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A LEAP OF FAITH

Coutinho counts on Chui to pass trade union bill

P5 MDT REPORT

WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA-MONACO

Chinese President Xi Jinping has found one country in Europe that isn't worried about China's growing global clout or its ambitions to dominate the future of technology: Monaco.
More on p10



TAIWAN For officials in Beijing looking for a Taiwanese presidential candidate who improves the island's fraught ties with the mainland, Han Kuo-yu (pictured) is saying all the right things. The question is whether he runs. More on p11



USA Vice President Pence is claiming that special counsel Robert Mueller has delivered "total vindication" of President Trump. Pence said that despite the two-year Russia investigation and "reckless accusations" Mueller confirmed "there was no collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia during the 2016 election." More on p14-15

More on backpage



COLOANE

Gov't to act and collect on parked trailers

P3 MDT EXCLUSIVE

Six tropical cyclones to affect Macau in 2019

This year there will be between four and six tropical cyclones affecting the Macau territory, according to the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG). These tropical cyclones will be within a range of 800 kilometers from Macau. Strong typhoons might occur, according to the SMG's prediction. The first tropical cyclone to affect Macau will hit the city sometime in the middle of June, while the typhoon season is expected to last until October. The SMG further predicts that precipitation levels between April and September will be normal to slightly above average.

Macau Taxi to run another 200 taxis

Macau Taxi has won the concession to operate an additional 200 special taxis, according to a dispatch published in the Official Gazette. Currently, the company already operates 100 special taxis. These vehicles are all mobile-hailing based taxis. Like the previous fleet of 100 taxis, the concession for the new fleet of 200 vehicles is also eight years. The company is allowed to operate this batch of 200 taxis separately. Moreover, the company expects to put these taxis on the roads within half a year after the company signs contracts with the local government.

IAS provides further instant sign language translation

The Social Affairs Bureau (IAS) is providing sign language translation at 20 of its service points. Deaf and hearing-impaired people who visit these IAS offices can receive instant video sign language translation through tablets installed inside the offices. The service results from a cooperative partnership between the IAS and the Macau Deaf Association. There are approximately 3,000 deaf and hearing-impaired people in Macau. The demand for sign language interpreters is high, according to the IAS, and, in the near future, the bureau will provide training to relevant personnel.

RENATO MARQUES



PSP spokesperson Lai In Hong

CRIME

Mother assaulted by son over household chores

Renato Marques

A 53-year-old mother was assaulted by her own son after an argument over household chores, the Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesperson reported yesterday during the joint press conference of the police forces, held on the Public Security Police Force (PSP) premises.

The crime occurred at 3 a.m. on March 20 and was initiated when the mother, a croupier, arrived home from work and, before heading to her room to rest, requested her 29-year-old son help with the laundry by taking dirty clothes to the washing machine.

The son, who was playing a video game, was annoyed by the interruption and the request of his mother, and although obliged made a lot of noise and threw several objects, such as an air conditioning remote control, to the floor.

Alerted by the noise, the mother rushed to the living room and the argument heated up. The son then picked up a wooden chair and hit his mother's head and body several times while she was trying to run away and find shelter in her bedroom.

A few minutes after the attack, the son regretted his behavior and excused himself to his mother, taking her to the public hospital so she could be seen and cared for by a physician.

Acknowledging the situation, the physician at the hospital, according to procedures in force, flagged the case as "domestic violence" and alerted the police authorities.

Receiving the case from the PSP, the PJ questioned the suspect who admitted the crime and was transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) on March 25 under the charge of domestic violence.

PASSENGER ASSAULTS BUS DRIVER

A dissatisfied passenger engaged in a fistfight that sent a bus driver to hospital, PSP spokesperson Lai In Hong revealed yesterday.

The case occurred on Sunday afternoon at the Border Gate bus terminal but was said to have started earlier when the passenger boarded the bus at Rua do Visconde de Paço de Arcos, in front of Ponte 16.

According to the suspect, he was disgruntled due to the fact

that he had to run to catch a bus that was already closing the door on him. After entering the bus, the passenger engaged in a verbal discussion with the driver, who ignored him for the rest of the trip. Upon arrival at the Border Gate bus terminus and before leaving the bus, the passenger approached the driver and assaulted him, throwing about 10 punches, according to the police.

The driver had to receive treatment at the hospital as a consequence of the assault.

Questioned by the PSP, the suspect said he assaulted the driver because he was angry and claimed to have also been harmed by the driver who punched him, despite refusing to go to the hospital to have his alleged injuries checked.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE SCAMS PERSIST

The PJ spokesperson revealed yesterday that the police force has identified another case of a currency exchange scam over the last few days.

The crime occurred on March 20 and involved two mainland residents - a 28-year-old male and a female aged 34, the suspect in this case.

According to the report, the man wanted to exchange RMB100,000 into HKD140,000 to gamble and agreed on the deal with the woman.

He performed a banking transfer to her via mobile phone, after which the suspect claimed to have to go to the toilet.

The victim waited and, after she came out of the toilet, the suspect said she had already completed the exchange via another transfer. However, the victim did not receive any confirmation of such activity.

They then engaged in an argument and the victim requested help from the casino security to detain the woman until the arrival of the authorities.

According to the PJ spokesperson, the woman refused to cooperate with the police, and would not admit to the crime. Following analysis by the force, the PJ found evidence that the man transferred the specified sum to the woman, while the woman has no record of the having transferred any money back to the man.

The force therefore says that there is enough evidence to forward the case to the MP to charge the woman.

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF (DIRECTOR) Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
ACTING MANAGING EDITOR Daniel Beitler daniel@macaudailytimes.com
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Eric Sautedé, Leanda Lee, Severo Portela

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Emilie Tran, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Julie Zhu, Juliet Risdon, Linda Kennedy, Lynzy Valles, Paulo Barbosa, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Viviana Segui
DESIGNERS Eva Bucho, Miguel Bandeira | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES Associated Press, Bloomberg, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua
SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

SEND NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION AND PRESS RELEASES TO: NEWSROOM@MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM WEBSITE: WWW.MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM.MO

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

SECRETARY Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

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SPECIAL REPORT

Obstructive truck trailers to be removed, sold by the gov't

Renato Marques

RESIDENTS have been complaining for some time about the frequent, obstructive and disrespectful parking of truck trailers in many streets in the surroundings of Concordia Industrial Park in Coloane.

On a visit to the location, the Times observed a significant number of these vehicles parked, some of them reportedly for long periods on streets and areas where parking, and

even stopping, is forbidden.

The authorities have been contacted regarding the case, however answers have not been forthcoming. After almost a month the Transport Bureau (DSAT) has finally acknowledged the questions, replying, "we have reinforced our joint operation with the Public Security Police Force (PSP) in removing the truck trailers."

The DSAT further explained to the Times that "these removed trailers will be subjected to the same procedures

as abandoned vehicles, which will mean that if they are not reclaimed by their owners within the legal period, they will be reverted to the government and sold in public auctions by the Financial Services Bureau."

Asked about the apparent lack of use of several parking areas nearby that are specially designed for heavy vehicles - and despite the alleged need for such spaces - the DSAT would make no speculations about the cause for their underuse.

"We make no assumptions about the reasons that the parking places specially designed and assigned to heavy vehicles are not in use. Meanwhile, we will continue to look for spaces suitable for solving the parking problems of the sector."

Questioned by the Times on the same issues, the PSP responded: "Regarding the illegal parking situation of the trailers, we have followed up on it proactively and have communicated with the other departments including the Customs Service

and the Transport Bureau."

"We will update the information of the relevant trailers and their owners regularly so that our Traffic Department can follow up and handle the situation more effectively in the future," added the PSP.

The police authorities also revealed plans to "convene a meeting and coordinate the four parties proactively, [namely the police force,] the transport sector, the Customs Service and the Transport Bureau, and formulate a suitable proposal in relation to the issues of trailers, including their entry and departure from Macau, their registration number plate, the set-up of a legal parking area, etc. in order to solve the problem."

It is important to note that several accidents have, in the past, occurred involving parked truck trailers, some with deadly consequences.

Almost 75,000 vehicles with unpaid Road Tax



A total of 74,721 vehicles, accounting for approximately 31 percent of the total Macau fleet, have not yet settled their Road Tax payment for 2019, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) revealed in a statement.

Acknowledging the situation, the DSAT urged the vehicles owners to settle the tax as soon as possible, as the payment deadline is just a week away on April 1.

In the same statement,

the DSAT warned owners that fines will be imposed if the Road Tax is not settled before the due date, also reminding all vehicle owners that all traffic-related fines issued by the Public Security Police Force need to be settled before the payment of the tax. To proceed with the payment, owners can go to the DSAT service areas, to the Financial Services Bureau service center or to any of

the 130 branches of the Macau Post, as well to the branches of nine banking institutions. The DSAT also took the opportunity to remind all owners that those who have paid electronically on the website or through the mobile application of DSAT need to collect the tax disc, at the DSAT service area until noon on March 28 or at self-print kiosks up until 6 p.m. on April 1. **RM**



New measure for Filipino migrant workers sparks backlash

Lynzy Valles

A new requirement from the Philippine government being asked of overseas Filipino workers has sparked frustration amongst the community, who are complaining that it has taken effect too suddenly.

The new measure, controlling the ability to acquire an Overseas Employment Certificate (OEC) - a clearance issued to overseas workers - requires Philippine workers to present a contract verified by the consulate, along with an addendum that requires the employers to cover the cost of repatriation in case of death.

Although the new guidelines, issued last week, are only applicable to new workers vacationing for the first time, and to those who have changed employment on-site, a number of migrants consider the transition a hassle, with

some having been threatened with termination.

"We have received news from concerned Filipino workers that they heard of employers terminating their workers, allegedly due to the new measure. We, however, to date have not received any direct information or complaints coming from a terminated worker," the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in the SAR, led by Ramon Pastrana, said.

Under the regulations of the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA), migrant workers undergo an official process to safeguard the rights and protection of these employees - contrary to what usually occurs in the SAR as most workers find employment while on tourist visas.

Thus, POLO clarified that Philippine rules and regulations mandate that Filipinos

wishing to work overseas need to process their employment documentation with the POEA before departing abroad.

However, the office admitted that it is not easy to fulfill the requirements.

There are several reports of migrant workers being threatened with termination allegedly because of the new measure

"Some of these requirements, like a photocopy of an employer's ID and other information, do not sit well with some

employers because of privacy concerns," Pastrana's office explained.

"To ensure that the harmonious relationship between the employer and worker is maintained, we explain to them that these requirements help us check on the authenticity of the employer's signature on the contract and the basic contact details also assist in coordinating matters involving employer-employee relations," it added.

As of Sunday, POLO has received a total of 130 requests for verification since the new measure was implemented.

Jassy Santos, president of the Progressive Labor Union of Domestic Workers, lamented that the only problem in the new legislation is that domestic workers do not have a copy of their contract, nor a standard contract.

Although the consulate provides the standard contract

that is found on the website of the Labour Affairs Bureau, she said that not all employers are willing to sign.

"Just today [yesterday], two compatriots texted me saying that they are having a hard time to come back here because their OEC was not verified, while I am also aware of a case where a worker was terminated because of the new measure," she said.

Santos also said that the memo was put in place immediately, without consultation with them, noting that not all employers are willing to sign the addendum.

"This measure will protect us but there was also no consultation. I believe the consulate also thinks that it [the memo] occurred [fast]," Santos explained.

Not all migrant workers are being provided with medical insurance - which is also needed as one of the requirements; and if it is being provided, it usually does not cover the cost of repatriation in the case of death.

Meanwhile, POLO is studying how to assist workers without the risk of being laid off, treating the cases individually.

AVIATION

Macau Airport Company participates in Asia forum

REPRESENTATIVES from the Macau International Airport Company limited (CAM) recently attended the 17th 2019 Routes Asia Forum in Cebu.

Eric Fong, director, and Franco Kwan, deputy director of Marketing Department, participated in the forum.

The three-day forum was hosted by the Phil-

ippine Tourism Authority, attracting over 1,000 representatives including over 100 airlines, 200 airports and 30 national tourism authorities around the world.

The Annual Routes Asia Forum is regarded as one of the most important events in the civil aviation industry, CAM noted in a statement.

During the forum, Turkish Airlines expressed their intention to establish a route to Macau next year with the aim of developing Asian cities, but for now, the aircraft capacity is being deployed to the regional routes.

CAM noted that a number of Southeast Asian airlines also intend to operate flight

services in Macau in the near future.

In addition, meetings were also carried out with Chubu Centrair International Airport, Sendai International Airport, Mumbai International Airport, Sydney Airport and Melbourne Airport representatives to explore route cooperation opportunities.

According to CAM, the forum also provided an industry platform for the Macau International Airport (MIA) to communicate with aviation operators around the world to seek cooperation opportunities for future route development and helped to further consolidate and expand the flight service network of MIA.

During the three-day forum, CAM representatives participated in over 20 meetings with various prospective airlines, airports and tourism organizations.

In the forum, one-on-one meetings were arranged with various airlines and airports to explore business opportunities and to provide an overview of MIA. **LV**

RENATO MARQUES



Pereira Coutinho

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Fate of trade union bill number 10 lies with Chui

Daniel Beitler

THE most divisive law proposal of the post-handover period is making its way back to the Legislative Assembly where it will once again mean trouble for the usually-harmonious voices of the establishment.

No other bill generates as much fervent interest from Macau's rubber-stamp parliament than the trade union and collective bargaining bill.

Introduced about once a year, the coming of the bill signals a brief lapse in the bipartisan entrenchments of pan-democrat against pan-establishment. Instead, the democrats find themselves in an awkward alliance with the worker representatives, who are together pitted against the business interests of the legislature.

The law proposal has been voted down nine times at the Legislative Assembly, with the last two readings tallying 12 votes in favor and 15 against on each occasion.

As the latest installment in the trade union bill saga unfolds, one unlikely player to watch is incumbent and outgoing Chief Executive Chui Sai On, who, via his seven appointed legislators,

alone wields the influence to greenlight the proposal.

LEAVING A LEGACY

The bill's most recent reading, a matter of weeks after the September 2017 Legislative Assembly elections, denied proponents' hopes that the new legislative makeup would be enough to tip the scales in their favor.

As in the previous iteration of the Legislative Assembly, the sixth legislature hosts a total of four pro-democrat lawmakers likely to side with the bill, with New Macau's Sulu Sou replacing Pereira Coutinho's lieutenant, Leong Veng Chai of New Hope.

Newcomer Agnes Lam, who claims to represent the 'middle ground' in Macau politics, sided with the bill in its most recent reading, as did workers' representative Leong Sun Iok, also elected for the first time. Pro-business lawmaker Melinda Chan lost her seat in the 2017 election, weakening the bill's opposition and closing the gap between the two camps.

Spearheading the proposal for his sixth time, lawmaker Pereira Coutinho says he cannot rely only on directly-elected

lawmakers, the majority of whom are already on board with a trade union and collective bargaining bill.

Instead, he will seek to convince Chief Executive Chui Sai On - who once represented workers in the Legislative Assembly - to instruct the government-appointed lawmakers to support the bill.

"We don't expect any support from the business representatives at the Legislative Assembly, and it will be very difficult without the Chief Executive giving these instructions [to the appointed lawmakers]," Coutinho told the Times in an interview yesterday. But in doing so, Chui "will leave a positive mark on the people and the future of Macau."

WRONG SIDE OF HISTORY

"The right and freedom to form and join trade unions" is enshrined in Article 27 of Macau's Basic Law, and the Special Administrative Region is party to several international conventions that make it mandatory to recognize such a right. For long-time political analyst Eric Sautedé, the absence of a trade union law is a de jure violation of

Macau's mini-constitution.

"I don't think we are at the tipping point," confesses Sautedé, who is also the director of development for China Labour Bulletin, a non-governmental organization promoting workers' rights on the mainland. "The democratically-elected lawmakers are mostly in favor as they have to be accountable [to the public] and that makes it very difficult not to support this bill. But all the others are against it and I don't see that changing."

Asked about Coutinho's plan to enlist the support of the outgoing Chief Executive, Sautedé suggested that, given his history of association with the workers' electoral list, should Chui "not want to support this bill, maybe he will be seen as on the wrong side of history."

The political analyst also believes Agnes Lam will continue to side with the democrats. That is notwithstanding last week's spat with Coutinho when the latter accused Lam of inconsistencies between her spoken enquiries and voting pattern. On the matter, Coutinho said that he couldn't be sure Lam would support the proposal.

ADVERTORIAL

GREAT TIMES

A Tempting Taste of Thailand

MENTION Thai cuisine and everyone can immediately imagine their favorite dish. And no wonder, as it's one of the most popular cuisines in the world. For some, it's the spicy tangy tom yum kung. For others, it's a hearty plate of pad thai. And for many more, it's the exotic green curry. Sweet, sour, salty, bitter and spicy flavors work together to add its own zing and zip to each dish.

As much as we know what to order in a Thai restaurant, how many of us know the origin of Thai cuisine? It actually has a history that's as fascinating as it is delicious.

Thai cuisine can be traced back to the people who first emigrated from southern Chinese provinces many centuries ago. The cuisine's other influences include India, the southern Muslim states, as well as Europe through contact with Dutch traders, and even Japan. We have Portuguese missionaries to thank for the Thai hallmark spiciness - they introduced chilies to the region in the late 1600s.

It's these multi-cultural influences that have perfected Thai cuisine as we know it. And this is something Chef Somprasong Jeenmahan understands very well, as his career seems to echo the history of his nation's cuisine. At just the tender age of 29, Chef Somprasong has shaped his culinary talents by working in numerous restaurants across the region, picking up a myriad of appetizing influences along the way. He was most recently the Executive Chef of the famous Rama V Fine Thai Cuisine in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. Before that, he worked at a variety of restaurants and hotels, where he honed his culinary skill and creativity. His passion for cooking shines through, and is the reason why he has garnered an impressive number of awards like the Maggi Most Outstanding Greenhorn Chef, Star Cruises Most Outstanding Live Cooking Greenhorn Chef and The Best Champion Thai Food Go To The World.



Of course, the proof is in the eating. And in the case of Chef Somprasong, he will be here in Macau to showcase the skill and talent that have earned him his many awards and accolades. From March 29 to 31, visit Rossio at MGM MACAU as Chef Somprasong serves up an authentic Thai-themed dinner buffet. Dishes include his specialties like larb moo (spicy pork salad), chicken hot basil and green beef cheek curry. There will also be a som tum (green papaya salad) live cooking station, where Chef Somprasong might just be there in person to prepare one of Thailand's most popular salads.

Don't miss this delicious and authentic Thai buffet dinner at Rossio at MGM MACAU. Priced at MOP450 per person, the buffet will be held every night from March 29 to 31 from 6 to 11pm. For enquiries and reservations, please call 88022372.



DANIEL BEITLER



MGTO studies tourist taxes as seen in Venice, Japan

THE Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) is studying tourist taxes in Venice and Japan as research references for a similar scheme to be implemented in Macau.

Yesterday, MGTO Director Helena Maria de Senna Fernandes revealed that the bureau is comparing these two places, among others, which charge a tourism tax, to further studies on a scheme proposed for Macau.

However, the MGTO head explained that a tourism tax is not a topic to be considered by solely the city's tou-

risms authority. The tax itself is complicated and requires deeper research and analysis. The study results will be later delivered to other relevant governmental departments for further consideration.

"We don't have a timetable yet, but I don't think it will take too long," said Senna Fernandes. "Different types of tourism taxes have different reasons, with effects also being different."

However, unlike in other jurisdictions, Senna Fernandes insisted that a potential tax on tourists is not being considered as a means to re-

duce the number of people coming to the Macau SAR. In recent months, several lawmakers have expressed concerns over a growing phenomenon described as 'over-tourism'.

Contrary to popular opinion, the tourism authority leader explained that in some cities where such a tax exists, the move was implemented to improve urban development, not to reduce the number of tourists. However, whether such a tourism tax in Macau will have the same effect still needs to be studied.

Earlier this year, lawmaker Agnes Lam proposed that the government establish a tourism tax, and that the tax revenue should be used to finance the tourism police and for maintaining community and tourism resources.

In October last year, Kyoto in Japan officially imposed an accommodation tax on tourists, becoming the first Japanese city to do so. The tax will be used to improve traffic conditions along sightseeing spots, to set guiding signs, to improve restrooms and to maintain the historical landscape. **JZ**

Kaohsiung signs food contracts with local buyers

THE visiting delegation from the southern Taiwanese city of Kaohsiung has signed contracts for USD23.3 million worth of agricultural and fishery products with buyers from the SAR, Secretary for Economy and Finance Lionel Leong announced.

According to Leong, 49 companies from Macau and Kaohsiung signed 27 long-term contracts, with a total value of MOP188 million.

The products ordered by the SAR's supermarkets and food suppliers include fish, pineapples and other agricultural specialties of Kaohsiung.

The contracts were signed during a promotional event at-

tended by Leong and Kaohsiung Mayor Daniel Han Kuo-yu, who led the municipal delegation visiting Macau on Saturday after his trip to the Hong Kong SAR (more on p11).

On Saturday, the Chief Executive, Chui Sai and Han exchanged views on promoting trade, and cultural and tourism activities.

Han believed that there was potential for cooperation between Kaohsiung and Macau, especially regarding exports of Kaohsiung's agricultural products.

The mayor said he hoped to enhance trade with Macau and promote tourism and cultural cooperation between the two cities. **LV**

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THE Shenzhen Urban Transport Planning Center is allegedly developing a maglev train that can reach speeds of up to 600 kilometers per hour, according to reports by Hong Kong media.

Earlier last week, the First Workshop on Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area Maglev and Advanced Rail Transit Development was held at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

During the workshop, the Shenzhen center informed that it is studying the construction of high-speed maglev test lines in Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and

China said to be developing maglev for Greater Bay

other Greater Bay cities.

The train is said to directly reach other Greater Bay cities in half an hour and to promote resource interaction within the region.

The center's director, Zhang Xiaochun, said that the maglev test lines in the study will connect to Guangzhou airport, Guangzhou central district, Nansha Free trade zone, Shenzhen airport, and

Hong Kong airport. The goal is to establish China's first high-speed maglev intercity line, according to Zhang.

In response to media enquiries, Hong Kong's transport and housing bureau said that it is paying close attention to the long-term cross-boundary transport arising from the development of the Greater Bay Area.

The Hong Kong authority further noted that, when considering new cross-border infrastructures, the impact on passenger traffic and financial performance posed by the Hong Kong section of the high-speed rail and by the existing cross-boundary railways should be measured as well.

The maglev train is also one of the key research and develop-

ment projects of the national science and technology ministry's 13th five-year plan.

In 2020, a pilot 600 kilometer per hour maglev train is expected to start operation.

As of today, Macau has only been connected to mainland China in terms of the railway system through the train network in Zhuhai. **JZ**

SHENZHEN

Tech hub uses helicopters for road accident rescue

TRAFFIC police in the city of Shenzhen, southern China's Guangdong Province, said that they have established a helicopter rescue team for major traffic accidents.

The team now has nine helicopters from a local helicopter company. The number will increase to 14 by the end of the year.

The Shenzhen municipal traffic police bureau said

they will mobilize the choppers to assist with road accidents involving heavy casualties when it is difficult for rescuers on the ground to reach the site.

The bureau said the helicopters will be equipped with medical equipment and medical staff during rescue operations. The transportation will be free of charge in life-threatening situations.

The bureau and the helicopter company will also share data on black spots on highways and remote mountain roads to further enhance the efficiency of helicopter rescue.

On Feb. 15, traffic police in Shenzhen used a helicopter to transport two injured people in a road accident from Heyuan, another city in Guangdong, to Shenzhen. **Xinhua**

GUANGZHOU

3D-printed electrical room starts operation

A power distribution room built with 3D printing technology has started operation in Guangzhou, capital of southern China's Guangdong Province.

The electrical room, the first of its kind nationwide, measures 12.1 meters long, 4.5 meters wide and 4.6 meters high. It was built using a 3D printer according to a digital 3D model,

said Wu Xiaofei with the power supply bureau in Guangzhou.

Wu said construction of the room started last December and took a total of 35 days to complete, cutting the normal construction time by 30 percent.

The printer only required one operator and two other workers to assist with the printing, while manual construction of the

room usually requires more than five workers, he added.

Besides, the printer reduced the dust and waste produced during the construction.

3D printing technology will be used as an efficient, intelligent and eco-friendly way for construction as Guangzhou is ramping up efforts to expand its power supply networks, Wu said. **Xinhua**

AD



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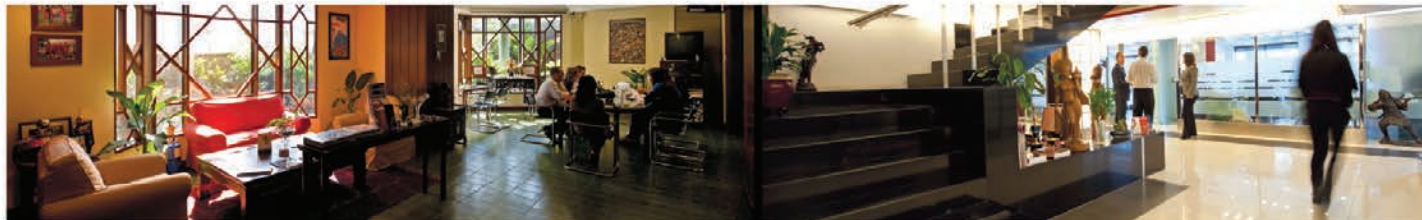
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China has a lot of financial opening up to do, says central bank

THE openness of China's financial markets to the rest of the world isn't high, so there's a lot of room for increased access, according to People's Bank of China Governor Yi Gang.

Yi said foreign financial services institutions should be treated the same as domestic ones in terms of shareholding proportions, scope of business and licenses. Speaking at a forum in Beijing on Sunday, he said the central bank will focus on providing more hedging tools in 2019 to help investors manage risks.

Officials made repeated pledges at the China Development Forum over the weekend to open up more of the economy to foreign companies and ensure a level playing field with domestic firms. The government is also seeking to bring foreign expertise and capital into play at a time of slowing economic growth, high debt levels and concerns about long-term financial stability.

"We need to improve the financial risk prevention mechanism in line with financial opening-up. The opening of the financial



Yi Gang, governor of the People's Bank of China

sector isn't the origin of financial risks, but the opening could add to the complexity of risk control," Yi said. He also promised to help people hedge their money in Chinese markets, something that foreign companies and investors have been asking for.

"An important task for this year is to study how capital markets can more accurately determine prices, supply sufficient types of

hedging tools so that all types of investors can more effectively manage risks," Yi said. He added that increasing the type of financial instruments available enables optimization of asset allocation.

The Chinese currency is a topic in the ongoing trade talks with the U.S., with the Trump administration concerned about Beijing's potential devaluation

to blunt the impact of tariffs. According to Yi, a flexible currency exchange rate is a "complementary" step in China's opening as it helps absorb risks. Top officials have previously promised that they won't use manipulation of the yuan to gain a trade advantage.

"The central bank has already withdrawn from day-to-day interventions and now more and

more market participants are getting used to a flexible exchange rate," Yi said, repeating an earlier pledge on exchange-rate reform.

Also at the weekend, top officials pledged to lower tariffs and expedite debt sales in 2019 as they seek to manage the economic slowdown while tackling the standoff with the U.S. Vice Premier Han Zheng said the government will continue to cut import taxes and create a first-rate environment for foreign businesses, though he didn't add details on tariff cuts.

The government will speed up bond sales and the use of the funding to boost domestic demand, Finance Minister Liu Kun said at the same event.

"Fiscal policy will play a bigger role in supporting the real economy" in spite of slowing revenue growth, Liu said, repeating a plan to reduce taxes and fees by at least two trillion yuan (USD298 billion) this year. About 70 percent of the planned cuts will come from taxes while the rest from lower social security premiums and other fee reductions, he said. **Bloomberg**

Fake Chinese range rovers barred in rare mainland court victory

A Chinese court ordered a local carmaker to stop selling a copycat version of the Range Rover Evoque in China, a rare legal victory for foreign companies locked in intellectual property disputes with local firms.

The Beijing court also ordered Jiangling Motors Corp. to immediately stop making the Landwind X7 after finding it copied five unique features from the Evoque, manufacturer Jaguar Land Rover Automotive Plc

said in a statement.

The Beijing Chaoyang District Court also ruled that Jaguar Land Rover be paid compensation, the company said, without giving an amount. A representative for Jiangling had no immediate comment.

China's treatment of foreign intellectual property has been a key component of trade talks with the U.S., which is sending negotiators to Beijing for another round of discussions this week.

Jaguar Land Rover, owned by Indian conglomerate Tata Group, had accused Jiangling of a "copy-and-paste" job after the Landwind was unveiled in 2014.

Jaguar Land Rover said Friday's court decision was the "first such case to support a foreign company in the car industry" and would strengthen its confidence in investing in China.

Overseas carmakers in-

cluding Honda Motor Co. and Porsche Automobil Holding SE have long complained their designs have been knocked off by Chinese rivals. Honda failed in a Chinese lawsuit in 2004 after accusing Shuanghuan Auto of copying the CR-V model.

The same year, Honda won a court ruling stopping a Chinese company from selling Hongda brand motorbikes. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

MELCO GREEN WEEK RAISES ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS



Melco Resorts & Entertainment has hosted a series of green-related events to raise environmental awareness in the community, targeting both employees and members of the wider local community.

Internally, during 'Melco Green Week', the company collaborated with The Salvation Army to host an environ-

mental awareness roadshow featuring game booths at employee Heart of House areas across City of Dreams, Studio City and Altira Macau, as well as at the company's offices at Flower City. Close to 250 colleagues were introduced to the concept of 'Recycling, Sharing and Connecting with the Com-

munity', and donated to the organization.

Externally, at a separate event held at Jardim Areia Preta, 600 pot plants grown with organic fertilizer mixed with compost processed by Melco's food waste decomposers were gifted to members of the community who brought along goods for recycling.

Another event to combat single use plastics saw the company host a DIY workshop dedicated to creating reusable cup holders with Fu Hong Society and attended by a more than 20 Melco volunteers and beneficiaries.

Furthermore, 250 plants dismantled from Melco's butterfly-themed display at Tap Seac Square were donated to various local NGOs and their beneficiaries.

'SUNCITY GROUP PRESENTS ALONG WITH EKIN LIVE CONCERT 2019' AT VENETIAN MACAO



Accomplished Hong Kong singer and actor Ekin Cheng will perform at The Venetian Macao's Cotai Arena on April

20 for "Suncity Group Presents Along with Ekin Live Concert 2019 Macao." The concert will see

Cheng share the highlights from his career to entertain his fans. He will sing his classic songs featuring exciting new orchestral arrangement and dramatic moments, bringing memories to life and happiness – the theme of the tour – to the audience.

Cheng returns to the stage for his concert tour after seven years. At the Macau concert he will delight fans with performances of much-loved hits including "Love You in My Lifetime", "Thankful We Met" and "Till the End of the World". He will also bring songs from the "Young and Dangerous" movie series which made him a star, such as "Willing to Replace You" and "Age Friendship".

Tickets go on sale starting today at all Cotai Ticketing box offices.

DIPLOMACY

Xi visits Monaco amid European 5G tech worries

Angela Charlton & Milos Krivokapic, Monaco

AP PHOTO

CHINESE President Xi Jinping has found one country in Europe that isn't worried about China's growing global clout or its ambitions to dominate the future of technology: Monaco.

Xi visited the tiny Mediterranean principality Sunday as part of a European tour that is clouded by mixed feelings about how to engage with China and benefit from its trade — while setting limits on its appetite for greater economic and diplomatic influence.

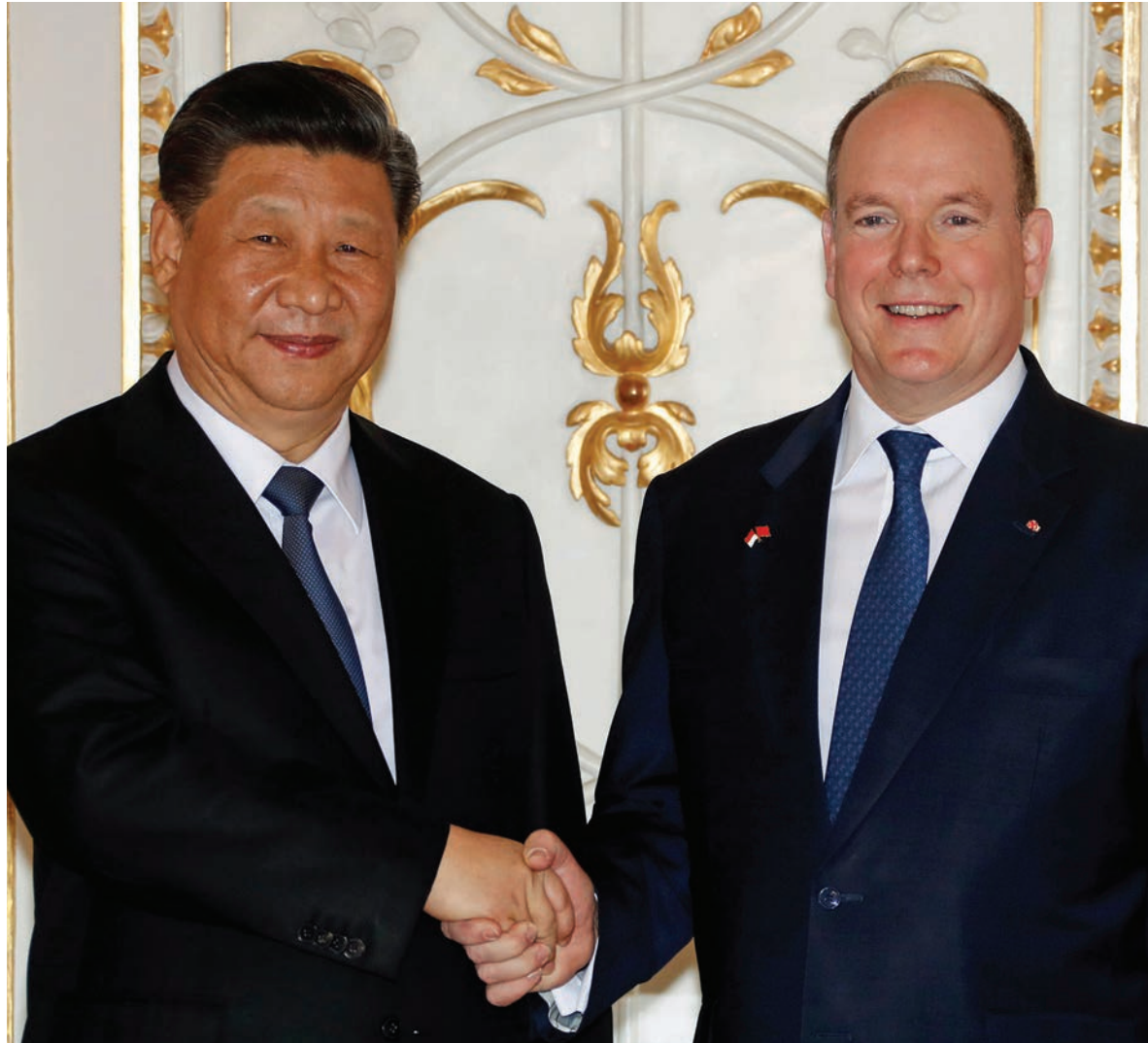
Xi's appearance alongside Monaco's Prince Albert and Princess Charlene marked the first state visit by a Chinese president to the principality. The palace said Monaco is interested in increased trade and economic cooperation with China and "boosting China's image in the principality."

Monaco last year clinched a deal with Chinese tech company Huawei to develop its 5G telecommunications network — a thorny issue for several European countries.

The U.S. government says Huawei's 5G network could give Chinese security services a backdoor to spy on consumers, and has pressed European partners to shun it. Huawei says the fear is unfounded.

Monaco imposed exceptional security for the Chinese visitors: The entire "Rocher" — the nickname for the cliff that Monaco is perched on — was effectively shut down for the day.

"It's the first time I've seen this [...] stores closed, windows shuttered, no one in the street," said Marc Bonafede, owner of



President Xi Jinping and Prince Albert II of Monaco

Le Castellet restaurant in front of the palace. He said he hadn't seen such heavy security even when Albert buried his father, Prince Rainier, or held his royal wedding to Charlene.

Monaco banned all flights in its airspace during Xi's brief visit and any sailing in its waters or mooring in its luxury yacht-filled harbor.

The nearby French city of Nice, where Xi is spending the night, was similarly cordoned off. The Promenade des Anglais — the

palm-lined beachside avenue that is the city's premier attraction — was closed to traffic all weekend. The promenade was targeted by a deadly extremist attack in 2016.

Outside the French resort town of Beaulieu-sur-Mer, where Xi was dining Sunday night with French President Emmanuel Macron, a police boat patrolled throughout the day, and police divers worked to secure the area.

Xi signed energy and other contracts with Macron yesterday,

then will meet in Paris today with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker.

The European Union is China's biggest trading partner, but many in Europe worry about unfair competition from Chinese companies that benefit from government financial backing.

Xi comes to Monaco and France from Italy, which just endorsed a vast Chinese transport infrastructure project, the Belt

and Road Initiative. Macron criticized Italy's move, calling for a concerted European approach to China instead.

"There is this bad European habit to have 28 different policies, with countries competing against each other to attract investment," a top French official said. "We need to speak with a common voice if we want to exist. We have the same approach on the 5G issue: avoiding 28 different decisions."

France hasn't decided yet whether to let Huawei build its 5G networks but it's likely to be a subject of discussions during the Chinese leader's visit.

Xi comes to Monaco and France from Italy, which just endorsed a vast Chinese transport infrastructure project

Europe wants to increase trade with China but on European terms, especially amid U.S.-China trade tensions. France also wants China's cooperation on climate diplomacy, in the face of U.S. President Donald Trump's skepticism.

Human rights concerns in China seem a lesser concern now than when Chinese leaders visited Europe in the past, though Macron's office says the French leader will raise concerns about China's repression of Muslim Uighurs in Xinjiang.

The U.S. State Department says China has "significantly intensified" a campaign of mass detentions of minority Uighurs over the last year, with between 800,000 and 2 million people interned in camps that have drawn condemnation from across the world. **AP**

New Zealand's Ardern to visit Beijing as tensions ease

NEW Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern will visit China for one day next week for talks with President Xi Jinping, adding to signs that any tensions between the two nations are easing.

A longer visit had been in the planning for some weeks, but it's been shortened following the terrorist attacks in Christchurch, Ardern told reporters yesterday in Wellington. She'll discuss a range of bilateral, regional and international issues including upgrading the existing free trade

agreement on April 1. Ardern will also meet Premier Li Keqiang and open New Zealand's embassy in Beijing.

"This is an important visit," she said. "New Zealand places a high priority on our relationship with China. I do look forward to our ongoing engagement."

China hopes her visit strengthens bilateral trust and expands cooperation between the two nations, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said at a briefing in Beijing yesterday.

Ardern's government was buffeted by a string of incidents earlier this year that fueled concerns China was turning a cold shoulder toward New Zealand after it barred Huawei Technologies Co. from its next-generation wireless network. Opposition politicians called for the government to shore up the relationship with China to avoid potentially dire economic consequences for more than USD19 billion in two-way trade.

Among the issues were claims that some exports

were facing delays being cleared through Chinese ports and a report in a Chinese newspaper that tourists were canceling plans to visit New Zealand.

Delays in Ardern's visit to China, originally planned for late last year, were also cited as an example of friction, as was the postponement of the launch of the China-New Zealand Year of Tourism in Wellington. That event has been rescheduled for later this week and will be hosted by China's minister of culture and tourism. **Bloomberg**



Cindy Wang

FOR officials in Beijing looking for a Taiwanese presidential candidate who improves the island's fraught ties with the mainland, Han Kuo-yu is saying all the right things. The question is whether he runs.

The new mayor of the southern city of Kaohsiung last month described Taiwan and China as partners in an "arranged marriage" who had fallen "madly in love." He's also said that peace talks were "inevitable" between the democratically run Taiwan and the Communist Party-ruled mainland.

Such blunt talk contrasts with Taiwan's current president, Tsai Ing-wen, a cautious critic of China who's bracing for a tough re-election fight after bruising policy battles and an isolation campaign by Beijing. Han's shock defeat in November of a candidate from Tsai's Democratic Progressive Party in the ruling bloc's stronghold catapulted him to the top of the list of possible presidential hopefuls from the China-friendly Kuomintang.

While Han has sidestepped questions about whether he'll run - telling Hong Kong's Sing Tao Daily "let's see in the future" - his travel schedule suggests someone with bigger ambitions. On Friday, he began week-long trip to Hong Kong, Macau and the mainland cities of Shenzhen and Xiamen. Next month, he'll visit the U.S.

'OUTLIER CHARACTER'

Han's success winning over younger voters who usually identify with the pro-independence DPP has built buzz among KMT supporters and others who want closer China ties. But his rough-and-tumble style, including scuffling with other politicians and accusations of sexist remarks, also presents a potential liability in a high-profile campaign.

"The reason why Han has become a discussion topic is his outlier character," said Alexander Huang, professor at Taiwan's Tamkang University. "He is a non-traditional KMT politician, since the KMT values seniority, while Han is more grassroots and daring to challenge and speak up. As to whether he is a good presidential candidate, I

BLOOMBERG

Brash China-friendly Taiwan mayor stirs talk of president run



Good old times: KMT's Ma Ying-jeou and Xi in 2015

think he still needs a lot of help."

The KMT is anxious for a win after losing both the presidency and the parliament majority in 2016 - derailing its push for closer economic ties with Beijing. Chinese President Xi Jinping, who held a historic meeting with Taiwanese counterpart Ma Ying-jeou weeks before the vote, has cut off communications with Tsai's government and led a campaign isolate her island diplomatically.

Tsai now looks vulnerable, receiving the support of less than 20 percent in recent polls, as she grapples with both voters concerned about deteriorating ties with China and those who want a cleaner break. Earlier this week, Tsai's former premier, independence advocate Lai Ching-te, announced that he would challenge her for the DPP nomination next month.

Han would join a crowded field of potential KMT contenders including Eric Chu, the former mayor of New Taipei City, who lost the 2016 election to Tsai, and former legislative speaker Wang Jin-pyng. Still, a survey released

this week by broadcaster TVBS found Han with 38 percent support in a three-way race with Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je (28 percent) and Tsai (18 percent).

Tsai has sought to push back against Han's pro-China remarks, saying there can't be an arranged marriage with China because Taiwan is sovereign and its people have the freedom to choose. Taiwan's official Mainland Affairs Council also took a shot at him, arguing the island "must resolutely refuse China's terrorizing affection."

Others observing from Beijing argue Han's candidacy could lead to a breakthrough between the long-time rivals. He supports the idea both sides are part of "one-China" - a negotiating framework Tsai has refused to endorse.

'MORE TRUST'

"If he wins in 2020, it is likely that he will reverse Tsai's cross-strait policies," said Wang Dong, an international relations professor at Peking University and secretary general of the Pangao Institution, a Beijing-based re-

search group. "The mainland, of course, would have much more trust in him."

The trip will test Han's ability to navigate sticky issues on the mainland

Kaohsiung city spokeswoman Anne Wang said Thursday that Han was focused on promoting the local economy and "will not think about other plans for the time being." This week's trip was intended to promote economic and cultural exchanges and not touch on politics, she said.

The trip will test Han's ability to navigate sticky issues on the mainland and in the fractious former British colony of Hong Kong. His past forays into the public eye have been rocky.

POLITICAL FIGHTS

When he was a legislator in

1993, Han punched future DPP President Chen Shui-bian, putting him in the hospital. As president of the Taipei Agricultural Products Marketing Co. in 2016, he dared a city councilor to swallow a hockey puck during a dispute.

During his run for mayor, he told a gathering of female supporters that anyone who created 1,000 jobs in Kaohsiung would get a kiss. Earlier this month, he was forced to apologize after dismissing the idea of attracting white-collar workers from the Philippines since it was hard to believe maids could become English teachers.

Han successfully cast himself as the "CEO mayor" during the campaign, propelled in part by a social media campaign led by his Canadian-educated daughter, Coco Han. His focus on economics on platforms such as YouTube and Facebook helped garner robust support from younger voters looking for higher wages.

One of his slogans was: "With goods sold and talent flowing in, Kaohsiung's people will make a fortune." **Bloomberg**

CHINA protested the latest transit through the Taiwan Strait by American warships, warning the U.S. not to undermine relations between the two countries.

"China has been closely monitoring from start to end the passage by the U.S. warships through the Taiwan Strait," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a regular news briefing in

Beijing protests after U.S. Navy Sails through Taiwan strait again

Beijing on yesterday. "China has lodged stern representations with the U.S."

Two U.S. vessels entered Taiwanese waters off the island's southwest coast heading north on Sunday, Taiwan's Ministry of Na-

tional Defense said in a statement. The Wall Street Journal, which first reported the patrol, identified the vessels as the Navy destroyer USS Curtis Wilbur and the Coast Guard cutter Bertholf.

The patrol comes days before a scheduled visit to Beijing by U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, as talks on a trade agreement continue between the world's

two largest economies. Chinese Vice Premier Liu He is set to lead a delegation to Washington starting on April 3.

The U.S. has over the past year increased its naval transits through the

180-kilometer wide strait that separates Taiwan from the Chinese mainland. Sail-bys in January and February also drew protests from China, which considers the island a province.

Yesterday, China urged the U.S. to avoid undermining ties between the world's two biggest economies and support peace and stability in the strait, Geng said. **Bloomberg**

PHILIPPINES

Ex-official: Duterte photographed with drug-linked Chinese

Jim Gomez & Bullit Marquez, Manila

A former senior Philippine police official said President Rodrigo Duterte, who has faced widespread criticism over his deadly drug crackdown, has been photographed with two Chinese men involved in illegal drugs and that he sent a report to warn him about the two.

Dismissed Senior Superintendent Eduardo Acierto said late Sunday that he's unaware what government action has been taken after he submitted his report about the Chinese men to top police officials starting in December 2017. Instead, Acierto said he's now facing illegal drugs complaints and has been the target of death threats that forced him to go into hiding recently.

"In my investigation, I discovered that our president [...] is often accompanied by two people deeply involved in illegal drugs," Acierto, who was a veteran anti-narcotics official before he was dismissed last year by an anti-graft agency, said in a video message shown to reporters before he appeared at a news conference in Manila. "What popped into my mind at the time was maybe the president isn't aware that these are suspected drug lords."

Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency Director General Aaron Aquino told The Associated

AP PHOTO



Former Police Senior Superintendent Eduardo Acierto

Press that he received Acierto's report and sent it to Duterte's office, adding that both his office and that of the president took steps to validate the allegations against the two Chinese. An initial check showed that at least one of the Chinese was not facing any illegal drugs case in the country, he said.

There was a suspected drug

dealer in the northern Philippines with the same name as one of the two Chinese Acierto identified in his report, but Aquino said investigators would have to check if they were the same person.

"It's wrong to say that there was no action taken because it was acted upon," Aquino said. He played down the significance

of the photographs showing Duterte with the two Chinese men, saying officials often get approached by all sorts of people for group photographs without being able to rapidly check their background.

"I get to be asked for selfie shots and I wouldn't know that the one I'm being photographed with is a drug lord," Aquino said.

Aside from his alleged involvement in the irregular issuance of gun permits that led an anti-graft prosecutor to order his dismissal last year, Acierto also faces criminal complaints for his alleged role in the entry of a large amount of methamphetamine through the Bureau of Customs in Manila, Aquino said.

"In terms of credibility, it's evident that he's not credible because, first of all, he has been implicated in the smuggling of drugs," Aquino said.

Acierto's confidential report about the alleged drug links of the two Chinese contained many details, including the involvement of one of them in the establishment of a secret methamphetamine drugs manufacturing laboratory that was raided by authorities in 2004 in southern Davao city, where Duterte served as a longtime mayor before rising to the presidency in mid-2016.

Police have not said if they investigated those specific allegations or what they found out. Profiles of the two Chinese provided by Acierto to reporters said they were similarly involved in the "manufacturing, financing, the importation, transshipment and local distribution of meth or shabu," referring to the local name of the powerful stimulant.

Acierto said he made a video message about his findings and contacted the media to make them public to be sure the potential danger the two men posed would be dealt with even if he gets killed. He did not elaborate on the death threats but said they forced him to go into hiding with the help of friends and church people. AP

SOUTH KOREA

Seoul says some N. Korean officials back at liaison office

SOUTH Korea said some North Korean officials returned to an inter-Korean liaison office yesterday, three days after the North abruptly withdrew its entire staff citing unspecified instructions from "higher-level authorities."

It wasn't immediately clear why North Korea sent some workers back to the office or whether it would restore a full staff. The North's decision to withdraw its staff on Friday came a week after its vice foreign minister threatened to pull out of nuclear negotiations with the United States following the collapse of a nuclear summit last month between leader Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump in Vietnam.

Seoul's Unification Ministry, which deals with inter-Korean affairs, said

in a statement that four to five North Korean officials showed up for work yesterday at the liaison office in the North Korean border town of Kaesong and told South Korean officials they came to work their usual shifts.

The ministry said the North had still not provided a clear explanation as to why it withdrew staff from the office. It expressed hope that even the partial return of North Korean personnel would allow the office to serve its "essential function." The North reportedly had sent about 10 workers each working day to the office since it opened last September as part of a slew of reconciliation steps between the rivals agreed to by Kim and South Korean President Moon Jae-in.

"We plan to continue

operating the inter-Korean liaison office like we did in normal times," said Baik Tae-hyun, the ministry's spokesman.

Some analysts say the withdrawal was part of North Korean efforts to pressure South Korea to back its position with the United States more strongly following the breakdown of the Trump-Kim summit. North Korean state media have recently demanded that South Korea distance itself from the United States and resume joint economic projects that have been held back by U.S.-led sanctions against the North.

The Koreans in past months have also dismantled some of their front-line guard posts, halted military exercises across their border and vowed to resume inter-Korean economic



mic projects when possible, voicing optimism that international sanctions could end, allowing such projects.

While Moon says inter-Korean reconciliation is crucial for achieving progress in nuclear negotiations, the breakdown of the Trump-Kim summit has created a difficult environment to push enga-

gement with the North.

Washington and Pyongyang have struggled with the sequencing of North Korea's nuclear disarmament and the removal of sanctions, and blamed each other for the collapse of last month's meeting in Hanoi.

The liaison office between the Koreans is the first since the Korean Peninsula was

split into a U.S.-backed capitalistic South and a Soviet-supported socialist North in 1945. The rivals previously used telephone and fax-like communication channels that were often shut down in times of high tensions.

Kaesong is also the location of a now-shuttered factory complex that was jointly run by the two Koreas. It combined South Korean capital and technology with cheap North Korean labor. Both Koreas want the United States to allow exemptions from the sanctions to permit the reopening of the factory park, which provided North Korea with much-needed foreign currency. Critics say Kaesong and other inter-Korean economic projects helped North Korea fund its nuclear weapons program. AP

Kaweewit Kaewjinda & Stephen Wright, Bangkok

THAILAND

Parties jostle for power after first election since coup

A military-backed party that based on unofficial results won the most votes in Thailand's first election since a 2014 coup said yesterday it will try to form a government, after a rival party also claimed it had the right to govern.

The conflicting claims following Sunday's election highlight the deep divisions in Thailand, which has been wracked by political instability for nearly two decades.

Uttama Savanayana, the head of the Palang Pracharat party that is backed by junta leader and Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, said it would contact like-minded parties to form a new administration.

But early yesterday, Sudarat Keyuraphan, leader of the Pheu Thai party that was ousted in the 2014 coup, said it would try to form a government because it won the most constituency races. The party is allied with exiled Thai leader Thaksin Shinawatra.

"As we have said before, the party with the most seats is the one that has received the confidence from the people to set up the government," Sudarat said.

But the party faces an uphill battle because selection of the next prime minister will be decided

by the 500-member lower house as well as a 250-member junta-appointed Senate.

The Election Commission announced the results of 350 constituency races but said full vote counts, which are needed to determine the allocation of 150 other seats in the House of Representatives, won't be available until Friday.

Unofficial results show Palang Pracharat had the highest popular vote, which along with the appointed Senate puts Prayuth in a relatively strong position to stay in office and cobble together a coalition government. Analysts say the next government is likely to be unstable and short-lived, whichever party leads it.

The election is the latest chapter in a nearly two-decade struggle pitching conservative forces including the military against the political machine of Thaksin, a tycoon who upended tradition-bound Thailand politics with a populist political revolution.

Thaksin was ousted as prime



minister in a 2006 military coup and now lives in exile abroad to avoid a prison term, but parties allied with him have won every election since 2001. His sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, who led the Pheu Thai government that was ousted in 2014, also fled the country after what supporters said was a politically motivated prosecution.

The blunt-speaking Prayuth, who as army chief led the 2014

coup, has aimed to extend his hold on power by engineering a new political system that stifles the influence of big political parties not aligned with Palang Pracharat and the military.

Under the convoluted election system created by the junta, 350 of the lower house members are elected from constituencies and 150 are allocated to parties based on share of the nationwide popular vote.

Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit, leader of the anti-junta Future Forward party, which polled in a strong third place after scooping up first-time voters, said the party won't nominate him as a prime ministerial candidate to avoid a political deadlock.

He urged all parties that support a true democracy to form a coalition to trump the spoiling effect of the votes of 250 junta-appointed senators.

The Election Commission's secretary-general, Charoengwit Poomma, defended the EC's handling of Sunday's vote and said delays in announcing full results reflect its duty to ensure the election is free and fair.

"Elections in our country are not like other countries," he said.

"We have laws to determine whether the election was free and fair or not. It needs to go through the process of orange, yellow, red cards before results are announced," Charoengwit said, referring to different levels of seriousness for election violations. **AP**

AD



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INVESTIGATION

Mueller finds no Trump collusion,

SPECIAL counsel Robert Mueller found no evidence President Donald Trump's campaign "conspired or coordinated" with Russia to influence the 2016 presidential election but reached no conclusion on whether Trump obstructed justice. That brought a hearty claim of vindication from Trump but set the stage for new rounds of political and legal fighting.

The battle began yesterday as White House aides and allies blanketed television news broadcasts to trumpet the findings and claim that Trump has been the victim in a probe that never should have started.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said Trump will let Attorney General William Barr decide whether the special counsel's Russia report should be publicly released, though she adds that "he's more than happy for any of this stuff to come out."

Trump cheered the Sunday outcome but also laid bare his resentment after two years of investigations that have shadowed his administration. "It's a shame that our country has had to go through this. To be

honest, it's a shame that your president has had to go through this," he said.

Democrats pointed out that Mueller found evidence for and against obstruction and demanded to see his full report. They insisted that even the summary by the president's attorney general hardly put him in the clear.

Mueller's conclusions, summarized by Barr in a four page letter to Congress, represented a victory for Trump on a key question that has hung over his presidency from the start — whether his campaign worked with Russia to defeat Democrat Hillary Clinton.

That was further good news for the president on top of the Justice Department's earlier announcement that Mueller had wrapped his investigation without new indictments. That could deflate the hopes of Democrats in Congress and on the 2020 campaign trail that incriminating findings from Mueller would hobble the president's agenda and re-election bid.

But while Mueller was catego-

rical in ruling out criminal collusion, he was more circumspect on presidential obstruction of justice. Despite Trump's claim of total exoneration, Mueller did not draw a conclusion one way or the other on whether he sought to stifle the Russia investigation through his actions including the firing of former FBI director James Comey.

According to Barr's summary, Mueller set out "evidence on both sides of the question" and stated that "while this report does not conclude the president

■ Barr's summary notes 'multiple offers from Russian-affiliated individuals to assist the Trump campaign'

committed a crime, it also does not exonerate him."

Barr, who was nominated by Trump in December, and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who appointed Mueller in May 2017 and oversaw much of his work, went further in Trump's favor.

The attorney general said he and Rosenstein had determined that Mueller's evidence was insufficient to prove in court that Trump had committed obstruction of justice to hamper the probe. Barr has previously voiced a broad view of presidential powers, and in an unsolicited memo last June he cast doubt on whether the president could have obstructed justice through acts — like firing his FBI director — that he was legally empowered to take.

Barr said their decision was based on the evidence uncovered by Mueller and not affected by Justice Department legal opinions that say a sitting president cannot be indicted.

Mueller's team examined a series of actions by the president in the last two years to determi-

ne if he intended obstruction. Those include his firing of Comey one week before Mueller's appointment, his public and private haranguing of then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions for recusing himself from the Russia investigation because of his work on the campaign, his request of Comey to end an investigation into Michael Flynn, the White House's first national security adviser, and his drafting of an incomplete explanation about his oldest son's meeting with a Russian lawyer during the campaign.

Mueller's findings absolve Trump on the question of colluding with Russia but don't entirely remove the legal threats the president and associates are facing. Federal prosecutors in New York, for instance, are investigating hush-money payments made to two women during the campaign who say they had sex with the president. Trump's former personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, implicated Trump in campaign finance violations when he pleaded guilty last year.

AD



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03 / 04 / 2019

(Quarta - Feira)

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19:00

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Inglês

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leaves obstruction open



The special counsel's investigation did not come up empty-handed. It ensnared nearly three dozen people, senior Trump campaign operatives

among them. The probe illuminated Russia's assault on the American political system, painted the Trump campaign as eager to exploit the release

of hacked Democratic emails to hurt Hillary Clinton and exposed lies by Trump aides aimed at covering up their Russia-related contacts.

Thirty-four people, including six Trump aides and advisers, were charged in the investigation. Twenty-five are Russians accused of election interference either through hacking into Democratic accounts or orchestrating a social media campaign to spread disinformation on the internet.

Sunday's summary — and its suggestion that Mueller may have found evidence in support of obstruction — sets up a fight between Barr and Democrats, who called for the special counsel's full report to be released and vowed to press on with their own investigations.

"Attorney General Barr's letter raises as many questions as it answers," House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said in a statement.

"Given Mr. Barr's public record of bias against the special counsel's inquiry, he is not a neutral observer and is not in a position to make objective determinations about the report," they said. Trump's own claim of complete exoneration "directly contradicts the words of Mr. Mueller and is not to be taken with any degree of credibility," they added.

Trump was at his Florida estate when lawmakers received the report. Barr's chief of staff

called Emmet Flood, the lead White House lawyer on the investigation, to brief him on the findings shortly before he sent it to Congress. Mueller submitted his report to Barr instead of directly to Congress and the public because, unlike independent counsels such as Ken Starr in the case of President Bill Clinton, his investigation operated under the close supervision of the Justice Department.

Barr did not speak with the president, Mueller was not consulted on the letter, and the White House does not have Mueller's report, according to a Justice Department official.

Though Mueller did not find evidence that anyone associated with the Trump campaign coordinated with the Russian government, Barr's summary notes "multiple offers from Russian-affiliated individuals to assist the Trump campaign."

That's a likely reference not only to a June 2016 Trump Tower meeting at which Donald Trump, Jr. expected to receive damaging information on Clinton from a Kremlin-connected lawyer, as well as a conversation in London months earlier at which Trump campaign aide George Papadopoulos was told Russia had "dirt" on Clinton in the form of thousands of stolen emails. AP

AD

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what's ON



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

MEMBER JOINT EXHIBITION OF 33RD ANNIVERSARY OF CAC – CÍRCULO DOS AMIGOS DA CULTURA DE MACAU
TIME: 3pm-8pm (Mondays); 12pm-8pm (Tuesdays to Sundays)
UNTIL: April 14, 2019
VENUE: Albergue SCM
ADMISSION: Free

MASTERPIECES OF RUSSIAN ART FROM THE STATE TRETYAKOV GALLERY
TIME: 10am-7pm (last admission 6:30pm; closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: April 22, 2019
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

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

Offbeat

ALASKA MAN WHO TRACKS DOWN STOLEN VEHICLES ENTERS PLEA DEAL

An Alaska man has agreed to a plea deal that includes a promise to stop chasing after stolen vehicles. Officials said that 54-year-old Floyd Hall pleaded guilty to one count of reckless endangerment resulting in a 30-day suspended sentence and a USD500 fine, the Anchorage Daily News reported.

The terms of Hall's three-year probation sentence include a pledge to refrain from chasing anyone driving a suspected stolen vehicle, officials said.

The newspaper reports that Hall can remain involved with a citizens' group calling itself the "A Team" that relies on tips from social media to recover stolen automobiles.

Hall engaged in a 19-month court case resulting from an August 2017 charge of reckless driving for what police say was a high-speed chase but Hall contends only involved following the vehicle.

Joshua Fink, Hall's attorney, said prosecutors initially requested that Hall not be allowed to "chase, follow or otherwise pursue" suspected stolen vehicles during his probation, but agreed to scale it back to simply "chasing." The difference is the "high rate of speed," Fink said.

The prosecuting attorney declined to comment.

Hall said the A Team previously broached the possibility of a partnership with police without success.

Anchorage Police Capt. Sean Case said that while police appreciate information from the public and regularly partner with community watch groups, they draw a line when citizens might harm themselves by becoming involved with suspects.

"You don't know (a suspect's) criminal history, you don't know how violent they are, you don't know if they're armed," Case said.

TV canal macau



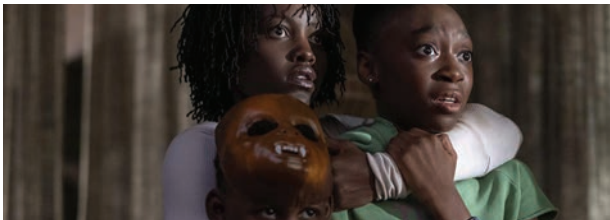
13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Água de Mar
15:45	Zig Zag
16:10	Conversa da Treta
16:40	Quem Quer Ser Milionário
17:35	Ministério do Tempo
18:25	TDM Desporto (Repetição)
19:30	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	TDM Entrevista
21:50	Escritores a Norte - Vidas com Obra em Casas D'Escritas
22:25	Filhos da Nação Sr.2
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Resumo Qualificação EURO 2020
00:10	Uma História de Autonomia
00:55	Telejornal (Repetição)
01:40	RTPI Directo

cinema



CINETEATRO

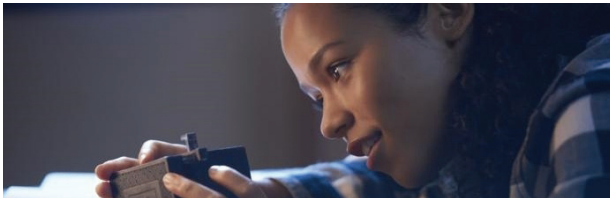
21 - 27 Mar



US
ROOM 1
2:30, 4:45, 9:30pm
Director: Jordan Peele
Starring: Lupita Nyong'o, Winston Duke, Elisabeth Moss
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 116min

CAPTAIN MARVEL
ROOM 1
7:15pm
Director: Anna Boden, Ryan Fleck
Starring: Brie Larson, Samuel L. Jackson, Ben Mendelsohn
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 124min

MASQUERADE HOTEL
ROOM 2
2:15, 4:45, 9:15pm
Director: Masayuki Suzuki
Starring: Takuya Kimura, Masami Nagasawa, Nozomi de Lencquesaing
Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)
Duration: 133min



ESCAPE ROOM
ROOM 2
9:45pm
Director: Adam Robitel
Starring: Taylor Russell, Logan Miller, Jay Ellis
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 99min

I WANT TO EAT YOUR PANCREAS
ROOM 3
7:30pm
Director: Shin'ichirô Ushijima
Starring: Mahiro Takasugi, Lynn, Yukiyo Fujii
Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)
Duration: 108min

KAMEN RIDER HEISEI GENERATIONS FPREVER
ROOM 3
2:30, 4:30, 9:30pm
Director: Kyohei Yamaguchi
Starring: Eiji Akaso, Shunsuke Daitô, Nayuta Fukuzaki
Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)
Duration: 100min

this day in history



1981 'GANG OF FOUR' LAUNCHES NEW PARTY

The Social Democrats have launched their new political party pledging to "reconcile the nation" and "heal divisions between classes".

At a crowded press conference in London, signalling the start of a massive media campaign to recruit supporters, the party outlined its hopes of breaking the political mould and of making significant gains at the next General Election.

The Gang of Four, the nick-name of the four Labour defectors who set up the SDP, outlined their hopes of winning, with the Liberals, a majority in the Commons.

Roy Jenkins, former Labour cabinet minister, David Owen, William Rodgers and Shirley Williams published a 12-point document covering elections, education and international co-operation.

The party's proposals included calls to reform the political system, environmentally friendly policies, equality of opportunity for women and ethnic minorities, and a fairer distribution of wealth.

Mr Jenkins said formulating an incomes policy would be "one of the most difficult things we have to do".

The Gang of Four describe themselves as a left-of-centre party and is the first to be run in Britain with a one-member one-vote system for policies and selection.

Dr Owen said the party offered Britain a fresh start and he said recruits were coming from other parties all the time.

"We are going to be free: we will make decisions... But they will be your decisions," he told potential members.

He accused the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of having divided the country between the North, Scotland, Wales, and the still "relatively prosperous" South East.

The four left Labour citing major differences over European and defence policies as the party has taken a sharp turn to the left under leader Michael Foot.

The opposition leader has insisted they will win no support.

But with call centres waiting to hear from future supporters and an estimated £170,000 spent on regional journeys and advertising, the SDP is determined to win over MPs and then voters.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The party joined forces with the Liberal Party to create the Liberal-SDP Alliance in autumn 1981.

It enjoyed increasing support but by the 1987 general election the Alliance was weakened by high Labour support.

After the election, Liberal Party leader David Steel proposed an official merger with the SDP and while most of the SDP's membership voted in favour of the merger, its leader David Owen remained adamantly opposed to it.

He pledged to fight the now new Social and Liberal Democrat Party (SLD). But by 1990, the party had lost a great deal of credibility and support and the SDP was folded.

YOUR STARS

Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Someone needs your help -- but they may not know how to ask you. Make sure that you're really paying attention as you move through the day, as you can score bonus karma points!

Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

You need to really hunker down and focus on communication today -- in all its creative forms. Your energy is better spent on poetry than on drafting that email to get a new job.

Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Nothing is quite clear today -- you need to take a big step back before you can make sense of anything. That could work to your advantage, though, as you may spot details you'd never have seen otherwise.

Libra

Sep.23-Oct. 22

You need to stay flexible and enjoy life's little treasures -- there's no sense in wailing over every little thing that goes wrong today! All should return to balance soon, and no one knows that better than you.

Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Try something totally new today -- it could be almost anything! Your personal energy is somewhat restless and seeking new inspiration. A new friend, a random website or even a cloud can give it to you!

Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Take a chance on that new volunteer opportunity or charity pitch, even if it doesn't quite seem right -- you can always back off later if it falls apart. You need to give back on a day like today.

Taurus

April 20-May 20

You finally get that one friend or family member who's been so odd lately -- and the explanation is likely simpler than you would have thought. Just reach out and let them know you're savvy.

Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

You need to enjoy what you've got today -- your energy is terrific, and almost anything you choose to do should make life sweeter and more enjoyable for you and your people. Go for it!

Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Not much gets done today -- which could mean that you just need to deal with a backlog later. There's nothing wrong with that, especially as fighting too hard against today's pace could result in moving backward!

Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Your artistic license just got renewed -- make the most of it! All this great energy should make you a hit with your colleagues or friends, as long as you're free with your ideas.

Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

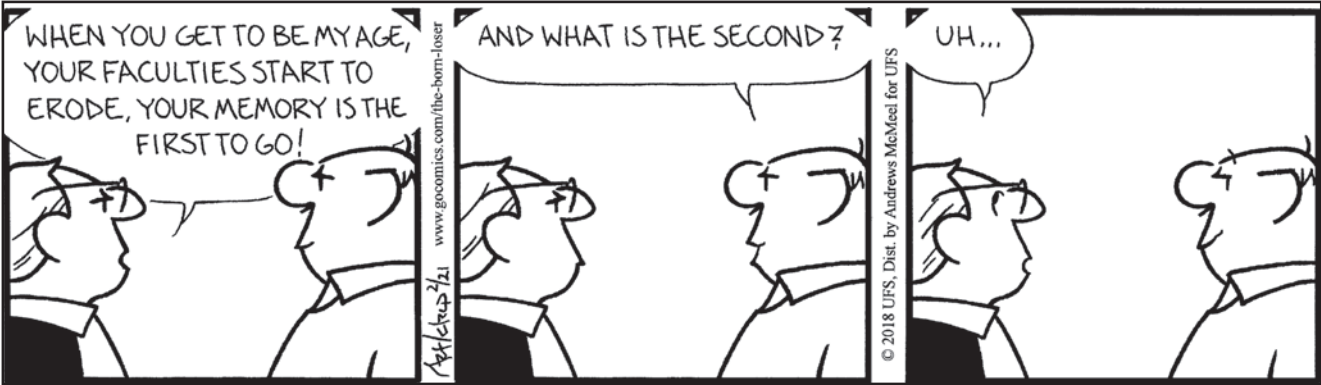
You have got to make social connections today -- though not necessarily new ones. Reach out to old friends (even old flames, possibly) to see if you've still got anything to talk about.

Pisces

Feb.19-Mar. 20

You've got to rethink things a bit -- but your great energy helps you do just that with ease. See if you can get your friends to pitch you new ideas for transformative activities. Use them all!

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
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CHINA

Beijing	5	22	clear
Harbin	-4	9	cloudy/clear
Tianjin	7	22	clear
Urumqi	3	11	cloudy/drizzle
Xi'an	5	26	clear/cloudy
Lhasa	1	16	overcast/cloudy
Chengdu	8	19	clear/cloudy
Chongqing	9	21	cloudy
Kunming	7	24	cloudy/clear
Nanjing	11	18	cloudy/clear
Shanghai	9	15	drizzle
Wuhan	5	21	cloudy
Hangzhou	10	18	drizzle/cloudy
Taipei	16	21	drizzle
Guangzhou	14	19	moderate rain
Hong Kong	17	20	drizzle/moderate rain

WORLD

Moscow	-1	3	sleet/cloudy
Frankfurt	1	15	drizzle
Paris	3	15	cloudy/clear
London	6	13	drizzle
New York	7	15	clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Cottonwoods; 7- ____ kwon do; 10- Conked out; 14- Go over again; 15- Egyptian cobra; 16- The King ____; 17- Theater district; 18- Go downhill fast?; 19- Cornfield cacophony; 20- Aviation mechanic; 23- Belle or Bart; 26- Boy; 27- Unfolds; 28- Amos or Spelling; 29- Like some ears; 30- ____-Cat (winter vehicle); 31- Imperial dynasty of Russia; 33- Injection amts.; 34- Sprechen ____ Deutsch?; 37- Mineral suffix; 38- "Lord, is ____?": Matthew; 39- That's gotta hurt!; 40- Tolkien ogre; 41- Third degree?; 42- Legume; 43- Uncommon; 45- Belief system; 46- Get older; 47- Annapolis sch.; 48- Hippodrome, e.g.; 51- Menu words; 52- Distinguishing characteristic; 53- Made to resist breaking; 56- Pigeon coop; 57- Cinco de Mayo, e.g.; 58- Scoffs; 62- Polecat's defense; 63- Common Market abbr.; 64- People of courage; 65- Neutral shades; 66- D.C. advisory grp.; 67- Size up;

DOWN: 1- Sheet music abbr.; 2- Wreath of flowers; 3- I've got it!; 4- Swampfever; 5- Blender maker; 6- Restaurateur Toots; 7- Dutch navigator; 8- Inquired; 9- Larger-than-life; 10- Repeated from the beginning; 11- Mindlessly stupid; 12- Newsmen Newman; 13- Flat circular plates; 21- Singer Newton-John; 22- Island in central Japan; 23- Piece of bacon; 24- Fang, e.g.; 25- Equipped; 29- Tribal emblem; 30- Teatime treat; 32- Tries to bite; 33- Puma; 34- March man; 35- Afghan's neighbor; 36- Brilliance; 44- Wave riders; 45- Buries; 46- Llama relative; 48- Cravat; 49- Role for Valerie; 50- Stationery brand; 51- Sign of spring; 52- Shades; 54- First place; 55- Dept. of Labor division; 59- Fair-hiring abbr.; 60- Hi-____ graphics; 61- Conscription org.;

Yesterday's solution

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

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PJ (Picket) 28 557 775

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S. J. Hospital 28 313 731

Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333

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HKD 7,900 sq ft
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Nova Park, Taipa
Taipa
Two Bedroom Apartment
HKD 16,400 / 1134 sq ft
Ref: 17020638

Ocean Garden Elm Court
Taipa
1,610 sq ft / HKD 10.8 M
HKD 6,708 sq ft
Three Bedroom Apartment
Ref: 18105563

Car Park, The Manhattan
Taipa
Single Car Park
HKD 2,000
Ref: 1505507R





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Thursday 28 March
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Co-founder of Rooftop Republic

Rooftop Republic has transformed over 45,000 square feet of underused space into 45 urban farms across Hong Kong and China and has organised more than 350 events around organic farming and sustainable living

Urban Farming: Wonders and Benefits

The potential of urban farming as an instrument of change - to transform our food system from the ground up and make it more sustainable, healthier while transforming and empowering communities at the same time. The talk will also include a brief introduction to the two organisations leading the way in Hong Kong, Rooftop Republic and ManaVida.

Silk Room, Level 5
The St. Regis Macao, Cotai
07:45 Registration
08:00 Breakfast
08:15 Presentation
09:00 Close

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Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

Dan Gelston

ROB Gronkowski the football player is finished. Yeah, but what about Gronk?

Well, the party is about to go bazooka.

Look out for Gronk gone wild, Gronk unhinged, Gronk unleashed. Without football strings attached, Gronkowski is suddenly a hot free agent year-round, his talents pitched to far more than 32 suitors, from Hollywood to endorsements to, well, whatever Gronk wants.

He was fun-loving and fearless, a dominant tight end whose Super Bowls were won with New England and whose playful personality won over even the most casual fans. Gronkowski, who announced Sunday that he is retiring from the NFL after nine mostly dominant, title-filled seasons, set scores of records for the Patriots at his position and could light up the scoreboard like his smile can light up a room.

The numbers only tell a speck of the story.

Super Bowl wins were great.

Boy, was it so much more fun just being Gronk.

He stood tall at the Super Bowl and WrestleMania; won big games and took on gamers; starred on the field and in film; and did it all with a goofy charm that belied a gritty tight end who seemingly always played through pain. The Patriots are going to miss Gronkowski as they try for yet another Super Bowl championship.

But Gronk's not going anywhere.

So let's take a look at what made Gronk so great, and what could be ahead:

GRONK THE GOAT

Gronkowski never would have had a sustained run as a popular pitchman, hosted kids shows or popped up in movies had he not been one of the greatest tight ends — yeah, probably the greatest — in NFL history.

Gronkowski was hobbled by injuries last season and played just 13 games, and each ache raised constant questions about possible retirement. Gronkowski had plenty left in the Super Bowl and still had clutch catches in the tank on New England's final drive. He had two catches on the Patriots' go-ahead touchdown drive, the second catch set up Sony Michel's 2-yard score in the win over the Rams.

Tom Brady to Gronk, one more time for a title.

"I like making big catches like that," Gronkowski said.

Gronkowski went out a champion — and he may be headed to Canton.

He had 10 catches for 145 yards and three touchdowns in New England's win at Denver in an AFC Divisional playoff win in 2011. Gronkowski might have been more impressive in the 2015 AFC championship game, when he converted two fourth-

AP PHOTO



Rob Gronkowski

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Gronk unleashed: Gronkowski sets course for retirement fun

—down attempts on the game's final drive and had eight receptions for 144 yards and one touchdown, perhaps his best effort in a crushing defeat.

Gronkowski is the only NFL tight end with more than 500 career receptions who averaged more than 15 yards per reception.

He averaged nearly 69 yards per game and cracked juvenile jokes about setting a record 69 TDs for a tight end, thanking his mom when he reached the mark. He finished with 79 TDs receiving and one rushing.

GRONK GONE WILD

The final image of Gronkowski in a Patriots uniform, greatness.

The final image of Gronk out of uniform, hilarious.

He celebrated the Super Bowl title on the parade route by stripping off his shirt, chugging beers, flipping his hat backward and acting like a frat boy on a float. A hurled beer from the crowd that ricocheted off his hulking chest was the final hit in his career.

Gronk seemed to make as many TMZ clips as NFL Films highlights.

Earlier this month, TMZ reported, "Gronk and his bikini model girlfriend have taken their hotness to sea ... 'cause the couple put on one hell of a twerk fest on a boat in Mexico." Peter King prose, this was not.

Who knows where Gronk will end up in retirement.

Or do we?

Gronkowski has a standing offer from WWE to move from the gridiron to the squared circle and become a professional wrestler like his childhood friend, Mojo Rawley. Gronkowski stormed over the barricade at WrestleMania in 2017 and bro-hugged Rawley after he won the Andre the Giant battle royal.

Gronk vs. The Rock?

Gronk vs. Brock?

With WrestleMania just weeks away, the goofy Gronkowski could crash the show again and get mixed up in more shenanigans. Heck, "Gronk" doesn't even need to make up a ring name.

GRONK THE ENTERTAINER

Gronkowski might find his NFL bio condensed on a Hall of Fame

plaque down the road but there's almost no way it could fit in his offseason activities. Gronkowski was a hit with the average fan — from kids to grandparents — because of his endearing persona that made him about as A-list as any athlete. He had a personal "Talk with Gronk" that poked fun at any idiot who wanted to eat a Tide Pod. He hosted "Crashletes" on Nickelodeon, was a fed a beer bong by Patriots teammate Julian Edelman in the "Entourage" movie, and played a heightened, animated version of Gronk on "Family Guy."

Late night TV host Conan O'Brien once invited Gronkowski and Seahawks running back Marshawn Lynch to play a stirring game of "Mortal Kombat."

Gronkowski found victory lane just as fun as the end zone when he partied with Daytona 500 winner Kurt Busch and team owner Tony Stewart in 2017. He had Monster Energy drinks and Monster girls all around him, a winning combo in an offseason pit stop for Gronk.

"I'm just having a blast," he said. "I never really got to tailgate. I ne-

ver really got to run-around [on Sundays]. It's cool to run around and meet people, enjoy the atmosphere, see what really goes down on this side of the stadium."

GRONK SAID IT

"Yo soy fiesta."

Always the life of the party, Gronkowski quipped he was the party in an interview with ESPN Deportes after one of New England's Super Bowl wins. He was a hit in any language, especially compared to the milquetoast Brady. Among his best just-for-laughs takes, reading erotic Gronk fiction to Jimmy Kimmel such as, "I would have the pleasure to spike a football between butt cheeks," he told a Boston talk radio station that he was a virgin and said Patriots fans were "going bazooka" at Gillette Stadium.

But he went from whimsical to warm on the Insta post where he called it a career.

"Cheers to all who have been part of the journey," he wrote, "cheers to the past for the incredible memories, and a HUGE cheers to the uncertainty of what's next." AP

opinion

Our Desk

Julie Zhou



LOCAL SORE LOSER

In Macau, hearing someone using the term “outsiders” is as normal as some stupid human beings thinking that lunch must happen at 12 and dinner must happen at 9.

Macau is a place full of local sore losers, but why?

Look at the Macau locals: while they make, on average, MOP20,000 per month, they try their best to make sure whoever makes less than that will never make it past MOP20,000.

What do the non-locals do in Macau?

I once heard a Macau local, believe it or not, complaining about the fact that “Filipinos are in high positions, but not the Macau locals.” I asked that person why. The person told me “because they speak English.”

So, Macau locals, if you know the reason, then why do you want people to show less capability than you so that you can keep your 20,000 patacas? Why can your brilliance and brightness only be seen or shown when other people perform below their real abilities? Why do you want your wife to stay home doing housework in order for people to say that you, as the husband, are amazing because you are the bread-winner of the family?

Instead of crying every single day that mainlanders or Asians took your job, your executive position, and took your money, would you dare to go onto the streets and say something that actually revealed your lack of capabilities?

Where is your boss from? Where is your company manager from? Why don't you ask the local government to put on a protectionism mechanism dedicated to you, the sore loser.

You cannot, right? Because you are scared, you are scared of losing your 20,000 patacas and that is why you are making all that noise, making sure that whoever makes less than you will never overtake you in terms of salary.

For once, just learn something.

Before 1999, people from the European continent were better than the Macau locals. After 1999, mainlanders are better than the Macau “talents.” Have you ever spent a single second wondering why that is? Have you ever really tried to open your eyes and open your heart to observe and learn a bit, rather than simply complaining that “they are taking our jobs, they are disrespecting us, they are creating problems”?

It is hilarious that thousands of people from a “World Tourism and Leisure Center” went to the streets demanding the exclusion of those who threaten their survival but not those who already conquered; that's what losers do.

It is beyond any doubt that the non-locals are creating problems in Macau, but it is also beyond any doubt that the non-locals are making Macau. Macau locals are in the middle, what can they do? Macau locals, you are neither the brain of the city, or the body of the city. Those who design this city are not Macau locals, and those who build this city are also not Macau locals.

Macau locals, you have every reason to fight for your 20,000 patacas, but remember dictatorship because the Macau locals allow only themselves to voice their opinions.

THE FIVE KILLED IN SHOOTING IN CHINA'S INNER MONGOLIA

Five people died yesterday in a shooting in China's Inner Mongolia region, authorities said.

An individual shot and killed five people before being apprehended by police, authorities said in Inner Mongolia's eastern Kailu county.

Police did not describe the suspect, provide a motive or say whether anyone else was

injured.

Gun crime is rare in China, where private firearm ownership is almost entirely forbidden. But guns can be purchased on the black market through online dealers.

Regulations introduced in 2014 mandate that police officers carry guns — a change after decades in which Chinese police were unarmed.

Long-awaited video service expected from Apple today

Michael Liedtke & Tali Arbel

APPLE is expected to announce today [Macau time] that it's launching a video service that could compete with Netflix, Amazon and cable TV itself.

It's a long-awaited attempt from the iPhone maker, several years after Netflix turned “binge watching” into a worldwide phenomenon.

The new video service is expected to have original TV shows and movies that reportedly cost Apple more than USD1 billion — far less than Netflix and HBO spend every year.

Also expected is a subscription service consisting of news, entertainment and sports bundled from newspapers and magazines.

Apple is making the announcements at its Cupertino, California, headquarters during an event likely to be studded with Hollywood celebrities.

The iPhone has long been Apple's marquee product and main money maker, but sales are starting to decline. The company is pushing digital subscriptions as it searches for new growth.

Making must-have TV shows and movies that are watchable on any device has propelled Netflix into a force in both Silicon Valley and



Hollywood.

But Apple remained focused on making on gadgets: iPhones, iPads, computers and its Apple TV streaming box for TVs. Apple co-founder Steve Jobs began toying with the idea of building a powerful TV business, but he couldn't pull it off before his death in 2011. It has taken his successor, CEO Tim Cook, nearly eight years to draw up the script that the company will now try to execute.

“Apple is very late to this game,” eMarketer analyst Paul Verna said. “Netflix has become the gold standard in how to create and distribute content, using all the data they have about their viewers.”

Netflix's prowess has attracted 139 million subscribers worldwide. But Apple will have several other deep-pocketed competitors fighting for consumers' dollars. Amazon has also become

a formidable force in video streaming. Walt Disney Co. is launching its own service this year, armed with an imposing library that became more formidable with its purchase of 21st Century Fox's films and TV series. AT&T is debuting another streaming service built around HBO.

Apple has plenty of money to spend, though, with about \$245 billion in cash and marketable securities. It must prove itself attractive to Hollywood even without a track record for supporting high-quality programming and then ensuring it gets widely seen.

As part of its efforts to make quick connections, Apple hired two longtime Sony television executives, Jamie Erlicht and Zack Van Amburg, in 2017. They have reportedly signed up stars such as Oprah Winfrey, Steven Spielberg and Jennifer Aniston. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Frank Gunn/The Canadian Press via AP



High 5. Charlotte Hornets guard Jeremy Lamb (3) celebrates his game-winning basket against the Toronto Raptors with teammate Devonte' Graham in an NBA basketball game Sunday in Toronto.

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	40-60 Good	
High Density Residential Area	35-55 Good	
Ambient	25-45 Good	

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

NORTH KOREA Swedish diplomats are keeping a room ready for the U.S. to use if it ever decides to have an official presence in the North Korean capital. The unmarked, slightly musty room next to the Swedish ambassador's office in Pyongyang's diplomatic quarter has been kept in an odd state of limbo for years.



INDONESIA Police said yesterday they found geckos and chameleons in the luggage of a Russian tourist who was arrested for allegedly trying to smuggle a drugged orangutan out of Bali. Andrei Zhestkov was detained late Friday at Bali's international airport after security officers found a 2-year-old endangered male orangutan sleeping in a rattan basket in his luggage.



NFL Look out for Gronk gone wild. Without football strings attached, Patriot's Rob Gronkowski (87) is suddenly a hot free agent year-round, his talents pitched to far more than 32 suitors, from Hollywood to endorsements to, well, whatever Gronk wants. More on p19



EGG BOY An Australian teen known around the world as “Egg Boy” conceded yesterday that egging a far-right senator was not the right thing to do, but said the gesture united a world reeling from a white supremacist's alleged massacre of 50 Muslims in New Zealand. Will Connolly, 17, gave his first television interview since becoming an online hero among many for cracking an egg on Sen. Fraser Anning's head.