



FRAUD, FORGERY AND ABUSE OF POWER

Macau's anti-graft agency said corruption in public office is becoming more common and the public think it's "unbelievable"

■ P2 CORRUPTION



CATHAY PACIFIC ACQUIRES BUDGET CARRIER HK EXPRESS

■ P6-7 GREATER BAY



CHINA-US TRADE TALKS BACK ON THE TABLE

The world's two largest economies are due to resume trade talks this week in what could be the first step in the long road to economic peace

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA said yesterday that it has expelled former Interpol President Meng Hongwei from public office and the ruling Communist Party as he awaits trial on corruption charges. More on p10

INDIA successfully test-fired an anti-satellite weapon yesterday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in an unexpected announcement just weeks before a general election.

IRAQ Turkey's state-run news agency says a senior Kurdish rebel commander has been seriously wounded in a Turkish airstrike in northern Iraq. Three other wanted militants were killed.



SAUDI ARABIA Nearly a dozen Saudi women's rights activists seated before a three-judge panel in a Riyadh courtroom yesterday laid out their defense and spoke of physical and sexual abuse they say they were subjected to by masked interrogators, according to people with knowledge of the case.

ISRAEL-PALESTINE An unofficial cease-fire appeared to be holding yesterday between Israel and Gaza's Hamas rulers despite limited exchanges of fire.

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Neglect leading down dangerous road

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HEALTH

Measles outbreak worsens in Macau, HK

■ P5

CORRUPTION

Fraud, forgery and abuse of power more common among public officials

Daniel Beitler

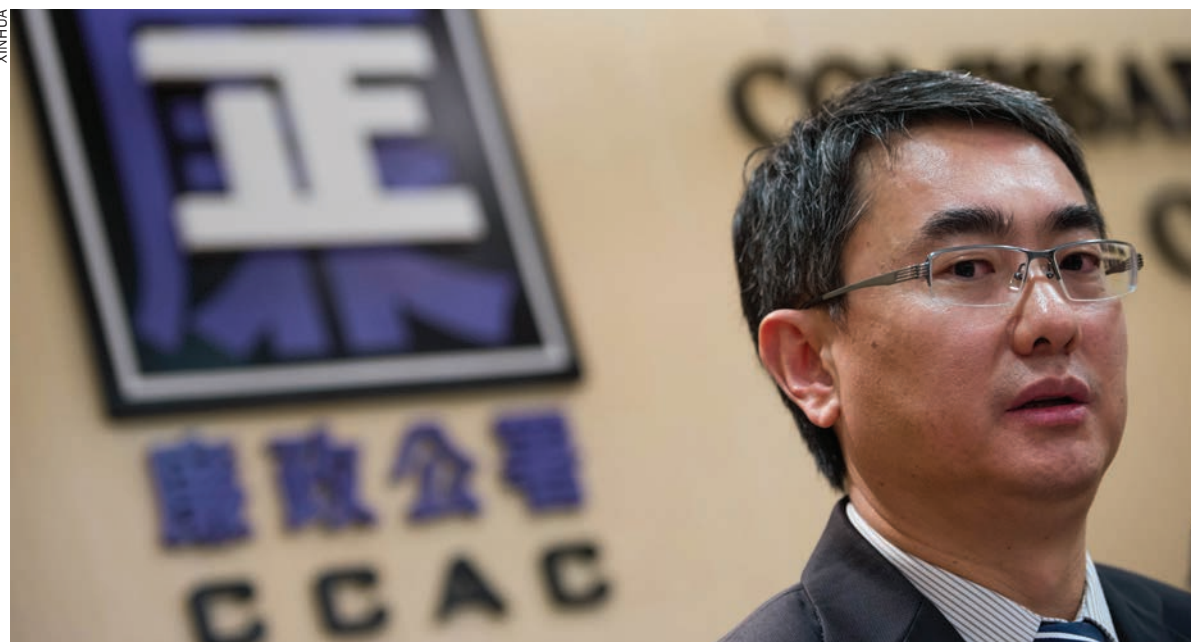
COMMISSION Against Corruption (CCAC) investigators detected an increase in cases of fraud, document forgery and the abuse of power committed by public servants in 2018, especially in those that saw violations of the law exchanged for the private gain of senior state officials.

In its 2018 Annual Report, the CCAC said it would be necessary moving forward to strengthen the integrity and responsibility of senior government officials.

While the abovementioned crimes were on the rise, the Annual Report conversely pointed to a decrease in bribery cases detected by the anti-graft body last year involving public servants.

Nevertheless, the CCAC warns that public officials “shall not take advantage of their powers and positions directly or indirectly for private gain.”

Over the course of 2018, the CCAC investigated a number of fraud cases relating to government subsidies, with the Fund



of Environmental Protection and Energy Saving, as well as the Fund of Continuing Education identified as some of the culprit organizations. The Commission said that such cases demonstrate the need for more stringent criteria and the monitoring of the grant of sub-

sidies by public services.

In 2018, the corruption watchdog completed two major inquiries on a controversial construction project at Alto de Coloane and on the approval of ‘major investment immigration’ and ‘technical immigration’, as arranged by the Macao Trade and Invest-

ment Promotion Institute (IPIM). The Annual Report noted that, in the latter case, the involvement of senior government official Jackson Chang, former IPIM president, indicated that corrupt practices had spread even into leadership positions in the Macau government.

A summary of the Annual Report released on the CCAC website yesterday described in somewhat colloquial terms the public’s reaction to learning of these two cases. “Even citizens thought that they were unbelievable and smelled a rat after knowing them,” the summary reads, paraphrasing the statement of CCAC Commissioner André Cheong in the report’s foreword.

Cheong states in the Annual Report that being incorruptible and not accepting bribes and other personal gain constitute the minimum legal requirements for public positions.

In 2018, the CCAC received a total of 733 complaints and reports, of which 141 involved corruption and 592 were about administrative impropriety. Compared with the previous year, there was a decrease in complaints and reports, attributed by the CCAC to the occurrence of the 2017 Legislative Assembly Election, which prompted enquiries pertaining to the legal conduct of various aspects of the election.

CTM profits hold stable as revenue, investments grow

MACAU telecommunications company CTM yesterday presented an overview of its business performance of 2018, indicating that its profits last year of MOP941 million held at the same level as in 2017.

CTM’s revenue grew in 2018 on account of growth in the Macau economy and elevating consumer interest in new products offered by the firm. At the same time, various network infrastructure projects were completed and put into operation, including enhancements to the fiber-optic network and 4G+ mobile network, an expansion of CTM’s Wi-Fi hotspot coverage, the opening of a software

development center in Zhuhai and a data center in Hong Kong.

At the end of 2018, CTM’s 4G+ users and fiber-optic users had reached 930,000 and 150,000 respectively. There were over 2,700 free CTM Wi-Fi hotspots covering various districts, bus routes and TurboJET Ferries travelling between Hong Kong and Macau, enabling more than 40 million connections and some 4 million GB of data transferred.

Under the slogan of “Digital Macau 2.0”, the telecommunications firm unveiled yesterday plans for a 5G rollout in Macau which, subject to approval by Macau authorities, will allow

for high-quality real-time monitoring of Macau’s roads. According to representatives of the company, the technology might be used for both security and transportation purposes.

By the end of this year, CTM expects its first customers to begin surfing the internet on the latest generation of Wi-Fi, significantly faster than its predecessor iterations.

There are also plans underway to utilize other new technologies showcased at yesterday’s event, including high-speed wireless transmission virtual reality equipment, network security solutions and the Internet of Things applications.

Company CEO Vandy Poon said that “Digital Macau 2.0” was not a mere upgrade of existing equipment, but the implementation of a broader and deeper vision.

Two collaboration agreements were signed by CTM during yesterday’s event. An agreement with the University of Macau will facilitate cooperation on the research and development of 5G mobile technology, while another, signed with Benefit Vantage Ltd, a service provider on network security and data backup based in Hong Kong, will seek to introduce mobile authentication technology to Macau, making online payments safer and easier. **DB**

ECONOMY

Employment situation holds stable

THE general unemployment rate for the three-month period between December 2018 and February 2019 held stable compared to the previous period (November 2018 to January 2019) at 1.7 percent, according to the latest information from the Statistics and Census Service. The unemployment rate of local residents was 2.3 percent, down by 0.1 percentage points.

Meanwhile, the data shows the underemployment rate was 0.5 percent, up by 0.1 percentage points.

The total labor force was 394,800 and the labor force participation rate was 70.8 percent. Total employment was 388,100 and the number of employed residents totaled 283,600, down by 3,400

and 3,500 respectively from the previous period.

Analyzed by industry, employment in gaming and junket activities decreased, while that in hotels, restaurants and similar activities increased.

The number of unemployed was 6,700, down by 200 from the previous period. New labor market entrants seeking their first job accounted for 6.6 percent of the total unemployed, down by 7.1 percentage points.

In comparison with the December 2017 to February 2018 period, the unemployment rate dropped by 0.2 percentage points, while the labor force participation rate and the underemployment rate rose by 0.6 and 0.1 percentage points, respectively.

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Times

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Lawmakers accuse gov't of lagging on counter-corruption measures

Julie Zhu

LAWMAKER Pereira Coutinho has asked the government about a timetable for the implementation of measures to hold principal government officials more accountable as well as for allowing Macau's situation to be studied by international organizations, such as Transparency International for Macau, in order to be evaluated on the Corruption Perceptions Index.

However, Kou Peng Kuan, director of the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP), argued yesterday during a Legislative Assembly (AL) session that no significant changes to Macau's political system could be made without permission from the central government in Beijing.

In response to Coutinho, Kou said that the government had already discussed the accountability issue internally, particularly after Typhoon Hato. The bureau director however, did not reveal the government schedule for the establishment of new measures to enhance principal officials' accountability.

Coutinho also took the opportunity during yesterday's AL session to criticize Macau's corruption index. "How can you spend effort letting organizations evaluate our corruption perception?" asked Coutinho, adding that "you have said a lot of things which we have constantly been hearing about. There is nothing new."

"There is a joke which goes: 'the Macau government is very clean'," added Sulu Sou.

"In the last half year, it has been spread around that Macau only got about 30 points in the Index of Economic Freedom, only higher than the Philippines' government," he added.

Sou pointed to a recent report from the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC), which revealed the close private relationships among the staff of the Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Center.

"I hope that the SAR government can carry out corruption crackdown [activities] before this government ends its term," said Sou.

Besides the aforementioned lawmakers, Au Kam San also expressed his opinion about the government's political responsibility. "Rules for the principal officials have not been produced yet. The CCAC even confirmed that the Secretary for Administration and Justice engaged in such improper behavior [... but] the CCAC confirmed that it did not violate the law," said Au.

In reply to the SAFP director, who had argued that a change to Macau's political system required the approval of the central government, Au blamed the SAR government for finding excuses to avoid improvement.

"Regardless of whether it is the Chief Executive election or lawmakers' election, the first step must be taken by Macau, not by the central government," said Au, adding, "do not blame the central government for Macau lagging behind in politics."

The SAFP director refused to

budge, insisting that the SAR government places importance upon anti-corruption measures.

POOR GARBAGE CLASSIFICATION

Mak Soi Kun has stated that there are difficulties in classifying food waste in Macau, pointing specifically to kitchens in the city and their handling of leftover food.

During yesterday's AL, an environmental protection inquiry was conducted by lawmaker Si Ka Lon, who asked about regulations of restaurants' emissions of cooking fumes in particular, as well as other air pollutant emissions.

"Macau's environmental policies are still lagging behind, and are not catching up to the world's pace," Si said.

Mak Soi Kun then criticized kitchen waste handling habits in Macau.

"We are putting wine bottles, beer bottles and everything else into the same trash bin," said Mak. "Even if we were to install kitchen waste grinders, it would not be effective because we would put everything inside."

In Macau, 40 percent of solid waste comes from kitchens, with integrated hotels producing more waste, according to Ho Ion Sang.

Ho proposed that, when Macau builds new buildings, food waste classification facilities and other relevant facilities should be installed during the process. He also asked the government whether it would take gaming operators' environmental protection measures into consideration during the next

gaming concession public tender.

Other lawmakers also expressed that there could be regional cooperation in regards to food waste treatment.

According to Raimundo Arrais do Rosário, Secretary for Transport and Public Works, the local government is working on food waste treatment with the six big gaming operators and "there is no big problem" regarding food waste from casinos and hotels.

According to the Director of the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSAP) Tam Vai Man, the drafting of the administrative regulations on the food processing-related equipment funding scheme will be completed this year. Another regime governing restaurant cooking fumes will also enter legislative procedures this year.

MORE REPRESENTATION URGED IN STANDING COMMITTEE

Sulu Sou has asked the government for wider representation in the Standing Committee of the Coordination of Social Affairs.

Recently, the city's employees and employers reached a new agreement regarding compensation for groundless dismissal.

However, Sou called for stronger protection of employees. He believes that a greater diversity of opinions should be included in the committee.

On the other hand, Mak Soi Kun proposed to the government the improvement of local workers' and companies' quality, in order to partially solve the dispute between the employers' side and the

employees' side.

"Knowledge changes one's fate. When workers become bosses, naturally, there will be fewer disputes," said Mak.

The lawmaker also criticized the fact that the local government's policies are tilted toward large-scale companies.

"When small companies opened in the past, they did not think that there would be this many advances in terms of employee protection. In the 1980s, the local government started introducing employer and employee laws. They could only compensate employees if they sold their houses," said Mak.

In Mak's opinion, if the local government helps workers to become self-employed or be promoted, then the workers will not turn to the government, and in turn there would be fewer disputes.

ROSÁRIO COMPLAINS HE CANNOT HIRE STAFF

Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raimundo Arrais do Rosário has complained that applicants for job vacancies in his sector do not show up for exams.

Yesterday, a proposal to hire more people for his departments was made to Raimundo.

However, the secretary complained that his departments provided 115 vacancies in the past civil servant exams.

"As of today, not even half of the vacancies are filled up. We spent 6.7 million patacas. There were 55,000 applicants, but only 14,000 people showed up for the exams," said Raimundo.



ANTÓNIO TRINDADE

Untreated sewage rules out marine economy, leading down potentially disastrous road

Renato Marques

THE environmental situation in Macau is “appalling” according to António Trindade, CEO of local energy and environment firm CESL Asia, and those in the government and other entities ought to be held responsible for allowing the situation to deteriorate so far and so fast.

Ahead of this year’s Macao International Environmental Cooperation Forum and Exhibition (MIECF), the Times spoke with Trindade, seeking updates on the region’s current environmental situation, as well as ideas and challenges for the future.

Above all, Trindade stressed the urgency to restore an attitude of integrity in public service toward environmental issues.

According to Trindade, a very high percentage of untreated wastewater is being dumped on the Macau coastline, causing total disruption of the entire maritime ecosystem, among other problems.

“I would say that over 80 percent of the sewage water that is produced in Macau is discharged, untreated, to coastal waters, and this means that there is no possibility of a marine economy. But the problem is way broader, because it is not just the fish that die. Then you have health problems like, for example, gas-

troenteritis, that increase when typhoons and flooding occur. All this pollution affects the environment and the place we live in,” he said.

“Unfortunately the situation is deteriorating and we need to have a solution [...] artificial intelligence-style. We must change everything that we do nowadays.”

“This pollution does not appear by chance; it occurs because none of the wastewater treatment plants [ETARs] work properly, and it is proven the administration knows about this for a long time and miscommunicates the real situation to the public.”

Trindade noted that, contrary to pollution resulting from plastic waste, the impact of the untreated wastewater has direct and immediate consequences, although the majority of the population is not aware of the seriousness of their exposure.

Questioned as to how the current situation could be reversed, Trindade said: “Well, only two things can happen: either a push from society [like in the plastic situation] or by the initiative of a new leadership in public office and the private contractors.”

“We are not just talking about gastroenteritis, there are many things involved. There were explosions occurring in the sewage of Macau a couple months ago [due to concentrations of metha-

ne gas] which could have much worse consequences.”

The CESL Asia CEO also said that other cases are being reported. For example, people getting intoxicated from sewage gases in their own homes is a situation that normally occurs during the night when there is less use of the sewage piping, he said. “The same happens with the tons of fish dying every week or so and the administration replies that it is due to a lack of oxygen, which is an almost grotesque [statement].”

“Common people probably do not know but the specialists know that ‘lack of oxygen’ is a technical term for extreme pollution.”

He described the situation in Macau as dramatic, adding that it was “not possible to emphasize the matter more.”

“Maybe 10 years ago we could warn - and we did - but at the moment things are at a stage which does accept such resolutions anymore” and demands action.

For Trindade, “15 [or even] 10 years ago, Macau was considered a center of excellence in terms of public environmental infrastructure. The problems have been clearly identified, but unfortunately nothing changed.”

As an example, Trindade claimed CESL Asia was replaced from the Macau ETAR project due to a dispute with the admini-

nistration, “because the government never wanted to accept that the facility had half of the capacity [to treat wastewater] than what the government had announced.”

I would say that over 80pct of the sewage water that is produced in Macau is discharged, untreated, to coastal water.

ANTÓNIO TRINDADE

“The fact is, after four of five years there is no ETAR and we will not have it - at least [not] in the upcoming three or four years. So what we are seeing is a delay that goes almost to 10 years, which is something completely unthinkable.”

“Macau cannot be turned into a World Tourism and Leisure Center for the Greater Bay in such a poor condition.”

Meanwhile, Trindade attribu-

ted the new anti-plastic bag bill proposed by the government to community awareness, adding that the long-awaited initiative might never have been put into action without pressure from the public.

“These are things that clearly result from public pressure and the community, which is, in fact, most of the time the origin of these positive actions,” he told the Times.

“The plastic is a serious problem, not only in Macau but all over the world, and it is has received special attention in the last few years, with an attempt from worldwide communities to eliminate its use because it does have a very significant impact on the ecosystem.”

Trindade noted that the creation of the plastic material, which was considered at the time a “wonderful fiber” with a huge range of applications, had “consequences that were already predictable at that time.”

“[Public awareness] has an immediate impact, visible, and [it can be done] in a very simple way. It just needs a small group of activists to come to the public and find a way to measure the pulse of society and the performance of the government on such a matter, making it impossible for the [local] government to be indifferent to a matter that all the world is addressing.”



HEALTH

Measles outbreak intensifies with 23 cases now reported

ANOTHER three cases of measles were reported this week, bringing the total number of cases in Macau to 23 since the beginning of the year – an eight-fold increase compared to last year.

The Health Bureau (SSM) announced in a statement that of the three new cases, two had contracted the disease from a patient who was the fifth imported case of measles, and that they are in isolation at the Clinical Center of Public Health.

One recent case involved a 47-year-old woman working as a croupier at a casino in L'Arc Macau, who had visited her relatives at Kiang Wu Hospital on the afternoon of March 6.

The second case was diagnosed in a 24-year-old woman living in the SAR, who had also gone to the outpatient clinic at Kiang Wu Hospital on the afternoon of March 6, while the third case was detected in a local teenager, aged 14, who is a student of Xin Hua School (Chinese section) and returns to Zhuhai every day after classes.

In a separate statement, the SSM clarified that no evidence has been found that points to failures on the part of Kiang Wu Hospital or its health professionals.

This comes after a physician working at the private hospital had recently treated a measles patient and then contracted the disease.

The bureau noted that health professionals have complied with all the guidelines and standards.

“It should be emphasized that measles infection can be transmitted through air, as it is a highly infectious disease. Sporadic cases occur where levels of infectivity are very high and therefore infection of health professionals [by] the public is unavoidable,” the SSM said in a statement.

The bureau said that there are clinical reports listing the existence of cases of re-infection even after effective vaccination in several areas of the world.

Additionally, on Tuesday, six further Hong Kong residents were reported to be infected with measles, bringing the number of cases in the neighboring region up to 26.

Nine of the Hong Kong cases involved airport and airline personnel – of which one was a pilot who had recently visited Manila, Singapore and Bangkok.

As cited in a report issued by the South China Morning Post, a top disease expert has warned that Hong Kong could face a second wave of measles infections.

Meanwhile, the Philippines is in the midst of a measles epidemic. More than 21,000 cases have been recorded this year and 315 people have died, according to media reports.

Last week, the director of Macau's Disease Prevention and Control Centre, Lam Chong, urged employers of non-resident workers, especially workers from the Philippines and Vietnam, to vaccinate such workers against measles. **LV**



MELCO 38TH MACAO GREEN WEEK Green Endeavors

Dedicated to environmental sustainability as one of its corporate social responsibility priorities, Melco Resorts & Entertainment has made tremendous effort to promote environmental awareness in the community and is committed to addressing plastics pollution

Coinciding with the 38th Macao Green Week, Melco hosted a series of events titled Melco Green Week with The Salvation Army and other NGOs to spread the message of environmental sustainability among the community and colleagues.

Environmental awareness game booths were set up at employee Heart of House areas across City of Dreams, Studio City and Altira Macau, as well as the company's offices at Flower City. Close to 250 colleagues were introduced to the concept of 'Recycling, Sharing and Connecting with the Community'. During the week, the company's Heart of House eateries provided sustainable menus. The Melco Green Week Diet highlighted healthy and environmentally-responsible food options.

At a separate event titled Melco Community Recycle Day held at Jardim Areia Preta, some 600 pot plants grown with organic fertilizer mixed with compost processed by Melco's food waste decomposers were gifted to those bringing along goods for recycling.

Some plants dismantled from Melco's butterfly-themed floral installation at Tap Seac Square, where the company became the first local integrated resort operator to participate at Macao Green Week's Green Carnival, were donated to local NGOs, while others were treated at Melco's waste decomposers to become recycled organic compost.

Acting to combat single use plastics and pollution, the company shared the message of sustainability with more than 20 Melco volunteers and beneficiaries from Fu Hong Society at a DIY workshop dedicated to creating reusable cup holders.

Each year, plastics weighing 8 million tons enter the ocean. If current trends continue, there could be more plastics than fish in the sea by 2050. Recognizing this issue, Melco is the first and only hospitality group and integrated resort globally to become signatory to The New Plastics Economy Global Commitment, led by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in collaboration with UN Environment.

The Global Commitment addresses plastics pollution, enabling a coalition between governments and companies to commit towards 100% reusable, recyclable, or compostable plastic packaging by 2025. Businesses that become signatories will publish annual data on their progress, and targets will be reviewed every 18 months and amplified over time.

Committed to reducing the use of plastics and promoting circular economy across its global operations, including at integrated resorts City of Dreams Macau, Studio City, Altira Macau and City of Dreams Manila, as well as its corporate offices and properties in Hong Kong, Macau, the Philippines and Japan, Melco will remove 100% of single-use plastic bottles at all employee areas by the end of 2019.

By the end of 2020, it plans to expand the scope to guest areas including amenity kits, garbage bags, plastic bottles, straws, disposable F&B containers and utensils.

Furthermore, by mid-2019, Melco will complete the process of identifying non reusable, recyclable, or compostable packaging, and further develop an execution plan to address each of these by 2025.



This article is sponsored by Melco Resorts & Entertainment.

SHENZHEN

Drunk driver said he had perfume, not alcohol

A mainland man recently caught drunk-driving in Shenzhen told a traffic police officer that he had drunk a bottle of perfume instead of admitting to having consumed alcohol.

The Shenzhen police officer caught the man, surnamed Cai, and tested him positive for a blood-alcohol value exceeding the legal limit. However, Cai insisted that he had not been drinking alcohol. Instead, he said that he had drunk half a bottle of perfume.

The drink-driver continued his narrative with the police officer, saying that he had been at a party with his friends, where they had played a game. As a punishment for losing the game, he had to drink perfume.

In total, he said he drank 75 ml of perfume. He also said that, after drinking the perfume, he drank an ample amount of water.

The Shenzhen police officer then discovered that the man had had his driving license canceled in 2018 due to drink-driving, and that he therefore had been driving without a license.

The man was fined a total of RMB4,000, and punished with an administrative detention period of 15 days. JZ

Kyunghee Park

CATHAY Pacific Airways Ltd. agreed to pay HKD2.25 billion (USD287 million) in cash for Hong Kong's only budget airline to enter the no-frills market, after more than a decade resisting such a move to focus on premium services.

Cathay plans to operate Hong Kong Express Airways Ltd., part of HNA Group Co., as a standalone carrier after the transaction is completed by Dec. 31, the flag carrier said.

"HK Express captures a unique market segment," Cathay said in an emailed statement Wednesday. "This represents an attractive and practical way for the Cathay Group to support the long-term development and growth of our aviation business and to enhance the competitiveness of the Hong Kong hub during a time of intense regional competition."

The acquisition will give Cathay a crucial piece of business that's missing

Cathay buys HK Express

from its operations and additional landing slots in Hong Kong, home to Asia's busiest international airport. It will provide Cathay with a new revenue source as the region's growing economies allow more people to fly, and as Chinese rivals expand with direct long-haul flights, bypassing the need to transit in Hong Kong.

Cathay declined 0.3 percent to HKD13.64 as of 10:12 a.m. in Hong Kong trading, after climbing as much as 3.4 percent.

The company will use its existing funds for the cash payment. As part of the transaction, Cathay also pledged to repay HKD2.68 billion of debt held by Hong Kong Express in the form of promissory notes.

Asia Pacific's burgeoning market will probably see the largest increase in air traffic worldwide, with almost 4 billion passenger journeys expected in the next two decades.

Cathay is more than a decade behind Asian arch rival Singapore Airlines Ltd. in entering the no-frills business, and has seen demand for some shorter routes eroded by low-cost airlines while Chinese and Middle Eastern carriers chip away at premium and long-haul demand.

As airlines from Australia to India acknowledged the travel aspirations of Asia's rising middle class by setting up budget carriers including Jetstar, Peach Aviation and IndiGo, Cathay sat tight on its premium roots. Profits were further eroded as mainland carriers began offering cheaper, direct flights to the U.S. from Chinese cities including Shanghai and Guangzhou, reducing the need to fly via Hong Kong.

In March 2017, Cathay reported the first annual net loss in eight years and said it was embarking on a three-year transformation program to improve its operational efficiency and returns.

In April that year, it named a new chief executive officer, Rupert Hogg, who said a few months later that Cathay "broadly" had no plan to begin a low-cost carrier. Less than a year later, Cathay's parent, Swire Pacific Ltd., named Merlin Swire as chairman, marking the return of a Swire family member to lead the conglomerate.

The overhaul amid the management changes appears to be bearing fruit. After cutting at least 600 jobs, adding destinations, and improving services, the carrier ended a two-year run of losses and posted its first full-year profit in 2018.

Apart from Hong Kong Express, airlines looking to start frills-free operations in the city have been

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met with opposition. In 2015, Hong Kong rejected an application from Jetstar Hong Kong Airways Ltd., saying it didn't comply with legal requiremen-

ts to operate such a business. Cathay also voiced its objection to the budget airline - a venture of Qantas Airways Ltd. and China Eastern Airlines Corp.

that was backed by billionaire Stanley Ho's Shun Tak Holdings Ltd.

Hong Kong's position as an aviation hub has been threatened in recent years

as airports in the mainland have been expanding to handle more international passengers, while Chinese carriers are either adding direct routes to the U.S. and Europe or teaming up with U.S. peers to expand their networks. Delta Air Lines Inc. took a minority stake in China Eastern in 2015 and American Airlines Group Inc. announced a similar deal with China Southern Airlines Co. in 2017.

For Chinese conglomerate HNA Group, the disposal is part of its efforts to trim one of China's biggest debt piles by selling dozens of assets from hotels to aircraft-leasing and inflight-catering businesses.

Hong Kong Express, which started services in October 2013, operates a fleet of Airbus SE A320 family aircraft. It flies to cities in countries including China, South Korea, Japan and Vietnam. **Bloomberg**

HONG KONG

Gov't cracks down on developers who defy vacancy tax

HONG Kong's government unveiled details of a planned tax on unsold new apartments, including the potential for jail time for developers who defy the rules.

Developers will be required to submit reports annually on the status of apartments, with false statements punishable by a fine and a year in prison, a document submitted to the legislature late Tuesday proposed.

Notorious as the world's least affordable housing market, Hong Kong's aim is to boost the supply of homes, a move that could help to curb price pressures. Builders would be more likely to sell apartments quickly rather than stockpiling them in the hope of price gains and bigger profits in the future.

Under the plan, a tax amounting to double an apartment's annual rental value would apply after six months of vacancy. The proposal also plugs a loophole: developers can't beat the tax simply by selling a new apartment to an associated company.

The government plans to introduce a bill containing the measures before the end of the legislative year in July.

AD

2019MIECF
Macao International Environmental
Co-operation Forum & Exhibition
2019年澳門國際環保合作發展論壇及展覽

Grand Opening
28-30/03/2019



Promoting Ecological Civilization
and Green Development

Host



中華人民共和國澳門特別行政區政府
Government of the Macao
Special Administrative Region of
the People's Republic of China

Special Supporting Organizations:

National Development and Reform Commission of the People's Republic of China
Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China
Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of the People's Republic of China
Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the People's Republic of China

Co-organizers:

People's Government of Fujian Province
People's Government of Jiangxi Province
People's Government of Hunan Province
People's Government of Guangdong Province
People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region
People's Government of Hainan Province
People's Government of Sichuan Province
People's Government of Guizhou Province
Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Host Co-ordinators:

Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM)
Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA)

Event Manager:

Koelnmesse Pte Ltd

The program is subject to change.
Please refer to the final announcement at
www.macaomiecf.com.

Query hotline: 8798 9675
Venue: The Venetian Macao



Highlights of the Official Events

28/03/2019(Thursday)			
10:00 - 11:30	2019 MIECF Opening Ceremony Keynote Speech: Mr. Michael Liebreich	Ballroom G-L (Level 3)	
11:00 - 18:30	Green Showcase (Open to trade visitors only), Green Matching	Expo Hall A / B (Level 1)	
Green Forum, Green Business Co-operation Day & Business Exchange			
14:30 - 16:30	Session 1 New Opportunities in the Eco Bay Area - Creating Green Energy Cities	Sicily Room 2401-2502 (Level 1)	
16:30 - 17:00	Business Exchange	Sicily Room 2404-2405 (Level 1)	
Green Business Pioneers Roundtable			
14:30 - 15:45	Session 2 Corporate Innovation	Florence Room 2201-2302 (Level 1)	
16:15 - 17:30	Session 3 Sustainable Investment		
29/03/2019(Friday)			
09:00 - 18:00	Green Showcase (Open to trade visitors only), Green Matching	Expo Hall A / B (Level 1)	
Green Forum & Signing Ceremony			
09:30 - 11:00	Session 4 The Ways Toward Ecological Civilization	Sicily Room 2401-2502 (Level 1)	
09:30 - 12:20	Session 5 Leveraging the Macao Platform, Fostering Green Finance to Promote the Development in the Greater Bay Area Part I - Macro environment and development potentials of green finance Part II - Innovative instruments of green finance	Florence Room 2201-2302 (Level 1)	
11:20 - 13:00	Session 6 Solutions for Green Development - Clean Water	Sicily Room 2401-2502 (Level 1)	
12:30 - 13:00	Signing Ceremony	Green Networking Area, Expo Hall B (Level 1)	
14:30 - 15:15	Keynote Speaker Special Session Industry Insights with Mr. Michael Liebreich Topic: The State of the Green Industry	Sicily Room 2401-2502 (Level 1)	
15:00 - 18:00	Session 7 Green Chemical Forum - Solutions to Tackle Plastics Marine Debris	Florence Room 2201-2302 (Level 1)	
15:30 - 18:00	Session 8 Pan-Pearl River Delta Region Session Part 1: Sharing by Representative of PPRD Delegation to Europe Part 2: The Introduction of Environmental Protection Industry's Development in China Part 3: Pan-Pearl River Delta Region Eco-Corporate Pioneers Roundtable: Creating Green Values through Ecological Civilization	Sicily Room 2401-2502 (Level 1)	
30/03/2019(Saturday)			
09:00 - 17:00	Green Showcase, Green Matching	Expo Hall A / B (Level 1)	
10:00 - 17:00	Green Public Day		

2019 MIECF Keynote speaker



Mr. Michael Liebreich

- Founder of New Energy Finance
- Former Chairman of the Advisory Board at Bloomberg New Energy Finance and Senior Contributor
- Chairman and CEO of Liebreich Associates

Free Admission to the exhibition. All are welcome.

Activity Highlights / Forum Green Networking Area, Expo Hall B (Level 1)

28/03/2019(Thursday)	
14:00 - 15:00	Turn Waste into Treasure, Smart Eco and Nanotechnology Forum
15:15 - 16:45	European Sustainable Solutions
29/03/2019(Friday)	
09:30 - 10:15	Buyer Briefing Session
14:30 - 15:30	Green Booth Award and Electricity Fee Rebate
15:30 - 16:30	2019 Environmental Co-operation Development Forum and Business Matching Session Host: Macao Association of Environmental Protection Industry
16:00 - 16:45	Green Finance Networking
17:00 - 18:00	Greenovation Roadshow
30/03/2019(Saturday)	
10:00 - 17:00	Green Public Day

Free shuttles are provided for the public on 30 March (Saturday). Please refer to the following link for the routes. <http://www.macaomiecf.com/miecf2019/general-information/shuttle>

Green Exhibition and Green Forum

28/03/2019	11:00 - 18:30	Open to trade visitors only
29/03/2019	09:00 - 18:00	Open to trade visitors only
30/03/2019	09:00 - 17:00	Green Showcase opens to the public

Greenovation Zone - Elevator pitching

28/03/2019	29/03/2019	30/03/2019
14:30 - 17:00	11:00 - 15:30	11:00 - 13:00

Concurrent Event

30/03/2019(Saturday)		
10:00 - 11:00	Press Conference on Ecological Environment Research in Macao Hosts: Department of Science and Technology for Social Development, Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China Environmental Protection Bureau	Sicily Room 2401-2502 (Level 1)

Frederik Balfour

THE world's ultra-rich are used to bespoke touches in life, from custom-made suits to tailored financial advice. But what happens when you apply that approach to property, and take it to the extreme?

Hong Kong businessman and former JPMorgan Chase & Co. banker Loewe Lee has the answer in a cluster of homes nestled on a piece of land overlooking the South China Sea. It's prime real estate, but the appeal doesn't stop there.

Five of the seven houses have been painstakingly fitted out with everything a modern multimillionaire could want. Persian carpets cover the floors, and the kitchen cabinets are filled with cut crystal and Christofle cutlery. There's art on the walls and coffee table books arranged just so.

All a buyer need do is bring a suitcase, and USD75 million (for one dwelling, that is).

"We're aiming these at well-to-do, well traveled, sophisticated people who might have gone through the process of creating a home many times," said Lee, 39, the fourth generation of a family that made its fortune in grandfather clocks and quartz watch movements. "They tell us it's quite a nightmare."

So time poor, and cash rich: Hong Kong, the world's least affordable property market and Asia's preeminent financial center, should have plenty of those.

Still, it's an unorthodox approach to selling ultra-luxury homes, particularly when buyers who can afford to spend that sort of money can also af-

A must-have for Hong Kong's rich: USD75 million bespoke homes



Loewe Lee

ford to hire interior designers and style consultants.

Lee, the managing director of Hong Kong-listed National Electronics Holdings Ltd., whose property arm teamed with BPEA Real Estate on the project, says attention to detail is a key point of difference.

Dressed in a crisp three-piece suit with white pocket square, Lee is keen to highlight design features that may escape the untrained eye, from the way pat-

terns in the hand-picked slabs of Carrara marble dovetail, to the pull-down leather tray in the walk-in closet that makes accessorizing while dressing easier. (He jokes that his wife often ribs him about his extensive collection of Hermes wallets.) The development also boasts landscaped gardens, a spacious car park, and each house has its own infinity pool.

Two of the homes have been designed by Paris-based duo Gilles & Boissier, whose projects have included New York's

Baccarat Hotel and the Mandarin Oriental in Marrakech. They're cool and contemporary, with a muted color palette and restrained finishes. More ornate are the two others by local architect Joseph Fung. Doused liberally with gold and red, their baroque style should appeal to mainland Chinese buyers.

The fifth, which hasn't been revealed to potential buyers yet, is by Michele Bonan, whose work Lee discovered when

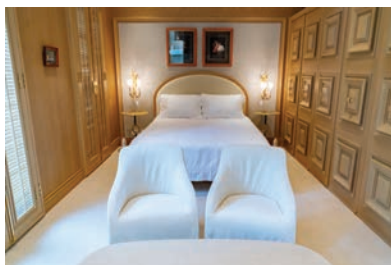
staying at the Hotel Portrait Suites in Rome. Lee liked the Italian designer so much he commissioned him to design the interior of his Benetti superyacht.

The seven-home development (two will be sold unfurnished) is the first property project Lee has overseen from start to finish, following in the footsteps of his father Jimmy Lee, who branched from watch making into luxury houses in the early 1990s.

"Loewe has his father's passion and attention to detail. He flew someone in from Italy to paint a mural, which took a month," said Richard Yue, the former director of investment at AIG Global Real Estate, which has developed Hong Kong residential projects with the Lee family in the past. "We sold to the very, very elite of Hong Kong."

These villas should sell for around HKD125,000 per square foot, or about HKD606 million (\$77 million), according to Alan Man, a broker at Engel & Volkers. They're located in an area of Hong Kong known as Tai Tam, about 30 minutes drive from the central business district.

"There's limited supply and the last development in that area was in 1996," he said. The Lees "have a brand, and people know their quality and reputation." **Bloomberg**



corporate bits

SANDS CARES AMBASSADORS COMPLETE TRAINING WORKSHOP TO ENHANCE SKILLS



Around 40 Sands Cares Ambassadors recently completed a training workshop to help them better serve the community. The workshop aimed to enhance the service quality of their volunteer work while helping them learn more about the concept and significance of corporate volunteers.

The activity is one in a year-long series of celebratory activities leading up to the 10th anniversary of the Sands Cares Ambassador program in August 2019, with the theme "Spreading Love and Embracing Our Community."

The workshop was offered on March 16 at The Ve-

netian Macao's Adelson Advanced Education Centre, and was led by a professional trainer, Leo Hung, chairperson of Supervisory of the Association for Volunteers Social Service of Macau.

Through presentations and interactive games, workshop participants examined effective volunteer strategies and skills, and discussed the nature of volunteer service and the relationship between volunteers and those they serve.

The Sands Cares Ambassador program was established in August 2009 to give Sands China team members an outlet for serving the local community by organizing community activities and initiatives that work toward creating a better Macau.

JADE DRAGON NAMED AMONG ASIA'S 50 BEST RESTAURANTS



Melco Resorts & Entertainment Limited is pleased to announce that Jade Dragon has once again been named

among Asia's 50 Best Restaurants 2019 at an awards ceremony held today in Macau.

Located at City of Dreams, Jade Dragon is renowned for its premium Cantonese cuisine and creative gastronomic presentation. This is the third consecutive year that the restaurant receives this prestigious award. Jade Dragon was also recently honored as the only three-Michelin-starred Cantonese restaurant in Macau. Both recognitions further elevate Macau as a Creative City of Gastronomy.

Lawrence Ho, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Melco Resorts & Entertainment said, "I am incredibly proud that Jade Dragon has been acknowledged for its dedication to excellence for yet another year. Achieving this level of recognition for the third year running is of tremendous significance."

BLOOMBERG



AVIATION

China suspends airworthiness certificate for Boeing 737 Max

CHINA suspended a certificate of airworthiness for Boeing Co.'s 737 Max jet, saying it needs to review a proposed modification before determining whether the plane is safe to fly after two recent crashes.

The move raises the possibility of the Max being kept out of China's skies should authorities there deem Boeing's fix for plane-control software linked to the disasters inadequate. Chinese authorities grounded the country's fleet of Max planes on March 11, a day after an Ethiopian Airlines flight plunged to the ground.

The latest decision was taken in light of the uncertainty surrounding the model and an anti-stall system that's the focus of a probe into the loss of the Ethiopian Airlines plane, according to the Civil Aviation Administration of China. It will be reviewed once Boeing has detailed the changes, the body said.

The potential blow to Boeing comes a day after China awarded a \$35 billion order to Airbus SE that consisted mostly of A320-series planes, the 737's biggest global rival. The Asian nation was one of the first to ground the American narrow-body after the Ethiopian crash showed parallels to one involving a Lion Air Max in October, while Boeing has also become embroiled in a simmering trade spat.

"I suspect this has everything to do with the broader China-U.S. climate," said Richard Aboulafia, an aerospace analyst at Teal Group. "Boeing is on the front line in this confrontation. The Max looks like merely a pawn."

It wasn't immediately clear how long the process will take for the Max to regain its certification, but some suggested it could take a long time.

"Recertification means the whole vetting process will begin all over again," said Zhang Qihuai, a

partner at Lanpeng Law Firm and a former China Air Force lawyer. "For mature plane types, it will take a few days. But for a new plane type, it will take as long as needed. The 737 Max is a new jet."

I suspect this has everything to do with the broader China-US climate.

RICHARD ABOULAFIA
AEROSPACE ANALYST

In addition to China, officials in Canada and the European Union have signaled that they intend to independently review changes to the Boeing planes before restoring flights.

Addressing the decision

to buy planes from Airbus, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said China and France have consistently cooperated in the aerospace industry to each other's benefit.

"China's market has provided conditions facilitating the growth of the Airbus company," Geng said at a briefing in Beijing on Tuesday. "China will stay in cooperation with relevant parties concerning the aerospace industry."

In the U.S., the Transportation Department is creating a commission to review aircraft certification, including an evaluation of how the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration oversees the process. While Boeing is working with airlines and regulators this week to prepare an update for the suspect software, known as the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System, it faces increased scrutiny and possible criminal action as the Justice Department begins a probe. **Bloomberg**

ADVERTORIAL

GREAT TIMES

Magic Meets Music In MGM Theater

CALLING all Harry Potter™ fans! Ever dreamt of watching your favorite movie on the world's largest indoor LED screen, with more than 80 members' orchestra performing live to picture? Your dream can now become a reality! The Harry Potter™ Film Concert Series is a global concert tour celebrating the Harry Potter™ films. And you will soon be able to enjoy this magical experience at MGM COTAI's MGM Theater.

The Harry Potter™ Film Concert Series by Orchestra Italiana del Cinema is a first of its kind in Macau and the world's first residency of this series. The first four chapters of this beloved film series will be screened in high-definition on a 900-square-metre screen, as the orchestra performs the unforgettable scores live. The conductor, Maestro Shih-Hung Young, is renowned conductor of classical symphonic literatures, film scores and operas, who will conduct the orchestra and promises the audience a mesmerizing time.




The performance will cover the Harry Potter™ Film Concert Series, beginning with *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*™. In the first installment of the series, Harry Potter™ learns on his 11th birthday that he is the orphaned son of two wizards and possesses magical powers of his own. His adventures at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry includes learning the high-flying sport of Quidditch and playing a thrilling 'live' chess game en route to facing a Dark Wizard bent on destroying him. In the second installment, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*™, Harry faces yet another year of adventure and danger when bloody writing on the wall announces: "The Chamber of Secrets has been opened." Then, in Harry, Ron and Hermione's third year at Hogwarts, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*™, they meet escaped prisoner Sirius Black and learn to handle a half-horse/half-eagle Hippogriff, repel shape-shifting Boggarts and master the art of Divination. And in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*™, Harry Potter™ is mysteriously entered into the Triwizard Tournament, a grueling contest among three wizarding schools in which he confronts a dragon, water demons and an enchanted maze only to find himself in Lord Voldemort's grasp.



This is a performance that will please Harry Potter™ fans of all ages and across all generations. Since the world premiere of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*™ in Concert in June 2016, more than 1.3 million fans have enjoyed this spectacular performance from J.K. Rowling's Wizarding World. As such, a number of great value packages are available, including Family Pass, Macau Local and Students Offer. Visit <https://tickets.mgm.mo> to purchase tickets and view the full schedule for each movie performance.

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AD



星級旅遊服務認可計劃
Programa de Avaliação de Serviços Turísticos de Qualidade
Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme

Application Date

18/3 - 12/4/2019

APPLICATION IS FREE OF CHARGE

Quality Tourism, At Your Service

Food and Beverage Sector

➤ Participants
All licensed * Restaurants and F&B establishments in Macao
Four categories:
- Deluxe Restaurant
- First Class Restaurant
- Second Class Restaurant
- Food and Beverage Establishments

* Operate its business in Macao for at least one year (i.e. obtained licence and opened for business before 17th March, 2018)


Travel Agency Sector

➤ Participants
All licensed * Travel Agency Headquarters / Branches in Macao
* Merchants that operate its business in Macao for at least one year (i.e. obtained licence and opened for business before 17th March, 2018)


➤ Application
Application form is available for download from <http://industry.macaotourism.gov.mo> or can be collected at: Training and Quality Management Department of Macao Government Tourism Office during office hours
Address: Room 1821, 18th Floor, Hot Line Center, Alameda Dr. Carlos d'Assumpcao, nos. 335-341, Macao

➤ Enquiry
Macao Government Tourism Office – Training and Quality Management Department
☎ 8397 1225 / 8397 1522
✉ DFCQ@macaotourism.gov.mo
🌐 www.macaotourism.gov.mo

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DIRECÇÃO DOS SERVIÇOS DE TURISMO
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Conselho de Consumidores do Governo da RAEM
Macao SAR Government Consumer Council




旅遊學院
INSTITUTO DE FORMAÇÃO TURÍSTICA
Institute for Tourism Studies




Associação de Hotéis de Macau
Macao Hotel Association 澳門酒店協會




澳門餐飲業聯合會
The United Association of Food and Beverage Merchants of Macao



澳門中小企業協會
Associação das Pequenas e Médias Empresas de Macau



Associação das Agências de Turismo de Macau
澳門旅遊協會



TICM
Turismo e Indústria da Madeira



CORRUPTION

Beijing expels ex-Interpol president from public office, party

CHINA said yesterday that it has expelled former Interpol President Meng Hongwei from public office and the ruling Communist Party as he awaits trial on corruption charges.

Meng was elected Interpol president in 2016, but his four-year mandate was cut short when he was detained without notice by Chinese authorities last October during a visit to China from Interpol headquarters in France.

At the time, Meng was also one of China's vice ministers of public security.

An investigation found Meng guilty of serious legal violations, a party statement said, noting that he had failed to abide by party principles and implement the party's decisions.

The statement said Meng abused his power to satisfy his family's "extravagant lifestyle," indulging his wife's use of his authority for personal benefit. Expulsion from the party is usually the last step before a suspect is sent for trial and almost certain conviction. Corruption charges usually result in lengthy sentences, including life in prison.

Meng's wife, Grace Meng, made a bold public appeal from France for help locating her husband after she lost contact with him last September. The appeal — especially unusual for relatives of senior Chinese officials — cast light on the forced disappearances of dissidents and allegedly corrupt officials alike under President Xi Jinping.

Following Meng's appeal,

the Ministry of Public Security said he was being lawfully investigated for bribery and other crimes. Interpol said the international police agency had not been informed in advance of the probe, while the French police had launched an investigation into his unexplained disappearance.

Interpol later said Meng resigned as president.

Rights groups criticized Meng's appointment in 2016, pointing to the lack of transparency in China's legal systems and the potential for Meng to use his position against Beijing's political opponents.

He is among a slew of high-ranking officials who have been ensnared by Xi's sweeping crackdown on graft and perceived disloyalty. **AP**

Gov't ratchets up pressure on Canada amid Huawei dispute

CHINA said yesterday that its suspension this week of the license of a second major Canadian canola exporter is justified by safety concerns, as the sides continue to feud over Ottawa's detention of a top executive of Chinese telecom giant Huawei.

China's actions were "scientific and reasonable," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said, adding that Canada should "take practical measures to correct the mistakes it made earlier" in dealing with the overall

relationship.

China's suspension of the license of canola seeds from Viterra Inc. on Tuesday is a blow to USD2 billion worth of exports widely seen as retaliation for Canada's arrest of Meng Wanzhou, the daughter of Huawei's founder.

China earlier had halted imports from Canada's other major canola exporter, Richardson International Ltd.

In both cases, China cited hazardous organisms found in shipments of the seeds and Geng said it ac-

ted "in line with relevant Chinese laws and regulations, as well as the international practice."

Without mentioning Huawei directly, he said China hopes Canada can "get along with us to ensure the sound and steady development of China-Canada relations."

China was infuriated by Meng's Dec. 1 arrest on a U.S. extradition warrant alleging fraud and has since arrested several Canadian citizens on charges the government here says are spurious. **AP**



Andrew Mayeda

U.S. and Chinese officials resume high-level trade talks this week as they close in on a deal that could just be the first step in the long road to economic peace.

President Donald Trump's top trade negotiator, Robert Lighthizer, and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin are due to visit Beijing on today and tomorrow, while top Chinese negotiator, Vice Premier Liu He, plans travel to the U.S. the following week.

The burst of diplomacy suggests both sides remain determined to reach an agreement that would avoid any escalation of the eight-month trade war that has seen them impose duties on \$360 billion of each others' imports.

In a radio interview this week, Lighthizer said he wants to get a deal, but he's "not necessarily hopeful" one will happen. "We're working on it," Lighthizer told National Public Radio. "If there's a great deal to be gotten, we'll get it. If not, we'll find another plan."

U.S. negotiators have voiced concern that China is backtracking on earlier pledges, while officials in Beijing have shown resistance to proposals that they see as one-sided. Plans for a meeting between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping to finalize an agreement has been pushed back by at least a month to late-April, at earliest.

Trade talks to resume as Trump vows 'excellent' deal

2020 DESPERATION

"The president is desperate for a deal," said Clark Packard, trade-policy counsel at the R Street Institute, a think tank based in Washington. "I don't think he wants to go into 2020, running for re-election, without something here."

■ Even after a deal is signed, trade relations between the two powers will likely remain tense for some time

But it's looking increasingly doubtful that the ideal scenario for investors and business leaders - complete removal of the tariffs - will come to pass. Trump said last week he plans to keep tariffs on Chinese products until he's sure Beijing is complying with any deal, citing concern that it hasn't

lived up to previous commitments.

The question of whether to roll back existing tariffs will probably be one of the final, and trickiest, issues to resolve, and it's likely some of the duties will remain in place, said Tim Keeler, an attorney at Mayer Brown who served as chief of staff to former U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab.

That could be a critical issue for talks, according to Zhou Xiaoming, a former Chinese Ministry of Commerce official and diplomat.

"The additional tariffs must be removed," Zhou said in an interview. "If the U.S. won't end the tariffs, then China won't stop the retaliatory tariffs. If it's just no hikes of tariffs rather than scrapping all the existing ones, the significance of the trade talks would be much less."

SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS

Even after a deal is signed, trade relations between the two powers will likely remain tense for some time as they search for a new equilibrium in their economic relationship. Zhou Xiaochuan, the former head of China's central

bank, sounded an optimistic note at an event in Boao, Hainan Province yesterday, and said he believed the two sides could resolve their issues through negotiation.

Trump stoked optimism about a major breakthrough late last month, when he withdrew a threat to ratchet up tariffs and suggested he and Xi could celebrate a deal at a "signing summit." Since then, Trump walked away from a meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, and warned it's possible he'd do the same with Xi if things didn't go his way.

The president told Republican lawmakers on Tuesday that he won't settle for less than an "excellent deal" with China, according to Senator Marco Rubio, who attended the briefing.

TRADE TRUCE

Some market strategists have already been counting on an extended truce, rather than a wholesale reversal of the tariffs. In a research note early this month, Goldman Sachs economists said their base case was that any deal "would leave some U.S. tariffs in place, potentially lifting them in stages as various commitments

under the agreement have been met."

BNP Paribas echoes that view. In a note, rates strategist Laurence Mutkin and oil economist Harry Tchilinguirian predicted the negotiations would end in tariff "stabilization," with some U.S. duties still in place. "We expect tensions to persist even after these deals are reached, as political leaders jockey for commercial advantage abroad and political points at home."

The two countries are still struggling to bridge gaps on substance. Some U.S. negotiators are concerned that China is pushing back against American demands in trade talks, according to people familiar with the negotiations. Chinese officials have scaled back promises on key issues such as intellectual-property policies after failing to receive assurances from the Trump administration that the U.S. will roll back existing tariffs, the people said.

Beijing has played down the chances of a currency commitment solely by China, and it has also said that any enforcement mechanism in a deal must be "two-way, fair and equal." **Bloomberg**

E-COMMERCE

Japan internet giants join forces as payments race heats up

Pavel Alpeyev

LINE Corp. and Mercari Inc. are joining forces on mobile payments as Japan's internet companies race to dominate cashless transactions in the world's No. 3 economy.

The operator of Japan's most popular messaging platform and the used-goods online marketplace app will let users shop and pay for purchases at stores that accept each other's systems starting early this summer, they told reporters in Tokyo yesterday. They also launched an alliance to welcome other mobile payment providers.

After years of inactivity, mobile payments competition is heating up in Japan. Line and Mercari are teaming up to face powerful rivals: e-commerce giant Rakuten Inc. runs its own bank, has a credit card with more than 15 million customers and is building a mobile-phone network. PayPay, backed by SoftBank Group Corp., Yahoo Japan Corp.



BLOOMBERG

and India's Paytm, sparked a shopping frenzy in December by giving users USD90 million in rebates on purchases.

"The teaming up of Mercari and Line makes perfect sense and should help reduce infrastructure and promotion costs," Amir Anvarzadeh, a market strategist at Asymmetric Advisors Pte,

said in a note to clients. "Those who dominate e-commerce and messaging platforms have a good shot at carving the mobile payment market. With Rakuten also heavily involved in financial services and soon to get into mobile segment with an aggressive pricing plan, its chances are good to be among the top two in

Japan, which will include Line/Mercari."

While Rakuten and Line had an early start in payments, Mercari is a latecomer and none of their rivals have managed to secure an insurmountable lead. Two of the country's biggest convenience store chains -- Lawson and Family Mart -- already accept most competing payment methods, on top of an assortment of e-money and transit cards. The same is true for fast-food operator Matsuya Foods, electronics store Bic Camera and pharmacy chain Tomod's.

Internet companies have also turned to discounts and giveaways to lure users. PayPay is running its second rebate campaign, while Rakuten customers can earn 40-times the points awarded on purchases. All three leading players offer users a chance to get back as much 20 percent from purchase amounts.

"The way we have been pursuing cashless payments has put a strain on the merchants and

confused consumers," Line Pay Chief Operating Officer Hisahiro Chofuku said at the briefing. "We want to simplify things."

Line has bet that partnerships with financial institutions will help it get ahead of the competition. The company plans to introduce Line Securities equities trading with the country's biggest brokerage, Nomura Holdings Inc., this year, provided it receives the necessary permits. And a banking offering in partnership with Mizuho Financial Group Inc. could become available as early as fall 2020. In November, the internet company announced an alliance with China's Tencent Holdings Ltd. and its WeChat Pay, targeting Chinese visitors to Japan.

Line and Mercari's payments operations will remain separate, and they will continue with their own marketing, customer service and fee collection from stores. Mercari's Merpay is accepted at 1.35 million locations around the country, including 900,000 stores using NTT Docomo Inc.'s iD contactless payments service, while Line Pay is available at 1.33 million outlets. The companies didn't discuss the extent of their overlap.

"When pursuing new merchants, we would like to avoid doubling up," said Naoki Aoyagi, the head of Merpay operations. **Bloomberg**

AD

ALBERGUE SCM

人婆仔屋文創空間

Seminário

Mais com menos... Ou mais ou menos, Exemplos de Arquitectura Efémera ou de Baixo Custo

Orador

Prof. Eng. **Marco Imperadori Ph.D.**
Professor do Politécnico di Milano

Data
03 / 04 / 2019
(Quarta - Feira)

Hora
19:00

Língua
Inglês

Local
Albergue SCM - Espaço D1

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SINGAPORE

500
evacuated
in hotel fire;
no injuries

OFFICIALS say about 500 people were evacuated during a fire at a luxury hotel in Singapore, but there were no reports of injuries.

Smoke billowed out of the Grand Hyatt hotel in the Orchard Road shopping district. Guests, passers-by and staff, including some wearing chef hats, gasped as they watched from a distance away.

The Singapore Civil Defence Force said the fire started in the kitchen of a restaurant on the hotel's second floor. It said water sprinklers extinguished the blaze before firefighters arrived.

"There were no reported injuries. The cause of the fire is under investigation," it said.

Last month, about 1,000 guests and staff were evacuated when a switch room caught fire at another Singapore hotel. There were no injuries. **Bloomberg**

Singapore will invest SGD724m
in technology transformation

Yoolim Lee & Joyce Koh

SINGAPORE will allocate SGD724 million under a current plan to transform its economy into one that relies more on fields such as research and on companies that create new markets and jobs.

The additional investment includes SGD500 million for digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, super-computing and robotics under the five-year plan ending 2020, a government advisory panel on research and innovation said in a statement yesterday. The amount includes S\$300 million announced by Minister for Communications and Information S. Iswaran earlier this month.

The Southeast Asian nation, a densely packed regional financial hub with a population of about 5.7 million, is seeking to attract more businesses and investors through the use of advanced technologies. The city-state plans to roll out artificial intelligence and cloud-based so-

lutions to every business sector by 2020, Iswaran said March 4.

"We must continue to emphasize science and technology throughout our society," Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, who chairs the panel, said at a briefing. "We can't afford to have people fearful and distrustful of science, and held captive by totally groundless anti-scientific beliefs."

The government will invest

SGD80 million to develop cell-therapy manufacturing to build on its success in the biopharmaceutical sector, which contributed 4 percent to gross domestic product in 2018 and employs more than 7,700 highly skilled workers. Cell therapy involves injecting living cells into a patient to derive a therapeutic effect such as restoring tissue functions or fighting cancer.

Singapore will also set aside as

much as S\$144 million for food-related innovations to help in sustainable urban production. These will involve tropical aquaculture, urban agriculture, and advanced biotech-based protein production. The nation aims to produce 30 percent of its nutritional needs locally by 2030.

The panel noted that global demand for proteins is expected to increase significantly in the coming decades as the world population increases and income levels rise.

To capture the economic opportunities presented by this demand, the government will focus its research on plant and microbial-based proteins, as well as cell-based cultured meat. It will target investments to build on Singapore's existing research capabilities in bio-engineering, nutrition, bio-processing and agri-food science to grow this new industry.

The figures announced Wednesday fall under a SGD19 billion budget for research, innovation and enterprise for a five-year period through 2020. **Bloomberg**

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Elana Schor & Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar, Washington

USA

Democrats pivot to health care as

PRESIDENT Donald Trump is calling on Republicans to revive the effort to quash the Affordable Care Act, handing Democrats an opportunity to unite in defense of the law as they try to move past the Russia investigation and win the White House in 2020.

Trump's administration is asking a federal appeals court to strike down the entire health care law. The president vowed on yesterday [local time] to make the GOP the "party of health care" and told Senate Republicans to lean into their own agenda on the issue as they head into next year's election.

The moves could help Trump rally his conservative base as he celebrates Attorney General William Barr's summary of special counsel Robert Mueller's report that said there was no evidence that the president or his associates colluded with Russia in the 2016 campaign. But the push also poured political kerosene on an issue that many Democrats credit with powering their midterm election victories in November.

Top Democrats, including presidential candidates, said health care is an issue that resonates with voters more than the Mueller investigation.

"This is something that Americans care deeply about," said Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, a White House hopeful. "I may not have been asked about the Mueller report at town hall meetings, but I was sure asked about health care."

Other Democrats appeared to relish the chance to shift to health care. Asked if the Trump administration's court filing allowed Democrats to turn the page on Mueller, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she would have been talking about health care no matter what.

"We have been dealing with health care constantly," the California Democrat said. "The public attention has been on the Mueller report, but we have been focused on health care."

Another 2020 contender, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, said if Trump "wants to have a fight on health care, it's

a fight we're willing to have. And it's a fight he is going to lose."

Trump's administration is asking a federal appeals court to strike down the entire health care law

That confidence is in part because health care was a big political winner for Democrats last year. According to AP VoteCast, a survey of more than 115,000 midterm voters nationwide, nearly 4 in 10 Democratic voters identified health care as the most important among a list of key issues including immigration, the economy and the environment. A Quinnipiac University poll released yesterday found 55 percent of Americans support-

ing the improvement and not the replacement of the nation's health care system.

The Supreme Court has twice upheld President Barack Obama's health care law, known as "Obamacare." Five justices — a majority — who upheld the law in 2012 are still on the bench.

Trump's effort to repeal Obamacare narrowly failed in the Senate in 2017. Nearly two years later, it's unclear where the White House plans to focus its health care efforts. Trump's most recent budget backs one piece of the legislation that stalled in the Senate.

Republicans gained Senate seats last fall, but there's no indication that GOP senators want another fight over repealing Obamacare — particularly not those up for re-election next year. The GOP also lost control of the House, which means any attempt to dismantle the law could not pass Congress.

One White House official, speaking on condition of anonymity to address still-ear-

ly talks, said discussions are ongoing with Pelosi's office on legislation to lower prescription drug prices, but no substantive path forward for a broader health care bill has emerged.

As the debate plays out on Capitol Hill, the White House made a surprising legal argument for eliminating the health care bill. In a Monday court filing, the administration said the entire health care law should be struck down as unconstitutional after Congress repealed fines on people who remain uninsured.

That's at odds with previous statements by leading congressional Republicans who said they didn't intend to repeal other parts of the law when they cut out its fines, effective this year. It's also a departure from the administration's earlier stance in a lower court, where it had argued that only federal safeguards for people with pre-existing medical conditions and limits on premiums charged to older, sicker

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trump attacks 'Obamacare'



people should be struck down. Repeal of Obamacare in its entirety would risk making more than 20 million people

uninsured. That includes some 12 million low-income people covered through its Medicaid expansion and some 11 million

purchasing subsidized private health insurance through HealthCare.gov and state-run insurance markets.

Some Republicans say that wouldn't happen because the Trump administration's "repeal and replace" plan would send grants to states for them to run their own health insurance programs. However, during the 2017 congressional debate over repealing the health law, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated the GOP replacement plans would result in steep coverage losses.

Several GOP senators said that Trump told them to ensure those with pre-existing conditions stayed protected as they work on an Obamacare replacement. Republicans appeared ready to back up the president on health care for now.

Trump is "thinking that's the issue that defines us as conservatives," Sen. Mike Braun, R-Ind., told reporters after the president addressed a closed-door meeting of GOP senators.

Rep. Steve Scalise, the House minority whip, said Democrats have "misled" voters about the

benefits of Obamacare.

"They were misled about collusion with Russia," said Scalise, R-La. "The same people that have been misleading on all those other issues want to try to mislead people on health care costs."

The sudden focus on the health care law comes as Democratic presidential candidates have embraced a move toward a single-payer health care system known as "Medicare for All." The momentum for that effort could wane if congressional Democrats instead have to focus on defending Obamacare.

House Democrats on unveiled legislation to shore up the Affordable Care Act and expand enrollment to millions more people.

"For (Trump) to bring this back up is traumatic, and it shines a real light on what the contrast is going to be between him and whoever the Democratic nominee is," said Andrew Bates, a spokesman for the Democratic group American Bridge. The group's planned USD50 million investment in deterring swing-state voters from backing Trump in 2020 will focus in part on health care, as well as other economic issues, Bates said. **AP**

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CELEBRATING LIFE – JU MING LIVING WORLD SCULPTURE SELLING EXHIBITION
TIME: 10:30am-11pm
UNTIL: April 7, 2019
VENUE: Rippling Gallery, Roaming Gallery, and Floating Gallery, MGM Cotai
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8806 8888

EXHIBITION OF NEW WORKS IN MAM COLLECTION – CHE HO
TIME: 10am-7pm (no admittance after 6:30pm; closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: April 14, 2019
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

Offbeat

DRUG SUSPECT CAUGHT FLEEING AUSTRALIA BY SEA-DOO



A British man wanted on drug charges has been thwarted in a daring bid to flee Australia for Papua New Guinea on a motorized personal watercraft.

Australian police said the 57-year-old man set out Monday on his Sea-Doo craft from the northern tip of Australia's Queensland state, carrying enough fuel to make the 140-kilometer trip across Torres Strait, and possibly armed with a crossbow.

But after an Australian Border Force vessel was deployed to search for him, he was located only a few kilometers from his destination at Saibai Island, an Australian territory near the southern coast of New Guinea.

Police said the man was wanted for drug-related offenses in Western Australia, and would be sent there.

A joint statement from Australian Federal Police, Australian Border Force and Queensland Police said the man was picked up partly due to information from various "community members" in Queensland and neighboring islands to the north about his likely travel path.

The statement said the arrest in one of Australia's furthest corners was testament to the police force's strong intelligence and policing partnerships.

"This arrest sends a strong message to would-be fugitives — our reach across Australia is second to none and we will use all our contacts and relationships to find you and bring you before a court," it said.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Água de Mar
15:45	Zig Zag
16:20	Conversa da Treta
16:50	Quem Quer Ser Milionário
17:40	Moda Portugal Sr.3
18:15	Ministério do Tempo
19:00	Montra do Lilau (Repetição)
19:35	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	TDM Talk Show
21:50	Livros com João Guedes
22:00	Justiça de Chicago Sr.1
22:45	Todas as Palavras
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Arquivos do Entendimento - O Poder 'Afirmação da Autoridade Portuguesa'
00:15	Telejornal (Repetição)
01:05	RTPi Directo

cinema



CINETEATRO

29 - 31Mar



DUMBO
ROOM 1
2:30, 4:30, 7:30, 9:30pm
Director: Tim Burton
Starring: Colin Farrell, Michael Keaton, Danny DeVito
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 112min

EXTREME JOB
ROOM 2
2:30, 4:30, 9:30pm
Director: Byeong-heon Lee
Starring: Gong-Myoung, Lee Hane, Jun-seok Heo
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 111min

US
ROOM 2
7:15pm
Director: Jordan Peele
Starring: Lupita Nyong'o, Winston Duke, Elisabeth Moss
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 116min



SHAZAM
ROOM 3
2:30pm
Director: David F. Sandberg
Starring: Zachary Levi, Djimon Hounsou, Michelle Borth
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 132min

LOVE LIVE! SUNSHINE SCHOOL IDOL MOVIE - OVER THE RAINBOW
ROOM 3
5:00, 7:15pm
Director: Kazuo Sakai

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

this day in history



1965 THOUSANDS JOIN DR KING IN ALABAMA RALLY

Dr Martin Luther King has taken a crowd of nearly 25,000 people to the steps of the state capital of Montgomery, Alabama to highlight black grievances.

The procession marks the end of a five-day march which started in Selma last week and it brings to a close a month of civil rights protests in Alabama.

Troops policed the roads surrounding the capital and army helicopters hovered overhead as the crowd swelled to nearly 25,000.

Dr King, who addressed the protesters from a podium in the square, described the trek as "one of the greatest marches in the history of America".

"Our aim is not to humiliate and defeat the white man, but to win his friendship and understanding," he added.

Dr King tried to present a petition of black grievances to Governor George Wallace but he refused to meet the delegation.

The civil rights leader said he would ask trade unions to refuse to transport or use the state's products and he urged the Federal Government and the Treasury to withdraw all assistance from the area.

Dr King also said that demonstrations would have to continue where essential conditions remained unmet.

When the march began last week, large bombs were planted at a black church, a funeral parlour and a leading black lawyer's home.

They were later discovered and detonated by experts from the army base at Anniston, Alabama.

To prevent further attacks, US President Lyndon Johnson gave the marchers the protection of nearly 3,000 troops, plus FBI and local police assistance.

But three days ago Viola Liuzzo, a white civil rights advocate who had been ferrying demonstrators to their homes, was shot dead on a lonely stretch of road near the route of the march.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Ku-Klux-Klan movement have reportedly tried to contact President Johnson to discuss his aversion to their organisation.

There was no immediate response from the US President, who recently launched a scathing attack on the group, describing it as "a band of hooded bigots, whose loyalty was not with the United States".

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The protests came just months after the signing of the Civil Rights Bill which created equal rights regardless of race, colour, religion or national origin.

The Voting Rights Act, which banned literacy tests and poll taxes which had previously been used to prevent black people from voting, was introduced in August 1965.

But many states acted quickly to circumvent the law and most of the decade was marked by race riots and assassinations.

Further riots followed in Los Angeles in August 1965.

They lasted six days and left 34 dead and a further 1,000 people injured.

Dr King was assassinated in April 1968 and this led to riots in 100 US cities.

Black people continued to remain at a disadvantage when looking for work, and programmes of "affirmative action" were introduced during the 1970s under President Nixon.

YOUR STARS



Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You're heading home in one way or another. You may be on your way to a reunion, or you may just be finding a place that is more comfortable and will work better for you in the long run.



Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

You are having a hard time coping with the pace of change today — but it's not as bad as you think! You just need to find one safe place and stick to it for the day, as things should settle down soon.



Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You really just want people to get along together — why does it have to be so hard? You can hardly believe the lengths people go to when they want to keep fighting, but you can calm them down.



Libra

Sep.23-Oct. 22

You need to deal with today's situation with a little more flexibility than you may realize. Try not to just fall back on your old standby routines, or you could find yourself extremely confused!



Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

You can't quite come to terms with that one person who's almost always on your side — sometimes it's just not a good match. That doesn't mean it's worth throwing out, though, so just move on for a bit.



Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Your health is all-important, so make the most of today's willpower and start on a new health kick. It could just be a dedication to whole grains and fresh fruit, or a whole new way of living.



Taurus

April 20-May 20

Your transportation issues come to a head today — and while it may be frustrating, it's for the best. If your car breaks down, just remember that you do have other options. Make the most of them!



Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

You are so sure that you've got what it takes that you may find it easier to convince others. You've got twice the energy of anyone else in the room, so make the most of it and shine!



Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

You need to help out today — someone really needs you, and your energy is just better spent on outside activities. You may want to volunteer, ring up an elderly neighbor or just clean house.



Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

You need to travel — but even if you're stuck at home for a while, you can still dream and make plans. Your great energy needs exposure to new things and new people, and you can make it happen.



Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Your people are all freaking out over something that seems trivial to you, but you can tell that they are just enjoying a little drama — there's no reason for you to join them. Just watch and wait.



Pisces

Feb.19-Mar. 20

You need to express yourself today in the best way you know how. That could mean freestyle poetry or something softer and more direct, but you should know when it works for you.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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Easy+

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Hard

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7				6				
	1							

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Hindu queen; 5- Office subs; 10- Jr.'s exam; 14- North Carolina university; 15- Love, Italian-style; 16- Horrors!; 17- Mil. leaders; 18- Metal pin; 19- River to the Moselle; 20- Achievement; 23- Judge Lance; 24- Japanese immigrant; 25- Lingo; 27- Chinese menu phrase; 29- Golden, in France; 31- Patient care grp.; 32- Mine find; 34- Fight site; 35- Intention; 36- Capable of changing color; 40- Hi-___ graphics; 41- Playthings; 42- Memorable period; 43- Cockpit abbr.; 44- French pronoun; 45- Halved; 49- Lout; 51- Raise a glass to; 55- Crew's control; 56- Resembling a prehistoric human; 59- Pillar; 60- Fit to be tied; 61- Kitchen addition; 62- French friend; 63- Covered with hair; 64- Robert of "The Sopranos"; 65- Soviet news service; 66- Buffalo skater; 67- Sun. speeches;

DOWN: 1- Recover; 2- One of the Furies; 3- Sarge, for one; 4- Not ___ many words; 5- Diamond protectors; 6- Ludwig and Jannings; 7- Motion picture; 8- Military post; 9- Clockmaker Thomas; 10- Riddle; 11- China's largest city; 12- Pertaining to bodily structure; 13- Rocky hilltop; 21- Exodus; 22- Cocktail; 26- Male cat; 28- Barfly; 30- This one's ___; 33- Biol. branch; 34- Monopoly quartet; Abbr.; 36- Skin tumor; 37- Sensation; 38- Emotional outburst; 39- Convert into leather; 40- Beam; 46- Proceed in a leisurely way; 47- Table attendant; 48- Commands; 50- Novelist Joyce Carol ___; 52- Toothbrush brand; 53- Essential oil; 54- Author Hite; 57- Immerses; 58- Fragrant neckwear; 59- One way to stand;

Yesterday's solution

P	I	T	C	H	E	R		A	N	G	E	R	E	D
U	N	E	A	R	T	H		D	E	A	N	E	R	Y
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			I	T	S	M	E		N	O	O	N		
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D	E	T	R	A	I	N		E	E	R	I	E	S	T
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Rugby Academy

Finalists but no silverware for Bats

Donald Shaw, Hong Kong
Special to MDT

MACAU Bats hosted three teams from Hong Kong last Saturday as part of their U13 Spring 7s competition. Sai Kung Stingrays, Sandy Bay and Barbarians were the visiting teams and the early morning rain had stopped for the games but made conditions underfoot difficult. The tournament format was a round robin league followed by a final.

First up for the Macau Bats were the Barbarians and Macau got off to a strong start by winning 35-0. This meant that the Bats went into their second game against Sandy Bay full of confidence. Sandy Bay have been the top U13 team this season in Hong Kong, with only one defeat and having beaten the Bats earlier in the autumn version of this competition. Sandy Bay established an early lead but the Bats fought back and started to assert themselves with several break away tries. The Bats had powerful runners and finished convincing winners by 45-26.

The third pool match was against Sai Kung Stingrays who had shown good skills in their earlier games with a win against Barbarians after a defeat by Sandy Bay. Macau got off to a good start, scoring an early try, but despite plenty of pressure could not add to that score in the first half. Just before the end of the half Stingrays scored to reduce the lead and then early in the second half scored again to edge in front. Both teams added further tries but Stingrays ran out winners by 17-14. The sequence of results meant that Macau, Sandy Bay and Stingrays were all equal on points in the mini-league and the top two had to be decided based on tries scored leading to a Macau v Sandy Bay final.

The Bats had every right to be optimistic given their earlier win, however Sandy Bay were keen to exact a quick revenge and took an early lead by scoring two tries. Macau came back into the game with a score late in the first half. This in the end was not enough and Sandy Bay won the game by 19-7 to take home the Cup.

The following day it was the turn of Macau's U16 teams to travel to Hong Kong for their 7s championship. Macau had once again combined forces with Kukris and Discovery Bay Pirates and fielded two teams. The "A" team won all their group games and qualified for the Cup final against Sandy Bay. Meanwhile the "B" team reached the Bowl final only to be beaten by the USC Tigers in a free scoring game.

The "A" team were underdogs in their final and Sandy Bay quickly showed why they were favourites by scoring two breakaway tries. The bats fought their way back into contention with three very good scores, however Sandy Bay added two late tries to secure a deserved 25-19 win.

Although three finals failed to result in silverware the Macau Bats can take great satisfaction from having once again punched well above their weight. The clubs next focus is on hosting the Macau Rugby festival on 13th April at TIS playing field, when 50 teams from Hong Kong and China will play-off in Macau.



Gerald Imray

CASTER Semenya accused IAAF president Sebastian Coe of opening “old wounds” in an Australian newspaper interview, where he said the two-time Olympic 800-meter champion and other female athletes with high levels of naturally occurring testosterone were a threat to “the sanctity of fair competition.”

In a statement released yesterday in response, Semenya's lawyers said Coe's comments and the Daily Telegraph's “distorted” reporting — the newspaper referred to the South Africa runner as “muscle-packed” and “unbeatable” — reminded her of how she was scrutinized and judged at her first world championships in 2009, when she was 18.

Back then, Semenya won the 800 title a day after it was revealed she underwent gender tests ordered by the IAAF, partly because of her muscular build. Some Australian media were criticized for inaccurate and unsavory reporting at the time, when they speculated on the then-teenager's physical anatomy.

Semenya underwent further medical examinations after the event and was sidelined from running for nearly a year. The IAAF later accepted her in women's competitions.

Semenya read Coe's interview with the Daily Telegraph over the weekend, her lawyers said.

“Ms. Semenya remembers her story breaking out of Australia ten years ago on the eve of her competing in the 2009 World Championships,” Semenya's lawyers said in their statement. “After winning the 800 meter final the next day Ms. Semenya stood in the middle of the stadium knowing that everyone watching the event was judging her. She was 18 years old.

“The nature of the intrusive medical examinations that Ms. Semenya was subjected to following the event were discussed publicly,

AP PHOTO

ATHLETICS

Semenya camp lashes out at Coe for opening ‘old wounds’

South Africa's Caster Semenya

including by the IAAF. The scars Ms. Semenya has developed over the past decade run deep.”

The statement from Semenya's camp came as she and track's governing body wait for a verdict from the Court of Arbitration for Sport in a case that could change women's sports.

Now 28, Semenya has gone to CAS to challenge rules the IAAF wants to introduce to lower the high levels of natural testosterone in some female athletes through medication or surgery before they can compete in top-class races from distances ranging from 400 meters to the mile.

A five-day hearing was held last

month and a decision is expected in late April.

In the interview with the Daily Telegraph, Coe was quoted as saying the proposed rules were designed “to protect the sanctity of fair competition and fair play.”

“The reason we have gender classifications is because if you didn't then no woman would ever win another title or another medal or break another record in our sport,” Coe was quoted as saying.

The IAAF said yesterday in a statement to The Associated Press that Coe's comments in the Daily Telegraph “are entirely consistent with both his and the IAAF's comments on this issue

since the regulations were introduced.”

The CAS case — possibly the end of a decade-long battle between Semenya and the IAAF — has been marked by glimpses of ill-feeling between the camps, with Semenya's lawyers complaining in the buildup to the hearing that the IAAF was breaching confidentiality rules.

Details of Semenya's condition have never been made public but she is believed to be one of numerous female athletes to have hyperandrogenism, which results in elevated levels of natural testosterone. The IAAF says the condition gives her and athletes

like her an unfair advantage over other runners.

Semenya rarely speaks publicly on the issue but has become more vocal in recent months through her lawyers. She had also not previously spoken in depth about the effect the 2009 worlds in Berlin had on her, and the “scars” she said it left.

“Reading the comments of Mr. Coe this weekend opened those old wounds,” Semenya's lawyers said, “and the reference by the Daily Telegraph [Australia] to ‘the muscle-packed Semenya’ is just the latest illustration of how the issues have been distorted by innuendo.” AP

THE SPORTSMAN

Putin calls on Russia to play by doping rules for Olympics

VLADIMIR Putin wants Russian athletes and officials to play by anti-doping rules ahead of next year's Olympics.

In televised comments yesterday, the Russian president said efforts should be made “so that we don't give any pretext to those who use sport for political ends, to act against Russia's interests.”

Russia's team was barred from last year's Winter Olympics for repeated doping violations, but 168 competitors from the coun-

try were allowed to compete as “Olympic Athletes from Russia.”

Of those, two were later disqualified for doping, more than any other country.

The International Olympic Committee lifted its suspension of Russia immediately after the Pyeongchang Games. Putin said there should be no similar “restrictions” on any member of the Russian team at next year's Tokyo Olympics.

Putin didn't specify what

potential restrictions he had in mind, though the Russian track federation remains suspended.

If that sanction isn't lifted by the IAAF, then only athletes who have been vetted and approved by a panel which examines their history of drug testing would be able to compete in Tokyo.

That's currently keeping some top Russians like the former Olympic walk champion Elena Lashmanova and Olympic high jump champion Anna Chi-

cherova restricted to national competitions only. Both have served doping bans.

Putin added that Russia had finished restructuring its anti-doping systems after World Anti-Doping Agency investigations revealed widespread doping and alleged government complicity, something Putin denies.

“Russia has met all requirements in the area of perfecting the fight against doping,” Putin said. “Constructive cooperation with the relevant international

AP PHOTO



structures is under way. We need to finally resolve the remaining issues.”

WADA reinstated the Russian anti-doping agency last year, but could reverse that ruling if the country stops cooperating

with efforts to examine past offenses.

Russia has so far turned over data from the Moscow laboratory at the center of the allegations, and must provide stored samples for retesting by June 30. AP

opinion

World Views

David Fickling, Bloomberg

CATHAY'S BUDGET DEAL WON'T MEAN BARGAIN TICKETS

Budget aviation ain't what it used to be. Passengers on EasyJet Plc aircraft can book fares that let them change flight times at no extra cost. Those on Singapore Airlines Ltd.'s Scoot and JetBlue Airways Corp. can pay for business-class seats, and people flying Juneyao Airlines Co. can collect frequent flier points and spend them on flights with Star Alliance members such as Lufthansa AG. These days, no-frills carriers often seem to have as many frills as their upmarket counterparts.

That's reason for Hong Kongers to temper any excitement about Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd. giving up its longstanding opposition to discount aviation. Cathay will pay HKD4.93 billion (USD628 million) to buy Hong Kong Express Airways Ltd. from debt-strapped HNA Group Co., the carrier said yesterday, giving it control of the territory's sole low-cost airline.

Those hoping to see the sorts of peppercorn-priced tickets that India's SpiceJet Ltd. and Ireland's Ryanair Holdings Plc like to offer are likely to be disappointed. It's much more likely that Cathay is trying to protect its existing patch than becoming a born-again no-frills carrier.

If you've ever had that experience of going to book a flight on a low-cost airline and finding the prices aren't all that low-cost, you're not alone.

Indeed, there's a substantial group of nominally budget carriers that have much more in common with full-service airlines. Per available seat kilometer, the granddaddy of discount aviation Southwest Airlines Co. makes more passenger revenue than Air France-KLM and International Consolidated Airlines Group SA.

It also gets a lower share of revenue from ancillary services like fees and in-flight meals than Delta Air Lines Inc., according to Oliver Wyman. On top of that, it takes a cautious approach to expanding capacity that resembles legacy carriers such as Delta and American Airlines Group Inc. than true, ultra-low-cost airlines, the consultant says.

This blurring of the boundaries between discount and full-service aviation is hardly surprising. For all that the likes of Ryanair Chief Executive Officer Michael O'Leary like to fetishize their spartan approach to customer service, most of the savings for budget carriers come from having simple fleets flying short routes that maximize aircraft utilization and minimize crew costs. Unlike wild proposals like charging passengers to use the toilet, these are savings that can easily be carried across to large parts of a full-service network.

That's the logical place for Cathay to position Hong Kong Express. As regional peers Qantas Airways Ltd., Singapore Airlines and ANA Holdings Inc. have learned, having a low-cost carrier in your stable can be an effective strategy. By keeping the business in-house, you can ensure that it doesn't cannibalize your mainline carrier, restricting it to more leisure-oriented routes and times of day.

Having a discount airline with the cost-base to match also provides some ammunition in the event that truly no-frills carriers like AirAsia Group Bhd., Cebu Air Inc. and Spring Airlines Co. move aggressively onto your patch. It's a lot easier for Cathay Pacific to win a price war using Hong Kong Express's fleet of Airbus SE A320s and bare-bones services than on its own more premium metal.

Ultimately, this deal will serve only to consolidate Chief Executive Officer Rupert Hogg's control over Cathay's home market, especially as HNA's other local unit, Hong Kong Airlines, shrinks its fleet and network and pulls out of long-haul markets such as Australia and New Zealand.

The low-cost typhoon may still be blowing through the global aviation industry, but Cathay Pacific is hoping Hong Kong can still remain a sheltered harbor.

THE BUZZ UK PARLIAMENT TO VOTE ON EIGHT OPTIONS FOR BREXIT

British lawmakers will get to vote on eight widely differing options for the U.K.'s departure from the European Union.

House of Commons Speaker John Bercow selected the motions yesterday from 16 proposals submitted by lawmakers.

The ones to be considered include calls to leave the EU without a withdrawal deal, to stay in the EU's customs union and single market, to put any EU divorce deal to a public referen-

dum, and to cancel Brexit if the prospect of a no-deal Brexit gets close.

The "indicative votes" are intended to reveal if any kind of Brexit plan can command a majority in Parliament. Lawmakers have twice rejected Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit deal with the bloc.

The government has promised to consider the outcome of the votes, but not to be bound by them.

WOMEN'S MONTH

Melco invites female figures to 'Best I Can Be'



MMELCO Resorts & Entertainment hosted Melco Women's Forum yesterday, with the theme "Best I Can Be," inviting female figures to give keynote speeches and take part in a forum, all to celebrate Women's Month.

Describing the forum as a Corporate Social Responsibility measure, Melco said these kinds of events were about creating long-term programs that provide solutions and opportunities for society, including for women's health and well-being.

"Initiatives for women have always been at the forefront of Melco's Corporate Social Responsibility. Embracing diversity is one of Melco's guiding principles and we strive to be an equal

opportunity employer," said Lawrence Ho, chairman and CEO of the gaming operator.

"We [...] look forward to implementing further women's initiatives to benefit our colleagues and the community," Ho added.

The gaming operator invited Ann Osman, Malaysia's first female professional mixed martial arts fighter, and Julia Morley, chairman and CEO of the Miss World Organization, as the event's keynote speakers.

"I feel that we're already part of Macau. [...] Let's all work together. Slogans are important but the real material matters," Morley shared during her speech.

The forum was moderated by Lorraine Hahn, and the panelists comprised Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes,

director of the Macau Government Tourist Office; Karuna Shisho, board director at Melco; Dominique Mielle, board director at Studio City; Silvia Vanessa Pounce De Leon Sanchez, Miss World 2018 and Kanako Date, Miss Japan 2018, who shared their experiences, both professional and personal.

Mielle, one of the most senior women in the hedgefund industry, remarked, "how did I survive a world of men? I think there are little traits and skills that you learn along the way."

"At the root of succeeding as a woman, it has to be the deep conviction that you are as good as most men and likely much better than some of them, and that is statistically undeniable," she added. **LV**

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Academic proposes new strategies to be studied

AN academic from Hong Kong has called on Macau's gaming operators to develop more strategies for their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) measures.

Tiffany Leung, a lecturer at Hong Kong Polytechnic University's School of Professional Education and Executive Development, noted that the gaming operators' current CSR measures may have been improved to the point where they are now in line with the United Nation's international benchmark.

Leung was speaking at a breakfast talk held by the

French Macau Chamber of Commerce yesterday.

"There are some areas [in which] they can improve," Leung told the Times. "When we look at the measures and the benchmark, we can benchmark [against] other industries [to see] whether they have done it in a good way or if it's underperforming."

Leung formerly conducted a study on the city's CSR measures based on 49 semi-structured interviews with internal and external stakeholders of Macau's gaming industry.

The study showed that these organizations use "strategies to ensure passive support and acquiescence from certain stakeholder groups" and that they "deploy bargaining and legitimacy-capturing strategies to generate active support for the industry."

Leung also said that the study found firms were emphasizing strategies based on both economic and non-economic contributions in a bid to project a positive image of the industry.

Comparing the gaming operator's reports from 2009 to 2016, Leung commented: "In terms of the Western gaming operators, they have tried to improve because they have used the Global Reporting Initiative's guidelines." **LV**

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	40-60 Good	
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Good	
Ambient	50-70 Good	

SOURCE: D5SMG

WORLD BRIEFS



VATICAN Pope Francis allowed nuns and priests to kiss his papal ring during his weekly audience in St. Peter's Square on Wednesday, two days after a video that showed him pulling his hand away from several faithful drew disapproval from some of the pope's conservative critics.

SPAIN The 10 people who allegedly raided the North Korean Embassy in Madrid last month belong to a mysterious dissident organization that styles itself as a government-in-exile dedicated to toppling the ruling Kim family dynasty in North Korea.

NORWAY A cruise ship that was the focus of a daring rescue operation off Norway's frigid North Sea coast became disabled because its engines didn't have enough lubricating oil, the country's top maritime official said yesterday.



USA President Donald Trump is calling on Republicans to revive the effort to quash the Affordable Care Act, handing Democrats an opportunity to unite in defense of the law as they try to move past the Russia investigation and win the White House in 2020. **More on p14-15**

VENEZUELA With her youthful energy and globe-trotting, the 26-year-old wife of Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido is emerging as a prominent figure in his campaign to bring change to the crisis-ravaged country.

BRAZIL Far-right President Jair Bolsonaro's call to commemorate the anniversary of Brazil's 1964 military coup is causing discomfort in Latin America's largest nation.