



AIRASIA ENTERING CHINA VIA MACAU

"Entering China could be via Macau," Tony Fernandes said on the budget airline's plan to build a base in the city in GBA backdrop

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HEALTH BUREAU STOCKS UP ON MEASLES VACCINES

The bureau increased its order of MMR vaccines to 15,000 doses amid a measles outbreak. The first batch of 5,400 is set to arrive next week

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OVER 550 TROUBLEMAKERS BARRED FROM CASINOS

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WORLD BRIEFS

HONG KONG's traditional banks are set to face one of their biggest challenges yet: a new breed of financial technology firms estimated to snare as much as 30 percent of their revenue. More on p6



TAIWAN President Tsai said her government has asked to purchase advanced new fighter jets and tanks from the U.S., a request that if approved, could set off new tensions between the U.S. and China. More on p11



CHINA Companies linked to cannabis growing tumbled yesterday, as regulators put the squeeze on one of the year's hottest trades. More on p8

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Renato Marques

AVIATION

AirAsia would use Macau base as foothold further into China

ASIA'S largest low-cost air carrier is considering establishing an operations base in Macau, aiming to expand their services into mainland China. The move was signaled by company founder and CEO Tony Fernandes, speaking to the South China Morning Post on the sidelines of Credit Suisse's Asia Investment Conference in Hong Kong.

According to Fernandes, this possibility is being seriously evaluated now that it has been announced that the exclusive rights to airport slots, enforced in favor of local flag carrier Air Macau since 1995, will not be renewed from November 2020, putting an end to the 25-year concession. "Entering China could be via Macau," Fernandes said, adding, "We do not have to be in mainland China, but being in Macau is like being in China."

Fernandes noted that if such an opportunity arises, AirAsia is ready to grab it, using its Macau base to serve mainly Chinese costumers.

AirAsia already flies to four destinations in the Greater Bay Area - Macau, Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangzhou - and would see its local base as an engine to expand operations not only within the Greater Bay but across all of China. This is a long-held ambition of the company after its attempt in 1993 to establish a partnership with the provincial government of Henan. That attempt failed, being viewed more as a marketing stunt than a real operation.

"It did not feel right at that time and we are not an airline that just goes in there for the sake of just saying 'We are in China'," said Fernandes. "What we were working towards would not make a jot of difference to

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the Chinese aviation space and we decided to withdraw for the moment until a better opportunity comes."

And Macau might well be that opportunity as, according to a forecast by the online rental platform Cozystay, Chinese travelers are expected to make some 400 million trips by 2030, more than double the number made in 2017.

Although the Malaysia-based airline seems to be in a good position to tap into the market, as the carrier is already the second-largest user of Macau's International Airport with a 15 percent share of the airport slots,

AirAsia is not the only company interested in using the local airport as a base.

In late January this year, Asian Business Aviation Association chairperson Jenny Lau suggested there were several competitors interested in the Macau opportunity. "Several players like Air Asia or Cebu Pacific may consider expanding their services from Macau, or new players like HK Express," she said, adding that among the new players names such as Shun Tak Holdings' as well as companies related to business aviation could come into play.

Still, Fernandes expressed that

he is willing to fight for AirAsia's shot, saying, "Macau is very close to my heart. They believed in us when we were nothing."

The carrier, which came out on top in last year's World's Best Low-Cost Airline, an award attributed by World Airline Awards, already flies to a total of 21 destinations in mainland China (including charter and seasonal routes), such as Beijing, Changsha, Chengdu, Chongqing, Guangzhou, Guilin, Haikou, Hangzhou, Kunming, Meixian, Nanchang, Nanjing, Nanning, Ningbo, Sanya, Shanghai, Shantou, Shenzhen, Wuhan, Xi'an and Yichang.

From May this year, it will begin flying to another two locations, Lanzhou and Tianjin, in what Fernandes said is proof that Chinese aviation "is an open market."

The low-cost airline, which also operates budget hotels, is also said to be preparing to include other transportation options in their travel packages, such as buses on the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, ferries and high-speed trains, under a plan that aims to give their passengers more flexibility and added connectivity among the several airports in the Pearl River Delta.

HEALTH

SSM stocks up on vaccines amid measles outbreak

TWO new imported cases of measles were detected yesterday, raising the total number of cases to 25, the Health Bureau (SSM) announced in a statement.

The first case was diagnosed in a Filipino national who is a 27-year-old non-resident worker and a restaurant employee in the SAR, while the second

case involves a 23-year-old local resident who works as a nurse in Kiang Wu Hospital.

The first patient was in the Philippines between January 6 to March 15, while the latter visited Taiwan between March 3 to 9.

The SSM claimed that the local nurse working in the private hospital

- where many cases of measles were detected - was not contaminated in his workplace.

According to the health authority, the bureau has increased its order of Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccines to 15,000 doses. The first batch of 5,400 doses is set to arrive next week.

The bureau also annou-

nced that more than 800 residents have asked for the vaccine in just the past few days, compared to the typical demand of around 30 per day.

Thus, the bureau stated that residents who wish to apply for vaccination should make an appointment at the region's health centers, either in person or over the phone.

"This demand has had a strong impact on the regular functioning of the [health centers], since the procedures to apply this vaccine are [taking] longer than usual," SSM noted.

However, children under two years old, childcare staff and health professionals are exempted from requiring an appointment.

SSM director Lei Chin Ion told the press yesterday on the sidelines of a committee of the Legislative Assembly that there are enough vaccines available for children and medical staff.

Lei pledged that the bureau would follow the guidelines of the World Health Organization regarding vaccination. LV

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Times

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Over 550 people barred from casinos

SOME 550 people have been barred from entering casino facilities in Macau since 2017 due to breaching security rules or causing disturbances on gaming floors, the director of the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ), Paulo Martins Chan, said at the Legislative Assembly.

The official was at the plenary to respond to an enquiry from lawmaker Leong Sun Iok on the first of two days entirely dedicated to replies from the government to spoken enquiries from lawmakers over the past few months. The lawmaker noted that there are "more problems arising from the high development of the tourism sector and that require[s] more security measures."

In response, a representative of the Unitary Police Service noted that the authorities are already tackling the problem through the enforcement of surveillance cameras with facial recognition technologies that "will help prevent crime in casinos."

The official recalled that the government had said that plans to install around 200 video surveillance cameras with such capabilities were included in the approximately 1,600 cameras that the government is said to be installing by 2020. **RM**

GAMING

March slowdown projecting poor first quarter

Daniel Beittler

A slowdown in VIP casino activity over the second half of March is expected to dampen full-month gaming revenues when the results are released on Monday.

Gaming analysts had held a brighter forecast earlier in the month when the average daily run rate was signaling strong returns. Daily earnings averaged about MOP860 million for the first 10 days of March, representing year-on-year growth of between 2 and 3 percent when extrapolated to the month-end.

At the time, analysts appeared to agree on a growth prediction for March that ranged between a minor contraction and up to a 5 percent expansion.

However, Japanese brokerage Nomura now says that average VIP daily gambling volume in March could be



down by as much as 19 percent. The slowdown has led the brokerage firm to revise its earlier forecast of between 0 and 5 percent year-on-year growth to a decline of between 3 and 5 percent.

Sanford C. Bernstein said earlier this week that average daily revenue in March was tracking about 12 percent lower than in February and 1 percent lower than January. Compared with a year earlier, March 2019 is tra-

cking about 5 percent lower at about MOP795 million per day.

A 5 percent contraction in March would make it the worst performing month of the year to date, rounding out gross gaming revenue for the first quarter of 2019 at approximately 2 percent lower than the same period in 2018.

Macau gross gaming revenue for the first two months of 2019 amounted to MOP50.31 billion, a 0.5 percent contraction from

the same period last year. Considering January and February together each year offsets the increasingly unpredictable effects of the Chinese Lunar New Year period, which can fall in either month.

Gross gaming revenue in March 2018, the comparison point for Monday's results, amounted to MOP25.95 billion - a 22.2 percent rise from the same month in the preceding year.

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Three people defrauded nine pawnbrokers

The Judiciary Police (PJ) has arrested three mainland men who are suspected of having used fraudulent gold chains to swindle nine pawnbrokers. The three suspects would visit pawnbrokers a first time with real gold. Later, on their second visit, they would use fake gold, leather and watches. According to the PJ, one of the suspects was involved in all the cases of fraud, while the other two men only participated in some of them. The three were arrested when they were attempting to leave the territory.

200 construction works started prior to approval

From April 2018 until now, the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) received more than 200 construction applications asking for the DSSOPT's approval to start building after the relevant parties had already launched the construction process. In reply to a lawmaker's written inquiry asking the government about its low efficiency in regards to approving street plans, DSSOPT Director Li Canfeng said that, since 2018, the DSSOPT started allowing parties to first launch the construction process and only afterwards submit the application. A project is allowed to start production 10 days after relevant parties submit all documents. The DSSOPT says that it considers the measure effective.

Hainan-Macau cooperation to be enhanced

Chief Executive Chui Sai On hopes that Macau and Hainan province can enhance cooperation. While meeting with Hainan's provincial governor during a visit this week, Chui said that there is room for further cooperation between Macau and Hainan. In particular, Chui said that Macau will expedite tourism, economic, trade and technology cooperation projects with Hainan. In addition to Chui, Hainan provincial governor Shen Xiaoming also said that Hainan province has already reached an agreement with Macau in terms of cooperation, with both regions' commercial industry also having reached agreements.

MIECF

Plastic bag levy a reminder to

Lynzy Valles

THE proposed plastic bag levy that has recently been submitted to the Legislative Assembly (AL) will serve to remind local residents to "bring your own bag (BYOB)," no matter the actual amount of the levy, Secretary for the Environment of Hong Kong Wong Kam Sing has said.

The proposed levy will range from MOP1 to MOP5. The exact amount is expected to be debated and voted on at the AL, as its last step.

Questioned by the press as to whether there would be any negative effect on lo-

cal residents, citing the higher levy when compared to Hong Kong, Wong remarked, "I think for normal citizens, the regulations are to remind them to BYOB. So for many people, if they are really concerned [about] that, they can BYOB and avoid paying the 50 cents or 1 dollar."

In Hong Kong, the PSB Levy Scheme, an equivalent measure, kicked off a decade ago and targeted some 3,000 retail outlets during the first phase.

According to Wong, who gave a keynote speech yesterday during the first session of the ongoing Macao International Environmental Cooperation Forum and Exhibition (MIE-

CF), there are still further improvements the HKSAR needs to undertake, despite having the plastic levy in place since 2009.

"Around 2005, there were about 8 billion plastic shopping bags per year, but now it has reduced to about 4 billion. That means there is room for further improvement, given the awareness about reducing single use plastic globally and locally," Wong told the press.

The neighboring region also makes references to other cities, including Taipei, citing a recent measure there that seeks to narrow exempted items. Currently, Hong Kong provides certain exemptions

to balance food hygiene and waste reduction concerns.

"But given the rising awareness and the relevant experience in other Asian cities, there is room to review the exemption and also consider whether [the level of levy charged] should be reviewed since it has been intact for a decade," the official added.

Wong noted that the Macau bureau may review whether there is room for narrowing the exemptions, as there would still be some items that could address food hygiene concerns.

In Macau, the Environmental Protection Bureau expects that the use of plastic bags will



Gov't said working toward an ecological city

Julie Zhu

THE Macau government is making contributions to the surrounding area's sustainable development through measures such as strengthening ecological education and the implementation of the polluter-pays principle.

At the opening of the Macao International Environmental Cooperation Forum and Exhibition (MIECF), Secretary for Administration and Justice Sonia Chan said in her speech

that building an ecological city is one of the key points of the local government's governance plan.

Sonia Chan believes that promoting the construction of an ecological civilization is the only way toward sustainable development, while it will also contribute to a degree of economic diversification.

Chan claimed, "Macau will strive to improve the urban environment of Macau by strengthening ecological education, promoting the use of

green energy, building a comprehensive management of mobile pollution sources, encouraging plastic reduction activities, and accelerating environmental protection infrastructure and the establishment of green spaces."

Through MIECF, Macau's role as a link between regional cities and the world will be promoted, with the environmental cooperation and exchange between regions and international communities, especially in the Pan-Pearl River

Delta Region and the Greater Bay Area, also being promoted, according to Chan.

Some of the local exhibitors, upon being interviewed by the media, said that the main purpose of the exhibition for them is to bring to Macau environmental protection equipment and products suitable for use in Macau.

The exhibitors also believe that the government and local enterprises should be environmentally conscious when building large-scale in-

frastructure projects and should not wait until an environmental problem occurs.

Wang Zhigang, the mainland's Minister of Science and Technology, also said in his speech, that as a responsible developing country, China is becoming a participant, contributor and leader in sustainable development, and is developing eco-environmental technologies and efficient recycling of resources in accordance with its national science and technology innovation plan.

BYOB



Wong Kam Sing, Secretary for the Environment of Hong Kong

decrease by around a half as a result of this levy.

Revenue generated from the plastic levy would go to businesses, the head of the bureau, Raymond Tam, previously said.

The proposal also says that a MOP1,000 fine will be imposed on retailers who fail to charge the levy, while a MOP10,000 fine will be in place for those who do not cooperate with authorities during inspections.

Despite the law proposal, lo-

cal environmental activists believe that the government should also focus on raising awareness of the issue by promoting education on the use of plastic bags.

The first session of the MIE-CF Forum also focused on green energy analyses and discussions to promote the building of an innovative platform for green energy exhibitions and exchange between businesses.

CORRUPTION

Lionel Leong says he expects better for CPTTM recruitment

Julie Zhu

MACAU'S Secretary for Economy and Finance Lionel Leong has said that as of late last year he had already required the Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Center (CPTTM) to submit a report following a Commission Against Corruption investigation. The Secretary told media yesterday that he expects an improvement to the CPTTM recruitment processes.

Earlier this week, the CCAC, in its 2018 Annual Report, detected that 16 of 101 workers of CPTTM were relatives, including father and son, father and daughter, husband and wife, and brothers and sisters. Three of the 16 workers have already left their jobs.

During the investigation, the center was unable to provide the employment documents of some of its staff members.

The CCAC believes that although the center is not a government department in the traditional sense, it relies mainly on government



RENATO MARQUES

funding. In turn, the center's recruitment method was too casual and the proportion of staff of kinship is too high, which inevitably raises questions about cronyism.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of yesterday's Macao International Environment Co-operation Forum and Exhibition launching ceremony, the Secretary remarked that despite the center not being a government department, it consumes sizable public resources to maintain its operation.

"Although the center has internal rules, its internal recruitment and promotion systems do have the need, as pointed out in the CCAC

report, to be carried out on principles of fairness and openness."

Leong said it is necessary for any public department or self-governing body to conduct fair and open recruitment and promotions. The Secretary expects that, through the CCAC report, there can be an improvement in the recruitment process of CPTTM.

In November 2018, the CCAC sent a warning to the center addressing the aforementioned maladministration.

Leong said that he instructed the center to improve its recruitment and promotion system back then. In particular, he asked the center to take on board the opinions of the CCAC.

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Hong Kong permits virtual banks in test to traditional lenders

Alfred Liu

HONG Kong's traditional banks are set to face one of their biggest challenges yet: a new breed of financial technology firms estimated to snare as much as 30 percent of their revenue.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority has granted three virtual bank licenses and is processing five more, Deputy Chief Executive Arthur Yuen said in a briefing on Wednesday. Firms that got the permits have partnered with Standard Chartered Plc, BOC Hong Kong Holdings Ltd. and ZhongAn Online P&C Insurance Co. and they intend to begin operating within nine months, Yuen said.

The city is playing catch up with regional economies, notably

China and India, by allowing fintech to shake up retail banking. A reliance on cash and strong household savings had yielded high profitability for a clutch of lenders and kept the industry concentrated. That could see the sector vulnerable to disruption as competition gets fiercer.

"This will help foster fintech development in Hong Kong and promote financial inclusion," the Hong Kong Association of Banks said in a statement. "The industry can leverage this opportunity to develop new business models."

Virtual banks are similar to traditional retail banking services in that they will be able to accept deposits and give out loans. They aren't expected to set up physical branches. Analysts at Citigroup Inc. estimate around 10 percent

of existing banks' revenue is at risk over the next decade.

Most at risk are HSBC Holdings Plc, Standard Chartered, Hang Seng Bank Ltd. and BOC Hong Kong Holdings, which account for 66 percent of the retail loan market and 77 percent of mortgages, according to Goldman Sachs Group Inc. About USD15 billion, which is 30 percent of the city's total banking revenue, is up for grabs, Goldman's analysts, led by Gurpreet Singh Sahi, estimated in September.

"There will be some competition, but we think that the market can comfortably absorb this kind of competition," the HKMA's Yuen said. "Virtual banks have a different business model, so one could say that, to some extent, they are creating new business opportunities in the market."

The payment space would be the first battle ground between banks and technology firms in the city, the Goldman report said. Hong Kong's value of cash transactions accounted for about 17 percent of GDP in 2016, leaving the city behind only Japan among major economies, according to a report published by the Bank for International Settlements last year.

Virtual banking was one of the fintech initiatives announced by the HKMA in 2017, which also included a digital payment system that uses mobile numbers and email addresses for payments. The faster payment system had more than 2 million registrations by the end of 2018 and handled transactions worth HKD104 billion (\$13 billion) since it started in September, according to

the de facto central bank.

Digital wallets, intermediaries between a consumer's phone or tap card and traditional bank account, have also seen a steady increase in use. The transaction value of such accounts increased about 9 percent to HKD45 billion in the third quarter from three months earlier, HKMA data showed.

"It will be a great, great thing for Hong Kong to have these virtual banks operating," said Sumit Indwar, a partner at Linklaters in Hong Kong. "It's a real statement of intent by the regulators to show that Hong Kong is an innovation-friendly city."

Keith Ng, a relationship manager who works in corporate banking and has been using HSBC for more than 10 years for its deposits, foreign exchange and pension services, said he'd love to try and open a virtual bank account as long as they are secure.

"I just need a bank that provides good support over the phone or online," Ng said. "That's something the traditional banks are now not doing well enough." **Bloomberg**

AD



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The Greater Bay project is coming and it will bring both opportunities and challenges to our little-big town. Macau Daily Times wants to hear your voice.

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STATE CENSORSHIP

CPPCC members call for internet freedoms to extend into Guangdong

Julie Zhu

JOHNNY Ng Kit-chong, member of the Hong Kong Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), has expressed his confidence in the proliferation of freedom of internet access in the Greater Bay Area, even in the mainland cities of Guangdong, according to a report by TVB.

The same report said that there was another Hong Kong CPPCC member who proposed in Beijing during the recent CPPCC

meeting that Greater Bay cities should allow people to freely access websites from anywhere in the world without the need for a virtual private network (VPN). The report did not mention the name of the specific Hong Kong CPPCC member.

Many of the world's websites are blocked in mainland China. However, netizens sometimes use a VPN to access censored content.

The Outline Development Plan of the Greater Bay Area proposed that one of the strategic objecti-

ves of the region is to become a technology innovation center with a global reach.

Some commentators are worried that information restrictions may hinder the development of the region as a technology center.

"A science and technology center must be in line with foreign countries in the production of scientific research," said Ng.

Ng believes that the Greater Bay will establish a special internet zone in order to achieve the aforementioned purpose.

Ng not only believes that there should be free internet access in the Greater Bay, he also believes that there is a high chance for the proposal to become a reality.

"The problem should be small [for the proposal to be approved], because this is the trend of the times. The country will go international, the free movement of information is the most important [aspect] among the free movement of people, the free movement of logistics, the free movement of capital," he said.

A Hong Kong businessman,

surnamed Hung, who has invested in mainland China's technological industry, voiced that technology often has to be connected to foreign products, designs and concepts. But information has not been flowing to the mainland and this has become a bottleneck in the development of technology companies.

"Hong Kong is also a part of China. The social platforms that Hong Kong can access should also come to the Greater Bay Area," said Hung, according to the report.

Mayor's Visiting Program carries high significance, says Zhuhai mayor

THE Mayor's Visiting Program for China's Neighboring Countries carries growing significance in the context of the Greater Bay Area (GBA), according to Zhuhai's mayor Yao Yisheng.

"As the Greater Bay Area keeps developing [on] all fronts, the leading role of Macau and Zhuhai as a pole in the Greater Bay Area will become very prominent," said Yao. "Therefore, the Mayor's Visiting Program is facing greater opportunities in terms of exchange and cooperation. With well-developed economies and sound environments, cities involved in the Program have their own development features, which are complementary to each other."

"Zhuhai and Macau are geographically close, and our people have close ties," said Yao.

Citing Chinese president Xi Jinping, Yao noted that it is necessary to strengthen policy support, increase the

scope of cooperation, develop emerging industries and promote Macau's economic development in order for the city to become more dynamic.

Then, citing Li Xi, secretary of the CPC Guangdong Provincial Committee, Yao said that "Guangdong and Zhuhai will do everything we can to meet the needs of Macau's development."

"Zhuhai has been conscientiously implementing the requirements of the central and provincial governments. It has also been doing its best to promote an appropriate level of diversified economic development within Macau," said Yao. "We are creating an environment Macau people and companies will be willing to go to and which is suitable for their development."

"We made sure to meet the demands of projects involving Macau, we carried out a new round of urban planning revision, and we have reserved sufficient

space for the cooperation between Zhuhai and Macau, in Hengqin island and the integrated area, and for the western ecological new era."

This year, according to Yao, Zhuhai will promote the establishment of the Intelligent Supercomputing Center of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Science and Technology Research Institute of the University of Macau in Hengqin and will also endorse Macau's four national key laboratories to set up branches in Hengqin.

Zhuhai also plans to develop 100,000 square meters of office buildings and 10,000 units of rental housing to encourage Macau enterprises to set up offices in Hengqin.

The Zhuhai mayor noted that Zhuhai will play a greater role in promoting Macau's integration into the overall development of the country and in facilitating the participation of all parties in the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative. **JZ**

HK rejects British 'interference' report

THE government of Hong Kong said that "foreign governments should not interfere in any form in the internal affairs of the HKSAR" in response to a recent report by the British government.

Since the 1997 handover, Hong Kong has been exercising "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" and a high degree of autonomy in strict accordance with the Basic Law, and the "one country, two systems" principle has been fully and successfully implemented, a spokesperson for the SAR government said while responding to the Six-monthly Report on Hong Kong (July to December 2018) issued by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Despite reports to the contrary, the local government insisted that human rights, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, the right to vote and to stand for election are fully protected by the Basic Law and other legislation.

"The HKSAR government attaches great importance to them and is determined to safeguard them," said the spokesperson.

However, any suggestion of "Hong Kong independence" is a blatant violation of the Basic Law and a direct affront to the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of China, the spokesman said, adding that the city's mini-constitution clearly stipulates that Hong Kong is an inalienable part of China.

For other issues mentioned in the report, including the prohibition of the operation of the Hong Kong National Party, a visa application case and the co-location arrangement at the West Kowloon Station of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link, the Hong Kong government insisted it has been handling affairs strictly in accordance with the "one country, two systems" principle, the Basic Law and the laws of Hong Kong. **DB/Xinhua**

REAL ESTATE MATTERS

(Opinion) The Greater Bay Area Plan and Macau

Sam Lee is a marketing manager and property consultant at JML Property. JML was established in 1994 and offers Investment Property & Homes. It specializes in managing properties for owners and investors, and providing attractive and comfortable homes for tenants.

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SAM LEE

On February 18, Chinese policymakers finally released the blueprint for the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA). The 11-chapter document described a grand plan to drive economic integration and innovation in the region, and cited Macau as one of the core cities alongside Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hong Kong and Macau.

The vision is truly ambitious. By leveraging the resources and individual strengths of the various cities in the region, the plan is to create an economic powerhouse that can be described as "Silicon Valley and Wall Street within the same city cluster," according to Hong Kong's leader Carrie Lam.

But like any ambitious plan, it won't happen without obstacles. There are obvious infrastructural and logistical challenges to completely 'integrate' such a large geographical area spanning land and sea. There are also extensive legal challenges, as the two S.A.Rs and the mainland do not share the

same legal framework. But all in all, the plan does seem to hold potential in the long run.

Many developers and investors seem to share this sentiment. As soon as the plan was released, there were headlines of bullish developers planning to expand their portfolios in cities such as Shenzhen and even Zhongshan.

The plan's outline for Macau is to focus on being the "world centre for tourism and leisure" and act as a bridge to Portuguese-speaking countries.

Nothing unexpected there. My personal opinion is that the plan to turn Macau into a 'bridge' between the region and the Portuguese speaking countries potentially underestimates the entrepreneurialism and resourcefulness of both China and the Portuguese-speaking countries such as Brazil and various African nations.

While I was living and studying in Guangzhou, I was definitively surprised by the number of African and Brazilian entrepreneurs engaging

business across sectors such as trade, F&B, manufacturing and textiles.

Many of them were fluent in Mandarin, and they seemed to have a strong network of compatriots who supported each other in their business. Many have been doing business in China for years.

After speaking with them, I discovered that there was an even heavier presence of Portuguese-speaking business people operating in other places of China, such as Dongguan.

My personal observation was that these entrepreneurs already have a 'platform' and a 'gateway' into doing business in China. Why would they need to come through Macau?

Macau could offer services such as translation and structured legal support and consultation - But many of them speak Chinese anyway, and they've already been doing business just fine in China for years!

But of course, I could be mistaken, and Macau could add a ton of value to these entrepreneurs. I certainly hope so!

Cannabis craze comes to China stocks, drawing regulator's ire

CHINESE companies linked to cannabis growing tumbled yesterday, as regulators put the squeeze on one of the year's hottest trades.

Shanghai Shunho New Materials Technology Co. and Jilin Zixin Pharmaceutical Industrial Co. both slid more than 6 percent after the Shenzhen Stock Exchange told them to warn investors about uncertainties facing their industrial cannabis projects. In written notices, the exchange also asked the companies to submit progress reports on those businesses before April 2. Neither company immediately responded to Bloomberg's requests for comment.

Shanghai Shunho - whose products include cardboard and filament - had soared 378 percent this year prior to Thursday, while Jilin Zixin rose 142 percent, joining the euphoria that's driven a rally in marijuana-focused stocks elsewhere in the world. Cultivation of



industrial cannabis is legal in China but only for use in fiber and seeds, the China National Narcotic Control Committee says. Other uses including for medical purposes are forbidden.

Chinese investors have piled into stocks with the slightest hint of a link to industrial cannabis, ignoring companies' warnings and a government notice said to urge authorities to tighten approval of hemp-related licenses. Shunho's issued at least six warnings in the past two months alone reminding investors of risks in hemp.

"It's still just a concept. We've seen huge gains in the near term, so it's going to be all risks going forward," said Yu Ying-

dong, a vice general manager with Shenzhen Yun-Neng Fund Management Co.

Among other stocks to slide, Yunnan Yuntianhua Co. dropped by the 10 percent limit and cigarette package printer Shantou Dongfeng Printing Co. also fell that amount after climbing nearly 60 percent since February, when it said an affiliate was exploring industrial cannabis opportunities. Harbin Pharmaceutical Group Co. escaped with a 6.9 percent gain after saying it has 2 percent interest in a project linked to industrial cannabis. Dali Pharmaceutical Co. is up 20 percent since denying it was involved in the business earlier this month. **Bloomberg**

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Kitty Donaldson

Britain slams Huawei for failing to address security risks

CHINESE telecommunication equipment giant Huawei Technologies Co. is putting U.K. national security at risk by failing to improve its devices and software, according to a report by its oversight body.

The annual report by the Huawei Cyber Security Evaluation Centre Oversight Board, which examines how the company conducts its U.K. operations, concluded it has not seen anything to give it confidence in Huawei's ability to improve defects in cyber security and software engineering.

The report identified:

- Further significant technical issues in Huawei's engineering processes, leading to new risks in U.K. telecommunications networks
- "Significant, concerning issues" in its approach to software development, "bringing significantly increased risk" to U.K. operators
- No material progress has been made by Huawei regarding issues reported last year
- U.K. networks are less vulnerable than last year because the technical insight provided to British operators allows them to plan more effective defenses

A Huawei spokesman said: "The oversight provided for in our mitigation strategy for Huawei's presence in the U.K. is arguably the toughest and most rigorous in the world. This report does not, therefore, suggest that the U.K. networks are more vulnerable than last year."

The U.K. is preparing to roll out fifth-generation mobile networks and Culture Secretary Jeremy Wright is currently considering the results of a review into the resilience of the telecom supply chain.

While yesterday's report from Huawei's oversight board makes clear it "has seen nothing to give confidence" that the company can fix its long-term security risk management, this is only one element Wright will examine before making recommendations to the National Security Council.

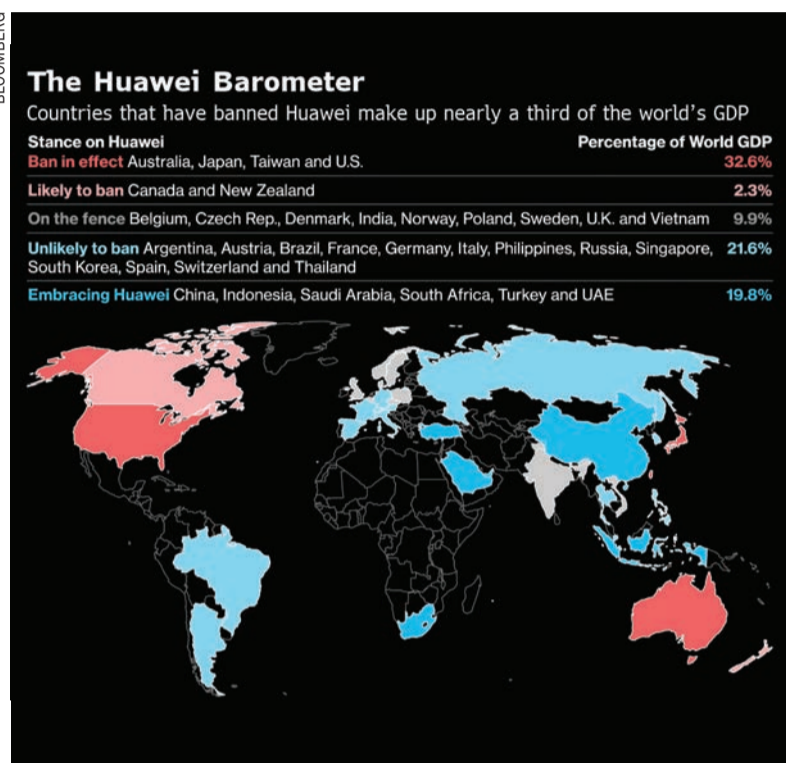
The Chinese company has a significant presence in the U.K. Huawei has signed contracts with all four U.K. mobile

networks to test its 5G wireless equipment, deepening the Chinese vendor's involvement in Britain's telecom industry as officials weigh whether to ban the company over security concerns.

Although critical of Huawei, the U.K. is still no closer to putting in place any restrictions on the company. Taking a softer approach to Huawei could put the country at odds with some of its closest security counterparts, including in the so-called Five Eyes network, the pan-national intelligence sharing network which comprises the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the U.K.

Officials from the U.S. have been warning allies over letting carriers work with Huawei. The head of the U.K.'s foreign intelligence agency MI6 Alex Younger has denied lobbying from the U.S.

The Huawei Cyber Security Evaluation Centre is funded by Huawei, but is staffed by both Huawei employees



and representatives from the U.K.'s National Cyber Security Centre. Based at Banbury in Oxfordshire, northwest of London, the center's board is made up of around 35 U.K. se-

curity approved cyber experts. It was established in 2010 to provide insight for the British government into the company's strategies and products. **Bloomberg**

AD

Academic Year 2019/2020

Central Registration for Children Entering Kindergarten for the First Time

Eligibility Macao residents aged 3 by 31st December, 2019, who will enrol in infant education in Macao for the first time.

Timeline for printing out and submitting the "Registration slips"

Timeline (Year 2019)

Printing out the "Registration slip"	<p>At the self-service kiosks / on the DSEJ website: Between 1st and 10th April</p> <p>Macao Residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have to insert their children's valid Macao Resident Identity Card into the self-service kiosks (same machine for medical vouchers) to print out the "Registration slip". (The slip can only be printed once. Duplicated copies will not be accepted) <p>Non-Macao Residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents who have processed the Central Registration can login to the DSEJ website (www.dsej.gov.mo), input the child's identification document number and print out the "Registration slip". (The information on the "Registration slip" must be verified by the school when the slip is submitted) • The child has not processed the Central Registration, parents must process the "Registration slip" at any of the DSEJ counter(s). <p>DSEJ counters (for special cases) Between 1st and 30th April (Except Ching-Ming Festival & Easter holidays)</p>
Release of the admission list and submission of the "Registration slip"	<p>Schools release the admission list Between 3rd and 4th April</p> <p>Parents of admitted students submit the "Registration slip" to the school selected for their children to attend. Between 6th and 10th April (On school working days)</p>
Release of the admission list of waitlisted students and submission of the "Registration slip"	<p>Starting from 11th April onwards, schools release the admission list of waitlisted students.</p> <p>Parents of waitlisted students submit the "Registration slip" to the preferred school or conduct process for transferring their children to another school. Between 11th and 30th April</p>
Enrolment at other schools	<p>If children have not been admitted to any school until 11th April, i.e. after schools release the admission list of waitlisted students, or parents want to enrol their child in other schools, parents can visit the DSEJ website to check the status of K1 places available at different schools, and go to the schools that still accept enrolment for enquiries and registration.</p>

Gentle Reminder:

- To enrol in Macao schools, non-Macao Residents must possess a stay or residence permit for over 90 days issued by the authorised entity of the Macao SAR.
- The DSEJ will provide "Service of consultation and arrangement of school places" to parents who are in need.

Inquiry number: 8397 2309

For details, please browse DSEJ website: www.dsej.gov.mo

DSEJ app

DSEJ account on Wechat
Wechat ID: dsejmacau



TARIFF WAR

US trade negotiators arrive in Beijing for resumed talks

Joe McDonald, Beijing

U.S. trade negotiators arrived in Beijing yesterday to start a new round of talks aimed at ending a tariff war over China's technology ambitions as officials hint they might be making progress.

The meetings are the latest in a rapid-fire series of exchanges seeking to end the conflict that is disrupting trade in goods from soybeans to medical equipment.

The talks began with a working dinner, Chinese commerce ministry spokesman Gao Feng said during a regular briefing.

"Both teams are currently sparing no effort" on the negotiations, Gao said.

President Donald Trump expressed optimism last week, saying, "we're getting very close." The chief American envoy, Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, said this week that questions about details and enforcement remain to be answered.

The U.S. delegation to the talks is led by Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who arrived at a Beijing hotel on yesterday afternoon. Speaking briefly to reporters, Mnuchin said he and Lighthizer were pleased to be back and looked forward to productive meetings.

The chief Chinese envoy, Vice Premier Liu He, is due to visit Washington in early April for more talks.

The two sides have not announced agreements yet but trade analysts expect at least

a preliminary accord in coming weeks or months. Still, they say the negotiations are unlikely to resolve conflicts that have bedeviled U.S.-Chinese relations for two decades.

The latest dispute erupted after Trump raised duties last year on Chinese imports in response to complaints Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology. It has disrupted trade in goods from soybeans to medical equipment.

That is fueling fears the battle between the two biggest economies will chill global growth that already shows signs of slowing.

Neither side has indicated they are making progress on the core of the dispute: U.S. pressure on Beijing to drop industrial strategies its trading partners say violate its market-opening obligations and might be based on stealing technology.

That includes plans for government-led creation of Chinese global competitors in robotics and other technology.

■ Negotiations are unlikely to resolve conflicts that have bedeviled US-Chinese relations for two decades

A stumbling block appears to be Washington's insistence on an enforcement mechanism with penalties if Beijing fails to follow through on commitments.

Trump also raised another potential obstacle last week, saying he wants to keep in place 25 percent taxes on USD50 billion of Chinese goods. The president said, "we need that."

Beijing is not "in the biggest hurry" so long as Washington delays imposing additional tariffs, said Bryan Mercurio, a trade law specialist at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Chinese negotiators want to avoid giving too much before they figure out what Washington will settle for, said Mercurio, a former Canadian trade negotiator.

"You never really know what the Trump administration wants," said Mercurio.

Separately, Premier Li Keqiang, China's No. 2 leader and economic czar, told a conference in southern China that Beijing plans to open its financial sector further and beef up its rules on foreign companies' mergers and acquisitions within China.

Li was speaking at the Boao Forum for Asia, an annual meeting in the coastal town of Boao.

The official Xinhua News agency cited Li as promising to improve access to China's bond, banking, securities and insurance markets. AP

Chinese viewers balk at 'Bohemian Rhapsody' film censorship

Yanan Wang & Shanshan Wang, Beijing

A huge fan of rock legends Queen, Peng Yanzi rushed to see "Bohemian Rhapsody," the biopic about the band's late lead singer, Freddie Mercury, while he was traveling in Britain last October.

It was a touching film that made him cry hard, Peng says. He loved it enough to watch it a second time in his home city of Guangzhou after the film garnered a surprise China release.

But the version of "Bohemian Rhapsody" he saw this past weekend was notably different from the original. Moviegoers in China say key scenes about Mercury's sexuality have been either abruptly muted or cut altogether.

"The cut scenes really affect the movie," said Peng, a Chinese LGBT rights activist. "The film talks about how [Mercury] became himself, and his sexuality is an important part of becoming who he was."

Scenes that were deleted include one in which Mercury reveals to his long-time partner that he is not heterosexual. In the part of the film where Mercury tells the band that he has AIDS, the dialogue goes silent.

"It's a pity" the scenes were removed, said Hua Zile, chief editor of VCLGBT, an LGBT-themed account with more than a million followers on Weibo, one of China's top social media platforms.

"This kind of deletion weakens his gay identity. It's a bit disrespectful to his real experience and makes the character superficial," Hua said. "There is no growth and innermost being of him." Hua said he also watched both versions of the movie, in the semi-autonomous region of Hong Kong, which enjoys greater freedoms from censorship than mainland China, and the Chinese city of Guangzhou.

The missing scenes confused

some moviegoers. Su Lei read Mercury's biography online before watching the movie Wednesday afternoon so that she could better understand the plot and character development.

"Now it's a very open era, influenced by some American and British TV dramas. People now can understand and accept this," said Su, who works for an accounting firm. She called the film "inspiring" and said cutting the gay content was "unnecessary."

Lu, a freelancer in Shanghai who asked to be identified only by his family name, watched the original version online after seeing the movie in a Chinese theater, where he said he found parts of the dialogue incoherent.

Lu said that despite some lines being erased, it was still obvious the main character is gay. "But the movie has been deleted like this, which affects its entirety," he said.

While LGBT content is generally less taboo than other topics that Chinese authorities deem sensitive, same-sex relationships are still virtually absent from mainstream media.

In 2017, a government-affiliated internet TV association warned streaming content providers against depicting homosexuality, labeling it an "abnormal" sexual behavior. A similar move last year from Weibo provoked an outcry that prompted the website to backtrack and state that a "cleanup of games and cartoons will no longer target gay content."

When Chinese video site Mango TV livestreamed the Academy Awards in February, "Bohemian Rhapsody" lead actor Rami Malek's speech was subtitled to read "special group" when in fact he said "gay man."

Mango TV also censored two LGBT-themed performances during last year's Eurovision song contest, causing Eurovision to terminate its partnership with the Chinese broadcaster in the middle of the competition season. AP



Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

TAIWAN

Tsai confirms request to buy new US fighters, tanks

TAIWANESE President Tsai Ing-wen said her government has asked to purchase advanced new fighter jets and tanks from the U.S., a request that if approved, could set off new tensions between the U.S. and China.

Beijing considers self-governing Taiwan part of China, to be annexed by force if necessary. Speaking during a visit to Hawaii yesterday [local time], Tsai said requests have been submitted for F-16V fighters and M1 Abrams tanks.

The new weaponry would "greatly enhance our land and air capabilities, strengthen military morale, and show to the world the U.S. commitment to Taiwan's defense," Tsai said.

The U.S. is Taiwan's main supplier of defensive weapons, despite the lack of formal diplomatic ties. The F-16V is the most advanced version of the plane that already forms the backbone of Taiwan's air forces, while the M1 Abrams would mark a significant upgrade from the aging, refurbished models the army now uses. Reports say Taiwan is seeking 66 of the planes.

In Beijing, defense ministry spokesman Wu Qian reiterated yesterday that China was "firmly opposed" to U.S. arms sales to Taiwan and military exchanges between the sides.

While China will strive to unify with Taiwan by peaceful means, it is prepared to take "all necessary measures" in response to pro-independence sentiment and outside influence, Wu said.

Foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said China urges the U.S. to stop arms sales to Taiwan "to avoid serious damage to China-U.S. cooperation." He added that the U.S. should "recognize the high sensitivity and serious harm" of the issue. The comments

AP PHOTO



military intimidation, such as circling the island with bombers and fighters in what are officially termed training missions.

China was 'firmly opposed' to US arms sales to Taiwan and military exchanges between the sides

Elsewhere in remarks carried by satellite link to the conservative Washington think tank the Heritage Foundation, Tsai said she found developments in Hong Kong "deeply concerning." China has touted Hong Kong as a future model Taiwan under what it calls "one country, two systems."

Critics say the semi-autonomous territory's civil liberties have been gradually eroded since it was handed over from British to Chinese rule in 1997. "Hong Kong is a reminder that all politicians in Taiwan, regardless of political parties, should carefully avoid falling into a trap laid by China, which includes economic incentives and other promises but ultimately leads to the same destination that is one country two system," Tsai said. **AP**

came the same afternoon that U.S. trade negotiators arrived in Beijing for a new round of talks.

In addition to arms sales, the U.S. is bound by law to treat threats to Taiwan as matters of major concern — although the law is vague on how it would respond to a Chinese attack on the island.

Taiwan's arms requests are carefully reviewed to ensure they suit "Taiwan's actual needs," Tsai said.

"We are also investing heavily into training as well as modernizing our defense strategies to prioritize the use of

asymmetrical capabilities, so that they more closely correspond with the realities of the threat we face," Tsai said. "Altogether, I hope that these actions will ensure that the people of Taiwan remain able to choose our own futures, free of coercion."

Tsai, who says she will seek a second four-year term next year, said Taiwan was also stepping-up training as it prepared to transition to an all-volunteer force and pointed to three consecutive years of defense budget increases.

"These funds have been directed into programs that

will make a real difference in Taiwan's defense, including asymmetrical capabilities," she said.

Tsai's unofficial Hawaii visit comes at the end of a trip to the Pacific island nations of Palau, Nauru, and the Marshall Islands, three of Taiwan's dwindling number of allies that now total just 17 as Beijing seeks to increase Taiwan's international isolation. The sides separated amid civil war in 1949.

Beijing has cut contacts with Tsai's government over Tsai's refusal to endorse its claim that Taiwan is a part of China. It has also stepped up efforts at

Li sees sound economy at home, risk of downturn abroad

PREMIER Li Keqiang said China's domestic economy showed signs of stability amid targeted stimulus support, although new threats were arising from weakness in global demand.

"China's sound economic performance is not a result of quantitative easing or massive stimulus," Li said yesterday in a speech at the Boao Forum for Asia on the Chinese island of Hainan. "Some fluctuations in economic growth from month to month or quarter to quarter are hardly avoidable. Nevertheless

we'll carry on with our policies as long as the major economic indicators are kept within an appropriate range for the whole year."

The government this month unveiled a record USD297 billion tax cut and has worked since last year to improve the supply of credit to small businesses and the private sector. While signs of stabilization in the local economy continue to appear, the U.S.-China trade war remains a major source of uncertainty. Negotiations continue in Beijing.

Li was upbeat on the domestic outlook, although he sounded a warning on the global economy. Concerns of a downturn are multiplying amid signs that trade is being hammered due to recession fears in Europe and China's own slowdown.

LACKLUSTER GLOBAL TRADE

"Global trade and investment are lackluster, and protectionism is on the rise," Li said. "The global economy is losing momentum. There are a lot of uncertainties, and

market confidence has been impacted."

Li said that his government was now working to implement a new foreign-investment law passed this month, which seeks to address some of the concerns about access to the Chinese market that have fueled U.S. complaints. China planned to abolish all laws that contradict the new investment code, draft regulations on its implementation by year-end, he said, and work toward treating all companies, Chinese and otherwise, equally.

LESS NEGATIVE LIST

In addition, the government would continue shrinking the list of sectors foreign companies can't invest in, Li said.

"We'll only reduce items instead of increasing items" on the negative list, Li said. "We'll further open up sectors including modern services such as value-added telecom, healthcare, education as well as transportation, infrastructure, energy and resources."

Li also repeated promises that investors from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau wouldn't be ad-

versely affected by the new investment law, comments that drew enthusiastic applause from the audience in Boao.

"We'll protect and maintain the consistency of the policies regarding Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan investment," he said, promising both clear rules and that there would be no change to the favorable policies those firms have enjoyed until now.

"We'll ensure better protection of the rights of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwanese companies, and allow them to prosper even more." **Bloomberg**

THAILAND

Election Commission faces criticism in vote count

Chris Blake & Kawewit Kaewjinda, Bangkok

THAILAND'S Election Commission held a sudden news conference yesterday to release full preliminary results of the country's recent general election, though some of the data was inconsistent, adding to concerns over the management of the nation's first poll since a military coup.

The commission, appointed by the legislature hand-picked by the junta that took power in 2014, has faced mounting pressure to speed up the count of Sunday's vote and to address concerns about potential irregularities. The U.S., European Union, Australia and others have called for the commission to address such concerns.

Thai social media users have been less diplomatic, making hashtags such as "CheatingElection19" and "ECBusted" trend.

The latest preliminary results, which the commission said were based on a count of all votes,

showed that Palang Pracharath, a party allied with the ruling junta, won the most votes. The commission announced earlier that the main anti-junta party, Pheu Thai, had won the most constituency seats. Final official results aren't required until May.

Both parties have said the early results mean they have a mandate to form the next government, setting up a showdown that could last weeks and lead to instability in a country that has seen repeated political unrest over the past 15 years.

After delaying the release of a full preliminary vote count on election night and then again on Monday, the commission has done little to address concerns beyond blaming any issues in the early counting on the media failing to keep up with the raw data.

After Monday's delay, the commission said it would release a full preliminary vote count on Friday. Then on Wednesday, it said the results announced Friday would only be 95 percent of

the count. Then yesterday, without giving advance notice to the media, it went on TV to announce what it said was the full preliminary vote total, though it did not give seat totals.

As election officials began announcing various numbers, observers noted that they failed to match those in handouts the commission issued at the same time. A huge leap in the voter turnout percentage also did not appear to be supported by the absolute numbers that were issued. Other issues were more minor, such as the total vote count on one page not matching that on another.

A 208-page file showing the vote by each constituency, posted by the commission on the internet, was taken down and unavailable less than two hours after it was released.

The election was for 500 seats in the lower house. Of those, 350 seats are set aside for the winner of each constituency, while another 150 so-called party list seats are divided among parties based



AP PHOTO

on a proportion of the overall vote. The commission has yet to release a preliminary result for the party list seats, which is determined using a complicated formula that is meant to handicap larger parties.

While official results are due in May, the commission has said the seat allocation could change as it investigates complaints and lawsuits in some constituencies.

"In the midst of public doubt toward the Election Commission, we are confident that they still have time and opportunities to prove themselves — release all information in detail, by constituency, online, so the people can scrutinize it," said Pannika Wanich, spokeswoman for the anti-junta Future Forward Party, which was in third place in the vote count. AP

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Elaine Kurtenbach, Bangkok

UN rights envoy says Laos focus on big projects hurting poor

A United Nations human rights expert has urged communist-ruled Laos to focus less on foreign-invested dam and railway contracts and devote more resources to helping its children and the poor.

The U.N. rapporteur on poverty, Philip Alston, said yesterday that Laos' impoverished economy can only thrive if its leaders do a better job of educating and caring for all of its people. The current strategy of favoring big-ticket projects with Chinese investors and granting big concessions for land and other resources favors a wealthy elite and is leaving many others behind, he said.

Alston made the remarks in a news conference livestreamed from Laos' capital, Vientiane, after he toured parts of rural Laos, including an area devastated by a dam collapse last year.

They add to a chorus of concern over China's push for big construction projects linked to its "Belt and Road" initiative, which is aimed at weaving a global network of transport and trade that is integrated with its own economy and industries.

Tucked between Thailand, China, Myanmar and Cambodia, tiny Laos' economy has grown quickly in recent years, but the benefits of that growth have not reached

many in its largely rural population.

Alston said many infrastructure and plantation projects take land from local residents, forcing their resettlement. Most generate too few jobs and result in too much debt, he said.

The current strategy of favoring big-ticket projects with Chinese investors is leaving many others behind

"Those concessions potentially cover something like 40 percent of the national territory and many if not most of those concessions have produced very few returns to the national budget," he said. "They have generated very little real revenue that can be spent on



the wellbeing of the Lao people and of course they have led to widespread dispossession."

A Lao foreign ministry official, Phetvanxay Khouasakoun, objected to Alston's comments.

"Some of that information that you received might be biased. Also, NGOs might have hidden agendas. This might provide you some misperceptions about Laos," he said. "These are rather small groups of people that do not reflect the entire country."

The official also suggested Al-

ston's comments went beyond his mandate.

Alston praised the government for allowing his 11-day visit to the country. But he countered that his findings were in line with his mission.

"These challenges can only be met if they are acknowledged," he said.

He noted that women in Laos are largely shut out of decision making, and that the ethnic minorities who make up nearly half of the population are "severely de-

ved" by nearly every measure, with low incomes and inferior access to education and health care.

Despite major progress in alleviating poverty, more than one-fifth of Lao children are underweight, 9 percent suffer from "wasting," or severe malnutrition and a third are stunted. Less than half have been vaccinated.

"You might have no interest in children, but all you have to know is they are the economic future," he said. "You're not going to have a great workforce with those statistics as your starting point."

Alston, an Australian who is based in the U.S., acknowledged that all countries struggle with poverty.

He said the government's pursuit of resource-oriented foreign investment such as rubber plantations, mining and hydroelectric dams is directly linked to poverty because they fail to generate tax revenues or jobs needed to address poverty.

"Poverty is a political choice," he said. "When you decide to spend money on something else, you produce poverty or you perpetuate poverty." AP



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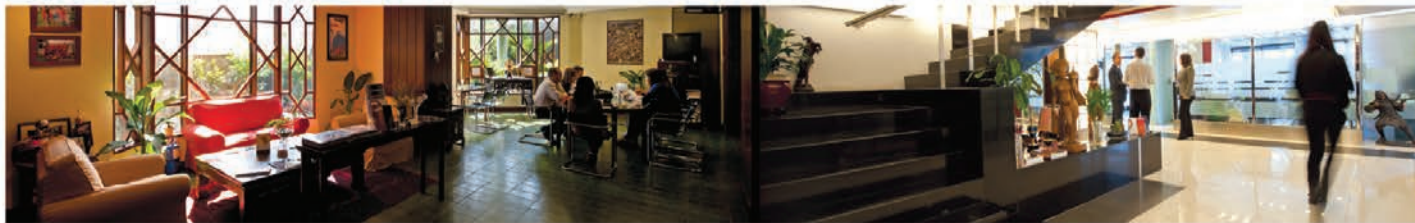
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杜慧盈 Rita da Costa Andorinho
馬潔冰 Maria João Marques
陶義德 António Isóo de Azeredo
白穎怡 Iglia Berenguel
冼玲鳳 Mariana Afonso Esteves
薛明恩 Maria Antónia Giestas
飛嘉華 Carlos dos Santos Ferreira

實習律師 TRAINEE LAWYERS:

孟民諾 Carlos Maurício
羅成軒 José J. Rodrigues
陳祖恩 Joana Chan
顏曉蓉 Teresa Xiaorong Yan
康靜雅 Viviana Hong
梁淑嵐 Ana Leon
黃瀚賢 Frederico Vong
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Danica Kirka & Jill Lawless, London

BREXIT

BBRITISH Prime Minister Theresa May was making a final push yesterday to save her European Union withdrawal deal after her promise to step down gained the agreement some support but failed to win over lawmakers from Northern Ireland.

May pledged that she would quit if the deal were approved, in hopes of blunting opposition from lawmakers in her Conservative Party who have criticized her leadership. May has been under mounting pressure to quit from pro-Brexit Conservatives, who accuse her of negotiating a bad divorce deal that leaves Britain too closely tied to the bloc after it leaves.

Some prominent opponents, including former Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, quickly said they would back the agreement, but Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party said it remained opposed because of concern that the deal treats the region differently from other parts of the U.K.

The prime minister's announcement came as lawmakers rejected eight alternatives to her deal after an unprecedented move to wrest control of the parliamentary agenda from the government in an attempt to find a plan that could break the Brexit deadlock.

A second round of votes is planned on Monday to try to find a plan with majority backing. But the architect of the votes said the inconclusive outcome meant a damaging no-deal Brexit was becoming more likely.

"At the moment we are heading for a situation where, under the law, we leave without a deal on the 12th, which many of us think is not a good solution,"



AP PHOTO

Conservative Party lawmaker Oliver Letwin told the BBC. "And the question is, is Parliament on Monday willing to come to any view in the majority about that way forward that doesn't involve that result?"

The EU last week extended the Brexit deadline for two weeks, saying Britain would leave the bloc with no deal on April 12 if it doesn't come up with a plan to

break the deadlock by that date. If Parliament approves May's deal by Friday, the deadline will be extended until May 22 so there is time to pass implementing legislation.

Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay said the outcome of the indicative votes showed "there are no easy options here," as he urged lawmakers to support May's deal.

The results of the "indicative vo-

tes" underscored the divisions in Parliament, and the country, over Brexit — but also pointed toward a potential compromise.

The idea of remaining in a customs union with the EU came closest to winning a majority, with 264 lawmakers voting for it and 272 voting against. The most popular option was the idea of holding a second referendum on any deal approved by Parlia-

ment, which was backed by 268 lawmakers, but opposed by 295.

Both ideas got more support than the 242 votes secured by May's deal earlier this month.

The plan is for the most popular ideas to move to a second vote Monday to find an option that can command a majority. Parliament would then instruct the government to negotiate it with the EU.

May has said she will consider the outcome of the votes, although she has refused to be bound by the result.

Business groups expressed alarm at the continuing gridlock, which has left companies uncertain whether they will face tariffs, customs checks and other barriers to trade with the EU in just a couple of weeks.

"No one would run a business like this - and it is no way to run a country," said Adam Marshall, director-general of the British Chambers of Commerce.

He told politicians to stop "chasing rainbows" and "start making tough decisions, however personally or politically difficult they might be."

Labour Party legislator Margaret Beckett, who sponsored the second referendum proposal, said lawmakers who had been "wedded to particular proposals" now needed to compromise in the national interest.

"They are going to have to look over the abyss," she said. **AP**

Trump Tower meeting figure: Russia probe 'not a witch hunt'

Nekesa Mumbi Moody, New York

THE music publicist who brokered a meeting between the Trump campaign and a Russian lawyer says Robert Mueller's Russia probe wasn't a "witch hunt."

Rob Goldstone requested the lawyer's meeting with Donald Trump Jr. and other senior campaign officials in June 2016 on behalf of a pop star client whose father was a major property developer in Moscow. Goldstone has been entangled in the special counsel's nearly two-year probe as well as several congressional investigations.

But even after Attorney

General William Barr said Sunday that Mueller found no evidence President Donald Trump's campaign had colluded with the Russian government to sway the 2016 election, Goldstone said it wasn't a wasted effort.

"I hope that everyone will realize this was not a witch hunt. This was a very, very valid exercise in democracy," Goldstone told The Associated Press. "But at the end of the day if the findings are as we believe they are and there's no reason to think otherwise, then really people should move on."

"Witch hunt" was a term used repeatedly by Trump to deride Mueller's investigation.

In brokering the Trump Tower meeting over email, Goldstone said Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya had documents that could "incriminate" Democrat Hillary Clinton and they were being shared as part of the Russian government's support of the Trump campaign. Trump Jr. eagerly took the meeting, which also was attended by campaign chairman Paul Manafort and Trump son-in-law Jared Kushner. The participants would later say the meeting was a bust, taken up with discussion of Russian adoption and U.S. sanctions.

"So to me it was a classic bait-and-switch that took on a life of its own because

Russia became this hot-button topic," Goldstone said.

Goldstone came to know the Trumps while representing Azerbaijan-born singer Emin, whose father had partnered with the Trumps on the 2013 Miss Universe pageant in Moscow. He said even though he felt the meeting he helped set up was immaterial, testifying before the grand jury was terrifying.

"Even though you deep down and fundamentally you know you've done nothing wrong, you believe you've done nothing wrong, you're warned by so many people that the reason people get tripped up isn't because they've done anything wrong,"

AP PHOTO



Natalia Veselnitskaya

he said. "It's that inadvertently or maybe on purpose they lie, they forget, they say something that isn't consistent. And suddenly you've got a perjury case. So it makes you hypersensitive."

Goldstone also testified before Congress behind closed doors and says he's still not done on Capitol

Hill. He is one of dozens who have been asked to testify before the House Judiciary Committee chaired by Democratic Rep. Jerry Nadler of New York.

"I have cooperated in a voluntary capacity with five committees or five inquiries. There's no reason not to do six," Goldstone said. **AP**

TV canal macau



FRIDAY

13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Água de Mar
15:45	Zig Zag
16:05	Conversa da Treta
16:30	Quem Quer Ser Milionário
17:30	Arquitectarte
18:00	Ministério do Tempo
18:50	TDM Talk Show (Repetição)
19:25	Livros com João Guedes (Repetição)
19:35	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	Sinais de Vida
22:00	Contentor 13
22:30	Portugal Culto e Oculto
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Resumo Liga Europa 2018/2019
00:10	Um Amor de Perdição
02:05	Telejornal (Repetição)
02:50	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

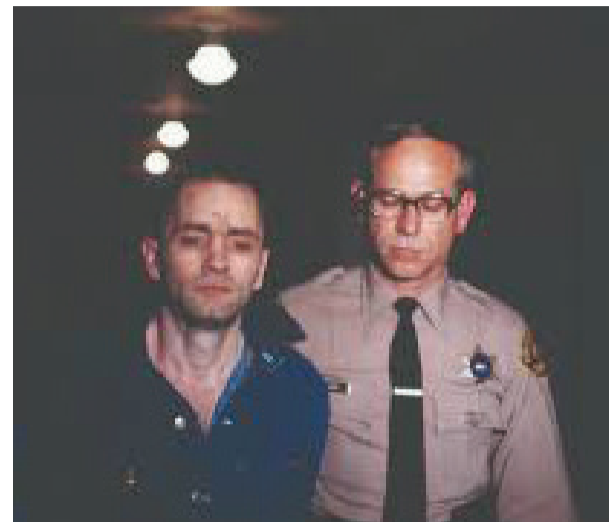
Starring: Takuya Kimura, Masami Nagasawa, Nozomi de

Lencquesaing

Language: Japanese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 133min

this day in history



1971 MANSON SENT TO GAS CHAMBER

Charles Manson and three members of his hippy cult have been sentenced to death in Los Angeles.

They were found guilty of the August 1969 murders of seven people and one unborn child at the beginning of the year.

Their victims included eight-months pregnant actress Sharon Tate - wife of film director Roman Polanski.

None of the defendants heard their verdicts as they were ejected from the courtroom for disrupting proceedings - as they had done several times during the nine month trial.

Manson, 36, was led out after telling the judge and jury: "you don't have any authority over me. You're not nearly as good as me."

His accomplices - Susan Atkins, 22, Patricia Krenwinkel, 23 and Leslie Van Houten, 21 - were dragged screaming from court.

Ms Atkins shouted: "It's gonna come down hard. Lock your doors. Protect your kids."

The prosecution - led by Vincent Bugliosi - depicted Manson as a satanic monster who controlled the women whom he described as "mindless robots".

Jury member Marie Mesmer said: "He was the leader, the worst...I think he's a dangerous influence on society, highly dangerous."

The women - who, like Manson, had shaved their heads - admitted carrying out the killings under the influence of the hallucinogenic drug LSD but denied Manson's involvement.

It took the jury 10 hours to give their verdict in a case that has cost the state of California over £400,000 (over \$1m).

As well as the Tate murder Atkins, Krenwinkel and Manson were condemned for killing Polish writer Voytek Frykowski, coffee heiress Abigail Folger, Hollywood hairdresser Jay Sebring and a friend of Sharon Tate's caretaker, Steven Parent.

Ms Van Houten was sentenced for murdering supermarket owner Leno la Blanca and his wife.

Judge Charles Older said he would pass formal sentence on 16 April, when he may reduce the punishments to life imprisonment, but it is considered unlikely he will do so.

Manson is expected to be confined to the notorious 'death row' in San Quentin to wait for the final outcome of his - automatic - appeal.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Judge Older confirmed the death penalty in his judgement on 19 April 1971.

It had been one of the longest-running murder trials in US history, with a jury sequestered for longer than ever before - 225 days.

The California Supreme Court abolished the death penalty in 1972 and the four were given life sentences.

Manson and four other (male) accomplices were subsequently convicted for the murders of Gary Hinman and Donald (Shorty) Shea. Charles Manson has endured as a cult figure for various extremist groups and has been the subject of various films and documentaries.

In April 2002 Manson was refused parole for the 10th time and Van Houten had her fourteenth request turned down in June of that year. Atkins and Krenwinkel have also had numerous parole applications refused.

Offbeat

NEW YORK CITY COUNCILMAN NAMED AS WORLD'S TALLEST POLITICIAN



A 6-foot-10 (208 centimeters) New York City councilman from Brooklyn has been named tallest politician in the world.

Robert Cornegy Jr. (picture, right) was honored for that distinction at a City Hall ceremony on Wednesday after being officially certified by Guinness World Records as world's tallest male politician on Jan. 14.

Cornegy says he went for the title two years ago after a constituent jokingly told him "you have to be the tallest politician ever." Cornegy says being tall has its challenges, especially shopping for shoes and clothes.

The previous record holder was a British member of Parliament named Sir Louis Gluckstein, who measured 6-foot-7-1/2 inches. He died in 1979 and was succeeded by another British politician who stood at 6-foot-6 inches.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Your drive and motivation are everything right now — and you should find that your energy is best spent sparingly. Focus it all in one direction and you should see great dividends soon!

Taurus
April 20-May 20
Try not to worry all that much about your emotional state — you are sure to feel more grounded early on today. In fact, you may find that what felt like a burden is actually a blessing!

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
Watch out for new rules — especially those that come from people you know and trust! It's hard for you to accept authority when it's so close to home, but for now you may be better off letting it happen.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Things are looking up, most likely — but if this seems wrong to you, then that means it's time for a quick adjustment to your perspective! You've got the means to pull up out of any rut.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Your confidence and righteousness may rub others the wrong way today, so try to wrap them up in a big blanket of humility. It may feel weird, but it's the best way to get others to notice.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Your romantic energy is heightened today, so if you're single, get out there! If you're already seeing someone, it may be time to get more serious. Whatever you do, have fun with it!

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22
Your past is not as distant as you would like — someone or something comes back to haunt you today. It may be that it ends up as nothing much to fret over, but you may have to work to make it right.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Your plans are great — but you need to take action on them! Start today, even if it's just something small. You should be able to make serious progress, but only if you actually get to work.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You are always true to your values — even when you can feel them start to change, as they are today. You should be able to make sense of it all by the time you're through this phase, though it may take some work.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You can work all night if you must — but the odds are that you don't really need to. Things are looking good, and you should find that your energy is stable for as long as you need it to be.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You feel the walls start to close in on you — and no, you're not going insane. It's just that new rules are starting to make themselves known, and you may need to just cope with new restrictions — for now.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20
Life is easy right now — maybe too much so! You need to make sure that you're asking the right questions and checking in with the right people in order to make the most of this great time.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	4	13	cloudy
Harbin	-9	4	cloudy/clear
Tianjin	5	14	clear
Urumqi	-5	4	foggy/clear
Xi'an	3	20	cloudy
Lhasa	2	15	overcast/cloudy
Chengdu	12	17	clear
Chongqing	11	14	drizzle/overcast
Kunming	8	23	cloudy/clear
Nanjing	7	19	cloudy/clear
Shanghai	7	19	cloudy
Wuhan	7	22	cloudy
Hangzhou	8	19	clear
Taipei	15	18	drizzle/cloudy
Guangzhou	16	22	drizzle/overcast
Hong Kong	17	20	drizzle/cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-7	2	cloudy/flurry
Frankfurt	4	14	moderaterain
Paris	6	16	drizzle
London	6	15	drizzle/overcast
New York	10	14	cloudy/thundershower

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1-Imitating; 6- Indonesian island; 10- PDQ; 14- Chocolate bean; 15- Word of woe; 16- Abdul-Jabbar's alma mater; 17- Freshwater fish; 18- Auto loan figs.; 19- Raised platform; 20- Artist Max; 21- Small parrot; 23- Break bread; 25- Be under the weather; 26- "Waterloo" group; 29- Trick; 32- Plumed heron; 37- Miller Sebastian; 38- Walking stick; 39- With a level head; 40- Like afterschool activities; 43- Go to bed; 44- The two; 45- From ___ Z; 46- Carplike fish; 47- Caribbean dance music; 48- Storm centers; 49- Common street name; 51- Confederate soldier; 53- Polled; 58- Receded; 62- Bang-up; 63- Et ___; 64- Gaucho's rope; 65- Sign of the future; 66- Range: Abbr.; 67- Lay to rest; 68- ___ majeste; 69- Pops a question; 70- Excrete from the body;

DOWN: 1- Entr'___; 2- Henry VIII's last wife; 3- Screen symbol; 4- Sickness at the stomach; 5- Must, informally; 6- Ancient Semitic for "Lord"; 7- Purina competitor; 8- Immature insects; 9- Japanese immigrant; 10- BMW competitor; 11- Sign of injury; 12- Put ___ on it; 13- Faux ___; 22- Remove the color from; 24- Hint; 26- Biting; 27- Prizefighter; 28- Davis or Midler; 30- Burma's first prime minister; 31- ___Croatian; 33- African antelope; 34- Cooperative race; 35- Bring joy; 36- Newbies; 38- Bizet's opera; 39- Ravi Shankar's instrument; 41- Long, narrow inlet; 42- Fabled bird; 47- Refines, as ore; 48- Reffluent; 50- Alpaca's cousin; 52- So spooky as to be frightening; 53- ___ on the Range; 54- Some bills; 55- Jeweler Lalique; 56- Gravitate; 57- Talk back to; 59- De-intensify; 60- French summers; 61- Pub projectile; 62- "You've got mail" co.;

Yesterday's solution

R	A	N	I	T	E	M	P	S	P	S	A	T	
F	E	L	O	N	A	M	O	R	E	O	H	N	O
G	E	N	S	R	I	V	E	T	S	A	A	R	
A	C	C	O	M	P	L	I	S	H	M	E	N	T
I	T	O	I	S	S	E	I	A	R	G	O	T	
N	O	M	S	G	R	I	N	G	A	I	M		
M	E	T	A	C	H	R	O	M	A	T	I	C	
R	E	S	T	O	Y	S	E	R	A				
A	L	T	I	L	S	I	N	T	W	O			
V	A	H	O	O	T	O	A	S	T	O	A	R	
N	E	A	N	D	E	R	T	H	A	L	O	I	D
P	O	S	T	I	R	A	T	E	T	T	E		
A	M	I	E	P	I	L	A	R	I	L	E	R	
T	A	S	S	S	A	B	R	E	S	E	R	S	

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- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IACM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
- Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
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	<p>Macau Square Office Space, CBD Macau Multiple Offices For Rent HKD 21,000 / 837 sq ft Ref: 18100691</p>	<p>4 Storey Commercial Building Coloane Commercial Building HKD 168,000 / 4003 sq ft Ref: 17040646</p>	<p>Nova Park, Taipa Taipa Two Bedroom Apartment HKD 16,400 / 1134 sq ft Ref: 17020638</p>	<p>Car Park, The Manhattan Taipa Single Car Park HKD 2,000 Ref: 1505507R</p>



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FOOTBALL

Solskjaer stays at the wheel in his dream job at Man United

Steve Douglas

IN his 99 days as interim manager at Manchester United, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer delivered a record-breaking set of results, restored the team's identity and swagger, and lifted the gloom lingering from the end of the Jose Mourinho era.

Somehow, he even kept United on course to win the Champions League — a feat he memorably achieved as a player.

So it quickly became a matter of when, not if, the Norwegian got offered the chance to stay on permanently in what he has always described as his "dream" job.

That moment came yesterday.

As a reward for his better-than-expected spell in temporary charge, Solskjaer accepted a three-year contract as manager of the biggest club in England.

"This is the job that I always dreamed of doing," he said, "and I'm beyond excited to have the chance to lead the club long-term and hopefully deliver the continued success that our amazing fans deserve."

United's hierarchy is set to give some compensation to Molde, the Norwe-

gian team that Solskjaer was coaching before his former club came calling, as a gesture of goodwill.

It's the least they can do. When Solskjaer was appointed on a temporary deal on Dec. 19, United was sixth in the Premier League and 11 points off fourth place — the last spot to gain automatic qualification for next season's Champions League.

More than that, there was a joylessness hanging over the club from the final months under Mourinho, who had fallen out with some players — Paul Pogba, in particular — and left fans disillusioned with the team's playing style.

Fast forward three months and United might only be in fifth place in the league but is now only two points behind fourth-place Arsenal, after losing just one of its 13 league games under Solskjaer. In the Champions League, United beat highly favored Paris Saint-Germain — the team of Neymar and Kylian Mbappe — over two legs in the last 16 and next faces Barcelona.

In the process, Solskjaer became the first United manager to win his first eight games in charge and

tied the record of Carlo Ancelotti at Chelsea and Pep Guardiola at Manchester City by winning his first six Premier League games. Nine straight away wins under Solskjaer is also a United record.

In all, he has led the team to 14 wins in his 19 games in charge. It is playing with a freedom and commitment to attack not seen since the days of Alex Ferguson, who quit in 2013 after more than 26 years as manager. Indeed, Solskjaer has leaned on Ferguson for advice over the past three months.

"The results Ole has delivered speak for themselves," said Ed Woodward, United's executive vice chairman. "More than just performances and results, Ole brings a wealth of experience, both as a player and as a coach, coupled with a desire to give young players their chance and a deep understanding of the culture of the club. This all means that he is the right person to take Manchester United forward."

Solskjaer said upon arriving at United in December that he wanted the job on a full-time basis, having played for the English club from 1996-2007 and scored 126 goals

in 266 appearances. His most famous goal was his late winner in the 1999 Champions League final.

Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino was widely regarded as the front-runner to replace Mourinho, but United's results under Solskjaer meant the Norwegian quickly became favorite.

The fans also got behind him and have regaled him with his own song, which starts: "Ole's at the wheel, tell me how good does it feel?"

Pretty good, actually.

"From the first day I arrived, I felt at home at this special club," Solskjaer said. "It was an honor to be a Manchester United player, and then to start my coaching career here. The last few months have been a fantastic experience."

Solskjaer can finally begin planning for the future and will likely want funds to strengthen the playing squad particularly in defense. Keeping star players like Pogba and David De Gea at the club will also be key in the off-season transfer window.

United hasn't won the Premier League since 2013, the last year of Ferguson's long reign. **AP**



BOXING

Unified cruiserweight champ Usyk moves to heavyweight

The undisputed world cruiserweight champion, Oleksandr Usyk (pictured), is finally moving up to heavyweight. The Ukrainian fighter said he's vacated the WBA cruiserweight title rather than fight challenger Denis Lebedev, in a video statement on the WBA's Instagram feed yesterday. "That fight will not happen because I and my team have decided to move up to heavyweight," Usyk said. "I'm vacating the belt. I don't want to just have it, so let the guys fight for it." It wasn't immediately clear if he's vacating the IBF, WBC, and WBO belts. Usyk unified the cruiserweight division in July by beating Murat Gassiev and immediately said he could move up to heavyweight. Usyk has a 16-0 pro record, 12 by knockout. Usyk is a native of Crimea, but has continued to represent Ukraine.



FORMULA ONE

Mick Schumacher 'totally confident' he can handle pressure

Mick Schumacher feels comfortable being under the spotlight in the desert heat of Bahrain. It will be an intense few days for the 20-year-old son of Formula One great Michael Schumacher as he makes his F2 debut for the Prema team this weekend and then drives in his first F1 test for Ferrari this week. Five of his famed father's record seven F1 titles were won with Ferrari from 2000-04. His father also holds the record for F1 wins with 91. Asked if he can handle the pressure, the young Schumacher says he is "totally confident." One of his father's trademarks as a driver was an unshakeable inner confidence.

FOOTBALL

Asian confederation leader Sheikh Salman now has no election rival

Asian Football Confederation president Sheikh Salman Bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa is assured of being re-elected after his only remaining challenger withdrew. Qatar's soccer federation says in a statement it will support Sheikh Salman, ending the candidacy of its vice president Saoud Al-Mohannadi. A third candidate, Mohamed Khalfan Al Romaithi of the United Arab Emirates, dropped out of the race this month. Sheikh Salman, who was first elected in 2013, is set to get another four-year mandate unopposed on April 6 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The AFC president is also one of FIFA's eight vice presidents.

opinion

Kapok
Eric Sautédé



LIVEABLE TOURISM

When designing or even reviewing policy-making, the whole process is bound to start with a discussion of sort. Whether it is a subdued exchange of views or a heated debate over contentious points, hard facts will mitigate opinions and inform the overall spin of the conversation.

When the figures for visitors coming to Macao in 2018 were released earlier this year, it was thus only logical that some legislators wanted to discuss the matter further: almost 36 million visitors coming to a place whose total population is only 650,000 does qualify our SAR for the “overcrowded” category — we are talking about 100,000 daily visitors on average. This is also what is often referred to as “overtourism” these days. Mind you, this is not a new topic, and since Macao has breached the symbolic threshold of 30 million visitors in 2014, the idea of having daily quotas of tourists or restrictions regarding back and forth movements have been regularly aired.

Some very touristy “enclosed spaces”, such as islands or walled cities, have already taken drastic moves by substantially restricting sudden surges of visitors. Among the most well-known examples are Dubrovnik in Croatia and Santorini in Greece, and in both cases the cruise-ship stopovers were the main targets of these restrictions — what really distort everything being the massive arrival of day visitors.

Despite all the hype about Macao becoming a “world center of leisure and tourism” and the magic formula of “integrated resorts” for new casinos to develop, the average length of stay in Macao is still 1.3 days and it took years to go beyond 1.1!

What is indeed more troubling is that someone representing the food and beverage sector and by extension the hospitality industry, such as legislator Chan Chak Mo, would simply refuse to discuss the issue, and dismiss it on the ground that it is impossible to choose the tourists who visit our SAR. He thus concluded that residents “need to just get used to them.” This is not only irresponsible, but it goes against the latest reflections from the industry itself.

Macao participates in the activities of the World Travel and Tourism Council, and several events of the Council, which represents the Travel & Tourism private sector globally, have actually been held in our SAR. All the research produced by the Council and the global summit it organizes are of course largely concerned by the economic impact and the mega-trends in the growth of the tourism industry, but the overall perspective is lined-up with other concerns, long terms ones, and the Council has actually made the 2015 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals its latest guiding principles.

In its remarkable 2017 study entitled “Coping with Success: Managing Overcrowding in Tourist Destinations”, the Council indicated that “an essential element of a sustainable tourism strategy [was] to put the local community first”. Someone has got his priorities wrong!

But before even thinking of defining a strategy — even one that would be backed by the latest tools of a smart city — the proper diagnosis has to be made.

The report recommends nine metrics grouped under five categories to understand the potential risks: the overall context (importance of tourism and arrivals growth), the alienation of local residents (tourism density — visitors per square kilometer — and intensity — visitors per resident), the degraded tourism experience, the overloaded infrastructure (arrival seasonality and attraction concentration), the damage to nature (air pollution) and the threats to culture and heritage (historic site prevalence).

Interestingly enough, Macao was part of the study and ended up in the most at risk categories in four metrics out of nine, with one (air pollution) not being documented — one can wonder why. And then comes the difficult part: the solutions! Five directions have been identified, with several instruments available: visitors have to be smoothed over time, spread across sites, prices have to be adjusted to balance supply and demand, accommodation supply needs to be regulated and then, if that's not enough, access and activities can be restricted.

Ultimately, the city has to be liveable if it wishes to remain attractive.

THE BUZZ **HOMEMADE EXPLOSIVE AT NORTH CHINA POLICE STATION INJURES THREE**

Three people were injured yesterday when a homemade explosive device was set off at a police station in China's northeast, authorities said.

After setting fire to the station in Liaoning province's Shenyang city, the attacker used gunpowder to detonate a homemade explosive in the first-floor reception hall, local police said

in a statement.

Three people, including two police personnel, suffered light injuries, it said.

Authorities said the suspect died at the scene, but did not give further details.

Last month, seven people were killed in northwest Shaanxi province in an arson attack linked to a family dispute.

Station	Air quality	Icon
Roadside	55-75 Moderate	☹️
High Density Residential Area	60-80 Moderate	☹️
Ambient	55-75 Moderate	☹️

SOURCE: DSMG

Saris stand out on Indian fashion runway



AP PHOTO

sari, Indian women's most idiosyncratic garment, 6 yards of fabric that symbolize a centuries-old tradition.

“As a long piece of fabric, it's not easy to drape, a lot of designers have worked on it over time and it is being styled differently to inspire the younger generation to wear,” Vaishali S., a Mumbai-based designer, said of the sari.

Models sashayed down the runway in a riot of color and glitz as Delhi socialites, Bollywood stars and prospective buyers watched for the season's next “it” items.

The sari was juxtaposed with other Indian ensembles, Western wear and fusion clothing collections



AP PHOTO

IT'S fashion season in India's capital, with the country's top designers showcasing their latest collections to lure the rapidly growing domestic and export markets for Indian haute couture.

Before the styles debut on the runway lie days of planning, fittings and hair and makeup sessions to experiment with looks, poses and choreography. Just days ahead of the big show, tailors take models' measurements and fashion designers finish rehearsing.

Top fashion names and models participated in Lotus Makeup India Fashion Week organized by the Fashion Design Council of India earlier this month. The show celebrated the



AP PHOTO

for men and women.

The show finale was an ode to the sari, worn by the runway models in modern, reconstructed forms, along with elaborate jewelry and accessories against striking backdrops.

Vaishali said the saris on the runway paid tribute to the great variety across India of “weaves, textures, drapes and fabrics with every state and every village having its own strongly distinct and contemporary style, alive and evolving.”

At the end, avid fashionistas in the audience blended in with fashion models as buyers thronged the stalls of designers, who offered their creations for sale, pret-a-porter. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Victoria Jones/Pool Photo via AP



The other Harry. England soccer captain Harry Kane (right) and his partner Kate Goodland after being made an MBE by Britain's Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge during an investiture ceremony at Buckingham Palace yesterday.

WORLD BRIEFS

LAOS A UN human rights expert urged communist-led Laos to focus less on foreign-invested dam and railway contracts and devote more resources to helping its children and the poor. *More on p13*



BANGLADESH A fire struck a high-rise office building in Dhaka, killing 19 people and injuring about 70 others. It trapped many inside the building, with some shouting for help from windows on high floors or from the roof.



BREXIT Prime Minister May was making a final push to save her European Union withdrawal deal after her promise to step down gained the agreement some support but failed to win over lawmakers from Northern Ireland. *More on p15*



DOLPHINS The dolphins' bodies were horribly mutilated, the fins cut off. But what shocked French marine researchers wasn't just the brutality of the deaths of these highly intelligent mammals, but also the numbers involved — a record 1,100 have washed up on France's Atlantic coast since January.



FOOTBALL The hype around the Barcelona city derby this weekend seems to boil down to an Argentine superstar meeting a Chinese sensation. Lionel Messi faces Wu Lei (pictured) for the first time on Saturday when Barcelona takes on Espanyol.