense, in Leong's opinion, the park's work has been translating into positive effects through the diversification of local industry.

According to a statement issued by the Government Information Bureau, Leong explained that the purpose of the invitation to the lawmakers was to provide them with fresh insights on the progress of the development and planning of the park. In addition, the visit aimed to offer the dele-



Leong and lawmakers are briefed on the latest developments of the park

gation a better understanding of the allocation of public funds related to the industrial park, the first major project in Guangdong-Macau cooperation.

In comments made to the media during the visit, the Secretary stated that the industrial park had entered a new phase of development, with a growing number of companies involved in traditional Chinese medicine having established a foothold there.

Besides fostering the development of the pharmaceutical industry, the industrial park also boasts a number of associated industries, such as accreditation

and quarantine services, the Secretary noted, adding that in addition the industrial park would help businesses explore markets not only in the mainland but also overseas.

Leong gave a few examples of Chinese medicine products from Macau and mainland companies that had been registered and granted approval to be marketed in other countries, such as Mozambique.

## INTERTEK ZHUHAI PLEDGES TO BOOST TCM INDUSTRY

**INTERTEK GUANGDONG-Macau Testing Services Limited (Intertek Zhuhai)** officially opened on Monday, committing to build a third-party testing and service platform for traditional Chinese medicine health products. The opening ceremony at the Traditional Chinese Medicine Park was attended by Lionel Leong. CEO of Intertek China, Bai Xueli, pledged that Intertek Zhuhai will work to serve Macau's economic tran-

sition and adjustment by way of supplying total quality assurance services with its products, commodities and systems, and safeguarding export enterprises in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau. The park aims to foster a strategic structure based in Hengqin to serve the SAR and provide support to improve the quality standards of the medical industry in the Greater Bay Area and enhance its international competitiveness.

# Illegal construction works demolished



**A**N interdepartmental group set up to demolish illegal construction works has intervened in two cases of structures being unlawfully constructed on rooftops.

According to a statement issued by the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT), following a complaint, it was found out that the revamp works in question were being conducted on two illegal sites. In both cases, DSSOPT followed through by issuing an embargo and demanding that the promoters of the works demolish them and restore the original design of the rooftops.

However, the owners reportedly ignored the embargo and construction works continued. After the expiration of the embargo notice, and having received evidence that the rooftops were being used by those infracting the embargo, the interdepartmental group demolished the concrete constructions, which included walls, windows, gates and doors.

In a statement, DSSOPT stressed that illegal works cause damage to buildings and may endanger residents by obstructing exit routes and access by firefighters, particularly if built in common areas.

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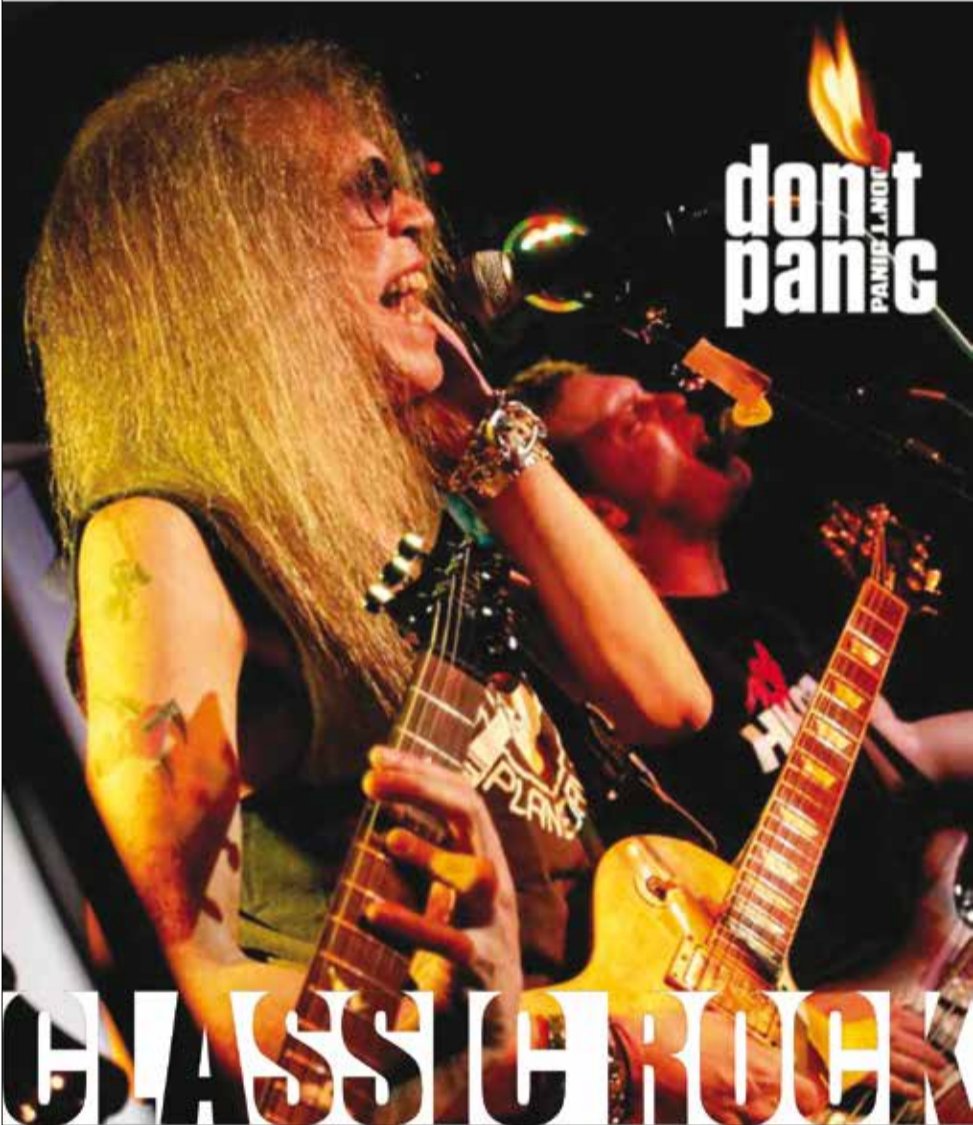
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**M**ACAU'S composite consumer price index (CPI) in December 2018 increased by 2.94 percent year-on-year to 114.35, with its inflation rate for 2018 reaching 3 percent, up by 1.78 percentage points from 1.23 percent in 2017, the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) announced yesterday.

DSEC added that the year-on-year growth in December 2018 was attributable to dearer charges for eating out, rising rental costs for dwellings, and higher parking meter rates, as well as increasing prices of adults' clothing.

Among the various sections of goods and services, the price indexes of clothing and footwear and of education grew notably by 6 percent and 5.95 percent respectively year-on-year, while the index of communication decreased by 6.85 percent.

## Inflation rate reaches 3 percent in 2018

For 2018, the average composite CPI increased by 3.01 percent year-on-year to 112.85. As well as the effect of eating out expenses, rental costs, clothing expenses, and rising parking meter rates, the increase was driven by rising tuition fees and the increased price of gasoline.

Analyzed by section, the price indexes of clothing and footwear (6.57 percent), transport (5.32 percent), health (4.80 percent) and education (4.76 percent) registered notable growth, while those of communication, alcoholic beverages and tobacco dropped by 8.48 percent and 0.08 percent respectively.



### GAMING

## Philippines expected to set another record year



**T**HE Philippines is on track to see another record year in terms of gross gaming revenue, according to a Reuters interview with the chairman of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp (Pagcor), Andrea Domingo.

Last year gross gaming revenue in the Philippines jumped 13 percent to a record of approximately 200 billion Philippine pesos (MOP30.54 billion). That trend is set to continue in 2019 with approximately 8.5 percent forecast growth, leading to a year-end take of 217 billion pesos (MOP33.14 billion).

The Macau SAR recorded gross gaming revenue of MOP302 billion across 2018, up 14 percent year-on-year. However, most analysts expect market consolidation to prevail in 2019, predicting little or even negative year-on-year growth.

A steady stream of foreign high rollers has made the Philippines one of Asia's fastest growing gambling markets in recent years.

Being the recipient of large investments from multinational gaming companies, such as Macau's Melco

Resorts and Entertainment Ltd. and Japan's Universal Entertainment Corporation, the casino infrastructure around the archipelago-nation's capital is well developed.

Moreover, the Philippines has benefited from a strict regulatory gambling environment in its Southeast Asia neighbors, some of whom ban gambling outright.

That is now beginning to change. Casino projects cropping up from Cambodia to Japan – and almost everywhere in between – may dampen growth prospects in the Philippines, even if the rival integrated resorts are years away from opening their doors.

In the meantime, the Philippines is on track to generate a record amount of gross gaming revenue, and Pagcor chairman Andrea Domingo says that there is enough gambler volume to weather the emerging competition.

"The operators are threatened [by the growing competition]," Domingo told Reuters. "However, if you have critical mass and a safe environment, gamblers will still be there."

### MUSIC

## Violinist Tianwa Yang joined Macao Orchestra for concert



**T**HE Macao Orchestra (OM) presented the concert "Salute to Richard Strauss – Tianwa Yang and Macao Orchestra", part of the Shining Virtuosos series, on 19 January at the Macau Cultural Centre Grand Auditorium, featuring Edouard Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole", in which acclaimed Chinese violinist Tianwa Yang displayed her virtuoso technique.

As a tribute to German composer Richard Strauss on the 70th anniversary of his death this year, the orchestra also performed two classical symphonic masterpieces by Richard Strauss, "Don Juan" and "Tod und Verklärung" (Death and Transfiguration). In addition, the violinist gave a master class on January 18 at the Macao Conservatory, in which she coached and exchanged views with the

participating violin students. Tianwa Yang, hailed by American music critics for her "stunning, effortless virtuosity", cooperated with the OM for the first time in this concert.

On Sunday January 27, OM will present the chamber music concert "Mesmerising Austro-German Music" at the Dom Pedro V Theatre, at 8 p.m., featuring a program of ensemble compositions by Mozart, Mendelssohn and Schubert. Tickets are priced at MOP120 and MOP100 and are now available for purchase. On the same day, the exchange session "Music Hour with Musicians" will be held at 7 p.m., in which musicians of the orchestra including first violinist Li Silei, cellist Zhang Taiyang and bassoonist Zhu Wukun will talk about curiosities of chamber music. Admission is free.

## Secretary admits public house quality problem

Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raimundo do Rosário has admitted that falling bricks on the external walls of public houses are a problem, but the Secretary also declared that it is not a major issue. As stressed by Rosário, both public and private houses might experience problems in the future. The Secretary wants the public to accept the problems with some public houses because they were built hastily in the past. Regarding whether the government can ensure the quality of future public houses, Raimundo claimed that no engineer would guarantee that any given project would be without problems.

## Over 400 kilos of smuggled vegetables seized

The Macao Customs Service (the Customs), together with the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), has inspected seven restaurants, three vegetable stalls and five smugglers suspected of smuggling unquarantined vegetables to Macau. In total, the two bureaus seized 390 kilograms of vegetables, 23 kilograms of meat and 20 kilograms of other types of food. IAM will prosecute the restaurants and the smugglers. The two departments will continue to inspect food premises in Macau, enhance the intensity of winter defense operations, and combat the smuggling of food to Macau in order to ensure food safety in the region.

## Local man left scene of accident after injuring infant

A local man in his 50s was called to the Public Security Police (PSP) to cooperate in a police investigation regarding an accident that injured a 3-year-old boy. The incident was recorded on Monday. The man, who claimed to be an occupational driver, is suspected of having injured the boy while driving his motorbike. The boy's front teeth fell out due to the accident. The man left the scene after the accident but was later found by the PSP. He then admitted to the accident, however he claims that he left the scene because he thought the boy was uninjured.

## SURVEY

# CEO pessimism on economy spreads after upbeat 2018

A survey of hundreds of corporate leaders shows “a record jump in pessimism” about the world economy, with sentiment doused by trade spats, a global downturn and fading benefits from U.S. President Donald Trump’s tax cuts.

Consulting firm PwC says the latest edition of its annual survey of CEOs found 30 percent feel growth will decline this year, a six-fold increase from a year earlier — when 57 percent were optimistic.

The survey, released Monday on the eve of the World Economic Forum opening in Davos, Switzerland, tallies responses from more than 1,300 CEOs worldwide and is billed as a good predictor of economic results.

In an interview, PwC Chairman Bob Moritz said: “There’s a not-surprising increase in the amount of pessimism from the CEOs and the global economy as they look at the next 12 months.” He said “confidence is waning” amid rising trade tensions and protectionism.

Thirty-five percent of CEOs cited the perennial concern about over-regulation as the top



threat to their businesses. But “policy uncertainty” — a new metric introduced this year — came a close second, the survey found.

The survey of CEOs in 91 territories was conducted online, in person and by phone in September and October.

The souring mood was perhaps most pronounced about the United States: The survey found a 41-percentage point drop in CEOs choosing the U.S. as a top market for growth, and optimism among North American executives dropped the most sharply — from 63 percent to 37 percent.

Moritz suggested that the U.S.

dominance in world affairs isn’t what it once was, noting how the center of gravity of capital markets had been the U.S. over nearly the last half-century. “Now you’ve got it shifting a little bit more east” to China and other parts of Asia, he said.

The Trump administration’s salvos over trade with China and other key trading partners have taken a bite: PwC found that 98 percent of U.S. CEOs and nine in ten Chinese counterparts voiced concerns about the U.S.-China trade issues.

Moritz also pointed to uncertainty’s about Brexit, saying simply: “You never know where these things are going to go.” AP

## Toyota, Panasonic announce venture for green auto batteries

TOYOTA Motor Corp. and Panasonic Corp. are setting up a joint venture to research, manufacture and sell batteries for ecological autos, an increasingly lucrative sector amid concerns about global warming.

The Japanese automaker and the Japanese electronics maker said in a joint statement Tuesday that Toyota will take a 51 percent stake and Panasonic 49 percent in the joint venture, which is to be running by the end of 2020.

The companies have been studying working together on batteries since 2017. They did not say how much would be invested in the joint venture.

Panasonic will transfer equipment, assets and workers from its plants in Japan and China to the joint venture, which will employ 3,500 workers from both companies.

Separately, Panasonic already



Toyota president Akio Toyoda (left) and Panasonic Corporation President Kazuhiro Tsuga

has invested in a battery factory with U.S. electric car maker Tesla Inc.

Innovations in batteries are critical for electric vehicles, with charging times and costs key obstacles.

Toyota, Japan’s No. 1 automaker, is thought to have fallen behind rival Nissan Motor Co. in pioneering electric vehicles, and has been trying to catch up in recent years.

The companies said the auto sector was trying to meet various challenges that require innovation, including autonomous driving and car-sharing services.

“Today’s automotive world is also being called on by society to help find solutions to such issues as those related to global warming, resources and energy,” they said in a joint statement. AP

## Starbucks expands Uber delivery venture to San Francisco, London

Giles Turner

STARBUCKS Corp. is expanding its venture with Uber Eats, offering delivery in San Francisco followed by expansion into other major U.S. cities and rolling out a new test program in London.

The service started in San Francisco yesterday, to be followed by Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York and Washington D.C. “in the coming weeks.” Starbucks is planning to bring delivery service to nearly a quarter of U.S.-owned stores in seven cities this spring.

The announcement builds on a trial run that started in September in Miami. Almost all of Starbucks’ menu items will be available with delivery times of within 30 minutes — and an initial USD2.49 booking fee. The coffee chain is planning to test delivery programs in other countries this year, with London being the first European city targeted for a pilot later this month.

Starbucks has long been testing how to build out a delivery service in its home market. In 2014, then-CEO Howard Schultz said the chain would soon begin offering delivery in select U.S. markets. Starbucks began testing a service in Seattle, and in the Empire State Building in Manha-



tan in 2015. But the Empire State location has since been converted into a mobile-order-only store, and a Seattle trial with startup Postmates has since ended.

Starbucks already has a significant delivery business in China, using Alibaba Group Holding Ltd.’s Ele.me platform, involving 2,000 stores across 30 cities in China.

The expansion of the deal with Starbucks adds another major U.S. brand to Uber Technologies Inc.’s restaurant delivery arm. McDonald’s Corp. in May said it will expand delivery service to 1,000 more U.S. restaurants, using UberEats to handle the “McDelivery” program.

In November Uber said it’ll triple headcount working on food delivery across Europe, the Middle East and Africa in its fight for market share against local rivals including Deliveroo and Just Eat Plc. Bloomberg

## MasterCard fined USD648m for ramping up EU card fees

MASTERCARD Inc. was fined 570.6 million euros (USD648 million) by the European Union for imposing rules that regulators said may have artificially raised the costs of card payments in the region.

The European Commission said MasterCard unfairly prevented retailers from seeking cheaper rates from banks outside the EU country where they are based. MasterCard’s curbs on cross-border acquiring ended when the EU introduced credit card legislation in 2015. The EU’s probe started in 2013 and escalated with a statement of objections two years later.

MasterCard last month set aside \$650 million to cover the fine, less than a potential 1 billion euros it flagged as a possibility in 2017. The company got a 10 percent fine reduction for cooperating with the EU, regulators said.

Credit card payments have been a target of EU antitrust enforcement for nearly two decades. MasterCard and Visa Inc. are separately seeking to settle ano-



ther EU probe into fees charged for tourists shopping in Europe, which would see them avoid fines. MasterCard has also been sued by retailers seeking compensation after an earlier EU investigation found their cross-border payment fees unfairly restricted competition.

MasterCard said the EU decision “puts an end to a legacy investigation” into “historic practices only” that were in place for less than two years. It “will not require any modification of MasterCard’s current business practices,” the company said in an emailed statement. Bloomberg



MOZAMBIQUE

# Economic growth in 2019 practically unchanged compared to 2018 – EIU

**M**OZAMBIQUE'S economy is expected to remain unchanged in 2019, with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth falling by 10 basis points compared with 2018 to 3.4 percent, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

The latest report on the country noted that the difficulties in access to credit by agricultural producers will continue to hamper the sector's growth and the fall in the international prices of coal will put a brake on new investments in mining.

The EIU also said the country's financial problems were also hampering development as well as the high amount of late payments by the government which "continue to weigh heavily on the banking sector and undermine investor confidence."

In the long term, particularly with the start of the explo-



A street in Maputo, Mozambique

ration of natural gas deposits in the Rovuma basin, the economy will tend to grow faster, with a forecast of 4.5 percent in the 2020/2022 period.

The report recalled the oversupply in the world natural gas market and that the materials for the construction of the gas extraction and processing facilities will have to almost entirely be imported

and therefore the impact on the country's economy will be limited.

However, the start of gas extraction in the Coral Sul field, projected for 2023, is expected to drive economic growth that year to 7.5 percent, although the influence of this project on the rest of the economy, through the provision of services, should be very limited.

Among the main economic indicators, inflation is expected to be between 6.1 percent this year and 6.7 percent in 2023, and the budget balance is expected to increase from minus 8 percent in 2018 to minus 8.3 percent this year, an election period, until it reaches 2023 with a value of minus 4.1 percent. **MDT/Macauhub**

## China, Brazil resolve commercial dispute over chicken meat

**C**HINA'S Ministry of Commerce has accepted a proposal from Brazilian poultry exporters to end a dispute over dumping, a lawyer at MPA Trade Law told Reuters this week.

Cláudia Marques, a partner at the law firm representing Brazilian exporters, also said that China's decision to accept the proposal was communicated to the parties involved through a report sent by the Ministry of Commerce.

The agreement on the proposal under which minimum prices for exports to China would be established in exchange for the closure of an investigation into dumping which began in August 2017 will enter into force by 18 February, bringing an end to formal procedures.

China determined in June 2018 that importers of chicken meat produced in Brazil would have to deposit between 18.8 percent and 38.4 percent of the value of the product due to "dumping", or sale below price of production.

Under the proposal now agreed, Brazilian exporters undertake to sell to China at prices not lower than those set out in the document, in a process known as the minimum price undertaking. **MDT/Macauhub**

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 綠·跡  
**Vestígios de Linhas**

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26.1.2019  
 26 January 2019  
 16h 下午4時

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 PAULO PEREIRA  
 IVAN PINEDA  
 LUIS BENTO  
 e CONVIDADOS

# Gene scientist fired by college as investigators say he broke the law

Daniela Wei

**T**HE Chinese scientist who altered the genes of twin baby girls as embryos was fired by his university after a government probe found he violated laws and signaled he may face a criminal investigation.

He Jiankui's employment was terminated by the Southern University of Science and Technology, which also ended his research activities based on the results of the probe, the university said in a statement. A local government investigation found he breached China's laws and ethics and will be "severely" dealt with, state-run Xinhua reported on Monday.

The firing is the latest blow for He, who triggered an international backlash when he shocked the world with his claims of genetically-altering human embryos that resulted in births. The suspected crimes will be handed over to China's public security agency, increasing the prospects the scientist may face criminal charges.



He, who retreated from public view following the revelation, is living under guard in university quarters in Shenzhen. He and his spokesman did not respond to requests for comment.

The work by He and his team "seriously violates ethics and scientific research integrity" as

well as state regulations, Xinhua reported. The investigation confirmed the birth of the genetically-altered baby girls and also a second pregnancy, according to the report. He recruited eight volunteer couples for the experiment by "forging" ethical review documents, the news agency said.

The scientist deliberately evaded regulation and supervision, raised his own funds and employed his own team for the gene-editing project on human embryos in "pursuit of personal fame and benefit," according to Xinhua, citing the probe. The researcher violated the law in

implanting the manipulated embryos into humans, according to the report.

In China, it's banned to have manipulated embryos in vitro culture for more than 14 days, and the embryos are not allowed to be implanted into human bodies or animals, according to ethical guidelines on human embryos and cells research published in 2003.

Investigators in Guangdong province will hand over suspected crimes to the public security agency, the news report said without elaborating. The report did not say what punitive measures the government intends to take against He and his team. The twin babies and the pregnant volunteer will also be monitored, according to Xinhua.

He's attempts at engineering the genes in human embryos in a bid to make them HIV-resistant led to his university disavowing his work, fellow researchers rebuking the surreptitiousness with which he worked and the government swooping in to conduct an investigation.

The researcher, who had said he was "proud" of his work in Hong Kong last November, more recently told a Stanford University fellow researcher that he regretted not being more transparent and open about his project.

**Bloomberg**

## Distrust of local milk lingers a decade after crisis

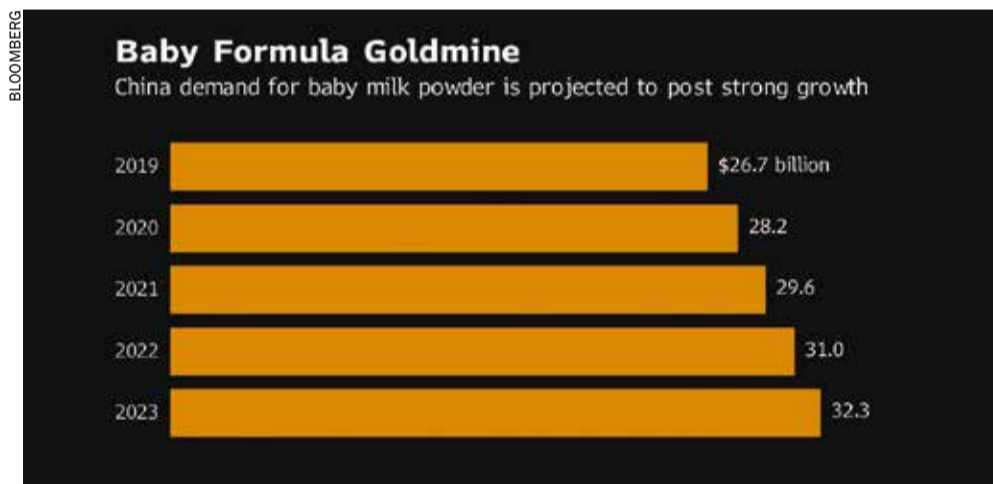
**M**ORE than a decade after tainted infant milk powder in China killed six children and exposed institutional neglect of food safety, Chinese parents still don't trust local companies to feed their babies.

That could mean another goldmine for foreign producers as the battle for infant milk shifts to the hundreds of smaller cities beyond the metropolises of Shanghai and Beijing.

The deadly milk scandal of 2008 was a watershed moment for China's consumers. Some 300,000 children were poisoned after Chinese suppliers added melamine, a chemical used to make plastic, to powdered milk to artificially boost protein levels. yesterday marked the 10th anniversary of the sentencing to death in China of those at the center of the contamination and its concealment.

The scandal fueled a new era of consumer suspicion and China's USD27 billion infant-formula industry was reshaped to the near-exclusion of homegrown companies among the market leaders.

While Chinese government regulations on milk powder production are in line with international



standards, consumers like Chen Jijie, a Beijing-based mother of two, will neither forgive nor forget.

"I won't even consider giving domestic brands a chance, even 10 years later," said Chen, who has a two-year-old child and a newborn baby. "The incident brought my confidence in Chinese baby formula brands to the lowest level."

Nestle SA's share of China's milk-formula market has quadrupled since the scandal to make it the clear leader, while annual revenue at Australia and New Zealand upstart A2 Milk Co. has soared to close to NZD1 billion (\$673 million) from only NZD1.5 million before the crisis.

Foreign milk labels are

still viewed by consumers as safer, higher-quality and a mark of affluence, but domestic suppliers are fighting back with savvy branding and lower prices. The prize is clear: With only a quarter of Chinese moms breast-feeding, China's infant-formula market will expand 21 percent to about \$32 billion in 2023, according to Euromonitor International.

Both Danone and Nestle are focused on parents in so-called lower-tier cities. Danone is bolstering its e-commerce business, since there are fewer retail stores that stock its goods in rural China, while Nestle is assessing which of its products can best capture demand in these areas.

In a statement, Nestle said it carefully chooses its ingredient suppliers. The company also set up a dairy farming institute in northeast China in 2014 that helps teach farmers to produce safe, high-quality milk.

Meanwhile, Chinese dairy companies are finding that some sort of association with foreign cows - real or imagined - can go a long way toward gaining market share. Chinese milk giants Inner Mongolia Yili Industrial Group Co. and China Mengniu Dairy Co., both of which were found to have batches of tainted milk a decade ago, are racing to build up foreign milk sources in a bid to win over local mothers.

Mengniu sells a high-priced, made-in-New-Zealand line called Milk Deluxe, whose tins are emblazoned with snowy, Alps-like mountains.

"Ten years ago, everyone felt depressed and said there was no hope for China's domestic dairy industry," Jeffrey Lu, Mengniu's chief executive officer said in an interview at the World Economic Forum in Davos on Tuesday. Most local brands now have international supply chains that produce baby milk powder on par with the global brands, he said.

While more than 90 percent of Chinese consumers are drinking local milk, Lu admits that its harder - and will take longer - to gain Chinese mothers' trust for infant milk. "We need to make the supply chain more transparent," he said.

"In the short term, seeking overseas milk sources is the most effective way for Chinese milk powder brands to win back consumer confidence," said Luo Yixin, a consumer analyst at Hua Tai Securities.

Among Chinese producers of milk powder, the only company that's managed to eke out any meaningful share since the scandal is Feihe

International Inc. It had 8.6 percent of the market in 2017, Euromonitor said.

Even then, Feihe's success is likely tied to a branding campaign that implied a foreign provenance: Up until 2013, it was listed on the New York Stock Exchange and named American Dairy Inc.

After reverting to its Chinese name and going private, the company's top-selling product line, Firmus, emphasizes that its milk is sourced from cows in the milk belt that spans from Wisconsin in the U.S to Hokkaido in Japan. Its cows are actually located in Heilongjiang in the country's northeast.

"Domestic baby formula has the highest quality in history and compares with the leading brands in the global market in technology, equipment and management," said Feihe in a statement to Bloomberg. "We spare no efforts to improve the technology and enhance linkages with international dairy peers."

Products made and packaged overseas can command a price that's as much double that of domestically produced milk, said UOB Kay Hian consumer analyst Robin Yuen. **Bloomberg**

## DIPLOMATIC ROW

# China demands US drop Huawei extradition request with Canada

**C**HINA yesterday demanded the U.S. drop a request that Canada extradite a top executive of the tech giant Huawei, shifting blame to Washington in a case that has severely damaged Beijing's relations with Ottawa.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said Meng Wanzhou's case was out of the ordinary and Canada's extradition treaty with the U.S. infringed on the "safety and legitimate rights and interests of Chinese citizens."

Hua said China demands that the U.S. withdraw the arrest warrant against Meng and "not make a formal extradition request to the Canadian side."

Hua's remarks come after more than 100 academics and former diplomats signed a letter on China to release two Canadians detained in apparent retaliation for Meng's arrest.

They also follow a report by the Canadian newspaper Globe and Mail that the U.S. plans to formally request Meng's extradition to face charges that she committed fraud by misleading banks about Huawei's business dealings in Iran.

China detained former Canadian diplomat Michael Kovrig and Canadian entrepreneur Michael Spavor on Dec. 10 in an apparent attempt to pressure Canada to release Chinese executive Meng Wanzhou, who was arrested Dec. 1 at the request of U.S. authorities.

Meng is the chief financial officer of the Chinese tech giant Huawei and the daughter of its founder. The U.S. wants her extradited to face charges that she committed fraud by misleading banks about Huawei's business dealings in Iran.

The letter, released earlier yes-

terday [Macau time], notes Kovrig is a former diplomat who was working as an expert on Asia for the International Crisis Group think tank. It notes that Spavor devoted his time to building relationships between North Korea and China, Canada and United States.

It praises Kovrig and Spavor as bridge-builders between China and the world and said their arrests make writers "more cautious" about travelling to China.

## ■ Hua's remarks come after over 100 academics and former diplomats signed a letter calling on China to release two Canadians

"Meetings and exchanges are the foundation of serious research and diplomacy around the world, including for Chinese scholars and diplomats," the letter says. "Kovrig and Spavor's detentions send a message that this kind of constructive work is unwelcome and even risky in China."

The letter said the arrests will lead to "less dialogue and greater distrust, and undermine efforts to manage disagreements and identify common ground. Both China and the rest of the world will be worse off as a result."

More than 20 diplomats from seven countries and more than 100 scholars and academics from 19 countries signed.

Guy Saint-Jacques, a former Canadian ambassador to China, signed the letter and noted it comes as Canada is working to rally international support for the case.

"It will be noticed in Beijing and I hope that it will make clear for them that the arrests of Kovrig and Spavor are not only a China-Canada problem but it's also having an impact on the image of and reputation of China," Saint-Jacques said. "It's an impressive list."

The signatories include former British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind, former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans and Chris Patten, former British governor of Hong Kong. Two former U.S. ambassadors to China, Gary Locke and Winston Lord, also signed.

David Mulroney, another former Canadian ambassador to China, said the letter is significant because it shows the international breadth of support for the two men.

"This isn't simply a Canada-China dispute," Mulroney said. "A lot of serious people, including many who have spent years working in China, are worried about how it is closing itself off, and punishing those who seek to understand and interpret it for others."

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said he encourages friends and allies around the world to point out that all countries should stand up for the rule of law.

Meng is living under house arrest in her Vancouver mansion while her case is under deliberation. Kovrig and Spavor are being held in Chinese jails and have yet to be granted access to lawyers, according to those who have contact with them. **MDT/AP**



Meng



Kovrig



Spavov



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen (left) speaks during a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing

## BELT &amp; ROAD

## Cambodia leader says Beijing to give USD600 million in grant aid

**C**AMBODIAN Prime Minister Hun Sen, making a four-day visit to China, says Beijing has agreed to provide his nation with nearly USD600 million in grant aid as part of a three-year assistance fund.

Hun Sen announced the aid from Cambodia's most important political and economic ally on his Facebook page yesterday before any

announcement by Beijing. He said the commitment was made in a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Hun Sen said the two countries also agreed to increase their bilateral trade to \$10 billion by 2023 and Xi promised to buy 400,000 tons of rice from Cambodia in 2019 and push more Chinese businesses to invest in Cambodia.

The agreements come as some Western countries are threatening to impose economic sanctions on Cambodia for repressing democratic rights.

Cambodia has grown increasingly close to China in recent years as Hun Sen's government has become estranged from the United States, which is critical of his long-running authoritarian rule.

China is Cambodia's most important political and economic ally, providing millions of dollars in aid and investment, writing off debts and granting the country tariff-free status for hundreds of items.

Cambodia in turn has done Beijing's diplomatic bidding in the region, especially regarding China's claims to most of the South China Sea. **MDT/AP**



202 people died in 2002 Bali nightclub bombings

## Australia urges Indonesia to respect Bali bombing victims

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

**A**USTRALIA'S prime minister said yesterday he would be disappointed if radical cleric Abu Bakar Bashir were released from prison early and urged Indonesia to show respect for the victims of the 2002 Bali nightclub bombings that the firebrand preacher inspired.

Indonesia's top security minister, Wiranto, said on Mon-

day that Indonesian President Joko Widodo had asked him to coordinate a review of all aspects of the planned release of the 80-year-old cleric following domestic and international criticism.

Australia has been in top-level discussions with the Indonesia since last week when the decision was announced to release Bashir, the spiritual leader of bombers who attacked night-

clubs on Bali island and that killed 202 people, including 88 Australians.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Australia would protest if Bashir were released early as planned, after serving nine years of a 15-year sentence.

"I would obviously be very disappointed about that — like other Australians would — and will register that disappointment and quite strong feelings about that,"

Morrison told 4CA Radio in the Australian city of Cairns.

"We don't want this character able to go out there and incite the killing of Australians and Indonesians, preaching a doctrine of hate," Morrison added.

Morrison told Indonesia "respect must be shown for the lives of those who are lost."

Widodo on Friday said he had agreed to release Bashir on humanitarian grounds. The annou-

ncement came during campaigning for a presidential election due in April in which opponents of Widodo have tried to discredit him as insufficiently Islamic.

Australian survivors of the Bali attacks and victims' relatives and friends urged against Bashir's release.

Phil Britten was captain of a Perth-based Australian Rules football club and was with 19 teammates in a Bali nightclub when a bomb exploded, killing seven club members.

"Seven of my friends died, they don't get the chance to live out the rest of their lives in peace. Why should he [Bashir]? I think it's just appalling," Britten told The West Australian newspaper.

Australian Peter Hughes suffered burns to 50 percent of his body when a bomb detonated in another Bali nightclub.

"He probably deserves the death penalty more so than the guys that actually did it themselves," Hughes said of Bashir. "I believe he was totally responsible."

Bashir had previously been considered ineligible for parole because of his refusal to renounce radical beliefs. His family had requested his release since 2017 because of his age and deteriorating health.

The firebrand cleric was arrested almost immediately after the 2002 Bali bombings.

But prosecutors were unable to prove a string of terrorism-related allegations, and Bashir was instead sentenced to 18 months in prison for immigration violations.

In 2011, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison for supporting a military-style training camp for Islamic militants. **AP**

AUSTRALIA

## Football player says detained refugee is losing hope

**A** former Australian football player urged the sport's governing bodies yesterday to push for the release of a Bahraini refugee athlete detained in Thailand while it weighs his extradition.

Former national team member Craig Foster visited Hakeem al-Araibi at a Bangkok prison and said the Bahraini was losing hope after nearly two months in detention. Australia granted al-Araibi asylum in 2017, but Bahrain wants him returned to serve a prison sentence for a charge he denies.

Foster criticized FIFA, football's world governing body, and the Asian Football Confederation for not doing more for the jailed player.

"We feel as though football hasn't done enough," Foster said after meeting with al-Araibi. "FIFA has



Former Australian football national team member Craig Foster talks to journalists after meeting Hakeem al-Araibi

failed to uphold their own human rights policy and certainly the AFC and President Sheik Salman

have been completely silent throughout this whole process. It's simply not good enough."

Al-Araibi plays for a semi-professional Australian football's team, Melbourne's Pascoe Vale Football

Club, and has played for the Bahraini national team.

He was detained upon entry at Bangkok's main airport in November on a Bahraini-requested Interpol notice because he had been sentenced in absentia in 2014 to 10 years in prison for vandalizing a police station, which he denies.

A Thai court in December ruled that al-Araibi could be held for 60 days pending the completion of an extradition request by Bahrain. Al-Araibi's lawyer said Monday that Bahrain has not yet officially submitted the extradition request but that Bahraini officials had been in touch with Thai officials via diplomatic channels.

Foster, who is now a television sports analyst, said al-Araibi suspects he is being sought by Bahrain because of critical com-

ments he made about royal family member Sheikh Salman Bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa, the president of the Asian Football Confederation who was elected in 2013 despite criticism from human rights groups.

Foster said al-Araibi had played soccer inside the Thai prison where he is being detained.

"He played for the champions of the prison," Foster said. "And I said: did you win? He said, 'yeah we won but I got injured so I can't play again.' But he said 'why am I playing behind bars?'"

"And that's the message to FIFA," Foster said. "This is a kid who loves football, this is one of our fellow players and here he is behind bars. Loves the game so much that he's prepared to play with other prisoners just to play a game." **AP**

AFGHANISTAN

# Death toll rises to 45 in Taliban attack

Amir Shah & Rahim Faiez, Kabul

**A**FGHANISTAN was reeling yesterday from a brazen Taliban assault on a military base in the country's east the previous day that killed at least 45 people and wounded as many as 70, most of them military personnel, according to provincial officials.

There were fears, however, that the death toll from the daytime assault on the base, which also serves as a training center for a pro-government militia and is run by the country's intelligence service, was even higher.

The attack began when a suicide bomber drove a Humvee into the base in eastern Maidan Wardak province and detonated his load as he rammed the vehicle into the main building there, according to Khawanin Sultani, a council member.

The building collapsed from the explosion, which likely contributed to the high casualty numbers.

The Taliban, who promptly claimed responsibility in a statement to the media just hours



Afghan security forces inspect the site of a Taliban attack in Maidan Shar, capital of Maidan Wardak province, east of Kabul

after the attack, later said in a separate statement that they had met again yesterday [Macau time] with U.S. representatives to discuss "ending the invasion of Afghanistan" in talks that would continue today. They are meeting in Qatar, where the Taliban have a political office.

The simultaneousness of the events — the deadly attack, one of the worst Taliban assaults on Afghan forces in recent years —

and the Qatar meeting that was meant to pave way for talks aimed at resolving Afghanistan's 17-year war, underscored the audacity of the insurgents in the face of stepped-up U.S. peace efforts.

The Taliban, who now hold sway in almost half of Afghanistan, carry out attacks on a daily basis, mainly targeting the country's beleaguered security forces.

The base that was hit is located on the outskirts of Maidan Shar, the provincial capital, about 40 kilometers from Kabul. Sultani said that after the Taliban bombing, four other attackers engaged in a shootout with Afghan troops and that all the attackers were killed.

"The main building inside the base collapsed and most of the bodies were under the destroyed building," he said.

Sultani said there were about 150 military personnel and others at the base at the time. The pro-government militia that was hit had been responsible for and highly effective in securing the province, especially two important highways linking Kabul with the provinces of Kandahar, Maidan Wardak and Bamyan.

"They had participated in so many operations alongside other security forces and had fought against insurgents," Sultani added, speaking about the militia.

A provincial security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media, told the AP that he personally counted as many as 75 dead bodies at the base. There was no official confirmation of a higher toll.

Dozens of ambulances took the wounded to the main provincial hospital as well as to Kabul for further treatment, the official said, adding that there were fears the death toll would keep rising. The blast was so strong that windows of civilian homes seen in the distance from the base were also shattered, he said. **AP**

AD

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IFFAM FILMS LEAD OSCAR NOMINATIONS

## 'Roma,' 'The Favourite' get 10 nods each

Jake Coyle, New York

**ALFONSO** Cuarón's "Roma" and Yorgos Lanthimos' "The Favourite" led all films with 10 nominations each to the 91st Academy Awards, while Netflix and Marvel each scored their first best picture nomination.

The nominees for best picture are: "A Star Is Born," "Roma," "Green Book," "The Favourite," "Black Panther," "BlacKkKlansman," "Bohemian Rhapsody" and "Vice."

With "Roma," Netflix has scored its first best picture nomination, something the streaming giant has dearly sought. Marvel, too, joined the club with "Black Panther," the first superhero movie ever nominated for best picture.

Spike Lee was nominated for his first directing Oscar 30 years after a writing nod for 1989's "Do the Right Thing." Notably left out of the category was Bradley Cooper, whose "A Star Is Born" landed eight nominations, including best actress for

Lady Gaga, but was overlooked for Cooper's direction.

On behalf of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, presenters Kumail Nanjiani and Tracee Ellis Ross unveiled nominations from Los Angeles' Samuel Goldwyn Theatre.

The nominees for best actor are Cooper, Christian Bale ("Vice"), Willem Dafoe ("At Eternity's Gate"), Rami Malek ("Bohemian Rhapsody") and Viggo Mortensen ("Green Book").

Up for best actress are Yalitza Aparicio ("Roma"), Glenn Clo-

se ("The Wife"), Olivia Colman ("The Favourite"), Lady Gaga and Melissa McCarthy ("Can You Ever Forgive Me?").

The nominees for best supporting actress are Amy Adams ("Vice"), Marina De Távira ("Roma"), Regina King ("If Beale Street Could Talk"), Emma Stone ("The Favourite") and Rachel Weisz ("The Favourite"). Távira was something a surprise, while Claire Foy of "First Man" was left out.

Up for best supporting actor are: Mahershala Ali ("Green Book"), Adam Driver ("BlacKkKlansman"), Sam Elliott ("A Star Is Born"), Richard E. Grant ("Can You Ever Forgive Me?") and Sam Rockwell ("Vice").

Notably snubbed was Timothy Chalamet ("Beautiful Boy").

The lead-up to yesterday's nominations was rocky for both the film academy and some of the contending movies. Shortly after being announced as host, Kevin Hart was forced to withdraw over years-old homophobic tweets that the comedian eventually apologized for. That has left the Oscars, one month before the Feb. 24 ceremony, without an emcee, and likely to stay that way.

Some film contenders, like Peter Farrelly's "Green Book" and the Freddie Mercury biopic "Bohemian Rhapsody," have suffered waves upon waves of backlash, even as their awards tallies have mounted. On Sa-

turday, "Green Book" won the top award from the Producers Guild, an honor that has been a reliable Oscar barometer. In the 10 years since the Oscars expanded its best-picture ballot, the PGA winner has gone on to win best picture eight times.

The season's steadiest contender — Cooper's "A Star Is Born" — looked potentially unbeatable until it got beat. Despite an enviable string of awards and more than USD400 million in worldwide box office, Cooper's lauded remake was almost totally ignored at the Golden Globes. Still, "A Star Is Born" was the sole film to land top nominations from virtually every guild group.

The academy is reportedly planning to go host-less following Hart's exit, something it has tried only once before in an infamous 1989 telecast that featured a lengthy musical number with Rob Lowe and Snow White.

The Oscars last year hit a new ratings low, declining 20 percent and averaging 26.5 million viewers. Though ratings for award shows have generally been dropping, the downturn prompted the academy to revamp this year's telecast. Though initial plans for a new popular film category were scuttled, the academy is planning to present some awards off-air and keep the broadcast to three hours. **AP**

PANAMA

## Inmates at youth prison anticipate visit from pope

**MORE** than 100,000 young people are expected to show up in Panama City when Pope Francis visits from Jan. 23-27 for World Youth Day. At a detention center about 25 miles away there are 144 more who can't make the trip, locked up for serious crimes including murder — so the pontiff is going to them.

In an encounter expected to last a little over an hour on Friday, Francis will pray and bring a message of peace and reconciliation to the young inmates, and hear the confessions of several, including one convicted of committing a double homicide at just 16 years old.

"The pope is going to listen to them, encourage them," Panama Ar-



Las Garzas de Pacora detention center in Panama

chbishop Jose Domingo Ulloa said. "They have been preparing with high hopes to be able to receive his message."

Francis nearly always makes side visits to prisons during his foreign

trips, in keeping with his belief that even those on the lowest rungs of society have dignity and need ministry.

In such visits he typically preaches hope and reminds inmates that he has

also sinned, and criticizes judicial failings such as prison overcrowding and inadequate rehabilitation efforts. This will be the first time he hears confessions in a prison, however.

The Las Garzas de Pacora detention center is Panama's main youth lockup, opened a year after five minors died in a fire at another prison in Panama City in 2011. Nine people including administrators and police were convicted of homicide or negligence in what was the worst tragedy for the country's youth prison system.

Today, administrators argue that Las Garzas de Pacora is a model facility compared with other youth prisons in the region that suffer from overcrowding.

Designed to house up to 200, it's well within capacity. Inmates have painted the cellblocks in pastel colors, its green grass is well tended, and it has a school, a laundry, a dining hall and workshops where the youths can learn trades such as masonry, carpentry and screen printing.

It's a rough population — about 65 percent of the inmates were sent there for robbery and the rest for homicide, authorities say. But members of rival gangs are said to coexist without conflict.

Internees have painted symbols of peace and the logo of the youth festival on walls and chairs in preparation for Francis' visit.

On a recent day a group

rehearsed the World Youth Day hymn at the entrance to the school. One boy played the piano, others strummed guitars and still others formed the chorus, coached by volunteers ahead of a planned performance for the pontiff.

Emma Alba de Tejada, national director of interdisciplinary studies in youth prisons, acknowledged that some of the young inmates aren't interested in participating in the pope's visit. But others are excited, she said.

"Just thinking that the pope is coming to visit has for them been a total transformation," she said. "They are dressing up the facility. They have painted it, they have gotten involved, they are singing." **AP**

USA

# Trump's proposal to break budget deadlock falls flat

Jill Colvin & Lisa Mascaro, Washington

**S**ENATE Republicans have released a measure designed around President Donald Trump's proposal for breaking a budget impasse, its centerpiece his demand for USD5.7 billion to build a southern border wall all but guaranteeing Democratic opposition and no foreseeable end to a partial government shutdown.

As the shutdown dragged through its fifth week, another missed paycheck loomed for hundreds of thousands of workers.

Voting in Congress was not expected to unfold until later in the week. Even then it seemed doubtful that the 1,300-page measure, dubbed the "End The Shutdown And Secure The Border Act," had any chance of passing swiftly.

Senate Republicans hold a 53-47 majority but would need Democrats to reach the usual 60-vote threshold for bills to advance. Not a single Democrat



AP PHOTO

publicly expressed support for Trump's proposal since he announced it over the weekend.

Details of the measure released yesterday [Macau time] highlight the trade-off of border wall funding for temporary protection from deportation for some immigrants. The Republican package would reopen the shut-

tered parts of the government and boost some spending. To try to draw more bipartisan support, it adds \$12.7 billion in supplemental funding for regions hit by hurricanes, wildfires and other natural disasters.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer's office reiterated earlier that Democrats are

unwilling to negotiate any border security funding until Trump reopens the government.

"Nothing has changed with the latest Republican offer," Schumer spokesman Justin Goodman said. "President Trump and Senate Republicans are still saying: 'Support my plan or the government stays shut.' That isn't a compromise or a negotiation — it's simply more hostage taking."

While the House and the Senate are scheduled to be back in session today, no votes have been scheduled on Trump's plan. And senators, who will be given 24-hour notice ahead of voting, have yet to be recalled to Washington.

McConnell spokesman David Popp said yesterday the GOP leader "will move" to vote on consideration of the president's proposal "this week."

Trump, who on Sunday lashed out at House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, accusing her of acting "irrationally," continued to single her out on Twitter.

"If Nancy Pelosi thinks that Walls are 'immoral,' why isn't she requesting that we take down all of the existing Walls between the U.S. and Mexico," he wrote. "Let millions of unchecked 'strangers' just flow into the U.S."

House Democrats this week are pushing ahead with voting on their own legislation to reopen the government and add \$1 billion for border security — including 75 more immigration judges and infrastructure improvements — but no funding for the wall.

Trump later tweeted: "Democrats are kidding themselves (they don't really believe it!) if they say you can stop Crime, Drugs, Human Trafficking and Caravans without a Wall or Steel Barrier. Stop playing games and give America the Security it deserves. A Humanitarian Crisis!"

Meanwhile, the impact of the shutdown, the longest ever, continued to ripple across the nation as it stretched into its 32nd day Tuesday. The previous longest shutdown was 21 days in 1995-96, when Bill Clinton was president.

The Transportation Security Administration said the percentage of its airport screeners missing work hit 10 percent on Sunday, up from 3.1 percent on the comparable Sunday a year ago. AP

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## what's ON



**SURFACE REVEALED - DRONE PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHAN HIN IO**

TIME: 12pm-8pm (closed on Tuesdays)

UNTIL: February 8, 2019

VENUE: Taipa Village Art Space

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2857 6118

**MOTIONS OF BRUSH AND INK - CALLIGRAPHY EXHIBITION OF HO LAI SIM AND HER STUDENTS**

TIME: 9am-10pm

UNTIL: January 31, 2019

VENUE: Team Building, IFT Main Campus, Mong-Ha Hill

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2856 1252

**VESTIGES OF LINES, GUILHERME UNG VAI MENG** ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE 19TH ANNIVERSARY OF MACAU HANDOVER TO CHINA

TIME: 12pm-8pm (Tuesday to Sunday)

3pm-8pm (Monday)

UNTIL: February 13, 2019

VENUE: Albergue SCM

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2550

**EXHIBITION OF NEW WORKS IN MAM COLLECTION - CHE HO**

TIME: 10am-7pm (last admission 6:30pm; closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: April 14, 2019

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

**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

## Offbeat

## HALF TON OF FUN: CINCINNATI ZOO'S FIONA TURNING 2

AP PHOTO



Now a half ton of fun, the Cincinnati Zoo's famed prematurely born hippo will soon turn 2 years old.

The zoo says a variety of activities will celebrate Fiona's latest milestone. The hippo was born Jan. 24, 2017, at a dangerously low 29 pounds. Round-the-clock critical care and outside help including from the Smithsonian National Zoo and the Cincinnati Children's hospital enabled Fiona to not only survive, but to thrive as a social media sensation. The zoo last month reported she had reached 1,000 pounds (454 kilograms).

Zoo spokeswoman Michelle Curley says the weather outlook isn't good for Fiona to be outside on her birthday, but a behind-the-scenes party is planned that will be shared on social media along with a two-year highlights video.

## TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Mistura Fina
15:45	Zig Zag
16:05	Os Compadres
16:45	Quem Quer Ser Milionário
17:40	João Semana
18:30	TDM Desporto (Repetição)
19:35	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	TDM Entrevista
21:50	O Contrato Sr.1
22:35	Viajante da Música
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Filhos da Nação Sr.2
00:25	Telejornal (Repetição)
01:10	RTPi Directo

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

24 JAN - 30 JAN



## GLASS

ROOM 1

2:30, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30 pm

Director: M. Night Shyamalan

Starring: Bruce Willis, James McAvoy, Samuel L. Jackson

Language: English

Duration: 112min

## SECOND ACT

ROOM 2

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

Director: Peter Segal

Starring: Jennifer Lopez, Vanessa Hudgens

Language: English

Duration: 89min



## MORE THAN BLUE

ROOM 2

4:30 pm

Director: Gavin Lin

Starring: Jasper Liu, Ivy Chen

Language: Putonghua (Chinese &amp; English)

Duration: 105min

## TAKE POINT

ROOM 3

4:30, 4:45, 9:30 pm

Director: KIM Byung-woo

Starring: Ha Jung-woo, LEE Sun-kyun

Language: Korean (Chinese &amp; English)

Duration: 95min

## MORE THAN BLUE

ROOM 2

4:30 pm

Director: Gavin Lin

Starring: Jasper Liu, Ivy Chen

Language: Putonghua (Chinese &amp; English)

Duration: 105min

## this day in history



## 1973: NIXON ANNOUNCES VIETNAM PEACE DEAL

The US president, Richard Nixon, has appeared on national television to announce "peace with honour" in Vietnam.

Statements issued simultaneously in Washington and Hanoi confirmed the peace deal was signed in Paris at 1230 local time, bringing to an end America's longest war.

The ceasefire will begin at midnight Hanoi time on Saturday, 27 January, monitored by an international force made up of troops from Canada, Poland, Hungary and Indonesia.

President Nixon's speech from the Oval office at the White House was broadcast on national radio and television.

He said: "Throughout the years of negotiations, we have insisted on peace with honour, I set forth the goals that we considered essential for peace with honour.

"In the settlement that has now been agreed to, all the conditions that I laid down then have been met."

The conditions include the release of prisoners of war within 60 days and all American forces to be withdrawn within the same time period.

An international conference will be held within 30 days, probably in Vienna, to guarantee the peace.

American forces have been involved in the conflict in Vietnam for more than a decade. In 1967, there were 500,000 American troops deployed in Vietnam.

For the people of South Vietnam, the president had this message: "By your courage, by your sacrifice, you have won the precious right to determine your own future and you have developed the strength to defend that right.

"We look forward to working with you in future, friends in peace as we have been allies in war."

To the leaders of North Vietnam, the president said: "As we have ended the war through negotiations, let us now build a peace of reconciliation.

"For our part, we are prepared to make a major effort to help achieve that goal, but just as reciprocity was needed to end the war, so, too, will it be needed to build and strengthen the peace."

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The last American troops left Vietnam on 29 March 1973.

The following year there were frequent violations of the peace treaty.

In 1975, fullscale warfare resumed between North and South Vietnam - without American intervention. In 1976 the first elections were held to a National Assembly, finally reuniting North and South.

As for Nixon, he had been re-elected with a landslide majority and sworn in for a second time three days before announcing the 1973 peace deal.

But his honeymoon period did not last. Before Nixon's re-election, it was known there had been a break-in at the Democratic offices in the Watergate building. By the end of January, it was being linked to his re-election campaign and an inquiry was ordered.

The scandal grew and on 9 August 1974, facing impeachment, he resigned.



YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You meet someone new — and possibly new to your city. It's a good time to play tour guide...

Taurus April 20-May 20 Your subconscious mind is acting out today — which could mean you're seeing fairies or gremlins...

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 You and a friend or colleague are suddenly in perfect sync — so now is the time to work together on something amazing!

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 A colleague asks for a favor — but they are sure to more than repay you for it in the near future!

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Change is coming today — and you may be the only one who welcomes it. See if you can help your people adjust...

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You may not want to do what needs to be done today — so force yourself. You're the master of self-discipline...

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Your brain is fully powered up today — so if there are any lingering questions about that person or problem...

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Risks are too good to be true today — you can't quite trust your judgment. Avoid signing on with anything that feels anything less than perfectly safe...

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Your desperate need for travel and exploration busts out in a new, extremely positive way today. It could lead to a new career, a big move or just a happy-go-lucky road trip.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Your ideals are stretched to their limits today by strange circumstances. You should be able to get around the weirdness by clinging to the core of your beliefs...

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You meet someone new today — or possibly succeed in recruiting someone to your cause or team. In either case, it's a good day, so make the most of it...

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 A work-related problem doesn't go away today, try as you might to get rid of it. Things should start to settle down tomorrow, but for now, you've got to deal with it as directly as you can.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

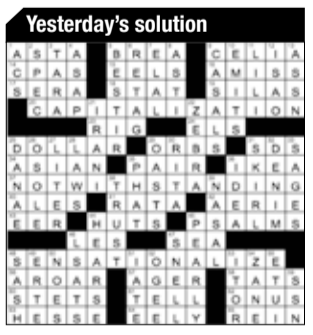
Sudoku puzzles categorized by difficulty: Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard. Each category contains a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1-Sounds of disgust; 5- Sudden assault; 9- "Inferno" writer; 14-Incandescence; 15- Comrade in arms; 16- Tip off; 17- \_\_\_ majesty; 18- Ellington, e.g.; 19- Reason for a raise; 20- Temporary; 22- Undress; 24- Brownd sliced bread; 26- Can be used to catch fish or surf; 27- Imaginary; 30- Small guitars; 35- Noise; 36- Goddess of discord; 37- Like some chocolate; 38- Drift, make a mistake; 39- Pioneer; 42- \_\_\_ kwon do; 43- Iranian coin; 45- Teen hangout; 46- Spring up; 48- Marketable; 50- Young roarer; 51- Rap's Dr. \_\_\_; 52- Muscle contraction; 54- Gaunt; 58- Athletic shoe; 62- "Oklahoma!" aunt; 63- \_\_\_ Three Lives; 65- Khartoum's river; 66- Tierney of "ER"; 67- Shivering fit; 68- Library ID; 69- \_\_\_ my case; 70- "Shane" star; 71- I'd hate to break up \_\_\_; DOWN: 1- Wrinkly fruit; 2- Secluded spot; 3- Emcee; 4- Add sugar; 5- Tire type; 6- Grads; 7- Kind; 8- Colored; 9- Maiden; 10- Warned; 11- Adopted son of Claudius; 12- Chicago paper, for short; 13- Suffix with cigar; 21- Highways, e.g.; 23- Busy; 25- Shelled reptiles; 27- Consumers; 28- Water wheel; 29- Rustic; 31- Slay; 32- Caesar's tongue; 33- Clear the slate; 34- Shooting sport; 36- List finish; 40- Cinder; 41- Elevate; 44- Account books; 47- Republic in SE Europe; 49- Turkey's highest peak; 50- Acred; 53- Prefix meaning "false"; 54- Prefix with sphere; 55- Banned orchard spray; 56- Adhesive; 57- Old phone buttons?; 59- Join lips; 60- Hamburg's river; 61- Hire; 64- NYC airport;



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- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
Tourism 28 333 000
Airport 59 888 88



Real estate advertisement for JML Property. It features 'FOR SALE' signs and lists several properties with details like location, size, and price. The JML Property logo is prominently displayed on the right side.

## TENNIS

# 'Barbecued chicken': Tiafoe's Australia run ended by Nadal



Nadal

Howard Fendrich, Melbourne

**R**AFRAEL Nadal is back to feeling healthy. Probably not a coincidence that he's back in the Australian Open semifinals.

Playing his familiar brand of court-covering, ball-bashing, opponent-frustrating tennis, Nadal claimed 20 of his first 23 service points and saved the only two break chances he faced, ending American Frances Tiafoe's best Grand Slam run with a dominating 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 victory yesterday night.

"I feel lucky to be where I am after all the things I went through," said Nadal, who quit during his quarterfinal at Melbourne Park a year ago because of a right leg problem, again during his semifinal at the U.S. Open in September because of a painful right knee, and then had offseason surgery on his right ankle.

"Not easy situations," he said, summing it up.

Nadal, 32, reached his 30th major semifinal and prevented Tiafoe from getting to his first, two days after he turned 21.

"I knew he was going to bring crazy intensity. I knew the ball was going to be jumping.

I knew if he got hold of a forehand, it was going to be barbecued chicken," Tiafoe said. "But point in, point out, I've never seen someone so locked in."

The two hadn't played each other before, though they did practice together at Roland Garros back in 2014, when Tiafoe was a teen in the junior competition.

Entering this year's Australian Open, the 39th-ranked Tiafoe had never been past the third round at a major. But he knocked off two-time Slam runner-up Kevin Anderson and 20th-seeded Grigor Dimitrov on the way to the quarterfinals, drawing plenty of attention for his play — and his bare-chested, biceps-slapping celebrations inspired by LeBron James.

As usual, Tiafoe was animated and talkative. He lamented missed shots with a self-admonishing "Oh, Frances!" He marked good ones with a shout of "Let's go!"

But it all came to a screeching halt against Nadal, a 17-time major champion.

Tiafoe, who is from Maryland, was broken the initial time he served in each set, which was

all Nadal needed, given how well he handled his own service games. He's been reluctant to go into detail about a recent tweak he made to his serve, saying it's "nothing drastic, nothing dramatic."

He spoke after yesterday's win about going for winners on his first forehand following a serve, something he called "very important [...] at this stage of my career."

Whatever he's doing is working. And how. Nadal has won every set he's played in the tournament, the first time he's done that en route to the semifinals in Australia since 2009, the only time he won the championship.

"I am playing well," he said. "I did a lot of things well during the whole week and a half."

Now Nadal goes up against another opponent much younger than he is, 20-year-old Stefanos Tsitsipas, who upset Roger Federer in the fourth round.

The 14th-seeded Tsitsipas became the first player from Greece to earn a semifinal berth at a major, beating No. 22 Roberto Bautista Agut 7-5, 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (2) earlier yesterday.

"It's going to be interesting," Tsitsipas said about his matchup against Nadal. "I feel all right with my game. I feel like I can do something good against him."

Asked about all of these kids trying to elbow their way to the top of tennis, Nadal smiled and said: "They can wait a little bit." AP

## China's Li Na sees some similarities with Osaka

**L**I Na saw much of herself in a young player on the women's tour early last year.

The two-time Grand Slam champion didn't hesitate to identify Japan's Naomi Osaka as the player with a bright future.

So Li, set to be inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in July along with fellow former Australian Open champions Mary Pierce and Yevgeny Kafelnikov, was not surprised when Osaka won the 2018 U.S. Open.

The 21-year-old Osaka has reached the quarterfinals at the Australian Open this week.

"When I first saw Naomi Osaka play, I thought she was really calm, very mature on court," Li said in comments translated during a news conference at the Australian Open. "She was so focused on her game itself, no pressure, point by point. That quality and the player's



Li Na in Wimbledon in 2014

focus really impressed."

Li said it was a loss to Kim Clijsters in her first Grand Slam final on Rod Laver Arena that became the catalyst for her major title breakthrough on the same court three years later.

"The most memorable here in Australian Open was the 2011 women's final. Although I lost, that gave me confidence and the inside of myself to say I could do it," she said. "I was one step away to be champion of

the Grand Slam."

Li would lose another Australian singles final two years later to Victoria Azarenka, again after winning the opening set, before she eventually lifted the trophy by sweeping aside Dominika Ci-

bulkova in straight sets in the 2014 final.

As a mother — she had a daughter in 2015 and a son the following year — Li marvels at how Serena Williams and Azarenka juggle their tennis commitments while travelling the world with young children.

**“**When I first saw Naomi Osaka play, I thought she was really calm, very mature on court.**”**

LI NA

"Yeah, I can't imagine, like Serena or Azarenka, same time play, then care about the family,"

she said. "I couldn't do that."

Li was a trailblazer in women's tennis, becoming the first player from China to win a WTA title — in 2004 — and the first from Asia to win a Grand Slam singles title when she won the 2011 French Open. She also won the Australian Open in 2014 after losing two previous finals here.

Todd Martin, International Tennis Hall of Fame chief executive, credits Li's international emergence as a powerful influence on the sport.

"I think the Hall of Fame is not just a body that recognizes the greats of the game, it's the steward of the history of our sport," Martin said. "If you look forward 50 years, 100 years, 200 years, one can only imagine that the sport will continue to thrive, and it will be a massive sport in China and throughout Asia." AP

FOOTBALL

# Ronaldo pleads guilty to tax fraud at Madrid court

Tales Azzoni, Madrid

**C**RISTIANO Ronaldo smiled broadly after leaving court yesterday despite the unwanted trip back to Madrid to plead guilty to tax fraud.

The Juventus forward, who was facing charges stemming from his days at Real Madrid, spent about 45 minutes in court to sign an agreement which cost him nearly 19 million euros (USD21.6 million) in fines. He was also given a two-year suspended sentence.

Ronaldo will not have to serve time in prison because judges in Spain can suspend sentences for two years or less for first-time offenders.

Ronaldo arrived in a black van and was wearing sunglasses, a black sports coat, black pants and white tennis shoes. He stopped to sign an autograph before walking up some stairs leading to the court house. He was accompanied by his lawyers and his partner, Georgina Rodriguez. Police officers escorted him.



Cristiano Ronaldo leaves the court in Madrid with his girlfriend Georgina Rodriguez yesterday

A few hundred journalists waited outside but the Portuguese player did not stop to talk.

The court had dismissed Ronaldo's request to enter the building directly from the parking lot, which would have allowed him to avoid the media. The request was made for security reasons, but the court said it didn't think the measure was

needed despite the player's notoriety.

Court officials said Ronaldo didn't make any comments while in the courtroom to sign the agreement.

Smiling on his way out of the court house, he again stopped to sign autographs for a few fans who were wedged among the journalists.

Ronaldo made the deal to plead guilty with Spain's state prosecutor and tax authorities last year.

In 2017, a state prosecutor accused Ronaldo of four counts of tax fraud from 2011-14 worth 14.7 million euros (\$16.7 million). Ronaldo was accused of having used shell companies outside Spain to hide income

made from image rights.

The accusations didn't involve his salary from Real Madrid, his club from 2009 until joining Italian champion Juventus last year.

Separately, Ronaldo is facing a rape allegation in the United States.

Kathryn Mayorga filed a civil lawsuit in Nevada in September claiming Ronaldo raped her in his Las Vegas hotel room in 2009. Police reopened an investigation into the allegation at her request. Ronaldo has denied any wrongdoing.

Former Real Madrid player Xabi Alonso also was in court in Madrid yesterday. He is accused of defrauding tax authorities of about 2 million euros (\$2.3 million) from 2010-12.

The retired Spain midfielder denied any wrongdoing after spending nearly three hours in the court house.

"I've done everything correctly, never tried to hide anything," he said. "I'm confident justice will be done."

Alonso had initially been found innocent but the case against him was reopened.

He could be sentenced to five years in prison and ordered to pay a fine of 4 million euros (\$4.5 million), in addition to the amount allegedly defrauded. The charges are related to Alonso's income from image rights. He played for Madrid from 2009-14. **AP**

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opinion

Macau Matters

Richard Whitfield



G IS FOR GLULAM

Traditionally most of the human built environment was made of stone or wood, but nowadays reinforced concrete is one of the world's most commonly used construction materials. This trend needs to be reversed if we are to reduce climate change, and I would like to see much more wood used as structural, insulative and decorative elements in future Macau buildings.

The manufacture of cement (a key ingredient in concrete) involves high temperature kilns and produces about 6% of global carbon emissions as a waste product. Similarly, steel is made by smelting iron in a furnace which generates about 8% of global carbon emissions. Building construction is then also very energy intensive so that it also generates a lot of carbon emissions. Finally, in operation, buildings account for around 40% of global electricity consumption – to heat and cool them and to run the equipment within them – and so they produce even more carbon emissions. Thus a large part of the world's climate change problem can be attributed to problems with how we make and use the human built environment.

In contrast to concrete and steel, wood is a sustainable and renewable natural resource that is effectively carbon neutral. Plants absorb carbon from the environment to grow and this carbon is trapped within wood that is used in buildings. After use, wood decomposes and naturally releases its carbon and other nutritious constituents back to the environment for reuse.

Modern timber construction does not use traditional wooden posts, beams and planks. Instead, wooden sticks, fibres or sheets are glued together into cross-laminated beams and panels. Most people are familiar with plywood and oriented-strand panels, but we now also have glue-laminated beams and panels that are becoming increasingly popular, especially in Europe. Glue-laminated wooden construction materials can be made using just a small fraction of the energy needed for the equivalent steel reinforced concrete materials. They are also much lighter for the same strength and easier to join together. These characteristics explain why bamboo scaffolding is so popular in Asia, for example.

The substantially lighter weight of wooden building elements mean that they are much easier to prefabricate in a factory and then transport and assemble on-site. Building pre-fabrication has many advantages, especially in reducing the amount of labor and the time needed for onsite construction.

Wood is also relatively fire resistant and burns much, much more slowly and predictably than the aluminum clad plastic facades that are often used now – remember the recent Grenfell Tower disaster in London. If you have ever seen the aftermath of a forest fire you will know that while the light branches and leaves of trees have burnt away the main tree trunks are often still standing. You can readily make wooden fire doors that are lighter and as fire resistant as steel ones.

Building heating and cooling is needed to maintain comfortable indoor conditions in the face of adverse outdoor weather so that a major issue with buildings is how well the materials used resist heat transmission. Aluminum is a very good heat conductor, which is why it feels hot or cold depending on the temperature of its contents. Compared to aluminum, steel has about 20% the thermal conductivity, wooden panels and concrete have about 0.1% the conductivity, and wood fiber insulation has about 0.005% the conductivity. Thus properly made wooden buildings need much less heating and cooling than similar steel or concrete buildings.

Modern wood materials are now being successfully used to make quite large high-rise buildings, eg the 85m tall Mjostarnet Tower being built in Norway, or the 18 story Brock Commons Student Residence in British Columbia that was completed in 2016.

Governments in Finland, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Tasmania have proclaimed Wood Encouragement Policies and I would really like to see something similar in Macau. It is yet another way we could promote our environmental credentials, lead the technological development of the region and nurture a regionally competitive local engineering consulting industry.

THE BRAZIL'S NATIONALIST LEADER TO ADDRESS DAVOS GLOBALIST CROWD

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro will headline the first full day of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, with a speech to political and business leaders.

The nationalist leader is attending an event that has long represented business's interest in increasing ties across borders. But globalism is in retreat as populist leaders around the world put a focus back on nation states, even if that means limiting trade and migration.

After Bolsonaro's speech today [Macau time], German Chancellor Angela and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will address the gathering tomorrow.

But several key leaders are not attending to handle big issues at home: U.S. President Donald Trump amid the government shutdown, British Prime Minister Theresa May to grapple with Brexit talks, and France's Emmanuel Macron to face popular protests.

Armed with affection, octogenarian is an 'octopus whisperer'



84-year-old Wilson Menashi interacts with an octopus at the New England Aquarium in Boston

Rodrique Ngowi, Boston

Wilson Menashi palmed a squid in his left hand and extended his arm into an aquarium tank, watching as a giant Pacific octopus stretched out arms to greet him like a friend.

Freya latched some of her 2,240 suction cups onto Menashi's arm, using their powers of taste and smell to gather information around the 84-year-old man known as the octopus whisperer – and the seafood treats he was bearing.

"She's just contacting me and she's saying, 'You come to me,'" Menashi said of Freya, a 3-year-old predator weighing 35 to 40 pounds. Her arms span 14 feet and pack enough strength to kill sharks and other enemies.

But this afternoon's gentle interaction left no doubt that Menashi has a special way with the cephalopod, whose body includes a large, sac-like head and eight powerful arms.

More than 25 years ago, Menashi retired after a career as a chemical engineer and began volunteering at the New England Aquarium in Boston. He's spent 7,800 hours – the equivalent of about four years working full time – hanging out with octopuses, the aquarium said.

"I've been able to interact with them from the beginning. I do not know why. I cannot explain it, but I can connect with them," Menashi said, standing in front of the Olympic Coast Sanctuary exhibit that is home to

Freya and Professor Ludwig Von Drake, a younger male giant Pacific octopus living in a separate tank.

Menashi's eyes twinkled with mischief as he acknowledged that encounters with octopus have left a mark on him.

"I will come back home sometimes with hickeys all over my arm and my neck," he said.

Menashi's spent 7,800 hours – the equivalent of about four years working full time – hanging out with octopuses

So how did he explain them to his wife?

"Not too difficult when you have about 10 or 15 marks next to each other," he said. "It did not take too much. She also knew where I was, anyway."

Menashi's volunteer work has included designing puzzle boxes for octopus as well as rubbing their backs and wrestling their arms, all intended to ensure that the highly intelligent animals receive the mental stimulation to thrive and stay healthy.

Two decades of working

with the largest members of the octopus species has not dulled his sense of wonder at the animal's adaptability and mysteries.

Experiments have shown these animals to be color blind, but they are supreme masters of camouflage. A complex system of pigment cells, nerves and muscles allows them to change skin color in the blink of an eye to match their surroundings.

"What I find totally surprising is how they could tell different people and react differently," Menashi said. "I've also made them a few toys, made up some boxes and ... I put different latches so they could get in and figure out how to get the food that I put in the boxes. However, I've had some that said, 'It's too much time to figure out how you do the latch.' So they just crushed the box."

That eye for detail, patience and willingness to experiment makes Menashi a perfect octopus whisperer, said Bill Murphy, a senior aquarist.

"Every octopus is different. So then you can't use the same rules for every octopus," Murphy said. "You need to change it up. And Wilson does that."

Menashi said spending time with octopuses and other animals gives his life a whole new purpose in retirement.

"Just being here has been, to me, a lifesaver," he said. "Gave me something to do. Gave me different interests and showed me the world is a wonderful place to be." AP

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

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

**INDIA** Police in northeastern India say they have arrested 61 Rohingya Muslims this week amid reports that more than 1,300 have recently crossed the border into Bangladesh.

**RUSSIA** Authorities said yesterday that a passenger plane bound for Moscow has been forced to land shortly after take-off in a suspected hijacking.

**ROMANIA's** president says a government decree that could invalidate hundreds of corruption cases involving senior officials is "crassly unconstitutional."



**FRANCE's** national weather agency Meteo France says a large part of the country is on alert for dangerous levels of snow and ice and urged people to limit their movement.

**PORTUGAL** Police say they have discovered 430 kilograms of cocaine concealed inside a banana shipment from Latin America. The highly pure cocaine that was on its way to a gang in Spain had a street value of around 15 million euros (MOP137 million).



**BRAZIL** The son of new President Jair Bolsonaro is fending off suspicions of financial irregularities that are starting to cast a shadow over the administration just four weeks in power.

**COLOMBIA** The head negotiator for Colombia's National Liberation Army is denying advance knowledge of an attack on a police academy last week and demanding that Colombia's government allow negotiators to return safely from Cuba.