

HANGING IN THE BALANCE
The fate of Wynn Resorts' Boston project is now in the hands of regulators as they review what company officials knew about sexual misconduct allegations

▲ P5 GAMING



HK LAWMAKER CALLS FOR EXTRADITION LAW LIMITS
A pro-establishment legislator has suggested the controversial bill could be retroactively applied only within the past 12 months

▲ P6-7 GREATER BAY



DJIBOUTI IN DEEP DEBT TO CHINA

▲ P11

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



ECONOMY Europe's sclerotic growth and political dysfunction inspire frequent comparisons with Japan's lost decade from the mid-1990s. We're not there yet. [More on p8-9](#)



CHINA Officials at the Sanya Championship said that 28-year-old Malaysian golfer Arie Irawan (pictured) died in his hotel room from "apparent natural causes," and the PGA Tour Series-China canceled the final round of the tournament. Irawan missed the 36-hole cut Friday. The official coroner's report had not been completed.



INDONESIAN presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto called for change in a rally yesterday, talking down the government's economic performance as competition heats up ahead of an election next week. Indonesia goes to the polls on April 17. [More on p13](#)



INDIA In the city Hindus consider the center of the world, Varanasi, PM Modi has commissioned a grand promenade connecting the sacred Ganges River with the centuries-old Vishwanath temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, the god of destruction. It's a project dripping with equal parts symbolism and political calculation.

[More on backpage](#)

Arts Festival slips up with poster blunder

▲ P2-3



SOUTH CHINA SEA

Duterte appeasement wearing thin

▲ P10

IC pays for 'accidentally plagiarized'



Mascot "Agu" unveiled during yesterday's event



Staff reporters

CULTURAL Affairs Bureau (IC) President Mok Ian Ian is in the spotlight for the second time in two weeks after it was discovered that the poster for a Cantonese opera performance at this year's Macao Arts Festival had used elements plagiarized

from another designer.

Late last week, local media outlet All About Macau reported that they had received a "complaint" from a resident who claimed that the poster for the Cantonese opera show closing the festival had used elements that were not originally owned by the IC.

The source said that the case

had been reported to the IC, but the Bureau had "not handled it seriously and wanted to resolve the controversy off record by paying money."

The media outlet reported, "in the response given by the IC, in the design phase [of the poster], personnel of the Bureau collected a large amount of Cantonese opera images

for reference and used a part of the image as a component of the poster."

The IC pledged to follow up the matter with a "serious attitude."

It said it has "commissioned representatives to explain and apologize to the owner."

Meanwhile, the IC also promised to purchase the copyri-

ght from the original artist.

At a promotional event yesterday for the 'swearing-in' of 25 cultural ambassadors selected by the Cultural Affairs Bureau and tasked with promoting Macao culture, IC President Mok Ian Ian was asked about the plagiarized content.

Mok affirmed the afore-

ASK THE VET

by Dr Ruan Du Toit Bester

TOTAL DOG HEALTH: THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

Complete dog health is a combination of key elements including nutrition, supplementation, and preventatives. Not only do these key elements integral to your dog's overall health, but they also promote vitality, mental stability, and overall well-being. Secondary aspects of dog health include remedies and treatments. Remedies such as aromatherapy and herbalism can aid in easing symptoms of hundreds of conditions and treatments such as massage, acupuncture, and hydrotherapy can help dogs stay healthy physically and mentally.

DOG NUTRITION

Good dog nutrition is one of the best ways to avoid a number of common conditions such as constipation, diarrhoea, allergies, chronic skin conditions, frequent stomach upsets, bad breath, ear infections, hyperactivity, anxiousness, aggressiveness, and anxiety, to name a few. To avoid common dog conditions the best thing you can do for your dog is to avoid low-quality, low-nutrition, commercial dog food and buy high-quality products with a 40/50/10 ratio. This means, 40% meat, 50% veggies, and 10% carbohydrate. It is also important to avoid dog foods that use by-products as well

as preservatives such as BHT, BHA, and Ethoxyquin. Choose premium brand foods as they do not contain fillers, by-products or harmful chemical preservatives. They contain 100% natural and nutritious human-grade ingredients. Add bulking agents to the diet, such as bran, pumpkin, or methylcellulose, can help prevent constipation as well. In addition to feeding your dog a balanced, high-quality diet, you should: always provide fresh water keep them away from trash and bones avoid feeding them table scraps

DOG SUPPLEMENTATION

Dog supplements can be a great benefit to your pet in the long-run. No matter how healthy a type of dog food may be, not all dog food contains all of the vitamins and minerals your dog needs. Antioxidants, in particular, are important for optimal dog health for several reasons. Antioxidants have healing properties, they assist the body's natural defense mechanism and in turn boost the immune system, and they decrease the effects of free radicals. The best dog supplements should contain vitamins A, C and E, and vitamins B, B1, B2, B3,

B5, B6 and B12.

DOG PREVENTATIVES

Besides feeding your dog a balanced diet and supplements, exercise is one of the most important ways to help prevent a number of common conditions. Just a few common dog conditions include heart problems and obesity. Exercise can even prevent emotional problems. Exercise also promotes joint health, healthy bones, bone density, and even self confidence. Walking, running, fetching/catching, and swimming are all excellent exercises for dogs. Several 15 minute walks per day might be plenty for some dogs, such as pugs, while playing at the dog park for an hour or so with other dogs may be just what a large dog needs. No matter what size or breed your dog may be, some exercise is always better than no exercise at all.

ORAL HEALTH

Oral health is one of the most neglected aspects of dog health. Unfortunately, when you neglect your dog's dental health, you open the door to a number of preventable health issues. In addition to the usual suspects such as bad breath gingivitis, and



periodontal disease, poor oral hygiene can lead to tonsillitis, pharyngitis (sore throat), kidney infections, and infections involving the heart valves. To ward off diseases related to poor oral health, brush your dog's teeth regularly and see your vet for regular check-ups and cleanings.

Hope this info helps
Till next week
Dr Ruan Bester

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mentioned stance of her bureau, adding that since the incident was now under official investigation, further comments or details could not be provided.

The incident marks the second blunder in two weeks for organizers of the Macao Arts Festival, which is overseen by the Cultural Affairs Bureau.

During the announcement of this year's festival line-up, local media discovered that the closing performance of the Macao Art Festival, "The Soul of Macao", was an adaptation of a script originally written by the IC president. Official press information had described the script writer merely as a "Macao author".

During yesterday's event organized by the IC, a five-minute short film commissioned by the entity premiered, reminding the public of the three large-scale events organized by the Bureau - namely the International Music Festival, the City Fringe Festival and the Arts Festival, which is just around the corner.

The 25 cultural ambassadors selected by the IC to promote Macau's culture were also sworn in during yesterday's event.

Candidates underwent a selection process and were fi-



Mok Ian Ian (center) and cultural ambassadors

nally revealed at the Bureau's Cultural Promotion Day opening at Tap Seac Square yesterday.

The IC had held a cultural ambassador campaign that attracted more than 400 applications. According to the Bureau, applicants were ordinary people from all walks of life.

After rounds of interviews, 25 candidates were confirmed as cultural ambassadors representing Macau. They are set to undergo 90 hours of "experiential" training by veteran cultural professionals.

Regarding the backgrounds of the ambassadors, the IC noted there were students, civil servants, journalists and

others, whose ages ranged between 15 and 85.

The mascot "Agu" was also revealed. Designed by local illustrator Lai Hoi Ieng, Lai said the inspiration came from marketplace storytellers from decades ago.

A carnival was also held as part of the event to educate participants about local cul-

ture. Interactive games and activities attracted thousands of participants.

In addition, the IC also presented local Cantopop singers Vivian Chan and Terence Choi, as well as celebrated Chinese artists Liza Wang and Wu Jinyan, appointed by the Bureau as star ambassadors for this year's event.

ARTS

Original Renaissance works to debut in Macau this week

A joint exhibition presented by the Macao Museum of Art and the British Museum will bring the original drawings of 42 Renaissance artists to Macau starting Thursday, presenting works from renowned figures including Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael. The exhibition will seek to highlight the achievements of Italian art during this period, according to organizers.

The exhibition is divided into six sections: "The Human Figure," "Movement," "Light," "Costume and Drapery," "The Natural World" and "Storytelling." The sections combine to examine some of the themes that characterize Renaissance art, according to a state-

ment from the Cultural Affairs Bureau, which oversees the Macao Museum of Art.

"Starting from the study of the human form, it explores how artists brought life and dynamism to their compositions through the study of movement, light and shade, and costume," the Cultural Affairs Bureau wrote in its statement.

The exhibition is part of a series of activities being held to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Macao Museum of Art.

As 2019 also marks the 500th anniversary of the passing of the great Renaissance master Leonardo da Vinci, the exhibition has been especially scheduled to open in April to coincide with the artist's date

of birth in April 1452. The artist died in May 1519, almost exactly 500 years ago.

On April 13, the Saturday after the exhibition unveiling, British Museum curator Sarah Vowles will hold a talk conducted in English for those interested in learning more about the works on display and the techniques used by the Renaissance artists.

A number of other exhibition activities have also been created by the Macao Museum of Art, including guided tours with the curator, hands-on tours to the 3D printing section of the exhibition, drawing workshops, courses, and special activities for children and the blind or visually-impaired.

The Department of

Prints and Drawings at the British Museum is home to the national collection of Western prints and drawings. There are around 50,000 drawings and over two million prints dating from the beginning of the 15th century to present day. The collection is available to the public through a program of temporary displays, touring exhibitions and loans.

"Italian Renaissance Drawings from the British Museum" will be unveiled at the Macao Museum of Art at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday. Supported by the Faculty of Creative Industries of the University of Saint Joseph, as well as Jiangsu-based Suzhou Museum, the exhibition will run until June 30. **DB**



Francesco Salviati (1510-1563), Drapery Study for a Seated Woman. Courtesy of Trustees of the British Museum



Giovanni Bellini (c. 1430-1516), Three Head Studies. Courtesy of Trustees of the British Museum

MIGRANTS

Indonesian Consulate working to protect underpaid domestic workers



Tri Tharyat

THE Indonesian Consulate in Hong Kong and Macau is working with local authorities to protect Indonesian nationals from being underpaid in the MSAR.

Tri Tharyat, Consul General

of the Indonesian Consulate in Hong Kong and Macau said that the office is working on specifying a minimum wage in contracts, particularly those of domestic workers.

Although the official said there

is an indicative minimum wage amounting to MOP2,500, Tharyat is pushing for the amount to be written on paper.

"I observed that this practice has been respected because I haven't heard any reports

of unpaid salaries or lower salaries that are lower than MOP2,500," the official said, as cited in a TDM report.

"This is something that the two governments have to work together on, putting a minimum salary on paper. I have been talking to local authorities about putting this figure in contracts," he added.

Unlike Hong Kong where the minimum wage is clearly set at HKD4,520, the MSAR has no minimum wage for foreign domestic workers.

The Consulate provides consular services three times a week to around 5,000 Indonesian domestic workers in the region.

Previously, the official said that the consulate was ready to work with the Macau govern-

ment to improve protection, including following up on the Mutual Legal Assistance planned between Indonesia and Macau.

"There are cases that we've been handling, and I am happy to see that the number of cases is reducing day by day and year by year. It shows that the management of reported cases has been quite effective, and our cooperation with local authorities has been excellent," said the official.

However, Tharyat is set to leave his post at the Consulate next month.

"I'm still working with the Macau government on improving the quality of [admitting] workers here, particularly those working as domestic helpers," he said. **LV**

Taxi hits elderly wheelchair user at zebra crossing

A taxi driver in his 20s hit a wheelchair user in the surroundings of the Fai Chi Kei area on Saturday afternoon. The woman was around 70 years old and was crossing the street at a zebra crossing.

According to a spokesperson from the Public Security Police Force (PSP), the incident occurred around 4:30 p.m. on Saturday when the woman, who was using a motorized wheelchair, crossed the road at the pedestrian crossing located at Rua Norte do Patane.

The spokesperson told the Times that after the incident, the woman was assisted by

an ambulance which arrived at the scene, and then transferred to the Conde de São Januário Hospital Center where she was treated for minor injuries and discharged a few hours later.

The PSP also noted that the driver tested negative for alcohol.

The PSP said that according to preliminary investigations, the accident would have been the fault of the taxi driver, who disrespected the right of way of the elderly crossing the road. They also noted that there is no final report on the case yet, and that it is still under investigation. **RM**

Ho Iat Seng lacking 'political skills,' says lawyer

LAWYER Jorge Menezes said that the current president of the Legislative Assembly, Ho Iat Seng, lacks "political skills" which could prevent him from being a good Chief Executive (CE).

"I have serious doubts that the current president of the Legislative Assembly will make a good Chief Executive," Menezes said during an interview with TDM Radio, adding, "he lacks political skills."

Menezes was commenting on the fact that Ho is seen as one of the most serious candidates in the election for the new CE, at least for the time being, as he is the first



to publicly admit the possibility of candidacy.

The way Ho has handled several situations at the AL, such as the case of lawmaker Sulu Sou, or the dismissal of Portuguese legal advisors Paulo Taipa and Paulo Cardinal, is a clear indication of

his lack of skill.

Menezes expressed sorrow at the way the two advisors had been dismissed as though it was "political pruning," but noted his belief, contrary to others, that the dismissal of the two former advisors was not related to Sou's case.

On the program which aired on Saturday, Menezes also added he found it "strange" that after their dismissal from the AL, the two experienced legal advisors could not find a job elsewhere in Macau, eventually having to return to Portugal. **RM**

ONE SHOT NEWS



Mosquito season. Staff of the Working Group on the Prevention of Dengue Fever hand out flyers on the Macau peninsula to advise the public on the prevention of dengue fever and the Zika virus. The mosquito presence is usually at its worst in the spring and summer months, starting from April.



In this March 2016 file photo, Steve Wynn gestures during a news conference in Medford, Mass., regarding his proposed casino complex

GAMING | MASSACHUSETTS

Panel to vet Wynn Resorts' fate with public hearings in mind

THE fate of Wynn Resorts' USD2.6 billion Encore Boston Harbor resort is now in the hands of Massachusetts gambling regulators after they wrapped up a series of public hearings into what company officials knew about allegations of sexual misconduct against company founder Steve Wynn last week.

Massachusetts Gaming Commission Chairwoman Cathy Judd-Stein said at the close of the three-day inquiry that the panel will now deliberate privately and "take our time" making a decision on whether the Las Vegas company is still suitable to hold a state casino license.

Wynn Resorts hopes to open their nearly complete resort on the Everett waterfront in June.

The inquiry opened Tuesday after the commission released a more than 200-page report from its investigative unit that concluded company executives concealed and failed to take action on allegations against Steve Wynn for years. The five-member panel then questioned company leaders and outside experts over the course of two days.

On Thursday, company co-founder Elaine Wynn defended her decision not to disclose to Massachusetts regulators a \$7.5 million settlement her ex-husband Steve Wynn made to a former employee who accused him of rape.

Steve Wynn has denied the sexual misconduct allegations, which were made over the years by several former casino workers. He told investigators in a statement that his "multiple relationships" with company employees were all consensual.

Elaine Wynn, who co-founded Wynn Resorts and is now the company's largest shareholder, told regulators she relied on the company's lawyers to decide what should be disclosed as the company sought a casino license in 2013.

She maintained that she told the company's lawyer about the 2005 settlement in 2009 and had not been aware until recently about some of the other settlements her husband privately made, such as a \$700,000 payment to a cocktail waitress in 2008.

Matthew Maddox, the company's new CEO and close confidante of Steve Wynn,

told regulators he also did not know about the specifics of some private settlements his former boss reached with former casino employees who had accused him of sexual misconduct until those details became public years later.

Maddox took over after Wynn resigned last year following a Wall Street Journal story detailing the allegations. But he's been with the company since its founding and was best man in one of Steve Wynn's weddings.

He said Wednesday he had been aware of the 2008 settlement as the company's then-chief financial officer. But he maintained he was told the payment was to help a financially struggling employee and was on behalf of both Steve and Elaine Wynn.

Maddox said he was also made aware of at least one of a number of complaints made by spa workers at Wynn Las Vegas about Steve Wynn's conduct during massages. Maddox, who was company president at the time, said he told the then-president of the casino to tell Steve Wynn to discontinue the behavior.

Maddox acknowledged he should have informed regu-

lators about the allegations in 2018 because he and other company officials were aware of The Wall Street Journal's reporting weeks prior to publication.

Company board members testifying Wednesday acknowledged they failed to investigate after learning in 2016 about a \$7.5 million settlement Steve Wynn had paid to a former employee in 2005.

Board member Patricia Mulroy said the settlement first came to the board's attention in 2016 during a lawsuit brought by Elaine Wynn, who was then in a bitter feud with Steve Wynn and the company board.

Mulroy said the company's then-legal counsel assured them the incident was an "outlier" and that Wynn had personally paid the settlement with no liability to the company.

She also maintained the company's legal counsel never told board members the allegation, from a former casino manicurist, involved a rape claim, and that company officials never made the board aware of other settlements.

"The word 'rape' was never said," Mulroy said. **MDT/AP**

Chan Meng Kam to receive honorary degree

Portugal's University of Évora will tomorrow hold a ceremony where it will bestow Macau businessman Chan Meng Kam with an honorary degree.

According to the University, the honoris causa is being given to Chan in return for services rendered toward strengthening relations between the education institution and both Macau and China. It is also related to the Belt and Road Initiative, according to Lusa agency, "which has had a huge impact, being economic [but] also cultural and technological." Chan currently chairs the board of City University of Macau, as well as controls the Golden Dragon group. He was formerly an influential lawmaker in Macau's Legislative Assembly, stepping down prior to the 2017 elections.

Health Bureau to monitor unauthorized products

The Macau government has notified in a statement that two healthcare products detected in Hong Kong to contain unauthorized Western medicinal substances were never permitted for import into the MSAR. The two products, "LegStep" and "Bello Smaze", were found to contain substances such as the appetite-suppressant drug sibutramine. The government in the neighboring region has appealed to residents not to buy or consume these products. The products have never been authorized for import or distribution in Macau. Nevertheless, the Health Bureau says it will monitor the circulation of these products in the territory. The bureau said that if residents have purchased these products, they should not consume them and must deliver them to the Department of Pharmaceutical Affairs of the Health Services for proper monitoring.

Fire Services holds Open Day

The Fire Services (CB) organized the "Fire Brigade Public Open Day" yesterday at the entity's Sai Van Lake operations center located on Avenida Doutor Stanley Ho, inviting residents to gain a deeper understanding of the Services' daily tasks. Through a series of activities, participants learned more about CB's coordination efforts, fire prevention work and emergency responses. The Open Day activities included a simulation rescue demonstration, as well as a tour of emergency vehicles and the equipment they contain.



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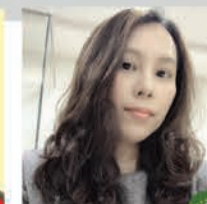
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Property of the Week



THE MANHATTAN

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Property Hotlist



OCEAN GARDEN ELM COURT
\$10,800,000
 1,610 ft²
 3
 3



HELLENE GARDENS
\$8,800,000
 1663 ft²
 3
 3



SUPREME FLOWER CITY
\$14,980,000
 2,060 ft²
 4
 2



More Listings

For Sale

- [Taipa] Pacifica 3 2 1,226 ft² **\$9,888,000** (ref: 19015575)
- [Taipa] Choi Long Meng Chui 3 3 3,398 ft² **\$17,800,000** (ref: 18045555)
- [Taipa] Nova City 4 3 2,503 ft² **\$17,800,000** (ref: 19015574)
- [Macau] Lakeview Tower 2 2 1,497 ft² **\$11,826,300** (ref: 19015572)
- [Taipa] Va Fat 1 1 580 ft² **\$4,680,000** (ref: 18115569)

For Sale

- [Taipa] Wa Bao 2 2 1,020 ft² **\$8,500,000** (ref: 18115568)
- [Macau] Lakeview 3 3 3,430 ft² **\$25,000,000** (ref: 18105565)
- [Taipa] The Manhattan 3 2 1,720 ft² **\$13,600,000** (ref: 16105507)
- [Taipa] Kinglight Car park space **\$1,500,000** (ref: 1190300015T)
- [Taipa] The Manhattan Car park space **\$1,900,000** (ref: 17035514)

Recent Movements

Rented

- Hellen Gardens, Coloane, 3 beds, 1,663 ft² (ref: 17020639)
- Vila Taipa, Old Taipa, 2 beds, 800 ft² (ref: 19010698)
- Houston Court, Coloane village, 1 bed, 850ft² (ref: 17090657)



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HONG KONG

Lawmaker calls for cutoff date for proposed extradition law

A pro-Beijing lawmaker is calling for a clear definition of Hong Kong's proposed extradition law, suggesting a cutoff date for how far back it would retroactively apply to fugitives.

The plan will allow for the transfer of fugitives to jurisdictions that the city has no agreement with, such as mainland China, Macau or Taiwan.

Although pro-democrats feared that the law would lead to Hongkongers over the border being victimized, lawyer Paul Tse suggested having a clear cutoff date to address the worries of business and human rights groups.

Recently, these groups expressed concern over proposed changes to Hong Kong's extradition law that would allow suspects to be sent to mainland China, where they could be subject to torture and unfair prosecution.

They believe that these amendments would tarnish Hong Kong's reputation for the rule of law.

"Do we have to handle all cases in the past? Or can we impose a restriction intelligently by drawing a line and not handling cases from more than a year ago?" said Tse, who is expected to chair a Legislative Council committee examining the bill, as cited in

a report issued by South China Morning Post.

"Maybe we could exempt a bunch of people so they don't have to worry about their past. This is a compromise, a way of sacrificing a little bit of the past for the sake of the future," he added, clarifying that his suggestion would be applicable to non-violent offences only.

The bill had previously sparked concern over fears that mainland authorities would request fugitives be handed over for political, religious or ethnic reasons.

Meanwhile, when commenting on Tse's suggestion, Democratic Party chairman Wu

Chi-wai said, "It is meaningless. The authorities across the border can just frame somebody if they want and fabricate a charge."

Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam she last week she would press ahead with plans to present the bill to the legislature. The government wants to pass the proposal before the current legislative session ends in July.

"The Hong Kong SAR government is facing legal challenges on a daily basis, but then it doesn't mean that we should put on hold important work which is for the public interest of Hong Kong," Lam said, as citing by international media. LV

Guangzhou introduces 3D printing at funeral parlor to restore remains

A special 3D printer worked next to a display cabinet filled with a variety of imitation body parts at a funeral parlor in Guangzhou, capital of southern China's Guangdong Province.

The city's funeral service center is trying to introduce the new technology to help restore remains damaged in accidents.

"We want the deceased to leave with dignity," said Yu Jiaqi, an embalming expert at the funeral parlor.

The 3D printing servi-

ce was launched in early April, the annual tomb-sweeping period for Chinese people to pay their tribute to deceased family and friends.

Quite a few people who died in traffic accidents, fire, falls or mining mishaps were not fit for farewell ceremonies due to damaged faces or serious deformation, which aggravated the grief of their families and friends, according to the funeral parlor, which handles approximately 35,000 bodies every year, about 30 of which

need restoration.

Yu said most of the restorations were on faces. "Though not large in number, every successful operation brought utmost respect to the deceased and great comfort to their relatives."

Previously, the restoration was carried out manually, using plasticine, plaster and clay. A facial repair usually took 15 to 30 days.

Yu said not only the long wait but the sometimes barely satisfactory restoration prolonged the pain for family and

loved ones.

"The materials can easily deform. We have been looking for better ways to restore the original form of the deceased," she said.

Li Zhijian, deputy head of the funeral service center, said 3D printing only takes 10 days for a much more lifelike and accurate face, and the texture is stronger and feels more like real skin.

After digital modeling based on the deceased's photos and consultation with relatives, the prin-

ter has to work non-stop for 10 to 20 hours to produce a facial mold. Then a beautician will step in to put makeup on the mold.

Jointly developed by the funeral service center and a laboratory under China's civil affairs ministry, the 3D printing service has hit the market. Li said the introduction of 3D printing to funeral services is not only an expansion of application scenario but also reflects humanistic care of the technology. Xinhua

China builds first bridge with 5G network

The Nansha Bridge opened last week in Guangdong Province, becoming China's first bridge with a 5G network. As the latest major transport project in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area, the 12.89-km bridge began to provide 4G and 5G services on the day it opened, according to the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council. Also known as the Humen Second Bridge, the 40.5-meter-wide Nansha Bridge is the world's widest steel box girder suspension bridge. Linking Guangzhou and Dongguan, two cities in the Greater Bay Area, the bridge is designed to relieve traffic pressure in the area.

Vehicle crashes into feast, killing 3 in Guangdong village

Three people were killed and eight others injured after a vehicle ploughed into a family feast on Thursday evening in south China's Guangdong Province. The incident happened around 7 p.m. when a villager, under the influence of alcohol, drove a sport utility vehicle into the crowd that was dining in front of a house in Pomeiling Village in the city of Lianjiang, municipal police said Friday. The crash injured 11 people, three of whom later succumbed to injuries. Police have detained the driver and are investigating the case.

Chinese software firm raises USD8.75m in IPO

Zhuhai-based Powerbridge Technologies, a Chinese trade software application and technology services provider, received gross proceeds of around 8.75 million U.S. dollars from its initial public offering (IPO), which the company closed on Thursday, two days after it went public in the United States. Proceeds from the IPO will be used for research and development, sales and marketing, strategic alliances and acquisitions, as well as working capital, and general corporate purposes, said the company. Founded in 1997 and based in southern Chinese city of Zhuhai, Powerbridge provides software application and technology solutions and services to corporate and government customers primarily located in China.

Carolynn Look

Europe isn't Japan in the 1990s.

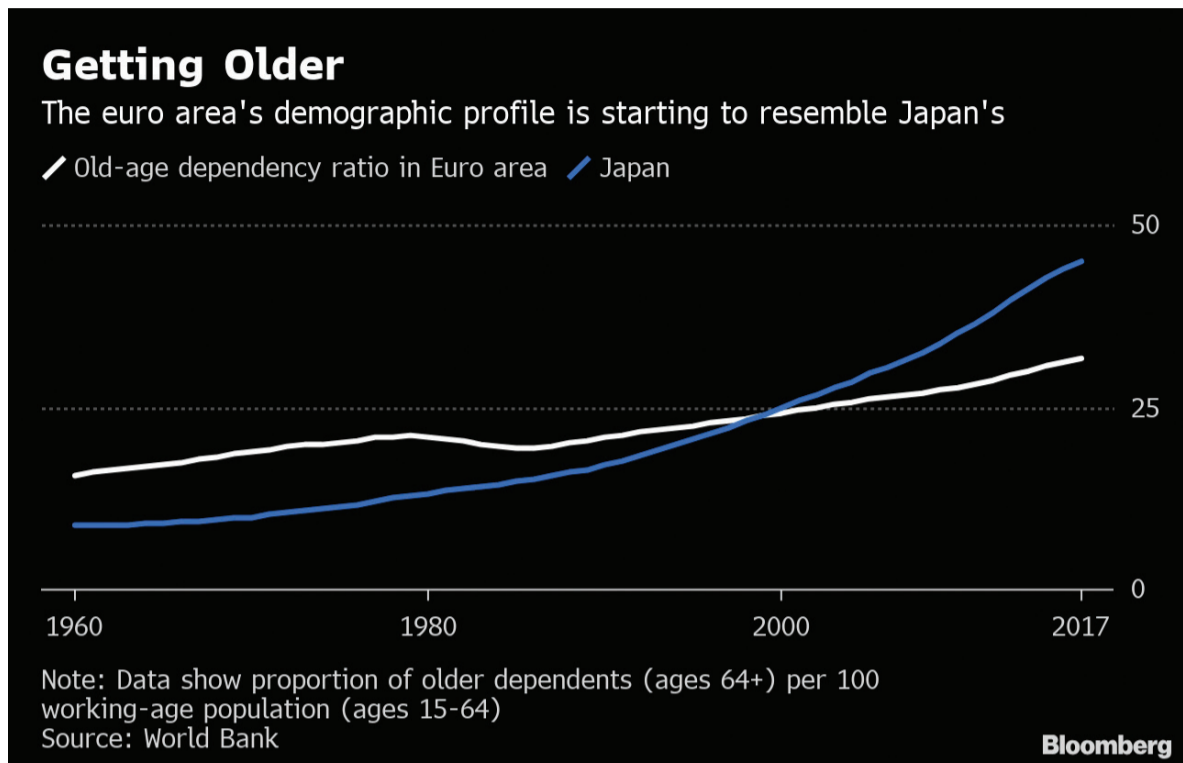
EUROPE'S sclerotic growth and political dysfunction inspire frequent comparisons with Japan's lost decade from the mid-1990s. We're not there yet.

The region's bout of misery this year - Germany's industrial slump and the struggle to fix its banks, Italy's inability to reform, the apparent defeat of central bankers seeking to wean the euro area off stimulus - may seem to make perpetual malaise look inevitable.

The euro region's economy is similar in important ways to its Asian counterpart two decades ago: Interest rates at or below zero, the mountains of debt and non-performing loans, populations transitioning from an aging society to an aged one.

Economists insist there are limits to the comparison, though, while acknowledging that a prolonged period of European stasis, deflation and central bank impotence remains a threat.

"I'm very worried about it," said Adam Posen, president of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, whose areas of expertise include both



Japan and Germany. "Europe's Japanification is a real risk."

Japan's so-called lost decade, triggered by the bursting of a bubble in stocks and real estate, pushed the economy into

anemic growth or none at all, with rising unemployment and falling interest rates.

Here are some of the ways Europe is heading in that direction - and some of the ways it isn't.

DWINDLING WORKFORCE

The euro area's working-age population has decreased as people live longer and have fewer children. Overall population growth is set to peak in

2045, according to Eurostat, so the region is well on track to match Japan. There, the population has fallen for the last seven years; one in three people is now age 60 or older.

Aging populations are often thought to weaken inflation pressures, as people save for retirement and spend less per capita.

Japan's demographic squeeze has brought more women and old people into work and pushed the overall unemployment rate to 2.3 percent, near the lowest level in more than two decades. Yet wage growth is tepid, insufficient to spur inflation.

In the euro area, on the other hand, unemployment is still above its pre-crisis low, yet workers' pay has started to improve, a signal ECB officials frequently cite as evidence that price growth will pick up.

MONETARY POLICY

The Bank of Japan has battled deflation for much of the last two decades. The ECB got a taste of that struggle in 2009

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

You should still be worried

amid a recession and in the aftermath of the euro area's sovereign debt crisis. While Japan's woes began abruptly at the start of the 1990s, the euro area slid more gently into weak inflation and growth.

The BOJ was the first major central bank to embrace radical monetary policy, yet it's still locked into negative interest rates and asset purchases, and weighing more easing. The ECB is a long way from raising rates. While it may be unable to adopt more BOJ-like measures if the slowdown worsens, the bank could be locked into its current stance for a while.

"By refusing to ease policy appropriately, the Bank of Japan created a situation where the country had to stay with near-zero interest rates for 20 years," said Athanasios Orphanides, a former ECB policy maker. "If you look at it like that, 2020 or 2021 might become completely impossible for the ECB to hike."

INFLATION EXPECTATIONS

While inflation in the euro area has picked up, it's still

below the ECB's goal of just under 2 percent, and the core rate is stuck around 1 percent.

The ECB says the risk that markets anticipate even slower inflation is "very low." Investors are less sanguine: A gauge based on derivatives prices has plunged to 1.3 percent, the lowest level since 2016 - when the ECB was buying bonds at a rate of 80 billion euros (USD90 billion) a month.

DEBT AND YIELDS

Japan's debt-to-GDP ratio is now above 230 percent, and rising as deficits pile up. European Union rules impose fiscal limits that will limit such a buildup. The euro area's ratio is 89 percent and is forecast to decline slowly, though a weaker economy and the need for fiscal stimulus could hamper progress.

Still, bond yields tell a worrying story: German borrowing costs are converging with those of Japan.

"Japan and the euro area are not that dissimilar," said Andrew Bosomworth, a money manager at Pacific Investment Management Co.

"We're just following in their footsteps."

MIGRATION

The euro area's more dynamic labor market, with both external and internal migration, is a key caveat to comparisons with Japan.

Net inflows of migrants peaked in 2015 as a recovering European economy coincided with instability in North Africa and the Middle East. That helped soften declines in the working-age population. More recently, however, Europeans have grown resistant to large-scale immigration. Annual net inflows into the euro area will decrease in the coming decades, according to Eurostat.

Japan, with 126 million people, has only about 1.3 million foreign workers and remains opposed to a formal immigration policy. The government is likely to issue five-year residency permits to as many as 345,000 low-skilled workers over the next five years. That would plug about one-quarter of the predicted labor shortfall. **Bloomberg**

China continues gold-buying spree

CHINA'S on a bullion-buying spree. The world's second-largest economy expanded its gold reserves for the fourth straight month, adding to optimism that central banks globally will continue to build holdings.

China, the world's top gold producer and consumer, is facing signs of a slowing economy, even as some progress is being made in trade negotiations with the U.S. The latest data from the People's Bank of China (PBOC) indicate that the country has resumed adding gold to its reserves at a steady pace, much like the period from mid-2015 to October 2016, when the country boosted holdings almost every month.

Should China continue to accumulate bullion at that pace over 2019, it may end the year as the top buyer after Russia, which added 274 tons in 2018.


Governments worldwide added 651.5 tons of bullion in 2018, the second-highest total on record, according to the World Gold Council. Russia quadrupled its reser-

ves within the span of a decade amid President Vladimir Putin's quest to break the country's reliance on the U.S. dollar, and data from the central bank show that holdings rose by 1 million ounces in February, the most since November.

Spot gold fell for a second straight month in March even after the Federal Reserve said it would pause on interest rate hikes for the rest of the year, which lead to a surge in equities instead. Still, the longer term outlook is more bullish as central bank purchases should be supportive of prices, with inflows running as high as last year, said Goldman Sachs Group Inc., which expects a rally to USD1,450 an ounce over 12 months.


China has previously gone long periods without revealing increases in gold holdings. When the central bank announced a 57 percent jump in reserves to 53.3 million ounces in mid-2015, it was the first update in six years. The latest pause was from October 2016 until December last year. **MDT/Bloomberg**

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Get well prepare for typhoon, know more about emergency suspension of power supply

GDSE's Advice:






Before the coming typhoon season, get well prepared as follows:

To ensure personal safety and protect electrical installations from the risk of flooding, CEM may carry out power supply suspension (commonly known as an 'emergency suspension of power supply') in low-lying areas during serious flooding, to reduce damages on electrical installations by flooding and improve efficiency of power supply restoration afterward. Thus, residents living in low-lying areas should get well prepared for power supply suspension during a typhoon, and pay close attention to the announcements of the Civil Defense Department and CEM, to minimize the impacts of flooding together.

To reduce damage of electrical installations from flooding, for those buildings with common electrical installations installed at ground level, all property owners should hire competent electrical contractor to raise and install all common electrical installations to a higher position, with reference to the "Technical specifications for new building's electrical installations in low-lying area". For any enquiries and doubts, property owners can consult CEM for technical opinions and supports.

Meanwhile, CEM's staffs will station in turns at different low-lying areas to answer residents' questions. Specific dates will be announced by CEM.

More details are available at the GDSE's special page:
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SOUTH CHINA SEA

Duterte: few options in territorial disputes with Beijing

Jim Gomez, Manila

PHILIPPINE President Rodrigo Duterte has described his dilemma in dealing with a more powerful China in territorial disputes in the South China Sea, saying he has few options other than to order troops to “prepare for suicide missions” if a Philippine-occupied island comes under threat.

Duterte reminded China in a speech of its closer ties with the Philippines under his leadership, but said if an island occupied by Filipinos in the disputed waters is threatened, “things would be different.”

Duterte has adopted a non-confrontational approach in territorial spats with Beijing while seeking Chinese infrastructure funds, trade and investment. He has often lashed out at the security policies of the United States, a treaty ally, while praising China and Russia.

Duterte has often had to walk a tightrope when discussing China’s increasingly assertive actions in the disputed waters, where Manila and Beijing, along with four other governments, have wrangled for control of territory.

The Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs on Thursday issued a rare public rebuke of large numbers of Chinese vessels near

AP PHOTO



islands and islets occupied by the Philippines in the disputed waters, saying the Chinese presence was illegal. The Philippine military has monitored more than 200 Chinese vessels from January to March in a disputed area named Sandy Cay near a Philippine-occupied island called Pag-asa by Filipinos.

“I’m trying to tell China, Pag-asa is ours [...] so let us be friends

but do not touch Pag-asa Island and the rest. Otherwise, things would be different,” Duterte said. “This is not a warning, this is just a word of advice to my friends, because China is our friend.”

“I will not plead or beg, but I’m just telling you [to] lay off [of] Pag-asa because I have soldiers there,” he said. “If you touch it, that’s another story. Then I will tell my soldiers ‘prepare for sui-

cide missions.”

When he first met President Xi Jinping in Beijing in 2016, Duterte said he told him, “We are staking our claim in our economic zone and we will dig for oil in our territory.” But Duterte said the Chinese leader replied that was better to hold talks first because “if you insist on your position, there might be trouble.”

“I had no choice,” Duterte said. “If I send my navy and my soldiers there tomorrow and start to travel toward them, in a matter of seconds they’ll all explode [...] they will be slaughtered and the missiles that are parked there will arrive in Manila in about four minutes. Do you want a war?”

“I’m trying to tell China, Pag-asa is ours [...] so let us be friends but do not touch Pag-asa Island and the rest.”

RODRIGO DUTERTE

Duterte said the Americans would comply with their obligations under their Mutual Defense Treaty with Manila but that they need congressional permission before going to war. “Do I trust the Americans? Yes. But will that help be on time? That’s the problem,” he said.

He raised anew his criticism of America for failing to stop China’s transformation of seven disputed reefs into islands, some of them with runways, in the South China Sea. After he took office in 2016, Duterte said the Chinese islands had become “military garrisons.”

“Why was it not stopped by America?” Duterte asked. **AP**

Ros Krasny & Miao Han

CHINA and the U.S. made progress toward a much-anticipated trade deal in their latest meetings and will keep talking on the remaining issues, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

High-level U.S. and Chinese officials met in Washington over the past few days, hard on the heels of discussions in Beijing the previous week. Future talks will be conducted in “various ways,” Xinhua reported on Saturday, without providing details.

Chinese negotiators, led by Vice Premier Liu He, and their U.S. counterparts wrapped up the latest set of talks on Friday. They discussed the text of an agreement regarding technology transfers, intellectual property protections, non-ta-

US-China to keep working on trade deal as latest talks wind up

riff measures, services, agriculture, trade balance and enforcement, Xinhua said.

Xinhua said in a separate commentary on Friday that “the remaining issues are all hard nuts to crack.”

Larry Kudlow, President Donald Trump’s top economic adviser, said on Friday that negotiators plan to “be in touch” by phone next week. “There is no let-up,” he said in an interview on Bloomberg TV.

The White House released a statement Friday evening saying that while progress had been made, “significant work remains, and the principals, de-

puty ministers, and delegation members will be in continuous contact to resolve outstanding issues.”

Trump, speaking to reporters on Friday, hailed the latest round of talks as a “big success” but said he didn’t want to predict whether a deal would be reached.

The president said before meeting Liu on Thursday in the Oval Office that the U.S. and China were close to an agreement, with an announcement possible in the next four to six weeks.

A month ago, Trump was touting the idea of a “signing summit” with Chinese President

Xi Jinping, which aides suggested at the time could take place at Trump’s Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida. Now, there are no assurances. “If we have a deal, then we’ll have a summit,” the president said on Thursday.

The nine-month trade war between the world’s largest economies has disrupted supply chains, whipsawed markets and weighed on the world economy. International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde this week warned both sides to avoid the “self-inflicted” wound of a protracted trade conflict. **Bloomberg**

PGA TOUR

Player dies in hotel room, fourth round of tournament canceled

OFFICIALS at the Sanya Championship said yesterday that 28-year-old Malaysian golfer Arie Irawan died in his hotel room from “apparent natural causes,” and the PGA Tour Series-China canceled the final round of the tournament.

The PGA Tour Series-China said in a statement that Irawan missed the 36-hole cut Friday in the tournament at Sanya Yalong Bay Golf Club. It said the official coroner’s report had not been completed.

“The PGA Tour and the China Golf Association grieve at this loss of one of our

members and share sincere condolences with Arie’s wife, Marina, and his parents, Ahmad and Jeny,” the tour said. “When something of this magnitude occurs in the golf world, we all grieve at the same time.”

“Out of respect for the family, officials canceled the final round of the Sanya Championship [...] it’s a true tragedy what has happened. Sometimes, though, things happen in life that are bigger than a sporting event.”

The PGA Tour China had an “In Memorium” photo of Irawan prominently displayed on its website yesterday. **AP**

Djibouti's rising debts to expansionist China worry US, France



Nizar Manek

INSIDE the carriages on the 10-hour rail journey through land-locked Ethiopia into the tiny Red Sea state of Djibouti, the chirping of mobile phones mingles with a mashup of regional languages and the murmur of the devout at prayer. A woman in a yellow frock trundles past maroon-upholstered seats with her cart: “Coffee! Bunna! Tea! Chai!”

At first glance, there's nothing conspicuously Chinese about the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway, but then you spot the train's Chinese driver and a few Chinese passengers huddled on a bunkbed. In fact, says Ilyas Moussa Dawaleh, Djibouti's good-humored finance minister, “It's all about the ‘C.’” The railway wouldn't exist in its current form without a massive infusion of Chinese loans—indeed, most of Djibouti's economy relies on Chinese credit. And the Chinese might not have shown as much interest if it hadn't been for Djibouti's geostrategic location: About a third of all the world's shipping steams past this barren land on the northeast edge of Africa en route to and from the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean.

China's bridgehead here is part of its globe-girding “Belt and Road” initiative, an amalgam of economic strategy, foreign policy, and charm offensive that's fueled by a torrent of Chinese money and is designed to rebalance global alliances. And as with dozens of other way stations along this new Silk Road, Djibouti's dalliance with China is raising hackles from Paris to Washington. China has no qualms. “China-Africa cooperation is yielding fruitful results all across Africa, bringing

tangible benefits to every aspect of local people's lives,” Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang said at a press briefing on March 18. “It is these people who are in the best position to judge the effects of China-Africa cooperation projects.”

The railway will eventually string together a necklace of big Djibouti infrastructure projects in which the Chinese, through state-owned companies, have substantial interests: the Doraleh Multi-Purpose Port, the Doraleh Container Terminal, and the Djibouti International Industrial Parks Operation, a sprawling manufacturing hub. At one point, the railway skirts within a mile of the two-year-old Chinese People's Liberation Army support base, which was China's first overseas naval station.

China Merchants Port Holdings Co., a state-owned corporation, wants to turn Djibouti into “the Shekou of East Africa,” Dawaleh says, referring to the free-trade zone across Shenzhen Bay from Hong Kong. Djibouti, whose gross domestic product was USD1.85 billion in 2017, can use the help. According to the World Food Programme, 79 percent of Djiboutians live in poverty and 42 percent in extreme poverty. Barely larger than Wales, the nation has a population of about 1 million people. Livestock represents the main livelihood of a third of the population, but the country, whose meager natural resources include salt and gypsum, has to import 90 percent of the food it needs.

As clanking machinery and the rising dust of construction activity along the coast attest, Djibouti is making progress of a sort, but it's coming at a steep price. Under President Ismail Omar

Guelleh, the one-party state is partway through what started out as a \$12.4 billion infrastructure development program, much of it funded through loans from the Export-Import Bank of China.

China has taken major stakes in some of those projects. Take the sprawling International Industrial Parks Operation, where red lanterns left over from Chinese New Year celebrations were still hanging in March. Ten percent of this free-trade zone is owned by the Port of Dalian Authority, China; 30 percent by China Merchants, which owns about one-fifth of Dalian port; and the rest by Great Horn Investment Holding, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority.

China's grip was tightening as Djibouti's debts were soaring

China Merchants owns 23.5 percent of a Djiboutian holding company that in turn owns the Doraleh Container Terminal, Djibouti Dry Port, and the Doraleh Multi-Purpose Port. The latter's been operational since last year, built on \$580 million in loans from the Chinese EximBank that Dawaleh describes as “almost concessional.”

China's grip was tightening as Djibouti's debts were soaring. In a 2017 report, the International Monetary Fund said Djibouti's public debt—the lion's share of it owed to China—rose from 50 percent to 85 percent of GDP over the previous two years. In

December the IMF criticized the government for falling deeper and deeper into debt.

“The Djiboutian authorities' strategy of investing in infrastructure to transform the economy and position the country as a logistics and commercial hub offers great opportunities for economic growth and development,” the IMF said. “However, the financing of this strategy through a buildup of debt has resulted in debt distress, which poses significant risks. Public and publicly guaranteed debt is expected to be around 104 percent of GDP at end-2018.”

The government here takes a different view. Dawaleh says the IMF shouldn't include the debts of Djiboutian state enterprises in its assessment because those enterprises “are overperforming or have the capacity to overperform.” “This should not harm us,” he says in his office in Djibouti City, having just returned from meetings with Vice President Wang Qishan and other Chinese officials in Beijing, where he sought to restructure Djibouti's EximBank loans.

Dawaleh was there to talk about two loans in particular—\$460 million for Djibouti's share of the railway and \$340 million for a water pipeline. (The 750-kilometer [466-mile] railway is a joint project of Ethiopia and Djibouti, built with more than \$4 billion in EximBank loans; 656 kilometers of track run through Ethiopia, providing it with a valuable trade link to the sea.) Djibouti wants to refinance the loans because neither project is generating the revenue it should at this stage. The railway began operations last year, a year and a half behind schedule, and is running one freight train a day instead of three as planned. Power supply problems

have prevented the pipeline from operating at all. Djibouti's grand expectations, Dawaleh says, do “not always match the reality.”

China is hardly the only country with a military presence in Djibouti. The U.S. Africa Command is headquartered at Camp Lemonnier, a naval expeditionary facility that's the only permanent American base in Africa. The Japanese, Italians, and Spanish are also here. The Saudis are planning a base. France has had a foothold since at least 1894; what is now Djibouti was French Somaliland, a colony, until 1977.

“What can look good in the short term can often end up being bad over the medium to long term”

When French President Emmanuel Macron visited in March, he did more than highlight France's intention to spread its influence in East Africa and beyond. He also chided Djibouti for its over-reliance on Chinese largesse. “What can look good in the short term,” he said, “can often end up being bad over the medium to long term.” Paris, he said, “wouldn't want a new generation of international investments to encroach on our historical partners' sovereignty or weaken their economies.”

The U.S. has been beating this drum even more loudly than the French. “China uses bribes, opaque agreements, and the strategic use of debt to hold states in Africa captive to Beijing's wishes and demands,” John Bolton, President Trump's national security adviser, said in a speech in Washington in December. Geng, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, dismissed such talk as “groundless accusations filled with cold war mentality.” **Bloomberg**

THAILAND

Leader of new political party charged with sedition

Kaweewit Kaewjinda, Bangkok

THE leader of a popular new Thai political party that ran a strong third in last month's general election was formally charged with sedition on Saturday and expressed concern that he is to be tried in a military court.

Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit was greeted by hundreds of supporters chanting "Keep fighting, Thanathorn!" as he arrived at a Bangkok police station to answer a summons on complaints of sedition, assisting criminals and illegal assembly filed by a member of the country's ruling military junta. He denied the charges, which carry a prison sentence of up to nine years.

"I'm concerned because this case is under the military court instead of the criminal court," Thanathorn, leader of the Future Forward Party, told reporters. "That is quite unsettling."

While he said he was treated fairly by police, he maintained his innocence. He said "many citizens in Thailand" have been charged with sedition, "including those who have not received any public attention."

"The regime creates fear for society to silence us," Thanathorn said. "I insist I am innocent and I am ready to stand firm in the court proceedings."



I urge all Thais and the international community to call for civil rights [...] for the betterment of our society."

Thailand's deputy police chief, Srivara Ransibrahmanakul, said last week that the charges against Thanathorn stem from his role in a student demonstration on June 24, 2015. He said the case had stalled because of several reshuffles among the responsible officers.

Thanathorn, however, said he views the case as politically motivated because "the timing couldn't have been more coincidental than this — just one week after elections."

Thailand has been led by a military government since a 2014 coup. The ruling junta has kept a tight lid on dissent, slapping criminal charges against critics, with some detained for weeks for "attitude adjustment" sessions at mili-

tary bases in efforts to change their views.

The coup leader, Prayuth Chan-ocha, became junta chief and prime minister and is now seeking to lead the next government after a party backing his reappointment won the most popular votes in the March 24 election, according to preliminary results.

Sakda Tanpratoomwong, a Bangkok supporter who voted for Future Forward, said

he came to the police station on Saturday to "show support to Thanathorn" and "to fight injustice in this country." He held up a sign that read "End of age of dinosaur." He said another person came with him in a dinosaur mascot to symbolize old Thai politics.

I urge all Thais and the international community to call for civil rights

THANATHORN
JUANGROONGRUANGKIT
LEADER OF THE FUTURE FORWARD
PARTY

Thanathorn's party said the police interview was observed by several embassy and U.N. representatives, including those from the U.S. and the European Union. They declined to comment to reporters.

Future Forward positions itself as youth-oriented and is deeply opposed to the military rule. Its strong showing in the election has made it a target for the military and its supporters. Several criminal complaints and protests to election authorities have already been lodged against Thanathorn and his party.

The election results are due to be ratified by May 9. Meanwhile, political parties are in a race to gather enough support to form the next government. **AP**

PHILIPPINES

Three hostages escape Muslim militants, one drowns

Jim Gomez, Manila

THREE hostages held by Muslim militants in the southern Philippines have made a daring escape that left one drowned, another shot in the back in critical condition and another safe after swimming to his freedom, officials said.

The two Indonesians and one Malaysian separately escaped while Philippine marines were attempting to rescue them on Simusa island in southern Sulu province over the last two days, regional military spokesman Lt. Col. Gerry Besana said Saturday.

The dramatic escapes leave at least three more hostages in the hands of the Abu Sayyaf, which is blacklisted by the United

States and the Philippines as a terrorist organization due to its brutal history of bombings, ransom kidnappings, extortion and beheadings. The remaining captives include a Dutch bird watcher, Elwold Horn, who was kidnapped by the militants in 2012, and two Filipinos.

One of the Indonesians, Heri Ardiansyah, was plucked from the waters by marines on board a gunboat while they recovered the body of his companion, Hariadin, who drowned. The marines gunned down three Abu Sayyaf captors who were trying to chase the two Indonesians at sea, military officials said. Like many Indonesians, Hariadin used just

one name.

The marines seized four assault rifles, a grenade launcher and various ammunition from the captors of the Indonesians, military officials said.

The Malaysian, who was identified by the military as Jari Bin Abudullah, was shot by the militants when he ran away Thursday as marines tried to rescue him and engaged his captors in a gunbattle. Government forces surrounded Simusa island, where a small community thrives near mangroves, to hunt down the remaining Abu Sayyaf gunmen.

"The act of shooting the kidnap victim is indicative of the Abu Sayyaf's hopelessness and desperation as the militants



are now surrounded by our pursuing troops," said Sulu's military commander, Brig. Gen. Divino Rey Pabayo Jr.

The Malaysian was airlifted to Zamboanga city, where he was in critical condition in a hospital, military officials said.

The three hostages were kidnapped off Malaysia's Sabah state on Borneo is-

land in December last year and taken by speedboat to Sulu, the predominantly Muslim and poverty-wracked province where a few hundred Abu Sayyaf have survived in the jungles despite frequent military offensives.

Army troops on Friday clashed with about 80 Abu Sayyaf gunmen in Sulu's mountainous Patikul town

in a fierce but brief gunbattle that left three soldiers and four militants dead and several wounded on both sides, the military said.

The Islamic State group issued a statement confirming it killed three and wounded 13 Philippine soldiers, but it said "the mujahideen returned safely to base."

The rebels belong to an Abu Sayyaf faction led by commander Hajan Sawadjaan and aligned with the Islamic State group. Sawadjaan is the main suspect in the bombing of a Roman Catholic cathedral during a Mass that killed 23 mostly churchgoers and two suspected suicide attackers on Jan. 27 in Sulu's capital town of Jolo. **AP**

NEPAL

Horses race to keep devils away

NEPAL'S president, top officials and diplomats gathered recently at army grounds in central Kathmandu for an annual horse festival that marks the slaying of the Hindu Guru-mapa demon.

Soldiers race the horses and show off warfare techniques believed to keep devil spirits away through the pounding of the horses' hooves.

A dedicated team of soldiers spends three months preparing the animals for the Ghode Jatra festival.

According to a centuries-old tradition, people raced horses before worshipping gods with offerings of food and flowers under a tree. It has been 169 years since a Nepalese king designated the army to perform the festival rituals.

At the Nepal Cavalry grounds, located on the former site of the royal palace in Kathmandu, Nepal's capital, riders spend months bonding with the horses.

There are 106 horses at the cavalry and more than 200

soldiers take care of them.

Every day, the soldiers bathe, groom and feed the horses, which are raced and tested to check their skills and ability.

Capt. Ram Shrestha of the Nepal Cavalry likened horses to children: "If you love them, they will love you back, but if you abuse them, they will hit back like a bad child."

On the day of the festival, the uniformed riders race the horses on tracks, and show off skills like picking up objects with spears while riding at high speeds. Meanwhile, the most powerful members of Nepal's government and foreign diplomats cheer them on.

A child revered as the Hindu Living Goddess Kumari is carried out of the palace temple and brought to watch the horse festival.

Away from the cavalry grounds, the Newar community — an indigenous group from Kathmandu — worships the gods and feasts with friends, families and community. **AP**

INDONESIA

Presidential race heats up amid mass campaign rallies

Karlis Salna & Arys Aditya

INDONESIAN presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto called for change in a rally Sunday, talking down the government's economic performance as competition heats up ahead of an election next week.

Indonesia goes to the polls on April 17 in a contest that pits the incumbent Joko Widodo against the contender with the economy being the focal point in the race. President Widodo was to speak later in the day at South Tangerang in the province of Banten.

Prabowo, a former general who Widodo beat in the 2014 election, told a rally at a stadium in Jakarta that Indonesia's "wealth is robbed continuously, taken and sent abroad," and that the leakage would cost the country USD708 billion over the next five years.

"Indonesian people are fed up, want improvement, want change," Prabowo said. He put the number of people at the rally at "more than a million" although that figure could not be verified. The latest polls have Wido-



do on track to win, with a Roy Morgan survey April 3 putting support for him at 56.6 percent. Still, Prabowo has closed the gap in recent weeks on the back of a promise to lower prices and to get "a better deal" in trade with China.

Southeast Asia's biggest economy has been growing at about 5 percent, below the 7 percent targeted by Jokowi when he came to office in 2014. Meanwhile, inflation eased to 2.48 percent last month, the slowest pace of price growth

since 2009. Widodo touted a massive infrastructure drive as a key achievement over his first term while vowing to alleviate poverty and create more jobs if he stays in office. Prabowo has also pledged job creation, while hitting out at the government over a current account deficit and trade imbalance with China.

The two candidates have a series of mass rallies planned before a campaign blackout period begins on April 14. **Bloomberg**

AD

數碼互動

DIGITAL INTERACTIONS

美獅美高梅致力打造難忘的沉浸式藝術體驗
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ELECTIONS

As Israelis head to polls, it's all about Netanyahu

Josef Federman, Jerusalem

ISRAEL'S election campaign has been a three-month roller coaster of mudslinging, scandals and more scandals. But when voters head to the polls tomorrow, one name will be predominantly on their minds: Benjamin Netanyahu.

At its core, the vote boils down to a referendum on Netanyahu, the man who has dominated Israeli politics for the better part of three decades. A victory will propel him into the record books later this year as the longest-serving Israeli prime minister, surpassing founding father David Ben-Gurion.

A loss would likely end his career just as he is enjoying the limelight at the vanguard of a rising global movement of tough-talking, nationalist world leaders led by his close friend, President Donald Trump.

"Israel's standing internationally has never been as solid as it is right now. International leaders are lining up to visit Israel and meet with the prime minister," said Yechiel Leiter, a former Netanyahu chief of staff who is now a senior fellow at the Kohelet Policy Forum, a conservative Jerusalem think tank. "Everyone knows Bibi wherever you go."

Netanyahu's impassioned supporters revere him as larger-than-life "King Bibi," friend of powerful world leaders and guarantor of Israel's security in a tough neighborhood. His opponents revile him as a corrupt hedonist who has divided the country by inciting against Arabs and whose

policies toward the Palestinians are leading Israel off a cliff.

In the final days of the campaign, the race appears too close to call as Netanyahu faces a strong challenge from Benny Gantz, a popular former army chief. Polls show Netanyahu's Likud party and Gantz's new Blue and White party neck and neck. The surveys give Likud a slight advantage in being able to put together a governing coalition with smaller, likeminded parties.

The son of a Jewish historian and scarred by the loss of his brother in a 1976 Israeli commando raid on a hijacked airline at Uganda's Entebbe airport, Netanyahu, 69, often portrays himself — and the country — in historical terms. He laces his speeches with references to Jewish history, tales of Jewish heroism and warnings that Israel's most sinister enemies lurk around every corner. The main target of his diatribes, Iran, is often compared to biblical enemies and even the Nazis.

Though he is an MIT-educated millionaire who speaks flawless American-accented English, Netanyahu has managed to portray himself as an outsider and underdog. He claims to be persecuted by journalists, judges and other hostile "elites" in a message that endears him to his religious, working class political base.

"He's unprecedentedly gifted. He's a competent political maneuverer and the most effective political communicator in Israel's history," said Yohanan Plesner, president of the Israel Democracy Institute, a nonpartisan think tank. "And his personal

motivation to continue to hold onto power is infinite."

Netanyahu's campaign has focused heavily on smearing opponents as weak "leftists," routinely claiming they are conspiring with the country's Arab parties against him. Opponents accuse him of incitement and demonizing Israel's Arab minority, which makes up roughly 20 percent of the population.

Netanyahu's campaign has focused heavily on smearing opponents as weak 'leftists'

"Netanyahu incites against us more than anyone, and each time he breaks his own record," wrote Ayman Odeh, a prominent Arab lawmaker, on Twitter.

It's a formula that has worked before — and this time, he has an added Trump card.

Since taking office, Trump has given Netanyahu gift after gift, recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal and cutting hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to the Palestinians.

All but endorsing Netanyahu, Trump hosted him at the White House late last month and recognized Israel's annexation of the occupied Golan Heights. Over the weekend, Netanyahu

announced in a television interview that if re-elected, he would move to annex Jewish settlements in the West Bank, a step that would likely erase the last hopes of a two-state solution with the Palestinians.

Anshel Pfeffer, author of "Bibi: The Turbulent Life and Times of Benjamin Netanyahu," said the Israeli leader has managed to leverage every major geopolitical event in recent years to his advantage. Israel's economy is flourishing, it is expanding diplomatic ties around the world, and there has been no punishment for ignoring the ticking time bomb of the Palestinian issue.

While turning the Palestinians into a "sideshow," Netanyahu has even managed to cultivate behind-the-scenes ties with Gulf Arab countries. "It's not that Israelis are drifting to the right. It's that Netanyahu has won the argument," Pfeffer said.

Netanyahu's campaign videos show him hobnobbing with Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin and leaders of China, India, Africa and Latin America. Massive political billboards show him standing alongside Trump.

Following up his White House visit, Netanyahu traveled last week to Moscow to meet with Putin, where the Russian leader acknowledged helping return the remains of an Israeli soldier who went missing in action in Lebanon 37 years ago. It was another election-related gift to Netanyahu, reinforcing his business-as-usual message that the country is secure and in good hands.

But this campaign is anything but usual. Gantz, with two other former military chiefs on his ticket, is a rare candidate who has the credentials to challenge Netanyahu on security, always a central issue to voters. He has derided Netanyahu's failure to halt rocket fire from the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip.

Yet Gantz's main focus has been on Netanyahu himself, taking aim at the raft of corruption allegations against the prime minister. Israel's attorney general has recommended indicting Netanyahu on bribery and breach of trust charges. Rivals have also begun to question a deal in which Netanyahu reportedly earned USD4 million on a German submarine sale to Egypt by owning shares in one of the German manufacturer's suppliers.

"Enough already Bibi," say Gantz's campaign videos.

The election campaign has been especially nasty. Netanyahu has branded his opponent a weak "leftist" and tried to seize on the discovery that Gantz's mobile phone was infiltrated by Iranian hackers. Likud attack ads paint Gantz as stuttering and mentally unstable.

Gantz, 59, accuses Netanyahu of leading the country to "low and bad places. Israeli researchers' recent discovery of a network of social media bots that promoted Likud messages and smeared Gantz has deepened the animosity.

Netanyahu's confident rhetorical style has served him well during a three-decade career that has included time at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, a stint as ambassador to the United Nations and an earlier term as prime minister in the 1990s. The scandals seem to have had no effect on his supporters.

But if the attorney general files formal charges after the election, the walls may finally close in on a newly re-elected Netanyahu.

Pfeffer, the Netanyahu biographer, predicted a "major showdown" with the legal branch and said Netanyahu will search for a way to dismiss the charges or pass a law granting him immunity.

"We're facing a constitutional crisis in the next few months in Israel," he said. **AP**

Elliot Spagat, San Diego

IMMIGRATION

US says reuniting separated families laborious process

THE Trump administration wants up to two years to find potentially thousands of children who were separated from their families at the border before a judge halted the practice last year, a task that it says is more laborious than previous efforts because the children are no longer in government custody.

The Justice Department said in a court filing Saturday [local time] that it will take at least a year to review about 47,000 cases of unaccompanied children taken into government custody between July 1, 2017 and June 25, 2018 — the day before U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw halted the general practice of splitting families. The administration would begin by sifting through names for traits most likely to signal separation — for example, children under 5.

The administration would provide information on separated families on a rolling basis to the American Civil Liberties Union, which sued to reunite families and criticized the proposed timeline on Saturday.

“We strongly oppose a plan that could take up to two years to locate these families,” said Lee Gelernt, the ACLU’s lead attorney. “The government needs to make this a priority.”



Sabraw ordered last year that more than 2,700 children in government care on June 26, 2018 be reunited with their families, which has largely been accomplished. Then, in January, the U.S. Health and Human Services Department’s internal watchdog reported that thousands more children may have been separated since the summer of 2017.

The department’s inspector general said the precise number was unknown.

The judge ruled last month that he could hold the government accountable for families that were separated before his June order and asked the government submit a proposal for the next steps. A hearing is scheduled April 16.

Sheer volume makes the job di-

fferent than identifying children who were in custody at the time of the judge’s June order, Jonathan White, a commander of the U.S. Public Health Service and Health and Human Services’ point person on family reunification, said in an affidavit.

White, whose work has drawn strong praise from the judge, would lead the effort to identify additional families on behalf of Health and Human Services with counterparts at Customs and Border Protection and U.S. Immigration and Customs and Enforcement. Dr. Barry Graubard, a statistics expert at the National Cancer Institute, developed a system to flag for early attention those most likely to have been separated.

The vast majority of separated children are released to relatives, but many are not parents. Of children released in the 2017 fiscal year, 49 percent went to parents, 41 percent to close relatives such as an aunt, uncle, grandparent

or adult sibling and 10 percent to distant relatives, family friends and others.

The government’s proposed model to flag still-separated children puts a higher priority on the roughly half who were not released to a parent. Other signs of likely separation include children under 5, younger children traveling without a sibling and those who were detained in the Border Patrol’s El Paso, Texas, sector, where the administration ran a trial program that involved separating nearly 300 family members from July to November 2017.

Saturday marks the anniversary of the administration’s “zero tolerance” policy to criminally prosecute every adult who enters the country illegally from Mexico. The administration retreated in June amid an international uproar by generally exempting adults who come with their children. The policy now applies only to single adults. AP

AD

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what's ON



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 TIME: 11am-7pm
 UNTIL: April 30, 2019
 VENUE: Macau Military Club
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 28727066

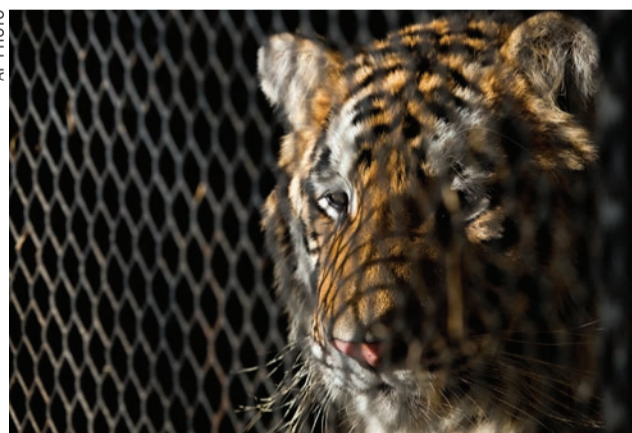
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 AMIGOS DA CULTURA DE MACAU
 TIME: 3pm-8pm (Mondays);
 12pm-8pm (Tuesdays to Sundays)
 UNTIL: April 14, 2019
 VENUE: Albergue SCM
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRY: (853) 2852 2550

MACAU GIANT PANDA PAVILION AND PAVILION
 OF RARE ANIMALS
 TIME: 10am-1pm & 2pm-5pm daily
 VENUE: Seac Pai Van Park
 ADMISSION: MOP10 (Pavilion of Rare Animals)
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0087

MACAU SCIENCE CENTRE
 TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Except on Thursdays;
 open on public holidays)
 VENUE: Macau Science Center
 ADMISSION: MOP25 (Exhibition Centre)
 MOP60 (Planetarium 2D dome or
 2D sky shows)
 MOP80 (Planetarium 3D dome or
 3D sky shows)
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

MANDARIN'S HOUSE
 TIME: 10am-6pm daily (last admission at
 5:30pm; closed on Wednesdays, open on public
 holidays)
 ADDRESS: No. 10, Travessa de António da Silva
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8820

Offbeat

JUDGE: ANIMAL SHELTER TO KEEP
TIGER SEIZED FROM HOUSTON HOME

A judge has ruled that an animal shelter can keep a tiger that was rescued from an abandoned Houston home.

The Cleveland Amory Black Beauty Ranch in Murchison has looked after the tiger since February, when some people entered the house to smoke marijuana and found the big cat.

Authorities say the 160 kilogram tiger was improperly secured in a small cage, and was sitting on hay and its own waste.

Houston police believe Brittany Garza is the tiger's owner and have filed a civil lawsuit accusing her of animal cruelty. She refuses to explain how she obtained the tiger.

The Houston Chronicle reports that the judge ordered Garza to pay about USD11,600 to cover the cost of the tiger's care.

Garza's lawyer declined comment.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Água de Mar
15:50	Zig Zag
16:25	Conversa da Treta
16:50	Grande Entrevista - Salvador Sobral
17:40	Estórias do Tempo da Outra Senhora
18:30	Contraponto (Repetição)
19:35	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	TDM Desporto
22:20	Impostores Sr.2
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Magazine Liga dos Campeões 2018/2019
00:25	Telejornal (Repetição)
01:10	RTPi Directo

cinema



CINETEATRO

04 - 10 Apr



SHAZAM

ROOM 1

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

Director: David F. Sandberg

Starring: Zachary Levi, Djimon Hounsou, Michelle Borth

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 132min

P STORM

ROOM 2

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

Director: David Lam

Starring: Chrissie Chau, Louis Koo, Kevin Cheng

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 96min

US

ROOM 2

7:15pm

Director: Jordan Peele

Starring: Lupita Nyong'o, Winston Duke, Elisabeth Moss

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 116min



DUMBO

ROOM 3

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

Director: Tim Burton

Starring: Colin Farrell, Michael Keaton, Danny DeVito

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 112min

MASQUERADE HOTEL

ROOM 3

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

1994 ROCK MUSICIAN KURT COBAIN
'SHOOTS HIMSELF'

The lead-singer of American grunge rock band Nirvana, Kurt Cobain, has been found dead in his Seattle home.

The 27-year-old rock star had a single gunshot wound to the head. A gun and suicide note were found nearby.

It appeared he had been dead for at least 34 hours when his body was discovered by an electrician who was carrying out repairs at the musician's house. Mr Cobain's mother, Wendy O'Connor, said she had not heard from him for six days.

The troubled singer, whose band achieved global fame with the release of its album Nevermind in 1991, survived a drug and alcohol-induced coma in Rome last month.

A statement from Nirvana's management company, Gold Mountain Entertainment, said: "We are deeply saddened by the loss of such a talented artist, close friend, loving husband and father."

Mr Cobain was married to the lead singer of the band Hole, Courtney Love. The couple had a daughter, Frances Bean, 18 months ago.

The three-piece group from Aberdeen in Washington State, were due to arrive in Britain next week on the next leg of their European tour.

Nirvana are widely acknowledged to be the leading pioneers of the Seattle-based grunge movement, combining a violent rock sound with lyrics expressing vulnerability and anguish.

Eight million copies of their hit Smells Like Teen Spirit have been sold worldwide. The band's latest album, In Utero, released last year, was also a great success.

But American music journalist Jeff Gilbert said Mr Cobain had been depressed by bass player Chris Novoselic's recent announcement that he wanted to leave the band.

Nirvana's frontman joins a long litany of rock stars - including Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison and Janis Joplin - who have died young.

Ms O'Connor told reporters after her son went missing she had warned him about suffering a similar fate.

"I told him not to join that stupid club," she said.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The coroner found that Kurt Cobain had died on 5 April. The star quickly became a rock icon and martyr to the disaffected. Nevermind was later described as one of the most influential albums ever made. His widow Courtney Love sold the rights to her dead husband's journals eight years after his death and they were published in November 2002. The volumes revealed the singer's battles with illness, depression and heroin addiction. He also described how he had bought the gun he used to commit suicide two years before his death. A greatest hits album including the previously unreleased track, You Know You're Right, was released in October 2002. Ms Love was arrested for drug possession and disorderly conduct in October 2003. The incident led to her losing custody of her 11-year-old daughter, Frances Bean.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Communication is important today - but keep it short and sweet.

Taurus April 20-May 20
Focus on today as much as possible - long-term thinking is best put off.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21
You are in motion today, which is just how you want it.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You need to deal with a few extra elements you hadn't counted on.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You're torn between two equally appealing options - which is a pretty good problem to have!

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22
You can't let your heart make decisions today - it's all about your head.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22
You need to try new things today - even if you'd rather poke around in the garden.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
You can't stop thinking about some weird little detail that seems to be popping out from a spreadsheet.

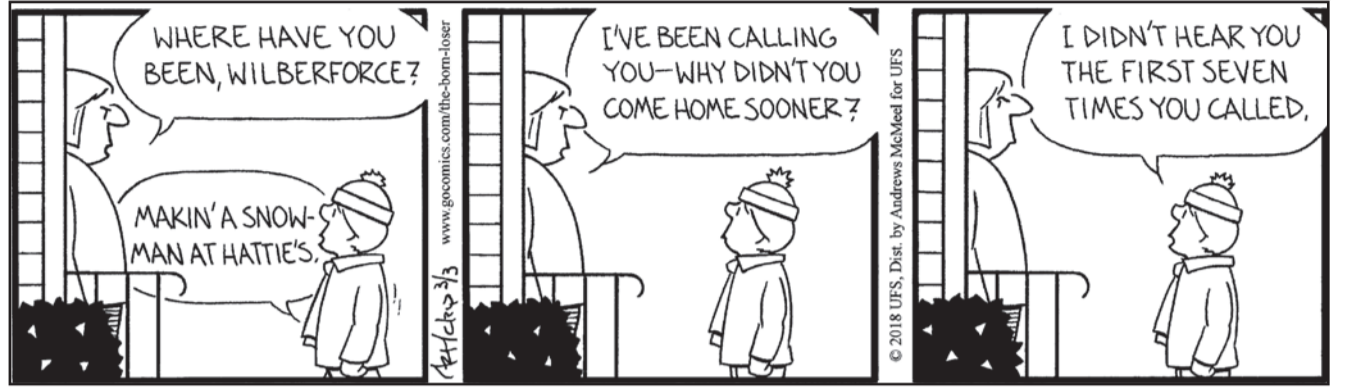
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You are thinking hard about things, but you're not really sure what you need to do next.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Today is all about communication, and even your quiet wisdom is much in demand now.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Something small but meaningful could spark a new romance today - if you're looking for one.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20
Your creative mind is much more active today, so you may need to find a way to capture all the great ideas.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

4x4 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle.

Easy+

4x4 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle.

Medium

4x4 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle.

Hard

4x4 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle.

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Buenos ___; 5- High home; 10- Land east of the Urals; 14- Garb for the bench; 15- Poles, e.g.; 16- AAA recommendations; 17- "Roots" author Haley; 18- Article of faith; 19- Ethereal; Prefix; 20- Ragged; 22- Head armor; 24- Attorney's org.; 25- Big rig; 26- Worldly; 29- Normally; 33- Friendship; 34- Hatcher of "Lois and Clark"; 36- Neptune's domain; 37- "Silent" prez; 38- Actress Phoebe; 39- City in GA; 40- Suffer; 41- Way, way off; 42- Bristles; 44- Ego; 47- Hotel patrons; 48- Questionable; 49- Bruin legend Bobby; 50- Size up; 53- Inflammation of bone; 58- Henry VIII's last wife; 59- Thai breed of cat; 61- I could ___ horse!; 62- Purim's month; 63- Goodnight girl of song; 64- Editor's mark; 65- Tabula ___; 66- Pitcher Ryan; 67- Domesticate;
DOWN: 1- Darn!; 2- Kansas city; 3- Help in a heist; 4- Astronomical instrument; 5- Star-shaped; 6- Robt. ___; 7- Monetary unit of South Africa; 8- Now ___ seen everything!; 9- Sensation; 10- Decorative ivy; 11- Flower part; 12- Able was ___; 13- ___ were (so to speak); 21- Auction site; 23- Outback bird; 25- Less doubtful; 26- Chocolate tree; 27- Lower a sail; 28- Lunar valley; 30- Atty.-to-be exams; 31- Sic on; 32- Some locks; 34- Chewy candy; 35- Greek letter; 38- Cowhide; 42- Free from doubt; 43- Most strange; 45- Mountain range; 46- Abysmal grades; 47- Obtained; 50- On ___ with: equal to; 51- Actress Thompson; 52- Ladies of Sp.; 53- Baseball's Hershisier; 54- Yemen's capital; 55- Toodle-oo; 56- Romantic couple; 57- Fill to the gills; 60- Spanish gold;

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

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
Tourism 28 333 000
Airport 59 888 88



Advertisement for 'The KEY to happiness is finding the KEY to the right home' featuring a woman holding a key.

Property of the Week advertisement for 'THE MANHATTAN' with a photo of a modern apartment interior.

FOR SALE advertisement listing properties in Taipa and Macau with prices and contact info.

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Advertisement for jml property (卓雅物業) with contact number (853) 2835 2699 and website.

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Tim Dahlber

THE not-quite-ready-for-prime-time Thanksgiving exhibition with Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson produced such bad golf that Mickelson and country singer Jake Owen traded barbs about it a day later at Jordan Spieth's wedding.

Owen said it was so bad he deserved a refund. He told Bars-tool Sports' "Fore Play" podcast that Mickelson, who won USD9 million from the TV spectacle, pulled out a wad of \$100 bills, handed one to Owen and told him he had 90,000 more where that came from.

Golf's two biggest attractions are back at the Masters, eager to play the kind of golf this week that they couldn't produce in The Match. The two 40-somethings will be on prominent display, though the trash talk that was promised on the pay-per-view money grab will not be heard on the hallowed grounds of Augusta National.

And, unlike The Match, the Masters will deliver.

It always has, with moments like Woods stunning the field in a runaway victory at the age of 21, or Mickelson leaping for joy on the 18th green after finally winning his first major in 2004.

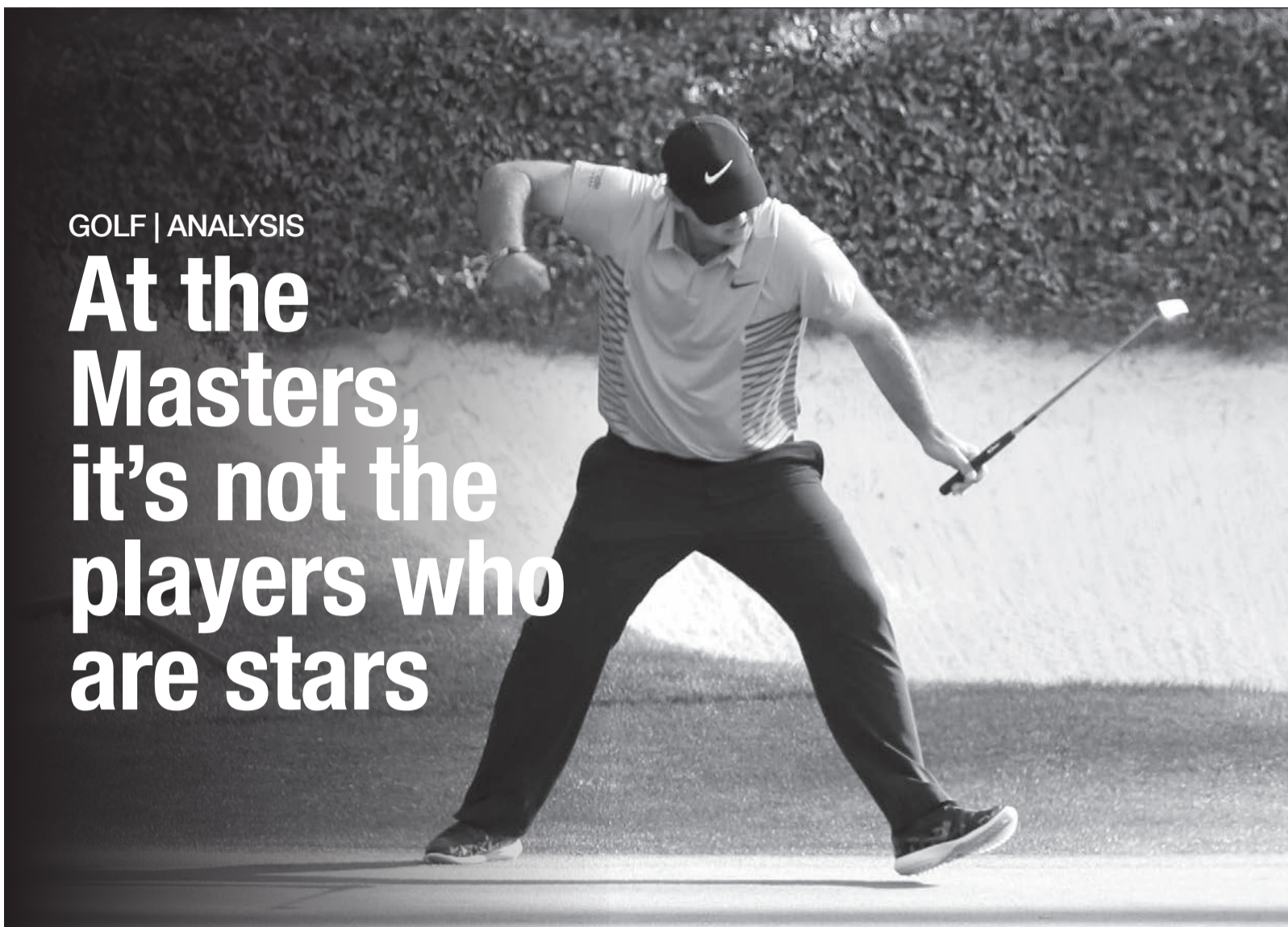
It always has, even when an unknown like Danny Willett came from nowhere to win, only to quickly disappear from the golf landscape.

And it even did last year when Patrick Reed won a green jacket that few in yesterday's crowd seemed particularly happy about.

The Masters enjoys special status as the enduring annual rite of spring, the place every duffer who has ever picked up a club dreams of hitting shots. Set under magnificently manicured fairways and greens and framed by towering pines, it offers a tantalizing glimpse of summer in a place where nothing seems to change but something is different every year.

Arnold Palmer won there four times and Jack Nicklaus six.

AP PHOTO



GOLF | ANALYSIS

At the Masters, it's not the players who are stars

Patrick Reed reacts to his birdie on the 12th hole during the fourth round at the Masters golf tournament in Augusta in April last year

Woods has four green jackets, and Mickelson has three.

Still, the defending champion is rarely the focus and for the most part the big names in the game aren't either. The course is the star, even when the real tournament begins — as is Masters lore — on the back nine yesterday.

That's true more than ever this year, even as spectators and television viewers got a rare sneak preview of Augusta National on Saturday for the first time with the final round of a women's amateur tournament.

Reed comes in mired in a deep slump that had him seeking the aid of swing coach David Leadbetter last month, at the insistence of his wife. Bookies in Las Vegas make him a 40-1 pick,

long odds for someone trying to become the fourth player to repeat as Masters champion.

Still, Reed said last month he was looking forward to everything about the Masters, except the fact he will have to turn in his green jacket if he's not successful in repeating.

"You want to keep it around as long as you can," Reed said of the famous jacket. "The only way you're going to do that is continue winning at Augusta and continue winning the event so you can have it year in and year out."

History suggests that won't be happening, since only three players before Reed have returned to successfully defend their title. But there is golf to be played before that's decided,

and a champion's dinner to be eaten.

Reed said at The Player's Championship that he figured out the menu for the dinner long before he won.

"Oh, I knew that back when I was 13," he said. "I mean, it was always a bone-in ribeye, mac and cheese, creamed corn, creamed spinach. I'm going to fatten those boys up a little bit."

Reed didn't exactly bask in the love of the galleries last year when he rolled in a 3-footer on the 18th green to beat Rickie Fowler by a shot and Spieth by two. The stories that followed didn't make him any easier to root for, when he declined to discuss why his parents weren't welcomed at the tournament despite living just a few miles away.

Mickelson and Woods, meanwhile, have had their own personal issues, though that hasn't dented their popularity. The two are icons of modern golf, and even in their 40s they are among the group of favorites that include Fowler, Spieth, Rory McIlroy and Dustin Johnson.

Just don't expect Mickelson to do what he did at the U.S. Open last year and run after a putt and hit it while it's still moving. Do that at Augusta National and you'd get a one-way trip back out Magnolia Lane, and no invitation in the mail the next spring.

Don't expect Mickelson or Woods to play as badly as they did in their pay-per-view match, either. AP

AD

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opinion

Tax Matters

Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa



THE TAX ENFORCEMENT CODE – IS IT REALLY IN FORCE?

The enforcement of tax debts, as well as the enforcement of other debts of public entities, should take place under the terms of the tax enforcement procedure as is generally set forth in the tax and administrative laws in Macau. Up until December 20, 1999, Macau Handover Day, the Tax Enforcement Code was in force. The Tax Enforcement Code (TEC) was approved by Decree No. 38.088 on December 12, 1950 and established a procedure applicable to the enforcement of said debts. However, the Reunification Law (Law No. 1/1999), which was effective as of December 20, 1999, revoked the TEC since it was Portuguese legislation applicable to Macau and approved by Portuguese sovereign bodies. It just so happens Macau SAR authorities have not passed any new legislation to replace the TEC to this day. This means that since December 20, 1999 there has been a legislative gap (an absence of legal provisions) regarding the enforcement of tax debts and other public debts by Macanese public entities, signifying that there is currently no legislation in force that is applicable to the enforcement of said debts. However, Macanese authorities have continued to apply the provisions of the TEC as if it were still in force, and this is not a desirable situation. Given the absence of any legislation, it is understandable that the courts had to find creative solutions to overcome the issue from a practical standpoint. In fact, the courts have already issued a number of decisions, arguing that although the TEC had been revoked by the Reunification Law, its provisions may still be enforced provided they do not conflict with the Basic Law of Macau and/or current legislation in force in Macau.

In my opinion, there are grounds to disagree with the courts' position. Pursuant to the Reunification Law, the provisions contained in the legislation that was in force in Macau prior to the Handover may be treated as still being in force, provided that the legislation has not been replaced by new legislation and that it does not conflict with the Basic Law. However, this only applies to the legislation identified in Annex II of the Reunification Law, and this does not include the TEC. Therefore, any other legislation – as is the case with the TEC – has been expressly revoked by Article 4(4) of the Reunification Law. On the other hand, the practical outcome of the courts' position may result in an undesirable inconsistency in the Macanese legal system: if one accepts that the provisions of the TEC may still be deemed to be in force, despite being expressly revoked by the Reunification Law, why should this not apply to other revoked legislation?

Furthermore, in a decision dated January 2018, the Court of Second Instance ruled that the statute of limitation applicable to tax debts is the one provided for in the TEC, which is 20 years. Previous court decisions accepted this, despite the revocation of the TEC and the Civil Code, which entered into force November 1, 1999, providing a new general statute of a limitation of 15 years. The latter should apply to tax debts, at least as of the date of the TEC revocation. However, this judicial decision opposed the previous case law and applied revoked legislation instead of allowing the existing valid legislation to cover the matter. In my view, this was a decision "contra legem," against the law, and this ruling hindered taxpayers' rights, in particular, by establishing that tax debts may be enforced for 20 years instead of the 15 year period established in existing laws. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that the competent authorities pass new legislation to close the gap that the TEC revocation has created in the Macanese legal system to prevent similar situations from arising.

THE BUZZ CNN ANCHOR DON LEMON ENGAGED TO REAL ESTATE AGENT TIM MALONE

CNN anchor Don Lemon (pictured) has announced his engagement to New York real estate agent Tim Malone.

Lemon, who has two dogs with Malone, posted on Instagram photos of customized canine tags that read: "DADDY WILL YOU MARRY PAPA?" yesterday [Macau time].

Referring to Malone, the 53-year-old Lemon wrote in the caption: "He gave

me a present on his birthday. How could I say no?" Malone confirmed the engagement on his Instagram story, posting: "He said YES!"

Page Six and People report the two began dating in 2016. They shared an on-air kiss during CNN's New Year's Eve coverage last year.

Lemon anchors CNN's weeknight news show.



UBER BLUES

Slaying puts focus on ride-hailing safety, fake drivers



Tammy Webber, Chicago

WHENEVER Rachel Worden calls for an Uber, the 20-year-old Michigan State University sophomore immediately walks to the back of the vehicle to check the license plate number, then opens the door and waits for the driver to say her name before getting in.

Even then, she devises a backup plan in case she feels uncomfortable.

"How could I get out? Could I unlock the door? Who do I have on speed dial? Could I jump out safely if I needed to? All that goes through my mind," said Worden, of Naples, Florida, who uses the ride-hailing service about once a week, usually when going out at night. She said the March 29 slaying of University of South Carolina student Samantha Josephson, who mistakenly got into a vehicle she thought was her Uber ride, has made her even more cautious.

It also has prompted law enforcement agencies and ride-hailing companies to intensify efforts to warn passengers against getting in without checking to ensure both the vehicle and driver are legitimate. Although no official tallies exist, there have been several high-profile cases involving would-be robbers and assailants posing as ride-hailing drivers – often at bars. Police in South Carolina have not said if that was what the driver did in Josephson's case.

"You do have individuals who are predatory and roving around looking for potential victims," said Chicago Police Department spokes-

man Anthony Guglielmi, adding that fraudulent drivers are drawn to bars because people might be drunk and not paying attention.

A Chicago-area man was charged with raping four women he picked up at bars after posing as an Uber driver in 2017. He picked up a fifth woman in a taxi, authorities said. Musaab Afundi has pleaded not guilty to sexual assault and his case is ongoing, CBS2 Chicago reported.

There have been several high-profile cases involving would-be robbers and assailants posing as ride-hailing drivers – often at bars

In South Carolina, Josephson, 21, had ordered an Uber around 1:30 a.m. after reportedly becoming separated from friends following an evening out at Columbia bars. She mistakenly got into a car driven by 24-year-old Nathaniel David Rowland, according to authorities, who allege he used the childproof locks in his car to imprison Josephson before killing her and dumping her body about 65 miles from Columbia. Her funeral was held Saturday in

New Jersey, where she grew up.

Rowland is charged with kidnapping and murder.

Then last week, a 34-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of raping a woman who got into his car after leaving a Seattle bar on Dec. 16. The King County Sheriff's Office said the man led her to believe he was her driver before pulling the car over and raping her. A judge found probable cause to hold the man on investigation of third-degree rape.

And a man from Stamford, Connecticut, was charged last month with raping and kidnapping two women whom he'd picked up at bars in December, the Greenwich Time reported.

"There is no more dangerous place to be than in a locked car traveling with a stranger," said Bryant Greening, a Chicago attorney who specializes in representing ride-hailing drivers and passengers. "You have to be aware of your surroundings and think how you would react if the situation turns sour [...] you have to listen to your instincts."

It's not just women who are at risk from fake ride-hailing drivers, he said. Men also have been robbed after getting into the wrong car.

"There is no discrimination by predators," he said.

Greening urged Uber and Lyft to do more to educate customers and to come up with technological solutions. Also, in the wake of Josephson's death, a bill has been introduced in the South Carolina legislature to require Uber and Lyft drivers to have illuminated signs. AP

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

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS



TURKEY's ruling party says it will appeal to the country's top election authority, demanding a full recount of votes cast in Istanbul in the March 31 mayoral election. Ali Ihsan Yavuz, deputy chairman of the ruling AKP party, spoke yesterday as a recount of votes was continuing in several Istanbul districts.



US Declaring "our country is full," President Trump insisted the U.S. immigration system was overburdened and illegal crossings must be stopped as he inspected a refurbished section of fencing at the Mexican border. Trump is making a renewed push for border security as a central campaign issue for his 2020 re-election

More on p15



CUBA More than 400 animal-lovers, many accompanied by their dogs, peacefully marched a mile through Havana yesterday, waving placards calling for an end to animal cruelty in Cuba. Short, seemingly simple, the march wrote a small but significant line in the history of modern Cuba.



BREXIT Cross-party talks to jumpstart plans for Brexit are expected to resume before the U.K.'s Friday deadline for leaving the European Union, and the opposition Labour Party is hopeful the country's political impasse can be resolved, a party negotiator said yesterday.