



**'SECRET MEETINGS' IN PARLIAMENT**  
Lawmaker Sulu Sou has filed a complaint regarding what he claims to be 'secret committee meetings' at the AL

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**MACAU'S CAR FLEET HOLDS STABLE**  
By year-end, there were 240,145 licensed motor vehicles in Macau, about the same as last year

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**BANGKOK FLIES DRONES IN BAD AIR BATTLE**

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## UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY ACCUSATION

# Chiang wins appeal, may be absolved

P3 COURTS

BLOOMBERG



### WORLD BRIEFS

AP PHOTO

**INDONESIA's** volatile Mount Merapi volcano on the island of Java has unleashed a river of lava that flowed 1,400 meters down its slopes.

**BANGLADESH** More than 5,000 Bangladesh workers who demanded higher wages have been fired by factory owners, and hundreds face police charges in the world's second-largest garment export industry after China, an activist said yesterday. [More on p12](#)

AP PHOTO

**AFGHANISTAN** A new U.S. watchdog report says Afghan security forces are shrinking, gaps in security are growing, and the Taliban are largely holding their own despite a surge in American bombing.

More on backpage

## Xi's tough talk on Taiwan backfires, as Tsai support surges

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times Extra

The Old Man and the Play

**Extra** times  
weekend Guide  
INSIDE

# 120 fishing vessels return to Inner Harbor for CNY holiday



Julie Zhu

A total of 120 fishing vessels have temporarily returned to Macau to spend the Chinese New Year (CNY) holiday in the Inner Harbor, according to the Marine and Water Bureau.

Yesterday, the Bureau, together with the Fire Services Bureau, Macau police authorities, and two associations from the fishing sector visited the fishermen at the Inner Harbor, where they distributed safety and hygiene promotional materials to the fishermen whose vessels have been anchored. The activity was carried out in the hopes of preventing safety risks during the holiday.

Each year, the water authority calculates the number of fishing vessels. The Marine and Water Bureau believes that more fishing

vessels are returning to Macau for the holiday.

Between Wednesday Feb. 6 and Saturday Feb. 9, the Bureau will deploy one tugboat and one speedboat to the Inner Harbor in order to ensure safety in the area.

The Bureau is also setting up a fire prevention separation zone to make sure that when a fire incident occurs, the fire's spread can be prevented.

"It is easy for danger to arise in such a dense environment. We will arrange a 24-hour tugboat at the center of the Inner Harbor as [an] alert. When there is any sudden occurrence, we can arrange vessels [to coordinate]," said Lao Weng U, head of the Maritime Service Division of the Marine and Water Bureau.

During the CNY holiday, the marine authority will provide ad-

ditional speedboats and officers conducting inspections at the said location. Additionally, the Bureau will strengthen supervision to ensure that all passengers on vessels wear life jackets and that passenger overloading is avoided.

In addition to safety issues, the Marine Bureau will also take measures to maintain the clean water environment.

"We will regularly distribute sanitary bags, so that fishermen can put refuse into them. There will also be ferries collecting trash," announced Lao, urging the fishermen to "never dump the trash into the water. If we find anyone dumping trash into the water, we will issue a punishment."

Furthermore, the Bureau revealed that in order to support the sustainable development of fisheries, the SAR government provides interest-free loans to fishermen through a fisheries development and assistance fund.

Since the establishment of the fund in 2007, there have been 213 applications approved, amounting to MOP70 million.

## GAMING

# Another year of fewer junket promoters

THE Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) has announced the latest number of approved licensed junket promoters in Macau, according to a dispatch published in the Official Gazette.

In total, there are 100 junket promoters, consisting of 90 companies and 10 individuals.

In January 2018, there were 109 promoters (comprised of 99 companies and 10 individuals). When comparing the number of junket promoters between this year and the previous year, an 8.3 percent decrease can be calculated.

Previously, the director of the DICJ, Paulo Martins Chan, revealed in December that the bureau was reviewing the bill on the eligibility and regulation of junket promoters.

The amendment consideration for the bill includes raising the entry requirements for a junket promoter, in particular,



reviewing the appropriate qualifications, funding sources and financial resources of junket promoters, and stipulating that a certain proportion of the shares must be held by a Macau resident.

It is expected that the bill will enter legislative procedures after DICJ hears opinions from the Legal Affairs Bureau.

In order to strengthen the compliance of junket promoters and gaming operators, the government included another regula-

tion, indicating increased supervision of the accounting of junket promoters.

Chan further revealed that the DICJ had already instructed junket promoters that had not registered correctly or had missed registration to rectify this by registering. The DICJ head also noted that the bureau will consider other measures when renewing licenses if no rectification or registration is made.

The Macau Junket Association expects an 8 to 10 percent drop in the gam-

bling revenue of casino VIP rooms, according to a report by TDM.

During a press conference that took place yesterday, the association started by noting that gambling revenue had generally declined this month.

The new regulations on smoking control inside casinos are among the most important factors contributing to the revenue drop, according to the association.

Association President Lam Kai Kuong expressed that the full extent of the new regulation's impact on the local gaming industry has not been revealed yet, however, there are signs showing a tendency towards a greater influence.

In addition, Lam mentioned that accusations of VIP room operators covering for illegal smoking inside VIP rooms is without ground.

Lam noted that VIP rooms do not have the authority to punish smoking behaviors, they can only verbally warn smokers. Lam claims that operators do not have the management rights over the rooms, and that they have to inform the gaming companies to follow up on illegal smoking incidents. **JZ**

# Money laundering prevention guidelines issued

THE Housing Bureau has issued guidelines to prevent real estate agencies from laundering money, according to an Official Gazette notice.

Real estate agents and agencies are required to follow the new guidelines during a transaction.

The agents and agencies are obligated to identify and verify the contractor, the parties of interest involved in the real estate transaction, and the property in circumstances of suspicion of money laundering or terrorist financing, or when the authenticity of the documents provided by the contractor is in doubt.

Agents and agencies should also use documents and materials from independent and reliable sources in order to ascertain and verify the identity of stakeholders involved in the transaction.

They should regularly assess the risk of money laundering and the financing of terrorism in relation to the transactions involved in the real estate intermediary business, and procedures for intensive reviews to identify individuals in high-risk situations.

Agents and agencies are obligated to manage and supervise a transaction, fully understand a customer's past record, in particular, the customer's sources of capital.

Large cash transactions involving MOP500,000 or more are considered high-risk situations.

Transactions involving overseas companies, trust companies, offshore companies or other companies with complex organizational structures are also considered high-risk situations, with agents and agencies obligated to identify and verify the parties concerned.

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COURTS

# Scott Chiang may be absolved of guilt after appeal victory

Daniel Beitler

**A**CTIVIST Scott Chiang has won a ruling in the Court of Second Instance that may absolve him from a sentencing last year for the crime of unlawful assembly.

Chiang and legislator Sulu Sou were charged with disobeying police authorities during a demonstration in May 2016 that challenged a controversial RMB100 million donation from the Macau Foundation to Jinan University. In May 2018, the two defendants were found guilty in the Court of First Instance of organizing an unlawful assembly and were sentenced to fines worth 120 days each.

Chiang's 70-page appeal submitted to the Court of Second Instance detailed numerous violations of his rights during last year's trial. It remains unclear which of these arguments compelled the Court into siding with the appellant.

Pedro Leal, the lawyer who



Scott Chiang

represented Chiang, told the Times yesterday that his client was still waiting to hear more about the decision.

"When we filed the appeal, we requested the Court [of Second Instance] declare Scott Chiang not guilty or to hold a re-trial. One of those two options has been decided by the court, but we don't know which one yet,"

he explained, adding that more information would likely be released today.

"The result is in – that I won – but we don't know the details yet," echoed Chiang in a separate conversation. "What does it mean? Am I pronounced not guilty? Will I have a re-trial? Right now we know very little."

What is known, however, is that the crime of organizing an illegal assembly cannot be brought further up the chain of Macau's judiciary via an appeal from the Public Prosecution's Office. According to Leal, that means it will not be entertained in the Court of Final Appeal.

Jorge Menezes, who represented Chiang's co-defendant Sulu Sou, said the decision was a strong sign of judicial independence. "There is no separation of powers between the government and the Legislative Assembly, but there appears to be a separation between the government and the courts," he told the Times. "That's a reason to be happy."

The Court's decision to uphold Chiang's appeal will not affect Sulu Sou, who withdrew an earlier, "merely defensive", appeal in order to expedite his return to the Legislative Assembly.

Lawmakers in Macau normally enjoy prosecutorial immunity that prevents charges from being brought against them. Sou was suspended by a Legislative Assembly intervention in December last year, which lifted his immunity and permitted him to stand trial.

"It's painful to see Sulu Sou, a legislator, hold a criminal offence from a decision at trial that wasn't fairly reached," said Menezes. "It shows how unfairly Sulu Sou was treated; that he was forced to waive his fundamental right of appeal in order to serve the public interest as a legislator."

"[Sulu Sou] deserved to share this little victory," said Chiang. "I don't know if he can benefit from this decision, but it is a moral vindication for him."

## Foundation 'understands the public concern' over subsidies

The Macau Foundation (FM) "understands the public concern regarding the way public money is spent" and has taken measures to improve its mechanism to grant financial support, said FM President Wu Zhiliang yesterday on the sidelines of a meeting with media representatives.

During the meeting, the FM Administrative Committee president reviewed work conducted in 2018. A total of MOP2.3 billion was given to support 2,568 events. About 18 percent of the money was donated to education and academic research, followed by social welfare (32 percent).

Ng Chi Leong, president of the executive committee of the foundation, said that no cases of subsidy abuse had been discovered. Currently, the FM receives approximately 8 to 10 applications for funding daily. Ng claimed that the foundation carefully reviews the applicant's background, the project concerned, execution and budget.

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## 'Hush!!' calls on local bands to participate



The "2019 Hush!! Full Music" concert will be held from April 28 to May 1 at Hac Sa Beach, Hac-Sa Nautical Centre and various locations in the island district, the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) announced in a statement. Local bands and musicians can participate in the concert in three categories, including the "Hot Wave," which features local and foreign bands performing original songs; "Uprising Power," a section for emerging local bands and musicians; and "Summer Chill," an individual stage dedicated to a specific theme in the leisure area. In order to promote the development of original local music and to bring music to campuses and communities, the IC will also promote several outreach activities, such as the "Island Music Program," "School Music Ambassador" and "Music Workshop." The bureau is calling on interested parties to submit their proposals from Feb. 18 to 22.

## Kun Iam Tong illegal construction continues

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has once again reported the illegal construction at Kun Iam Tong Temple to the police authority, according to a statement released by the IC yesterday. In 2018, the temple was found to be carrying out illegal construction work several times, with the case having already entered a judicial procedure. However when the IC visited the temple on Wednesday, the bureau learned that construction work had been resumed. The construction consists of changing the color of the temple's external wall, and breaking through the temple's ceiling when carrying out the construction. Besides reporting the work to police, the IC has also increased the number of inspectors and inspections at the said location. The bureau pledged to deal 'seriously' with the case and said it would pursue legal responsibility regarding the damage.

## Melco announces pay raise for team members

Melco Resorts & Entertainment has announced a pay increase for non-management employees ranging between 2.5 percent and 7.5 percent, effective April 1, 2019. Eligible full-time non-management employees earning a monthly base salary less than or equal to MOP13,000 will receive a base salary increase of MOP600 per month, while employees earning a monthly base salary over MOP13,000 will receive an increase of 2.5 percent. Ahead of the Lunar New Year, a one-month discretionary bonus, announced earlier this month, was paid to eligible non-management employees.

# Sulu Sou files complaint against 'secret meetings'

RENATO MARQUES



Renato Marques

**LAWMAKER** Sulu Sou has filed a complaint regarding what he claims to be the unlawful behavior of the Legislative Assembly's Committee of Rules and Mandates. The committee adjourned yesterday to discuss topics involving Sou.

According to Sou, to his surprise, "this was not the first meeting of the committee to discuss these matters. This is actually the second one. The first one, I don't know even when it happened, as we [the lawmakers] were not informed about it."

In Sou's opinion, this is a very concerning development, as the committee which has the duty of issuing rule-based opinions cannot disregard the rules of the Legislative Assembly (AL).

Sou, who attended yesterday's meeting as an observer with José Pereira Coutinho, told the media that he had expressed such concerns im-

mediately to committee president Kou Hoi In, who in turn, replied that the first meeting was an "internal meeting" and that was why no other lawmakers, besides those on the committee, were notified. This answer did not satisfy Sou, who now says he is appealing to AL president Ho Iat Seng in writing.

Regarding the closed-door meeting, committee members told the media through AL staff that they would not be available to make any comments. Sou said that two topics were discussed which the committee "should have discussed in the previous meeting which we did not know about," he said. "[The meeting] today was mostly to discuss a few details from the final report with the opinions of the committee, which will be forwarded to the House of Rules."

The topics under discussion were related to the AL plenary session in which the amendments to the "Rights of Assembly and Demonstration Law"

were voted upon. At the time, Sou proposed that instead of transferring the prior warning and definition of times, spaces and routes of demonstrations from the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau to the Public Security Police Force, these should be transferred directly to the Chief Executive.

The president of the AL noted that since Sou's request had not been submitted at least five days prior, it could not be addressed by the plenary. Ho further noted that, as far as he understood, at this stage only a vote on whether the proposal ought to be returned to the 1st Standing Committee for detailed scrutiny could be held at this stage.

When replying to Sou's written appeal on the matter, Ho questioned the legality of such a procedure and forwarded it to the committee to analyze.

Although he acknowledged that the outcome would not affect the approval of the law approval since a lot of time had passed, Sou noted that

according to his observations, the legal advisor of the committee gave reason to Sou on the legal procedure of his written appeal, noting that the regiment of the AL does not contain any restrictions to lawmakers' appeals.

As Sou noted, "We tried to practice our power [as lawmakers] and [for the] next opportunity, we already know that this is a legal procedure that we can use."

**They are apparently having secret meetings.**

SULU SOU

The other topic the committee discussed was related to a written protest issued by Sou, this time against the behavior of AL president Ho Iat Seng, who, during Sou's plenary presentation, made "paternalistic" remarks regarding the time that Sou's mandate had been suspended, noting that the AL "treated him well and continued to pay his salary."

Sou considered the wording offensive and he made note of it in a written protest to the president, which Sou wants to see included in the AL's journal records.

The committee, or at least some of its members, disagreed and expressed feelings that such an episode and Sou's consequent written protest should be removed, or rather should not be included in AL historical records for future reference.

Sou could not disagree more and said: "I want to make a historical record regarding this matter, so I cannot agree with the conclusion of the legal advisor [of the committee] on this matter." According to Sou, the legal advisor's opinion went along the lines that if a lawmaker "did not express their protest orally during the plenary session, it cannot be included in the AL journal at a later stage via a written protest." He noted that the explanation was "not a suitable one," adding: "The Article 99 letter G [of the AL rulebook] says that lawmakers have the right to a written protest regardless of whether there was or was not an oral protest at the time."

When questioned as to whether the topic of Sou being accused of disrespecting the AL by using the words "lap sap wui" (rubbish assembly) was addressed by the committee, Sou said, "I don't think so, at least not this time. But again, I can't confirm if they discussed it or not since they are apparently having secret meetings."

# Cross-border traffic records slight increase

**C**ROSS-BORDER vehicular traffic rose by 2.3 percent to 4,927,368 trips in 2018, while those passing through the Checkpoint of Cotai (30 percent of total traffic) recorded an increase of 16.5 percent. In contrast, those going through the checkpoint of Border Gate (68.2 percent) saw a decrease of 3.6 percent.

Transport statistics released yesterday by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) indicate that vehicular trips passing through the checkpoint of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge totaled 23,574.

Last year, commercial flights increased by 13.1 percent year-on-year to 62,048 trips. Flights to and from mainland China and Thailand showed 20.9 percent and 20.8 percent growth respectively, whereas flights to and from South Korea and Vietnam fell by 15.5 percent and 8.8 percent respectively.

In the fourth quarter, helicopter flights between Macau and mainland China, and Macau and Hong Kong dropped by 5.3 percent year-on-year



to 3,640 trips. Yet helicopter flights in 2018 rose by 2.7 percent to 13,089 trips.

Last year, ferry trips between Macau and mainland China, and Macau and Hong Kong totaled 131,740, down by 5.1 percent year-on-year. Those to and from Hong Kong (111,186) dropped by 1.9 percent.

At the end of December 2018, the total number of licensed motor vehicles edged down by 0.6 percent year-on-year to 240,145, of which light motorcycles (26,256) decreased by 10.5 percent, whereas light automobiles (108,442) and heavy motorcycles (97,822) inched up by 0.8 percent and 0.9 percent respectively.

The new registration of motor vehicles in the fourth quarter of 2018 declined by 27.2 percent year-on-year to 3,622. New registrations in 2018 dropped by 13.7 percent to 14,509, with heavy motorcycles (7,374) falling by 25.4 percent.

A total of 3,467 traffic accidents were recorded in the fourth quarter of 2018, down by 4.5 percent year-on-year, and the number of victims was 1,165.

In 2018, the number of traffic accidents dropped by 6.5 percent year-on-year to 13,764, resulting in 4,390 casualties, with 10 fatalities.

## TOURISM

# MGTO launches measures for upcoming Spring Festival

**T**HE Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) is rolling out a range of measures for the upcoming Spring Festival Golden Week, including forecasting visitor flows using big data for the first time.

Visitor flows will be monitored at tourist districts and congested locations for internal testing during the Spring Festival Golden Week to ensure accurate reference data.

Through collaboration with the Public Security Police Force, MGTO will adjust its smart application for visitor flows and



gear up for its official launch, as cited in a statement.

After its launch, the website will provide a glimpse of visitor flows in future, in a bid to facilitate visitors' itinerary arrangements.

The bureau is also cooperating with the Depart-

ment of Culture and Tourism of Guangdong Province to operate a "Tourism Notification System for Spring Festival Golden Week," in a bid to maintain close communication during the seven-day celebration and ensure smoo-

th visitations between Guangdong and Macau.

MGTO also pledged that it would carry out more frequent and rigorous inspections at tourist attractions, ports of entry and different districts, besides taking action with police authorities to tackle the provision of illegal accommodation.

In addition, the bureau has sent letters advising travel agency associations to liaise and coordinate with local travel agencies regarding their itinerary arrangements for tour groups to major attractions.

# DSEJ prepares for 4th phase of Continuing Education Plan

**T**HE Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, said that he is willing to promote a permanent Continuing Education Development Plan during Wednesday's Legislative Assembly plenary meeting.

According to Tam, a total of 145,000 residents participated in the first

installment of this plan. In the second phase (2014 to 2016), the number went up to 167,000. In the third phase (as of Dec. 31, 2018), the number of participants was 128,000.

The director of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ), Lou Pak Sang, said that currently,

the third phase of the plan is undergoing a mid-term review, and the DSEJ will start preparing a draft of the fourth installment of the plan later.

As reported by Lou, for the first and second phases, each resident spent MOP3,500 and MOP4,000 on average respectively.

Lou claimed that the government fund for implementing the plan is sufficient at this current stage.

By Dec. 31 last year, about 2,500 inspections had been conducted at the course providers.

Regarding fake reports of the number of course attendees, the government hopes to solve the problem in the fourth phase by requiring students to use ID cards to enter the classes.

## ADVERTORIAL

# GREAT TIMES

## Ruling Dance, the Jabbawockeez Way

**T**HINK plain white masks and gloves, think solid dance moves. Only one dance crew in the world owns this visual signature: the famous Jabbawockeez troupe. Soon, at MGM Theater in Cotai to present their newest routine, "True to Yourself."

Established in 2003 in San Diego, California, Jabbawockeez first rose to fame in a national television appearance on America's Got Talent in 2006. The rest is poppin', lockin', breakin' history. The crew went on to win the MTV Hip Hop reality series, Randy Jackson Presents America's Best Dance Crew (ABDC) in March 2008.

As the most notable group to come out of the MTV reality series, Jabbawockeez is synonymous with the show and is today universally recognized as America's truly best dance crew.

Many people may not be aware of this – even their fans – but the unique name "Jabbawockeez" is derived from Lewis Carroll's poem Jabberwocky, in which the titular character is a dragon that roamed the "tulgey wood" in the children's story "Through the Looking Glass".

They are, however, better known for the significance behind the visual signature of their white masks and gloves: to divert the audience's attention from individual identities and towards a unified group. They have famously been quoted as saying that they welcome people from all over the world to join them – as long as he or she treats others without bias and racial discrimination.

Known for their creativity, one-of-a-kind choreography, athleticism and intricate synchronization, each member



brings a different technique and perspective to form the unique style that makes Jabbawockeez so distinct.

What makes the group's achievements even more amazing is the fact that they do not have a leader. Everything the crew does, from choreography to music and design, is created as a collective unit.

Jabbawockeez has been making appearances all over the world, winning fans and friends everywhere they go.

In March, the crew is set to showcase their best spectacle yet at MGM Theater in MGM COTAI with a new theme "True to Yourself". They promise amazing choreography to wow your "sight and auditory senses". Stay tuned for more details.



# Lawmaker calls for action to avoid 'over-tourism'

**LAWMAKER** Pereira Coutinho is concerned that residents of Macau are losing quality of life due to an excess of tourists visiting the region.

In a spoken enquiry delivered last week at the Legislative Assembly, Coutinho expressed concerns over Macau being on the verge of becoming another city suffering from "over-tourism," a phenomenon that, according to the lawmaker, occurs when cities "accept without any control tourists who invade them as 'plagues of locusts', seduced by the spending of such visitors and forgetting the harmful consequences."

Noting that his criticism was not directed at tourism in general, as a supporter of the local economy, Pereira Coutinho urged the government to "adopt as early as possible more balanced solutions instead of just waiting to



see when the city would reach a breaking point."

The lawmaker argued that Macau is not far from reaching such a point, as with cities such as Barcelona, Mumbai, Amsterdam, Venice and Hanoi.

In Pereira Coutinho's opinion, the government should pay attention and

restrict access to the so-called "poor tourists" who come to visit Macau almost "for free" via tourism packages and who, after arriving in the region, "are guided to certain shops to be lured into shopping for particular items that are most of the time counterfeit or stolen items."

The lawmaker says that the government has no policies for the sustainable development of tourism, contributing to the lack of ethics of some operators. In his opinion, these factors are also encouraging illegal accommodation and the dishonest sales of dubious products.

## CE outlines measures to advance Greater Bay Area development

**T**he Chief Executive (CE) has outlined steps to boost Macau's contribution to the development of the Greater Bay Area.

Chui Sai On chaired the first meeting of Macau's Working Committee for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area, which was set up in November 2018. During Tuesday's meeting, Chui noted that Macau should work under the guidelines provided by the Central Government's leading group for the development of the Greater Bay Area, which has held its first plenary meeting. Following on from that meeting, the MSAR is expected to play a more active role and advance its involvement in the city-cluster initiative.

The CE asked committee members to focus more closely on the pursuit of relevant research and the formulation of policies regarding Macau's participation in the Greater Bay Area. Chui also stressed the need to strengthen coordination mechanisms in relation to the Greater Bay Area.

During the meeting, committee members also reviewed work already done to advance Macau's involvement in the development of the Greater Bay Area. This included: updating Macau's Five-Year Development Plan, the creation of the Working Committee for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area, signing an agreement with the National Development and Reform Commission, and the organization of a youth forum regarding opportunities created for young people by the Greater Bay Area.

AD

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GAMING

# Cotai property the jewel of Wynn Resorts' 2018 growth

**W**YNN Resorts reported its 2018 financial results yesterday, showing that Wynn Palace continues to outperform its older sister resort on the peninsula. The company announced that a cash dividend of USD0.75 per share has been approved, payable on February 26 to stockholders.

Wynn Resorts' operating revenue increased 10.7 percent to reach \$6.72 billion (MOP54 billion) in 2018, with operating revenues at Wynn Palace increasing by \$727.3 million, and revenue at Wynn Macau and Las Vegas falling \$42.4 million and \$37.4 million respectively.

At the same time, the generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) net income attributable to Wynn Resorts amounted to \$584.2 million (MOP4.7 billion) or \$5.46 per diluted share in 2018, compared to \$747.2 million or \$7.28 per diluted share in the previous year. According to



Wynn's financial report, the decrease was primarily driven by a litigation settlement expense of \$463.6 million recorded in the first quarter of 2018.

Adjusted net income attributable to Wynn Resorts amounted to \$699.5 million (MOP5.62 billion) or \$6.54 per diluted share in 2018, compared to \$560.5 million or \$5.46 per diluted share in the year ending Dec. 31, 2017.

Meanwhile, full year adjusted property earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) increased 12.9 percent, or \$233.7 million, to \$2.04 billion (MOP16.4 billion), compared to \$1.81 billion in 2017. Adjusted property EBITDA increased \$316.3 million at Wynn Palace, partially offset by decreases of \$27.5 million and \$55.1 million, from Wynn Macau and Las

Vegas Operations, respectively.

Wynn Palace was the big winner in the results for the fourth quarter of 2018, which were also published yesterday. Operating revenues amounted to \$740.6 million, according to the gaming operator, a 12.8 percent increase from the \$656.5 million in the same period of 2017. Casino revenues increased 12.3 percent to \$636.9 million in the final quarter of 2018.

Meanwhile, operating revenues at Wynn Macau fell 5.2 percent in the fourth quarter to \$553.4 million, with casino revenues declining 5.9 percent to \$479 million.

In terms of Las Vegas operations, operating revenue increased 3.1 percent year-on-year to reach \$393.6 million, while casino revenues grew 3.5 percent to \$104.8 million.

During the fourth quarter of 2018, Wynn Resorts repurchased more than 1.47 million shares of its common stock for approximately \$156.7 million.

## IPIM rolls out online document submission system

The Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) has launched an online document submission system. The service allows applicants to fill out a temporary residency application form online and upload supporting documents before filing a formal temporary residency application. According to a statement issued by IPIM, after applicants have submitted the relevant information via the new system, the institute's personnel will check whether or not applicants have submitted all the required documents and inform them by email within 30 days of receiving the documents of the analysis result and the designated dates for filing a formal application. IPIM stated that the measure was taken "in line with the administrative concept that emphasizes administrative simplification."

## Air Macau inaugurates new airplane

Air Macau inaugurated a new Airbus 320 aircraft on Wednesday, baptized "Cidade de Macau" [City of Macau], in the hangar of the Macau International Airport. The airplane's interior layout consists of eight business class and 150 economy class seats respectively. Its maiden flight, NX886, was operated yesterday morning from Macau to Bangkok.

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REAL ESTATE MATTERS

How to de-risk your property portfolio (part 1)

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



SAM LEE

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The work 'risk' conjures up a different beast in the mind of every investor. If you are a speculator, you might tremble at the thought of it. If you are an opportunist, you might redefine 'risk' as 'volatility' and jump straight into it. If you are a veteran, you have probably developed emotional immunity to it over the years.

No matter what your attitude or philosophy is towards risk, as property investors we all recognise that it is an unavoidable part of the game and that it is our job to find creative ways to minimise downside risk and maximise upside potential.

Here are 10 practical ways you can guard your portfolio against various risks:

1. BUYING WELL

There is a saying in the property investment community that says "You make your money when you buy, not when you sell". A little foresight will reveal that some of the biggest risks for a property investment include 1. Not being able to rent or sell when you want 2. Not receiving enough rental income to cover financing costs 3. Physical threats to the property such as structural issues, just to name a few. By setting predetermined heuristics and processes for conducting due diligence on your investment and sticking to them no matter what, you

have eliminated most of the risk by simply filtering opportunities and not buying overly risky properties.

2. BUYING AT A DISCOUNT

This ties into the concept of "Buying Well", but it is so important that it deserves a spot of its own. Negotiation is a core skill in any property investor's toolbox, and one that needs constant practice and sharpening. Good investors know that there are often factors outside of the price such as the speed of the transaction or creative financing terms that can be offered in exchange for a fair discount. By identifying and solving the seller's problems, the investor secures an "equity cushion" against market fluctuations.

3. ADDING VALUE

By renovating and/or converting the usage of the property and adding value to it in the eyes of the bank or the buyer, the investor reduces risk by increasing the 'equity cushion' previously mentioned. Generally speaking, the more equity you have in the property, the less risk you have.

4. CASH FLOW

Cash flow is the name of the game for many property investors looking to build personal wealth and financial freedom. By buying well at a discount and adding a lot of value to the

property, you can make sure that the rental income you receive from the investment surpasses the total mortgage payments and management expenses, providing you with passive income month after month. If your investment positioned correctly in the rental market and provides you with steady cash flow, you don't have to be too concerned with the risk of the market fluctuations. You simply hold on to the asset over the long-term and sell when it makes sense to you, if you wish to sell at all.

5. RESPONSIBLE LEVERAGE

Leverage is the double-edged sword in every investor's toolbox. Used correctly, it can accelerate your acquisitions, increase your ROI and build wealth. If on the other hand you over-leverage and get caught at the wrong end of the market, it can wipe you out and destroy your credit and confidence. My personal opinion is that the risk of leaving some money on the table in the short-term is preferred over the risk of over-leveraging and potentially permanently cutting your investment career short. To remove excessive credit exposure and de-risk your portfolio, keep your debt-to-equity ratio at manageable levels.

Next week we will look at 5 additional ways investors can remove risk from their portfolios.

Musk says USD500m enough to get Shanghai production running

ELON Musk told investors Tesla Inc. won't incur a heavy financial burden to get production up and running in its first overseas factory, seeking to soothe investor concerns about capital requirements for the Shanghai facility.

Capital expenditure of about USD500 million is needed for Tesla to reach a weekly production rate of 3,000 vehicles, the chief executive officer said on an earnings call yesterday [Macau time]. A majority of the funding will be by local banks, and with competitive debt financing and "extremely compelling interest rates," Tesla doesn't expect the investment to be a capital drain on the company, he said.

"These are the biggest banks in the world," Chief Financial Officer Deepak Ahuja said on the call. "And for them, \$500 million is not a large amount of money in the



scheme of things."

Financing for the plant, which Musk earlier said would cost about \$2 billion to reach an annual capacity of 250,000 vehicles in the first phase, was a source of intense speculation when the carmaker was bleeding cash until last year. The Palo Alto, California-based company has turned its performance around, with a healthier balance sheet and about \$3.7 billion in cash and equivalents.

After years of negotiations with authorities in China, Musk broke ground on the plant in the outskirts of Shanghai on Jan. 7. The automaker aims to finish initial construction this summer and start Model 3 production by the end of the year. With the Shanghai plant in operation, Tesla expects to have a global weekly production rate of about 10,000 vehicles or close to it by the end of the year. Bloomberg

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## DIRE STRAIT

# Xi's tough talk on Taiwan backfires, as Tsai support surges

Ralph Jennings  
& Johnson Lai, Taipei

**C**HINESE President Xi Jinping sought to push Taiwanese closer to unification with a new year speech mixing carrots and sticks.

That hasn't panned out. Instead, his independence-leaning Taiwanese counterpart, Tsai Ing-wen, has enjoyed a surge in support following a brutal drubbing of her political party in local elections last year, according to public opinion surveys and interviews.

The residents of this self-governing island, with its vibrant and well-established democracy, are as much inclined as ever to resist China's demands despite rising political, economic and military threats from Beijing.

Xi's offer to Taiwan "is a total scam," said Kuo Lin-han, 26, a Chinese Culture University student in Taipei.

Kuo was referring to China's proposal of a "one country, two systems" arrangement that Xi renewed in his Jan. 2 speech, under which Taiwan would accept Chinese sovereignty while being allowed to retain its own economic and legal systems.

That's based on the framework Hong Kong was granted when it reverted to Chinese rule in 1997, an arrangement that has become increasingly frayed as Beijing expands its political influence in the former British colony.

Jarringly for many Taiwanese, Xi mixed his outreach with a reminder that Beijing had no intention of dropping its threat



AP PHOTO  
Pro-Taiwan supporters carry banners during a march of about 8,000 people asking the government to change the island's official name from the "Republic of China" to "Taiwan," in Taipei, in 2002

to use military force to bring the island under its control.

Xi's speech was seized on by Tsai, who went on a four-day media blitz in Taipei that appears to have significantly bolstered her support among voters.

In a telephone survey published Jan. 21 by the Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation, 34.5 percent of the 1,074 respondents gave her a thumbs-up, an increase of about 10 percentage points from after the November elections. Two-thirds said they want Taiwan to continue its self-rule or declare formal independence.

Separately, the Taiwan government's Mainland Affairs Council found in a Jan. 17 survey of 1,078 people that 75.4 percent oppose "one country, two systems," 74.3 percent dispute the "one China" condition for formal dialogue and 77.2 percent oppose China for holding pledges that it could use force against Taiwan if needed.

Both polls had a margin of er-

ror of plus or minus 3 percent.

"The most important thing is that Xi Jinping made the speech on Taiwan and Tsai Ing-wen gave a rare response, which received a high level of support," foundation chairman You Ying-lung said. "The China factor helps her come out of a trough."

Younger Taiwanese have a firm sense of local identity that stands in the way of China's idea for unification, said Wu Yi-hsuan, 27, an energy science and engineering doctoral student.

"We want to be Taiwanese Taiwan rather than Chinese Taiwan," Wu said, referring to the terminology Beijing often uses for the island that many consider condescending. "Regarding the fact that the People's Republic of China has never ruled Taiwan for a second, this (two systems) policy of China's is more an invasive, aggressive and offensive one."

China ruled Taiwan loosely under the former Qing dynasty and

the island was made a Japanese colony in 1895. Handed over to Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists at the end of World War II, it split again from the mainland in 1949 during the civil war with the Communist Party under Mao Zedong.

The Communists have regarded Taiwan since then as a breakaway territory that must eventually be brought into the fold. Many commentators say they believe Xi sees that as his historical mission, prompting major increases in China's military budget and renewed pressure on the island, including cutting off contacts with Tsai's government.

China's huge economy and global clout may have some effect, but most Taiwanese are unimpressed with how Beijing has followed through on its earlier pledges, said Andrew Yang, secretary-general of the think tank Chinese Council of Advanced Policy Studies.

"Hong Kong is totally controlled by mainland China," Yang said. "Even though they have their autonomy, they have limited freedom, and certainly there is no democracy in Hong Kong, as far as Taiwanese are concerned."

"I feel that the China government is unpredictable especially after Lee Ming-che was taken away by them," said Catta Chou, 30, a worker in a non-governmental organization, referring to a Taiwanese citizen sentenced in China in 2017 to five years in prison for spreading pro-democracy information.

"China is definitely crazy," Chou said.

Despite such sentiments, China is unlikely to come up with a new proposal in the immediate future, said Yun Sun, East Asia Program senior associate with the Stimson Center think tank in Washington, D.C.

Beijing's leaders "know how unpopular the proposal has been and will be," Sun said. "But before they have a good alternative, this is and will be the biggest deal for them."

Voters had complained before the Nov. 24 midterm elections that Tsai had either grown too distant from China to build economic ties or hadn't stood up enough to Beijing's military and diplomatic pressure.

Though she won the presidency by a landslide in 2016 — largely due to concerns about China's influence — and her Democratic Progressive Party received its first-ever legislative majority, Taiwanese voters have in the past shown a willingness to try new approaches.

Many in the business community are already urging Tsai to climb down from her refusal to meet Beijing's "one China" demand, largely as a way of easing pressure on the island.

"One country, two systems" could bring more people in and out, and this is good," said dried fruit merchant Yu Chen-ching, 65. "Otherwise, no one wants to visit Taiwan, and it's not good for the economy."

Economic concerns could cause Tsai's popularity to fade before her party faces the 2020 presidential race, said Alex Chiang, international relations professor at National Chengchi University in Taipei.

"Because she's president, she has to be firm on her position toward China, but in reality, Taiwan still has to do business with China," Chiang said. **AP**

## Chinese leader says 2022 Winter Games will be green, inclusive, open

**C**HINESE President Xi Jinping says his country is well on track to deliver a "spectacular" 2022 Winter Olympic Games.

China's government was firmly committed to staging the games with a "green, inclusive, open, and corruption-free approach," Xi told IOC President Thomas Bach on Thursday.

"We will deliver a spectacular games," Xi said in opening remarks at their meeting at the Great Hall of the People in central Beijing.

Xi said China's preparations grew out of its



AP PHOTO  
IOC President Thomas Bach (center left) meets with President Xi Jinping in Beijing, yesterday

people's approach to performing jobs in a "methodical matter and well in advance."

In response, Bach said his delegation had been impressed with their visits to the Olympic

venues, winter sports training grounds, and the winter ice festival in the northeastern city of Harbin.

"And we had a great experience about the dynamism and efficiency of China in the preparation for these Olympics," Bach said.

Beijing received the games by attrition, winning over Almaty, Kazakhstan, after a half-dozen European bidders dropped out, discouraged by soaring costs and taxpayer backlash.

Its win was based largely on the city's organi-

zational prowess, financial backing, and ability to reuse existing venues. Beijing claims strong public support for the games, although the ruling Communist Party severely restricts public participation in such decision-making.

Beijing's win came despite concerns about air pollution and the city's long, dry winter that will require it to rely almost entirely on man-made snow. The Nordic events will be held in the Zhao-long ski area in neighboring Hebei province, which generally receives

some natural snow cover.

The government has also been criticized for its record on human rights, including the internment of hundreds of thousands of Muslims in political indoctrination camps.

Yet, with fewer countries willing to bid on the games, Beijing appears a safe bet for the International Olympic Council.

After being rejected in yet another public vote, the IOC is down to two candidates to host the 2026 Games — Stockholm, and a joint Italian bid from Milan and Cortina D'Ampezzo. Both of those bidders also have issues, and organizers are scrambling to give the next available Winter Games to one of them before either bid gets derailed. **AP**

## ECONOMY

# Manufacturing improves but activity sluggish



Joe McDonald, Beijing

**C**HINA'S manufacturing improved in January but activity was sluggish, a survey showed yesterday, as U.S. and Chinese negotiators wrangled in Washington over a tariff war.

A measure of factory activity issued by the government statistics agency and an industry group rose 0.1 points on a 100-point scale but stayed below a level that shows activity expanding. Measures for employment and domestic demand weakened.

China's economic growth sank to a three-decade low of 6.6 percent in 2018 after activity in the final quarter of the year dipped to its lowest level since the 2008 global crisis.

"We see economic growth remaining sluggish" through mid-2019, Citigroup economists said in a report. "We believe the government will step up efforts to keep the labor market stable."

Chinese and U.S. negotiators began talks Wednesday in Washington aimed at resolving the fight over U.S. complaints about Beijing's technology ambitions.

No details were announced. Business groups see a decision by the top U.S. and Chinese trade envoys to take part as a positive sign, but economists say this week's meeting can at best make limited progress toward resolving sprawling irritants.

President Donald Trump jolted Chinese manufacturers in July when he started hiking tariffs on billions of dollars of goods in response to complaints Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology.

Trump and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, agreed on Dec. 1 to postpone further punitive action for 90 days while they negotiate. But penalties of up to 25 percent already imposed on tens of

billions of dollars of each other's goods stayed in place.

Exports to the United States shrank 3.5 percent in December from a year earlier as Trump's penalties began to depress demand.

Communist leaders are trying to steer China to slower, more self-sustaining growth based on consumer spending instead of trade and investment.

The deceleration has been sharper than expected, prompting Beijing to step up government spending and order banks to lend more to shore up growth and avoid politically dangerous job losses.

News of layoffs and lower sales of autos and real estate may have helped worsen the downturn by unnerving consumers, causing them to postpone spending.

The monthly purchasing managers' index of the National Bureau of Statistics and the China Federation of Logistics & Purchasing improved to 49.5 from December's 49.4.

The employment index declined 0.2 points to 47.8, showing more producers cutting jobs. The measure of new orders declined 0.1 points to 49.6.

Inventories rose, but ING's Robert Carnell cautioned that might reflect trade tension instead of economic strength as companies stockpile goods, anticipating possible further tariff hikes.

"It probably shouldn't be read positively," said Carnell in a report. "It may have to be unwound in the months ahead."

Chinese leaders are trying to reduce reliance on trade and nurture self-sustaining economic growth based on domestic consumer spending. But their plans call for keeping exports stable to avoid politically dangerous job losses.

Some companies have shifted production of goods bound for the United States out of China to avoid Trump's tariffs. Others are lining up non-Chinese suppliers of industrial components. **AP**



## Australian rugby league team proud of Huawei sponsorship

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

**A**N Australian rugby league team wants to continue Huawei's longest-ever sports sponsorship despite the Chinese communication giant's ban from Australia's 5G networks and legal wrangle with the United States.

Huawei has been the major sponsor of the Canberra Raiders, the national capital's only team in the National Rugby League, since 2012, and will consider this year extending its first sponsorship contract with a sports team anywhere in the world.

Raiders chief executive Don Furner said relations between the sponsor and the team, which won the last of its three championships in 1994, had not been affected by recent U.S. criminal charges that allege Huawei stole trade secrets, misled banks about its business, and violated U.S. sanctions.

"We are proud to carry their logo on the front of our jersey and our relationship has been nothing but positive from the first season they were with us until now," Furner said in an email.

"We would love to keep Huawei on board as sponsor. They're our longest serving major sponsor and have been a fantastic partner for us. We will sit down with them once the season starts and open discussions about their deal beyond 2019."

Huawei's three-year sponsorship deal, which includes displaying the Huawei logo prominently on the Raiders' uniform, expires when the 2019 season ends in September.

Huawei first sponsored what is perhaps Canberra's highest-profile sports team months after the federal government banned the company, on security grounds, from involvement in the rollout of Australia's National Broad-

band Network in 2011.

The government struck Huawei another commercial blow in August by excluding the company from playing any part in 5G networks that are being rolled out across Australia this year.

Huawei spokesman Jeremy Mitchell said the 5G ban would figure in the company's discussions on whether extending the Raiders' sponsorship "aligns with our business going forward."

"We have a large business portfolio across consumer, across enterprise, and we still are the largest provider of 4G networks in Australia, and there are still many years left of 4G investment in Australia," Mitchell said.

"So while it [the 5G ban] will be part of the equation, it certainly doesn't rule out us continuing with the Raiders."

Neither Huawei nor the Raiders will reveal the value of the sponsorship deal. **AP**

## Beijing appeals to US to accept its technology progress

**C**HINA urged Washington yesterday to accept its industrial development after U.S. intelligence officials said Beijing steals or copies foreign technology, as the two sides prepared for another day of talks aimed at ending a tariff war over Beijing's technology ambitions.

It is "totally unreasonable to make random accusations," said a foreign ministry spokesman, Geng Shuang.

Earlier, U.S. intelligence officials told Congress that China is the biggest commercial and mili-

tary threat to the United States. A separate report this week said Beijing will steal or copy technologies it cannot make itself.

"The United States is the world's top power in terms of technology, we acknowledge that," Geng said. "But we hope that the US can see the scientific and technological progress of other countries with an open and inclusive attitude. It must allow others to make progress while developing itself."

President Donald Trump is voicing optimism before he mee-

ts with representatives from China for trade talks today [Macau time].

But Trump says "No final deal" will be made until he sits down again with Chinese President Xi Jinping "in the near future" to discuss "some of the long standing and more difficult points."

The negotiators meeting in Washington face a March 2 deadline: the Trump administration is scheduled to escalate its tariffs on USD200 billion worth of Chinese imports from 10 percent to 25 percent if a deal is not struck before then. **MDT/AP**

BANGLADESH

# Thousands fired after garment industry protest

Julhas Alam, Dhaka

**M**ORE than 5,000 Bangladesh workers who demanded higher wages have been fired by factory owners, and hundreds face police charges in the world's second-largest garment export industry after China, an activist said yesterday.

Kalpona Akter of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity said the firings came after thousands of workers took to the streets earlier this month in and around Dhaka, the nation's capital.

But an industry leader said that the dismissed workers were involved in vandalism or other crimes, or were laid off when factories closed because of business losses.

One worker was killed and more than 50 were injured in clashes during the protests in the Ashulia, Dhaka, Gazipur and Savar areas.

In November, the government increased the monthly minimum wage for garment workers to 8,000 takas (USD96) from



5,300 takas (\$63). But workers weren't satisfied after having demanded more, along with the implementation of other benefits declared by the authorities. Unions and advocacy groups

have demanded up to 16,000 takas (\$193) as a minimum salary, but factory owners say they are under tremendous pressure to meet prices demanded by global brands.

The industry exports about \$30 billion worth of garments a year, mainly to Europe and North America.

Akter said hundreds of workers are facing looting and vanda-

lism charges and some have also been accused of attempted murder. More than 50 workers were arrested and many others have fled their rented homes in the industrial zones, she said.

"We came to know at least 5,000 workers have been sacked, but the actual figure by this time could be about 7,000," she said. "Many workers are being harassed."

The president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association said he did not know the exact number of workers who have lost their jobs, and no innocent people were facing any legal trouble.

"Some of the workers were involved in vandalism, looting and other crimes," association President Siddiqui Rahman told The Associated Press. "They will damage our factories, they will destroy very expensive equipment, they will smash our vehicles and beat our officials. Should not we report it to police? If you are the owner what would you do?"

He said the industry has a shortage of workers.

"Why should I sack my workers if my business is good, if I make money? We have huge bank loans, we have many other liabilities, why would an owner fire their workers without any genuine reasons?"

He said the situation is now under control. **AP**

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THAILAND

# Bangkok flies drones, warns of hardships in bad air battle

A fleet of drones, trucks and small planes sprayed water to try to reduce air pollution around Bangkok yesterday while the city's governor invited critics to brainstorm better ideas to improve the air quality in the Thai capital.

Unhealthy pollution levels forced city schools to close Wednesday for the rest of week, and the Public Health Ministry advised against outdoor activities.

Faced with public discontent as well as a possible health crisis, Bangkok's governor, Police Gen. Asawin Kwanmuang, has declared the city a "pollution control zone," allowing firmer measures such as road closings and limits on diesel exhaust, outdoor burning and construction activities.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha ordered inspections of factories to measure the pollution they are emitting. But he warned that implementing radical solutions could cause inconveniences that people might be



AP PHOTO

unwilling to accept. "To ban vehicles or to ban vehicles on odd and even dates, will people accept that?" he said. "If

we provide [more public] transportation, will people use it?" Even long-term measures raise questions, he said. "At the mo-

ment, we can improve the efficiency of cars and convert buses to use NGV gas. Are we ready to spend the budget for whatever it will cost?"

The measures proposed this week would focus on what are generally considered the main sources of Bangkok's air pollution, particularly vehicle exhaust, especially from diesel engines. Open burning and emissions from factories and power plants also are major problems, along with dust from construction sites.

Some scientists have speculated that smoke and haze from Thailand's less-developed eastern neighbor, Cambodia, also drifted into Bangkok, stirring up a bit of eco-nationalism, but the government's Pollution Control Department said evidence did not support this theory. Parts of northern Thailand, however, do suffer an annual air pollution crisis due to fires from slash and burn agriculture and other causes in remote rural areas and in another neighbor, Myanmar.

In Bangkok, the crisis-level pollution, along with public awareness, has been spurred by meteorological events that trap the noxious pollution. These include a thermal inversion, which keeps the dangerous particles closer to the ground, and weak winds which fail to blow them away.

Governor Asawin acknowledged that drones aren't a long-term solution but said he thinks every bit of effort helps. At a news conference, he said critics calling the drones a meaningless stunt would otherwise criticize him for doing nothing.

Asawin invited private-sector experts and academics to share ideas to improve air quality.

"Those who are knowledgeable on this issue, don't give opinions to others, tell me. I am the one who is working on the issue, please give me advice," he said. "Do I know everything? No, I don't. Because I do not know everything, that's why I will hold a meeting [yesterday]. Please join us in brainstorming."

Critics say the authorities' attempt to combat pollution by using drones to spray water is ineffective.

The director of Greenpeace Thailand, Tara Buakumsri, said at best, the attempt will have a psychological impact on city dwellers, but it won't improve air quality. AP

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## MIDDLE EAST

# Mariah Carey shakes off boycott calls for her Saudi concert



Aya Batrawy, Dubai

**M**ARIAH Carey, one of the world's most celebrated artists, is performing in Saudi Arabia today [Macau time] for the first time, but there's a growing chorus of Saudi women calling on her to cancel the concert to show support for detained women's rights activists.

Carey is the highest-profile star to perform in the kingdom since it began loosening decades of restrictions on entertainment, music and fun as part of a push by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to overhaul the economy and transform society.

But activists say her concert is an attempt by the government to polish its image after the Oct. 2 killing of Saudi critic Jamal Khashoggi inside the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul.

It's a dilemma that other celebrities could face as they ink multimillion dollar deals to perform in Saudi Arabia. The kingdom's General Entertainment Authority has promised a roster of major performances and sports exhibitions by the world's biggest names.

Carey's publicists told The Associated Press in a statement that when "presented with the

offer to perform for an international and mixed gender audience in Saudi Arabia, Mariah accepted the opportunity as a positive step towards the dissolution of gender segregation."

"As the first female international artist to perform in Saudi Arabia, Mariah recognizes the cultural significance of this event and will continue to support global efforts towards equality for all," the statement said, adding that Carey looks forward to bringing inspiration and encouragement to all audiences.

In December, the kingdom hosted a Formula-E car race in Riyadh, where thousands of young Saudis and hundreds of international visitors partied into the night at concerts by Enrique Iglesias, The Black Eyed Peas and DJ David Guetta.

Omaima Al-Najjar, a Saudi woman who fled the kingdom to seek political refuge abroad, said the concerts are a diversion from the Saudi-led war in Yemen against the neighboring country's Houthi rebels, human rights abuses committed under the crown prince and repressive male guardianship laws that restrict women's freedoms.

"The Saudi government is

using entertainment to distract the people from human rights abuses because it can sense the anger among the public," she said.

Al-Najjar is a co-founder of Women for Rights in Saudi Arabia, or WARSA, which launched a petition calling on Carey to boycott the country. The petition aimed to publicly pressure Carey because "she has power to stand for women [...] as an artist and as a female," Al-Najjar said.

Activists are tweeting at Carey directly, urging her to take notice of the prominent Saudi women's rights activists imprisoned since May who had long campaigned for social changes and women's empowerment. The women, who include activists in their 20s as well as mothers, grandmothers and retired professors, have been accused of vague national security violations in connection to their human rights work.

Al-Najjar said artists like Carey should make their performances in Saudi Arabia conditional on the release of the women's rights activists. A boycott would not impact ordinary Saudis because many cannot afford the concert's ticket prices anyway, she said.

abroad, where they do not face the prospect of arrest for speaking out.

Carey is to perform at King Abdullah Economic City, a two-hour drive north of Islam's holiest site of Mecca. The Economic City, built as a sort-of enclave for foreigners and Saudis, is gated and can only be entered with permission from security.

The concert, which includes DJ Tiesto, has also drawn the ire of some ultraconservatives on Twitter, angered that it is taking place in the greater region of Mecca.

The General Entertainment Authority's online flyer for Carey's concert shows her only from the waist up, with a red scarf draped over her arms. Women in Saudi Arabia are required to wear loose, long black robes known as abayas in public. Most Saudi women also cover their hair and face.

## Carey is the highest-profile star to perform in the kingdom since it began loosening restrictions on entertainment

Still, a concert like this would have been unthinkable until recently. Religious police used to enforce strict gender segregation, scolded women for not covering their hair and barged into restaurants to demand music be turned off.

The changes have a powerful backer in the crown prince, who is seeking to boost domestic spending and draw attention to his reforms.

Efforts to brand him a reformer took a hit after Saudi agents close to the crown prince killed and dismembered Khashoggi, a Washington Post columnist who was critical of the prince's crackdown on dissent. The U.S. Senate and U.S. intelligence have blamed the crown prince for the killing, but Saudi Arabia insists he had no involvement.

The night's concert is taking place at the Saudi International golf tournament. The European Tour has drawn several of golf's biggest stars, including four of the top five players in the world.

The purse is \$3.5 million, though the primary income for these players is appearance money, likely to be in the \$1 million range for the biggest names.

The golfing champions signed up to play for the European Tour event last April, well before Saudi agents killed Khashoggi. Even so, at least one big-name player pulled back. UNICEF ambassador Paul Casey has also said he'd "sit this one out." **AP**

Tickets for Carey's concert start at around USD80, and VIP seats — already sold out — cost \$530. The average monthly wage for Saudis is around \$2,600, according to the General Authority for Statistics.

Alia al-Hathloul called on Mariah Carey to remember her sister, Loujain al-Hathloul, who she says has been abused and threatened with death while in detention because of her activism, which included defying the kingdom's ban on women driving before it was lifted last year.

"Remember, thanks to my sister @LoujainHathloul, you r able to perform in Saudi Arabia. I wish she can attend your concert. But she's locked behind bars because she tried to improve women's condition. Don't forget to thank her on stage," she wrote to Carey on Twitter.

Saudi female artist Ms Saffaa wrote on Twitter: "Will @MariahCarey be singing 'It's a long road when u face the world alone. No one reaches out a hand 4 u 2 hold' to imprisoned female #Saudi activists @LoujainHathloul, @Saudiwoman, & @azizayousef?"

Both women, as well as Al-Najjar, made their pleas from

ITALY

# Country slides into recession, darkening outlook for Europe

**I**TALY has fallen back into recession, intensifying concerns about the 19-country eurozone economy and a possible flare-up in the debt market jitters that have haunted the bloc in the past.

The Italian economy, the third-largest in the eurozone, contracted by a quarterly rate of 0.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2018, the national statistics agency said.

Following a 0.1 percent drop in the previous three-month period that means Italy is in a technical recession, defined as two straight quarters of economic contraction — just four years after its last one.

Italy's recession is one reason why the wider eurozone slowed in 2018, along with uncertainties related to Brexit, the China-U.S. trade spat and new vehicle emissions standards.



Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte

Though the eurozone is performing better than in the dark days of the debt crisis, which threatened to break up the euro currency, it's still lagging the U.S. economy, which is

projected to have grown about 3 percent in 2018. As a result, unemployment in the eurozone is about double the U.S.'s 4 percent at 7.9 percent. The eurozone economy as a

whole grew by a meager 0.2 percent in the final quarter, the same as in the previous quarter, according to provisional figures released yesterday by the Eurostat statistics agency.

It expanded by 1.8 percent in 2018 overall, its weakest rate in four years. That's lower than had been anticipated a year ago, when the bloc was expected to slow only slightly from 2017's strong 2.4 percent rate.

The Italian economy has become an acute source of concern over the past few months, partly as a result of the new populist government's spat with the European Union's executive Commission over its budget plans, which has undermined business confidence and seen Italian borrowing rates in bond markets spike higher.

The government, elected against the backdrop of eco-

nomie disappointment after years — even decades — of stagnant growth, wants to ramp up spending to get the economy going. It wants to provide more social security payments and to roll back a pension reform.

The plan means Italy would not reduce its debt load, which at over 130 percent is the highest in Europe after Greece.

The EU Commission, still haunted by the memory of the debt crisis that required bailouts for a number of countries, has insisted that the Italian government rein back on its spending plans.

Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte sought to downplay the recession and placed the blame firmly on the trade spat between the United States and China, which he says has weighed on Italian exports.

"This is a transitory factor," he told reporters in Rome.

The head of Italy's UNC consumer advocate organization, Massimiliano Dona, said the weak figures raise questions over the Italian government's prediction that the economy will grow by 1 percent in 2019. He said that could mean the government will have to adjust its spending plans. **AP**

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## TV canal macau



## FRIDAY

13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Mistura Fina
17:10	Quem Quer Ser Milionário
18:05	A Ilha dos Escravos
18:55	TDM Talk Show (Repetição)
19:30	Livros com João Guedes (Repetição)
19:35	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	Sinais de Vida
22:00	Contentor 13
22:30	Motel Bates Sr.1
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Kutama - Destino Lisboa
00:45	Telejornal (Repetição)
01:30	RTPi Directo

## SATURDAY

11:40	Chai Chai
12:00	Novos Descobridores
12:30	Uma Mesa Portuguesa... Com Certeza!
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
14:30	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
17:30	Janela Indiscreta com Mário Augusto
18:10	Animais Anónimos
18:50	Joker
19:35	O Mundo da Dança Sr.1
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	Amor Fora da Lei
22:55	A Essência
23:15	TDM News

## SUNDAY

11:00	Missa Dominical
12:00	Visita Guiada Sr.2
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
14:30	Top Chef Jr. Sr.1
15:15	Rat-A-Tat Sr.1
16:05	Viva a Música Sr.4
17:00	Brainstorm
19:25	Bem-Vindos a Beirais
20:10	Aqui Há História
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	Contraponto
22:20	Atentado em Manchester - A Nossa História
23:15	TDM News

## Offbeat

## CANADA CONDEMNS NETFLIX FOR USING RAIL DISASTER IMAGES

Canada's Parliament passed a motion this week saying Netflix should compensate the people of Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, for using footage of the 2013 rail disaster in the post-apocalyptic survival film "Bird Box."

The footage involved the disaster created when an unattended train carrying crude oil rolled down an incline, went off the tracks and exploded into a massive ball of fire, killing 47 people in the Quebec town.

The motion is non-binding but is a stern rebuke from Canada's Parliament for the use of footage from the rail explosion in "Bird Box" and in the series "Travelers."

Members of Parliament voted to demand that Netflix remove all images of the Lac-Mégantic tragedy. Netflix has apologized but has refused to remove the images. Netflix licensed the footage from the stock image vendor Pond 5.

Pierre Nantel, a legislator with the opposition New Democrat party who introduced the motion this week, said he cannot accept Netflix not removing the footage.

"We know people are going to go and watch this film, and again these real images will be used," he said. "For people in Lac-Mégantic, they saw images of their own downtown burning, and could imagine their own family members in it."

Netflix refused comment Wednesday, pointing only to a letter the company sent last week to Quebec's culture minister in response to her concerns. In it, Netflix public policy director Corie Wright said the company "understands that many feel frustration and sadness at seeing images of this tragic event," but it cannot make changes to "finished content."



Sandra Bullock in a scene from the film "Bird Box"

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

01 FEB

I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE!

ROOM 1

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

Director: Wong Cho Lam

Starring: Eric Tsang, Teresa Mo, Ivana Wong,

Language: Cantonese (Chinese &amp; English)



MARY POPPINS RETURNS

ROOM 2

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

Director: Rob Marshall

Starring: Julie Andrews, Meryl Streep, Colin Firth

Language: English

Duration: 130min



A LIFETIME TREASURE

ROOM 3

7:30, 9:30 pm

Director: Andrew Lam Man Chung

Starring: Louis Cheung, Ivana Wong, Andrew Lam Man

Language: Cantonese (Chinese &amp; English)

Duration: 90min



THE LEGO MOVIE 2

ROOM 3

4:00, 7:45 pm

Director: Mike Mitchell

Starring: Chris Pratt, Elizabeth Banks, Will Arnett

Language: Cantonese (Chinese &amp; English)

Duration: 106min

## this day in history



## 2003 COLUMBIA SHUTTLE DISINTEGRATES KILLING SEVEN

The US space shuttle Columbia has broken up as it re-entered the Earth's atmosphere killing all seven astronauts on board.

This is the first time there has been an accident on landing in the 42 years of American space flight.

President George Bush told a nation in shock: "The Columbia is lost. There are no survivors."

Six of the seven astronauts were US citizens. They were Rick Husband, William McCool, Michael Anderson, David Brown, and female astronauts Laurel Clark and Indian-born Kalpana Chawla.

The seventh - fighter pilot Colonel Ilan Ramon - was Israel's first astronaut and was carrying with him a miniature Torah scroll of a Holocaust survivor.

Columbia disintegrated just 16 minutes before it was due to land at Cape Canaveral in Florida.

At 0900 local time (1400 GMT) Mission Control lost all data and contact with the crew.

The US space agency Nasa then sent search teams to the Dallas-Fort Worth area amid reports of "a big bang" and TV pictures showing smoke and fireballs in the sky.

In an emotional announcement, Nasa's administrator Sean O'Keefe, said: "This is indeed a tragic day for the Nasa family, for the families of the astronauts and likewise, tragic for the nation."

Flags at the Kennedy Space Center have been lowered to half-mast.

Debris from the shuttle is scattered across eastern Texas and western Louisiana and has crashed into car parks, forests, backyards, a reservoir, a rooftop and a dentist's office.

Nasa has temporarily suspended shuttle flights. Shuttle programme manager Ron Dittmore told a news conference in Houston, Texas, "We will not fly again until we have this understood. Somewhere along the line we missed something."

The finger of blame points to a piece of insulating foam from an external fuel tank that hit the shuttle's left wing as it took off 16 days ago.

Some experts say this could have damaged tiles that protect the craft from intense heat on re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere.

But the lead flight director in mission control, Leroy Cain, assured journalists engineers had concluded any damage to the spacecraft was considered minor.

The shuttle was the world's first reusable space vehicle and Columbia was the oldest of a fleet of four and flew her maiden voyage in April 1981.

Her sister ship Challenger exploded soon after take-off 17 years ago killing six astronauts and schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Three days later President Bush led a memorial service to the seven astronauts at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

In a statement the families of the astronauts insisted the tragedy should not hamper future space programs.

An independent investigation team spent months studying data recovered from computers tracking Columbia's final moments, and thousands of pieces of recovered debris.

The final conclusions of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board, published in August 2003, confirmed the view that a breach of the shuttle's heat shield on take-off caused it to break up on re-entry. But it was also highly critical of Nasa itself, saying management blunders were as much to blame as technical problems for the destruction of the shuttle.

It also said that while the space shuttle was not inherently unsafe, a number of mechanical changes should be made in order to ensure safety before flights resume.

It made 29 major recommendations aimed at both a short-term return to space and continuing exploration in the long term.

**YOUR STARS**

**Aries**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Someone in your life is going through some heavy issues that you might not be aware of. This person's recent odd behavior could be leaking into your relationship and subtly.

**Taurus**  
April 20-May 20  
Today is a very good day to follow up on anything that is pending in your life right now, so double-check the many irons that are in your fire. Are you sure you have everything under control?

**Gemini**  
May 21-Jun. 21  
Make some sweeping gestures, and add a few more generous acts to your repertoire. The people you encounter every day influence your mood more than you may realize — even the people you see only once.

**Cancer**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Today you might get some unexpected reactions about your recent suggestion or action — it turns out that some people have thinner skin than you realized. This could be a critical point.

**Leo**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
You can't always get what you want when you want it. But overall, time will be on your side today — when an unexpected hole appears in your schedule, fill it with a gossip-fest or fun catch-up conversation with a friend.

**Virgo**  
Aug. 23-Sept. 22  
Sometimes when you delve too deep, you discover more than you wanted to know. It's extremely important to respect limits right now, your own and other people's.

**Libra**  
Sep.23-Oct. 22  
Do not be shy about reaching out for the help you want — you have a strong reputation for being a hard worker, and it won't be hurt if you take advantage of a new situation.

**Scorpio**  
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21  
There are people in your life who should not be there, and unless you realize that they are not good for you, they will continue to negatively affect your journey.

**Sagittarius**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
It's time for you to follow your urge to get more social! Find out what opportunities there are for you to get out and get a bit wild. Make some phone calls and find out if anyone in your group is feeling the same itch.

**Capricorn**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
You don't have to let weighty issues get the better of you. If there is a big decision on your plate, you can handle it better right now if you take your emotions out of the equation.

**Aquarius**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
Sometimes, when people get too obsessive about what they want from life, they forget about the wonderful things that are in their life already — including the people they love (and the people who love them).

**Pisces**  
Feb.19-Mar. 20  
Speak out about what you know, and in as much detail as you can. Holding on to your pride or acting out of suspicion isn't going to get you anywhere. The more you share, the more you will come to understand.

**THE BORN LOSER** by Chip Sansom



**SUDOKU**

**Easy**

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

**Easy+**

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

**Medium**

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

**Hard**

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

**WEATHER**

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

**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS:** 1- Native of Hyderabad or Mumbai; 7- Deranged; 10- Lopsided victory; 14- Yellowish brown pigment; 15- \_\_\_ see it...; 16- Inventor Rubik; 17- One making fun; 18- UFO pilots; 19- Actor Estrada; 20- Specialist's point; 23- Commonplace; 26- Decoration at the top of a chair leg; 27- "Exodus" actor Sal; 28- Elvis's middle name; 29- Old California fort; 30- Hurried; 31- Garment worn by dancers; 33- Racket; 34- Gown renters; Abbr.; 37- D.C. pol; 38- Compass point opposite WSW; 39- Use an abacus; 40- Get thee \_\_\_ nunnery; 41- Bass, e.g.; 42- Neither partner; 43- Down-to-earth type; 45- After taxes; 46- Bro's counterpart; 47- Would \_\_\_ to you?; 48- Cop \_\_\_; 51- Firearm; 52- Bob and Elizabeth; 53- Lounging robe; 56- Trent of the Senate; 57- Bleat of a sheep; 58- \_\_\_ Pieces; 62- Bacchanalian cry; 63- Neighbor of Syr.; 64- Stanza of six lines; 65- Barrett of gossip; 66- Bashful; 67- Haunt;

**DOWN:** 1- Believer's suffix; 2- Never, to Nietzsche; 3- Narc's employer; 4- Moment; 5- Slippery as \_\_\_; 6- Pusher pursuer; 7- Frenzied woman; 8- Moving; 9- Frisbee, e.g.; 10- Land, as a fish; 11- Senator Hatch; 12- Join; 13- Capital of Japan; 21- Guy who tends goats; 22- Actress Plummer; 23- Light wood; 24- Staggering; 25- Nary a soul; 29- Ready \_\_\_; 30- Travels on; 32- Virgil hero; 33- Boldness; 34- Motionless; 35- Comic O'Donnell; 36- Fills to the gills; 44- Pride woman; 45- Lipton competitor; 46- Sweet; 48- Freud contemporary; 49- Brigham Young University site; 50- Divulge; 51- Grind, as one's teeth; 52- Nerd; 54- African wading bird; 55- Roughly; 59- Canonized mlle.; 60- Some MIT grads; 61- Ave. crossers;

**Yesterday's solution**

S	H	R	U	S	O	B	E	Y	C	H	E	T							
K	E	A	N	U	C	A	V	E	H	E	A	R							
E	A	V	E	S	T	R	I	M	A	R	T	E							
E	V	E	N	T	A	B	L	E	S	P	O	O							
T	E	N	D	R	I	L	E	E	S	E	E	D							
T	I	L	E	T	W	I	R	L											
N	O	U	N	S	A	O	R	T	A	E	S	A							
B	E	R	G	A	T	R	E	E	B	E	R								
A	R	N	G	R	O	A	N	E	R	E	C	T							
C	O	G	N	A	C	D	R	E	S	S	E	S							
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N	O	F	S	R	O	A	R	T	E	A	R	E							

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- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IACM 28 387 333
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## RUGBY

# Ntamack & Williams to make 6N debuts in France vs Wales

Jerome Pugmire, Paris

Saturday, 04:00am  
France v Wales  
H 2.05, D 26, A 2.1

**T**WO players with unpredictability and flair will make their Six Nations debuts for France and Wales at Stade de France early tomorrow [Macau time].

Lining up at center for France is 19-year-old Romain Ntamack, who won the world under-20 championship last year and is the son of one of the finest wingers Les Tricolores have produced.

For Wales, Tomos Williams was preferred at scrumhalf while Gareth Davies was in the reserves after recovering from a thigh strain.

"He is not the biggest man in the world, but he's competitive," Wales coach Warren Gatland said of Williams. "We feel he is a player with a future. [...] He's got some lovely little touches and a bit of X-factor about him."

While Williams has a handful of tests to his name, Ntamack has never played for France.

However, he has shown glimpses of his undoubted talent for club side Toulouse and for the French Barbarians. His father, Emile Ntamack, played 46 times for France and was renowned for his strong running and spectacular tries from deep.

France coach Jacques Brunel is hopeful the son can add some finesse and subtlety to a French midfield that has been one dimensional for several years. Burly center Mathieu Bastareud was dropped.



France's Romain Ntamack (center) passes the ball during a training session at the National Rugby Center in Marcoussis, south of Paris, yesterday

"We preferred Ntamack because he's shown what he can do at the highest level with Toulouse, as much in the Top 14 as he has in the European Cup," Brunel said. "Romain still has to improve [in defense] but we have no doubt he will overcome this obstacle pretty quickly."

Brunel has paired him alongside Wesley Fofana, who is playing in his final Six Nations, and left out Bastareud completely. Although Brunel insists "it's not a punishment" to drop Bastareud, the decision clearly surprised Gatland.

"We had expected him to be included. He has been a big part of their squad," Gatland said. "I thought if he wasn't in the starting XV, he would be on the bench as an impact player for the last 20 minutes."

After France lost at home to Fiji last November, Bastareud described his own team as "little boys" after an abject performance. But even though France was poor in that match and in other games last year, Gatland remains wary.

"Their last [home] game in the Six Nations was a win against England, and they should have beaten Ireland in that first game as well," he said. "They are going to be a tough proposition. It looks to me like they've got a big, bruising forward pack and a backline with flair, talent and footwork."

"We will use our wingers or midfield. They will probably use their forward pack. It's an exciting challenge," Gatland added. "We are coming under a bit of pressure. They clearly want to

be big and physical up front, and play some rugby when they get out wide."

Brunel also called up another newcomer in lock Paul Willemse, a mobile player whom he hopes will add something extra to France's static

forward play of late.

The 26-year-old Willemse, who was born in the South Africa capital Pretoria and plays for Montpellier, will be in the second row alongside the powerful but inconsistent Sebastien Vahaamahina.

Morgan Parra was at scrumhalf for his 70th cap after missing last year's tournament with a knee injury and the November home tests with a wrist injury. Camille Lopez will start at flyhalf. They are club teammates at Clermont and both are able penalty kickers.

"We've been trying to put them together for the past year, but injuries stopped us doing so," Brunel said. "They have a good understanding at club level."

Tough-tackling Maxime Medard was at fullback, the beefy Damian Penaud on the right wing and the speedy Yoann Huget on the left flank.

Brunel has not taken any selection risks with his front three in the pack.

Jefferson Poirot will make his 23rd appearance; Uini Atonio his 32nd, and captain Guilhem Guirado his 64th.

France has not won the Six Nations since 2010, the year it clinched the Grand Slam. The team finished fourth last year, while Wales finished second behind Ireland.

Gatland announced two other changes to the side that beat South Africa in November, with prop Rob Evans and flanker Josh Navidi both selected. **AP**

## LINEUPS

**FRANCE:** Maxime Medard, Damian Penaud, Wesley Fofana, Romain Ntamack, Yoann Huget, Camille Lopez, Morgan Parra; Louis Picamoles, Arthur Iturria, Wenceslas Lauret, Paul Willemse, Sebastien Vahaamahina, Uini Atonio, Guilhem Guirado (captain), Jefferson Poirot. Reserves: Julien Marchand, Dany Priso, Demba Bemba, Felix Lambey, Gregory Alldritt, Baptiste Serin, Gael Fickou, Geoffrey Doumayrou.

**WALES:** Liam Williams; George North, Jonathan Davies, Hadleigh Parkes, Josh Adams; Gareth Anscombe, Tomos Williams; Ross Moriarty, Justin Tipuric, Josh Navidi, Alun Wyn Jones (captain), Adam Beard, Tomas Francis, Ken Owens, Rob Evans. Reserves: Elliot Dee, Wyn Jones, Samson Lee, Cory Hill, Aaron Wainwright, Gareth Davies, Dan Biggar, Owen Watkin.

## FOOTBALL

# Asian Cup organizers review UAE complaint on Qatar players

**T**HROWING Qatar's appearance in the Asian Cup final in doubt, organizers are investigating a complaint by the United Arab Emirates about the eligibility of two Qatar players from the semifinal.

The complaint adds another layer to Qatar's politically-charged progress to today's [23:00] final of the continental soccer showpiece in the UAE,

which as a country is part of a quartet boycotting Doha diplomatically and politically.

There was an angry reaction from the home crowd in Abu Dhabi earlier this week as the UAE was beaten in the semifinal, with shoes thrown at Qatari players after striker Almoez Ali scored the second goal in a 4-0 win.

The UAE soccer federation has now questioned

whether Ali, with a tournament-leading tally eight goals, and Bassam Al-Rawi meet FIFA's requirements to play for the 2022 World Cup host nation.

"The Asian Football Confederation has received a protest from the United Arab Emirates FA regarding the eligibility of two Qatar players," the governing body said in a statement yesterday. "This protest will now be reviewed

in line with the AFC regulations."

The ultimate sanction would see Qatar having to forfeit the match. Qatar is due to play Japan today in its first-ever Asian Cup final.

An hour after announcing the review of the complaint into Qatar, the AFC's newsletter was headlined: "Excitement builds towards a thrilling finale." **AP**



Qatar's forward Almoez Ali

opinion

Bizcuits

Leanda Lee



ETHNOCENTRISM CLOUDS ANALYSIS

Although flagged in gaming analyst reports back in February 2018, the public announcement of a reshuffling of the control of the Stanley Ho family gaming empire on Wednesday 23rd brought with it the predictable rush from journalists seeking gaming analyst commentary. Two basic positions have been taken on the future of the SJM/STDM/Shun Tak conglomerate: a) those who stood firm with their long predicted inevitable heated family bun fight, leading to a weakening or stagnation of SJM, and b) those who allow for sophisticated abilities of key family members to negotiate a settlement that will place the group of companies in a position of strength leading into the new gaming concession bidding process.

The former was exemplified by rather disparaging statements from Sanford C. Bernstein during that week: "The hope that the Pansy Ho – Fok alliance can change the direction of SJM is just that at this stage – "hope" and "a hydra-like three headed co-chairman group and the elevation of entrenched management was not an indication that any shake up at the company for the benefit of independent shareholders [is] forthcoming. The byzantine corporate ownership and governance structure of SJM is not alleviated by this agreement."

From an extra-jurisdictional perspective, like Galaxy, SJM does not package information for investors in a form readily absorbed by the normal EBITDA-seeking, short-term, American Corporate Governance expectations focused on stock values. Apples and oranges do not compare well, however.

Corporate governance practices need to be in line with ethical and societal expectations within a particular context. Whilst directors are required to act in the best interests of the company, in this type of family conglomerate, the interests may be seen more broadly and based over a longer time-frame. It is not just SJM and its position in gaming vis-à-vis its competitors – as is the focus of the sell-side analyst - but the syndicated and synergistic cross-benefits that can be derived from the group as a whole that is currently being moulded.

Western business theories and practices are but one view of the ways of business. Granted, these are underpinned by empirical evidence in the form of data gathered from myriad business cases over decades, and, what is found in the data informs the development of theories. These theories continue to be tested in situ over time and serve to train business students and advise business leaders on how the business world works: the business world as we know it. To date, that foundational situation has been overwhelming concentrated in North America.

Business and management theories are mostly presented in university business schools as universal in complete ignorance of the implied imperialism. It is as if the most important, the only worthy and relevant set of ways of doing things in business is the western way. Only academic hippies on the fringe talk of comparative management studies and nod to the validity of alternative business structures and modes of conduct in other contexts. Even in comparative studies, the base for comparison is western – oh so ignorantly ethnocentric of us.

When educated in a particular context, targeting certain types of customers by offering them particular measures and definitions of corporate success packaged in a pre-digested form so that buy-sell decisions can be made on the run, one is likely to view as a pariah and a dinosaur any organization that dares step outside of those expectations and which measures its own success differently.

The Western reductionist short-term EBITDA measure of individual companies will continue to drive typical gaming commentary because that is what is understood by a particular market and readership. There are other ways to measure success; for example - if we must remain in the economic paradigm - return on investor capital, and that would paint an entirely different picture.

THE PRIVATE JET CARRYING COMEDIAN BUZZ MAKES EMERGENCY LANDING AT RDU

A private jet carrying a comedian who had just performed in North Carolina had to make an emergency landing at Raleigh-Durham International Airport.

New outlets cite an Instagram post from Canadian comedian and actor Russell Peters, who says the plane suffered a flat tire while taking off late Wednesday night. He says the pilot made the announcement 30 minutes into a flight to Texas on the way

back to Los Angeles.

The pilot burned off some fuel before making a bumpy landing at 1:30 a.m. Peters says no one was hurt.

RDU officials say there were seven people on board. Peters and his crew were able to take a later commercial flight.

Peters had made a stop on his "Deported World Tour" at the Durham Performing Arts Center yesterday [Macau time].

USA

Deep freeze kills eight, disruptions persist



THE painfully cold weather system that put much of the Midwest into a historic deep freeze was expected to ease yesterday, though temperatures could still tumble to record lows in some places before the region begins to thaw out.

Disruptions caused by the cold will persist, too, including power outages and canceled flights and trains. Crews in Detroit will need days to repair water mains that burst earlier, and other pipes can still burst in persistent subzero temperatures.

Before the worst of the cold begins to lift, more frigid weather is expected. Record-breaking cold hit northern Illinois yesterday, when the temperature in Rockford hit negative 34 Celsius. The city's previous record of negative 33 Celsius was set on Jan. 10, 1982.

Rockford, which is about 129 kilometers northwest of Chicago, has temperature records dating back to 1905.

As temperatures bounce back into the single digits early today [Macau time] and into the comparative balmy 20s by Saturday, more people were expected to return to work in the nation's third-largest city, which resembled a ghost town after most offices told employees to stay home.

The blast of polar air that enveloped much of the Midwest yesterday closed schools and businesses and strained infrastructure with some of the lowest temperatures in a generation. The

deep freeze snapped rail lines, canceled hundreds of flights and strained utilities.

Chicago dropped to a low of around minus 30 Celsius, slightly above the city's lowest-ever reading of minus 32 Celsius from January 1985. Milwaukee had similar conditions. Minneapolis recorded minus 32 Celsius. Sioux Falls, South Dakota, saw minus 31 Celsius.

Record-breaking cold hit northern Illinois yesterday (-34 C)

Wind chills reportedly made it feel like minus 45 Celsius or worse. Trains and buses in Chicago operated with few passengers. The hardest commuters ventured out only after covering nearly every square inch of flesh against the extreme chill, which froze ice crystals on eyelashes and eyebrows in minutes.

The Postal Service took the rare step of suspending mail delivery in many places, and in southeastern Minnesota, even the snowplows were idled by the weather.

The bitter cold was the result of a split in the polar vortex, a mass of cold air that normally stays bottled up in the Arctic. The split allowed the air to spill much

farther south than usual. In fact, Chicago was colder than the Canadian village of Alert, one of the world's most northerly inhabited places. Alert, which is 804 kilometers from the North Pole, reported a temperature that was a couple of degrees higher.

Officials in dozens of cities focused on protecting vulnerable people from the cold, including the homeless, seniors and those living in substandard housing.

At least eight deaths were linked to the system, including an elderly Illinois man who was found several hours after he fell trying to get into his home and a University of Iowa student found behind an academic hall several hours before dawn. Elsewhere, a man was struck by a snowplow in the Chicago area, a young couple's SUV struck another on a snowy road in northern Indiana and a Milwaukee man froze to death in a garage, authorities said.

Aside from the safety risks and the physical discomfort, the system's icy grip also took a heavy toll on infrastructure, halting transportation, knocking out electricity and interrupting water service.

Amtrak canceled scores of trains to and from Chicago, one of the nation's busiest rail hubs. Several families who intended to leave for Pennsylvania stood in ticket lines at Chicago's Union Station only to be told all trains were canceled until tomorrow. AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	55-75 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Moderate
Ambient	50-70 Moderate

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

IRAN Three European nations appeared poised yesterday to announce they have created a way for Iran to continue trade with them and avoid re-imposed U.S. sanctions, two Iranian officials said, setting up a potential collision with President Donald Trump.



SAUDI ARABIA's unprecedented anti-corruption sweep that saw top princes, businessmen, military officers and officials detained at the Ritz-Carlton hotel has concluded after netting the government around USD106.6 billion, the Royal Court said.

CYPRUS The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution urging Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders to agree on terms for starting negotiations aimed at reunifying their divided island.

ITALY has fallen back into recession, intensifying concerns about the 19-country eurozone economy and a possible flare-up in the debt market jitters that haunted the bloc in recent years. More on p15

POLAND About 2,500 kilograms of meat from sick cows who were slaughtered illegally in Poland has been exported to 10 other European Union countries, the country's top state veterinary official said yesterday.



VENEZUELA Citizens of every age, class and profession poured into the streets of the capital to demand that President Nicolas Maduro step down and to express their support for the young opposition leader who has declared himself interim president.

CUBA Canada announced it is removing up to half of the Canadians at its embassy in Cuba after another diplomat fell mysteriously ill. Canada has confirmed 14 cases of unexplained health problems since early 2017.