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VENEZUELA CRISIS

China's under pressure to recognize Guaidó

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WORLD BRIEFS



PHILIPPINES Five suspected Abu Sayyaf militants accused of involvement in a deadly suicide attack at a Roman Catholic cathedral in the southern Philippines have surrendered to authorities, the national police chief said yesterday amid renewed terrorism fears.
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AUSTRALIA Three of Australia's largest banks could face prosecution following a yearlong investigation into misconduct recommended tougher oversight and better consumer safeguards.
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AFGHANISTAN The Taliban said yesterday they will participate in what they call "intra-Afghan" talks in Moscow designed to bring together prominent Afghan figures, including former President Hamid Karzai, opposition figures and tribal elders — but no Kabul government officials.
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In the year of the pig, Hong Kong debates its boar problem

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CNY SUPPLEMENT INSIDE

AD

Message for Chinese New Year 2019 Shen Beili Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Macao SAR



Shen Beili

Bidding farewell to the prosperous year of the Dog, we ring in the year of the Pig. On behalf of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Macao Special Administrative Region, I would like to send New Year greetings and best wishes to people in Macao, and wish you and your families success and happiness.

The past year witnessed new achievements in all spheres of life in China, thanks to the concerted efforts of the whole nation under the guidance of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. The nation's GDP hit a record high of 90 trillion yuan and trade volume exceeded 30 trillion yuan. The three tough fights against major risks, poverty, and pollution scored initial successes. The supply-side structural reform made further headway. People are more satisfied with their ever-improving lives. The Chang'e-4 lunar probe made historic touchdown on the far side of the moon. Our second aircraft carrier set sail on its maiden voyage. The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area gained momentum for development and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao grand bridge stretched like a dragon treading the tides. We convened the grand gathering to mark the 40th Anniversary of reform and opening-up; we hosted the first China International Import Expo which attracted worldwide attendance; and we pledged to carry forward reform and opening-up.

Looking at Macao, the beautiful city of lotus flower remains peaceful and becomes more prosperous. The SAR government with His Excellency Mr. Chui Sai On as the Chief Executive stays committed to good governance. Macao achieves sound economic growth and social stability. Mechanism for safeguarding national security and proactively involving in the Greater Bay Area Development and the Belt and Road initiative gains further improvement. The Commissioner's Office spares no effort to serve Macao's external exchanges, protect the legitimate interest and rights of Macao compatriots who visit overseas and ensure the lasting stability and prosperity in Macao.

Looking to the new year, we will celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China, and the 20th birthday of the Macao SAR. With the upcoming "double happiness", it's the golden time to strive for our dreams. The Office will make further efforts to advance the Macao-related foreign affairs, and make new contributions to the successful implementation of the principle of "One country, Two systems".

Lynzy Valles

A recent study showed that the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among students at a local university stood at 5.1 percent, following Typhoon Hato which struck Macau in August 2017.

A study of the Global and Community Mental Health Research Group at the University of Macau, which was conducted one month after the typhoon, suggested that mental health services should be available and accessible for students and the general public.

The study – which 1,876 university students participated in – also examined the effect of media exposure on the prevalence of disaster-related PTSD.

It determined that media exposure to drownings and the portrayal of emotional reactions to such tragedies were associated with PTSD, while exposure to heroic acts and information about the typhoon was associated with less PTSD.

According to associate professor Brian Hall, the director of the research group, the findings of the study suggested that students and the public would need access to mental health services, citing the frequency of typhoons in summer.

Hall further explained the importance of developing a disaster preparedness plan to prevent outcomes such as PTSD, noting that the 5.1 percent of study respondents who had PTSD represents nearly 7 percent

Study shows need of post-traumatic stress management

of local students.

"Wider preparedness efforts should also include strengthening the capacity of first responders to provide psychological first aid – a standard supportive prevention approach following natural disasters that almost anyone can learn," Hall said.

This study points to a need to ensure we can meet the mental health needs of our students on our campus.

BRIAN HALL

"Longer term, mental health services should be developed that can meet the need for people who experience mental health issues. This should be done regardless of the typhoon. Since this study involved students, it also points to a need to ensure we can meet the mental health needs of our students on our campus," he added.



Brian Hall

According to the study, in which 66 percent of participants were from the SAR, the prevalence of PTSD was higher among local than non-local students.

When questioned whether it would be challenging for the region to have a mechanism to respond to such cases, Hall replied that mental health should be a priority in the city.

"It will be challenging so long as mental health remains low in priority in the city. The first step is to acknowledge that mental health and well-being is a critical

aspect of health," "Developing capacity in the city can take the form of training mental health providers, and training non-specialists like nurses to deliver psychological help. There are many possible strategies, but mental health needs to be an agreed upon priority that is important for Macau's continued development," Hall concluded.

The study concluded that there were potential positive effects of media use on communities following a disaster, and suggested that future studies may explore the benefit of certain media content in preventing or reducing PTSD.

"Future studies should investigate the long-term psychological consequences following Typhoon Hato, college students' resilience, and barriers and facilitators of psychological treatment to guide mental health services and facilities," the study noted.

BRIAN HALL RECEIVES AWARD FROM CAS

BRIAN HALL from the University of Macau's (UM) Department of Psychology has been awarded the Presidential International Fellowship for Foreign Talents by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). According to a statement issued by UM, this fellowship will provide Hall with an honorary appointment in the CAS and the Key State Laboratory in Mental Health, in the Insti-

tute of Psychology in Beijing. Hall will also be provided with research funding to initiate new joint collaborations in the field of traumatic stress studies in China. Hall was recently appointed associate editor of the journal "Applied Psychology: Health and Well-being," and was awarded the first Global Mental Health Fellowship by the World Health Organization.

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CE Election Committee member polling day set for June 16

The polling day to choose the members of the Chief Executive Election Committee is set for June 16, according to Executive Order No. 54/2019, which was published yesterday in the Official Gazette. The Chief Executive is appointed by the Central Government and elected by the Chief Executive Election Committee, a body comprised of 400 members from four sectors of society. The First Sector represents the industrial, commercial and financial sub-sectors. The Second Sector comprises people from the cultural, educational, professional and sports sub-sectors. The Third Sector includes representatives of the labor, religious affairs and social service sub-sectors. Finally, the Fourth Sector membership is formed by members of the Legislative Assembly, representatives of the Municipal Affairs Bureau and Macau's delegates to the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, respectively.

Airport passengers traffic up 20 percent in January

The Macau airport passenger traffic volume increased by 20 percent year-on-year in January 2019, according to a press release issued on Saturday. About 25,000 passengers used the airport per day in January. The airlines will add 200 extra charter flights during the Chinese Lunar New Year to accommodate the surging travel demand for local residents and tourists, it said. The airport also recorded steady growth in aircraft movements in the first month of 2019, due to the introduction of new airlines and more destinations, according to the press release.

UM's English debating team reaches quarter-final of Thailand debate

Two teams from the University of Macau's (UM) English Debating Team recently participated in the Thailand Debate Open 2019 held in Bangkok. Both teams made it to the final competition stage and one team reached the quarter-final. This year's event attracted debating teams from Peking University, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, Taylor's University in Malaysia, SolBridge International School of Business in South Korea, and Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. According to a statement issued by UM, the team in the quarter-final was made up of Tristan Li Kun, a fourth-year student from the Faculty of Social Science (FSS) and a member of Lui Che Woo College; Kelly Zhang Yi, a third-year student from the Faculty of Business Administration and a member of Moon Chun Memorial College; and Garrett Li Jia Neng, a second-year master's student from the FSS. The team ultimately placed seventh in the tournament. The three members of the team were ranked among the top 20 debaters out of all 160 tournament participants.

CNY

Chui to promote 'steadier and more sustainable path for Macau'

CHIEF Executive Chui Sai On called for all Macau people to show their enterprise and work alongside the government to maintain the stability of the city's community, amid an uncertain and sometimes volatile global economic situation.

In a speech yesterday to mark the coming Year of the Pig, Chui said that the "government would seek to propel – in a courageous manner – a steadier and more sustainable path for Macau."

In his speech, the CE noted it was normal for a society to experience some adversity during the course of its development. He called for concerted efforts to infuse the local community with positive energy and help the region overcome any difficulties.

Current efforts to advance social development would also constitute clear strides toward building a better Macau for future generations, Chui said.



Chui Sai On

The Chief Executive noted that this year would mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, and the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the MSAR. "At a time of such significance, Macau will apply unremitting ef-

fort to ensure the successful implementation of the 'one country, two systems' principle, and to further integrate into overall national development," Chui stated in his speech.

Chui also noted that the Lunar New Year, also known

as the Spring Festival, is the most important time in Chinese culture, adding that all should – where feasible – take some time to share the joy and goodwill of the festival not only with their families, but also with people in need.

Local footballer signs with FC Girondins de Bordeaux



David Cardoso

MACAU'S young football player David Cardoso signed a contract last week to move from Portuguese team Boavista FC to French team FC Girondins de Bordeaux.

Cardoso started his footballer career in Macau before moving to Portugal at the age of 18, where he played for several teams, including Feirense, Maфра and Cova da Piedade. He then joined SC Braga, a main league team, and most recently played for Boavista FC, another main league team where he had been playing on the second division team.

According to information made available by the French club, the de-

fender is joining the Bordeaux city club on a two-year contract.

For the time being, Cardoso is also expected to be playing for the French Ligue 1 club second division team.

Cardoso is one of the French club's highlights of the winter transfer window. The club also announced the recruitment of the young French footballer, Yacine Adli, coming from French reigning champion Paris Saint-Germain FC.

David Cardoso is the son of Rui Cardoso, a Portuguese coach and long-term Macau resident who has coached several local championship teams. **RM**

Government issues clarification on Iec Long Firecracker Factory case

DUE to the many questions posed by local media regarding the land plot that was formerly home to the Iec Long Firecracker Factory in Taipa, the government has issued a statement of clarification. It states that following the 2016 investigation report by the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC), the government instructed the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, to proceed with the declaration of invalidity on the land swap agreement involving the plot, and to follow up on any developments on the case.

According to the statement, the government instructed the CCAC to conduct a criminal investigation in order to ascertain the existence of any evidence of corruption or fraud in the case, and has ordered the relevant authorities to institute disciplinary proceedings in case there is any proof that the officials involved were culpable, constituting a disciplinary offense.

Last week, on the sidelines of the Legislative Assembly plenary session, where the Secretary was present to reply to lawmakers' enquiries, Rosário said that the process was still ongoing and that no disciplinary procedures were applied to the former Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau director, Jaime Carion, due to the fact that no evidence justifying the measure could be found. Rosário remarked that if any other evidence or facts were to be found at a later stage, authorities would act accordingly.

The government has now reaffirmed the words of the Secretary due to the media's questioning, and has also reaffirmed that the secretariat has taken all necessary measures to ensure the reclamation of the land and with it, the reestablishment of legality.

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Wynn Macau announces salary increase

Wynn Macau yesterday announced a 2.5 to 6.4 percent salary increase, effective Feb. 1 for all eligible employees of Wynn Macau and Wynn Palace (excluding senior management). According to a statement issued by the gaming operator, the number of employees included represents close to 98 percent of the current workforce of 13,700. Eligible team members with a monthly salary of MOP16,000 or below will receive a salary increase of MOP600, equivalent to an increase of 3.8 to 6.4 percent. Eligible team members with a monthly salary above MOP16,000 will receive an average 2.5 percent salary increase. Recently, a one-month bonus was also given to all employees ahead of the Chinese New Year holiday.

Merchandise export value grows 8.1 percent in 2018

The total value of merchandise export increased by 8.1 percent year-on-year to MOP12.19 billion, the Statistics and Census Service revealed. In 2018, the value of re-exports grew by 12.3 percent to 10.66 billion patacas (about 1.32 billion U.S. dollars), but domestic exports declined by 14.3 percent to 1.53 billion patacas (approximately 189 million U.S. dollars). Analyzed by destination, merchandise export to the nine provinces of the Pan Pearl River Delta increased by 2.7 percent year-on-year to MOP1.96 billion in 2018. Exports to Hong Kong SAR (MOP 7.57 billion) and the European Union (MOP209 million) rose by 14.7 percent and 10 percent respectively. Exports of non-textiles went up by 10.3 percent year-on-year to MOP11.50 billion, of which the value of machines, apparatus and parts (MOP2.56 billion) grew by 93.1 percent, but that of electronic components (MOP491 million) declined by 33.8 percent.

Applications for Young Musicians Competition open in March

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) will hold the 37th Macau Young Musicians Competition between July 13 and August 4. Applications will be open from March 4 to 10. According to the IC, this instalment of the musical competition will be dedicated to piano and will feature 18 categories, with elementary, intermediate and advanced levels. First, second and third prizes, and distinction and merit certificates will be awarded in each category. Participants must hold a valid Macau SAR Resident Identity Card and must have been born in or after 1998 to qualify. In order to facilitate the application process, this year applicants must first register online, followed by payment and document submission. Applicants can register online from 10 a.m. on March 4 to 6 p.m. on March 10, through the Macao Young Musicians Competition webpage.

TEDxSenadoSquare debuts at Dom Pedro next month

Daniel Beittler

TEDx is returning to Macau next month with a brand new event adopting one of the enclave's most recognizable landmarks as its name.

A local production developed independently from the TED media organization, TEDxSenadoSquare will feature a lineup of up to nine Hong Kong- and Macau-based speakers, who will share their inspirational stories and ideas under the theme of 'ripple'.

"We spent a lot of time thinking about a theme for this year because we wanted it to be diverse," event curator Venus Loi from the organizing team told the Times yesterday. "We know that the first TEDx[SenadoSquare] event will not be big enough to generate a huge push for a new idea. But we hope that it could make small ripples that could slightly influence peoples' minds and their daily life."

Speakers are everything at a TEDx event and though the speaker lineup for TEDxSenadoSquare has not yet been disclosed, Loi hinted that they would hail from a variety of different professions and include an architect, a photographer, a

DANIEL BEITTLER



Venus Loi

musician, and an environmental activist.

Speaking to the Times yesterday, Loi explained her passion for TED and a history of involvement with its affiliate organizations. Prior to her team's current project in Macau, Loi worked on several TEDx events in the United Kingdom and participated in organizer coaching conferences on the European mainland.

It turns out her own passion began with a TED talk.

Hans Rosling's "The best stats you've ever seen", in which statistics about the developing world are presented in a striking and visual manner, left a lasting impression on Loi. Screened by her math class teacher back in high school, Loi recalled yesterday how it transformed a dry subject into an exciting one.

"That's where it began," said Loi. "That talk changed how I relate to numbers [...] and even today I prefer data-related talks."

"I looked more into TED talks from that day forward," she added.

TEDxSenadoSquare will be held at the Dom Pedro Theater on Sunday, March 3. The talks will be in Mandarin and Cantonese with subtitles in Chinese and English. They will be filmed and uploaded to the official TEDx channel.

“We spent a lot of time thinking about a theme for this year because we wanted it to be diverse.”

VENUS LOI
EVENT CURATOR

Early bird "blind" tickets went on sale last week and were sold out within four days, according to organizers. The next batch starts from February 8.

Local bank sues Hong Kong-based airline over unpaid debt

Luso International Banking has sued Hong Kong Airlines for allegedly failing to repay a large portion of a USD20 million loan, following repeated demands.

According to a South China Morning Post report, court documents showed that the airline borrowed USD20 million from the local bank in October 2017 on the condition that the principal loan must be repaid with interest by December 28, 2018.

However, the bank's lawyers said that the troubled airline had only paid USD257,943 by January 1, breaching its contractual obligations.

Thus on January 2, the bank demanded the outstanding debt be paid within seven days.

Luso International Bank also wrote to subsidiary Hong Kong Airlines Limited, now listed as the defendant, following its agreement to provide a guarantee.

"Despite repeated requests and demands [...] the borrower has failed to pay the ou-



tstanding debts due and payable to the plaintiff, and the defendant has failed to pay the guaranteed amount to the plaintiff or any part thereof," the writ said.

Luso International Bank was incorporated in Macau in 1974 and has become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Xiamen International Bank, the first joint-venture bank in Chi-

na. According to information available on the bank's website, in 2015, it completed "the capital injection process and has become a truly local bank in terms of shareholdings." In 2016, the bank's first mainland Chinese branch opened in Guangzhou after approval by the relevant mainland and Macau authorities.

Meanwhile, earlier this mon-

th, Hong Kong's Air Transport Licensing Authority said that it had reviewed Hong Kong Airlines' finances and had demanded further clarification.

An airline spokesman told SCMP that the company had been working with the bank to address the outstanding issue.

"This has no impact on our business and we are operating as normal," he said.

The troubled airline is yet to find a chief of finance after a former executive resigned in December after fewer than 18 months on the job.

Since July 2018, the airline has seen six directors leave their posts.

Hong Kong Airlines, backed by debt-laden Chinese conglomerate HNA Group, operates 38 passenger aircraft and flies to 36 destinations.

According to reports, the group sold its last land plot near the Hong Kong's former Kai Tak airport for HKD3.9 million, ending its ambitions for a massive residential project.



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Home prices in London's best districts hit a six-year low

Political chaos and a series of tax hikes pushed the average price of a home in London's most-desired districts down by almost 5 percent last year, paring it to a low not seen since the start of 2013. Home prices in the U.K. capital's prime postcodes - which include Chelsea, Islington, Kensington and Mayfair - dropped 1.5 percent in the final quarter of 2018 as lawmakers failed to reach an accord on Brexit, data compiled by broker Knight Frank show. That extended the decline for the year to 4.6 percent. London's high-end house prices have been hit by a succession of tax reforms that have boosted the sales-tax bill for the most expensive homes to as much as 15 percent of the purchase price. The hikes, coupled with uncertainty about the country's political and economic future, has decimated the market for homes and reduced transaction levels to historic lows.

Hong Kong gas supplier offers 'excellent wife' cooking class

A Hong Kong company has raised eyebrows by promoting an "Excellent Wife" cooking course. "If you aspire to be the best girlfriend or wife in town, 'Excellent Wife' cooking course is perfect for you," says the text on a flyer by Towngas Cooking Centre, which is operated by Hong Kong & China Gas Co. "Excellent Wife Certificate" is written in bold on the top. A spokeswoman for Hong Kong & China Gas confirmed the advertisement was authentic, though declined to elaborate on the decision behind the phrasing. The HKD2,500 course consists of five lessons covering areas such as how to treat a new wok, steaming skills and abalone preparation, the company website shows. Hong Kong's "Equal Opportunities Commission would be interested to know whether men are allowed to go to this course," said shareholder activist David Webb, who posted a caption of the flyer on his Twitter account. "Perhaps Towngas needs to modernize its marketing people. Hong Kong is a very conservative and old-fashioned society in many ways - they still don't allow gay marriage or civil unions for example."

Huawei staff expelled from Denmark after work permit checks

TWO employees at Huawei Technologies Inc. in Denmark were expelled following an inspection focusing on improper work arrangements.

The company's offices in Copenhagen were searched on Thursday and four people were initially charged with breaking Danish laws covering residence and work permits, Danish police said. The charges against two of the people were subsequently dropped, a police spokesperson said by phone yesterday.

It was a "routine investigation" that Danish authorities "regularly" conduct at work places relying on a high number of foreign employees, the spokesperson said. The



person, who asked not to be identified by name citing police policy, declined to provide more details, including the nationality of the workers.

A Huawei spokeswoman said: "These visa checks are routine, and we are co-operating with

the authorities."

The investigation comes as the company is under fire around the world over allegations it could enable spying by Chinese officials after the country passed a law mandating organizations and citizens to assist

national intelligence in their investigations. The U.S. has urged European allies, such as Germany, to shun Huawei's equipment, as telecoms carriers prepare for the next generation of wireless technology known as 5G. There is no evidence that the measures taken in Denmark are related to any concerns about spying.

Poland in January detained a Huawei employee and former high-ranking official at Poland's Internal Security Agency, accusing the two men of conducting espionage activities against Poland. Huawei has said it fired the employee for breaking Polish law, adding that his alleged actions have not relation to the company. **Bloomberg**

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THE young politician spearheading efforts to remove Venezuela's authoritarian leader called for a "transparent relationship" with China, a key investor in the country, saying any agreements made with the regime of Nicolas Maduro would be honored as long as they were lawfully done.

Juan Guaidó, the National Assembly leader, is at the forefront of a renewed push to remove Maduro who, with his grip on the military and courts, has presided over crackdowns on protesters, the opposition and a hollowing out of Venezuela's economy. The desperate conditions for ordinary people struggling with skyrocketing prices and power outages has spurred one of the biggest mass migrations of modern times.

"I will be very clear: all agreements that have been signed following the law will be respected," Guaidó said in a written interview. "If previous agreements were signed by adhering to the due process of approval by the National Assembly, they will be accepted and honored."

Guaidó has the backing of countries including the U.S. and Brazil, and is seeking to put a noose around Maduro's access to funds, primarily oil and gold exports and income from state-dominated businesses. China is one of the biggest investors in Venezuela, and while it has been an ally of socialist administrations dating back to Hugo Chavez, Guaidó portrayed it as having suffered from Maduro's corruption and financial mismanagement.

"We want to establish a transparent relationship with China and put an end to the plundering of our resources that has prevailed under Maduro's government, which has ultimately also affected Chinese investors," he said. "China's development projects in Venezuela have been falling as they have been affected and destroyed by corruption or debt default."

The stance of China and Russia is crucial to Maduro's ability to hold onto power. The countries have filled the investment and security vacuum caused by Washington's decades-long

CHINA-VENEZUELA

Guaidó wants Beijing to see Maduro is bad for business



estrangement from Caracas. But the resurgent U.S. interest makes things more complicated.

Russia has strongly supported Maduro while China has been more equivocal, mostly falling back on citing a longstanding policy of noninterference in other states' affairs.

Asked three times last week if China still saw Maduro as Venezuela's president, foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang simply noted that a special envoy of President Xi Jinping attended his inauguration in January. On Friday, Geng said China has "maintained close communication with all parties" and ties "shouldn't be undermined no matter how the situation evolves."

China is the second-biggest importer of crude from the country, but receives its barrels as repayments of debt. Venezuela hasn't been able to send enough crude to meet its obligations in recent years as its production cratered and

crude prices tumbled.

Beijing has invested more than USD62 billion in Venezuela, mostly through loans, since 2007. Last year, it imported 3.6 percent of its oil supply from the country, down from just over 5 percent in 2017. In the throes of a financial crisis last September, Maduro flew to Beijing to win a \$5 billion credit line from his "big sister" China. Chinese technology giants Huawei Technologies Corp. and ZTE Corp. have invested heavily in the country.

Not everyone views Beijing's behavior as benign. Ricardo Hausmann, an acclaimed Venezuelan economist and adviser to Guaidó who runs Harvard University's Center for International Development, has called the China Development Bank a "disgrace."

Still, China has shown itself able to navigate doing business in difficult places before. And it has probably learned lessons from Sri Lanka, Malaysia and the Maldives, where it cozied up to authoritarian leaders only to be caught wrong-footed by quick power shifts that saw new governments launch probes of Chinese-funded projects and loans.

While investments often come with strategic objectives, Beijing's leaders are also pragmatic, and a change of leadership that incurred losses for China would be affordable for its \$12 trillion economy.

"China is in a wait-and-see mode," said Pang Zhongying, a former Chinese diplomat who is an international relations professor at the Macau University of Science and Technology.

"People shouldn't assume that China will lend a hand based on the similarity in socialist systems."

Humanitarian aid would pour in in response to a change in government, and institutions like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank would probably play a role - as the U.S. helped facilitate funding - but Venezuela's economy would require funds for infrastructure that would be unlikely to generate a return for some time. That's where China, with its deep pockets and longer-term horizon, could come in.

Beijing has invested more than USD62b in Venezuela, mostly through loans, since 2007

"Any Venezuelan government will recognize the irreplaceable value of China as a large customer," said Mei Xinyu, a senior researcher at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation affiliated with the Ministry of Commerce. "China's lending is mutually beneficial for both sides."

Russia in contrast probably cannot afford to keep its investments open-ended and has some payments already due from the current regime.

"There is a lot of work to do in this regard and we want to

continue working closely with China," Guaidó said, referring to reconstruction. He cited sectors including oil and mining, plus light industry and assembly.

"With the reactivation of our country's productivity we see a cooperation with China as an opportunity, rather than a threat," he added. "We are ready to begin a constructive relationship and dialogue with China as soon as possible."

Guaidó did not confirm if there had been any outreach to Beijing, only saying he would like to meet with officials "in the shortest possible time to relaunch our relationship." A person in Caracas with knowledge of the interactions said there had already been some contact with the Chinese embassy.

Those conversations center around a commitment to honor debts to China, plus Venezuela's reconstruction needs, the person said, asking not to be identified talking about private conversations.

The outreach is being carefully done, the person added, because Guaidó's focus is on his relationship with the U.S., which views China's presence in the region with suspicion. President Donald Trump has escalated trade tensions with China since coming to power, leading Beijing to claim the U.S. is increasingly attempting to contain it.

"If the regime changes quickly and peacefully, it will depend on whether the U.S.-backed government in Guaidó recognizes the loans made under the past government," said Gui Chenxi, an oil analyst at CITIC Futures. "For now, Guaidó has signaled that payments will be maintained, but America will probably call the shots if he takes office."

Guaidó described the U.S. as both a commercial supporter and an important ally in the effort to oust Maduro. "Bilateral relationships are established on the basis of mutual respect and our relationship with the U.S. is historic," he said.

Even so, he added "the fact that we have consolidated relationships with other nations does not mean that we cannot open ourselves up to establishing relations with other nations."

"We live in an interconnected world where all nations have their own potential," Guaidó said. "Within that space, China has an important role to play because of its capabilities and flexibility as a commercial partner." **Bloomberg**

MORE EUROPEAN NATIONS RECOGNIZE GUIDÓ AS LEADER

SPAIN, FRANCE and Sweden have all announced that they are recognizing Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaidó as the country's interim president and are urging him to hold a new presidential election. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez told reporters in Madrid yesterday that "we are working for the return of full democracy in Venezuela: human rights, elections and no more political prisoners." French

Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, speaking to France Inter Radio, urged Guaidó to call an early presidential election that will ensure "the Venezuelan crisis ends peacefully." Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom told Swedish broadcaster SVT the vote that brought Maduro to power was not a "free and fair election." Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has so far rejected calls by European countries to call an early election.



In the year of the pig, Hong Kong debates its boar problem

LIKE many Asian communities, Hong Kong ushers in the astrological year of the pig. That's also good timing to discuss the financial center's contested relationship with its wild boar population.

While some argue for an ongoing cull to keep the boar numbers down, others urge preservation, a position the government has lately embraced.

A growing human population and encroaching urbanization have brought humans and wild pigs into increasing proximity, with the boars making frequent appearances on roadways, in housing developments and even in shopping centers.

The debate about how to handle them comes as the densely populated city of more than 7 million people is being festooned with pig-themed decorations in preparation for the holiday that officially begins on Feb. 5.

Not far from its cramped apartment blocks and neon lights, Hong Kong has plenty of green land, traditionally home to a variety of animals, including wild boars. Some areas where homes are close to parks or forests, such as Aberdeen in Hong Kong Island's south, have become popular spots for growing numbers of boars to forage for food amid the garbage cans.

The boars often don't hesitate to get close to people and traffic.

The government's Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department says it doesn't know how many wild boars there are in Hong Kong. But it has acknowledged a big increase in public

complaints about the animals over the past five years — from 294 in 2013, to 738 in 2017.

That prompted a review of policy starting last year, which included a halt to hunts by volunteer teams for boars deemed to be threats to property or public safety. Instead, the government is extending a policy of sterilizing the animals and feeding them contraceptives, as well as discouraging the public from providing them food. It also captures and tries to relocate wild boars away from residential areas as an alternative to killing them.

However, one local organization, "Wild Boar 70," is lobbying for the renewed culling of the wild boar population.

Other countries with large populations of wild pigs have a policy of controlling them by killing 70 percent of their numbers every year, according to spokesman Wesley Ho.

"Our goal is hopefully to raise public concern about Hong Kong's current problem of wild boar overpopulation, and about exactly what kind of animal these wild boars are," Ho said.

Nations such as France and the U.S. have to deal with large-scale damage to agriculture wrought by feral pigs, largely appealing to hunters as a solution.

Denmark this month began erecting a 70-kilometer fence along the German border to keep out wild boars in an attempt to prevent the spread of African swine fever, which could jeopardize the country's valuable pork industry. AP

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Boss has teamed up with New York-based artist Jeremyville to present a special Chinese New Year collection. Featuring a quirky, cartoon-like pink pig design in typical Jeremyville style, the capsule includes stylish apparel and a range of chic yet playful accessories including shoes, bag and key ring.



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AUSTRALIA

Largest banks may face prosecution after probe

THREE of Australia's largest banks could face prosecution following a yearlong investigation into misconduct recommended tougher oversight and better consumer safeguards.

A government-commissioned inquiry found widespread misbehavior in the banking and financial services industry that often went unpunished.

Commissioner Kenneth Hayne referred 24 incidents of misconduct to regulators for further investigation and possible civil or criminal charges against executives and corporations, including all major banks except Westpac Banking Corp.

The banks facing potential charges are Commonwealth Bank, ANZ Banking Group and National Australian Bank.

Hayne reported to Treasurer Josh Frydenberg who said the financial sector must change.

"It's a scathing assessment of conduct driven by greed and behavior that was in breach of existing law and fell well below community expectations," Frydenberg said.

The share prices of banks and other financial institutions have slipped over the past year as Hayne's inquiry heard evidence of customers being charged fees for services that weren't provided, dead customers being char-



Australian Banking Association CEO Anna Bligh speaks in Canberra at a press conference after the Banking Royal Commission findings were released yesterday

ged fees and vulnerable people being sold inappropriate financial products.

Banks have tightened their len-

ding criteria in recent months, anticipating closer scrutiny.

Australian Banking Association chief executive Anna Bligh,

a spokeswoman for the banking sector, said Hayne's recommendations represented a huge overhaul and top-to-bottom reform of banking and finance in Australia.

Today's report contains some very tough medicine for banks, including potential court cases

The inquiry would change what financial services and products banks could offer, how staff were paid and create new offenses for wrongdoing, she said.

"Today's report contains some

very tough medicine for banks, including potential court cases," Bligh said.

She was grateful that Hayne did not recommend tightening of lending rules.

"Banks were very concerned that there may be recommendations that would see lending practice tighten up and perhaps put pressure on the flow of credit into the economy," she said.

The Australian government responded positively to all Hayne's 76 recommendations. The government agreed to create a compensation fund for people who lost money from bad financial advice. It also agreed to set rules to help drought-stricken farmers avoid bank foreclosures.

The government accepted the report's recommendations to strength protections for consumers and improve financial sector accountability and regulatory effectiveness.

The Federal Court would be given jurisdiction to hear corporate criminal charges, which often are not heard for more than two years in congested state courts.

A new oversight authority would also report regularly on the effectiveness of the two regulators in the financial sector, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission and the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority. **AP**

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PHILIPPINES

Police say five church bombing suspects in custody

FIVE suspected Abu Sayyaf militants accused of involvement in the deadly bombing of a Roman Catholic cathedral in the southern Philippines have surrendered to authorities, the national police chief said yesterday.

Police Director-General Oscar Albayalde said the five would be charged with murder and attempted murder for their role in the Jan. 27 attack at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral in Sulu province's Jolo town, which killed 23 people and wounded about 100 others.

Police have said the attack was carried out by two Indonesian suicide bombers. Police said the suspects taken into custody had escorted the two Indonesians around Jolo and to a meeting with an Abu Sayyaf commander, Hatib Hajan Sawadjaan, who has been accused of plotting and funding the attack.

Police said the five suspects were led by a suspected local militant identified as Kammah Pae, who has denied any involvement in the bombing.

The attack has renewed terrorism fears across the Philippines and the national police have been placed on full alert and security has been streng-

thened in churches, shopping malls and other public areas. President Rodrigo Duterte has ordered troops to destroy the Abu Sayyaf, leading to a renewed military offensive in the south that has included air strikes and gunbattles.

The attack has also highlighted concerns that the Islamic State group may be gaining a foothold in Southeast Asia after sustaining major battle setbacks in Syria and Iraq. Local militants aligned with the brutal extremist group laid siege to Marawi city in the southern Philippines for five months in 2017 before they were defeated by the military.

Albayalde said the Abu Sayyaf, a small but violent group based in the jungles of predominantly Muslim Jolo and outlying island provinces, staged the cathedral bombing to gain attention and possible funding from the Islamic State group. The militants also want to foment sectarian

AP PHOTO



conflict between minority Muslims in the south and the country's majority Christians, he said.

"It's the very same reason why they pledged allegiance to ISIS. They are seeking funding and they are bombing, kidnapping and murdering targets to get funds from the ISIS," Albayalde said at a news conference in Manila.

The Abu Sayyaf, which has

about 300 to 400 armed fighters, has been blacklisted by the United States and the Philippines as a terrorist organization because of years of bombings, kidnappings and beheadings. The commander police have implicated in the cathedral attack, Sawadjaan, is a Muslim preacher who has been linked to ransom kidnappings and the beheadings of hostages, including two Ca-

nadian men in 2016.

Citing witnesses to the bombing and statements by some of the suspects, Albayalde said Sawadjaan funded the assembly of the cathedral bombs, which most likely were detonated by an Indonesia man, who had hidden in the south for about a year, and an Indonesian woman, who only recently entered the south.

From a southern island, the Indonesians traveled to Jolo by boat last month and were met by the group now in custody, he said.

Indonesian officials have said there is no conclusive evidence that the attackers were Indonesian.

Police said the attack was planned since last year. Albayalde said the explosives used were powerful pipe bombs, packed with ammonium nitrate, TNT and other chemicals that have been used by the Abu Sayyaf in past attack. **AP**

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HISTORIC VISIT

UAE gives pope pomp-filled welcome ceremony at visit's start



Pope Francis is welcomed by Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE's Armed Forces, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (right), and Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, at the Abu Dhabi Presidential Palace

Nicole Winfield & Jon Gambrell, Abu Dhabi

POPE Francis received a grandiose, pomp-filled welcome

yesterday as he opened his historic visit to the Arabian Peninsula with a meeting with Emirati leaders ahead of an address to faith leaders gathered in a Muslim

region known for its restrictions on religious freedom.

Francis arrived at the Abu Dhabi presidential palace in a simple Kia hatchback, but was

greeted with an artillery salute and military flyover by a country now at war.

Even for a nation known for its excesses, the Emiratis' red-carpet welcome was remarkable for a pope who prides himself on simplicity. It featured horse-mounted guards escorting the pontiff's motorcade through the palace gardens while the flyover trailed the yellow and white smoke of the Holy See flag and cannons boomed.

Francis stood somberly between Abu Dhabi's powerful crown prince, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and the Emirati vice president and prime minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, as the Vatican and Emirati anthems played and delegations were introduced in the courtyard of the domed palace.

In a message to the prince, written in the palace book of honor, Francis assured the people of the UAE of his prayers and "the divine blessings of peace and fraternal solidarity." The prince, for his part, gave Francis a framed notarized decree from June 22, 1963, in which the then-ruler of Abu Dhabi donated the land for the construction of the first Catholic church in the Emirates.

Francis' speech to the gathering of faith leaders yesterday evening

is to be the highlight of his brief, 40-hour visit to Abu Dhabi, the first to the Arabian Peninsula by a pope. His trip culminates today with the first-ever papal Mass on the Arabian Peninsula — a gathering expected to draw some 135,000 faithful in a never-before-seen display of public Christian worship here.

The pope's trip culminates today with the first-ever papal Mass on the Arabian Peninsula, a gathering expected to draw some 135,000 faithful

Francis arrived in the Emirati capital late on Sunday, hours after making an appeal from the Vatican for urgent observation of a limited cease-fire in war-torn Yemen so that food and medicine can get to its people, who are suffering the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The UAE has been Sau-

di Arabia's main ally in the war in Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition is fighting the country's Houthi rebels, and Francis' pre-trip appeal was a way for him to avoid embarrassing his hosts with a public denunciation of the humanitarian costs of the war while in the region.

"The cries of these children and their parents rise up" to God, he said at the Vatican before heading to Rome's airport for his flight.

In a sign that regional politics was playing a not-insignificant role in Francis' visit, the papal plane flew north of Qatar and around the peninsular, energy-rich nation on his flight Sunday.

Four Arab nations — Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — have been boycotting Qatar since June 2017 as part of a regional political dispute. Tensions are still high between the nations, especially after Qatar's win at the Emirates-hosted Asian Cup soccer tournament this past week.

By avoiding Qatari airspace, Francis omitted sending a telegram of greetings to the country's ruler, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, as he would do when flying through the airspace of countries. He sent one when passing by the island nation of Bahrain. **AP**

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what's ON



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UNTIL: February 24, 2019

VENUE: Macau Museum

ADMISSION: MOP15 (free admission on Tuesdays and on the 15th of every month)

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

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

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Offbeat

FILM FEATURING DISABLED ACTORS WINS SPAIN'S TOP GOYA AWARD



Actor Jesus Vidal celebrates his Goya award

The film "Campeones" ("Champions"), a comedy about a basketball team featuring actors with mental disabilities, won best picture at the Spanish Film Academy's Goya Awards.

Directed by Javier Fesser, "Campeones" took the top prize at the gala that occurred Sunday in Seville, while the dark thriller "El reino" ("The Kingdom") was the night's big winner, sweeping up seven awards.

The Goya for best new actor went to Jesus Vidal, who has a visual disability, for his role in "Campeones."

"You have recognized an actor with a disability. You don't know what you have done. Three words come to mind: inclusion, fun and visibility," Vidal told the audience.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez congratulated the winners, above all Vidal, on social media. Sanchez said Vidal's acceptance speech was "unforgettable."

"El reino," a dive into the murky realm of corruption in Spain, earned Rodrigo Sorogoyen the best director award. It also won best screenplay and best actor for Antonio de la Torre.

Sorogoyen will compete at this year's Oscar Awards in the category of best short film with "Madre" ("Mother").

Alfonso Cuarón's "Roma" won the best Spanish-language film made from outside Spain, while Pawel Pawlikowski's "Cold War" won for best European film.

The annual Goya Awards are Spain's version of the Oscars, honoring excellence in filmmaking for full-length features, shorts, animated films and documentaries. Members of the Spanish Film Academy are eligible to vote.

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13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:25	Mensagem de Sua Excelência o Chefe do Executivo, Doutor Chui Sai On, por Ocasião do Ano Novo Lunar
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	A Essência do Amor
16:55	Ano Novo Chinês Macau
17:25	All Aboard - Dentro Da Eurovisão 2018
18:30	TDM Desporto (Repetição)
19:35	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	Festividades de Macau - Ano Novo Chinês
21:50	O Contrato Sr.1
22:35	Viajante da Música
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Filhos da Nação Sr.2
00:25	Telejornal (Repetição)
01:10	RTPi Directo

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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 & 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 & 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 & English)

Duration: 106min

this day in history



Sir Freddie Laker

1982 LAKER AIRWAYS GOES BUST

Pioneering budget airliner Laker Airways has collapsed owing £ 270 million to banks and other creditors. After a four-hour board meeting at London's Gatwick Airport, company chairman Sir Freddie Laker asked Clydesdale Bank to appoint a receiver.

All 17 Laker aircraft have been ordered to return to the UK by tonight and the British Airports Authority has impounded a DC10 at Gatwick to cover the company's landing and parking costs.

Stranded passengers - numbering 6,000 - will have the return half of their tickets honoured by British Airways, Pan American Airways, Air Florida and British Caledonian.

The receiver Bill Mackey, partner of Ernst and Whinney, told the media: "There is no way that Sir Freddie Laker can carry on with this business in its present form. It has to be sold."

He said the Civil Aviation Authority had given six days' notice for the withdrawal of the operating licence for the fleet of Laker aircraft.

The company's 2,500 staff will continue to be paid until liquidators have finalised their decisions about redundancies.

Earlier in the week Sir Freddie was optimistic he had put together a £ 60 million rescue package for the company he established in 1966.

Talks with his creditors - and the close involvement of the Bank of England - have been underway since the autumn but they broke down when new figures showed ticket sales and bookings were lower than expected.

The government has also taken a keen interest in the fortunes of Laker - Mrs Thatcher is a personal admirer of Sir Freddie - but yesterday afternoon the Department of Trade confirmed once and for all there could be no state assistance.

Mr Mackey will meet Sir Freddie tomorrow and expects to have worked out the future of the airline by the end of the week.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Thousands of pounds poured into a "Save Laker" fund, set up by members of the public sympathetic to the flamboyant tycoon. But it was too little too late.

Within weeks Sir Freddie was attempting to re-launch an airliner by transferring the Laker Airways licences to a new company.

The Civil Aviation Authority officially blocked his efforts in May after objections from other airlines and the public.

Twelve months later Laker's American liquidators launched a billion-pound lawsuit against several airlines and US aircraft manufacturer McDonnell Douglas alleging conspiracy and violation of the anti-trust laws.

Freddie Laker retired to Florida, then the Bahamas. He died in Miami aged 83 on 10 February 2006.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Don't be afraid to say what you think. And don't judge other people (especially if they are from other cultures) for what they say, even if they are criticizing you.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
If you let yourself get too caught up in your fantasy life, you will miss out on some important information that pertains to your real life. So temper your optimism with a healthy dose of realism.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
The idea of partnership is very appealing to you right now — it will be a real win-win situation that lets you showcase all your strengths and lets the other person shine, too.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
The pace of the world is much too fast for you right now, so why don't you simply step aside and let the crazy parade of people run on by? Their destination doesn't really appeal to you anyway.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
The level of romance in your life is on a steady climb! This means very exciting things for you, especially since you're ready to share more of yourself with someone else.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Letting go of negative things will be extremely easy for you today — so let yourself be a slippery surface! Try to release yourself from being responsible for other people's happiness;

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22
Beware of people who talk the talk but cannot walk the walk today. Aligning yourself too closely with someone like this could mar your reputation and leave you feeling frustrated.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Any impulse buys you make today could drain your bank account of much-needed funds. Save your money for another day and don't take any financial risks.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
If you let everyone involved know that you might be feeling like a fish out of water, they will respect you for it. A key mark of intelligence is knowing when you don't know something — and admitting it.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You can feel free to turn a deaf ear toward anyone who is telling you that your life needs more discipline and structure. This person is projecting his or her own feelings of inadequacy onto you.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Put yourself in the middle of a group of friendly people. Even if you have nothing to say, you will be warmly welcomed. Lasting relationships will be formed in a moment.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20
You will be spending a lot more time in this person's company, and you will be expected to act more as a peer than a subordinate. Try not to be intimidated by her or his somewhat chilly demeanor.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Mown grass; 5- Thus; 9- May honorees; 13- Sandy hue; 14- Fantasy; 15- Once again; 16- Plugging away; 17- Plevin or Watts; 18- Actress Turner; 19- Half-hour funny show; 21- Letters on a Cardinal's cap; 22- Hardware fastener; 23- Like ___ out of hell; 25- "You are ___"; 27- Power of vision; 31- Throws; 35- Part of a bird's beak; 36- Start of a counting rhyme; 38- Aquarium fish; 39- D-Day craft; 40- Sag; 42- Shipping magnate Onassis; 43- Slippery as ___; 46- Needle case; 47- Yes, there is ___!; 48- Even chance; 50- And so forth; 52- End-of-workweek shout; 54- Mandlikova of tennis; 55- Zip-___-Doo-Dah; 58- Mohawk-sporting actor; 60- Wrestling hold; 64- Lounging slipper; 65- Enamel; 67- Other, in Oaxaca; 68- Actor Tamiroff; 69- Petrol unit; 70- Close with force; 71- Cong. meeting; 72- "East of Eden" director Kazan; 73- Alone;

DOWN: 1- Meadows; 2- Play opening; 3- Court order; 4- Screwball; 5- East ender?; 6- Communists; 7- Brooks of country; 8- Beaten egg dish; 9- The ___ Falcon; 10- ___ epic scale; 11- Course list; 12- Attack a fly; 14- Wounded; 20- Sapporo sash; 24- Twice, a comforting comment; 26- Decay, waste away; 27- Acclaim; 28- Type of question; 29- Some Art Deco works; 30- Govt. security; 32- Phase; 33- Mistake; 34- You ___ mouthfull; 37- Early life; 41- Spicy; 44- Values highly; 45- Carry with effort; 47- Puzzled; 49- Zit; 51- Vane dir.; 53- Fragile; 55- Latin 101 word; 56- Ellington, e.g.; 57- Yale students; 59- South American monkey; 61- WWII battle site; 62- Like the Sabin vaccine; 63- Hurler Hideo; 66- Heston's org.;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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HKD 7,378 sq ft
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Ref: 18105563

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Macau
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HKD 7,900 sq ft
Two Bedroom Apartment
Ref: 19015572

Sea View Condo, Hellene Garden
Macau
1,663 sq ft / HKD 8.8M
HKD 5,291 sq ft
Three Bedroom Apartment
Ref: 18085559

Nova Taipa Gardens, T21
Taipa
2,500 sq ft / HKD 14.5M
HKD 5,800 sq ft
Four Bedroom Apartment
Ref: 18115570

Taipa, Nam Long
Taipa
550 sq ft / HKD 4.08 M
HKD 7,418 sq ft
Two Bedroom Apartment
Ref: 18095561

WA BAO, TAIPA
Taipa
1,020 sq ft / HKD 8.5 M
HKD 8,333 sq ft
Two Bedroom Apartment
Ref: 18115568

SERBIA held off a spirited fightback by Uzbekistan to clinch a berth in the finals tournament of the revamped Davis Cup tomorrow.

The 2010 champion seemed in control of the tie with a 2-0 lead after straight-set wins by Dusan Lajovic and Filip Krajinovic. But Uzbekistan leveled at 2-2 and Sanjar Fayziev took the opening set in the deciding fifth rubber. Krajinovic, however, won the next two sets to send Serbia through.

Germany, Russia, and Australia were other former champions to qualify for the finals in Madrid.

All 12 winners of this weekend's qualifiers join six already qualified nations at the Nov. 18-24 event: Defending champion Croatia, 2018 runner-up France, 2018 semifinalists the United States and Spain, as well as wild cards Britain and Argentina.

At the finals, the 18 nations will compete in six groups of three teams, with all group winners and the two best second-ranked teams advancing to the quarter-finals.

Germany routed Hungary 5-0 and third-ranked Alexander Zverev didn't drop a set in his two singles.

Russia's Karen Khachanov ended a Swiss comeback when he rallied to beat Henri Laaksonen 6-7 (2), 7-6 (6), 6-4 for an in-

TENNIS

Ex-champs Serbia, Germany, Russia reach new Davis Cup Finals



Russia's Karen Khachanov

surmountable 3-1 lead. Earlier, the hosts, playing without Roger Federer or Stan Wawrinka, won the doubles as they fielded

15-year-old Jerome Kym alongside Laaksonen.

Australia coach Lleyton Hewitt used all five players as they ra-

cked up four straight-set wins against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Elsewhere, seven-time champion Sweden failed to qualify for

the finals, not winning a sets in losing at Colombia 4-0.

Chile came from 2-1 down to edge Austria 3-2 after Christian Garin won the deciding fifth rubber 6-2, 6-1 against Davis Cup debutant Jurij Rodionov, who replaced Dominic Thiem.

Canada also rallied from 2-1 behind to Slovakia in Bratislava, where Denis Shapovalov beat Martin Klizan 7-6 (4), 6-4 and Felix Auger-Aliassime defeated Norbert Gombos 6-3, 6-4 to turn the tie around. Shapovalov and debutant Auger-Aliassime played shared all five matches for Canada.

Robin Haase won both singles and teamed up with Jean-Julien Royer for victory in the doubles as the Netherlands beat the Czech Republic in Ostrava 3-1.

Also, Belgium won in Brazil 3-1, Kazakhstan beat Portugal 3-1, Italy downed India 3-1, and Japan edged China 3-2 to complete the lineup for the Davis Cup Finals. **AP**

AD

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Los Angeles Rams' Jared Goff (16) gets sacked by New England Patriots' Kyle Van Noy (53)

SUPER BOWL

Patriots set records with sixth title

THE New England Patriots added even more luster to the franchise's rich championship history yesterday [Macau time].

Their victory over the Los Angeles Rams put a stamp on a season that started 1-2, but ended with New England becoming the first team since the undefeated 1972 Miami Dolphins to win the Super Bowl after losing it the previous season.

New England is now tied with Pittsburgh at six Super Bowl titles apiece. The Patriots also improved to 41-1 in the Bill Belichick-Tom Brady era after shutting out an opponent in the first half, including the postseason. Brady is also the oldest quarterback to win a Super Bowl at age 41. Belichick is the oldest coach to hoist the Lombardi Trophy at age 66.

With his sixth ring, Brady has broken a tie with Hall of Famer Charles Haley for the most all-time by a player.

Brady engineered the game's lone touchdown drive—a five-play, 69-yard march punctuated by an over-the-shoulder,

29-yard throw into the hands of tight end Rob Gronkowski. On the next play, Sony Michel scored on a 2-yard plunge with 7 minutes to play for a 10-3 lead.

But the real stars of this game were the New England defenders, who smothered Rams quarterback Jared Goff, holding him to 229 yards that felt like less.

The Rams, who averaged 32.9 points a game this season, joined the Miami Dolphins—from Super Bowl 6 in 1972—as the only the second team not to muster a touchdown in the title game.

The low-scoring manner the Patriots won also produced records.

The 13 points scored by New England matched the lowest total the team has scored in any of Brady's 40 postseason starts. This was the first of Brady's nine Super Bowl appearances in which he did not throw a touchdown.

It was his fifth postseason game without a TD pass. The Patriots are now 5-0 in those games. **MDT/AP**

FOOTBALL

Benfica beats arch-rival Sporting to move closer to Porto

BENFICA beat Sporting Lisbon 4-2 yesterday [Macau time] to move within three points of Portuguese league leader Porto.

Haris Seferovic, Joao Felix, Ruben Dias and Pizzi Fernandes scored for Benfica, which never trailed at Sporting's Jose Alvalade Stadium.

Bruno Fernandes and Bas Dost scored for the hosts.

Defending champion Porto lost ground at the top after being held to a 0-0 draw at Guimaraes.

Sporting is in fourth place, 11 points off the lead after 20



matches.

Third-placed Braga, which won 2-0 at Desportivo Aves over the weekend, is one point behind Benfica and four points behind Porto.

ADVERTORIAL

Sands WEEKEND

SEASONS OF PROSPERITY 2019

Until 19 February
Sands Resorts Macao

Sands Resorts Macao welcomes the Year of the Pig in style! Visitors can enjoy beautiful festive decorations across the properties. There is also The Parisian Macao's Eiffel Tower Grand Illumination Chinese New Year Show running each evening at 15-minute intervals until midnight. On 6 February look out for the Lion Dance Parade and Blessing Ceremony in each of our Sands Resorts Macao properties.



WINTER IN PARIS ICE RINK FUN

Until 19 February
Level 7 Observation Deck, Eiffel Tower, The Parisian Macao

Winter wonderland, real ice rink, seasonal treats with seating areas, under the Eiffel Tower.

Time: 4pm-10pm daily
Ticket Price: MOP50 for 30 minutes
* 10% discount for In-house Guests at The Parisian Macao



CHINESE NEW YEAR DINING OFFERS AT DYNASTY 8

Until 11 February
Level 1, Conrad Macao, Sands Cotai Central

Dynasty 8 is offering an exceptional nine-course Chinese New Year set menu at MOP 888* per person, with a minimum order for six people. Featuring an appetiser combination platter of suckling pig, mandarin goose liver and roasted duck, it also offers double-boiled superior soup, dry oysters, steamed red spotted garoupa, crispy-fried chicken, celery with lily bulb and chanterelle mushrooms, assorted grains with conpoy and sakura shrimp. A classic Poon Choi including prawns, six-head abalone, conpoy, dried oysters, goose web and fish maw rolls is also available at MOP 1,888* (for four to six people). It can also be ordered as a festive takeaway to enjoy at home with family and friends.

Reservations: Call +853 8113 8920 or macau.dynasty8.reservation@conradhotels.com

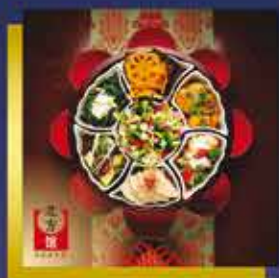


WELCOME CHINESE NEW YEAR WITH NORTHERN FLAVOURS

Until 11 February
Shop1015, Level 1, The Venetian Macao

Home of the most authentic northern Chinese and Sichuan cuisine, North offers a unique culinary experience. This Chinese New Year guests can enjoy an exceptional selection of cuisine, including a cold dish combination comprising drunken goose liver, crispy sliced beef, marinated jellyfish, poached spinach and crab meat, marinated sea whelks and poached chicken with sesame along with hot dishes such as 'Dong Bei' style braised prawns, pork belly and dried seafood in pickle vegetable broth and braised pork dumplings with abalone in soya sauce.

Reservations: Call +853 8118 9980 or north.reservation@sands.com.mo



澳門金沙度假區

Sands

RESORTS MACAO



opinion

Our Desk

Lynzy Valles



BRACE YOURSELVES FOR THE OINK

The local tourism bureau has recently announced its tourist arrivals estimate for the Spring Festival starting today, forecasting an 8 to 9 percent increase when compared to the same period last year.

This year's forecast is much higher than last year's forecast of 3 to 5 percent, with the bureau citing the operation of the highly expensive Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge as the reason.

The city hosted over 958,000 visitor arrivals during the holiday period last year.

This year's increased forecast also means that there should be more tourists on the streets, not to mention the long time it would take for one to go from Leal Senado to the Ruins.

I mean, on normal days this particular street, which leads to the Ruins, is full of tourists, along with vendors who try to entice them with almond cookies and beef jerky.

Thus, what more can we expect this upcoming festival?

I bet a huge number of photobombers ruining Ruins selfies, or the decorations at Leal Senado will be the norm.

According to the bureau, it has geared up for the seven-day festive period with a series of proactive measures including a system that monitors visitor flows, allocating manpower at tourist spots to attend to visitor enquiries, and other efforts, such as activating tourism notifications.

Last year, it was also proposed that the efficiency of checkpoints should be improved, and that the Macau government should communicate with the Gongbei immigration department in order to improve the management of the Gongbei immigration station during holiday periods.

Therefore, the bureau announced that it had collaborated with the Department of Culture and Tourism of Guangdong Province to operate a "Tourism Notification System for Spring Festival Golden Week," with close communication throughout the period to ensure hassle-free hospitality for travel between Guangdong and Macau.

In a city as dense as Macau, it is difficult to accommodate the surge of Chinese New Year travelers.

I hope a measure to minimize taxi infractions during the festive season can also be reinforced.

To recall, last year, the SAR recorded some 352 taxi infractions, including a humiliating 250 cases of overcharging – not to mention those who refused to file similar complaints to the Consumer Council.

It is known that providing ease of transportation, particularly taxi rides, would improve tourists' experience of the city.

I reckon it is not enough that only the tourism bureau works on bettering the experiences of visitors in the region, but rather a collective effort is needed to ensure that a city like Macau – though overcrowded – is actually ready to welcome a million tourist arrivals this festive season.

To welcome the Year of the Pig, Chief Executive Chui Sai On pledged to "excel in [Macau's] response to whatever challenges the coming Year of the Pig might bring."

In Chinese culture, pigs symbolize wealth, and their "chubby faces and big ears" are signs of fortune.

Although no one can really know what will come to be for the SAR this year, Chui called for efforts to "infuse the Macau community with positive energy and to help Macau overcome any difficulties."

It is just unclear which types of difficulties he was alluding to, or whether the "difficulties," such as taxi infractions or imported labor quotas, are among a series of long-awaited matters in the city that are still waiting to be resolved.

THE BUZZ CANDIDATES REGISTER FOR FIRST THAI GENERAL ELECTION SINCE COUP

Candidates in Thailand's first general election since the military seized power in 2014 have begun registering, as supporters wave banners and chant slogans in public political activity that until recently was illegal.

Hundreds of candidates from dozens of parties crammed into an indoor stadium yesterday to officially enter the race and draw lots for the numbers that will go alongside their names on ballots.

Enthusiasm for a return to democracy is high, but is tempered with an awareness that new election rules handicap the political machine of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, which has easily won every national election since 2001.

The Thaksin-affiliated Pheu Thai Party's main challenger in the March 24 polls is expected to be the Palang Pracharat Party, widely considered a proxy for the military.

Albergue holds annual 'Wishing Well' event



THE protective glass cover over the water well at the Albergue SCM Patio has been removed for the annual "Wishing Well" event, which is on until March 5.

The well encourages the public to make New Year wishes under the patio's "Marriage Trees."

According to PR representative Tina Chiu, some 6,000 participants are expected at the fifth iteration of the event.

"The main purpose is to delight local residents and tourists, and to have a place to make a wish and hang it on the tree. This is a tree that is very unique to Albergue, and we call it the 'marriage tree,'" said Chiu.

"Around 8,000 heart cards have been prepared for the public. We hope we can use them all, but we are expecting to use around 6,000 of them. This is completely free," the representative added.

This year, among many activities around the globe, the Albergue SCM Wishing Well will join forces with World Cancer Day to raise awareness about the disease, and Caritas Macau to help the needy.

“The main purpose is to delight local residents and tourists, and to have a place to make a wish and hang it on the tree.”

TINA CHIU

The proceeds from this fundraising activity will be donated to both societies.

World Cancer Day is an international day observed on Feb. 4 to raise awareness of cancer, and to encourage its prevention, detection and treatment. The primary goal of World Cancer Day is to significantly reduce illness and death caused by cancer, and is an opportunity to rally the international community to end the injustice of preventable suffering from cancer.

Meanwhile, as part of the annual activity, Albergue is also holding an "Albergue Wishing Well Photo Competition," which invites the public to post an original and creative photo of the well.

The most liked photo on Facebook will win a Huawei Mate 20. The submission deadline is March 6. LV

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

MDT/Renato Marques



Taxi's paradise. Rides over the counter, flash inflation of rates, abundance of clients over CNY holidays has always been a dark side of this tourism destination little-big-town of ours. A taxi driver's paradise becomes hell to passengers. Business as usual...

Station	Air quality
Roadside	55-75 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	45-65 Moderate
Ambient	50-70 Moderate

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS



ISRAEL Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu launched a new weekly webcast to "get rid of the fake from the news" ahead of national elections in April. In a video shared on social media, Netanyahu said the webcast will "only cover the reality, and I will continue to ensure that it will be positive."

RUSSIA Protesters have rallied in more than a dozen Russian cities and towns against waste management plans that foresee Moscow sending its trash to poorer – and often pristine – northern areas.

SPAIN The leader of Catalonia's failed secession bid in 2017 says that Spain will seek "vengeance" rather than justice when 12 of his separatist allies stand trial next week accused of rebellion and other charges.

BRITAIN With Brexit just seven weeks away, Britain's ruling Conservative Party was locked in tense negotiations with itself yesterday to rework the U.K.'s divorce deal with the European Union – as the EU stood firm in ruling out any renegotiation.



US Five people died and two were injured after a small plane apparently came apart over a suburban Southern California neighborhood, raining debris on streets and backyards and igniting a house fire, authorities said.

HOLIDAY TIMES

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holidays. The Times will be back on the stands on Monday February 11. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times. KONG HEI FAT CHO!