

GREATER BAY

CESL Asia makes Lusophone inroads in double deal

P6-7 MDT COVERAGE, EDITORIAL



LIONEL LEONG CONFIDENT ON GAMING, ECONOMY

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA In an unusual step, China's ceremonial legislature is due to endorse a law meant to help end a bruising tariff war with Washington by discouraging officials from pressuring foreign companies to hand over technology. *More on p10*



MALAYSIA is open to new proposals from U.S. technology firm Ocean Infinity or any other companies to resume the hunt for Flight 370, as families of passengers marked the fifth anniversary of the jet's mysterious disappearance. *More on p13*



PHILIPPINES The number of cases of measles in the Philippines has exceeded almost 15,000 and the count is still rising even as the government steps up its campaign against a vaccine scare that was triggered by deaths allegedly caused by Dengvaxia, a vaccine against dengue. *More on p13*



SOUTH KOREA and the U.S. are eliminating their massive springtime military drills and replacing them with smaller exercises in what they call an effort to support diplomacy aimed at resolving the North Korean nuclear crisis. *More on p12*

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Macau GP on track to change forever

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SCOTT CLOTWORTHY



COMING IN TO LAND

Kitesurfer nails first Delta crossing

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Adelson battling cancer

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ADVENTURE

Kitesurfer completes Pearl River Delta crossing after stalled attempt

Renato Marques

AFTER a postponement caused by bureaucratic problems regarding the clearance of a support boat, kitesurfer Hillian Siu has finally completed her much-anticipated kitesurfing trip, crossing the Pearl River Delta between Hong Kong and Macau.

The trip, held last Friday, was successfully accomplished in 2 hours and 17 minutes, but not without a series of difficulties, as Siu explained to the Times in an interview.

The first difficulty was the wind, previously identified by the kitesurfer as the most precious and decisive resource. The wind initially subjected the kitesurfer to many difficulties as she tried to exit the bay at Hong Kong's Cheung Chau Beach.

"Eventually my kite dropped near the rocks [at the northern part of the island] forcing the support boat to pick me up," she said, noting that this was the hardest part of the trip.

"These first four hours were the most difficult as I couldn't launch the trip [due to the wind]," said Siu, adding, "after the kite dropped we decided to take a different approach and around 1 p.m. we finally managed to successfully launch the trip, from a small island [West

HK KITEBOARD CLUB



Hillian Siu (center) and team

from Cheung Chau] in the Soko Islands."

From then on the kitesurfer did not experience any other problems and the trip ran smoothly, although her full and constant attention was required.

"I had not an exact idea whe-

re I was going, in terms of geo-orientation, so my boat was helping me, giving me simple directions like 'go left' or 'go right' and it was easy in that sense. My main concern was with the [maritime] traffic, as the route is quite busy, especially with cargo ships."

Siu said that although such ships travel at a relatively slow speed, a drop of the kite in front of one of them could turn the situation serious.

The trip aimed to raise awareness of marine pollution and raise funds for an ocean cleaning project. Questioned on the pollution encountered during the trip, the kitesurfer noted that it is present all the way from Hong Kong to Macau.

"There are a lot of floating objects like Styrofoam boxes and other plastic materials, but as we get close to Macau it is very clear that the [sea] water changes color and gets more polluted, and besides several kinds of residue we can see a lot of dead fish floating, especially at the final arrival point at the Macau Yacht Club [Doca de Lamau]."

According to Siu the trip, besides proving that the voyage is a perfectly achievable feat, also served to collect data and define potential routes and dangers to take into consideration for the main event. She hopes to gather a total of 30 kitesurfers in November.

Also questioned on safety issues, she admitted that having one support boat per kitesurfer provides a lot of confidence. For the main event, she said the organizer would be managing six support boats for a ratio of one

for every five kitesurfers.

Asked for the highlight of the trip, Siu answered the arrival to Macau.

"As I was approaching, I started noticing a few buildings [on the horizon] but since I don't see very well at a distance [so] I was not sure if it was really Macau or just another of several Chinese islands."

"When I saw the airplane passing overhead to land at the Macau airport, then I really realized that I was arriving and started to notice the tall buildings and hotels [in the Cotai area]. That was the moment when I realized that the trip had been accomplished."



ASK THE VET

by Dr Ruan Du Toit Bester

THE RIGHT DIET FOR HEDGEHOGS?

More and more people in Macau are getting Hedgehogs as pets because they are small and easy to keep, but I strongly suggest before buying a hedgehog you need to know how to properly look after it before you get one. We currently have a few in hospital that are being treated for wobbly hedgehog syndrome as well as nutritional deficiencies. In the wild, hedgehogs are primarily insectivores, but they will often eat whatever is available. Hedgehogs have been known to eat insects, slugs, baby mice, frogs, fish, worms, small snakes, eggs, and even fruit. They are definitely not picky eaters.

For your pet hedgehog you want to provide a well balanced diet that is high in protein. How much you should feed him depends on his activity and metabolism. If you notice your hed-

gehog becoming fat, cut back on his portions. A nutritious diet will help ensure you have a happy and healthy companion for many years. Below is a list of some of the items you could feed your pet.

Dry hedgehog or cat food

There is commercial hedgehog food, but it is not always available at some pet stores. A meat or chicken dry cat food that is high in protein is a decent alternative. Dry food should be the primary portion of your pet's diet.

Moist food

Moist food should also be fed to your pet. Canned cat or dog food work well as hedgehog food. Be sure to get a food that is high in protein and is made primarily from meat or chicken.

Fruits & vegetables

A small amount of fruits and vegetables should be added to his diet. Some foods you could use are beans, peas, corn, apples, grapes, and carrots. Your pet may only like a few types of fruits or vegetables so try a variety. These foods should only be a small portion of the diet so don't overfeed him fruits and vegetables.

Treats

Everybody loves junk food and your hedgehog is no exception. Treats are a great way to add variety to his diet, but should be fed in moderation. Insects like crickets and mealworms make great treats. Other choices are moist cat or dog treats, and cooked foods like eggs, hamburger, and chicken. Giving him a small piece of your food is an easy way to supply treats.

Water

A hedgehog needs to always have a source of clean fresh water. A stoppered water bottle in



his cage is the best way to supply water. Next week I will write about the Health and Illness factors of Hedgehogs

Hope this info helps
Till next week
Dr Ruan Bester

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MDT EXCLUSIVE

F3 Macau Grand Prix to accept new International Series car



Renato Marques

THE official confirmation has not yet been disclosed by the governing body of the championship, the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), but according to sources heard by the Times, a decision has already been made. The 2019 Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix and FIA F3 World Cup, to be held in Macau between November 17 and 19 this year, will present the same cars debuting this year at the FIA Formula 3 Championship.

This new series, organized by the FIA and launching this May as a feeder series for the FIA Formula One World Championship and the FIA Formula 2 Championships, results from the merging of two existing racing championships, the GP3 Series and the FIA Formula 3 European Championship. The merger was announced by the FIA in March 2018.

This championship constitutes a total of eight events and will run between May and September this year. Unlike its predecessor, which was an entirely independent championship and calendar, the new championship will be held as support races for a few selected Formula One racing weekends.

The F3 season ends on September 29 in Russia, just in time to prepare for the FIA F3 World Cup in mid-November in Macau.

The long-awaited switch seems to have discarded the possibility of a more consensual solution among Asian series organizers; the use of the so-called F3 regional series car, and even the possibility of continuing to run previous generation F3 cars like in 2018. According to motorsports specialist Autosport, the latter solution was "preferred" by local organizers in Macau.

The heaviest and most powerful of all F3 cars, the switch to the new model has led to safety fears regarding the race in Macau.

Besides having a significantly larger wheelbase, with the length being increased from the previous 2,000mm to 2,800-3,000mm, the engine power grows significantly from the previous ~210bhp to approximately 380bhp of the direct-injected Mecachrome 3.4L V6 engine, with an announced top

speed of around 300km/h and an acceleration of 3.0 seconds from 0 to 100 km/h and 7.7 seconds from 0 to 200km/h.

The F3 2019 car, designed by Italian company Dallara Automobili, uses a mix of carbon and aluminum honeycomb material for the chassis structure as well as a carbon aramid honeycomb for the bodywork.

The decision to update specifications also sees the return of Pirelli as tire manufacturer after 2017's unsuccessful experience.

successful experience.

The FIA F3 Championship will commence with the participation of 10 teams and 30 drivers from at least 17 different countries, among them many known faces from the Guia Circuit, such as Britain's Jake Hughes (fourth in last year's Macau GP), and Brazilian Pedro Piquet (sixth in 2018), and others such as the recent addition of Chinese driver Ye Yifei to British Hitech GP Team last week.

Lawmaker proposes ban on street smoking

Lawmaker Ella Lei has urged the local government to ban smoking in the city's main streets. In her written inquiry to the government, Lei asked the government whether it "will consider, in the future, to expand the smoking ban to densely populated outdoor spaces." Lei asked if streets near schools, kindergartens, public parks could be made into non-smoking areas. The lawmaker also wondered whether the government will establish non-smoking streets in some areas. "It has become a global trend to expand smoking bans to outdoor public places, especially where children are present," Lei wrote.

Additional grid to operate in June

China Southern Power Grid said that the third 500-kilovolt substation will be put into operation by the end of June, according to Chinese reports. When the substation becomes operational, Macau will be served by three substations in total. The company will also enhance the power-handling capability of electric substations in mainland China so that they can provide electricity to Macau in case of a public emergency, as well as support the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area.

Bill to allow revocation of unfair contracts

The Chief Executive Council has completed the discussion of the consumer rights protection act bill. The bill proposes that all misleading or intimidating business conduct shall constitute unfair business practices. If the consumer contract is made under the influence of unfair business practices, the consumer is allowed to revoke his or her obligation, according to the general law, and retain the part of the contract that is not affected. The bill also proposes to establish a more regulated mediation system and introduce arbitration for consumer disputes involving basic public utility services such as water, electricity and telecommunications services.

MOTORSPORT

Macau GP loses season finale to Malaysia



ONE of races that has historically attracted a lot of attention during the Macau Grand Prix is the "Guia Race" for touring cars which, as of last year, started to comply with the participation of the World Touring Car Cup (WTCR) car specifications. This was after the merging of the former TCR International series and World Touring Car Championship (WTCC).

As on other occasions, Macau was the host of the prestigious season finale where drivers and teams were crowned.

Such a sight will not return this year, according

to a decision confirmed at the last meeting of the FIA World Motor Sport Council.

In 2019, the role of WTCR season finale host has changed to Malaysia's Sepang Circuit in an event that will tentatively take place from December 13 to 15, one month after the Macau event.

The event will run according to a unique format, with one of the three races taking place at night and on a weekend that also includes another season finale: the FIM (Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme) Endurance World Championship for motorbikes. **RM**

GAMING

Las Vegas Sands said in 'good hands' as

Regina Garcia Cano, Las Vegas

CASINO magnate and major GOP donor Sheldon Adelson is battling cancer, but industry analysts and his Las Vegas Sands Corp. on Friday said the gambling empire he founded and helms has the personnel to guide it through the health crisis.

Their comments came a day after the company revealed Adelson is receiving treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. He has not been at the company's offices in Las Vegas since around Christmas Day.

Las Vegas Sands "has one of, if not the, deepest benches amongst the destination regional operators, in our view," analysts with Stifel said in a research note Friday. They

added that they "believe the company remains in incredibly good hands."

The announcement about Adelson's condition followed comments by a Sands attorney in a court hearing earlier in the week describing the billionaire's health as "dire." The company said side effects from medication have restricted him from traveling or keeping regular office hours, but not from fulfilling his duties as chairman and CEO.

It is unclear what treatment Adelson, 85, is receiving. Treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma can include chemotherapy, radiation therapy and bone marrow transplant.

The Securities and Exchange Commission does not require companies to disclose the health issues of executives. The company on Friday

told The Associated Press it is doing everything required of a publicly traded company.

"Mr. Adelson himself has said for many years he does not run the day-to-day operations," Las Vegas Sands spokesman Ron Reese said, adding that those responsi-

Mr. Adelson himself has said for many years he does not run the day-to-day operations.

RON REESE
LVS SPOKESMAN

bilities fall to the company's president and chief operating officer, Robert Goldstein, and Patrick Dumont, its executive vice president and chief financial officer. Adelson is seen as the company's chief visionary and strategist, Reese said.

Goldstein and Dumont, who is also Adelson's son-in-law, met with the casino mogul as recently as Friday, Reese said.

Sands' stock dipped about 1.7 percent in moderate trading Friday.

Most corporate governance experts believe CEOs have a right to privacy, particularly with respects to their health. But some say that coming forward would help end the stigma on workplace illness for other executives and workers. Top executives also must consider their roles as corporate officers when

evaluating what personal information they disclose — first to their boards, then to their workers and the wider investing community.

Adelson is Las Vegas Sands' largest shareholder and regularly participates in the company's earnings calls, but was absent when it reported results on Jan. 23. Goldstein said at the time that Adelson was "a little bit under the weather."

Adelson is one of the nation's most influential GOP donors, hosting the party's most ambitious candidates at his office on the Las Vegas Strip. The billionaire and his wife, Miriam, gave President Donald Trump's campaign USD30 million in 2016. They followed that by contributing \$100 million to the Republican Party for the 2018 mid-term elections. ▶▶

ECONOMY

Lionel Leong confident on 2019 growth



Julie Zhu

SECRETARY for Economy and Finance Lionel Leong is confident in Macau's economy, he told the media on Friday.

"There are a lot of things we have to do, but I'm confident in the long-term of Macau's economy," said Leong.

The Secretary remarked that, thanks to the entire city's efforts, Macau saw considerable economic growth in 2018.

In the fiscal year of 2018, Macau recorded an 8.5 percent growth in gross domestic product compared to that of 2017, while it grew by 4.7 percent in real terms. The rate of growth has declined slightly compared to that of the previous fiscal year.

In 2017, Macau's GDP expanded by 12 percent when compared to the previous year, which recorded growth consistent with that of 2015.

Leong believes that the changes in Macau's rate of growth through the years are "making sense."

"During the year of 2018, there were several variables around the world. Macau is a small place; we are highly affected by the external environment," explained Leong.

However, regarding 2019, Leong expressed his confidence in seeing growth amid uncertainty in the global economic environment.

"We can see that 2019 will also be a year where we may encounter things that are not easy to predict," said Leong, adding that "as we said before, we are looking at a stable economic environment, but simultaneously we also want to get some improvement. But I have to say that those improvements won't be expected [to produce results] like the growth in 2017."

"Minor growth is what we are trying to [achieve]. There are no guarantees," Leong remarked.

Once again, the head of the economic sector pointed out that "Macau's economy is quite easy to be affected by the external environment," and, because of that, the "Macau government has to be really conscious."

"We [have been and are] monitoring what is happening around the world and what is happening in Macau in order to make sure that the quality of our growth benefits every party, everybody, even small and medium [sized] enterprises," Leong said.

"The resilience of Macau's economy is the most important work. The most important thing is resilience; how we can make sure that the resilience exists within our economy?" the Secretary posed.

Moreover, according to Leong, gaming revenue in February recorded a 4.4 percent increase, bringing the total gaming revenue of January and February roughly in line with the same period of 2018.

Leong further noted that the contribution of the mass market has been growing. Stronger mass-market performance might be good for the local economy, because it improves Macau's resilience in the face of global economic volatility and assists in the sustainable development of the city's economy.

Leong additionally said gaming revenue was best evaluated on a quarterly basis, especially with regard to the first quarter each year. He went on to explain that the calendar month in which the Lunar New Year fell from one year to the next — and whether the month of February was lengthened due to a leap year — could make a difference to gaming-sector performance.

MONTHLY GROSS GAMING REVENUE IN MOP BILLIONS

	2019	2018	Variance (%)
January	24.94	26.26	-5.0
February	25.37	24.30	+4.4
Accumulated	50.31	50.56	-0.5

Official data according to the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau

Adelson battles cancer

RENATO MARQUES



He was photographed in mid-November at the White House, when Trump recognized Miriam Adelson and other Americans with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor the nation reserves for a civilian.

He was expected to testify

later this year in a civil case in Las Vegas brought by Hong Kong businessman Richard Suen and his company, Round Square Co. He testified in 2013 and 2008 in the case's two previous trials.

The judge in the case ruled Friday that Adelson

does not have to testify in court or sit for a deposition.

Suen has been seeking compensation because he said he helped Sands secure business in the Chinese gambling enclave of Macau. Sands has argued Suen didn't help get crucial appro-

val to build casinos in Macau and deserves nothing.

Macau now powers the profits of three of the four largest American casino operators, including Sands. Adelson's company and others will soon be vying for licenses to operate casinos in Japan. **AP**

Human trafficking threat may grow

The Director of the city's Policy Research and Regional Development Bureau, Mi Jian, has indicated that Macau will have no future if it does not face the reality that the Greater Bay Area initiative will have a significant impact on human trafficking to Macau. At the State Council Information Office press conference last week, Mi was asked about the human trafficking concerns that may arise in Macau and Hong Kong. "[The SARs] must be mentally prepared," said Mi. "It does not mean we [the SARs] have no measures [to counter the problem]. It tests a government department's intelligence. Cooperation among the three regions is also necessary."

Buses aim to transport 3,000 workers to Hengqin

Shuttle buses between Hengqin's Chinese Medicine Industrial Zone and Macau were launched on Friday, aiming to provide convenient transportation to Macau residents who work in the Hengqin zone. The buses operate between the Hengqin Chinese Medicine Industrial Zone and the Macau Lisboa Hotel, and stop at Hengqin Polytec plaza, Hengqin Headquarter, Hengqin border gate, Macau Cotai port and Macau Altira. On a daily basis, there are 24 services between the two regions. According to Hengqin authorities, there are approximately 3,000 Macau residents working in the industrial zone.

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Acknowledgement of the passing of ALDA FÁTIMA DA ROSA ESTORNINHO

It is with deep regret that the children Maria Isabel da Rosa Estorninho; José Luís da Rosa Estorninho; Carlos Miguel Gonçalves Estorninho; Palmiro Augusto Estorninho Jr.; Ivo Manuel da Rosa Estorninho and Luís Filipe da Rosa Estorninho carry the painful duty of acknowledging the passing of their beloved mother, ALDA FÁTIMA DA ROSA ESTORNINHO, on February 27th, in Macau.

Last respects can be presented on March 6 (Wednesday) at a wake from 4:00 pm in the Chapel of the Mortuary House, near the Canidrome, where a Mass will be given at 8:00 pm

The burial ceremony will be held on March 7 (Thursday) at 11:00 am, preceded by a Mass in the Chapel of the Cemetery of San Miguel Arcanjo.

The deceased ALDA FÁTIMA DA ROSA ESTORNINHO, widow of PALMIRO AUGUSTO ESTORNINHO, is survived by six children, eleven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

The bereaved family thanks in advance all for their condolences, as well as all who want to participate in the pious act.

editorial

Paulo Coutinho



THE GREAT 'BRAY' AREA

THE vagueness of the 11-chapter document [on the Greater Bay Area] suggests that officials will struggle to realize the initiative's goals," said recently Yue Su, China economist of the Economist Intelligence Unit, reflecting the generalized concerns many of us, media included, have in Macau.

What is exactly the Greater Bay Area (GBA) and, more importantly, how can we really use it to our benefit without losing our autonomy and eroding the "two systems" formula that serves to keep Macau's (and Hong Kong's) status quo within the greater China region?

Even Beijing, in the outline on the GBA's policy, recognizes those difficulties by stating, clearly, that the Greater Bay Area is challenged by diverging social, legal and customs systems, which have impeded the free flow of resources.

On the dark side of the Bay, there is plenty of speculation that this is a vested maneuver by Xi Jinping and peers to dilute the unique identities of Macau and Hong Kong in a fashion that soon (sooner than 49) one can't tell the difference from the mainland. On this side, the worries have to do naturally with the respect for fundamental rights and the rule of law that the sister SARs have been enjoying, and actually fighting hard to keep – remember Occupy Central, remember the Macau demonstrations of 2014, remember Sulu Sou vs AL legal battle.

Although the GBA blueprint emphasizes the importance of maintaining the "one country, two systems" framework, it doesn't provide details on how the different systems would be integrated and how they would cooperate.

On the bright side, according to HSBC Holdings, the move to knit the cities of Hong Kong, Macau, Shenzhen and Guangzhou together could boost a trillion-dollar economy that exports more than Japan.

And Macau, alongside HK, Shenzhen and Guangzhou has been given a starring role by the central government.

In so many words, it seems like a great opportunity for Macau to spread and diversify its economy and yet it is a risk – the risk of charting unknown territory.

That is why Macau Daily Times has made a strategic decision to dedicate efforts to a daily section on Greater Bay related issues, including coverage of those four cities and beyond and combining it with news from the Forum Macau member countries.

An example of what can be done weaving strategies for both economic blocs was put in place just last Friday by local company CESL Asia, which initiated the acquisition of a 40 million euro business in Portugal, siding with both money-issuing banks, BoC and BNU.

It is a purely private initiative with institutional support here, in Beijing and Lisbon. Maybe that's one way to go.

Keen to attract youth, Beijing rolls out SAR-friendly subsidies

Lynzy Valles

BEIJING rolled out a series of measures that will be implemented this year, including lower taxes and subsidies for those working in Guangdong's nine cities in a bid to advance the development of the Greater Bay Area.

The measures were announced by Chief Executive Chui

Sai On, following the second plenary meeting of the leading group for the development of the Greater Bay Area, which he attended in China's capital.

Previously, youth in the two special administrative regions of China have shown little enthusiasm for working and living on the mainland side of the Greater Bay Area. For example, at a talk last

week at the Macao Polytechnic Institute, just one student from 150 expressed an interest in relocating to the mainland.

But Beijing now pledges that the central government would offer a relaxed tax regime for professionals that travel frequently across the border to work in the bay area cities, amongst seven other measures.



Chief Executive Chui Sai On (second left) in a meeting with officials in Beijing

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A new solution to land supply shortage?

Dear Editor,

On February 18, 2019, Beijing laid out its plan for the Greater Bay Area, which named Hong Kong as one of the key cities or thrusts. In this plan, Beijing identifies Hong Kong's lack of sustainable economic growth and limited space for development as the city's major challenges.

Nearly at the same time, the report of the Task Force on Land Supply came out in last year, concluding the land available in Hong Kong is "indeed not much for development." The report proposes that Hong Kong is not in urgent need of land, but the rationalized and maximized utilization of the existing area.

Nowadays, only 25 percent of Hong Kong's 1106-square-kilometer territory is built-up, and the other 66 percent is green land for environmental purposes, which is, due to complicated and ingrained political problems, hard to transfer.

In this view, all of Hong Kong's civic activities are just performing in 276 square kilometers with nearly 7.5 million population.

Currently, there are six existing land supply options by the government to cope with the soaring need of land: Rezoning, Redevelopment, Resumption, Reclamation, Rock Cavern Development, and Reuse of Ex-quarry Sites. All of these six options may sound reasonable in Hong Kong's situation. However, as the Task Force on Land Supply noted at the beginning of this year, the land shortage dilemma is "still hard to resolve."

The Greater Bay Area may provide an alternative to solve the shortage.

The plan asks to develop and establish the cooperation demonstration area and policies to "explore the new model for regional cooperation and deepen the comprehensive, coordinated development among Hong Kong, Macau, and the mainland." It also offers specific for-

ms of cooperation in the region, providing more land and facilitating the flow of human resources, capital, and so on.

Such cooperation between Hong Kong and the mainland started much earlier than the release of the Greater Bay Area plan.

On January 27, 2018, Chen Huiwei, then secretary of the Huizhou Municipal Party Committee, said in an interview with the media, "Huizhou hopes to increase cooperation with Hong Kong through the construction of Greater Bay Area, such as making full use of Hong Kong's innovative resources and the advantages of Huizhou industry and building special cooperation zones to create a highland of innovative industries."

A couple of months later, the representative of the National People's Congress of the Hong Kong District, Mr. Zheng Yaoxuan, mentioned in September that he suggested the Hong Kong SAR Government to ask the Central Government to rent 30 square kilometers of land. The leased area should be in the one-hour life circle of the Greater Bay Area to build a new district in Hong Kong. It is expected

to accommodate 600,000 Hong Kong residents and implement Hong Kong law, under the jurisdiction of Hong Kong.

Dr. Tang Wenliang, CEO of Gale Well Group Limited and CEO of Jihui Group, also said in an interview that the development of the Greater Bay Area could also alleviate the shortage of land supply in Hong Kong.

On the one hand, mainlanders who want to come to Hong Kong for opportunity can directly settle in the cities of the area, hence dispersing pressure on the population carrying capacity of Hong Kong. On the other hand, those from Hong Kong can also move to other cities in the Greater Bay Area.

Construction of the Greater Bay Area will gradually break the traditional boundary between Hong Kong and the mainland, offering more options for solving the land supply shortage problem.

Tianchu Li
Hong Kong
Undergraduate student
of architecture, HKU

There is no guarantee that this tax measure would be applicable to all professionals; the measure implied that it would only be applicable to specific professions.

This measure guarantees that some professionals living in the two administrative regions and working in the bay area cities would pay a similar tax amount as they would in their home city.

The mainland's top personal income tax rate stands at 47 percent, while Macau's highest personal income tax rate is only 12 percent.

The extra amount will be reimbursed by the bay area's provincial government.

Chui pledged that local government departments would "step up efforts" to put forward policies and pilot

schemes to foster coordination with the nine cities.

The central government will also implement support for Guangdong public institutions to hire residents of Hong Kong and Macau.

The Department of Science and Technology offers subsidies to institutions that have introduced overseas talents in Guangdong Province and employers that have introduced overseas talents through human resources service agencies.

Launched in November 2018, the institutions will be granted subsidies ranging from MOP20,000 to MOP200,000 under the "Yuehai Zhiqiao Subsidy Scheme."

Meanwhile, Beijing will also allow higher education insti-

tutions and science research institutes in Hong Kong and Macau to obtain funding from the provincial and municipal governments in Guangdong.

The central government plans to issue an opinion regarding the implementation of a mechanism whereby these institutions can take part in Guangdong science research schemes.

Other measures that will be rolled out this year include: the launch of an operational guideline regarding a judgment concerning a 183-day stay in relation to individual income tax; the encouragement of young people from the two SARs to establish innovation-linked projects and businesses in the bay area; and the activation of new pilot schemes to facilitate cross-

boundary services within the places making up the Greater Bay Area.

Beijing will also facilitate cross-boundary movement of road vehicles between Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau and extend implementation of a speedy customs clearance program at boundary checkpoints within the Greater Bay Area.

"Macau would spare no effort to accommodate and promote these major measures launched by the Central Government that support the advancement of the Greater Bay Area," Chui told the press on the sidelines of the meeting on Friday.

Chui added that the SAR would launch promotional seminars on the new initiatives and that the government

Some Macau residents working in Guangdong would pay income tax closer to their 12 percent maximum rate instead of the mainland's 47 percent

would hold internal training sessions and publish articles providing interpretations of Greater Bay Area policies.

HONG KONG

Student expelled over 'democracy wall' protest

Crystal Tse

A university in Hong Kong expelled a master's degree student and suspended another after a clash over an on-campus news bulletin.

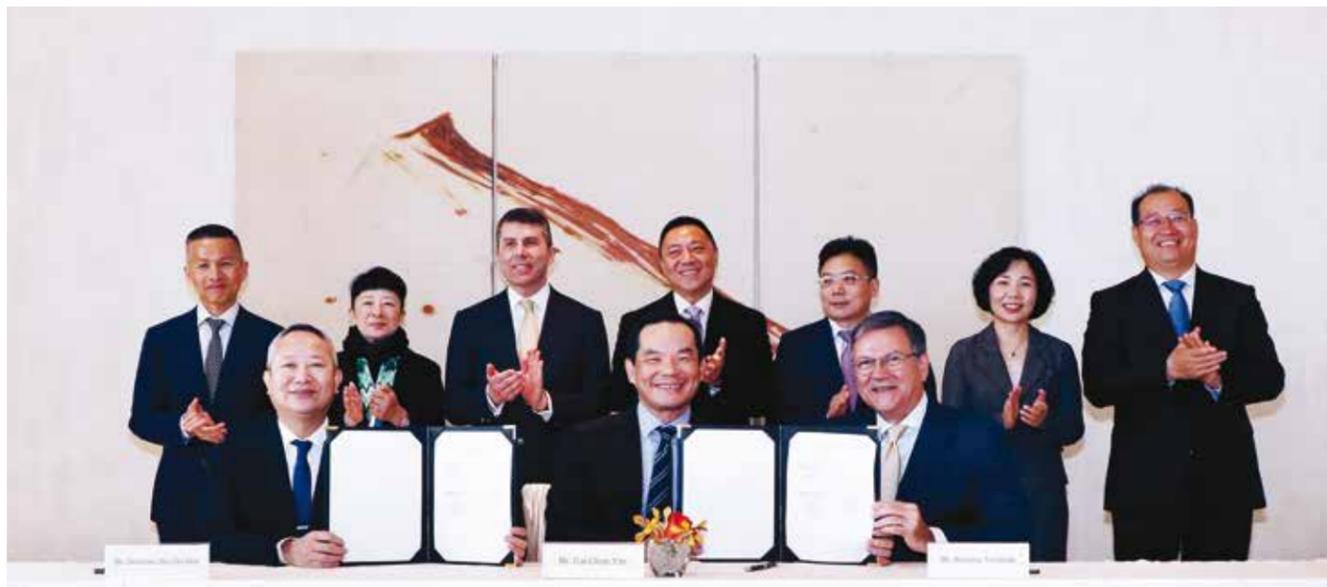
Hong Kong Polytechnic University expelled Gerald Ho and suspended former student-union president Lam Wing-hang for one year after they confronted the school management about interfering with the content on the school's "democracy wall" bulletin board, the union said on its Facebook page.

Two other students involved were given community service orders. Ho was told that he would never again be admitted to any program offered by the university, according to the announcement.

The university declined to comment on matters related to individual students, citing privacy concerns. The school had previously expelled students who violated rules or broke the law, according to its emailed statement. The school's disciplinary committee made its decisions after hearing from the involved students and considering all the available information, it said.

In September, the student union posted material on the bulletin board to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the so-called Umbrella Movement, a demonstration against China's increased political influence in the city. PolyU's management ordered the content to be removed, which the union protested. Internal investigations against the students were subsequently launched.

Protests, and punishments of protesters, have become common on Hong Kong campuses since the 2014 Umbrella Movement, in which the city's students played a big role. Hong Kong Baptist University suspended two students last year after they complained about a compulsory Mandarin exam. **Bloomberg**



CESL Asia **doubles down** on GBA-Lusophone investments

Daniel Beitler

Local energy and environment firm CESL Asia has signed a strategic cooperation agreement with the Bank of China Macau Branch to intermediate investments between China and Lusophone countries, seeking to underpin Macau's role as a platform for trade and cooperation with Portuguese-speaking countries, as designated by Beijing.

The agreement, signed at a ceremony on Friday, is the first such agreement with a local bank designed to develop a financial investment platform between China and the Lusophone world.

"We are building a financial platform in Macau to support our project development platform, while

expanding our cooperation with financial institutions in China, Portugal and Macau," said CESL Asia President Antonio Trindade on the occasion.

Using its bases in Macau and Portugal, the firm will facilitate deals for Chinese investors looking to do business in Portuguese-speaking countries, helping them to acquire assets and business and "produce economic and social value."

The signing ceremony was attended by several high-ranking officials in Macau. Among them was the Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, the director general of the economic affairs department of the Liaison Office of the Chinese central government, Liu Bin, the head of Forum Macau, Xu Yingzhen, and

the Portuguese Consul General in Macau and Hong Kong, Paulo Cunha Alves.

CESL Asia also finalized an agreement Friday to buy the largest Portuguese cattle-breeding firm, Monte do Pasto, for an investment of about 40 million euros (MOP367 million).

Monte do Pasto, which oversees nine farms in the Alentejo region spanning almost 3,700 hectares, exports around 30,000 live cattle per year, mainly to North Africa and the Levant, but also to neighboring Spain. For comparison, Macau is approximately 3,000 hectares in size.

The cattle exporter, already an established business in the Mediterranean, is an ideal candidate for CESL management, said Trindade. The local firm wants to

support Monte do Pasto and bring its operations in line with the Greater Bay Area agenda and the development of ties with Portuguese-speaking countries.

Trindade also said that the investment is not just about cattle exports, but that the land can be used for environmental- and energy-related projects. "This is value creation," he told local media referring to the investment, adding that "we can use [the land] for solar power production, for energy production or to grow food."

The deal is expected to complete in the coming months, with Portugal's Novo Banco as a partner, and the financial support of BNU.

Additional reporting by Julie Zhu

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FOR SALE



Taipa, Nam Long

(Ref: 18095561)
550 sq.ft. HKD 4.08 M
Rate: HKD 7,418

Fully renovated apartment with a bright street view situated on the edge of the popular Taipa Village. The original two bed layout has been converted into a large one bedroom configuration that can easily turn back into two. Great investment apartment.



Pacifica - Perfect Locality Taipa

(Ref: 19015575)
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.



Coloane Village - Coloane

(Ref: 16095490)
664 sq.ft. HKD 4.25 M
Rate: HKD 6,404

Located in the quiet village of Coloane. Renovated 8 years ago this apartment needs no further investment. Two bedrooms; a double & single size. Shower room with built in cabinets. Compact kitchen. Small balcony. Close to bus stop, village square, cafes and post office.



Ocean Garden Elm Court

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

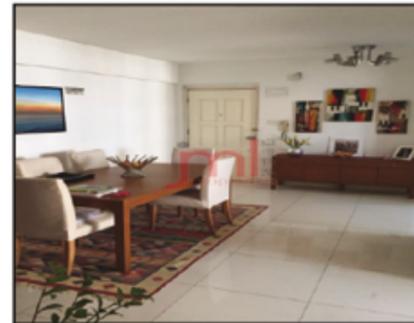
A beautiful modern stylish apartment in the popular Ocean Garden complex in Taipa. A fabulous family or first time buyer home. Clubhouse facilities which include a gymnasium, outdoor pool, function rooms etc. can be used under a monthly membership. Free shuttle bus to Macau is also available. A car park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

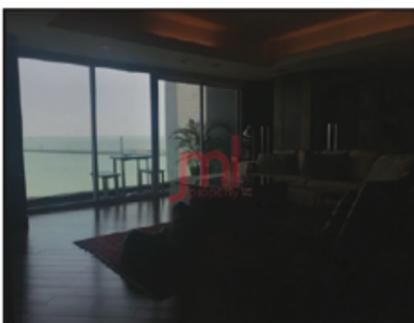
Taipa, fabulous and bright two bedroom apartment with two bathrooms. Lovely views one the Taipa Stadium, Galaxy and across to Hengquin are just stunning. Well designed kitchen. This beautiful home is located close to shops, cafes, restaurants and banks. Very convenient for all types of transportation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



Choi Long Meng Chui, Taipa

(Ref: 18045555)
3,398 sq.ft. HKD 17.8 M
Rate: HKD 5,238

Fabulous apartment with stunning open views across to Macau. Originally four bedrooms converted to three bedrooms with three bathrooms, two en suite. State of the art open plan kitchen with entertainment counter and plenty of room for casual dining, built in appliances with a separate utility area.



The Buckingham, Unit C, Taipa

(Ref: 18025544)
1,186 sq.ft. HKD 9.1 M
Rate: HKD 7,672

Great two bedroom apartment in Central Taipa. Open plan kitchen with fitted appliance. Two double bedrooms sharing one walk in shower room. Good size living area with balcony.



Two Shops, Down Town Macau

(Ref: 19015573)
1,404 sq.ft. HKD 24.99 M
Rate: HKD 17,805

Two separate shops for sale although currently rented as one unit under a Grade 1 restaurant license, with a rental contract until Feb 2022.



Nova Taipa Gardens, T21

(Ref: 18115570)
2,500 sq.ft. HKD 14.5 M
Rate: HKD 5,800

Fantastic apartment in a central location. What was a large four bedroom apartment has been converted into three bedrooms, making the most fabulous master suite with masses of built in storage, dressing area and en suite bathroom. If a fourth bedroom is required it would be simple to revert to the original design.

Office: (853) 2835 2699

Email: Info@JMLProperty.com

Contact Property Consultants Today.

Juliet Risdon (English Speaker)

+853 6680 9804 / Juliet@JMLproperty.com



ANALYSIS

HK home prices are ready to roar back

Nisha Gopalan

HONG Kong property is coming back. After declining about 10 percent since August, home prices have started rising again. The world's least affordable housing market may even be prepping for another boom.

Green shoots have included increased viewings at project sales and revived interest in government land auctions, with a plot in the northern New Territories selling for a higher price than analysts expected last month. The Centa-City Leading Index of second-hand home prices is up more than 1 percent from its recent low after gaining for three consecutive weeks.

Analysts at Citigroup Inc. and CLSA Ltd. forecast prices will rebound by between 5 percent and 15 percent this year. While most still expect them to resume their descent, other positive indicators include a rally in developers' shares, which typically lead movements in the physical real estate market.

So what's changed? A reprieve from the U.S. Federal Reserve, broader stock-market gains and the strengthening of China's currency. The Fed turned dovish in December, signaling less likelihood of further rate increases this year. That's a boon for Hong Kong, which tracks changes in U.S. rates because of the city's currency peg to the dollar. The Hang Seng Index has climbed 17 percent since the end of October.

Since rising rates increase the relative attractiveness of the U.S. dollar, the Fed's shift to a cautious stance has also alleviated pressure on the yuan. The Chinese currency has

strengthened about 4 percent from its October low. Confidence in the currency has also been bolstered by the trade talks, where the U.S. has been pushing for a commitment by China to avoid depreciation.

The improving monetary backdrop coincides with a market that's chronically undersupplied and where there's huge latent demand. Hong Kong sells enough land for just 20,000 apartments a year, according to CLSA, far from adequate for a city of 2.3 million households. The amount sold this year will be even smaller, enough for 18,000 apartments.

The shortage is so acute that the government will build on part of the Hong Kong Golf Club's site and is considering developing private agricultural land. These won't move the needle much. Meanwhile, an ambitious plan to reclaim 1,000 hectares from the sea and build a man-made island is at least a decade away.

Granted, Hong Kong home valuations remain stretched, at 18 times the median income even after recent declines. And the overbuilding of parking space-sized apartments in outer areas may weigh on prices. Any forecasts of a boom should also come with a caveat: All bets are off if the city's economy heads south.

Against that, though, is the vast amount of cash sloshing around the city's banking system: HKD13 trillion (USD1.7 trillion) of local-currency savings. That's 59 times the HKD220 billion value of primary real estate transactions, according to CLSA analyst Nicole Wong.

That's a hint of how sharply prices could snap back if demand strengthens. **Bloomberg**

ADVERTORIAL



Golden Lion Volunteer Team

At MGM, we are proud of our team members who actively volunteer their time to help fulfill our role as a corporate citizen in community engagements to shape a better Macau. In 2018, we held 106 different community activities with our Golden Lion Volunteer Team, who volunteered over 10,000 hours towards bettering the community – our highest record ever.

There are so many unsung heroes in the Golden Lion Volunteer Team who gave up their own leisure time for the sake of helping others in the community. Here are some stories of our award-winning volunteers who helped to make our community better through their kindness and positivity.



"Excellent Rainbow Life Volunteer"

Chan Kual Fun has been working at MGM for 10 years and has been an active volunteer for the past 18 years. Recently she has been awarded as an "Excellent Rainbow Life Volunteer" by Youth Volunteers Association of Macau. Chan Kual Fun shared, "Don't treat me as a hero. It is a very ordinary thing to help others. To me, volunteering is a real honor because someone has given me a chance to be part of their life and learn from the experience of volunteering."

As a volunteer, she tries her best to fit two to three community-related appointments into her busy schedule. "We do many things. Sometimes, we will provide haircut or massage services to senior citizens. Other times, we will play and do artwork with disabled children, or we will visit family with special needs", she said.



To her, volunteering is a rewarding experience and contributes to her healthy lifestyle. She normally starts her day with an early morning swim, followed by volunteer work and then lunch with her family and work in the afternoon. It has become an important part of her life and it wouldn't be the same if she didn't start volunteering. She treasure every single volunteering experience and the people she have met.

Besides giving back to Macau community, Kual Fun has a great passion helping her motherland and other parts of the world. She has made a few trips to rural China as well as Vietnam to take part in poverty alleviation projects, using her personal time and money.

Volunteering has taught me about gratitude and compassion

Che Sao Meng is one of the many Golden Lion Volunteers who started volunteering after she joined the company. After being part of the MGM Volunteer Team for four years, she has been awarded "Excellent Rainbow Life Volunteer Award". To her, it is important to give 100% to everything she decides to do. She is an active lady who cycles to work every day and by doing so she doesn't need to worry about traffic, in order to devote more time to volunteering.

She expressed that "As a volunteer, we need to have a big heart to welcome people in. I truly recommend volunteering to people, because this is one of the ways to discover joy."



We all possess capabilities to help others

Zhou was also nominated by the Golden Lion Volunteer Team and awarded 'Top 10 Macau Outstanding Volunteers' by Macau Volunteer Association for her commitment and devotion.

She began devoting her time to volunteering, sometimes up to three times a week. As a mother, she wants to be a good role model for her daughter, inspiring her that happiness can come from something as simple as extending a helping hand.

She told us that "I have gained many new skills from my experience of volunteering such as, relationship building, active listening, and cultivating empathy. And, I'm truly grateful that my family fully supports me being a volunteer." She also recommended people not to wait for tomorrow to be a volunteer. There are many ways including Wechat groups that can connect you with many volunteering opportunities in the community for everyone's schedule and preferences.



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Beijing considers legal changes on technology to placate US

Joe McDonald, Beijing

IN an unusual step, China's ceremonial legislature is due to endorse a law meant to help end a bruising tariff war with Washington by discouraging officials from pressuring foreign companies to hand over technology.

The battle with China's biggest trading partner is overshadowing the National People's Congress, the country's highest-profile event of the year. It brings 3,000-plus delegates to the ornate Great Hall of the People in Beijing for two weeks of speeches, meetings with senior leaders and political ritual to endorse the ruling Communist Party's economic and social welfare plans.

A gathering of noncommunist groups held at the same time brightens Beijing's drab winter, drawing tech billionaires, movie stars and ethnic minorities in distinctive traditional dress.

That gives President Xi Jinping's government a platform for advertising changes aimed at ending the fight with President Donald Trump that has disrupted trade in goods from soybeans to medical equipment.

The technology measure is part of a proposed law on foreign investment that aims to address complaints by Washington, Europe and other trading partners that China's system is rigged against foreign companies.

Trump cited complaints Bei-



President Xi Jinping at an exhibition commemorating the 40th anniversary of China's Reform and Opening Up Movement at the National Museum in Beijing

jing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology when he slapped punitive tariffs on USD250 billion of Chinese imports in July. Europe, Japan and other trading partners disapprove of the tariff hikes but echo U.S. complaints.

China has balked at changing its strategy for nurturing technologies that American officials worry might challenge U.S. industrial dominance. But communist leaders face pressure to reach a settlement after economic growth sagged to a three-decade low of 6.6 percent last year.

On the domestic front, companies and investors are hoping officials announce details of how Beijing will carry out promises to curb the dominance of state industry and support entrepreneurs who generate much of China's new jobs and wealth. They are looking for details of a promised cut of up to 1.3 trillion yuan in value-added and other taxes.

The congress opens tomorrow with an annual "work report" on government plans by Premier Li Keqiang, the No. 2 ruling party leader behind Xi and China's top economic official.

State media have cited other potential topics including revising China's patent law — another source of foreign complaints — and measures to encourage foreign investment in agriculture and technology and developing free-trade zones.

Chinese officials deny Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over trade secrets and technology. But they are trying to mollify Trump and other governments by promising better legal protections.

"I think the [American and European] complaints have been reflected in the revision of the

law," said Citigroup economist Li-Gang Liu.

Under the proposed law, officials would be barred from using "administrative methods to force technology transfers."

The chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, Tim Stratford, called the measure a "step forward." But business groups say they need to see how it will be enforced.

It was unclear whether the vaguely worded measure would appease Trump. The American Embassy in Beijing said it had no comment.

Officials deny Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over trade secrets and technology

Companies have been disappointed in the past after "hearing positive words," said Stratford, a former deputy U.S. trade representative.

The European Union Chamber of Commerce in China said the law's "vague language" gives regulators too much discretion. The focus on "administrative methods" would leave officials free to use other pressure tactics, it said.

The state press has cited other potential topics including revising China's patent law — another source of foreign complaints — and measures to encourage foreign investment in agriculture and technology and developing free-trade zones. **AP**

Goldman, JPMorgan still see upside in China assets after rally

Joanna Ossinger

CHINESE stocks have had a great start to 2019, and it may not stop there.

The benchmark CSI 300 Index has risen 25 percent this year, outperforming all other major stock gauges. The offshore yuan has risen more than 2 percent versus the U.S. dollar. And while Goldman Sachs Group Inc. and JPMorgan Chase & Co. say some sectors are fairly valued or even expensive, they also see China-related assets where further gains are likely.

"We see room for modest multiple expansion for China," Goldman strategists led by Timothy Moe



wrote in a note March 2. "We estimate an average 4 percent further upside in offshore equities if trade news improves further. For trade-related names, we

see better value in the U.S.-exposed China stocks than the regional exporters."

And they aren't alone in seeing some areas that are still ripe for investment.

"We anticipate further gains, but at a slower pace and conditional on policy lifting growth and earnings expectations," in the second half of the year, JP-

Morgan strategists led by John Normand wrote in a note March 1. "China equities are worth overweighting more than CNY, and agriculture is now a more interesting catch-up trade than base metals."

Multiple factors have helped drive the rebound in Chinese stocks this year. Optimism increased about the U.S.-China trade situation, while the People's Bank of China moved to cushion the country's economy and Beijing's new chief securities regulator made a call to "revere the market." And then there was the widely-anticipated announcement last week that MSCI Inc. would boost the weighting of mainland-listed shares in its indexes.

Both Goldman and JPMorgan cautioned in their reports that further strong performance in China-related assets is highly contingent on the outcome of

trade talks with the U.S., including the details of any deal.

U.S.-exposed China stocks that could benefit from improving news on trade include Nexteer Automotive Group Ltd., AAC Technologies Holdings Inc. and Genscript Biotech Corp., the Goldman strategists wrote. Companies that could benefit from a strengthening renminbi include Shenzhen International Holdings Ltd. and China Aoyuan Group Ltd., they said.

JPMorgan sees the yuan and local-currency bonds as looking expensive right now, while copper is "slightly" dear. Aluminum and soybeans look cheap, the firm said, and metals & mining stocks are undervalued along with other cyclical tech and financials.

"Bullish momentum has yet to fade broadly," Normand wrote. **Bloomberg**

FRAUD CHARGES

Canada allows extradition case against Huawei CFO to proceed

Rob Gillies, Toronto

CANADA said it will allow a U.S. extradition request for an executive of Chinese tech giant Huawei to face charges over possible dealings with Iran to proceed.

The Department of Justice said Friday officials made the decision after a diligent review of the case against Meng Wanzhou, chief financial officer of Huawei Technologies Ltd., the biggest global maker of network equipment for phone and internet companies. A department statement stressed that Canada was following its laws.

Meng's Dec. 1 arrest at the Vancouver airport set off a diplomatic furor and strained Canadian relations with China. Beijing has accused Washington of a politically motivated attempt to hurt a potential competitor to U.S. technology vendors.

Meng, the daughter of Huawei's founder, is accused of lying to banks about the company's dealings with Iran in violation of U.S. trade sanctions. She is free on bail in Vancouver and is due in court Wednesday, when a date for an extradition hearing will be set. The decision to proceed is a formality and allows a judge to hear arguments on whether to grant the U.S. request.

A decision to extradite ultimately must be approved by Canada's justice minister.



Huawei chief financial officer Meng Wanzhou

"There is sufficient evidence to be put before an extradition judge for decision," the statement said.

The Chinese government on Saturday criticized the decision as a "serious violation" of Meng's rights and called on Washington to withdraw its extradition request.

"The U.S. and Canada have abused their bilateral extradition agreement," said a Foreign Ministry statement.

China detained former Canadian diplomat Michael Kovrig and Canadian entrepreneur

Michael Spavor on Dec. 10 in an apparent attempt to pressure Canada to release Meng.

A Chinese court also sentenced a Canadian to death in a sudden retrial, overturning a 15-year prison term handed down earlier. Kovrig and Spavor haven't had access to a lawyer since being arrested.

Meng is living in one of two Vancouver mansions she owns.

"We are disappointed that the Minister of Justice has decided to issue an Authority to Proceed in the face of the political nature of the U.S. charges and

where the President of the United States has repeatedly stated that he would interfere in Ms. Meng's case if he thought it would assist the U.S. negotiations with China over a trade deal," said her lawyer, David Martin, in a statement.

Martin said the charges against Meng are not crimes in Canada and that his client maintains her innocence.

The Chinese Embassy in Ottawa criticized the case in a statement as "a political persecution against a Chinese high-tech enterprise."

Huawei is a focus of U.S. security concerns.

Washington has pressured other countries to limit use of its technology, warning they could be opening themselves up to surveillance and theft of information.

The U.S. and China have tried to keep Meng's case separate from their wider trade dispute, but President Donald Trump has undercut that. Trump said he would consider intervening in the case against Meng if it would be in the interest of U.S. national security or help forge a trade deal with Beijing.

The Chinese government criticized the decision as a 'serious violation' of Meng's rights

The Chinese embassy statement that due to "obvious political interference," Canada should refuse the U.S. extradition request and release Meng.

U.S. Justice Department spokeswoman Nicole Navas Oxman said the department pursues cases "free of any political interference" and follows evidence and the law.

Guy Saint-Jacques, a former Canadian ambassador to China, said Chinese authorities are not interested in hearing about how Canada is bound by its extradition case with the U.S.

Saint-Jacques said China might apply further pressure on Canada. **AP**

AGRICULTURE

No deals being done in US soybean sales

Isis Almeida & Shruti Date Singh

A week after U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue said China pledged to buy more American soybeans, no sales have been done.

While Chinese buyers returned to the market Friday asking for offers, traders familiar with the process say no deals have been done. That's a disappointment for American farmers looking to offload a bumper harvest that's been piled in bags and silos due to President Donald Trump's trade war with China.

"There's certainly been a lot of chatter," Arlan Suderman, chief com-



modities economist for INTL FCStone, said in a telephone interview. "We haven't seen any evidence that exporters are lining up ocean freight to ship large quantities of agri-

cultural commodities to China."

Trump stepped up the pressure, asking China to remove tariffs on beef, pork and other U.S. farm products immediately. In

making the demand, he cited his decision to refrain from increasing U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods.

Chinese buyers asked for offers of American soybeans for delivery

between June and December, according to the traders, who asked not to be identified because the negotiations are private. The beans would be for shipment from ports in the Gulf and the Pacific Northwest, the traders said.

The world's top soy importer has largely shunned U.S. supplies after slapping retaliatory tariffs of 25 percent on many American farm goods last year. After Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping reached a truce in December, state buyers Cofco Corp. and Sinograin returned to the market to buy 10 million tons of soy.

While another batch of

the same size is expected, traders remained skeptical of China's intentions to buy following Friday's inquiries. Soybean futures for May dropped as much as 1.1 percent on the Chicago Board of Trade to \$9.005 a bushel, the lowest for the contract in two months. Prices then pared losses to trade little changed amid broader gains for grains and U.S. equities.

Traders also questioned whether the purchases would significantly help offload American stockpiles, forecast to climb to a record in the season ending Aug. 31. That's because China's inquiries Friday included a period that could mean shipments from the new crop. Perdue had said that the purchases would be for supplies from the harvest completed in the fall. **Bloomberg**

US, South Korea end spring military drills to back diplomacy

Hyung-Jin Kim & Lolita C. Baldor, Seoul

SOUTH Korea and the U.S. are eliminating their massive springtime military drills and replacing them with smaller exercises in what they call an effort to support diplomacy aimed at resolving the North Korean nuclear crisis.

The decision announced by both countries yesterday came after President Donald Trump complained about the cost of joint drills even as his high-stakes second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un collapsed last week.

The drills' cancellation is an olive branch to North Korea, which has viewed them as an invasion rehearsal. But some experts say it will likely weaken the allies' military readiness amid worries that tensions erupt again in the wake of the failed nuclear summit in Vietnam.

The Pentagon said in a release that the U.S. and South Korean defense chiefs decided to conclude the Key Resolve and Foal Eagle series of exercises. It said the allies agreed to maintain firm



AP PHOTO

military readiness through newly designed command post exercises and revised field training programs.

Acting U.S. Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan and South Korean Defense Minister Jeong Kyeong-doo "made clear that the alliance decision to adapt our training program reflected our desire to reduce tension and support our diplomatic efforts to achieve complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a final, fully verified manner," the

statement said.

Seoul's Defense Ministry released a similar statement.

Jeong expressed his regrets at the lack of agreement at the Trump-Kim summit but still hopes that Washington and Pyongyang will continue negotiations, the South Korean statement said.

The new training, dubbed "Dong Maeng," which means "alliance" in English, starts today and runs through March 12. It will focus on "strategic operational and tactical aspects of gene-

ral military operations on the Korean Peninsula," South Korea's military and the U.S.-South Korean combined forces command said in a joint statement.

According to U.S. officials, the new training will be done in smaller drills, tabletop exercises and simulations, and will involve smaller units such as battalions and companies rather than massive formations involving thousands of troops, as they had in the past.

Officials said the Pentagon would focus on smaller exercises and mission essential tasks, which include the ability to integrate airstrikes and the use of other weapons systems, drones, surveillance assets, logistics and communications.

In November, a month before he resigned as defense secretary, Jim Mattis disclosed that the U.S. and South Korea would scale back and tone down the spring exercises. He said the aim was to avoid setting back diplomacy over North Korea's nuclear weapons. He described it as a reorganization of the exercises, not an end to maneuvers on the peninsula.

Trump has long complained about the cost of military drills with South Korea.

After his second summit with Kim ended without any agreement in Hanoi on Thursday, Trump spoke again about the cost of annual military drills. "It's a very, very expensive thing and we do have to think about that, too," Trump told reporters.

Following his first summit with Kim in Singapore last June, Trump caught many in the United States and South Korea by surprise by suspending the allies' summertime military drills. He called joint drills "very provocative" and "massively expensive."

The United States and South Korea also have since suspended a few other smaller joint drills.

Trump has also pushed South Korea to increase its financial contribution for the cost of the 28,500 U.S. troops stationed in the country as deterrence against North Korea. He previously threatened to withdraw troops from South Korea and Japan if those countries refused to pay more.

The end of the springtime war games will benefit North Korea, which has responded with its own costly military exercises and weapons tests, including firing a new intermediate-range missile over Japan in 2017.

North Korea's state media yesterday didn't immediately comment on the drills' cancellation. AP

AD

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5 YEARS ON

Malaysia open to proposals to resume MH370 hunt

Eileen Ng, Kuala Lumpur

MALAYSIA'S transport minister said yesterday that the government is open to new proposals from U.S. technology firm Ocean Infinity or any other companies to resume the hunt for Flight 370, as families of passengers marked the fifth anniversary of the jet's mysterious disappearance.

Ocean Infinity mounted a "no cure, no fee" search for the plane in the southern Indian Ocean in January 2018 that ended in May without any clue on where it could have crashed. But the company's CEO, Oliver Plunkett, said in a video shown at the public remembrance event at a mall near Kuala Lumpur that the company hopes to resume the hunt with better technology it obtained in the past year.

The Ocean Infinity mission came a year after an official search by Malaysia, Australia and China ended in futility.

Plunkett said his company has better technology now after successfully locating an Argentinian submarine in November, a year after it went missing. He said the firm is still reviewing all possible data on Flight 370 and thinking about how it can revive its failed mission.

"We haven't given up hope. [...] We hope we can continue the search in due course," Plunkett said.

Transport Minister Anthony Loke said it's been frustrating that the two searches failed to produce any clues and that he "welcomes credible leads and also concrete proposals to resume the search."



A man writes a condolence message during a Day of Remembrance for an MH370 event in Kuala Lumpur yesterday

He told reporters yesterday that the government is "waiting for specific proposals, in particular from Ocean Infinity." He brushed off suggestions of offering rewards to find the plane, but said the government is willing to discuss proposals from any companies prepared to resume the search.

"There must be a proposal from a specific company [...] we cannot just be out there without credible leads. That's the most practical thing to do," Loke said.

The plane vanished with 239 people on board on March 8, 2014, while flying from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing. Confirmed debris that washed ashore in the western Indian Ocean helped narrow the search area where Ocean Infinity focused, but it failed to uncover any evidence.

A Malaysian-led independent investigation report released last July showed lapses in the government's response and raised the possibility of "intervention by a third party."

Investigators, however, said

the cause of the disappearance cannot be determined until the wreckage and the plane's black boxes are found. The report reiterated Malaysia's assertion that the plane was deliberately diverted and flown for over seven hours after severing communications.

But it said there was no evidence of abnormal behavior or stress in the two pilots that could lead them to hijack the plane. All the other passengers were also cleared by police and had no pilot training.

Voice 370, a support group for next-of-kin, expressed hope that the new government that won a general election in May last year will do more to encourage search missions and seek new clues.

The group's spokeswoman, Grace Nathan, urged the government to set aside up to USD70 million — the amount it agreed to pay Ocean Infinity had it found the plane — to encourage exploration companies to take on "no cure, no fee" missions so that Flight 370's passengers will not have died in vain.

"It is a wound that cannot heal" if there is no closure, Nathan said.

“We haven't given up hope. [...] We hope we can continue the search in due course.”

OLIVER PLUNKETT
OCEAN INFINITY CEO

Another family member, K.S. Narendran from India, said the burden is on the government to be proactive and not wait for credible evidence to fall on its lap. He said there has been no government effort to find more debris on African beaches and Indian Ocean islands, where scattered pieces of the Boeing 777 have been found.

During the remembrance event, family members lit candles and sang songs in tribute to their loved ones. Relatives and supporters wore light blue T-shirts that read, "It's not history, it's the future. Fly safely," as they reminded the government that the mystery must be solved to ensure aviation safety. AP

PHILIPPINES

Measles epidemic tops 14,000 cases and still rising

Ian Sayson

THE number of cases of measles in the Philippines has exceeded more than 14,000 and the count is still rising even as the government steps up its campaign against a vaccine scare that was triggered by deaths allegedly caused by Dengvaxia, a vaccine against dengue.

The government recorded 14,938 cases and 238 deaths from measles as of Feb. 28, Health Department Undersecretary Eric Domingo said in a mobile

phone text message, adding that "the number of cases is still rising."

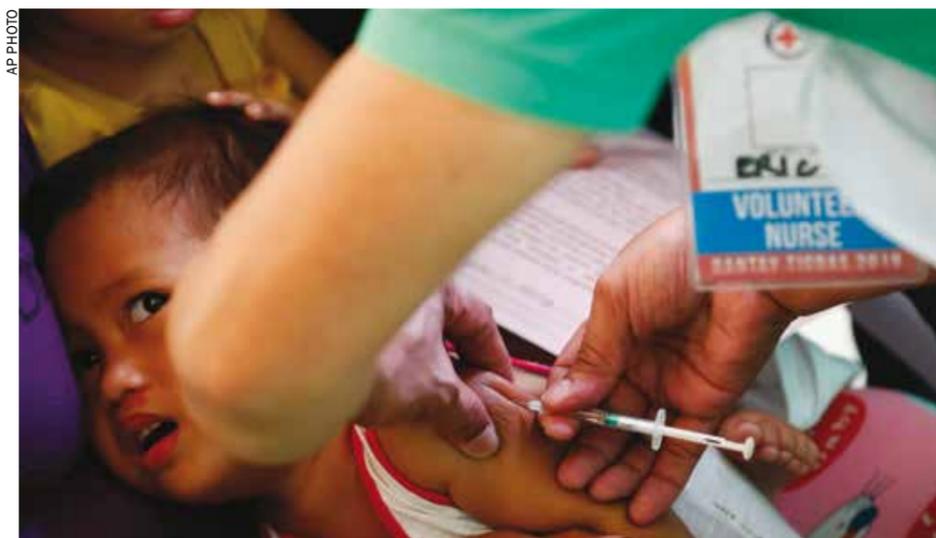
"We are continuing with our intensive campaign to vaccinate the vulnerable unprotected children," Domingo said.

The Philippines declared a measles outbreak in Manila early February as infections and fatalities from the highly contagious respiratory viral disease spiked.

Deaths due to measles escalated to 200 last year from about 50 in 2017 as the deaths allegedly cau-

sed by Dengvaxia, a vaccine against dengue that was given free by President Rodrigo Duterte's predecessor, sparked a scare and drove parents to shun the government's free immunization drive.

The Philippines banned Dengvaxia in February and government prosecutors on Friday said they found probable cause to indict executives of Dengue-manufacturer Sanofi and government health officials for at least 10 deaths allegedly linked to the vaccine. Bloomberg



US

Trump delivers a slashing speech that rouses the right

Kevin Freking, Oxon Hill

IN a slashing speech packed with braggadocio and grievance, President Donald Trump denounced Democrats as the party of “the socialist nightmare,” relitigated his crowd sizes back to the inauguration and took on “sick,” “lunatic” and “dirty” foes at every turn, earning him the unvarnished adoration of cheering conservatives.

After a trying week of tumult and setbacks, Trump delivered a stemwinder Sunday [Macau time] that extended beyond two hours and hardly left him winded.

Trump let loose against House Democrats, who are broadening their investigations of him, predicted he would win re-election by a greater margin than his 2016 victory, taunted his potential White House challengers and sounded themes that are staples of his rallies. He complained often of getting “no credit” for his achievements as he proudly drifted “off script” at the Conservative Political Action Conference.

His remarks capped a week that saw his nuclear summit with North Korea’s leader collapse without an agreement, his former lawyer deliver damaging congressional testimony about his character and business practices and Congress take action to nullify his emergency declaration to secure money for the border wall that lawmakers have denied him.

On the stage, he was a prideful and at times profane figure as he complained that past political appointments had allowed a situation where political foes were trying to take him out with “bullshit.”

Trump reached back to old criticisms of his ex-attorney general, mocking Jeff Sessions’ Southern accent and calling him “weak and ineffective.”

It took him more than an hour to get to the message that Republicans and members of his administration have been emphasizing in recent weeks as they try to brand Democratic policy ideas as socialism.

“America will never be a socialist country,” he said. “Socialism is not about the environment, it’s not about justice, it’s not about virtue.” He said it’s about “power for the ruling class.”

For every prepared line like that, there were multiple improvisations from a president on policy and personality.

“That’s how I got elected — by being off script,” Trump said early in his speech as the crowd roared its approval.

AP PHOTO



He took particular delight in going after the Democrats’ Green New Deal, brought forward by some liberal Democrats in Congress and backed to varying degrees by several of the party’s 2020 presidential candidates.

“I think the New Green Deal or whatever the hell they call it — the Green New Deal — I encourage it,” Trump said mockingly as he wound up for a round of exaggeration. “I think it’s really something that they should promote. They should work hard on it. [...] No planes, no energy. When the wind stops blowing that’s the end of your electric. Let’s hurry up. Darling, is the wind blowing today? I’d like to watch television, darling.”

He returned to the topic again and again, and jokingly kicked himself for doing so, saying it would give the Democrats time

to back away from it. He also turned the topic into an attack of Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and one of the top Democratic contenders for president.

“I’m going to regret this. This speech should have been delivered one year from now, not now, damn it.” Trump said. “I should have saved the Pocahontas thing for another year because that destroyed her political career and now I won’t get a chance to run against her. I don’t want to knock out all of the good stuff and wind up with somebody who’s actually got talent.”

Trump also went after Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, essentially accusing him of being a drag on the economy.

“We have a gentleman that likes raising interest rates in the Fed. We have a gentleman that loves quantitative tightening in the Fed. We have a gentleman

that likes a very strong dollar in the Fed,” Trump said. “...With all of that, we’re doing great. Can you imagine if we left interest rates where they were?”

Trump defended his declaration of a national emergency to obtain wall funding beyond the USD1.4 billion that Congress approved for border security. He said the order doesn’t set a bad precedent for future administrations because Democrats are “going to do that anyway, folks. The best way to stop that is to make sure I win the election.”

Trump continued to bask in his 2016 victory and the crowds that attend his events. He talked of how few gave him a chance to win.

“I think we’re going to do even better in 2020,” Trump said.

When he made his prediction of a second term, the crowd res-

ponded with chants of “USA, USA, USA.”

He also took a lengthy detour back to the inauguration, claiming that an enormous if not unprecedented crowd showed up, contrary to the thorough video and photo coverage that showed otherwise.

Trump revisited his meeting with North Korea leader Kim Jong Un, calling their summit “very productive.” He also took another crack at explaining his remarks that he didn’t believe Kim knew about or would have allowed the death of Otto Warmbier, the American college student who was held prisoner in North Korea, then sent home in a vegetative state. His remarks were widely criticized and led the Warmbier family to say they held Kim and his regime responsible for their son’s death.

America will never be a socialist country.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

“I’m in such a horrible position because in one way I have to negotiate. In the other way, I love Mr. and Mrs. Warmbier and I love Otto. And it’s a very, very delicate balance,” Trump said.

With special counsel Robert Mueller’s Russia investigation seemingly approaching its end, Trump spoke of the “collusion delusion” and lashed out at newly empowered House Democrats who are opening new inquiries involving him.

“This phony thing,” Trump said of the Russia probe, “looks like it’s dying so they don’t have anything with Russia there, no collusion. So now they go in and morph into ‘Let’s inspect every deal he’s ever done. We’re going to go into his finances. We’re going to check his deals. We’re going to check’ — these people are sick.”

House Democrats are undertaking several broad new investigations that reach far beyond Mueller’s focus on Russian interference in the 2016 election and possible collusion between Russians and the Trump campaign. So far, Mueller has not brought any public charges alleging a criminal conspiracy between the campaign and Russia; the investigation continues.

Their efforts increased this past week after Trump’s former personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, appeared before two House committees and a Senate committee. In his public testimony before the House Oversight and Reform Committee, Cohen called the president a “con man” and a “cheat” and gave Democrats several new leads for inquiry. **AP**

SYRIA

US-backed fighters advance on two fronts against IS

Sarah El Deeb, Syria

THE ground assault into the last area held by the Islamic State group intensified Saturday as U.S.-backed Syrian fighters made "remarkable progress" amid heavy clashes, including the capture of a hill overlooking a tent encampment for the extremists, officials with the Kurdish-led forces said.

The capture of the last pocket still held by IS fighters in Baghouz village would mark the end of a devastating four-year global campaign to end the extremist group's hold on territory in Syria and Iraq — their so-called "caliphate" that at the height of the group's power in 2014 controlled nearly a third of both Iraq and Syria.

Since the last push by the Syrian Democratic Forces began Friday night, the Kurdish-led force has been advancing slowly on two fronts as the extremists used snipers and booby traps to slow the push on the last area they con-



U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) fighter frisks a woman at a screening area after being evacuated out of the last territory

trol, SDF spokesman Mustafa Bali said. He added that IS tried to detonate a suicide car bomb against advancing fighters but the attempt failed.

Bali tweeted that "heavy clashes" were taking place in the area on the east bank of the Euphrates River. Later in the day, he tweeted that heavy fighting continued at outskirts of Baghouz, adding that "SDF made a remarkable progress since yesterday evening [and] recaptured many positions from ISIS."

Zana Amedi, an SDF commander, told The Associated Press that "an active ground force" is advancing into IS-held territories as the extremists resort to sniper fire and booby-traps.

Another SDF commander who goes by his nom de guerre, Aram, said the assault into the last IS sliver of land intensified later Saturday.

Two helicopters for the U.S.-led coalition were seen circling the area of fighting around noon Saturday. A loud explosion later was

heard from a distance and thick black smoke billowed into the sky, apparently a coalition airstrike.

The SDF on Friday evening resumed military operations to liberate the last piece of territory held by IS in the province of Deir el-Zour after evacuating thousands of civilians and hostages who had been besieged inside.

The military campaign to uproot the militants from the eastern banks of the Euphrates began in September, pushing them down toward this last corner in the village of Baghouz, near the Iraqi border. The military operation was halted on Feb. 12 as the SDF said a large number of civilians and hostages were holed up in the territory, which sits atop caves and tunnels where they had been hiding.

By Friday, more than 10,000 civilians had left the IS held area and the extremists released some SDF fighters they had taken prisoner in earlier battles.

"We expect it to be over soon," Bali said.

Another SDF commander, Adnan Afrin, said "there are fierce battles" with IS fighters firing thermal missiles at advancing troops and using drones. Afrin said eight SDF fighters were wounded, some critically.

Afrin said the buffer area between IS and SDF had been closed after the SDF's advance. He said there have been no suicide attacks but that some land mines went off.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a war monitor, said 10 IS gunmen were killed in fighting in the Baghouz area. It added that Syrian government forces and their allies clashed with IS gunmen who tried to cross to the west bank of the Euphrates river leaving seven IS members dead.

Amedi, the SDF commander, said the Kurdish-led force cannot rely on airstrikes by the U.S.-led coalition because IS gunmen are trapped everywhere "so if you just rely on airstrikes and then advance on the ground that will cause heavy casualties."

"At least now, we are trying to advance on the ground with rare airstrikes," he said. "Now it's mostly clashes. There are almost no airstrikes this morning. There were few airstrikes in the morning and nothing else after that." AP

AD

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what's ON



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UNTIL: March 2, 2019

VENUE: At Light, Pátio do Padre Narciso nº 1, R/C

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 6595 7203

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

Offbeat

CAT THAT LIVED SIX YEARS IN ALASKA GENERAL STORE GETS EVICTED



A cat named Stormy that has spent more than six years as a fixture in a remote Alaska general store is being forced out after officials notified the store owners that the cat's presence violates food safety standards.

The Fritz Creek General Store near the small city of Homer has been home for Stormy since 2012, The Homer News reported last week.

The slightly overweight black cat often lounges on one of the store's wooden chairs or solicits customers for a scratch on her head.

The state Food Safety and Sanitation Program received a complaint about Stormy and an environmental health officer saw the cat in the store, said Jeremy Ayers, section manager for the agency.

State food safety code prohibits pets in facilities that serve food, except for police dogs and service animals.

Enforcement of the pet prohibition is not usually high on officials' priorities list, but the complaint and the officer's observation meant that action needed to be taken, Ayers said.

Stormy is part of the store's and the rural community's culture, said Linda Chamberlain, who frequents the general store. Several people visit the shop just to greet the cat, she said.

Certain regulations may work in Alaska metropolitan areas like Anchorage, but they do not always account for special circumstances in other places, Chamberlain said.

Stormy might even make the store more hygienic, said Al Breitzman, a Fritz Creek regular, who said the cat helps reduce the rodent population.

The general store is owned by Sean Maryott and Diana Carbonell. They didn't return the newspaper's call seeking comment.

Sean Maryott's sister, Bridget Maryott, said Stormy will live with her family.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Mistura Fina
15:45	Teledisco
15:50	Os Compadres
16:30	Grande Entrevista - Maria Antónia Palla
17:30	O Douro nos Caminhos da Literatura
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

04 - 07 Mar

HAPPY DEATH DAY 2U

ROOM 1

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

Director: Christopher Landon

Starring: Jessica Rothe, Israel Broussard, Phi Vu

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 100min



BEN IS BACK

ROOM 2

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

Director: Peter Hedges

Starring: Julia Roberts, Lucas Hedges, Courtney B. Vance

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 103min

FATE/STAY NIGHT: HEAVEN'S FEEL II

LOST BUTTERFLY

ROOM 1

7:30pm

Director: Tomonori Sudô

Starring: Yu Asakawa, Mai Kadowaki, Hiroshi Kamiya

Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 117min



THE WANDERING EARTH

ROOM 3

42:30, 7:15pm

Director: Frant Gwo

Starring: Chuxiao Qu, Jing Wu, Guangjie Li

Language: Chinese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 123min

DRAGON BALL SUPER BROLI

ROOM 3

4:45, 9:30pm

Director: Tatsuya Nagamine

Starring: Masako Nozawa, Aya Hisakawa, Ryô Horikawa

Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 100min

this day in history



1975: COMIC GENIUS CHAPLIN IS KNIGHTED

Silent film legend Charlie Chaplin has become Sir Charles after a ceremony at Buckingham Palace.

The star of such films as *The Kid* and *The Great Dictator* was knighted in the New Year's Honours List.

The ceremony took place just miles from the south London district where he spent much of his childhood.

Sir Charles was accompanied to Buckingham Palace by his fourth wife, Oona, and the two youngest of his nine children.

The slapstick legend, famed for his acrobatic routines, received his knighthood, from a wheelchair.

It was a reflection of just how late in life - at the age of 85 - his honour had finally come.

As he was pushed into the hall where the ceremony was taking place the band struck up his signature tune, the theme from his 1951 film, *Limelight*.

He sat stiffly as the Queen tapped him on each shoulder and stooped to hang the KBE insignia around his neck.

The two then chatted briefly before Sir Charles was wheeled to the front of the hall to watch the rest of the ceremony.

Speaking to reporters afterwards Sir Charles said he had been "dumbfounded" by the occasion.

He said the Queen had thanked him for what he had done and that his films had helped her a great deal.

Sir Charles' knighthood follows years of calls for him to be honoured.

In the 1940s and 1950s he was accused of "communist sympathies" and vilified in his adopted home of the United States.

In 1952 his US visa was cancelled forcing Chaplin to relocate to Switzerland.

Three years ago, in what was seen as an act of contrition, he was awarded a special Oscar by the US' Academy of Motion Pictures.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Charlie Chaplin died in 1977.

In 2002 confidential Foreign Office papers from 1956 released by Britain's Public Record Office revealed the comic's knighthood had been delayed because of his perceived "communist" sympathies.

Worries about his morals had also played their part - he was twice married to 16-year-olds and once lost a paternity suit. Charlie Chaplin's body was stolen from his grave and was missing for 11 weeks until recovered in May 1978.

Two men were convicted of the theft and trying to extort money from the Chaplin family.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Try to pitch in when you see something that's not working out at the office or at home...

Taurus April 20-May 20 You need to get out there and enjoy the nightlife - or daytime - of your city, town or village.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Don't let anything accumulate in your inbox for long today - you need to answer messages as soon as you get them...

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Your ability to communicate is heightened today, so reach out to an old family member or make a new friend...

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 How does your budget look? If you don't have one to check on, now is a great time for you to draw one up...

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You find yourself on the receiving end of some serious praise - or maybe an award of some kind.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You're facing far too many details today - you need to make sure that you can cover them all...

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Your secrets are starting to come out - but only the ones that you want to make public!

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 This is not the time to rush ahead - you have to cover all the details of your new work or home situation first.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You need to spend some time online or in a good, old-fashioned library today - the information you need isn't going to come to you!

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You feel a little closer to normal today, and better able to see things through a prism of responsibility rather than freaked-out worry or wild fantasy.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You need to get to work on a new project - and today is perfect for picking out new things to do.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Big birds; 5- Vientiane's land; 9- Citrus coolers; 13- I could ___ horse!; 14- Everglades wader; 16- Bar ___; 17- Caustic solutions; 18- Snares; 19- Basic unit of heredity; 20- Suite spot; 22- Unfair lender; 24- Apprentice; 27- Pro foe; 28- Tool used for driving nails; 29- Conduct, as business; 33- To no ___; 34- To ___ it may concern; 35- Fabled runner-up; 36- Claiborne of fashion; 37- Foot bones; 38- Managed; 39- Slugger Slaughter; 41- Peter Fonda role; 42- Foremost part; 44- Apostate; 46- Fishing nets; 47- Take ___ your leader; 48- Pager sound; 49- Capital of the Philippines; 52- Prince Valiant's son; 53- Egyptian deity; 57- Not straight; 58- Lover of Juliet; 60- Trademark; 61- Not e'en once; 62- ___ Is Born; 63- Husband of a countess; 64- Norway's capital; 65- Meat-grading org.; 66- 1944 turning point; DOWN: 1- Moray, e.g.; 2- Kentucky Derby month; 3- Salt Lake City athlete; 4- Japanese dish of raw fish; 5- Mailed communique; 6- Go along; 7- Spoken; 8- Equinox mo.; 9- Acute suffering; 10- Person of action; 11- Feminizing suffix; 12- Clairvoyant; 15- Large sea wave; 21- Like Nash's lama; 23- RR stop; 24- Old German coin; 25- Steep-sided valley; 26- River in N South America; 27- Got up; 29- Trio; 30- Brother of Moses; 31- Machine for lifting heavy loads; 32- Camp sights; 34- Emerson's middle name; 37- Large New Zealand reptile; 40- Part-time player; 42- Lawyer's charge; 43- Made little waves; 45- Hair stuff; 46- Lady of la casa; 48- Baked dough; 49- Look ___ hands!; 50- Pub pints; 51- Seasonal song; 52- Tsp. and tsp.; 54- Tailless amphibian; 55- Taj Mahal city; 56- Consecrated; 59- Buckeyes' sch.;

Friday's solution crossword grid with filled-in words.

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



Real estate advertisement for JML Property, featuring 'FOR SALE' listings for various properties in Taipa and Coloane, including details like 'Choi Long Meng Chui, Taipa, 3,398 sq ft / HKD 17.8 M' and 'Ocean Garden Elm Court, Taipa, 1,610 sq ft / HKD 11.88M'.



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IDITAROD

Defending champ remains self-proclaimed 'goofball'



Mark Thiessen, Alaska

JOAR Leifseth Ulsom may not be flashy or brash, but he has sled cred.

The quiet, unassuming 32-year-old defending champion of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race leads the field of 52 mushers hoping to be the first to reach Alaska's western coast after a thousand-mile trek across the wilderness.

Most of the contestants are Americans, but the lineup also features international mushers: two from Norway, including Ulsom; four from Canada; and one each from Sweden and France.

Their quest officially begins to-

day [Macau time] as the mushers take off from a frozen lake about 50 miles north of Anchorage. A ceremonial start designed to be a fan-friendly experience was held over the weekend in downtown Anchorage.

The winner is expected in Nome, an old Gold Rush town on Alaska's Bering Sea coast, in about nine days.

The Iditarod seems to go in streaks. Lance Mackey in 2007 won his first of four straight before health problems began to set in. Two years after Mackey's run, the Seavey legacy took hold, with mushers Mitch and his son, Dallas, combining to win the next six races.

Ulsom broke the Seaveys'

string last year. If that came as a shock to anyone, they weren't paying attention to his career.

His worst Iditarod finish was seventh place in 2013, his rookie year. Since then, he's had two sixth place finishes and a couple of fourths.

It's all part of his strategy. "Basically since I came to Alaska, I kind of had a good plan," he said. He tweaks it little by little every year, but he hasn't made any wholesale changes to his training now that he's the defending champion.

What has changed for the musher living in Willow, Alaska's dog-mushing capital, was the instant fame his victor status granted him, not only in

Alaska but in his Norway.

"It's definitely been a bigger deal winning the race than I thought it was going to be," he said.

Ulsom traveled to Norway twice last summer for dog symposiums where his victory was celebrated alongside those of other winter athletes. Norway won the most medals at last year's Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

There is "definitely a lot of pride in Norway from the Olympics and for me winning the race because mushing, I think, is second to Alaska in popularity," he said. "It's a big deal in Norway, and they have some good races over there."

But he promises it hasn't changed him or gone to his head.

"It was a lot of fun, and people are excited and stuff, but nothing crazy," he said. "I'm still just a normal goofball."

One of Norway's big sled dog races is the Finnmarkslopet, which starts about a week after the Iditarod. Ulsom said it draws mushers from across Europe, but for the second year in a row, it has one of the top American mushers.

Four-time Iditarod champion Dallas Seavey took his team to Norway last year in protest after Iditarod officials said some of his dogs tested positive in 2017 for an opioid painkiller, an allegation he adamantly denied. New members were later placed on the Iditarod's governing board, and they reversed the decision, clearing Seavey of any wrongdoing.

Yet Seavey chose to race again this year in Norway, telling The Associated Press he had unfinished business there after placing third last year. He said he would eventually return to the Alaska race.

The Iditarod has suffered other recent setbacks, many related to the animal rights organization People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals pressuring national sponsors to drop the race.

When national sponsors drop out, smaller Alaska-based companies fill the void, but the race has been hurt financially. The winning musher will earn about USD50,000 and a new pickup, the same as last year. But it's down about \$20,000 from the winner's purse in 2017. The total purse this year is again \$500,000 — about \$250,000 below the 2017 purse.

Ulsom calls the PETA activism "kind of ridiculous when you start looking into it," adding that mushers take "exceptional" care of the dogs and use them for what they're meant to be used for.

"These dogs have it in them that they want to run, and so that's what they're bred and meant to do, and they love it," he said. **AP**

FOOTBALL

Benfica continue revival with 2-1 classico win against FC Porto

BENFICA came from behind for a memorable 2-1 win away to arch-rivals Porto yesterday [Macau time] which allowed them to leapfrog their opponents and go top of the Primeira Liga.

It was their ninth straight league win since Bruno Lage replaced Rui Vitoria as coach, a run which has seen them score 35 goals and turn a seven-point defi-

cit against Porto into a two-point advantage.

Porto went ahead in the 18th minute, Adrian Lopez scoring at the second attempt after his free kick went into the Benfica wall and rebounded straight to him.

His shot evaded a Porto player who was in an off-side position but ruled not to be interfering with play after a VAR review.

Joao Felix levelled eight minutes later after Haris Seferovic dispossessed a Porto player outside the penalty area.

Porto paid for more sloppy defending seven minutes after the break when they missed a chance to clear the ball which instead fell to Rafa Silva who played a quick one-two and scored with a snooker shot from the edge of the penalty area.

Benfica held on despite have Gabriel Appelt sent off in the 78th minute after he was shown two yellow cards in quick succession.

Benfica, fourth when Lage took over at the start of January, lead with 59 points, two more than Porto, who had not lost in their last 16 league games - their previous defeat also having come against Benfica. **MDT/ESPN**



The win over arch-rivals Porto was the ninth straight league win since Bruno Lage (pictured) replaced Rui Vitoria

opinion

Rear Window

Severo Portela



SAILING CHARTED WATERS

Kitesurfer Hillian Siu had to postpone her pioneer friendship vol across the Pearl River Delta, from Cheung Chau Island in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to the sister SAR's Hac-Sá beach on Coloane island. As the Macau Daily Times was told, the inconvenient delay had nothing to do with a panorama of bad weather or dire winds, and even less to do with a bout of cold feet, but rather was due to unanticipated, we guess, bureaucratic problems. Again, it was a joyride across the Pearl River that went wrong because of the lack of the official clearance needed for the supporting boat.

By now the story is old stuff since the organizing group has managed to obtain the clearance to allow kitesurfer Siu to carry on this sporting adventure - an initiative inspired by the idea to raise awareness of the accumulation of plastics in the oceans.

Nonetheless, in this bureaucratic nuisance, or bore, we found an inspiring tale to address the ambitious Greater Bay Area plan, which is, in general, about to get 11 cities together to pump out economic development. Both SARs of Macau and Hong Kong are included. In more general terms we would say that this is a framework for Macau doers, those who (within the legal framework) will go full throttle with a GBA (plan) which complements the PRC 13th Five-year Plan. It is not for those who bog themselves down in grey legal areas, shortcuts, antinomies, judicial jigsaws or nightmare puzzles. People, not only in the legal fraternity, are aware that when things get too muddled, the erasure solution seems a good way out.

But let us be neither a spoiler of the positive predictions for the MSAR gaming cluster, or even the science and technology nurtured by Chief Executive Chui. Nor let us be a judicial and political jinx on the integrity of the Basic Law.

Now we consider a number of predictions or commentaries which the alleged Chief Executive in-the-waiting, Ho Iat Seng, voiced on the relationship between the Macau Special Administrative Region and the whole Greater Bay Area. The scope of such predictions and commentary should be clarified by the CE-to-be for the benefit of those in Macau and those outside in the GBA.

According to the Chinese language daily Ou Mun Iat Pou Ho Iat Seng believes the gathering of the 11 cities shall lead to "simpler administrative procedures," and we do not dispute the reading, but perhaps it would be better to understand what is and on what will be a simpler administrative procedure?

And which singular standard should be applied to the legislation of all 11 cities, given the fact that each part (city) establishes its own laws? Ho draws our attention to the outcome of a GBA without a singular standard...the GBA would be useless, thus making opposition and argument useless!

Ho Iat Seng cannot enlighten us about the singular standard, but, sourcing from Macau Daily Times, in his opinion the best solution for the judicial differences of the 11 cities is coordination. As an example, the Legislative Assembly president and the-almost-candidate to the top job said that Guangzhou can coordinate with other cities in drafting an overarching standard for all municipalities in the GBA.

And perhaps requiring further clarification is the idea that Macau law will be consistent with the laws of other mainland cities in the GBA cluster, mainly in the field of administrative regulations. One more layer?

THE BUZZ IAN MCKELLEN HAS APOLOGIZED FOR REMARKS ABOUT SPACEY, SINGER

Actor Ian McKellen has apologized for remarks in which he appeared to suggest that allegations of sexual abuse that have been leveled against Kevin Spacey and Bryan Singer resulted from the entertainers' unease with their own sexuality.

McKellen tweeted over the weekend that comments made during the live #QueerAF podcast were "clumsily expressed."

He said, "I suggested that if closeted people were instead open about their sexuality they wouldn't abuse others. That, of course, is wrong."

He went on to say that he "would never, ever trivialize or condone abuse of any kind. I deeply regret my careless remarks and apologise unreservedly for any distress I caused."

Both Spacey and Singer have denied wrongdoing in relation to the allegations.

Electrics, compacts and SUVs share stage at Geneva auto show



A Volkswagen Buggy electric car

David McHugh, Frankfurt

CARMAKERS are hoping to give consumers a glimpse of the future at this year's Geneva auto show as they roll out new electric cars and try to re-energize an industry facing serious challenges on several fronts.

The Geneva International Motor Show is taking place against a background of slowing sales in China, the world's biggest auto market. A potentially chaotic departure by Britain from the European Union and the U.S.-China trade dispute could mean further trouble.

And add to those the looming disruption from new technologies such as autonomous driving and smartphone-based services that offer use of a car without ownership, as well as regulatory pressure to add more zero-emissions vehicles. In both cases, automakers are sinking billions in investment into areas that don't yet bring them big sales volumes and profits.

The show opens to journalists tomorrow and to the public from Thursday through March 17.

GOING ELECTRIC Although scarce on the road today, battery-driven cars headed for the market in the months and years ahead will be much in evidence at the show.

One reason: Tough new limits on emissions of carbon dioxide, the main green-

house gas blamed for global warming, take effect in the European Union from 2021, and get even tougher in 2025 and 2030. Carmakers originally bet on diesels, which are more efficient than gasoline engines, to help them cut average emissions. But diesel sales plummeted in the wake of Volkswagen's 2015 scandal over cars with software that let them cheat on emissions tests. Analysts say more electric sales will have to fill the gap. Yet that raises its own questions, not least consumer reluctance to buy electrics because of higher prices and concerns about the limited range and lack of places to charge them.

Honda will be showing a compact electric vehicle prototype while Volvo Car Group's Polestar brand will show off the Polestar 2, a battery-driven compact vehicle that advertises 500 kilometers of range under the European range test (275 miles under the different U.S. standard) and is intended to compete with the Tesla Model 3. Audi will present its A6, A7, A8 and Q5 vehicles in hybrid versions, which combine battery and internal combustion propulsion. Daimler's Mercedes-Benz has the concept EQV, a battery-powered van.

TRADE WOES Troubles in the global economy are hanging over the show, not least uncertainty about the outcome

of U.S.-China trade talks. Without a deal, U.S. President Donald Trump could add new import taxes that could slow the Chinese economy and global trade. Trump has also threatened to impose import duties on autos that could hit European producers hard.

Britain could wind up leaving the EU on March 29 without a negotiated deal to smooth the transition, leading to sudden tariffs that could disrupt the auto industries' complex supply chains.

Ferdinand Dudenhofer, director of the Center for Automotive Research at the University of Duisburg-Essen, says that Britain is only 2.8 percent of global sales, meaning "exaggerated fears on the demand side are not so realistic."

BEST-SELLERS

While displaying the electric cars coming to market in coming months and years, automakers are also offering plenty of what consumers buy most now: less climate-friendly SUVs and the small cars that remain a mainstay in Europe.

Sport utility vehicles sell well and can earn strong profits for manufacturers. Volkswagen Group's Skoda will show off the Kamiq crossover SUV with 95, 115 and 150 horsepower gasoline engines as well as a four-cylinder diesel version. Mercedes-Benz has an updated version of the GLC, an SUV loaded with driver assistance systems. AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	50-70 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	45-65 Moderate
Ambient	35-55 Moderate

WORLD BRIEFS



KASHMIR Residents near the disputed boundary in divided Kashmir region said yesterday it was quiet overnight, their first lull since a dangerous escalation between Pakistan and India erupted last week bringing the two nuclear-armed rivals close to full-out war.



ESTONIANS are voted in a parliamentary election yesterday in the small Baltic nation in a ballot where Prime Minister Juri Ratas (pictured) and his Center Party are pitted against the center-right opposition Reform Party and where populists are seen making inroads.

USA President Donald Trump denounced Democrats as the party of "the socialist nightmare," relitigated his crowd sizes back to the inauguration and took on "sick," "lunatic" and "dirty" foes at every turn, earning him the unvarnished adoration of cheering conservatives.

More on p14



USA Bernie Sanders kicked off his presidential campaign this weekend miles from the rent-controlled apartment where he grew up in Brooklyn and forcefully made the case that he is nothing like fellow New Yorker Donald Trump, proclaiming himself the Democrat best prepared to beat the incumbent in 2020.



SPACE SpaceX's sleek, new crew capsule arrived at the International Space Station yesterday, acing its second milestone in just over a day. No one was aboard the Dragon capsule launched Saturday on its first test flight, only an instrumented dummy.