



MIGRANTS RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

A group of migrant workers has celebrated the seventh edition of the annual global campaign 'One Billion Rising'

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FORMER UM DEAN ACQUITTED

P5 COURTS



DEADLINE IN TRADE TALKS MAY BE EXTENDED

U.S. President Donald Trump said that "there's a possibility" he would extend a March 2 deadline in trade talks with China

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WORLD BRIEFS



INDONESIA Plantation companies fined for burning huge areas of land since 2009 have failed to pay hundreds of millions of dollars in penalties meant to hold them accountable for actions that took a devastating environmental and human toll.

THAILAND The political party seen as the main challenger to military-dominated government in Thailand held its first rally in the capital, as campaigning heats up for the first election since a 2014 military coup. *More on p13*

MYANMAR A court sentenced two men to death for the killing of a prominent Muslim lawyer who was a close adviser to the country's leader, Aung San Suu Kyi.



INDIA-PAKISTAN As India considers its response to the suicide car bombing of a paramilitary convoy in the disputed region of Kashmir that killed dozens of soldiers, a retired military commander who oversaw a much-lauded military strike against neighboring Pakistan in 2016 has urged caution. *More on p12*

YEMEN U.N. envoy Martin Griffiths arrived yesterday in the capital, Sanaa, to discuss the "complex situation" in and around the key port city of Hodeida, Yemeni security officials said.

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F3 car specifications still unknown

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE ELECTION

Analysts, lawmaker welcome 1st contest in 2 decades

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Migrant groups unite to raise awareness of domestic violence

Lynzy Valles

A group of migrant workers has celebrated the seventh edition of an annual global campaign, One Billion Rising, which aims to end violence against women.

This year's theme is "Rising: from a campaign, to a way of life," referencing the community's view that the campaign has already become a way of life since it kicked off in 2012.

Yesterday, several groups of migrant associations, including Migrante Macau and the Indonesian Macau Workers Union, gathered at the tent near Nam Van Lake to raise awareness of the campaign.

Held for the fifth time in the SAR, the small gathering featured the One Billion Rising dance and food sharing amongst the community.

Wilma Jacinto, Chairperson of Migrante Macau, told the Times that although Macau does not have a significant number of domestic violence cases, she believed that such awareness should still be spread in the region for women to know about and stand up for their rights.

According to the latest data, 32 cases of domestic violence were reported across Macau in the first half of 2018: 19 involving spouses, ten involving children and three involving other family members. 22 of the cases involved physical abuse.



Wilma Jacinto (left) and Roi Solikin

"This issue is not so significant in Macau and we [migrants] have not encountered any severe cases of domestic violence that involves a domestic worker but we encourage these women to fight and stand up for their rights – not only in Macau but elsewhere," said Jacinto.

Meanwhile, Roi Solikin stressed that many migrant workers in the city are vulnerable to domestic violence, and called on fellow women to raise awareness of this possibility.

"We need to strengthen this community for women so they will not be afraid to speak up. We do this for solidarity as there are really women who are prone to domestic violence," she said.

In Macau, it has been three years since the Legislative Assembly approved Law n. 2/2016, listing actions of domestic violence as a public crime.

Catholic community celebrates sports fest

A Catholic community gathered yesterday to celebrate its annual "Provincial Group Sports Fest" as part of its recreational activity.

Held annually for the past ten years, El Shaddai – Macau Chapter – hosts the event that also promotes the different cultures of the Philippines' different provinces.

The day kicked off with a mass, a special message and the sports festival.

Emmamae Marcelo, the missionary in charge of the event, remarked, "the goal of the event is to have camaraderie [...] and it is also a new way of evangelization as there are also newcomers."

The groups each dressed in different attires and costumes that best represent their province, with a hint of a Chinese New Year element, as part of a



competition.

El Shaddai, a local church that holds mass at Dom Bosco Chapel, has regular attendees of 200 every Sunday.

Marcelo further explained that the Catholic community has been growing, adding that there is a significant number of

devotees attending mass every morning.

"We have regular masses and the Catholic faith has been really growing in the city," said Marcelo.

She added that when the church celebrates its annual anniversary, it could gather up to 500 participants.

ASK THE VET

by Dr Ruan Du Toit Bester

TAKING CARE OF KITTENS

TAKING in baby kittens is a wonderful experience, but it can be nerve wracking, particularly the first time. Kittens are tiny and fragile, and a new foster parent may be worried about inadvertently harming or neglecting their kitten. Learning as much as you can before you start can help.

Why are there foster care kittens?

Sometimes a mother cat dies or abandons her kittens. In that case, you may have found a young kitten that still needs milk feeding. Or, a cat shelter may not have room for all the kittens they are given, and ask people to care for them temporarily. In this case, the kitten is usually already weaned.

I've found a kitten, what should I do?

If you find an abandoned kitten, first make sure that the mother isn't coming back. If there is no sign of her, you should keep the kitten as warm as possible, preferably putting it against your own skin until you can get it to a heated place. Take it to

the vet as soon as possible, particularly if you have no experience with fostering kittens. It may need worming, flea treatments re-hydration, or other care. Your vet can also advise you on how old your kitten is and how to feed it.

How do I feed my kitten?

If it is a very young kitten, you may have to feed it with an eyedropper, or a special kitten nursing bottle. Buy kitten milk formula (if you can't find any quickly, call on your local vet or cat shelter and ask their advice). Week old kittens need feeding six times per day, while two week old kittens need four feedings per day. Once they are three weeks old, you can reduce it to three feedings per day. At four weeks you can continue with three feedings but begin to give them solid food as well (either canned, or soaked dry kitten food). Usually, if you are caring for a shelter kitten, they will provide you with some food, and instructions.

The amount of milk your kitten needs will depend

on how large it is, and this is generally noted on the milk container. Hold the eyedropper or bottle at 45 degrees so the kitten doesn't suck in any air with the milk, and allow him to suckle, rather than squirting the milk into his mouth.

What about the litter box?

Kittens can be encouraged to go in the litter box at around four weeks. Put them in there when you see them begin to go, and they will soon get the idea. Before that time, you should act as the mother cat would, and stimulate the kitten by rubbing gently on its stomach, to encourage it to go.

What if my kitten gets sick?

Kittens can die very quickly once they get sick, particularly if they weren't raised on their mother's milk with its natural antibodies. Immediately take your kitten to a vet if your kitten shows:

- lethargy
- loss of appetite
- discharge from eyes, nose or mouth
- excessive sneezing
- other abnormal behavior

Fostering a kitten is a wonderful experience, allowing you to make a difference in a young cat's



life. It can be labour intensive, particularly with very young kittens, but the reward of a happy, healthy cat is worth it.

Hope this info helps
Till next week
Dr Ruan Bester

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Dates for CE election committee proceedings set

THE submission of registration forms by candidates for the Electoral Affairs Commission for the Chief Executive Election is scheduled for April, the Commission announced on Friday.

Following its inauguration last week, the Commission held its first meeting on Friday. After the meeting, the Commission met with the media to explain the content of the meeting.

Chairman of the Commission, Song Man Lei, reported that, between April 8 and 23, legal person voters should register their representatives authorized to nominate candidates for the Chief Executive Election Committee.

Candidates for the Chief Executive Election Committee should then submit their candidature applications to the Electoral Affairs Commission from 24 April to May 7.

Moreover, in April, the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP) will hold a briefing on the Committee election,



Song Man Lei talks with the press after the meeting

with the detailed schedule and location to be announced later.

During the meeting, the Commission also discussed a webpage on election matters that would release the latest news and information.

When questioned about matters concerning the candidates for Chief Executive, Song explained that lawmakers who intend to run for CE will have to suspend their duties as lawmakers once

they are admitted as candidates. The suspension should start from the moment a lawmaker is admitted, and last until the announcement of the election's results.

Principal officials of the government, members of the Chief Executive Council, judges, judicial assistants, members of the Commission, members of the Committee, and Public Administration staff may be nominated

as candidates unless they have resigned or retired on the nomination date.

The Electoral Affairs Commission is responsible for coordinating the process to choose the 400-member Chief Executive Election Committee, and thereafter to coordinate the actual election of a new Chief Executive. This must be determined by June 16.

Regarding the schedule for the CE election, Song noted that the Commission has already started discussions.

Earlier last week, the president of the Legislative Assembly (AL), Ho Iat Seng, acknowledged that he was "actively considering" his candidacy to become the next Chief Executive when the successor to Chui Sai On is chosen later this year. Also last week, Secretary for Economy and Finance Lionel Leong remarked that he will "listen to the community's opinions and consider them comprehensively" when choosing whether to run in the election [more on page 4]. **JZ**

MIECF to promote 'ecological civilization'

The 2019 Macau International Environmental Co-operation Forum & Exhibition (MIECF) will be held from March 28 to 30, featuring the theme "Promoting Ecological Civilization and Green Development." Organizers announced on Friday that this year's event will set up a "Greenovation Zone" to offer displays and networking activities related to innovative green technologies and promote the application and exchange of innovative environmentally-friendly technologies. This year marks the 12th anniversary of the MIECF, which debuted in 2008. Last year's MIECF witnessed the signing of 35 agreements and 349 on-site business matching sessions held in the Green Matching zone, bringing together over 50 pioneers in the environmental protection industry, leaders of multinational corporations, and regional policy-makers from different countries and regions to share their visions, as well as the latest corporate strategies and industrial trends.

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Secretary Leong hints at bid for top post

Daniel Beittler, Julie Zhu

THE Secretary for Economy and Finance hinted on Friday that he might run in the upcoming chief executive election, becoming the second possible candidate after Ho Iat Seng, the President of the Legislative Assembly, who said earlier in the week he was actively considering the job.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of a Chinese Lunar New Year dinner hosted by the Macau Chamber of Commerce, Secretary Leong said that he is listening to the opinions of the community and will “consider them comprehensively.”

His statements echo that of potential rival Ho Iat Seng, who signaled a similar “consideration” of the position almost one year ago before repeating that sentiment last week.

Leong said Friday that he is willing to adopt any position in public service provided that it is within his personal capability and that it allows him to contribute to the development of China and Macau.

Citing the words of the director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office of China’s State Council, Leong specified that there are just four requirements for a person to be eligible for the Chief Executive post: to love the country and love Macau; to be trusted by the central government; to have administrative abilities; and to be supported by the Macau people.

The Secretary added that in this new era of the country’s development, he believes that the Chief Executive needs to be someone who can “lead the civil service” and who can “coordinate all sectors in the society.” Macau’s top official should also have “experience and capability in public administration,” an extensive social network, and the trust of various interests in the city.

“This is not just a personal choice,” answered Leong when asked if he feels qualified for the position. “I think I need to listen



In this August 2017 photo widely shared on social media, Secretary Lionel Leong is seen carrying a tree branch during the clean-up operations in the aftermath of Typhoon Hato

to the opinions of the various sectors within the community, and I will engage in a positive attitude [...] when considering them.”

It is a positive sign to have more than one candidate.

PEREIRA COUTINHO
LAWMAKER

Leong and Ho have long been favorites to succeed incumbent Chui Sai On, whose second and final five-year term in office will conclude on December 19.

The two potential candidates are currently on equal footing. Neither has officially confirmed their participation in the election, nor ruled it out.

Lawmaker Pereira Coutinho and social commentator Larry So both said they welcomed a second contender for the role, which would interrupt the pattern of the previous two elections when Chui Sai On ran unopposed. The only time there was more than one candidate in a Chief Executive election was the very first, when Edmund Ho ran against Stanley Au.

“Although I am against a minority of 400 people having the [sole] privilege of electing the chief executive, it is a positive sign to have more than one candidate,” said lawmaker Pereira Coutinho.

But the lawmaker warned that both candidates would face the same major challenge as Chief Executive.

“Anyone who is elected will have a very big problem [regarding] indebtedness to the vested interests of the 400 electors,” he cautioned. “Macau is very small.

Everyone is tied to many other people – whether that’s media links, commercial links or casino links. It’s very hard to find truly independent candidates.”

Larry So said he was “glad that we might have more than one candidate this time,” but offered the opinion that Ho was the frontrunner in the race. “Secretary Leong may have a chance although if Ho Iat Seng runs, Leong will face very strong competition,” he said.

Meanwhile, lawyer and political analyst Sérgio Almeida Correia holds the reverse opinion.

Leong has been the “main candidate for the job since he started his rise in local politics” in the early 2000s, he said, adding that the surprise is that Ho Iat Seng is considering the role.

“[Ho] previously said he didn’t have the profile because of a lack of experience in politics and public administration. He also said that he was too old,” recalled Correia. “He suddenly changed that position in March last year [...] and it is my conviction that someone in Macau put him forward for this.”

Leong is anchored in Macau society much better.

SÉRGIO ALMEIDA CORREIA
LAWYER

For Correia, “Leong is anchored in Macau society much better. For example, in the aftermath of typhoon Hato, there is a picture of Leong cleaning the streets, carrying a tree branch. That is a very powerful image. It says to people that Leong is on their side. He was the first to get on the street, and then the others [high-profile officials] followed.”

And although the Macau public will not have a direct say in who becomes the next Chief Executive, “they are interested in this decision” and their opinion will weigh on the privileged electorate. “[The public’s] quality of life is decreasing and that’s something everyone has an interest in,” said Correia.

TAM DOES NOT RULE OUT CANDIDACY

QUESTIONED YESTERDAY about a possible candidacy to the post of Chief Executive, Alexis Tam would not give a definite answer. “My current hope is to fulfill the duties as the Secretary

for Social Affairs and Culture and supporting the development of the country, in order to increase the welfare of the Macau population,” Tam said, quoted in a statement issued by his office.

Health Bureau offers up to USD80,000 support to domestic violence victim

THE 31-year-old woman who was victim of a domestic violence incident in July 2018 that left her badly disfigured will be sponsored by a local charity to undergo extensive surgery in Singapore to regain her eyesight, according to the Health Bureau.

The Health Bureau (SSM) had a meeting with the Conde S. Januário Hospital (CHCSJ), a representative of the charity, the victim and the victim’s family about sending her to Singapore.

The charity will give the victim be-

tween USD70,000 and USD80,000. This money will be paid directly to the relevant Singaporean hospital.

The SSM had publicly announced that the victim’s family had accepted the support.

However, Lao Kei, father of the victim, said

that his family has yet to accept the fund and that he was shocked with the bureau’s statement regarding their supposed acceptance.

The charity fund has conditions regarding the medical treatment, stating that it must be done in Singapore and that it

will be up to the committee to select the medical institute.

As previously discussed, the proposed medical treatment was supposed to be in the U.K.

“The news was released on the night of the meeting, forgetting our reply on whether we will ac-

cept the fund,” said Lao Kei during a press conference at the office of legislator Agnes Lam.

“Sure, we are shocked about it. This gives us huge pressure mentally as a result,” he added.

As cited in a TDM report, he added that the family was informed that further decisions will be made after a check-up in Hong Kong.

The campaign, calling for support from local residents, is set to continue for one more week.

Former UM dean acquitted of rape charges

THE former dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Macau (UM), John Mo, was acquitted from all the charges of rape, the Court of First Instance (TJB) ruled on Friday.

Mo was immediately released from the preventive custody in which he had spent almost nine months since June last year.

According to the decision of the court, announced by the judge that presided over the trial, it was not proven beyond reasonable doubt that the former UM professor had forced the student who pressed charges against him into any form of sexual act.

Evidence included surveillance camera footage from bars and other public venues where Mo and the student had been together, in which it is shown that the student never tried to refuse any of Mo's advances. According to the TJB, this footage indicates that the sexual contact among the two was consensual.

The TJB said there was proof that the scholar did have sexual contact with the complainant, but that such acts were consented to and did not fit with the definition of rape.



John Mo

Equally, the other two defendants on the case, Lei Lok Pui and Yang Manman, who were also accused of the crimes of rape and inaction, were also found not guilty.

The trial, which gathered a lot of media interest, was held behind closed doors on Jan. 25, reaching the sentencing stage in just two audiences, with a single audience in which all the defendants and the witnesses were heard.

While exiting the court, Mo's lawyer Oriana Pun said that the accusations from the

complainant were found to be groundless, expressing satisfaction with the decision of the court. "The [alleged] victim made her statements in court and then vanished," she said, noting that the student was always represented in court by the Public Prosecution.

"The judges were very well prepared," Pun said. "What was said is true. Although the trial lasted only a day, we were all prepared and we all watched the video. So it was quick and effective." Pun remarked that the court accepted and agreed with most of the defendant's views and doubts regarding the case.

As for further actions regarding the case, Pun said that the defense is still evaluating further actions, though noted that it is "a right of her client to sue the complainant," and that further actions regarding the termination of contract by the UM are "still being considered."

Mo had been listed as a suspect in June 2018 when a student from the mainland pressed charges against him for rape.

The investigation that followed led the UM to terminate the contract with Mo, who was at the time Dean of the Faculty of Law. **RM**

Maritime Museum temporarily closed for renovation works



The repair works of the central air conditioning system and other facilities of the Maritime Museum will start tomorrow and will take about two and a half months. The Maritime Museum and the No.1 pier will be closed to the public until the completion of the works. The reopening date of the Museum will be announced later.

300 more body-worn video cameras expected

The Public Security Police Force (PSP) has purchased 300 additional body-worn video cameras for police officers on the frontline, according to PSP Commissioner Leong Man Cheong. Since last year, the government has been equipping police officers on duty at the frontline with body-worn video cameras. Last year, the PSP purchased 100 cameras. On Friday, Leong remarked that the cameras would have an obvious impact in helping police officers carry out law enforcement. These 300 new cameras are expected to be put into operation in the second quarter.

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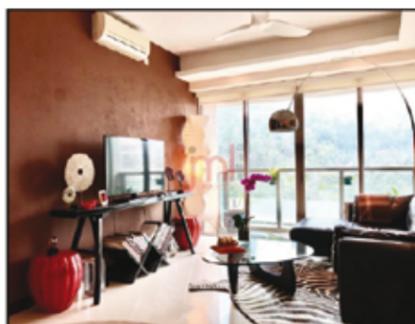
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Rate: HKD 7,418

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Pacifica - Perfect Locality Taipa

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948 sq.ft. HKD 10.88 M
Rate: HKD 11,485

Rarely on the market this super apartment makes the most fabulous home, and in such a convenient location. Excellent condition, with lovely views over the Taipa mountain. Two double bedrooms with an ensuite bathroom off the master and shower room for the guest double and single bedrooms.



Taipa, Supreme Flower City

(Ref: 13105367)
2060 sq.ft. HKD 16.4 M
Rate: HKD 7,961

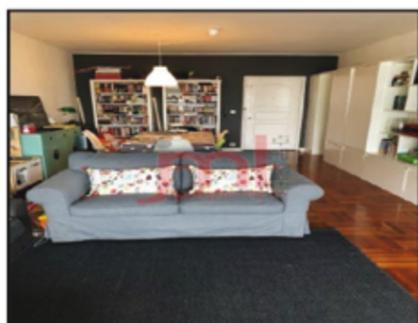
The large living spaces in Supreme are very popular with families thanks to the amount of natural light, the high ratio of usable area and the generous room sizes. This 4 bedroom / 2 bathroom apartment has recently been renovated, it features a good sized western style kitchen including a built in oven and fitted cupboards, and high a quality finish.



Nova City, T9 - Taipa

(Ref: 19015574)
2503 sq.ft. HKD 17.8 M
Rate: HKD 7,111

Beautiful, large 4 bedroom apartment in the popular complex of Nova City in Central Taipa. This mid floor apartment has great views over Central Park and swimming pool. Clubhouse facilities include gymnasium, outdoor pool, mini theater, function rooms and more. Car park space is available in Tower 5.



Ocean Garden Elm Court

(Ref: 18105563)
1,610 sq.ft. HKD 11.88 M
Rate: HKD 7,378

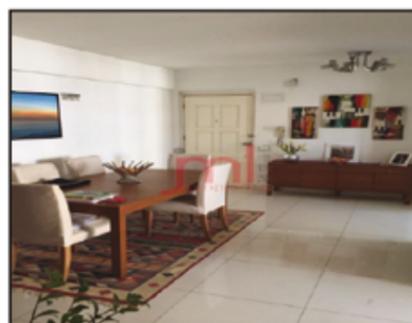
A beautiful modern stylish apartment in the popular Ocean Garden complex in Taipa. A fabulous family or first time buyer home. Clubhouse facilities which include a gymnasium, outdoor pool, function rooms etc. can be used under a monthly membership. Free shuttle bus to Macau is also available. A car park is available, asking HKD1.48M



Va Fat, Taipa Village

(Ref: 17085533)
638 sq.ft. HKD 4.48 M
Rate: HKD 7,021

Lovely apartment on the third floor of a five storey building in Taipa Village. The apartment has been well maintained and managed by JML of the last eight years, historical maintenance data available on request.



WA BAO, TAIPA

(Ref: 18115568)
1020 sq.ft. HKD 8.5 M
Rate: HKD 8,333

Taipa, fabulous and bright two bedroom apartment with two bathrooms. Lovely views one the Taipa Stadium, Galaxy and across to Hengquin are just stunning. Well designed kitchen. This beautiful home is located close to shops, cafes, restaurants and banks. Very convenient for all types of transportation and within walking distance to Taipa village and Cotai.



Sea View Condo, Hellene Gardens

(Ref: 18085559)
1663 sq.ft. HKD 7.95 M
Rate: HKD 4,780

This lovely 3-bedroom apartment features two balconies with breathtaking views of the South China Sea and the beautiful green hillside, where you will awaken to stunning sunrises. Recently renovated, the apartment also features a luxuriously spacious open kitchen with white cabinets, bar counter and high quality, European appliances.

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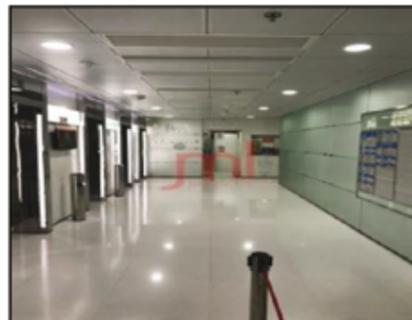
Nova Park, Taipa

(Ref: 17020638)
1,134 sq.ft. HKD 16,400
Two double bedroom apartment in Taipa. Master bedroom has an en suite and has been newly furnished. Second bedroom left unfurnished can be furnished to the tenants request (bed, desk wardrobe etc). Living / dining furnished by IKEA furniture with a small balcony over looking Central Park. Galley style well fitted modern kitchen



Coloane, 4 Storey Commercial Building

(Ref: 17040646)
4,003 sq.ft. HKD 168,000
The property is a licensed commercial space spread over 4 floors including a basement, ground floor retail, and two upper floors in the heart of the unique Coloane village situated next door to the famous 'Lord Stow's Bakery'.



Macau Square Office Space, Macau CBD

(Ref: 18100691)
837 sq.ft. HKD 21,000
Multiple offices for rent, ranging from 837 sq ft to 6,415 sq ft. Some fitted out, others bare-shell. All include management fees and central air conditioning.



VILA TAIPA

(Ref: 19010698)
800 sq.ft. HKD 13,000
Located the historical and popular area of Old Taipa, this bright cozy apartment has 2 bedrooms & 2 shower rooms with open kitchen/ living area. Built in balcony off the main bedroom with views to Taipa Village and Galaxy. Perfect for a couple or a single professional. Convenient for all types of transportation, within walking distance to Taipa Center and Cotai.

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Macau Grand Prix F3 car specifications still unknown

Renato Marques

NEW regulations and car specifications for the FIA Formula 3 championships are currently under discussion, and it is still unknown which models will be allowed to compete in off-regular season events such as the FIA Formula 3 World Cup (currently the main highlight of the Macau Grand Prix).

In the 2018 F3 Macau GP, the solution of using the previous year's car specifications and keeping everything almost untouched seemed to have gathered something of a consensus among organizers, drivers and teams. However, drastic changes introduced at the end of last season to revitalize a series that traditionally served as a springboard to Formula One seem to have created an additional problem of how the competition would continue to run in the streets of Macau every November.

As teams are gearing up for another F3 season and the Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee (MGPOC) says it is "currently evaluating all options available with regard to the type of Formula 3 cars to be used in this year's F3 Macau Grand Prix," opinions are starting to surface from drivers, teams and constructors.

In a recent report from the Automotive website "The Drive," racing driver Oliver Jarvis is quoted saying that there is a general consensus among all those who have raced in Macau that the proposed changes to the circuit would not make it safer.

Jarvis recalled last year's accident involving Sophia Florsch at the Lisboa bend. "Almost all the accidents that happen there are quite low speed. Cars locking up and nosing into the wall. The high speed in Macau certainly was a factor, but it was not a common accident there," he said. "I raced F3 at Macau for two years and never saw anything that spectacular."

In Jarvis' opinion, any proposed changes should restrict the cars, rather than the track. "I would prefer the cars getting lower power at Macau rather than the track be changed. If you start putting in chicanes you will lose a lot of the overtaking potential."

Such opinion, is shared by others in the field, such as Bill O'Brien, team manager of Black Arts Racing, a China/Hong Kong registered motor racing team with headquarters at Zhuhai International Circuit and that races several cars in different



The new FIA International F3 car



Sophia Florsch (top) goes over Japanese driver Sho Tsuboi's car

categories including the Asian Formula Renault Series, China Formula 4 Championship, and Asian F3 series.

Speaking to the Times, O'Brien said, "there has been discussion about using the old European F3 car or even the new FIA International F3 car, which I think is way too dangerous for Macau."

"We hope they will run the new regional F3 car [Europe, Asia and W Series Car]. It will be better racing and way safer," he added. In O'Brien's opinion, the Regional F3 car, besides being safer, could also offer closer competition and better racing, being the best of the three options on the table.

The fact that the car is used also by the European F3, Asian F3 and W Series - a recently presented racing series exclusive for female drivers kicking off this spring - can also guarantee some diversity in terms of drivers and teams.

The new car, code-named Tatuus F.3 T-318, is produced by Italian chassis manufacturer Tatuus, the same company responsible for the construction of the chassis being used in several F4 racing series. The Tatuus F.3 T-318 would be powered by an Alfa Romeo 1750 TBI engine built by the Italian Autotecnica Motori.

The engine is a four-cylinder inline turbocharger of 1742cc

with double VVT delivering 270bhp and has been running since July 2018 on the newly created F3 Asia Series, the first of the new system of FIA F3 regional series that is active due to the establishment of a "Winter Series." This series included three weekends of competition in Thailand and Malaysia.

Two-time Macau Grand Prix winner Dan Ticktum was one of the drivers who took this opportunity to contest the Asian F3 Winter Series in a bid to collect points necessary to apply for a super-licence that could open his doors to Formula One.

Dallara, another Italian chassis manufacturer, disagrees. A report by newspaper Hoje Macau

quotes Dallara's Engineering & Project Management Jos Claes expressing concerns over the possibility of the FIA and the MGPOC choice for 2019 fall for the regional F3 car, a solution that he considers a downgrade from the previous F3 car.

"It's up to the Macau Grand Prix [Organizing Committee] to decide what they want. If they want to keep people in the media center, this is the result of several years of appearance of highlighted drivers and driving the F3 International car. This would keep the quality [status of the competition]." On the other hand, "if they want to bring in the Asian regional championships or something like that, then the attention [from media] would be totally different."

The F3 International Series car, built by Dallara and firstly presented at the F1 season finale at the Yas Marina Circuit in Abu Dhabi last November, will be contending for three seasons (2019-2021) and presents significant upgrades from the former F3 car, being closer to the former GP3 Series car which it replaces and sharing with this the engine that moved from an Inline-four 2.0Litre to a V6 3.4Litre capable of delivering 380bhp, that is, over 40 percent more than the F3 regional series car.

I would prefer the cars getting lower power at Macau rather than the track be changed.

OLIVER JARVIS
RACING DRIVER

This car is also significantly larger than the former F3 with the wheelbase length to grow from the previous 2,000mm to 2,800-3,000mm, maintaining a minimum track of 1,200mm.

At the same time, Dallara announced that it is building a new car for the F3 regional series that, in the words of Claes, would be "a little below of the current International F3 car but above the ones racing on regional series."

Also corroborating Dallara's intentions was a race promoter representative with connections to several teams in the field, who agreed to provide a short comment to the Times but asked not to be identified. Claiming that as far as he was aware, a final decision has yet to be made, he favors the ideas expressed by Dallara saying, "I hope [the car that will race in Macau this year] will be the [new] FIA-F3 car, but the [scenario of continuing to be] the Dallara F312 F3 car is a very realistic [one]."

EDUCATION

Chinese students fan profit at Bangkok school criticized for IPO

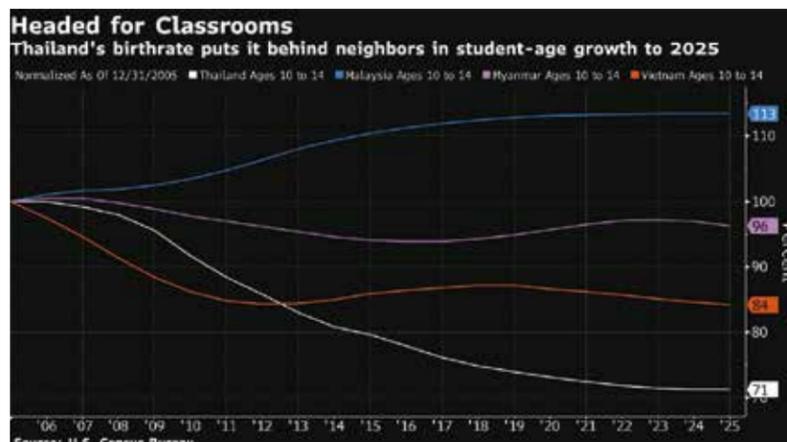
CHINESE enrollments are helping to buoy profits at Thailand's only listed school operator.

SISB Pcl, or Singapore International School of Bangkok, sees 2018 net income at the high end of expectations in part because of a jump in Chinese student numbers, Chief Executive Officer Kelvin Koh said.

A former Thai finance minister has said the school should lose tax breaks aimed at spurring investment in private-sector education, given that listed firms seek to maximize shareholder returns. Koh said the proceeds from the share sale can help SISB expand its campus and pay for new technology.

"Whether we're listed or not listed, we should be treated the same as other schools," Koh said in an interview in Bangkok.

Koh said he's looking at options for expansion into nations such as Vietnam and Myanmar. SISB owns and operates four schools in the Thai ca-



pital and has a joint venture in Chiang Mai, for a total student count of 2,400.

About 85 percent of students are Thai, with the rest from countries led by Singapore and China. The English-language curriculum is partly based on the Singaporean system. Annual fees are "mid-tier" for international schools in Thailand, in the range of

USD10,000 to \$20,000, Koh said.

Finasia Syrus Securities Pcl, which managed the share sale, forecasts net income of 97 million baht (\$3.1 million) in 2018 and almost double that for this year. The stock has climbed about 8 percent since listing, while the overall Thai stock market fell 0.2 percent. **Bloomberg**

GAMING

Caesars suitor Fertitta is said to have acquired shares

TILMAN Fertitta, the Houston real estate mogul who last year proposed merging his casino and restaurant empire with Caesars Entertainment Corp., has become an investor in the Las Vegas company, according to a person familiar with the situation.

Fertitta bought about 4 million Caesars shares, less than 1 percent of the total, because he thinks the company is undervalued, according to the person, who asked not to be identified because he wasn't authorized to speak publicly. Fertitta remains interested in a possible combination with Caesars, but he hasn't proposed one again.

Caesars, one of the largest owners of casinos in the U.S., is still coping with the fallout of a USD30 billion leveraged buyout 11 years ago. The company put its largest unit in bankruptcy in 2015. And a restructuring left Cae-

sars with an ownership base that includes distressed debt investors and hedge funds, as well as its original private equity firms, Apollo Global Management and TPG.

Chief Executive Officer Mark Frissora is scheduled to step down this year, a move that could set the stage for a deal.

Investor Carl Icahn is pushing for a sale of Caesars after amassing a 10 percent stake plus an additional 10 percent economic interest through swaps, said a person familiar with the matter who asked not to be identified because it wasn't public.

A representative for Icahn didn't respond to a request for comment. Eldorado Resorts Inc. also approached Caesars about a deal, the Wall Street Journal has reported. Fertitta owns closely held Landry's Inc., whose businesses include the Golden Nugget casinos and the namesake seafood chain. **Bloomberg**

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Flybmi's collapse over Brexit strands passengers across Europe

THE collapse of British regional airline flybmi over higher fuel prices and Brexit uncertainty has forced stranded passengers across Europe to fend for themselves, without the prospect of help from the U.K. government.

U.K. student Mary Ward was in Brussels waiting for a flight to Newcastle on Saturday when she received the airline's text that said all flights had been canceled, and was directed to the airline's website, according to an account on the BBC.

"I paid 130 pounds for my flight which it doesn't seem I'm going to get back - I don't know how I am going to get back to Durham," she told the broadcaster. "I can't afford any of



the flights or the Eurostar."

The airline filed for administration late Saturday, in effect grounding all 17 regional aircraft and shutting operations in 25 European cities.

"It has become impossible for the airline's shareholders to continue their extensive program of funding into the business, despite investment totaling over 40

million pounds (USD52 million) in the last six years," according to a statement by the carrier, formally known as British Midland Regional Ltd., published on its website. "The challenges, particularly those created by Brexit, have proven to be insurmountable."

BMI also blamed rising prices for European Union carbon

allowances, which have more than doubled since the beginning of last year. Flybmi had 376 employees in four countries and carried over 520,000 passengers in 2018, according to its website. "The collapse of FlyBmi is devastating news for all employees," said Brian Strutton, general secretary of the British Airline Pilots' Association. **Bloomberg**

PHILIPPINES

Tax agency sets sights on online casinos for Chinese

THE Philippines' tax agency is setting its sights on more than 50 companies operating online casinos catering to Chinese punters, and their thousands of Chinese workers.

The companies in question must register with the Bureau of Internal Revenue before the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. will renew their licenses, the Department of Finance said in a statement yesterday. The tax bureau also wants to join an inter-agency team monitoring the number of Chinese nationals working in the online gaming industry.

More than 50 companies referred to as Philippines-based offshore gaming operators, or POGOs, have set up businesses since President Rodrigo Duterte's government began awarding licenses in 2016, triggering the migration of tens of thousands of Chinese workers. Of the more than 115,000 permits given to foreign workers from 2015 to 2017, 51,000

were issued to Chinese nationals, a labor ministry official said in November.

More than 3 million Chinese have entered the Philippines from 2016 and many of them have applied for work permits, the labor ministry official said. In November, Senator Joel Villanueva expressed alarm, saying the number of Chinese workers in the Philippines is much higher than the number of permits issued. That prompted Duterte to say days later that Filipinos must not "get rough" on this issue.

"We want to trace these Chinese nationals employed by these gaming operators," the statement cited Bureau of Internal Revenue Deputy Commissioner Arnel Guballa as saying during a recent Department of Finance Executive Committee meeting. "They allowed us to join the task force because we are asking for data from Immigration and the Department of Labor and Employment on the list of these foreign nationals."

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UK Hammond is said to drop China trip as Beijing complains

Jessica Shankleman, Ellen Milligan

U.K. Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond has canceled a trip to China, a government official said, a day after a Chinese official in London criticized Britain's defense secretary for making a return to a "Cold War mentality."

The trip was to discuss issues affecting China-U.K. economic and financial relations. Hammond was expected to talk about plans for a stock market connection between the countries and wanted to fix a date for the postponed U.K.-China Economic and Financial Dialogue.

"The chancellor is not traveling to China at this time," a spokesperson for the Treasury said Saturday. "No trip was ever announced or confirmed."

Defense Secretary Gavin Williamson last week said in a speech the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth would be deployed to Asia on its maiden voyage and said China is "developing its modern military capability and its commercial power."



Philip Hammond

Williamson said the deployment was a U.K. show-of-strength as China increasingly disputes the waters in the region.

A spokesman at China's embassy in London said Williamson "made groundless accusations" that he said reflected a type of "Cold War mentality."

"China firmly opposes that," the spokesman said. "Meanwhile, China has also noticed the prime minister's spokesman stressed that U.K. holds strong and constructive relationships with China."

Separately, Williamson drew a jibe on Saturday from Russian Foreign

Minister Sergei Lavrov at the Munich Security Conference. In a reference to a speech in which Williamson accused Russia of "trying to goad the west" into a new arms race, Lavrov mixed up his title.

"If you listen to some people like the minister of war - oh, sorry the minister of defense - of the United Kingdom, then you might get an impression that nobody except NATO have the right to be anywhere," Lavrov said as he discussed security in the Arctic region.

Hammond's visit to China will be scheduled at a later date, according to the official. **Bloomberg**

REPORT

Beijing could use medical data to blackmail Americans

CHINESE investment in the U.S. biotechnology industry presents a risk to national security, potentially giving China's government access to patient data that could be used to blackmail Americans, according to a report for a Congressional advisory commission.

Biotech companies in China have access to technology and data through investments in U.S. companies, partnerships with American universities and recruitment of U.S.-trained researchers, the report for the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission said.

"Chinese biotechnology companies are acquiring technologies crucial to advancement in the field as well as amassing large collections of clinical and genetic data on U.S. residents," the report published Feb. 14 said.

New U.S. regulations have put biotech on the same level in terms of importance to national security as aerospace and microchips. Chinese

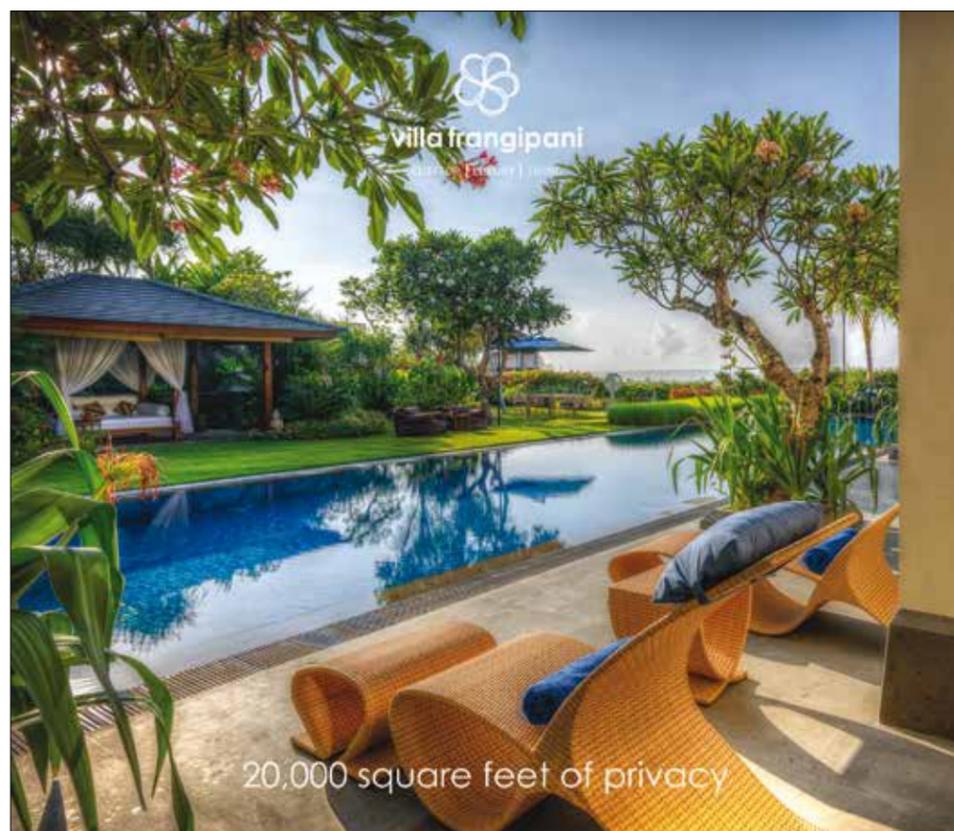
investors have been a mainstay of recent fundraising by private biotechnology firms. At least one Chinese investor participated in 41 U.S. biotech financing deals valued at a total of USD2.6 billion last year, according to Pitchbook.

"Theoretically, access to private information on security-sensitive U.S. persons creates a risk of blackmail and may reveal health conditions exploitable in a targeted attack," the commission report said.

The commission, which reports to Congress on national security implications of U.S.-China trade and economic ties, released the report prepared by consulting firm Gryphon Scientific.

While noting China is "a leading originator of cyberattacks on the U.S." that target personal health-care-related data, the commission's report said there was no evidence so far that the Chinese government has used such data in a "strategic and hostile way." **MDT/Bloomberg**

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Trump says he might extend deadline in US-China talks

Joe McDonald, Beijing

PRESIDENT Donald Trump said that "there's a possibility" he would extend a March 2 deadline in trade talks with China if the two countries are closing in on a deal.

Trump made the remarks after two days of high-level negotiations broke up in Beijing Friday, and the two countries announced plans to resume talks next week in Washington. The world's two biggest economies are locked in a dispute over China's aggressive push to challenge American technological dominance.

The U.S. is scheduled to hike import taxes on USD200 billion worth of Chinese goods on March 2. But Trump told reporters that he might extend the deadline "if I see that we're close to a deal or the deal is going in the right direction." He had made similar comments earlier this week.

Earlier Friday, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer told Chinese President Xi Jinping negotiators "made headway" in talks this week in Beijing.

Economists said this week's two days of talks were too brief to resolve the sprawling dispute that extends to cyber-spying and China's trade surplus. They said Beijing is trying to persuade Trump enough progress is being made to postpone the penalties.

"I hope you will continue to work hard to promote a mutually beneficial and win-win agreement," Chinese President Xi Jinping told Lighthizer in a meeting after the negotiations ended, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

The decision to hold more talks



Steven Mnuchin (second from left) talks with Xi Jinping

suggested they were making progress. But there was no indication of movement on the thorniest dispute: U.S. pressure on Beijing to scale back plans for government-led creation of Chinese global leaders in robotics and other technologies.

"We feel we have made headway on very, very important and difficult issues," Lighthizer told Xi. "We have additional work we have to do but we are hopeful."

Xi said Beijing and Washington "share broad mutual interests" in promoting global economic prosperity and stability.

"We shoulder important responsibilities," the Chinese leader said.

Washington, Europe, Japan and other governments say Beijing's industry plans violate its

market-opening obligations. Some American officials worry they might erode U.S. industrial leadership.

Trump raised tariffs in July over complaints Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology. He imposed 25 percent penalties on \$50 billion of goods from China and 10 percent on \$200 billion.

China retaliated by raising duties on American soybeans and other imports and ordering its companies to find other suppliers. Imports of American goods plunged 41.2 percent in January compared with a year earlier, according to customs data.

Trump agreed Dec. 1 to postpone further penalties by 90 days while the two sides negotiate. Once that expires March 1, the

charges on \$200 billion of goods are due to rise to 25 percent.

Both governments face growing pressure to make peace as global economic growth weakens and the cost to their companies increases.

Beijing has offered to narrow its trade surplus by purchasing more American soybeans, natural gas and other exports. But the government has resisted pressure to cut back development plans it sees as a path to prosperity and global influence.

"From politics to economy to ideology, the United States hopes to intervene in China's affairs," said the newspaper Global Times, published by the ruling Communist Party.

Companies on both sides have been battered by penalties. Foreign manufacturers in China

are starting to shift production of goods bound for the U.S. market to other countries to avoid Trump's tariffs, suggesting they anticipate an extended conflict.

A possible sticking point is Chinese reluctance to agree to an enforcement mechanism demanded by American officials to monitor whether Beijing carries out its promises.

Beijing has tried to deflect pressure by emphasizing China's growth as an export market. It has announced changes over the past year to open finance and other fields, including allowing full foreign ownership in its auto industry for the first time.

The U.S. delegation also included Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and David Malpass, a Treasury undersecretary who is Trump's nominee for World Bank president.

I hope you will continue to work hard to promote a mutually beneficial and win-win agreement.

XI JINPING
CHINESE PRESIDENT

The Chinese delegation was led by Vice Premier Liu He, Xi's chief economic adviser.

Chinese regulators also have announced plans to improve protection of foreign patents and copyrights.

It is unclear whether that will satisfy Washington and other governments that complain the system is rigged to extract technology from foreign companies and to use official industrial standards to shield Chinese enterprises from competition. **AP**

Hong Kong's growth halved in fourth quarter as trade war hit

Eric Lam

THE trade war between the U.S. and China and slowing retail sales dragged Hong Kong's economic growth down at the end of last year, with exports showing almost "zero growth."

Gross domestic product in the fourth quarter was "less than 1.5 percent," according to a blog post yesterday from Financial Secretary Paul Chan. The "significant slowdown"

was well below the 2.9 percent seen in the previous three months.

Hong Kong, a key financial and trade hub for Asia, has been hit hard by the ongoing U.S.-China trade war. Exports fell more than expected in December, the first time sales abroad contracted in consecutive months since 2016. Retail sales also missed estimates in December, despite a surge in mainland traffic.

"The economic slow-

down was very obvious," Chan said. "The impact of China-U.S. trade friction on Hong Kong's exports of goods has clearly emerged at the end of last year."

The slowdown means that the expansion for the whole year will be about 3 percent, the low end of the government's forecast, Chan said in the post, which is in Chinese. That's also lower than the 3.2 percent growth projected in November.

The budget surplus for

the nine months through the end of 2018 was HKD59 billion (USD7.5 billion), Chan said in his post. That compares with the HKD138 billion surplus for the whole of the previous financial year. Chan will provide a revised surplus estimate for the full year, along with economic growth data for the fourth quarter of 2018 and a forecast for 2019 when he announces his latest budget on Feb. 27.

Bloomberg



Financial Secretary Paul Chan

Retired Indian general urges caution against Pakistan strike

Aijaz Hussain, Srinagar

AS India considers its response to the suicide car bombing of a paramilitary convoy in the disputed region of Kashmir that killed dozens of soldiers, a retired military commander who oversaw a much-lauded military strike against neighboring Pakistan in 2016 has urged caution.

A local Kashmiri militant rammed an explosive-laden van into a convoy bus on Thursday, killing 41 soldiers and injuring two dozen others in the worst attack against Indian government forces in Kashmir's history. India blamed the attack on Pakistan and promised a "crushing response." New Delhi accuses its archrival of supporting rebels in Kashmir, a charge that Islamabad denies.

The retired commander, Lt. Gen. D.S. Hooda, told The Associated Press on Saturday that while "some kind of limited [military] strike [against Pakistan] is more than likely," he hopes for "rethinking and reconciliation" from all sides in the conflict.



An Indian paramilitary soldier walks past graffiti on a wall in Srinagar

The former general, who was in charge of the army's northern command at the frontier with Pakistan in Kashmir and counterinsurgency operations, oversaw India's "surgical strikes" in September 2016 after militants attacked a military base in the frontier town of Uri near the highly militarized Line of Control.

Nineteen Indian soldiers and three assailants were killed in that attack. India instantly blamed Pakistan for supporting

the attackers, who New Delhi alleged were Pakistani nationals.

At the peak of a 2016 civilian uprising triggered by the killing of a charismatic Kashmiri rebel leader, Hooda called for all sides to take a step back from the deadly confrontation, suggesting that political initiatives be taken instead. It was a rare move by a top Indian army general in Kashmir.

Later that year when the attack

on the base in Uri happened, Hooda commanded what New Delhi called "surgical strikes" against militants in the Pakistan-controlled part of Kashmir — which India said involved the country's special forces killing an unknown number of insurgents. Pakistan denied that the strikes ever occurred, demanding that India produce evidence to back up the claim.

India promised a 'crushing response'

Hooda has since said that the constant hype of "surgical strikes" was unwarranted.

Pakistani Foreign Secretary Tehmina Janjua rejected India's allegations about Pakistan's involvement in the attack, saying Saturday that it was part of New Delhi's "known rhetoric and tactics" to divert global attention from human rights violations. According to foreign ministry spokesman Mohammad Faisal,

Janjua called for implementation of U.N. resolutions to solve the issue of Kashmir.

Kashmir is divided between India and Pakistan and claimed by both in its entirety. Rebels have been fighting Indian rule since 1989, demanding Kashmir be made part of Pakistan or become an independent country. Nearly 70,000 people have been killed in the uprising and the ensuing Indian military crackdown.

A pre-recorded video circulated widely on social media showed the purported attacker, Adil Ahmed Dar, in combat clothes surrounded by guns and grenades claiming responsibility for the attack and calling for more such measures to drive India out of Kashmir.

Since 2016, soldiers from India and Pakistan have often traded fire along the frontier, blaming each other for initiating the skirmishes that have resulted in the deaths of dozens of soldiers and civilians on both sides in violation of a 2003 cease-fire accord.

Hooda said that considering the state of affairs in Kashmir, he wasn't surprised by the bombing.

"I just hope this all leads to some introspection, some deep thinking and engagement to do everything afresh and rethink what we all should be doing to settle issues once for all," he said. AP

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Singapore plans cautious budget with an eye on election

SINGAPORE Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat will aim to strike a delicate balance in today's budget: preaching fiscal prudence while doling out more social spending ahead of elections that could come as early as this year.

While not expected to be as headline-grabbing as last year - when Heng flagged a hike in the goods-and-services tax - the 2019 budget will cover a range of familiar policy priorities. Infrastructure spending, more health-care support for a rapidly aging population, and help for firms transitioning in a digital economy were top-of-mind for Heng in a Jan. 22 interview.

The global backdrop calls for more caution. Weaker demand and U.S.-China trade tensions saw Singapore's export-reliant economy grow at a slower pace than expected in the fourth quarter, data showed Friday.

"Expectations for a spending spree are high on past surpluses, likely elections and downside economic risks," Mohamed Faiz Nagutha, an economist at Bank of America Merrill Lynch in Singapore, said before the data was released. Those expectations should be reined in since the economy "is not in a crisis," he said.

The budget deficit could be smaller than projected thanks to improved tax collection. Nagutha sees a shortfall of 0.6 percent of gross domestic product in the primary balance, versus the government's 1.6 percent estimate.

Here's what else to look out for in the Singapore budget announcement:

HEALTH CARE

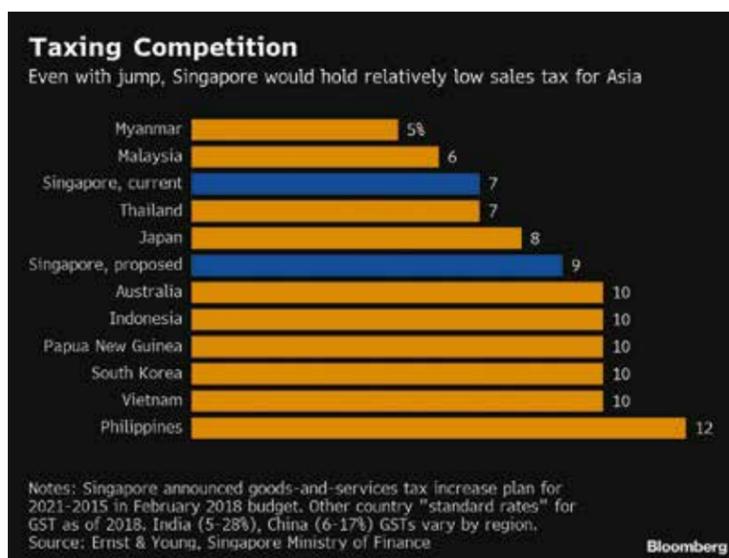
"Merdeka" will be the word of the day. That refers to a big portion of the population that came of age during Singapore's independence era in the 1960s, and which the government plans to support through insurance subsidies, top-ups for medical savings programs, long-term care funding and other goodies.

Having already rolled out similar assistance for the elder Pioneer Generation in fiscal 2014, the larger Merdeka Generation of almost a half-million citizens could benefit from about SGD8 billion (USD5.9 billion) in fresh spending, according to an estimate by economists at Maybank Kim Eng Research Pte. in Singapore.

The support is in line with the government's messaging on ensuring the city state thrives even as its population ages at one of the fastest rates in Asia.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Heng and other officials have reiterated that they're "not done building Singapore." Last year's infrastructure component of the budget was quite broad, including the for-



mation of a new government agency dedicated to acting as a broker for the region's much-needed development projects.

This year, we're likely to see more housing than road-and-rail: Lee has already flagged more spending to revamp public housing, and the budget might build on those schemes. Since the introduction of housing curbs in mid-2018 to damp price increases, some homeowners have found it difficult to sell their properties. Look for some form of resale support, Citigroup Inc. said Feb. 7.

NATIONAL SECURITY

National security could

make up a growing slice of the spending pie. While maritime skirmishes with neighboring Malaysia have grabbed attention since the start of this year, Singapore officials may also boost defense spending because of the rising threat of cybersecurity breaches and terrorism.

Defense spending is also overdue for an increase, having grown at less than half the pace of social or economic development, according to Barnabas Gan, an economist at United Overseas Bank Ltd. in Singapore. There may also be further confirmation of a purchase of some F-35 fighter jets made by U.S. defense

giant Lockheed Martin Corp., the Maybank analysts suggest.

DIGITAL BUSINESS

Heng said last month that the budget will reserve some focus on helping small businesses adapt to a digital economy, so look for research-and-development incentives or other credits to help boost those firms.

The government could offer some support for firms looking to expand overseas, such as a fast track for grant approval in high-growth industries or more support for trade associations abroad, said Irvin Seah, an economist at DBS Group Holdings Ltd. in Singapore.

TAX TWEAKS

Having already announced an increase in the goods-and-services tax to 9 percent from 7 percent sometime in the 2021-2025 period, there may be more detail on the plan in this year's budget. Also possible is further guidance on how Singapore plans to tax digital purchases, given last year's announcement that a GST on imported services would take effect at the start of 2020.

And don't count out the possibility of a sugar tax amid the government's long-time diabetes-awareness campaign. **Bloomberg**

THAILAND

Party challenging army rule holds first Bangkok rally

THE political party seen as the main challenger to military-dominated government in Thailand held its first rally in the capital on Friday, as campaigning heats up for the first election since a 2014 military coup.

Several thousand Pheu Thai party supporters gathered outside Bangkok's city hall, waving signs of support as they listened to hours of speeches seeking to fire up the faithful for the March 24 polls.

Pheu Thai is the flagship party of the political machine of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, which has won every national election since 2001. Thaksin was accused of abuse of power and disrespect toward the monarchy and deposed by a 2006 military coup.

Since then, Thailand's

conservative establishment, fearful of his populist appeal, has sought to oppose his comeback. The 2014 coup ousted the government of his sister, Yingluck Shinawatra.

Team Thaksin faces an uphill battle because Thailand's military overlords for the past five years enacted legislation virtually ensuring that no single political party can win a majority of parliamentary seats, and that the next prime minister has to have the backing of pro-military lawmakers. Its efforts make the prime minister in the current military government, Prayuth Chan-ocha - who led the 2014 coup - the odds-on favorite to keep his job.

Thaksin's forces suffered a setback last week with the spectacular failure of a plan by another of its affi-

liated parties to make Princess Ubolratana Mahidol, sister of King Maha Vajiralongkorn, its candidate for prime minister. The monarch slapped down the attempt as inappropriate and unconstitutional, and now the Thai Raksa Chart Party has suspended campaigning and faces possible dissolution by a court. The failed effort is likely to eat into the number of House seats Thaksin's side can accumulate.

At Friday's rally, however, the speakers went on the offensive.

"We will lead a green revolution, everything will be green," said Plodprasop Suraswadi, a former chief of the Royal Forestry Department who also was a deputy prime minister in Yingluck's government.

"The only green we don't want is the army. Go back

to your barracks!" he shouted, to enthusiastic applause.

A speech by the party's main candidate for prime minister, longtime Thaksin loyalist and former Cabinet minister Sudarat Keyuraphan, capped the evening. She accused the military government of hurting the economy and said Pheu Thai could bring prosperity "as we have done before."

"The time is up for the tank government," she said, in a reference to the tanks the army traditionally rolls out when it stages a coup. "It's time for professional economists. It's time for Pheu Thai to save the economy."

"I will always vote for them," said 74-year-old Buay Saeiam, who attended the rally. "They always have practical policies



A supporter of Pheu Thai Party wearing a t-shirt of former Prime Ministers Thaksin Shinawatra

whose results we can see."

Another in the crowd, Reungsak Benjapan, said he also has voted for the party many times.

"There is always an attempt to get rid of this party, using all sorts of methods," he said. "But for those who love this party, it will be hard to get rid of it from our hearts. I have given my faith to

them long ago."

Thaksin has denied involvement with the Pheu Thai party because election rules forbid parties from being led by outsiders. But he said in March last year during a reception in Tokyo that he believes the party is led by many good people that "should be able to lead the party to another landslide victory." **AP**



Nicolas Maduro (left) speaks during an interview with the AP

INTERVIEW

Maduro reveals secret meetings with US envoy

Joshua Goodman, Ian Phillips

A month into Venezuela's high-stakes political crisis, President Nicolas Maduro revealed in an Associated Press interview that his government has held secret talks with the Trump administration. He also predicted he would survive an unprecedented global campaign to force his resignation.

While harshly criticizing President Donald Trump's confrontational stance toward his socialist government, Maduro said Thursday that he holds out hope of meeting the U.S. president soon to resolve a crisis triggered by America's recognition of his opponent, Juan Guaido, as Venezuela's rightful leader.

Maduro said that during two meetings in New York, his foreign minister invited the Washington-based special envoy for Venezuela, Elliott Abrams, to visit "privately, publicly or secretly."

"If he wants to meet, just tell me when, where and how and I'll be there," Maduro said without providing more details. He said both New York meetings lasted several hours.

U.S. officials have not denied Maduro's claim of talks.

A senior administration official in Washington who was not authorized to speak publicly said U.S. officials were willing to meet with "former Venezuela officials, including Maduro himself, to discuss their exit plans."

Speaking with reporters Friday in Reykjavik, Iceland, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said he sees obvious signs that Maduro is starting to understand Venezuelans reject him as their leader. He said that it "is not new"

that Maduro holds out hope of meeting the U.S. president, but it reflects a realization that his crisis-riddled nation rejects his "model of governance."

Venezuela is plunging deeper into a political chaos triggered by the U.S. demand that Maduro step down a month into a second presidential term that the U.S. and its allies in Latin America consider illegitimate. His opponent, the 35-year-old Guaido, burst onto the political stage in January in the first viable challenge in years to Maduro's hold on power.

As head of Congress, Guaido declared himself interim president on Jan. 23, saying he had a constitutional right to assume presidential powers from the "tyrant" Maduro. He has since garnered broad support, calling massive street protests and winning recognition from the U.S. and dozens of nations in Latin America and Europe who share his goal of removing Maduro.

The escalating crisis is taking place against a backdrop of economic and social turmoil that has led to severe shortages of food and medicine that have forced millions to flee the once-prosperous OPEC nation.

Abrams' appointment as special envoy last month signaled the Trump administration's determination to take a tougher line on Venezuela.

The hawkish former Republican diplomat was a major voice pushing for the ouster of Manuel Noriega in Panama in the 1980s and also was convicted for withholding information from the U.S. Congress during the infamous Iran-Contra affair. He also played a leading role in managing the U.S.'s tepid response to

a brief coup that toppled Hugo Chavez in Venezuela in 2002.

Two senior Venezuelan officials who were not authorized to discuss the meetings publicly said the two encounters between Abrams and Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza came at the request of the U.S.

The first one on Jan. 26 they described as hostile, with the U.S. envoy threatening Venezuela with the deployment of troops and chastising the Venezuelan government for allegedly being in league with Cuba, Russia and Hezbollah.

“If he wants to meet, just tell me when, where and how and I’ll be there.”

NICOLAS MADURO

When they met again this week, the atmosphere was less tense, even though the Feb. 11 encounter came four days after Abrams said the "time for dialogue with Maduro had long passed." During that meeting, Abrams insisted that severe U.S. sanctions would oust Maduro even if Venezuela's military stuck by him.

Abrams gave no indication the U.S. was prepared to ease demands Maduro step down. Still, the Venezuelans saw the meetings as a sign there is room for discussion with the Americans despite the tough public rhetoric coming from Washington.

At turns conciliatory and com-

bative, Maduro said all Venezuela needs to rebound is for Trump to remove his "infected hand" from the country that sits atop the world's largest petroleum reserves.

He said U.S. sanctions on the oil industry are to blame for mounting hardships even though shortages and hyperinflation that economists say topped 1 million percent long predates Trump's recent action.

"The infected hand of Donald Trump is hurting Venezuela," Maduro said.

The sanctions effectively ban all oil purchases by the U.S., which had been Venezuela's biggest oil buyer until now. Maduro said he will make up for the sudden drop in revenue by targeting markets in Asia, especially India, where the head of state-run oil giant PDVSA was this week negotiating new oil sales.

"We've been building a path to Asia for many years," he said. "It's a successful route, every year they are buying larger volumes and amounts of oil."

At a petroleum conference in New Delhi, Venezuela's oil minister Manuel Quevedo suggested the country was open to a barter system with India to get around U.S. sanctions.

"We do not have any barter system with Venezuela. Commercial considerations and related factors will determine the value of trade," India's Ministry of External Affairs spokesman Raveesh Kumar said in response to the Venezuelan officials' comments.

Maduro also cited the continued support of China and especially Russia, which has been a major supplier of loans, weapons and oil investment over the years. He said that the antagonistic views taken by Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin runs the risk of converting the current crisis into a high-risk geopolitical fight between the U.S. and Russia that recalls some of the most-dangerous brinkmanship of the Cold War.

Amid the mounting pressure at

home and abroad, Maduro said he won't give up power as a way to defuse the standoff.

He also reiterated a refusal to allow humanitarian aid, calling boxes of U.S.-donated food and pediatric supplies sitting in a warehouse on the border in Colombia mere "crumbs" after the U.S. administration froze billions of dollars in the nation's oil revenue and overseas assets.

"They hang us, steal our money and then say 'here, grab these crumbs' and make a global show out of it," said Maduro.

His comments came hours after British billionaire Richard Branson announced in a video that he'll be hosting a concert in the Colombian border town of Cucuta in hopes of raising \$100 million to buy humanitarian supplies for Venezuelans.

"With dignity we say 'No to the global show,'" said Maduro. "Whoever wants to help Venezuela is welcome, but we have enough capacity to pay for everything that we need."

Opponents say the 56-year-old former bus driver has lost touch with his working-class roots, accusing him of ordering mass arrests and starving Venezuelans while he and regime insiders — including the top military brass — line their pockets through corruption.

But Maduro shrugged off the label of "dictator," attributing it to an ideologically driven media campaign by the West to undermine the socialist revolution started by Chavez.

He said he won't resign, seeing his place in history alongside other Latin American leftists from Salvador Allende in Chile to Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala who in decades past had been the target of U.S.-backed coups.

"I'm not afraid," he said, adding that even last year's attack on him with explosives-laden drones during a military ceremony didn't shake his resolve. "I'm only worried about the destiny of the fatherland and of our people, our boys and girls....this is what gives me energy." AP

Women recall the 'hell' of Soviet war in Afghanistan

Nataliya Vasilyeva, Moscow

SITTING in her living room, 65-year-old Tatyana Rybalchenko goes through a stack of black-and-white photos from more than 30 years ago. In one of them, she is dressed in a nurse's coat and smiles sheepishly at the camera; in another, she shares a laugh with soldiers on a road with a mountain ridge behind them.

The pictures don't show the hardships that Rybalchenko and 20,000 Soviet women like her went through as civilian support staff during the Soviet Union's 1979-1989 invasion of Afghanistan. Although they did not serve in combat roles, they still experienced the horrors of war.

As Russia on Friday marked the 30th anniversary of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the memories are still fresh for the nurses, clerks and shopkeepers, predominantly young, single women who were thrust into the bloody conflict.

Rybalchenko enlisted on a whim. In 1986, she was 33, working in a dead-end nursing job in Kiev, the capital of Soviet Ukraine, and was going through a breakup. One day, she joined a colleague who went to a military recruitment office. The recruiter turned to Rybalchenko and asked if she would like to work abroad — in Afghanistan.

She recalls that she was fed up with her life in Kiev, "so I told him: 'I'd go anywhere, even to hell!' And this is where he sent me."

Family and friends tried to talk her out of it, telling her that Afghanistan is where "the bodies are coming from." But it was too late: She had signed the contract.

At least 15,000 Soviet troops were killed in the fighting that began as an effort to prop up a communist ally and soon became a grinding campaign against a U.S.-backed insurgency. Moscow sent more than 600,000 to a war that traumatized many young men and women and fed a popular discontent that became one factor leading to the 1991 breakup of the Soviet Union.

Rybalchenko, who worked as a nurse at a military hospital in Gardez, was stunned by the many casualties — men missing limbs or riddled with shrapnel. But there was so much work that she found herself shutting off her emotions.

"At the end, I did not feel



Tatyana Rybalchenko worked as a nurse during the campaign in Afghanistan between 1986 and 1988

anything anymore. I was like a stone," Rybalchenko said, shedding her normally perky persona.

Friendships helped, and she befriended a young reconnaissance officer, Vladimir Vshivtsev.

He once confided to her that he was not afraid of losing a limb, but he would not be able to live with an injury to his eyes. She recalled him saying "if I lose eyesight, I'll do everything to put an end to it."

In November 1987, the hospital was inundated with casualties from a Soviet offensive to open the road between Gardez and the stronghold of Khost, near the Pakistani border.

One of the wounded was Vshivtsev, and Rybalchenko saw him being wheeled into the ward with bandages wrapped around his head. She unwrapped the dressing and gasped when she saw the gaping wound on his face: "The eyes were not there."

She convinced her superior to let her accompany him to a bigger hospital in Kabul as part of a suicide watch. She stayed friends with Vshivtsev, and he later became a leading activist in the Russian Society for the Blind. Decades later, he briefly served in the Russian parliament.

Alla Smolina was 30 when she joined the Soviet military prosecutor's office in Jalalabad near the Pakistani border in 1985. It wasn't until 20 years later that Smolina started having nightmares about the war.

"The shelling, running away from bullets and mines whizzing above me — I was literally scared of my own pi-

low," she said.

She put her memories on paper and contacted other women who were there, telling the stories of those who endured the hardships of war but who are largely absent from the male-dominated narratives.

She is trying to raise awareness of the role the Soviet women played in Afghanistan, believing they have been unfairly portrayed or not even mentioned in fiction and non-fiction written mostly by men.

The deaths of Soviet women who held civilian jobs in Afghanistan are not part of the official toll, and Smolina has written about 56 women who lost their lives. Some died when a plane was shot down by the Afghan mujahedeen, one was killed when a drunken soldier threw a grenade into her room, and one woman was slain after being raped by a soldier.

In an era when the concept of sexual harassment was largely unfamiliar in the Soviet Union, the women in the war in Afghanistan — usually young and unmarried — often started a relationship to avoid unwanted attention from other soldiers.

"Because if a woman has someone, the whole brigade won't harass you like a pack of wolves," Rybalchenko said. "Sometimes it was reciprocal, sometimes there was no choice."

She said she found boyfriends to "protect" her.

While the war grew unpopular at home, Soviet troops and support staff in Afghanistan mostly focused on survival rather than politics. While Afghans largely saw Moscow's

involvement as a hostile foreign intervention, the Soviets thought they were doing the right thing.

"We really believed that we were helping the oppressed Afghan nation, especially because we saw with our own eyes all the kindergartens and schools that the Soviet people were building there," Smolina said.

After Rybalchenko came home, she could hardly get out of bed for the first three months, one of thousands with undiagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder.

When she asked officials about benefits for veterans and other personnel in Afghanistan, she faced hostility and insults. She said one told her: "How do I know what you were actually up to over there?"

In 2006, Russian lawmakers decided that civilians who worked in Afghanistan were not entitled to war benefits. Women have campaigned unsuccessfully to reinstate them.

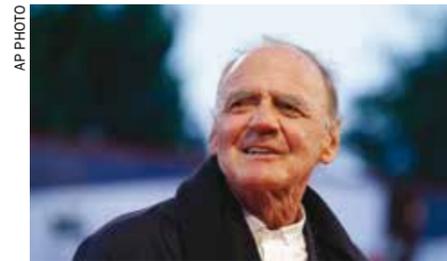
Rybalchenko eventually got an apartment from the government, worked in physiotherapy and now lives in retirement in Moscow, where her passion for interior decorating is reflected by the exotic bamboo-forest wallpaper in her home.

Smolina, who lives in Sweden, is wary of disclosing all the details about her own Afghan experiences after facing a backlash from other veterans about her publications.

"Our society is not ready yet to hear the truth. There is still a lingering effect from the harsh Soviet past," she said. "In Soviet society, you were not supposed to speak out." **AP**

SWITZERLAND

Actor Bruno Ganz, star of 'Downfall,' dies at 77



Swiss actor Bruno Ganz, who played Adolf Hitler cooped up in his Berlin bunker in "Downfall" and an angel in Wim Wenders' "Wings of Desire," has died. He was 77. German news agency dpa reported that Ganz's management said Saturday he died in Zurich. Ganz, a prominent figure in the German-language theater world, shifted into movies in the 1970s, appearing in Werner Herzog's "Nosferatu" and Wenders' "The American Friend" among others. In one of his more recent appearances, he starred as Sigmund Freud in "The Tobacconist," released last year. Berlin Mayor Michael Mueller said Ganz was "one of the greats" of the screen and stage. He said that "the death of Bruno Ganz is a great loss for the German-speaking theater and film world."

ISRAEL

PM appoints interim foreign minister

Israel's prime minister has appointed an interim foreign minister after holding the post himself for the last four years. Benjamin Netanyahu announced yesterday that Transportation Minister Israel Katz would serve as foreign minister until the formation of a new government after April elections. A good governance group petitioned Israel's Supreme Court against Netanyahu's multitude of roles after he took over the defense minister's portfolio following his resignation late last year. Netanyahu also serves as Israel's health minister. Katz recently finished first among serving ministers in the ruling Likud party primaries, and the upgrade solidifies his position as Netanyahu's top deputy and potential successor. Katz says he'll run for party chairman and prime minister after Netanyahu retires.

FRANCE

Yellow vests mark three months amid racist tensions



Paris authorities opened an investigation yesterday into anti-Semitic remarks hurled at a noted philosopher during a yellow vest protest in the capital, an incident that raised national concerns about the movement's ascendant radical fringe. The Paris prosecutor's office said yesterday an investigation was launched into "public insult based on origin, ethnicity, nationality, race or religion." A few demonstrators targeted philosopher Alain Finkielkraut with insults on the sidelines of a yellow vest protest through Paris on Saturday. The shocking incident prompted criticism from French President Emmanuel Macron and other prominent figures.

what's ON



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

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

3pm-8pm (Monday)

UNTIL: February 23, 2019

VENUE: Albergue SCM

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2550

MACAU GIANT PANDA PAVILION AND PAVILION
OF RARE ANIMALS

TIME: 10am-1pm & 2pm-5pm daily

VENUE: Seac Pai Van Park

ADMISSION: MOP10 (Pavilion of Rare Animals)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0087

MACAU SCIENCE CENTRE

TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Except on Thursdays; open
on public holidays)

VENUE: Macau Science Center

ADMISSION: MOP25 (Exhibition Centre)

MOP60 (Planetarium 2D dome or 2D

sky shows)

MOP80 (Planetarium 3D dome or 3D

sky shows)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

MONKEY KING

TIME: 4pm & 8pm daily (except on Thursdays)

VENUE: Sands Cotai Theatre

ADMISSION: MOP380, MOP480, MOP680,

MOP980, MOP1280

COTAI TICKETING: (853) 2882 8818

KONG SENG TICKETING: (853) 2855 5555

MANDARIN'S HOUSE

TIME: 10am-6pm daily (last admission at 5:30pm;
closed on Wednesdays, open on public holidays)

ADDRESS: No. 10, Travessa de António da Silva

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8820

TREASURE OF SACRED ART OF ST. JOSEPH'S
SEMINARY

TIME: 10am-5pm daily (closed on Wednesdays,
open on public holidays)

VENUE: St. Joseph's Seminary and Church, Rua do
Seminário

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

Offbeat

BEER FROM 1886 SHIPWRECK MAY
YIELD NEW BREW

Ahoy, beer lovers: A bottle from a 133-year-old shipwreck
may yield yeast for a new brew in upstate New York.

Biotechnology students at the State University of New
York at Cobleskill uncorked a bottle from the shipwrecked
SS Oregon on Thursday. Serious Brewing Company of
Howes Cave plans to develop a new brew if the students
successfully extract yeast.

Bill Felter, of Serious Brewing, acquired the beer from a
customer who owns an assortment of artifacts recovered
from the Oregon.

The ship was en route from Liverpool, England, to New
York City with 852 people aboard on March 14, 1886, when
it collided with a schooner near Fire Island, New York, and
sank. All but one person survived.

Last year, an Australian brewer produced beer from yeast
recovered from a 220-year-old shipwreck.

TV canal macau



13:00 TDM News (Repetição)

13:30 Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)

15:00 Mistura Fina

15:50 Os Compadres

16:35 Grande Entrevista - Dulce Maria Cardoso

17:30 Tempo Final

18:15 Contraponto (Repetição)

19:20 Aqui Há História (Repetição)

19:35 Os Nossos Dias Sr.2

20:30 Telejornal

21:15 TDM Desporto

22:20 Impostores Sr.1

23:15 TDM News

23:50 Magazine Liga dos Campeões 2018/2019

00:25 Telejornal (Repetição)

01:10 RTPi Directo

cinema



CINETEATRO

14 - 20 FEB

THE NEW KING OF COMEDY

ROOM 1

2:30, 7:30pm

Director: Stephen Chow

Starring: Wang Baoqiang, E Jingwen, Zhang Quidan

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 91min

INTEGRITY

ROOM 1

4:30, 9:30 pm

Director: Alan Mak

Starring: Sean Lau, Nick Cheung, Karena Lam

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 90min



ALITA: BATTLE ANGEL

ROOM 2

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

Director: Robert Rodriguez

Starring: Christopher Waltz, Mahershala Ali

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 122min

MARY POPPINS RETURNS

ROOM 2

4:30pm

Director: Rob Marshall

Starring: Julie Andrews, Meryl Streep, Colin Firth

Language: English

Duration: 130min

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

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM NT (NARRATIVE)

ROOM 3

4:15, 9:30 pm

Director: Toshikazu Yoshizawa

Starring: Junya Enoki, Tomo Muranaka

Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 88min

this day in history

1996 BOMB BLAST DESTROYS
LONDON BUS

Three people are feared dead and eight have been hurt
after a bomb exploded on a double decker bus in the
heart of London's West End.

The front of the bus was destroyed by the force of the
blast on the Aldwych near the Strand.

The bus had travelled over Waterloo Bridge along Lan-
caster Place and was passing a Ministry of Defence buil-
ding and turning onto Aldwych when the bomb exploded.

The explosion comes just nine days after the IRA ended
its ceasefire with a bombing in the Docklands area of
London, which killed two people.

Scotland Yard says it received no warning of the explo-
sion which happened at 2238GMT.

The blast, thought to have been on a New Cross to
King's Cross bus, could be heard five miles (eight kilo-
metres) away and witnesses described devastation at the
scene.

Six people have been taken to St Thomas's Hospital.
Three of the injured have "significant" head injuries.

A further two people have been taken to University
College Hospital.

One man is "serious but stable" in intensive care while
another was admitted with minor cuts.

Three of the casualties were in two cars in front of the
bus when the explosion happened.

Paul Rowan, 31, a BBC employee, described how the
bus was a tangled mess, with metal and glass scattered
over about 50 yards.

"I saw one woman who looked in a very bad way. She
was face down on the road with bad-looking head inju-
ries. There was blood all over the place."

Ten ambulances, five fire engines and four paramedic
units were called to the scene.

A large area of the Strand was cordoned off amid fears
over another device and police with loudspeakers warn-
ed people to move away or to stay inside restaurants,
theatres and hotels.

Charing Cross railway station was closed, preventing
many people from catching their last trains home to sou-
th-east London and Kent.

No-one has admitted carrying out the attack but one
theory is that the bomb exploded as it was being taken
to another destination in London.

Detectives are sifting through the wreckage and the
London Central bus company is to hand a tape from the
video recorder fitted to the bus over to Scotland Yard for
examination.

The Prime Minister John Major was being briefed by
officials at 10 Downing Street about the attack. The Irish
Government condemned the explosion as "an appalling
outrage".

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Irishman Brendan Woolhead, who suffered a fractured skull and pelvis
in the explosion, was initially regarded as the prime suspect and placed
under police guard in hospital.

Mr Woolhead's name was cleared but he died of an asthma attack in
October 1996.

It later emerged that one person died in the explosion - IRA bomber
Edward O'Brien. He was blown up and killed by his own device when it
accidentally detonated.

Bob Newitt, 49, the bus driver hurt in the blast, suffered back and chest
injuries while perforated eardrums have left him permanently deaf.

Several devices were found in the months after the bombing as the IRA
launched a series of attacks on mainland Britain following the breakdown
of a ceasefire.

On April 24, 32lb of semtex - the biggest bomb of its kind ever planted on
the mainland - failed to explode on Hammersmith Bridge in west London.
On 15 June 1996, a massive bomb exploded in a busy shopping area in
Manchester. Two hundred people were injured. Police believe the IRA
planted the device.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19
If you can't change something, it's a waste of time to try. Instead, use all that energy to think up ways to work around the things (or the people) that you don't like.

Taurus April 20-May 20
You know, there's not just one superhero in your group at work. Sure, that one person is awfully skilled at coming to people's rescue right in the nick of time, but you can help others, too!

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21
There is a fun but significant misalignment in the energies around you today, so you can expect a lot of missed connections, misunderstandings and mismatched pairs in your life right now.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Distractions are not necessarily bad—sometimes they can spark a new idea, entertain you on a boring day, or just keep your mind humming in a relaxed, healthy way.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22
The less you open up your wallet today, the better. It's not that you desperately need to save your cash or anything, it's just that the less often you have financial dealings with others.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22
You'll be put in a position today that isn't very enviable—you will have to tell someone you really like that they are just not delivering on expectations, and they need to get more in gear.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22
If you feel that there is too much duality in your day, then divide up your time more firmly. Do certain things at certain times, and avoid moving your schedule around too frequently.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
It's true that the more you open yourself up to people, the more you are going to get hurt—it's a simple numbers game. But what you're not realizing is that the more you open yourself up to people.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21
The universe has some serious power in store for you, although you might not receive it until the afternoon or early evening. So save any big plans for later in the day.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Think about what the recipient cares about most, and put that in the subject line—that way, you'll rise above all the competition in their inbox and get read first! Keep it short.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Keep in mind that gifts are all about the sentiment they represent—what they cost is not necessarily important. So if you are shopping for a gift right now, don't overspend.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20
When you need guidance or support today, you can always count on yourself! Getting other people's input is important, but it could also overload you with too much irrelevant information.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle.

WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION

CHINA

Table of weather forecasts for various Chinese cities including Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

WORLD

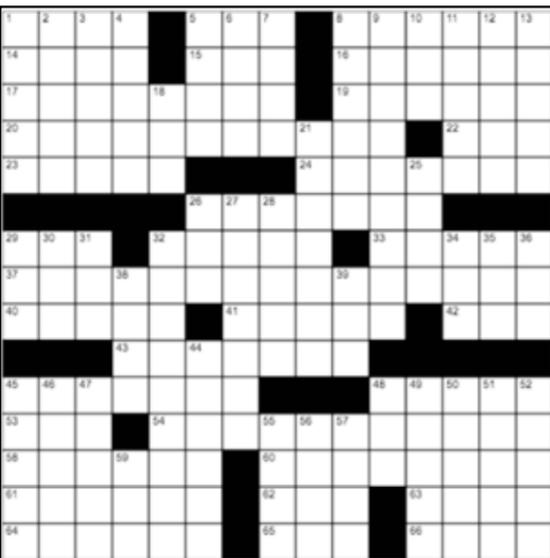
Table of weather forecasts for various world cities including Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, etc.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Some wines; 5- Tic-tac-toe win; 8- Affluence; 14- Sills solo; 15- Put to work; 16- "Earth in the Balance" author; 17- Mexican band; 19- Voyeur; 20- Like a process without heat transference; 22- Finish; 23- Simmons rival; 24- Certifies; 26- Ancient horse-drawn vehicle; 29- Bleat of a sheep; 32- Graph; 33- Dreadlocks wearer; 37- Empiricism; 40- Razz; 41- Pittsburgh product; 42- Jamaican music; 43- NaCl site; 45- Term of endearment; 48- Lauder of cosmetics; 53- Swiss river; 54- Inflexible; 58- Refrain from noticing; 60- Revolver; 61- Dig more; 62- ___ tai; 63- Infrequent; 64- Size up; 65- Pedigree org.; 66- Nautical speed unit;

Down: 1- "Caddyshack" director Harold; 2- Rub out; 3- More urgent; 4- Person of exceptional holiness; 5- That hurt!; 6- Dept. of Labor division; 7- Trompe l'...; 8- North American elk; 9- Pertaining to voting; 10- Mellow; 11- Easy gaits; 12- Senator Lott; 13- Groups of animals; 18- ___ crossroads; 21- Associate; 25- Catchall abbr.; 26- McBride of "Boston Public"; 27- Short-tailed, burrowing rodent; 28- Mountain ridge; 29- Stake; 30- Paul Bunyan's tool; 31- Therapists' org.; 32- Living things; 34- Spanish eyes; 35- Shame on you!; 36- Physicians' org.; 38- To be, to Ovid; 39- Half a score; 44- Sheets and such; 45- You ___ mouthful!; 46- Earnings; 47- Sea eagles; 48- Benz trailer?; 49- Grim; 50- Saturn's largest moon; 51- Diciembre follower; 52- Wading bird; 55- Ms. Bombeck; 56- Security problem; 57- Heroic; 59- Reveal, in verse;

Friday's solution



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



AD

Real estate advertisement for JML Property, featuring 'FOR SALE' signs and details for properties like Nova City, Ocean Garden, Sea View Condo, and Taipa, Nam Long.

LA LIGA

Madrid stunned by Girona, sees Barcelona increase its lead

Tales Azzoni, Madrid

REAL Madrid was stunned by struggling Girona yesterday, losing 2-1 at home to see Barcelona extend its lead at the top of the Spanish league standings.

Real Madrid was coming off a five-match winning streak in the league, but it wasn't able to get past its relegation-threatened rival at Santiago Bernabeu Stadium, conceding twice in the second half after taking a 1-0 halftime lead.

Girona hadn't won in 13 matches in all competitions and was coming off six straight losses. The Catalan club hadn't won in the league since November and had entered the weekend one point from the relegation zone.

The surprise loss dropped Madrid to third place and left the team nine points behind Barcelona, which on Saturday edged Valladolid 1-0 with a penalty kick converted by Lionel Messi. The result at Camp Nou Stadium ended a three-game win-



Real Madrid's head coach Santiago Solari shouts instructions

less run for the Girona neighbor in all competitions.

Atletico Madrid returned to second place after defeating Rayo Vallecano 1-0 on Saturday to halt a two-game losing streak in the league.

Girona, which had lost twice to Madrid in the quarterfinals of the Copa del Rey last month, being outscored 7-3, moved to 15th place in the league standings, four points from the re-

legation zone.

Madrid had won seven of its last eight matches in all competitions, with the only setback a 1-1 draw at Camp Nou in the first leg of the Copa del Rey semifinals. It had cut Barcelona's lead from 10 points to six in recent rounds after seeing its rival go through a slump.

Coach Santiago Solari made some changes to the starting lineup yesterday, leaving Vi-

nicus Junior and Gareth Bale on the bench after they started midweek in the 2-1 win at Ajax in the round of 16 of the Champions League. Marcelo, who had been left out of the Ajax game in the Netherlands, played from the beginning at the Bernabeu.

Casemiro opened the scoring with a firm header from near the penalty spot in the 25th minute after a cross by Toni

Kroos, and Girona equalized with a penalty kick converted by Cristhian Stuani in the 65th after a handball by Sergio Ramos inside the area.

Girona had a golden chance to equalize about five minutes before the penalty, when Aleix Garcia's close-range shot went over the crossbar. The visitors moved in front with a 75th-minute header by Portu after Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois initially saved a shot by Anthony Lozano.

Portu had hit the post a few minutes earlier with a booming shot from inside the area.

Madrid had won seven of its last eight matches in all competitions

Solari put on Vinicius Junior and Bale in the second half and Madrid pressed through the end to try to reverse the deficit. Courtois made it to the area in a last-gasp attempt, but couldn't get enough on his header, sending the ball just wide of the post.

Ramos was sent off in 90th after receiving a second yellow card. AP

AD

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BASKETBALL

NBA, FIBA announce plans for pro league in Africa

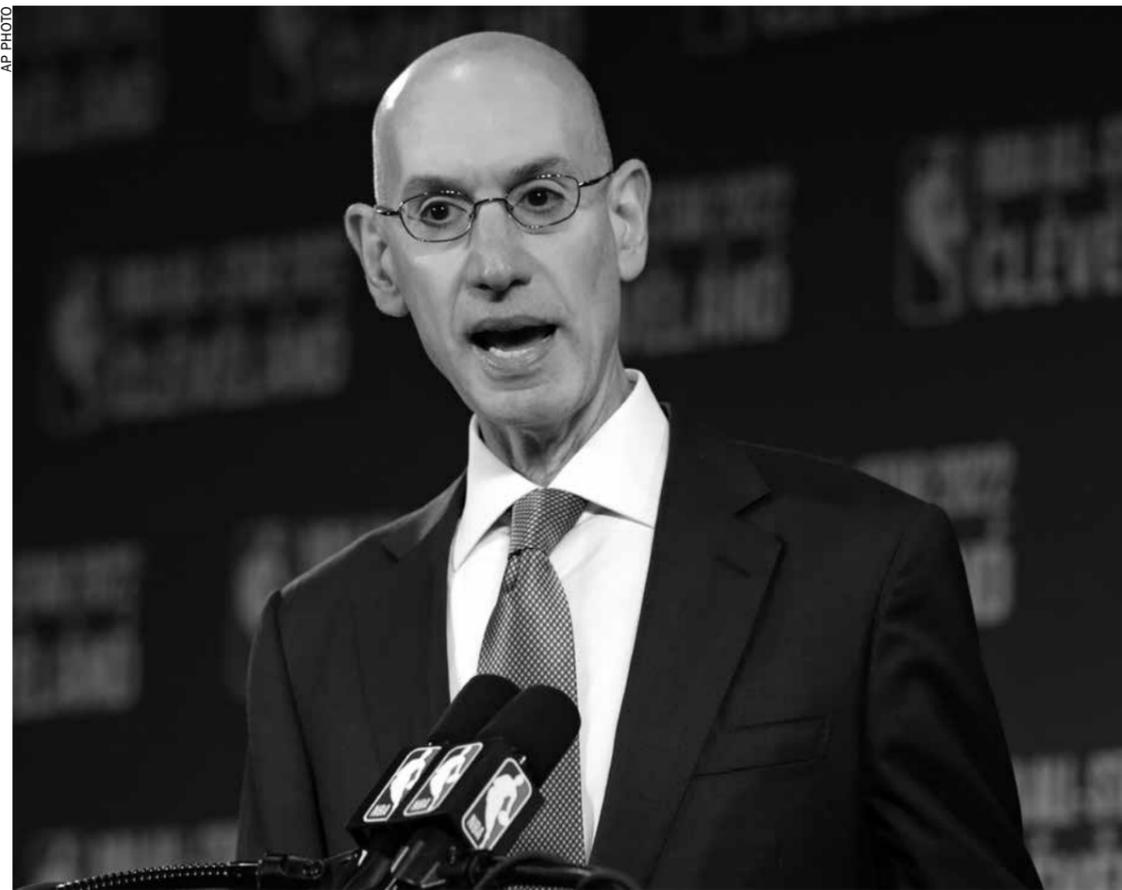
Tim Reynolds, Charlotte

THE NBA is bringing a pro league to Africa. The Basketball Africa League, a new collaboration between the NBA and the sport's global governing body FIBA, was announced Saturday. The initial plan is for the 12-team league to begin play in January, and former President Barack Obama is among those who are expected to have direct involvement with the league's plan to keep growing the game in Africa through the league and other initiatives.

The scope of what Obama's involvement will be remains unknown, and it's yet to be determined which existing club teams will be part of the league. Qualification tournaments will be held later this year to determine those clubs, with teams from Angola, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia expected to be among those taking part. No nation will have more than two teams in the league.

"As we've been talking about this concept over the last several months, there's been a tremendous reception from many of our NBA team owners [...] and in addition, several of the partners of the NBA have expressed a strong desire to work with us in Africa," Silver said.

Silver said Pepsi and Nike's Jordan Brand — Charlotte owner Michael Jordan was among the owners in the room where Silver made the announcement — are among the partners who have reached out to the NBA and said they want to be part



NBA Commissioner Adam Silver

of the Africa league. Silver also said that Obama, an enormous basketball fan, has told him he wants to "be directly involved with these activities in Africa."

Silver said talks between the NBA and Obama are ongoing. Obama spoke on a video that was shown during the event where Silver announced the league.

"I hope you know through sport, that if you put in effort, you will be rewarded," Obama said. "I hope you learn through sport what it means to play as

a team, and even if you are the best player, your job is not just to show off but your job is to make your teammates better."

The NBA and FIBA's involvement will include financial support and resources toward continued growing of the game on the continent, as well as providing training for players, coaches and referees and some infrastructure for the new league. Silver said there are 438 companies in Africa that generate more than USD1 billion in revenue annually, but that sport

there has not seen the same growth — yet.

"Africa is a huge economic engine," Silver said. "And one place, though, where we haven't seen enormous economic growth yet is in the industry of sport. And that's something that we are all particularly focused on."

The NBA has held three games in Africa since 2015, all of them selling out — two games in Johannesburg, the other in Pretoria. Many of the league's current players and coaches, along with several legends and Hall of

Famers, have been part of those trips.

"I went with them last year," Basketball Hall of Famer Kareem Abdul-Jabbar said. "The NBA reaches out across the world."

The league has an office in South Africa, has helped create 87 learn-and-play facilities in seven African nations, and 13 players who were born in Africa on opening-night NBA rosters this season. The league also built an academy in Senegal that opened nearly two years ago.

"It's a huge joy to see our partnership with the NBA enter uncharted territory as we work together for the first time to maximize the potential of professional basketball in Africa," said Andreas Zagklis, FIBA's secretary general.

Barack Obama is among those who are expected to have direct involvement with the league

This marks the first time the NBA has been involved with the operation of a league outside of North America.

"We're excited to work closely with the NBA to develop and put in a place a professional league like none that we have ever seen in our region before," said FIBA Africa Executive Director Alphonse Bile. "Through the Basketball Africa League, we can provide the many great clubs and players with the best possible environment to compete for the highest stakes."

The NBA says more details about the new league will be released in the coming months. **AP**

Emotional funeral for Sala held in his Argentine hometown

FAMILY, friends, supporters and former teammates paid tribute to striker Emiliano Sala in his small Argentine hometown on Saturday, almost four weeks after he died when the plane he was in crashed into the English Channel.

The 28-year-old Sala's body received a hero's welcome in Progreso where much of the grieving population paid their last respects to their soccer idol before the body was taken away for cremation.

"It is something that I still cannot understand or accept because it hurts so much," said Progreso resident Lucia Torres, who was in tears. "My town shut down on Jan. 21 and remains shut down to this day."

Sala was the best-known figure from Progreso, a town of several thousand inhabitants in Argentina's Santa Fe province, and was adored by many. He had been known since childhood here as "Emi."

A post-mortem found

that Sala died from injuries to his head and torso when his plane crashed in the channel.

The single-engine aircraft was flying from the French city of Nantes to Cardiff where Sala was due to start a new career playing for the Welsh capital's Premier League club. Among those in attendance at Saturday's funeral were Cardiff City's manager Neil Warnock and his Nantes teammate Nicolas Pallois.

Sala's body was recove-

red from the seabed wreckage last week but the plane's pilot is still missing. Authorities have said that the Air Accidents Investigation Branch investigation could take up to 12 months. A pre-inquest review hearing was set for Nov. 6.

"He is my player, he's signed for me," Warnock said of Sala, adding that he'd met with striker's family. "And then you look around the whole village here. It's like the whole village is part of it; I've



Cardiff City manager Neil Warnock (left) comforts Emiliano Sala's father, Horacio Sala

never known anything like it. People showed me pictures where he was 4 years of age and then 7 years and I spoke with his teacher."

Sala's body was flown to Argentina and arrived in Buenos Aires on Friday before being driven to Progreso, where Sala grew up. **AP**

opinion

Rear Window

Severo Portela



Ho IAT SENG: THE NATURAL CANDIDATE

Today it will be too difficult to spot anybody who disbelieves Ho Iat Seng is to succeed Chui Sai On as Macau's Chief Executive. Local entrepreneur and president of the Legislative Assembly, as well as a political heavyweight beyond MSAR, Ho left behind the role of the "never ever non-candidate", the reluctant one, to an "assuming almost-candidate" who is seriously considering the idea of becoming the 3rd Chief Executive.

Unequivocally, if not a tough unquestionable conservative, Ho Iat Seng is what, in the local liberal political lingo, is described as a reputable pro-Beijing asset, naturally ascending to the top job in the 20th year of the Macau Special Administrative Region. So much so nobody seems eager to really contest Ho Iat Seng in the small-circle selection system of the Macau Chief Executive. And allow us to underline #real#, thus discarding any dressing or sympathetic candidates.

Given his performance at the helm of an apparent regulatory tightening against the set of liberties granted in the Basic Law, Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak would be a natural bet but he puts himself totally out of consideration. He claims to be reiterating when he says he has never considered running in the next Chief Executive election. Last year, Wong dismissed the possibility at a Fire Service open day; this year during visits to the Border Gate he reiterated his unavailability. To date, this is the status and what counts about the replacement of Chui Sai On as CE.

Everything in this political outlook is pointing to a solo run, albeit the idea may be an uncomfortable one for Ho Iat Seng himself. Ho cared to state that he is not one to be scared of political quarrel, dispute or controversy, as supposedly his tenure at the Legislative Assembly attests, referring to the handling - the disastrous handling - of lawmaker Sulu Sou's suspension from the Nam Van Lake's floor. According to Radio Macau broadcast news, putative candidate Ho Iat Seng, not known for proficiency in the English Language, referred to the equivalent of "if you cannot stand the heat, get out of the kitchen"! For the time being, the heat is on at the usual kitchen: the Legislative Assembly, as a whole, and the Committee on Rules and Mandates, in particular.

Sulu Sou filed a complaint regarding the alleged secret meetings of the Committee on (House) Rules and Mandates, configuring what he claims to be unlawful behavior of the committee. In January, it held a meeting to discuss the pro-democracy lawmaker resorting to the Cantonese expression "trash assembly" ...however the opposition submitted by Sulu Sou was aimed at an internal meeting held prior: a so-called preparatory meeting held before the committee was to discuss matters involving Sulu. The thing is... there is no such thing as a preparatory meeting in the Rules of the House.

Again, Ho Iat Seng is now on the departure block, despite the formalities needed to be addressed to allow the candidacy of the current president of the Legislative Assembly, indirectly elected by the economic functional constituency.

How sound will the staple economy of the wealthiest hub be when the next CE takes office? No one knows. GGR was down this January for the first time in two years. Slower Chinese economic growth, a weaker yuan and a trade war threaten growth in the casino hub. At the end of the year, departing Chief Executive Chui Sai On warned residents about difficulties arising from an uncertain and sometimes volatile global economic situation.

THE BUZZ LION AIR JET OVERSHOOTS RUNWAY UPON LANDING IN INDONESIA

A Lion Air jet with 182 passengers and seven crew members overshoot the runway while landing at Pontianak airport in Indonesia's West Kalimantan province on Saturday, the airline said.

All the passengers and crew were evacuated safely from the aircraft that had departed from Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta airport earlier, Lion Air said. The airline is working with authorities to move the Boeing 737-800NG aircraft and minimize

disruption to its operations, it said.

The airport was temporarily closed and three flights to and from Pontianak were affected, PT Angkasa Pura II, the airport operator, said in a statement. The Lion Air jet landed during heavy rains, the operator said.

A Lion Air jet crashed into the Java Sea in October, killing all 189 on board, in Indonesia's worst aviation disaster in two decades.

IRAN

Thousands attend funeral for slain Guard members



Gen. Mohammad Ali Jafari

Ebrahim Noroozi, Isfahan

DOZENS of comrades circled caskets on the back of trucks on Saturday as thousands of mourners attended a mass funeral for 27 elite Revolutionary Guard soldiers killed in a suicide car bombing this week in Iran's Sistan and Baluchistan province.

Men rhythmically struck their chests, a traditional way of showing grief, as women in long black chadors wept. Shouts of "Death to America," and "Death to Zionism" could be heard from the crowd gathered in Bozorgmehr Square in the central city of Isfahan, where the soldiers were based.

The head of Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guard, Maj. Gen. Mohammad Ali Jafari, threatened to retaliate against neighboring Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates over the attack. Earlier, he claimed, without providing evidence, that the United States and Israel ordered Saudi Arabia and the Emirates to carry out the attack, which also wounded 12.

"The treacherous government of Saudi and Emirates should know that the patience of the Islamic Republic about your hidden support for criminals and Takfiri groups has come to an end and Iran will not tolerate it anymore," said Jafari in a speech to the crowd.

"We will get revenge for the blood of our martyrs from Saudi Arabia and Emirates,"

he said. He asked President Hassan Rouhani to give the Guard the freedom to retaliate.

Pegah Mohammadi, 19, a student, said she attended the funeral to say goodbye to heroes who sacrificed to provide security to the Iranian people. "They gave their blood to protect our borders, to bring us security and peace," she said.

Family members accompanied the bodies of their loved ones to Isfahan's Bagh Rezvan cemetery. Five of the dead Guard members will be buried there and the rest will be buried in nearby cities and towns in Isfahan province.

Wednesday's attack, claimed by Baluch separatists, killed both seasoned officers and younger soldiers, including a 20-year-old in the Isfahan-based Guard's forces. The assault killed members of the Guard's Imam Hussein division, which played a significant role in various battles during the 1980s Iran-Iraq war.

The bombing could lead to Iranian retaliation against the militant Sunni group Jaish al-Adl, who claimed responsibility. The group largely operates across the border in nuclear-armed Pakistan. Recent militant assaults inside Iran have sparked retaliatory ballistic missile strikes in Iraq and Syria.

Attacks by Jaish al-Adl, or "Army of Justice," have increased in recent years. Since its founding in 2012,

it has abducted or killed border guards in hit-and-run assaults from its havens in Pakistan. It kidnapped 11 Iranian border guards in October. Five later were returned to Iran and six remained held.

Jafari said Iran expects Pakistan to "punish" the group, which allegedly has taken refuge in the country's southwest. "If they do not punish them, our retaliatory measures will be carried out," he said. Jafari said the Pakistani government knows where the attackers are harbored and accused Pakistan security forces of supporting them.

Tehran immediately linked Wednesday's attack to a U.S.-led conference in Warsaw largely focused on Iran, just two days after the nation marked the 40th anniversary of its 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The bomb struck a bus traveling on a road between the cities of Khash and Zahedan, a mountainous region along the Pakistani border that is also near Afghanistan. Images after the blast published by semi-official news agencies showed the explosion tore the bus apart, as passers-by used the light of their cellphones to illuminate the debris.

The Guard, which answers only to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, issued a statement saying a vehicle loaded with explosives targeted a bus carrying border guards affiliated with its force. AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	50-70 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Moderate
Ambient	45-65 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS



SYRIA Islamic State militants are preventing more than 1,000 civilians from leaving a tiny area still held by the extremist group in a village in eastern Syria, a spokesman for the U.S.-backed Syrian militia fighting the group said yesterday.

SERBIA Thousands of people have rallied in Serbia's capital for 11th week in a row against populist President Aleksandar Vucic and his government.

ITALY's populist 5-Star Movement, which is part of the country's ruling coalition, is asking its supporters to vote online on whether the leader of its junior coalition partner should be prosecuted.

SPAIN will elect its third government in less than four years after Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's fragile socialist government acknowledged its support had evaporated and called an early general election.



BRAZIL Eight employees of Brazilian mining giant Vale have been arrested in connection with the investigation into last month's collapse of a mining dam that killed at least 166 people and left 147 missing in the southeastern state of Minas Gerais.

VENEZUELA The U.S. military airlifted tons of humanitarian aid to a Colombian town on the Venezuelan border as part of an effort meant to undermine socialist President Nicolas Maduro and back his rival for the leadership of the South American nation. More on p14