



## PORTUGAL EXTRADITION DEAL CLOSER THAN THOUGHT

An agreement between Macau and Portugal on the surrender of fugitives is expected to be signed this year



## HK BECOMES WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE CITY

According to the latest Economist Intelligence Unit report, Hong Kong has become the joint priciest city alongside Paris and Singapore

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## TAIWAN SEPARATIST CHALLENGES TSAI FOR PRESIDENCY



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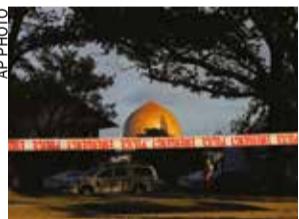
"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

### WORLD BRIEFS

**TAIWAN** and the U.S. will hold talks later this year as part of upgraded efforts to counter Beijing's growing pressure on the island for political unification. More on p10



**SOUTH KOREA** International journalists' organizations question the status of press freedom after the ruling party singled out a Bloomberg reporter with South Korean nationality over a "borderline traitorous" article insulting President Moon Jae-in, resulting in threats to the reporter's safety. More on p12



**NEW ZEALAND** Facebook says none of the 200 or so people who watched live video of the New Zealand mosque shooting flagged it to moderators, underlining the challenge tech companies face in policing violent or disturbing content in real time.



**USA** Top Democrats are urging the FBI to investigate a Donald Trump campaign donor, Li Yang, who is the founder and onetime owner of a spa that has been implicated in a human-trafficking ring. More on p15

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### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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## Four out of 15 domestic cases convicted

The Court of First Instance said that it has received a total of 15 domestic violence cases since October 2016, and that eight of these cases have already been concluded, while the rest have had a trial date confirmed. The court said that four of the seen cases resulted in conviction and that the defendants were sentenced to between one and three years' imprisonment. In two of the convicted cases, perpetrators were forbidden from contact with, harassing or tracking the victim. Three cases saw defendants convicted of ordinary wounding, with suspects sentenced to between 10 months to one year in prison.

## 45 greyhounds awaiting foster homes

About 45 greyhounds are still living in the Canidrome awaiting foster homes, according to José Tavares, President of the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM). The IAM will provide temporary assistance to foster families, including the issuance of a temporary license. The IAM president also said that the Coloane animal specimen museum is preparing for public tender and is expected to open by the end of this year.

## Lawmaker asks about street market renovation

Lawmaker Wong Kit Cheng questioned the government over the upgrading and renovation of street markets. Wong asked whether the government has a renovation plan for other markets besides the Taipa street market and the Red Market. The lawmaker pointed out that many vendors have complained about the dilapidation, inadequate facilities, and environmental hygiene problems of street markets. Wong urged the government to increase market cleansing works and to eliminate odors. She wants the government to renovate the surrounding areas of street markets to revitalize the community economy.

# Lawmakers enter into 'war of

**Renato Marques**

**LAWMAKER** Sulu Sou sparked controversy in yesterday's session of the Legislative Assembly (AL) by proposing two "votes of protest," an unusual motion to try to force the government to address the problem of illegal drivers and put a stop to the mutual recognition of driving licenses between Macau and mainland China.

The two votes of protest, delivered prior to the period before the agenda, were received poorly by the majority of lawmakers. But while some simply voted them down, others criticized the democrat for the methods used to address the problem.

Among them were lawmakers Agnes Lam and Song Pek Kei, who both noted that "there are other ways to address the matter." Lam said that lawmakers have several kinds of tools to express their opinions to the government, remarking, "AL votes are to express feelings."

But the clash of opinions at the AL reached its peak by the intervention of Chan Wa Keong, one of the lawmakers appointed by the Chief Executive, who issued a strong

RENATO MARQUES



Lawmaker Chan Wa Keong



Lam Lon Wai

criticism of Sou's attitude and described his methods as "immoral."

Sou immediately protested the use of such wording, calling on the intervention of the president of the Legislative Assembly, Ho Iat Seng, to have it retracted from Chan's speech.

But Chan would not accept the change, arguing that he has the right to choose his own words. "Immoral can have different meanings and I find it suitable." "You also said that the government has 'ignored' the people and that's your interpretation," added Chan, referring to an

earlier comment from Sou.

After the heated exchange of words between the lawmakers, Ho questioned Chan on his intention to retract the word "immoral" and the government-appointed lawmaker refused. Backing up Sou was lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho, who considered the option of votes of protest a "good way" to make use of lawmakers' rights under AL's regulations. "I think he did well as a way to force the government to act," remarked Coutinho. "Others will decide by their own conscience if they should vote against

or in favor but I see nothing wrong with the procedure."

Without any further remark by the AL president, the two proposals were voted down with only five and four votes in favor, respectively. For the first proposal, although expressing her opposition to the idea, lawmaker Lam actually voted in favor, noting the relation with an accident that occurred earlier this month in Taipa in which a university student passed away.

Democrat lawmakers Sou, Pereira Coutinho, Au Kam San and Ng Kuok Cheong also voted in favor.

## 136 employers joined govt pension scheme since its inception

**Julie Zhu**

**SINCE** the implementation of the Non-mandatory Central Provident Fund System on January 1, 2018, 136 employers have joined the joint provident fund scheme. Of this number, social service organizations account for approximately 70 percent, and the rest include public entities, gaming, hotels, restaurants, education, finance, retail, medical and other commercial organizations. A to-

tal of approximately 40,000 residents have participated in the individual provident fund scheme.

Last week, the Macau government extended gaming concessions for MGM China and SJM Holdings until 2022.

SJM Holdings submitted its application to join the non-mandatory central provident system, which has already been approved, the Social Security Fund (FSS) said yesterday.

For the extension of

the concessions, the two gaming operators are required to join the city's "non-mandatory central provident fund system" and to establish what is termed a "labor creditor's rights protection fund" – which is encouraged among the city's employers under local legislation passed in 2015 – within three months from the date of the signing of new contracts.

Regarding the number of employees who benefit from SJM joining

the fund, FSS said that "it is still not the deadline to submit the number of employees" as employees are still deciding whether or not to join the fund.

MGM has also submitted the application form but is preparing more documents for FSS's approval.

According to FSS, other gaming operators have expressed their willingness to join the fund.

The second-tier Non-mandatory Central Provident Fund Sys-

tem, which came into force on January 1, 2018, aims to strengthen the social protection for the residents of the Macau SAR in their old age and to complement the existing social security system.

Vice-president of FSS Administration Council Chan Pou Wan said that in the fourth year of the implementation of the second-tier, the government will review the fund and will consider whether it needs to be upgraded to a mandatory fund.

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# words' at Assembly



## VOTING DOWN OWN PROPOSALS

The topics of road safety, the need for better methods of inspection by the authorities, the increase in penalties for transgressors as well as the mutual recognition of the driving licenses were addressed during the session - or more precisely in the period before the agenda - with a total of six lawmakers addressing or delivering spoken enquiries.

In addition to Sou and Ng, who took a moment to recognize the recent demonstration against illegal drivers and the mutual recognition of the driving licenses, curiously lawmakers Lam Lon Wai, Ma Chi Seng and Lao Chi Ngai, who only minutes earlier had voted against Sou's proposal, had prepared statements on the topics.

In their interventions, the lawmakers showed support to the revision of the legislation to fight illegal work, namely concerning the fines and accessory penalties to be applied to wrongful employers.

Lam, who supported the recent visits of the Macao Federation of Transportation to both the Traffic Department of the Public Security Police Force and to the Labour Affairs Bureau, repeated the call for stricter law enforcement on illegal drivers.

Meanwhile, Ma and Lao said they were in favor of reviewing the law and increasing the penalties for illegal drivers, but opposed an end to the mutual recognition system. They argued that the mainland driving license "is recognized in

180 countries and regions and that Chinese citizens can drive legally in the U.S. (in the majority of the states), Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, France, Portugal, Belgium, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, the UAE, among others." In their opinion, it does not make sense to restrict such a policy in Macau.

## The AL president questioned Chan Wa Keong on his intention to retract the word 'immoral' and the government-appointed lawmaker refused

However, the Times has learned that the statements of the two lawmakers are inaccurate, as Chinese driving licenses are not recognized in Portugal and in several other countries mentioned. In some cases, the permit is valid only for a short period of time not exceeding one year, and in many others recognition is limited only to tourists, students or people with short-term working contracts.

The same lawmakers reaffir-

med that the neighboring region of Hong Kong has enjoyed such an arrangement for at least 15 years, noting, "we reaffirm our support in fighting the illegal drivers but we request all to discuss in a rational way the mutual recognition of the driving licenses."

## GBA WITH STRONG EMPHASIS

The Greater Bay Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Area (GBA) was another of the topics addressed fervently in the period before the agenda of yesterday's plenary session at the AL. A total of six interventions involving eight lawmakers were raised in relation to the GBA.

Although most of the interventions did not propose any concrete measures or ideas to be implemented, resembling more closely a show of duty from the lawmakers, some noted aspects like the need to implement better solutions regarding cross-border infrastructure and procedures, as well as to make use of the project to facilitate technological development, as mentioned by lawmaker Song Pek Kei.

On the same topic, lawmaker Ho Ion Sang preferred to highlight the need for better integration in terms of both laws and regulations, as well as a reduction of "customs-related barriers" increasing the flow of people and goods in the new extended region. Kou Hoi In, Chui Sai Peng and Ip Sio Kai expressed concerns over measures to raise the attractiveness of talented workers so that "Macau does not finish last in this regional competition."

## ADVERTORIAL

# GREAT TIMES

A Michelin 3-star Menu for 3 Nights at MGM COTAI

**I**MAGINE exotic ingredients like Gillardeau oysters, Carabinero prawns and US beef tenderloin. Envision the exquisite flavor combination of slow-cooked organic egg with corn textures and black truffle. These sublime creations aren't a dream, but what guests look forward to when dining at Mirazur in France, the highly acclaimed restaurant helmed by the indomitable Chef Mauro Colagreco. And for 3 nights only, he will be bringing this award-winning menu – only available in Mirazur – to Grill 58 at MGM COTAI.



Mirazur has been a decade-long fixture on the World's 50 Best Restaurants list, and no wonder as Chef Colagreco is well known for dishes driven by high quality fresh ingredients, as well as his Mediterranean inspired cuisine. Born in 1976, he began his culinary studies with Beatriz Chomnalez and Gato Dumas before moving to France in 2001, hoping to find the path to what he loves most. Here in the culinary capital of the world, Chef Colagreco started his career as a newly qualified chef and worked with several three-star Michelin chefs including Bernard Loiseau until his death in 2003, Alain Passard at l'Arpège, Alain Ducasse at the Hotel Plaza Athénée and finally spending a year at Le Grand Véfour. He then opened Mirazur in Menton in 2006, and was awarded by the prestigious Gault and Millau restaurant guide as "Revelation of the Year" six months later, followed by his first Michelin star after just 10 months. His other stellar achievements include being the first non-French chef to win the "Chef of the Year" title, and of course, the highly coveted Michelin 3-star award.

He pushes himself to always experience new ingredients, new flavors and new places. And that is what has brought him to our shores in Macau with Grill 58, his restaurant in MGM COTAI. In his own words, this restaurant is all about the love for exceptional, authentic, natural and rare products that make for unique moments of sharing at Grill 58.

And there surely can be no moment more unique than meeting Chef Colagreco. From March 27 till 29, you have the exclusive opportunity to experience Mirazur at Grill 58 in MGM COTAI, presented by the Michelin 3-star chef himself. The menu features exquisite ingredients and masterful creations, with the choice to pair each dish with a specially selected wine to elevate your experience.

Don't miss this incredibly rare opportunity for a taste of Mirazur, as well as the chance to meet one of the culinary world's biggest stars. For reservations and enquiries, call (853) 8806 2318.





Chef Mitsuhiro Tsumura (center), Chef Edwin Guzman Navarro (left) restaurant Manager Alexandre Santos (back left) and Sous chef Aldo Shimabukuro (right)

## A CONVERSATION WITH NIKKEI CHEFS

# Harmony of two cultures at Aji

**Text & review by Irene Sam  
Interview by Paulo Coutinho & Irene Sam**

**D**ELICACY of Japanese techniques matches with the exotic flavors of Peru to wow discerning diners this season at MGM Cotai's Aji.

In the world of Nikkei cuisine, where Japanese concepts of gastronomy influence Peruvian cuisine, Mitsuhiro Tsumura is one of the most well-known chefs who has brought his own ideas and passions from his country and introduced them to the world.

"To me, Peruvian cuisine is heavy metal music and Japanese cuisine is classical music. The two need to harmonize well together in a perfect combination. It is important that we understand the DNA of both cuisines," explains Peru's star chef of the restaurant "Maido" in Lima, a Nikkei concept which ranked

seventh in the San Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants 2018.

For the new menu at MGM Cotai's signature Nikkei restaurant, Aji, Tsumura, widely known as Chef Micha, works with his team, led by Chef Edwin Guzman Navarro and Manager Alexandre Santos.

Their goal is to elevate the original menu to another level and feature their best efforts and creativity. Additional ingredients from Peru are imported to make the taste profile more complex. The result is an explosion of well-balanced flavors and aesthetics that surprises the senses.

Umami takes center stage for creations like Causa: mashed potato filled with yellow chilli, king crab, and salmon roe layered on a bed of black rice cracker.

For lovers of beef tartar, Aji's version of the raw beef delight is

enhanced with sea urchin, quail egg, and truffle chapla.

Mushroom fanatics will be thrilled by mushroom, shiitake, enoki and king oyster mushroom in broth.

Lastly, the Rocoto, a dessert filled with coconut, cinnamon foam, chocolate praline and peanut ice cream, sweetens the palate with its diverse textures, making it the perfect conclusion to a rich meal characterized by sophisticated combinations and innovative artistry.

After the tasting, the Times sat down with the Nikkei chefs for a conversation.

**Macau Daily Times (MDT) - How do you work with Chef Edwin?**

**Chef Mitsuhiro Tsumura (MT)** - I communicate constantly with Edwin. For the first few months of the first year, I was more involved creatively. Now I give ideas, but I would

say that 80 or 90 percent of the job is done by [Chefs] Edwin and Aldo. Actually, they come up with ideas and they ask me, "what do you think about this?" And we take the ideas from there. Edwin and Aldo know what kind of flavors I like. I also give him ideas. So it's team work, but it's mostly executed by Aldo and Edwin.

**MDT - You talk through Facetime?**

**MT** - No. We like to see each other, but not that much. Once a week is enough. [Laughs]

Edwin has always been a very talented and creative chef. He worked with me in Maido. He won the best young chef [award] in Peru, the contest. Edwin has really developed a good relationship with everybody in the hotel, with the team, and outside the hotel. Also in Hong Kong. He is very easy going. When I came this time, I was surprised

because everybody knows him and he knows everybody. I feel proud and very happy because before coming here, it was a challenge, but I think he has done very well and engaged with the people.

**MDT - Can you talk about your experience in Macau?**

**Chef Edwin Guzman Navarro (EGN)** - It was a challenge when Mitsuhiro made the decision to choose myself and Aldo to come to Macau and develop the concept here in China. It was a challenge looking for products similar to the Peruvian ones and starting to cook with people who don't know anything about your cuisine and your flavors. But I can say the first year was very good also. We were tired but enjoyed the work.

**MDT - How do you overcome the problem of importing products?**

**EGN** - When the Hong Kong-Macau-Zhuhai Bridge was finished, we were thinking maybe the problem can be fixed because half of the products [can be found] in Hong Kong, but delivery is not easy. We have some





ingredients flown directly from Peru, but it's very expensive.

Peruvian cuisine is developing in Asia, more in Hong Kong than in Macau, and the products are going to Hong Kong first and then sent to other places. We are still trying to find new suppliers.

#### MDT - And ingredients from Japan?

EGN - I went with Mitsuhiro to Japan and tried the food

there. I saw the ingredients, but was not very familiar with all of them. Actually, we always ask Mitsuhiro how we should cook with those products that we never saw in our life.

#### MDT - What about the kitchen, is it to your liking?

MT - It's a dream kitchen. I said when I open this restaurant in Macau, it has to be the kitchen of my dreams. [MGM] hired a

designer and everything, but I want to design it myself. So, I went back to Peru and I drew it there. I want this station here, pastry there, etc. Plunger here, walks here. So, it's not a typical kitchen, it has many stations. It's like a fish bowl.

#### MDT - Is the new menu an elevation of the previous menu?

MT - We try to make some-

thing special for our guests. Engawa, for example, is top quality and a precious part of the fish, but most people don't know what it is.

When I first went to Japan I didn't know about it because in Peru, we don't use it; we throw it away because it's hard [to cook with]. But now they're using it. Some 17 years ago or so, my boss in Japan said, "Okay cut the fish." I cut the fish and left the Engawa and he got mad because I threw it away. "Where's the Engawa? Why not use that? That is the most expensive part of the fish. That's worth the same amount as the whole fish," he added. I'm never going to forget that. If you don't go very well into the bone of the fish, you can lose half of the Engawa. These tough parts of the fish are the best parts for cooking... because they're very hard when they are raw, but they are very tender when they are cooked.

places, like even fish markets, a French market and different restaurants with different types of cuisine and this overcame a lot of basic challenges, for example, how we can explain the dishes to the guests.

#### MDT - Chef Micha, what is your goal for the future?

MT - I take life day-by-day. I don't like to plan, but I have to plan sometimes because that's the way my work is. Many people think I'm very organized, but I am not. When I wake up every day, I try to make my day perfect. But when I plan something too much, it doesn't work. That has happened to me. So the best things in my life have happened without planning. So, I really don't know what I'm going to do. One of the things I know I'm going to do is that I'm going to close my restaurant in Lima. Maida is going to close in approximately three or four more years.

My concept in Chile and China are basically the only two concepts that are this elaborate. What I open in the future will be very casual. I am not looking to be in a ranking, just [to make] good food at a good price. I want to make my food more democratic. I want to open more concepts where everybody can go. That is happiness. We can make tasty food without it being so expensive. The future of food is informality. Do whatever you want. If you want to eat with your hands, eat with your hands. No dress code. There's no better way to eat than the way you feel comfortable. I never wear suits, for example. If you tell me I have to dress up to go to a restaurant, I don't go. I never wear a shirt, that's the way I am.

#### MDT - When did you first hear the word 'Macau'?

MT - The first time I heard the word 'Macau' was when I was in college because I had two friends from Macau. That was 20 years ago. I said, "Where are you from?" "Macau." "Where's Macau?" Macau was not like [it is] now 20 years ago, so he talked about gambling. He said, "We have casinos there and the Portuguese influence and this is Macau." So, from that time I always remembered Macau in that way and said, someday I'm going to go.

**The future of food is informality. If you want to eat with your hands, eat with your hands. No dress code.**

CHEF MICHA

#### MDT - Who are the clients?

Alexandre Santos (AS) - Expat and local Chinese community. They accept the food but it is very new for them. You need to really take an effort to explain what the dish is. After opening up the menu, we try our best to go to the table and start to explain.

MT - I was happy to hear that 80 percent or more of the customers of Aji are locals.

AS - In the beginning it was like the 'curiosity stage' of the whole hotel. It was the first Peruvian and then Nikkei Restaurant in Macau and it was challenging then. [...] I got a chance to go to Peru almost a year and a half ago. Chef Micha took me out to many different



# Surrender of fugitive agreement with Portugal may be signed this year

**T**HE Secretary for Administration and Justice, Sonia Chan, revealed that an agreement between the SAR and Portugal on the surrender of fugitives wanted by one of the two jurisdictions is expected to be signed this year.

The government started negotiations with the Portuguese government regarding an agreement on the surrender of fugitives back in February and a consensus was achieved, with an agreement initiated.

Last month, a local delegation headed by Chan negotiated the signing of the agreements for mutual legal assistance in criminal matters with the Directorate-General of Justice Administration of Portugal.

As cited in a statement issued by the Government Information Bureau, each side is currently working internally on procedures required for the official signing of the agreement.

According to the secretary, the government will strive to expedite the process and anticipates the agreement could be signed this year.

Chan previously clarified that the agreement will follow international directives that exclude extradition when the wanted person is in the territory where he or she is a national.

With such directives, fugitives with Portuguese nationality who are wanted by Macau authorities in Portugal will not be surrendered and

vice-versa.

Meanwhile, issues regarding the surrender of sentenced persons from Macau to mainland China and from mainland China to Macau are still being negotiated.

Extradition agreements with Macau's major political and economic partners, Hong Kong and Beijing, have long been a personal goal of Chan.

Chan said that more time was required to prepare the initial negotiations for a China-wide agreement.

Last month Chan was in Beijing to discuss such transfer agreements with her mainland counterparts following a suggestion from Hong Kong authorities that would allow extraditions to Macau, Taiwan and mainland China on a case-by-case basis.

According to a statement issued by the Secretary's office, the visit was "successful" and achieved the results that both parties were hoping for. The two parties are set to study the different legal regimes and have said to have already created a contact mechanism for checking on progress.

The Macau SAR currently has agreements for the transfer of convicted criminals with regions including Hong Kong, Mongolia and Nigeria, while plans are already in place to develop similar agreements with Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines. **LV**



## Armed drill to be conducted Friday at Venetian Macao

**A**N armed attack drill will be conducted at the Venetian Macao integrated resort in Cotai on Friday, in order to help the police, government departments and the casino to better know how to respond to a real attack.

Dubbed Wolf Hunting 2019, the exercise will count the participation of the Judiciary Police, the Public Security Police Force, the Fire Services Bureau and the Customs Service. It will be coordinated by the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau and the Unitary Police Service.

The exercise will simulate an attack on the integrated resort led by armed assailants, including bomb

threats, injuries and a hostage-taking scenario.

The Venetian Macao was chosen to host the attack drill in part due to its proximity to the barracks of the Macau Garrison of the People's Liberation Army. Last year, the authorities conducted a similar attack drill at Galaxy Macau, also in Cotai.

In 2017, a real attack at Resorts World Manila entertainment complex in the Philippines left dozens of people killed and injured. In October that year, 58 people were killed and hundreds more were injured in a mass shooting at Las Vegas' Mandalay Bay Resort.

Steve Vickers, CEO



of Steve Vickers and Associates (or SVA), a specialist political and corporate risk consultancy, has warned for several consecutive years of the possibility of a terrorist attack in Macau in its annual Asia Risk Assessment report.

Echoing the warnings of previous years, SVA wrote in this year's report that the prospect

of a terrorist attack in the Macau SAR remained "a perennial problem posing serious criminal and reputational threats to investors."

"The prospect of a terrorist attack on a casino is also a chronic worry, although Macau has recently taken some steps to limit the danger," added the report. **DB**

## Chui Sai On studying anti-graft report

**C**HIEF Executive Chui Sai On is studying the relevant proposals of the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) report on alleged employment recommendations made to Ho Chio Meng, to improve the accountability system for government officials.

On Monday, the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) found that Macau's incumbent Secretary for Administration and Justice and her predecessor did not violate the law in recommending their relatives to the Office of the Prosecutor General, which at the time was headed by Ho Chio Meng.

In December 2016, while standing trial at the Court of Final Appeal accused of corruption, former Prosecutor General Ho Chio Meng alleged that his Office had hired personnel based on the recommendations of Macau's incumbent Secretary for Administration and Justice, Sonia Chan, as well

as her predecessor, Florinda Chan.

Chui said that he had already received and read the CCAC investigation report.

"The CCAC submitted some suggestions to me for improvements to the accountability system for officials," said Chui.

The Chief Executive thinks that everyone is aware the previous secretary and the current secretary did not violate the law.

Chui also noted that the CCAC gave him some suggestions about amending the laws.

"As the Chief Executive, I certainly hope that my colleagues will abide by the law and have higher requirements and standards for themselves," said Chui.

Chui stressed that since the establishment of the Macau SAR, the government has been continuously improving its code for principal officials and the recruitment system for civil servants. **LV**



## THE WORLD'S LEADING CHEFS AT WYNN

For two years in a row, Wynn Macau and Wynn Palace have been chosen as the official venue partners by Asia's 50 Best Restaurants. This March, Wynn will present a series of events featuring award winning chefs and mixologists from Wynn, from Macau, and around the world.

**March 23 - 29 2019**  
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*Wynn*

  
MACAO  
CITY OF GASTRONOMY



# Hong Kong listed as most expensive city along Singapore, Paris

**H**ONG Kong shares the title of the world's most expensive cities along with Singapore and Paris for the first time, according to a report by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

Hong Kong moved three places up from last year, joining the Lion City, which has been the world's most expensive place to live for the last five years.

The trio of cities sharing the top spot are 7 percent more expensive to live in than New York, according to the EIU, which compiles its list from a

survey of 160 products and services across 93 countries.

As cited in the report, the top 10 is largely split between Asia and Europe, with Singapore the only city in the top 10 that maintained its ranking from the previous year.

In the rest of Asia, Osaka in Japan and Seoul in South Korea join Singapore and Hong Kong in the top 10. The Japanese city has moved up six places since last year, and now shares fifth place with Geneva, Switzerland.

New York and Los Angeles

reclaimed spots in the top 10 — ranking in seventh and 10th respectively — after slipping to 13th and 14th last year thanks to a weakening U.S dollar.

The Japanese port city of Osaka was another re-entry, moving up six spots to number five. Seoul (joint seventh place), Copenhagen (also seventh) and Tel Aviv (10th) round out the top 10 — which actually consists of 11 cities thanks to tied places.

"Weaker local currencies have pushed all five Australian and two New Zealand cities sur-

veyed down in the ranking," the EIU said, accounting for Sydney's absence after it scraped into 10th position in last year's report.

Outside the top 10, the EIU said the cost of living in Chinese cities remains relatively stable, while Southeast Asian locations were moving up the ranks.

One of the factors behind Asia's strong showing at the top of the ranking is that some Asian cities are among the world's priciest locations for general grocery shopping, according

to the EIU.

But while parts of Asia remain the most expensive places on Earth, the continent also makes several appearances at the bottom of the list.

"Within Asia, the best value for money has traditionally been offered by South Asian cities, particularly those in India and Pakistan," the EIU said. "To an extent this remains true, and Bangalore, Chennai, New Delhi and Karachi feature among the 10 cheapest locations surveyed." **LV/Bloomberg**

Julie Zhu

A mainland expert says that Macau can create a technological innovation and entrepreneurship zone through land reclamation.

The expert, Qu Jian, is the deputy dean of China Development Institute (CDI), a think tank based in Shenzhen. He voiced his opinion yesterday during the Regional Policy and Development Studies Services Seminar, at the Macau Tower.

"Macau, while participating in international scientific innovation, should try every effort to create an innovation zone under its own control," said Qu. "Macau should carry out land reclamation to form a new scientific industry increasing point, and should go to mainland cities to choose an enclave to extend the scientific innovation chain."

Through land recla-

mation, Macau can fulfill its strategy in terms of diversifying its economy, and can even become an asset within the Greater Bay Area (GBA)'s scientific innovation, according to Qu.

While voicing his opinion on the GBA, the mainland expert pointed out that China and other eastern Asian countries have been unable to "attract high-tech to their own countries." However, in Qu's opinion, mainland China and the two SARs have already achieved cooperation in manufacturing and in the service industry.

"[Now] it comes to human beings' most difficult cooperation, which is the scientific cooperation," Qu remarked, adding that "it requires

the cities, including Macau, to achieve highly efficient flows [in terms of human beings and resources]."

In the past five years, companies from various industries have been moving out from Guangdong provinces, as Qu highlighted, and these industries include both primary industries and IT industries. The relocations were said to reduce production costs.

How the GBA will "fill up the industrial blank" left by the relocation of companies in Guangdong is another challenge to study, said Qu.

Despite being the platform for trade and cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries and

a world tourism and leisure center, Qu believes Macau's advantages in the GBA are actually not related to either its pla-

tform status or center functions.

"A small section of Macau has unique advantages, which consist

of the cultural creativity and IT design sectors having a strong competitiveness," the expert noted.

## Zhejiang Province issues ban on new coastal projects

**E**AST China's Zhejiang Province has issued a ban on new land reclamation projects to protect the marine environment, state media Xinhua reported, citing local authorities.

Apart from key national strategic projects, Zhejiang will stop approving new land reclamation projects and strengthen the protection of coastal wetlands.

The provincial government will also launch a probe into existing land reclamation projects, aiming to target real estate and low-standard tourism and recreational projects, as well as those that have polluted the marine environment.

Through the move, Zhejiang vowed to keep the ratio of natural coastline above 35 percent by 2020.

The ban came after a 2017 inspection by the State Oceanic Administration found improper and illegal land reclamation practices in 11 provincial-level coastal regions. The vacancy rate of reclamation land in regions including Zhejiang and Shandong provinces was found to be above 40 percent. **MDT/Xinhua**



Incumbent Comoros President Azali Assoumani

## TOURISM

# Club Med touted as ex-President looks to secure Comoros vote win

**Faiza Soule Youssouf & Kamlesh Bhuckory**

**F**ORMER Comoros President Azali Assoumani said leisure companies including Club Med may invest in the Indian Ocean archipelago, as he vowed to boost the tourism industry if he wins this weekend's election.

The luxury-resort operator and French hotel group Accor SA

both plan to send prospecting missions to the country, Assoumani told reporters Monday in the capital, Moroni. Club Med and Accor didn't immediately respond to emailed requests for comment.

Assoumani, 60, stepped down last month to take part in the election after overseeing average economic growth of 2.4 percent, International Monetary Fund data shows. In addition to spen-

ding on the tourism industry, Assoumani said he plans to invest in agriculture if he wins the March 24 ballot to help raise the growth rate to 4 percent.

Comoros is one of the world's biggest producers of ylang ylang, an essence used in perfumes, which together with cloves and vanilla account for more than 70 percent of its exports.

The former army colonel, who previously ruled from 1999 to

2002 and again for four years until 2006, is seeking another mandate after he won a disputed referendum in July that allowed him to alter the constitution. The changes extended presidential term limits and modified the system of rotating power between the archipelago's three main islands to every 10 years instead of five.

"It is most likely that I will be elected in the first round," said

Assoumani, who first rose to power in a bloodless coup in 1999.

Comoros' Supreme Court has barred some of the main opposition candidates from participating in the vote, citing invalid paperwork. A country of about 820,000 people, Comoros has had more than 20 coups or attempts at seizing power since it gained independence from France in 1975. **Bloomberg**

## TECHNOLOGY

# Chinese firm gets no lift from giant rally

**Eric Lam**

**I**F the rising tide of investor optimism in China (and tech shares) is supposed to lift all equity boats, then at the moment Xiaomi Corp. appears to be adrift.

The smartphone maker's stock has failed to benefit from the wave of investor cash that's flooded into Chinese equities this year, retreating more than 6 percent in the face of double-digit rallies for benchmarks in both Hong Kong and China. To add insult to injury, mainland technology shares have led

gains in the CSI 300 Index, with a 47 percent rally.

Xiaomi has lost almost 30 percent since its highly anticipated trading debut in Hong Kong last July, hampered by plateauing smartphone demand globally and especially in its home market, where it still generated more than half its revenue in the third quarter. Add to that broad headwinds for Chinese names amid the U.S.-China trade war.

The company was one of a wave of hot-shot initial public offerings in Hong Kong that fizzled last year, with the likes of Ping An

Healthcare and Technology Co., Asclexis Pharma Inc. and food-delivery giant Meituan Dianping all stumbling out of the starting blocks. Yet while even the latter three have bounced back at least 10 percent (Ping An Good Doctor has made a 68 percent comeback, actually) this year, Xiaomi remains mired in its rut.

One contributing factor is likely the fresh wave of selling Xiaomi experienced in January after its lockup period ended, when key investors were allowed to sell shares. Despite the IPO's disappointment, those

who picked up the stock in its earliest funding rounds between 2010 and 2011 for as little as 1.95 Hong Kong cents may have reaped a profit of almost 57,000 percent if they sold in January.

Xiaomi will have an opportunity to get investors back on the bandwagon when it reports its fourth-quarter results after yesterday's markets close. The company is expected to post adjusted net income of 1.42 billion yuan (USD211 million) against revenue of 46.2 billion, according to consensus estimates from analysts sur-

veyed by Bloomberg.

Key to Xiaomi's outlook will be whether the smartphone maker can follow up on its third quarter, when it surprised analysts beating estimates for both sales and profit as it relied on its presence in emerging markets such as India and Southeast Asia to offset weakening demand in China.

Its unit shipments to its home market plunged 35 percent during the fourth quarter, lagging rivals including No. 1 supplier Huawei Technologies Co., whose own shipments soared 23 percent, according to research firm IDC.

"Xiaomi could have mitigated a sharp deceleration of its smartphone-shipment growth by improving product mix and average selling prices in the fourth quarter," said Anthea Lai, a technology analyst with Bloomberg Intelligence in Hong Kong. The company has also stepped up its branding efforts by splitting its lower-priced phone series Redmi from its higher-end brand, Lai noted.

The smartphone maker is also counting on the shift to so-called 5G next-generation wireless technology to boost flagging demand in China, Chief Executive Officer Lei Jun told Bloomberg Television in a January interview. However, that technology will take time to implement. **Bloomberg**

# Taiwan, US plan new talks this year in rebuke to Beijing

Ralph Jennings, Taipei

**TAIWAN** and the U.S. will hold talks later this year as part of upgraded efforts to counter Beijing's growing pressure on the island for political unification.

The talks planned for September in Taipei will include a senior official from Washington, de facto U.S. ambassador to Taipei William Brent Christensen said yesterday.

Christensen didn't say whether the consultations are meant to provoke China or push it to make changes. The U.S. has formal diplomatic relations with China but maintains strong ties with Taiwan through the American Institute in Taiwan, its de facto embassy in Taipei, which has recently undergone a major upgrade in facilities.

"We believe it's possible to have a good relationship with Taiwan and a good relationship with China at the same time," Christensen said at a news conference. "Things we do with

AP PHOTO



Taiwan Foreign Minister Joseph Wu (left) and American Institute in Taiwan director William Brent Christensen

Taiwan should not be regarded as things that we are doing because we are seeking to provoke China or vice versa."

President Donald Trump has elevated 40 years of informal ties with Taiwan through more open contacts and planned arms deals. Meanwhile, China and the U.S. are enmeshed in a dispute over trade, copyrights and tariffs, raising economic and political frictions to their

highest level in a decade.

Taiwanese Foreign Minister Joseph Wu said the "Indo-Pacific Democratic Governance Consultations" — as the dialogue is termed — would allow the two sides to "grow closer and more direct in their cooperation [...] to protect regional freedom and legal order."

Taiwan has been democratically ruled for about 30 years. It allows freedom of expres-

sion and religion in contrast to China's tight restrictions under authoritarian Communist Party rule, and remains a close U.S. ally in the Asia-Pacific region.

## More than 70 percent of Taiwanese oppose China's goal of unification

While China insists that Taiwan is its territory to be brought under its control by force if necessary, more than 70 percent of Taiwanese oppose China's goal of unification, the government's Mainland Affairs Council spokesman said in January. Many fear Beijing would eliminate Taiwan's democratic institutions.

While there was no immediate word from Beijing, China

will "most definitely" protest the consultations, said Shane Lee, a political scientist at Chang Jung Christian University in Taiwan.

China has used military flybys, aircraft carrier movements and diplomatic pressure as warnings to Taiwan since President Tsai Ing-wen took office there in 2016. Tsai's party embraces greater Taiwanese independence from China, resulting in a strong backlash from China. Beijing has cut all formal ties with Tsai's government, blockaded the island's participation in international forums and persuaded five countries to cut diplomatic ties with it.

Washington switched its official recognition from Taiwan to China in 1979. But Taiwan still counts the United States as its staunchest informal ally, particularly as a source of advanced weapons systems. Last year Trump signed a bill encouraging more high-level exchanges between the two governments, inflaming China.

In another sign of stronger U.S.-Taiwan ties, Tsai is expected to stop over in U.S. territory once or twice during a trip starting tomorrow to visit diplomatic allies in the South Pacific. China has protested to the United States against her previous stopovers. AP

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Debby Wu &amp; Adela Lin

A former premier and vocal proponent of independence for Taiwan will challenge his former boss, President Tsai Ing-wen, for the ruling party's nomination, ensuring the island's tense relationship with China will be a central focus of the presidential campaign.

Former Premier Lai Ching-te said in a text message this week that he would vie for the Democratic Progressive Party's backing in the election slated for next year. Lai - a former mayor of the southern Taiwanese city of Tainan who once described himself as an "independence worker" - resigned in January, weeks after the party suffered a resounding loss in local elections.

"Taiwan is facing a more precarious situation in the face of China's threats," Lai after submitting his nomination application at DPP headquarters in Taipei. "Taiwan doesn't want to be a second Hong Kong or Tibet. The elections in 2020 are critical to Taiwan's future."

Tsai, who is almost three years into her first term, has said she plans to seek re-election despite receiving support of less than 30 percent in most recent polls. Although Tsai stepped down as the DPP leader after losing several counties and cities to the more China-friendly Kuomintang opposition in November, she had so far faced no obvious challengers from within the party.

Tsai spokesman Xavier Chang said via text message that Lai's candidacy doesn't change the president's plans to run. Tsai said in a Facebook post Monday that she planned to submit her formal application to run before the end of the week. The DPP is scheduled to announce its candidate April 17.

## TAIWAN

# Independence backer challenges Tsai for presidency

AP PHOTO



Lai Ching-te (left) shakes hands with Tsai Ing-wen (center)

**Taiwan doesn't want to be a second Hong Kong or Tibet. The elections in 2020 are critical to Taiwan's future.**

LAI CHING-TE  
FORMER PREMIER

Lai's candidacy could make the issue of legal independence for the democratically run island a central campaign theme, just as an increasingly assertive Chinese President Xi Jinping pushes Taiwan for talks on eventual unification. Xi suggested earlier this year that mainland China and Taiwan enter into "in-depth democratic consultations" and work toward unification, the clearest signal yet that he wants to settle the 70-year dispute.

Beijing has said any moves by Taiwan to formalize its status as a sovereign state separate

from mainland China would be grounds for invasion. The two split during the Chinese civil war in 1949.

While the DPP officially supports Taiwan's independence, Tsai has so far avoided outright moves that might risk provoking the Communist Party in Beijing, saying that she wants to maintain the status quo. That has frustrated some within her party who support a more decisive break from the mainland.

Lai has pointed to the risk of the DPP losing not just the presidency but also its hard-won

majority in the Legislature as a motivating factor behind his decision to run. Taiwan is expected to hold legislative elections on the same day as the presidential vote.

"We need to impress voters so that the DPP can win both the presidential and legislative elections in 2020," he told supporters at a temple in Tainan yesterday.

Lai is likely to see strong support in southern Taiwan, a traditional DPP stronghold. After Tsai appointed Lai premier in August 2017, he described himself as a "Taiwan independence worker" and said the island was already a sovereign independent country, according to Taiwan's Central News Agency.

The opposition KMT, which has run Taiwan's government for all but 11 years since 1949 including decades under martial law, may have a crowded nomination contest. Former New Taipei Mayor Eric Chu and ex-parliamentary speaker Wang Jin-pyng, who both support closer China ties, have already announced their candidacy and KMT Chairman Wu Den-yih may also run.

An October poll by Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council found that some 23 percent of Taiwanese people support formal independence either immediately or at some later date, while 19 percent support unification. Most of the rest are in favor of maintaining the status quo. Bloomberg

## China said to consider excluding Boeing Max Jet from trade deal

CHINA is looking at excluding Boeing Co.'s troubled 737 Max jet from a list of American exports it would buy as part of a trade deal with the U.S., people familiar with the matter said.

Boeing jets were featured on a draft list of American products China would buy to reduce its trade surplus with the U.S., the people said, asking not to be identified discussing private deliberations. Now, safety concerns are pushing China to examine whether to cut the 737 Max from the list altogether or replace it with other Boeing models

after the crash of a plane operated by Ethiopian Airlines led to the aircraft being grounded worldwide, they said.

A reduction in aircraft purchases could make it harder for China to fulfill an offer it's said to have made to pare its USD-300-billion-plus annual goods trade surplus with the U.S. over six years, and potentially delay any overall agreement between the two countries. Worth billions of dollars and a key U.S. export, planes would likely be a key component of any commitment by China to buy more Amer-

ican goods, along with soybeans, meat and natural gas.

China's Ministry of Commerce, which is in charge of the nation's trade talks with the U.S., didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. A Boeing representative declined to comment.

For Boeing, China's exclusion of Max purchases in a trade deal would mark another setback for a company that's reeling from a crisis of confidence over its top-selling plane, which accounts for almost a third of its operating profit.

Chinese airlines made up

about 20 percent of 737 Max deliveries worldwide through January, according to Boeing's website. China Southern Airlines Co. has 16 of the aircraft, with another 34 on order. China Eastern Airlines Corp. has 13, while Air China Ltd. has 14, according to Boeing. Other Chinese airlines that have bought the Max include Hainan Airlines Holdings Co. and Shandong Airlines Co.

The 737, which first entered service in the late 1960s, is the aviation industry's best-selling model and Boeing's top earner. The re-engineered Max



version has racked up more than 5,000 orders worth in excess of \$600 billion, including planes that have already been delivered.

Most of China's airlines count the government as its top shareholder and aircraft purchases are often coordinated by state agencies including the

Civil Aviation Administration of China and National Development and Reform Commission. No other country has more demand for aircraft than China, which is estimated to seek 7,690 new planes worth \$1.2 trillion in the 20 years through 2037, according to Boeing's latest forecast. Bloomberg

## PRESS FREEDOM

# Concern raised over S. Korean treatment of Bloomberg reporter

Kim Tong-Hyung, Seoul

**INTERNATIONAL** journalists' organizations are criticizing the status of press freedom in South Korea after the country's ruling party singled out a Bloomberg reporter with South Korean nationality over what it claimed was a "borderline traitorous" article insulting President Moon Jae-in, resulting in threats to the reporter's safety.

The Democratic Party initially said yesterday that it had no immediate plans to withdraw a March 13 statement by spokesman Lee Hae-sik, who attacked the reporter by name over a September article whose headline described the liberal Moon as acting as the "top spokesman" of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un at the U.N. General Assembly.

However, hours later, Lee said in an email that the party has decided to remove the reporter's name and personal details from the statement and that it apologizes to members of the foreign press "if it caused misunderstanding."

Lee also on March 14 attacked a New York Times article published last October that said Moon was serving as Kim's "agent" while advocating diplomacy with North Korea. Lee tried to discredit the Times story by bringing up its South Korean author's nationality. Lee said it was "merely an article written by a black-haired wire reporter," but didn't call out the writer by name. In South Korea, the expression "black-haired" is commonly used in nationalistic insults against

AP PHOTO



South Koreans working for foreign companies who are said to be disloyal to the country.

After refusing to comment on the issue for days, Moon's office released a statement Tuesday evening saying that the government fully guarantees freedom of the press and "cannot accept any circumstances where a reporter's personal safety is threatened."

The ruling party statements by Lee came in response to a parliamentary speech last week by conservative lawmaker Na Kyung-won, who borrowed the Bloomberg headline to criticize Moon's diplomacy with North Korea following the collapse of last month's summit between

Kim and U.S. President Donald Trump.

The Asian American Journalists Association expressed "deep concerns" about the treatment of the Bloomberg journalist, saying that her safety was under threat "simply for doing her job."

"That she is being targeted by members of the South Korean government is also troubling," the AAJA said. "Threatening or intimidating journalists is unacceptable. Such activities have a chilling effect and undermine the freedom of the press for all journalists working in Korea."

AAJA-Asia and its Seoul sub-chapter, as well as the Seoul

Foreign Correspondents' Club, have also issued statements expressing concern over the Democratic Party's statement, which the SFCC described as a "form of censorship and journalistically chilling."

In the email, Lee said the March 13 statement was chiefly aimed at Na and that the party has the right to criticize the work of journalists. Lee said there was "room for self-reflection" on whether it was appropriate to describe the Bloomberg article as "borderline traitorous" and that he acknowledges he may have caused "inconvenience to the reporter, and depending on the person, psychological shock." He said the party still views

the headline as "clearly over the line" in terms of journalistic objectivity. Concerning the "black-haired wire reporter" comment, Lee said the expression "has nothing to do with racial prejudice" and it is a "political term" commonly used by South Korean internet users.

In a country deeply divided along ideological lines, being described as North Korea-friendly is a sensitive accusation for liberal politicians like Moon, who has been unwavering in his commitment to inter-Korean rapprochement, even in the face of North Korean threats. Moon has lobbied hard to set up nuclear diplomacy among Washington, Pyongyang and Seoul.

In an effort to keep the fragile diplomacy alive, Moon has tried to improve Kim's image and portray him as a credible diplomatic counterpart, describing him as a "candid and polite" leader who sincerely wanted to trade away his nuclear weapons to bring economic prosperity to impoverished North Koreans. Experts say the breakdown of the Trump-Kim talks has raised further doubts about Moon's claim that Kim is genuinely interested in dealing away his nuclear weapons.

The presidential Blue House responded sharply to Na's comments, calling them an insult to both Moon and South Koreans who want peace. During her parliamentary speech, Na said, "Please ensure that we never again hear the embarrassing talk that the president of the Republic of Korea is the top spokesman of Kim Jong Un," referring to South Korea by its formal name, as Democratic Party lawmakers began shouting at her.

While criticizing Na, Lee described the Bloomberg reporter's article as "borderline traitorous content that insulted the head of state while wearing the cloak of a U.S. wire service." AP

## THAILAND

# Tycoon guilty in poaching case, cleared of panther charge

A Thai construction tycoon was convicted yesterday on charges related to a high-profile poaching case last year but was found not guilty of possessing the carcass of an endangered black panther seen in photos that had sparked a public outcry.

The Thong Pha Phum Provincial Court sentenced Premchai Karnasuta, the president of Italiano-Thai Development PLC, to 16 months in prison for possessing the carcass of a protected Kalij pheasant, possessing fi-

rearms in public areas, and supporting others to hunt in a protected wildlife sanctuary.

Premchai was arrested last February after park rangers found that he and three of his company's employees had set up camp at the Thung Yai Naresuan Wildlife Sanctuary, where they were found with guns and the carcasses of a panther and other animals.

Only the three other men were found guilty of possessing the panther and other animals. Only one defen-

dant was found guilty of hunting in the wildlife sanctuary, and he and Premchai were fined a USD63,132 fine.

Premchai's case had been met with public skepticism that justice will be done in a country that has seen the rich and privileged prevail in high-profile cases. Wildlife activists concerned about the case have worn masks of the slain big cat as a symbol of protest on several occasions and graffiti artists had sprayed Bangkok's walls with paintings of

the black cat while environmentalists had pledged to keep up pressure.

Premchai was released on bail for a bond of \$12,635 shortly after yesterday's ruling while he appeals the case. The court also granted bail for two other defendants because they were not deemed flight risks.

Before Thailand's general election is held this coming Sunday, some political parties have even used images of the black panther in their campaigning to vow for an improved justice system. AP

AP PHOTO



Stephen Wade, Tokyo

JAPAN

**T**SUNEKAZU Takeda is stepping down as the president of the Japanese Olympic Committee amid a vote-buying scandal that French investigators suspect helped Tokyo land next year's Olympics.

Takeda announced yesterday at the committee's executive board meeting that he will resign when his term ends in June, and he again denied corruption allegations against him.

The 71-year-old Takeda is also a powerful International Olympic Committee member and the head of its marketing commission. When he resigns, he will lose the IOC membership which is tied to his JOC presidency.

The scandal, which French authorities have been investigating for several years, has cast a long shadow over the Tokyo Olympics and underlines flawed efforts by the IOC to clean up its bidding process. Japan is spending at least USD20 billion to organize the games, which open on July 24, 2020.

"I have not done anything wrong," he said. "I will continue to do my best to clear my name."

He said it was his own decision, although several months ago he denied he intended to step aside. But pressure has mounted with

# Olympic Committee head resigns amid bribery scandal

the games getting closer and the IOC wanting to distance itself from another scandal.

"I am sorry I have upset the society ahead of the Tokyo Olympics," he said, speaking to about 100 reporters in the JOC's small boardroom. "I feel bad about that."

He said his decision was based on getting "a younger generation" to lead the Japanese Olympic body.

The organization of the last Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro was chaotic and ended eventually with the arrest of organizing committee president — and Brazilian Olympic Committee president — Carlos Nuzman in a similar vote-buying scandal.

The favorite to replace Takeda is Yasuhiro Yamashita, a judo gold medalist in the 1984 Olympics.

Takeda has acknowledged he signed off on about \$2 million in payments to a Singapore consulting company, Black Tidings, and its head Ian Tan Tong Han. The payments came just before Tokyo

AP PHOTO



was picked in 2013 by the IOC, beating out Istanbul and Madrid.

French investigators have linked Black Tidings to Papa Massata Diack, one of the sons of powerful ex-IOC member Lamine Diack of Senegal. Lamine Diack was known to have huge influence over Olympic voters in Africa.

Takeda has said he was not involved in the decision-making process and had no reason to question what he termed a "regular commercial contact" approved by others at the JOC.

The scandal has also shined a light on the role of Dentsu, the

giant Japanese advertising and marketing agency. Since getting the Olympics, Dentsu has helped Tokyo organizers line up a record \$3 billion in local sponsorship. This is at least twice as much as any previous Olympics.

Dentsu has acknowledged it advised the Japanese bid committee about bid consultants just before the vote in 2013. Tan was among them.

In a 50-page report by the Japanese Olympic Committee investigating the bid, it said the committee — citing an evaluation from Dentsu — decided "that Tan was

an extremely competent Asian consultant."

It is not clear if Dentsu is a target of French investigators.

IOC President Thomas Bach, speaking in December in Tokyo and standing alongside Takeda, described the games as "the best prepared" in history. They have overcome early problems that included a redesign of the new national stadium because of soaring costs, and a plagiarized logo design.

General cost overruns have continued to be an issue for Tokyo, which is spending three times more than it said it would when it was selected. All venues are expected to be ready on time. The new national stadium is to be completed by the end of the year.

Takeda is a distant member of Japan's royal family, the great grandson of the Meiji emperor who ruled late in the 19th century and into the 20th. He competed in equestrian events in the 1972 and 1976 Olympics. AP

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## CYCLONE IDAI

# Over 1,000 feared dead in Mozambique

Andrew Meldrum, Johannesburg

**M**ORE than 1,000 people were feared dead in Mozambique four days after a cyclone slammed into the country, submerging entire villages and leaving bodies floating in the floodwaters, the nation's president said.

"It is a real disaster of great proportions," President Filipe Nyusi said.

Cyclone Idai could prove to be the deadliest storm in generations to hit the impoverished southeast African country of 30 million people.

It struck Beira, an Indian Ocean port city of a half-million people, late Thursday and then moved inland to Zimbabwe and Malawi with strong winds and heavy rain. But it took days for the scope of the disaster to come into focus in Mozambique, which has a poor communication and transportation network and a corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy.

Speaking on state Radio Mozambique, Nyusi said that while the official death toll stood at 84, "It appears that we can register more than 1,000 deaths."

Emergency officials cautioned that while they expect the death toll to rise significantly, they have no way of knowing if it will reach the president's estimate.

AP PHOTO



More than 215 people were killed by the storm in the three countries, including more than 80 in Zimbabwe's eastern Chimanimani region and more than 50 in Malawi, according to official figures. Hundreds more were reported injured and missing, and nearly 1,000 homes were destroyed in eastern Zimbabwe alone.

Doctors Without Borders said rivers have broken their banks leaving many houses fully submerged and around 11,000 households displaced in Nsanje, in southern Malawi.

U.N. agencies and the Red Cross helped rush emergency food and

medicine by helicopter to the stricken countries.

Mount Chiluvo in central Mozambique was badly hit by flooding. One resident said he heard a loud noise, like an explosion, and suddenly saw a river of mud rolling toward his home.

"I was indoors with my children, but when we looked we saw mud coming down the road towards the houses and we fled," Francisco Carlitos told Lusa, the Portuguese News Agency. The family lost their home and possessions but safely reached higher ground.

The country's president, who cut short a visit to neighboring Swaziland over the weekend because

of the disaster, spoke after flying by helicopter over Beira and two rural provinces, where he reported widespread devastation.

"The waters of the Pungue and Buzi rivers overflowed, making whole villages disappear and isolating communities, and bodies are floating," Nyusi said.

The United Nations' humanitarian office said the government issued flood warnings and said heavy rains were forecast for the next 24 hours, including in areas already hit hard by Idai.

The Red Cross said 90 percent of Beira was damaged or destroyed. The cyclone knocked out electricity, shut down the airport

and cut off access to the city by road.

U.N. officials cited reports that Beira Central Hospital's emergency room was flooded and without power, and that much of the building's roof had collapsed. Doctors Without Borders said it had completely ceased operations in Beira hospital, local health centers and throughout the community.

**Emergency officials cautioned that they expect the death toll to rise significantly**

The destruction in Beira is "massive and horrifying," said Jamie LeSueur, who led a Red Cross team that had to assess the damage by helicopter because of the flooded-out roads.

The U.N. also warned of devastation outside Beira, in particular of livestock and crops.

"As this damage is occurring just before the main harvest season, it could exacerbate food insecurity in the region," the U.N. humanitarian office known as OCHA said. AP

## USA

# Warner Bros.' chief Tsujihara steps down following scandal

Jake Coyle, New York

**W**ARNER Bros. chief Kevin Tsujihara, one of the highest ranking Hollywood executives to be felled by sexual misconduct allegations, stepped down from the studio Monday following claims that he promised roles to an actress with whom he was having an affair.

WarnerMedia chief executive John Stankey announced Tsujihara's exit as chairman and chief executive of Warner Bros., saying his departure was in the studio's "best interest."

"Kevin has contributed greatly to the studio's success over the past 25 years and for that we thank him," said Stankey. "Kevin acknowledges that his mistakes are inconsistent with the company's leadership expectations and could impact the company's ability to execute going forward."

Earlier this month, WarnerMedia launched an investigation after a March 6 Hollywood Reporter story detailed text messages between Tsujihara and British actress Charlotte Kirk going back to 2013. The messages suggested a quid pro quo sexual relationship between the aspiring actress and the studio head in which he made promises that he'd introduce her to influential executives and she'd be considered for roles in movies and television.

In a memo to Warner Bros. staff on Monday, Tsujihara said he was departing "after lengthy introspection, and discussions with John Stankey over the past week."

"It has become clear that my continued leadership could be a distraction and an obstacle to the company's continued success," said Tsujihara. "The hard

work of everyone within our organization is truly admirable, and I won't let media attention on my past detract from all the great work the team is doing."

Tsujihara's attorney, Bert H. Deixler, earlier stated that Tsujihara "had no direct role in the hiring of this actress." He declined further comment Monday.

Tsujihara, who has headed the Burbank, California, studio since 2013, earlier pledged to fully cooperate with the studio's investigation and apologized to Warner Bros. staff for "mistakes in my personal life that have caused pain and embarrassment to the people I love the most."

Tsujihara's role had just been expanded on Feb. 28 to include global kids and family entertainment including oversight of Adult Swim and the Cartoon Network.

Kirk appeared in Warner Bros.' "How to Be Single" in 2016 and "Ocean's 8" in 2018. She has denied any inappropriate behavior on the part of Tsujihara or two other executives, Brett Ratner and James Packer, who she communicated with. "Mr. Tsujihara never promised me anything," Kirk said in an earlier statement.

But the details of the leaked text messages between Tsujihara and Kirk immediately put his future at Warner Bros. in jeopardy. Kirk wrote in one 2015 message to him: "Are u going to help me like u said u would?" Tsujihara responded, "Richard will be reaching out to u tonight," referring to Richard Brener, president of Warner Bros.' New Line label.

Other exchanges suggested the kind of give-and-take of Hollywood's "casting couch" culture. Kirk

AP PHOTO



was introduced to Tsujihara by James Packer, the Australian billionaire. Warner Bros. was then finalizing a USD450-million co-financing deal with Packer and Brett Ratner, the director-producer. In a message to Ratner, Kirk said she was "used as icing on the cake."

WarnerMedia, the studio's parent company, said Monday that its internal investigation into the situation, carried out by a third-party law firm, will continue.

Tsujihara's exit follows other high-profile executive departures in the post-Harvey Weinstein #MeToo era. CBS Chairman Leslie Moonves was pushed out after numerous women accused him of sexual harassment. Walt Disney Animation chief John Lasseter was ousted after he acknowledged missteps in his behavior with employees.

The 54-year-old Tsujihara, the first executive of Asian descent to head a major Hollywood studio, presided over a largely positive Warner Bros. era with little fanfare.

The studio will now begin a search for a new chief as it also prepares to launch a streaming service designed to compete with Netflix. AP

Mary Clare Jalonick, Washington

USA

**T**OP Democrats are urging the FBI to investigate a Trump campaign donor who is the founder and onetime owner of a spa that has been implicated in a human-trafficking ring.

In a letter to the FBI, Democrats on the House and Senate judiciary and intelligence panels wrote that reports about Li Yang "raise serious counterintelligence concerns." Yang's company claimed it could provide Chinese clients with a chance to mingle and take photos with President Donald Trump, along with access to his private club in Palm Beach, Florida.

The Democrats said China has "frequently used non-traditional intelligence collectors and businesspersons to compromise targets" and asked for investigations into potential human trafficking, unlawful lobbying or campaign finance violations.

"Although Ms. Yang's activities may only be those of an unscrupulous actor allegedly selling access to politicians for profit, her activities also could permit adversary governments or their agents access to these same politicians to acquire potential material for blackmail or even more nefarious purposes," the Democrats wrote.

The Democrats asked the FBI to investigate whether authorities were previously aware of Yang's activities, to what extent she has interacted with Trump

# Democrats urge FBI probe of spa owner offering Trump access

and how she was invited to a Super Bowl party at his West Palm Beach country club, among other matters. Signing on to the letter were House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., House intelligence committee chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., and Sens. Mark Warner of Virginia and Dianne Feinstein of California, the top Democrats on the Senate intelligence and Judiciary panels.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Democratic Leader Charles Schumer of New York endorsed the request for an investigation in a joint statement, saying "the facts in this situation are very concerning."

An FBI spokesperson said the agency has no comment on the letter.

The Miami Herald last week published a photo of Yang with Trump at the Super Bowl party and reported on the link between Yang and the spa where New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft was charged with soliciting prostitution. Kraft was charged in late February and has pleaded not guilty.

AP PHOTO



The J. Edgar Hoover FBI building on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington

ity.

Yang, a former owner of the spa, wasn't charged in a multiagency anti-human-trafficking operation that resulted in 25 arrests, including Kraft's, and shut down 10 Asian day spas in South Florida last month. None of the spas is registered to Yang or her family.

A company Yang registered in 2017, GY US Investments LLC, "provides public relations services to assist businesses in America to establish and expand their brand image in the modern Chinese marketplace," according to a translation of the company's now-defunct website, which is mostly in Chinese.

That has included, the website claims, access to presidential dinners and roundtables, White House events, photo opportunities and "VIP" activities including the "opportunity to interact with the president, the Minister of Commerce and other political figures."

The site also featured numerous photographs, including a picture of Trump's Mar-a-Lago club and photographs of Yang with Trump. Yang is described on the website as the company's "Founder CEO," as well as a member of a "Presidential Fundraising Committee" and a "Presidential club member."

The FBI request comes as House Democrats have launched investigations into all aspects of Trump's White House, businesses and foreign financial dealings. Also Monday, a deadline passed for 81 people, businesses and organizations to respond to a broad document request issued by Nadler's Judiciary panel earlier this month.

Without naming names, Nadler said in a statement that the committee has already received "tens of thousands" of documents from "a large number" of recipients. He said some have requested a subpoena before they are comfortable complying.

"It is my hope that we will receive cooperation from the remainder of the list, and will be working to find an appropriate accommodation with any individual who may be reluctant to cooperate with our investigation," Nadler said. AP



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**what's ON**

**ONENESS: CALLIGRAPHY BY PROFESSOR JAO TSUNG-I**

**TIME:** 10am-6pm (No admission after 5:30pm, closed on Mondays)

**UNTIL:** September 30, 2019

**VENUE:** Jao Tsung-I Academy

**ADMISSION:** Free

**ENQUIRIES:** (853) 2852 2523

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**TIME:** 10am-6pm daily (last admission at 5:30pm; closed on Mondays)

**ADDRESS:** Rua Correia da Silva, Taipa

**ADMISSION:** Free

**ENQUIRIES:** (853) 8988 4000

**CELEBRATING LIFE – JU MING LIVING WORLD SCULPTURE SELLING EXHIBITION**

**TIME:** 10:30am-11pm

**Until:** April 7, 2019

**VENUE:** Rippling Gallery, Roaming Gallery, and Floating Gallery, MGM Cotai

**ADMISSION:** Free

**ENQUIRIES:** (853) 8806 8888

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

**TIME:** 10am-7pm (no admittance after 6:30pm; closed on Mondays)

**UNTIL:** April 14, 2019

**VENUE:** Macau Museum of Art

**ADMISSION:** Free

**ENQUIRIES:** (853) 8791 9814

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**Until:** March 31, 2019

**VENUE:** MGM Theatre

**ADMISSION:** MOP388, MOP488, MOP588, MOP988

**ENQUIRIES:** (853) 8802 3833 / 2855 5555 (ticketing)

**Offbeat****CARELESS LOADING OF CARGO CONTAINERS SINKS SHIP IN IRAN PORT**

Iranian state TV says careless loading of cargo has capsized a ship in the southern port of Bandar Abbas, sending port workers scrambling to retrieve any of the 153 containers that were suddenly submerged.

The report says only one Indian seaman aboard the Comoros-owned LS Star was injured in the foot in the incident this week.

Mehdi Haghshenas, deputy chief of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization, told the TV the ship was not being loaded properly and that there was "poor coordination between the ship's first officer and the crane operator" lifting the containers on board.

He says the ship has a 14-member crew, all from India.

There were no further details and there was no immediate estimate of damages.

**TV canal macau**

13:00 TDM News (Repetição)

13:30 Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)

15:00 Água de Mar

15:50 Zig Zag

16:15 Conversa da Treta

16:40 Quem Quer Ser Milionário

17:30 Palcos Agora

18:00 Ministério do Tempo

19:00 TDM Entrevista (Repetição)

19:35 Os Nossos Dias Sr.2

20:30 Telejornal

21:15 Montra do Lilau

21:50 LiteraturAqui

22:15 Network Negócios

23:15 TDM News

23:50 5 Para a Meia-Noite

01:30 Telejornal (Repetição)

02:15 RTPi Directo

**this day in history****2003 US LAUNCHES MISSILES AGAINST SADDAM**

American missiles have hit the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, signalling the start of the US-led campaign to topple Saddam Hussein.

President George Bush delivered a live television address shortly after the bombings began, vowing to "disarm Iraq and to free its people".

The attack was ordered two hours after a final 48-hour deadline expired for Saddam Hussein to leave Iraq.

US sources say five key members of the Iraqi regime, including the Iraqi leader himself, were targeted in the first attacks.

The Iraqis say some non-military targets have been hit and a number of civilians wounded in Doura, a southern suburb of the capital.

The air strikes began at 0534 local time (0234 GMT). A short time later, Iraqi TV broadcast what it said was a live speech by Saddam Hussein.

In it he said: "I don't need to remind you what you should do to defend our country."

"Let the unbelievers go to hell, you will be victorious, Iraqi people."

President Bush played down hopes of an early victory.

In his broadcast to the American people he warned the campaign "could be longer and more difficult than some predict".

He continued: "This will not be a campaign of half measures and we will accept no outcome but victory."

"The dangers to our country and the world will be overcome. We will pass through this time of peril and carry on the work of peace. We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others."

At 2200 GMT British Prime Minister Tony Blair made a live televised address to the nation.

He confirmed British troops were in action in Iraq. He said their purpose was to remove Saddam Hussein and disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction.

The attack has drawn international condemnation and brought demonstrators onto the streets in several countries.

Attempts to get a United Nations Security Council resolution backing a military campaign in Iraq were abandoned earlier in the week when it became clear the US still faced an uphill battle to get the majority it needed.

The French had been pushing for more time to allow Iraq to disarm and today President Jacques Chirac of France expressed regret at the launch of hostilities without UN backing.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said the military action was entirely unjustified, while China said the strike violated the United Nations charter.

Anti-war demonstrations have taken place in cities in Greece, Egypt, Australia and Indonesia.

Courtesy BBC News

**cinema****CINETEATRO**

14 - 20 Mar

**CAPTAIN MARVEL**

ROOM 1

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

**Director:** Anna Boden, Ryan Fleck

**Starring:** Brie Larson, Samuel L. Jackson, Ben Mendelsohn

**Language:** English (Chinese)

**Duration:** 124min

**ESCAPE ROOM**

ROOM 2

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

**Director:** Adam Robitel

**Starring:** Taylor Russell, Logan Miller, Jay Ellis

**Language:** English (Chinese)

**Duration:** 99min

**DRAGON BALL SUPER BROLY**

ROOM 3

2:30, 7:30pm

**Director:** Tatsuya Nagamine

**Starring:** Masako Nozawa, Aya Hisakawa, Ryô Horikawa

**Language:** Japanese (Chinese & English)

**Duration:** 100min

**KAMEN RIDER HEISEI GENERATIONS FPREVER**

ROOM 3

4:30, 9:30pm

**Director:** Kyohei Yamaguchi

**Starring:** Eiji Akaso, Shunsuke Daitô, Nayuta Fukuzaki

**Language:** Japanese (Chinese & English)

**Duration:** 100min

**IN CONTEXT**

The Pentagon called the US air strike against Baghdad a "target of opportunity" - a chance to attack leadership targets in the hope of killing senior Iraqi commanders. It was not the launch of full-scale hostilities. The attack was carried out by F-117 Stealth fighters, but cruise missiles were also fired from four US navy warships and two submarines. The following day (21 March) the US and Britain launched a massive aerial assault on Baghdad in what the US called its "shock and awe" strategy. At the same time, ground forces were advancing into southern Iraq. Iraqi forces resisted the American-led coalition troops until 9 April when a giant statue of the Iraqi leader was toppled by demonstrators in Baghdad but the man himself escaped into hiding. On 15 April a first meeting was held to talk about a new regime in Iraq. The US formally handed over power to the Iraqis on 28 June 2004. Saddam Hussein was captured in December 2003, tried by an Iraqi court, sentenced to death and hanged on 30 December 2006.



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Jim Armstrong, Saitama

**TWO-TIME** Olympic champion Yuzuru Hanyu says he has recovered from an ankle injury and is ready to compete for the title at the world figure skating championships.

"Before the season, I wasn't in what I would say was an ideal 100 percent," Hanyu told a news conference Tuesday, on the eve of the championships. "But I can say I'm 100 percent heading into the world championships and I'm looking forward to competing."

"I've been in this position before where I came back from injury before the Olympics and that was valuable experience that will help."

Hanyu arrived in Japan on a flight from Toronto late Monday accompanied by coach Brian Orser. On Tuesday, he practiced for about 30 minutes at the arena in front a large crowd of fans who applauded every jump he made.

The 24-year-old missed last year's worlds because of injury. He last won the title at the 2017 world championships in Helsinki. His first win was in 2014 at Saitama Super Arena, the same venue as this year's worlds.

After twisting his right ankle in a fall in practice at the Rossette Cup on Nov. 17, Hanyu was told he needed three weeks of rest and one month of reha-

## FIGURE SKATING

# Two-time Olympic champion Yuzuru Hanyu ready for worlds

bilitation to recover from a ligament injury sustained in the fall.

He claimed his second straight Grand Prix series title of the season despite the injury, but was forced to withdraw from the Grand Prix Final and the Japan nationals in December.

Hanyu sustained a similar injury at the 2017 NHK Trophy before making a comeback at last year's Pyeongchang Olympics, where he became the first male figure skater to win consecutive Olympic golds since American Dick Button in 1948 and 1952.

Defending champion Nathan Chen practiced at Saitama Super Arena on Monday and said he had fully recovered from a cold.

Coming off a long break from the U.S. Nationals in January, when he captured his third straight national title, Chen said his plan is pretty much to stick with that program at the worlds.

During the nationals, Chen landed four quad jumps in his free skate routine, one of which

was in combination.

Olympic silver medalist Shoma Uno, the 2018 world championship silver medalist, will also be a medal contender on home ice.

"I'm emphasizing results at a competition for the first time," the 21-year-old Uno said. "I've always tried to perform in a way so I would be satisfied. I didn't really put an emphasis on the results."

Uno heads into the worlds on a high having won the Four Continents last month. In that competition, Uno showed his resolve when he finished fourth in the short program and then won the free skate to claim the overall title. It marked the first time he won a major international competition.

Uno also had an impressive 2018, winning Skate Canada, the NHK Trophy and the Japanese nationals.

The world championships begin with the women's short program today. The men's short program is tomorrow. AP

AP PHOTO



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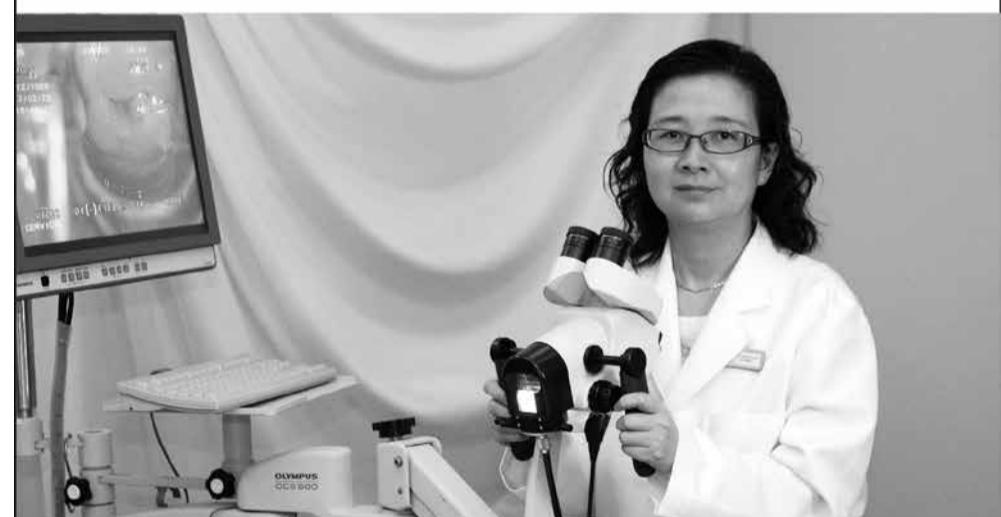
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**Paediatrics :** Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

**Obstetrics & Gynaecology :** Dr. Fong Kuan Io

**Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery :** Dr. Lam U Lin

**Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine :** Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

**ENT :** Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

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**Dietitian :** Chan Lai U Joey

## opinion

### World Views

Faye Flam, Bloomberg Opinion

#### WHEN YOU DIE, IT WON'T BE AN EGG THAT KILLED YOU

When the news broke last week that a new study has nutritionists again claiming eggs are unhealthy, I considered whether I needed to recant a 2016 column. There, I argued that declaring eggs and other real foods unhealthy back in the 1990s had driven people to make poorer food choices. Ditching eggs meant eating more cereal, muffins or oversized bagels with fake cream cheese.

But when I perused the results of the study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, I couldn't see any evidence that eggs are worse than other things Americans tend to eat for breakfast.

The egg study wasn't a controlled experiment but a so-called observational study, in which scientists pooled several studies on a total 30,000 Americans. At the outset, the subjects were polled about what they ate. Then researchers followed them for an average of 17 years to see who got heart disease, and who died. Those who reported at the outset that they ate more than one and a half eggs a day were 17 percent more likely suffer from heart disease than those who ate no eggs.

Knowing what this study reveals won't change what happens when I'm on a road trip and end up in Dunkin' Doughnuts, hungry. I'll get one of the egg sandwiches, and I might still gently suggest to my travel companion that the egg sandwiches are the best options available, even as he insists that the coconut doughnuts must be healthy, because wasn't there some study somewhere extolling the virtues of coconut?

It's worth a close look to see what the egg study actually shows. Science writer Gary Taubes, who has spent years examining the flaws in nutrition science, lays out the problem with this type of study in this 2012 blog post. He focused on the health effects of meat, but the studies he criticizes were constructed much the same way as the new one re-examining eggs.

There are several reasons people who eat less meat would live longer, Taubes argued. One is that more affluent, health-conscious people are more likely to follow multiple health recommendations — including some that are misguided, but also some that work, such as not binge drinking or smoking.

That is, there could be nothing bad about meat and researchers might still get an association between eating lots of it and ending up unhealthy. And so it is with eggs, which were still widely considered unhealthy 17 years ago, when the study subjects were asked about their diets.

Even now, if I step into that other ubiquitous American breakfast stop — Starbucks — what I want is a breakfast burrito with vegetables. But you can't get that. If you want the one with the spinach instead of some kind of processed meat, you can only get egg whites. So veggie lovers end up skipping the egg yolks, and we may be healthier because veggies are good, not because egg yolks are bad.

Despite my persistent skepticism over these egg scares, I myself would have to report that I eat at most three or four eggs a week.

In the daily life of most Americans, the alternatives to eggs and bacon are probably cereal, pancakes with syrup, doughnuts, pastries or maybe oatmeal. What we really need is a study showing what the death rate is from eating, say, three or more doughnuts a week.

There was a study published just last month that lead to the claim that eating processed foods — including cereal — would kill you. This latter study was constructed in a similar way to the egg study, so it's yet to be determined what's causing the processed food-eaters to die earlier. But I consider it good reason to hesitate before switching from eggs to Frosted Flakes.

[Abridged]

#### THE BUZZ POPE NIXES FRENCH CARDINAL RESIGNATION AFTER COVER-UP

Pope Francis has declined to accept the resignation of French Cardinal Philippe Barbarin as archbishop of Lyon after he was convicted of failing to report a known predator priest to police, the Vatican said yesterday.

Barbarin had traveled to the Vatican this week to present his resignation following the March 7 verdict and six-month suspended sentence he received.

The Vatican spokesman, Alessandro Gisotti, said

that during the audience, Francis didn't accept the resignation and instead asked Barbarin to do what he thinks is best for the archdiocese. Barbarin has decided to take time away and has asked his deputy in Lyon, the Rev. Yves Baumgartner, to assume leadership of the archdiocese, Gisotti said.

"The Holy See repeats its closeness to victims of abuse, to the faithful of the archdiocese of Lyon and the French church who are living in a particularly difficult moment," Gisotti said.

SOURCE: DSMG

Station	Air quality
Roadside	40-60 Good 
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Good 
Ambient	40-60 Good 

#### WORLD BRIEFS



**BRAZIL** The Brazilian leader who has been dubbed the "Trump of the Tropics" is ready for his first White House visit. Trump will meet today [Macau time] with Brazil's new president, the hard-right Jair Bolsonaro (pictured).



**KAZAKHSTAN** President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the only leader that independent Kazakhstan has ever known, abruptly announced his resignation yesterday after three decades in power, raising uncertainty over the future course of the Central Asian country.



**NETHERLANDS** Investigators probing the deadly tram shooting in the Dutch city of Utrecht sharpened their focus yesterday on a possible extremist motive, as judicial authorities revealed that the main suspect was released from jail this month and faces a rape trial in July.



**MOZAMBIQUE** Rapidly rising floodwaters have created "an inland ocean" endangering scores of thousands of families, aid workers as they scrambled to rescue survivors of Cyclone Idai who clung to rooftops and trees. Hundreds were dead, many more were missing and thousands were at risk in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi.

## Macao Arts festival to present classic performances in May

THE 30th Macao Arts Festival will be held in May with the theme "a tribute to classics," presenting a variety of performances and outreach activities.

Organized by the Cultural Affairs Bureau, this year's festival will kick off with the performance "Vertikal," jointly produced by French choreographer Mourad Merzouki and hip-hop troupe CCN Créteil & Val-de-Marne / Cie Käfig.

During the performance, 10 dancers perform in the air with the support of ropes, generating choreographic elements and producing contemporary hip-hop sequences.

The dance show "Rain" by Belgian choreographer Anne

Teresa De Keersmaeker and her dance company Rosas, in collaboration with contemporary musician Steve Reich, will be performed in Macau 18 years after its debut.

To commemorate the 120th anniversary of the birth of Lao She, the play "Mr. Ma and Son," adapted from Lao She's classic novel, will be presented with a combination of Beijing-style wit and English humour, reflecting on the exchange and collision between Chinese and Western cultures.

The play "Karl Valentin Kabarett" by Teatro do Elétrico from Portugal includes several short pieces written by Karl Valentin, a leading comedian who is hailed as

the "Charlie Chaplin of Germany," and will be brought to the city as a theatrical performance featuring music, dance and drama.

This year, the festival is presenting a special closing performance, "The Soul of Macao." The Cantonese opera was adapted by national first-class playwright Li Xinhua from an original play written by a Macao writer, is jointly presented by actors from Macau and the Foshan Cantonese Opera Troupe.

The closing performance celebrates the 10th anniversary of the inscription of Cantonese opera on the "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity". LV

**THE DECISIVE MOMENT**

Ignacio Marin/Bloomberg

Venezuela. In the Caracas slums that loved Chavez, Maduro is now despised on the walls.