



VISITOR SURGE PERSISTS THROUGH LABOR DAY

This year's rapid rise in the number of tourists continued unabated into the Labor Day holiday period, with 37 percent more than in 2018

P3



BRIBERY CAUSE FOR WIRETAPPING

The communication interception law will soon allow the authorities to listen in when the crime of bribery is suspected

P5



MALAYSIA PM SAYS LITTLE LEFT AFTER JHO LOW SWEEP

P8



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May 2019

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MSARG Dengue Fever Prevention Working Group

A GAME OF NERVES

Kings' trade war

P9,10,11



WORLD BRIEFS



THAILAND Thousands of Thais gathered around Bangkok's Grand Palace yesterday in hopes of getting a glimpse of King Maha Vajiralongkorn as he wraps up three days of coronation ceremonies with appearances before the public and the diplomatic corps.



AFGHANISTAN The Taliban stormed an army checkpoint in Afghanistan's western Farah province, killing 20 soldiers and abducting two, the latest in relentless attacks that the insurgents carry out even as they negotiate with the U.S. about ending the war, Afghan officials said yesterday.

BRUNEI's sultan has said a moratorium on capital punishment is in effect for new Shariah criminal laws including stoning people for gay sex and adultery that sparked an international outcry.

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RENATO MARQUES



Crimes committed by residents on the rise

P2

CRIME

Police report growing number of residents scamming each other

Renato Marques

FROM the police authorities' latest reports, it is possible to see that the number of crimes involving local residents as suspects has been growing significantly.

Among these, crimes against property and crimes against the person have been widely reported. Yesterday, the police forces' joint press conference was no exception, with it being reported that crimes perpetrated by locals topped the list with a prominence of scams, breach of trust involving large sums of money, violent assault using melee weapons and indecent behavior through illegal video recording and photography in public toilets.

MACAU FRIENDS

In one of the cases mentioned by the Judiciary Police (PJ), a 25-year-old local resident baited a friend of his to join him in an alleged scheme that would grant them both high commissions. The suspect told his friend that he could join the scheme by adding HKD500,000 to his share, also of HKD500,000, and depositing the combined sum of HKD1 million into an account at a casino VIP room. Such money would then be used in an exchange for gaming chips from which they would get a very profitable commission.

The friend agreed and on April 25 they went to a casino and made the deposit of the cash but after that, the suspect, with the excuse of going to the toilet, disappeared and never returned.

On May 1, after a week without knowing of the whereabouts of the friend, the victim felt deceived and went to the PJ to press charges against him.

During the investigation that followed, the PJ found that just 15 minutes after the money was deposited in that casino, the sum was withdrawn in another VIP room from the same company located in a different casino, concluding that the entire scheme was, in fact, a scam to swindle HKD500,000 from the victim.

On May 3, when the suspect

RENATO MARQUES



was trying to leave Macau by the airport, he was caught by the immigration authorities and handed over to the PJ. He was sent to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) on the same day, under the accusation of fraud.

A LOST 'SECOND CHANCE'

A property management company is accusing one of their employees of breach of trust over the misappropriation of an amount of around MOP77,000.

The employee, a local resident aged 31, was in charge of collecting condominium fees from house unit owners of several buildings and depositing the collected fees into company's bank account.

At the beginning of April, the company detected that the employee had diverted a sum of around MOP25,000 from the collected fees and had questioned him about the case.

At the time, he admitted the misconduct, promising to return the money to the company as soon as possible, so the employers granted him a second chance.

But, on April 28, the company realized that he did not have the

intention to fulfill his promise. Instead, he misappropriated again – this time an even higher sum (MOP52,000) – and so they decided to finally press charges against him.

Questioned by the PJ, the suspect justified his actions with the need to repay gambling debts that he had accumulated.

'PEEPING TOM' CAUGHT IN PUBLIC TOILETS

A 30-year-old local male has been caught in the act of indecent conduct, filming and photographing women while they used public toilets.

The alert for the case was triggered by a woman who, on May 3, while entering the toilet in a shopping mall in the city, noted that there was a mobile phone peering at her from under the adjoining cubicle.

She then went out and waited to see who would emerge from the cubicle. After a few minutes, she saw a man coming out and tried to stop him but was unable to do so and he escaped.

She then presented a formal complaint to the Public Security Police Force (PSP), which dispatched officers to the location.

The PSP officers reviewed the surveillance recordings from the shopping mall and were able to spot and identify the man.

A search performed on the man's residence found that on that same day he had already filmed and photographed six other women in the same place. In addition, according to the records found on the mobile phone he had, since March this year, he gathered a collection of 1,063 photographs and 45 video recordings of an undisclosed number of women in different public toilets across the city. When questioned, the suspect admitted the crime.

His case was forwarded yesterday to the Public Prosecutions Office, where he is being accused of illicit recording.

LOCAL MAN SCAMMED OVER PROSTITUTE

A Macau resident in his thirties was involved in a scam over the hiring of an alleged prostitute who he had met through the social network mobile application WeChat.

The man told the PJ that he had met the alleged woman on the afternoon of April 28 and had a conversation in which she revealed the nature and prices of her

services, ranging from MOP800 to MOP1,300.

On the evening of May 1, the man decided to contract her services and after a chat, he agreed to meet this person at a residential building in the Fai Chi Kei area.

Arriving at the place, he instead met a man who claimed to be the "boss" of the girl and demanded he buy a total of MOP20,000 in "MyCard" point cards in a convenience store nearby in order to pay for the services and as a safety deposit.

The man agreed, but after paying the MOP20,000 he was left waiting for a long period without news, until he decided to call the deal off and get a refund of his MOP20,000.

At this moment, he was warned by the same man that in order to get full refund he needed to buy another MOP20,000, threatening him that if he decided not to do that, the boss could harm his family members.

After the second payment, the victim totally ended the contact with the people and decided to go to the PJ to complain about the scam in which he had been involved, having reportedly lost the amount of MOP40,000.

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TOURISM

Visitor arrivals up 37% during Labor Day holidays

PROVISIONAL statistics have shown that Macau hosted a total of 636,644 visitors throughout the Labor Day holiday weekend, which was extended to a span of four days in mainland China.

Visitor arrivals during the first three days of the Labor Day Holiday this year reached 531,503, registering a year-on-year rise of 37%. Some 436,679 of the visitors came from the Mainland, an increase of 42.7%.

To date, the capacity of various local hotels and guesthouses has reached a total of 40,162 rooms. According to the latest figures provided by industry operators, local hotel establishments saw an average occupancy rate of approximately 96.2% during the Labor Day holiday, a year-on-year rise of 1.9 percentage points. The average room rate of hotel establishments in the city reached MOP1,882.2, an increase of about 16.7%.

Meanwhile, the bureau recorded a total of 2,665 users that utilized the "smart application for visitor flows" from May 1 to 4, who were mainly local residents and tourists from the mainland.

During this period, the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) conducted 38 inspections at major ports of entry and tourist attractions and found no irregularities involving unlicensed tour guides. Yet it discovered that there were a few individuals leading tour groups without dis-

playing or wearing any local tour guide license.

The bureau said that three official statements were issued against such cases of irregularities by tour guides leading tour groups without wearing a tour guide license, and sanction procedures will ensue.

The MGTO also carried out 12 joint actions against illegal accommodation with the Public Security Police Force and closed eight apartments allegedly operating as illegal accommodation.

Meanwhile, the bureau said that it has plans for developing a pilot scheme to unfold in the vicinity from Senado Square to the Ruins of St. Paul's, to collect statistical figures about visitor flows via measuring devices using the Internet of Things (IOT), thus optimizing the forecast of visitor flows at tourist attractions.

The MGTO and the Hong Kong Tourism Board will sign a "Cooperative Agreement on [a] Research Project about the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge", to conduct a comprehensive analysis on the situation since the bridge has come into operation.

The findings are intended to serve as reference for future tourism planning and destination promotion of the SAR.

MGTO said that it would also work on developing new tourist attractions for re-distribution of visitor flows and embark upon a study regarding the possible imposition of a tourism tax. **LV**



IAS provides sign language interpreter for case investigation

The man connected to a recent crime was said to be hearing impaired. The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) said that they deployed social workers and sign language interpreters to the scene to provide assistance. The Bureau explained that there is a mechanism for interaction with law enforcement, by which mechanism assistance by the IAS was requested. The Bureau pledged to continue their role in the investigation, while they reiterated their constant improvement of accessible facilities in Macau. Further and continuous training will be offered to train more sign language interpreters. The Neighborhood Union, on the other hand, urged the police to release information related to the case.

Lawmaker comments on current condition of tourism

Records of border-crossing headcounts were broken again during the past Labor Day holiday, leaving a multitude local districts packed. With regards to easing this, lawmaker Si Ka Lon made three recommendations: first, improving smart tourism, including the provision of all necessary data to tourists to enable them to travel on non-peak days; second, pacing up the development of commercial circles near border checkpoints, community tourism, harbor tourism, and island tourism; and third, constructing integrated tourism complexes, such as a theme park featuring Chinese culture. Si also suggested the use of a surveillance system to monitor crowding at bus stops. 1.2 million people crossed the border on the first two days of the holiday.

Old-style travel passes between mainland, Macau, HK to expire

The passport-shaped travel pass for use between the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong or Macau will be completely out of use by September 13, the National Immigration Administration (NIA) said. Citizens will not be able to use old-style passes to apply for a travel permit, said the NIA statement, urging citizens to renew travel documents as quickly as possible. The new travel pass, which has been available since 2014, is in the shape of an ID card. As of April 1 this year, mainland residents may apply for travel passes to Hong Kong and Macau across the country regardless of their household registration.

DICJ says it seriously monitors ads on online gambling

Staff reporter

ADVERTISING of online gambling or casinos should be regulated, especially where tricky tactics like promoting at gambling-related conventions and exhibitions are employed, a local organization promoting filial piety and patriotism, has urged.

The association has sent letters to the Secretary for Economy and Finance Lionel Leong, the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ), and the Macao Trade and Invest-

ment Promotion Institute (IPIM), among others, supporting the regulation of illegal online gambling, to which the government has replied, asserting that the administration would make special effort against such crimes.

In the reply, the DICJ expressed their concern with regards to the situation. They said they have been dealing with it informed by a rigorous attitude. Interactions and exchange of intelligence have been maintained with various law enforcing entities and other bureaus. The Bu-

reau pledged to continue its work against illegal gambling activities in Macau.

In the letter to the government, the association stated that online casino operators might take advantage of Macau's position as a convention and exhibition hub, and subtly infuse promotions of illegal online gambling and casinos on such occasions.

It claimed that citizens reported allegedly illegal online casino promotions at the G2E Asia last May. The letter reiterated that online gambling was illegal in Macau.

VIP to recover in third quarter, says Morgan Stanley

BANKING group Morgan Stanley anticipates a recovery in Macau VIP betting revenue in the third quarter of this year. Morgan Stanley Asia added in its recent note on the VIP segment that a market consensus might be wide of the mark.

For GGRAsia, this suggests that "the high-roller business slowdown in the city might be linked to cannibalization of the market due to improved casino product in other regional destinations."

The note, argues that "Cambodia and

the Philippines VIP business have grown significantly in the last two years and might give an impression that they are taking share from Macau. However, if we add Singapore, Australia and Saipan, we realise that the percentage of VIP revenue from regions (other than Macau) has remained fairly stable at around 30 percent of the total VIP revenue in Macau. Thus, one cannot blame overseas leakage for recent Macau VIP revenue growth slowdown."

MPI to stage five months of art events

Staff reporter

To support the development of the local art scene, the Macau Polytechnic Institute (MPI) is organizing a series of events over the next five months.

The initiative, titled "MPI Art-venture" with reference to the word "adventure", was launched yesterday at a press conference.

The Institute already holds an annual exhibition in May, which features graduation projects from fourth-year students from the School of Arts. It is a joint exhibition involving the Design and Visual Arts programs.

This year, the MPI is trying to further their vision with the addition of other art events - including musical performances and concerts - and the extension of the program's duration to five months.

In terms of music, there will be concerts featuring bel canto, as well as Chinese and Western orchestras.

Exhibitions to be staged will showcase drawings, Chinese and Western paintings, pottery, sculptures, etc.

Between May 7 to 9, there will be a total of three graduation



Officiating guests at yesterday's press conference

concerts at the MPI Auditorium, featuring around 20 students, showcasing their talent in singing and piano recital.

From July 5 to August 14, the MPI is hosting students from the University of Porto and the University of Aveiro for a joint exhibition. Work by both students and faculties will be shown.

As introduced by Prof. Marcus Im, President of the Institute, who officiated at the press conference, the Art-venture series of events resonates with this year's city-wide "Art Macao" initiative led by the Macau government, but counting the participation of many private sector entities.

Another officiating guest was

Dr Hsu Hsiu Chu, Director of the School of Arts, who disclosed the news that the MPI is introducing a Master's program in Multidisciplinary Arts.

She explained that on some occasions students were unable to enrich their artistic projects by adding various elements from outside their core studies. Their existing programs usually

focus on a single direction, she said, and the students may not have the tools to realize their ideas.

Hsu explained that this would likely be a first of its kind program in the Greater Bay Area.

The quota for the first-year intake of the new Master's program, according to Hsu, has been set at 15 students.

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Renato Marques

Bribery to be included among cases that allow wiretapping

THE use of wiretapping during the investigation of certain kinds of crimes, should include those involving bribery, according to a suggestion made by the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) during the public consultation for the amendments to the communication interception law.

The suggestion was well received by the authorities, who proposed to accept it and thereby broaden the types of crimes that may warrant wiretapping.

The acknowledgment was made through the publication yesterday of the report on the opinions on the public consultation that took place last year from September 26 to November 9.

Another change instigated by the government, which was said to follow from a lack of consensus among the public, concerned the dismissal of a proposed measure that would have allowed judges to order the inspection of the data from a suspect's communication devices. This measure has been removed from the final version of the bill.

The report also notes that the government is considering the needs and fairness in estab-

lishing a compensatory system in cases related with illegal interception of communications, proposing to increase the sanctions of such actions in order to have a deterrent effect and consequently, protect the freedom of citizens and the privacy of their communications.

One of the previously requested measures by several organizations and groups has also been accepted by the government. This measure states that statistical data on the number of communications intercepted and the purpose for such interception would be published regularly. According to a statement by the Judiciary Police, the public consultation consisted of a total of 4,315 opinions collected from the public, as well as others from specific sector organizations, including the Macau Lawyers Association, telecommunication operators, and several government departments such as the CCAC and the Personal Data Protection Bureau.



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HOUSING

Private transaction of economic units may become history

Staff reporter

AT a meeting discussing the proposed amendment to the existing economic housing law, a representative from the administration clearly stated that economic housing units would never become private housing, even after the transfer of ownership following the legally stated resale restriction period.

With the provision concerning the resale of such properties proposed to be tightened, other provisions in the proposal will likely be relaxed.

For instance, the law as it stands forbids members of the immediate family from purchasing an economic housing unit at any time regardless of their role in the family. The current proposal suggests that this be relaxed: a non-owner or non-signee of an ownership contract in the immediate family can purchase another economic housing unit under the premise of getting married and having lived for 10 years in the unit owned by the immediate family.



Under the new proposal, future resale of economic housing units can only be conducted with the approval of the Housing Bureau.

The Bureau and qualified potential economic housing owners are prioritized buyers.

Income from and assets of the non-local spouses of economic housing buyers are proposed to be included in the total asset calculation for buyer qualification. However, such spouses would not be considered part of

the immediate family. The relevant Legislative Assembly Committee questioned the legality of this provision, as the current laws state that cohabitation is a factor of a spousal relationship.

Future resale price of economic housing units would be calculated proportionally to the consumer price index and the rate of depreciation.

FINANCE

M2 supply up 9.6% in March

MACAU'S M2 monetary supply in March grew 9.6% year-on-year while M1 grew 5.4% year-on-year, the region's monetary watchdog said here yesterday.

According to statistics released by the Monetary Authority (AMM), currency in circulation fell 1.2% month-to-month whereas demand deposits rose 1.0%. M1 thus increased 0.5% from one month earlier. Meanwhile, quasi-monetary liabilities grew 1.3%.

The sum of these two items, i.e. M2, rose 1.2% to MOP662.1 billion (USD81.93 billion). The shares of pataca, Hong Kong dollar, renminbi and U.S. dollar in M2 were 30.9%, 51.7%, 4.5% and 11.0%, respectively.

Resident deposits grew 1.3% from the preceding month to MOP645.3 billion whereas non-resident deposits fell 1.6% to MOP257.8 billion. Domestic loans to the private sector grew 1.2% from a month ago to MOP511 billion while external loans rose by 7.7% to MOP574.5 billion.

At the end of March, the loan-to-deposit ratio for the resident sector rose from 57.6% at the end of February to 57.7%. Concurrently, the non-performing loan ratio stabilized at 0.2%. **Xinhua**

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1MDB

Mahathir claims Jho Low already swiped most of fund money

MALAYSIA'S prime minister yesterday accused fugitive billionaire Jho Low of absconding with most of the money from sovereign investment fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), Malay Mail Online has reported.

Mahathir Mohamad said the money that the United States and Singapore pledged to return to Malaysia last week is not a substantial amount, compared to the amount that is still missing.

"He stole all the money, missing from 1MDB alone was RM42 billion. Who keeps the money? Where is it?" Mahathir said, referring to the Penang-born fugitive.

"I think there is some evidence Jho Low has taken a lot of money for himself," he told a group media interview, as quoted by Malay Mail. During the press conference, he also stressed that Malaysian authorities are still actively looking for Low.

Last month, Chinese newspaper Sin Chew Daily cited sources as saying that Low had recently travelled between Macau, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Beijing and Hainan in China.

Mahathir last week expressed hope that Putrajaya would receive a total of USD\$7 billion of pilfered 1MDB funds from various sources around the globe.

Mahathir's remarks came after reports that the U.S. has pledged to return \$200 million to Malaysia.

U.S. prosecutors and representatives of the fugitive Malaysian financier want to sell a USD\$39 million mansion in Los Angeles that he purchased in 2012 with money allegedly stolen from the



BLOOMBERG

state-owned 1MDB investment fund, Bloomberg reported over the weekend.

The empty mansion above the trendy Sunset Strip is falling into further disrepair by the day and is costing USD\$690,000 a year in taxes, insurance and maintenance, lawyers for the Justice Department and for Low's holding company said in a request to sell the property filed last week in a federal court in Los Angeles. Low looks forward to an amicable resolution of the property sale, according to an emailed statement made through his lawyers.

Low, better known as Jho Low, is the alleged mastermind behind a multibillion-dollar theft from the 1Malaysia Development Berhad fund. Prosecutors say the money was used to buy real estate in California and New York, a USD\$250 million yacht,

works of art by Picasso and Monet, a private jet and millions of dollars' worth of jewelry for his one-time girlfriend, actress Miranda Kerr.

Some of the assets that the U.S. has been trying to seize, including Low's stake in EMI Music Publishing, have been liquidated per court order and the proceeds are being held pending the outcome of the forfeiture lawsuits. That is the plan for the Los Angeles mansion too; the proceeds will replace the property as the defendant in the government's forfeiture case.

U.S. authorities are preparing to return about USD\$200 million of recovered funds to Malaysia, according to people familiar with the matter. Low, who has denied wrongdoing, is sought by Malaysian and U.S. authorities. **MDT/Agencies**

HENGQIN

CRCC Plaza Project design wins award



A Hong Kong architecture firm, Aedas, won an award at the A'Design Award & Competition, a platform for design companies to sponsor companies, for its design of the Zhuhai Hengqin CRCC Plaza Project.

The project design won the award in the Architecture, Building and Structure Design Category, 2018-2019.

According to a description provided by Aedas, the design was based on the culture of China Railway Construction Investment Group Co., Ltd (CRCC) and Hengqin.

Hengqin CRCC Plaza features a signature sky bridge, symbolizing "integration, connection and communication," which links all four towers within the development, and offers office, retail and leisure facilities as well as outdoor terraces.

Aedas noted that two taller Grade-A office towers occupy the southeast and northeast corners of the site, standing

at road intersections.

The retail podium sits along the main road, and there is a central atrium plaza and an outdoor amphitheatre.

The sky bridge integrates a retail podium loop with two glass elevators at the corners of the two super high-rise towers travelling from the retail ground floor to the office sky lobby.

The sky bridge will become a focal point for Zhuhai's skyline, with the project set to be completed by December 2022.

The project - which commenced in September 2018 - sits in a prime area within the Hengqin New District, in close proximity to Cotai, Macau.

The project also won an Honorable Mention in the Architecture Category - New Commercial Building at the IDA International Design Awards 2018.

CRCC is a large state-owned holding company that is included in Hengqin's Zone A1, which has been designated the 'financial island'. **LV**

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Worst yuan drop since 2016, options traders off guard

TRADERS rushed to protect against further losses in the yuan after the currency suddenly sank the most in more than three years.

A gauge measuring demand to buy bearish contracts on the offshore yuan surged the most since early 2018 yesterday. The move came after U.S. President Donald Trump threatened to levy new tariffs on the country's goods. China's foreign ministry said officials were still planning to travel to the U.S. for the next round of talks but was unable to confirm when amid signs that a delay is being considered.

The currency had been almost flat against the dollar since the end of February on speculation that the world's two largest economies were edging closer to a trade deal. The yuan has become part of the negotiations after the U.S. raised concern that Beijing is deliberately depreciating its currency. Analysts



expect any potential agreement will include a clause on currency stability.

"Investors will remain bearish on the yuan, as they reprice in trade-war risks because the new developments are a reversal of previous positive progress," said Ken Cheung, a senior foreign-exchange strategist at Mizuho Bank Ltd. in Hong Kong. "The news was unexpected. Stop-loss orders will push the yuan even lower."

The yuan may weaken gradually against a basket

of currencies, as rapid depreciation versus the dollar "may not be palatable" to policy makers, Citigroup Inc. strategists Gaurav Garg and Lu Sun wrote in a note. A Bloomberg replica of the CFETS RMB Index, which measures the yuan versus 24 peers, stabilized after hitting the highest since June late last month.

The latest developments in the trade dispute have "thrown a monkey wrench" into the theme that yuan stability in recent months will

anchor other currencies in Asia, said Jason Daw, head of emerging-market strategy at Societe Generale SA in Singapore. The offshore yuan could drop to 6.9 a dollar this quarter if the U.S. raises tariffs and the two countries stop active talks.

The offshore yuan's three-month risk reversal jumped 39 basis points, the most since February 2018, to 0.63 percent. While this reflects higher demand for short-yuan wagers in the options market, the level is low compared to the aftermath of the country's 2015 depreciation. That suggests traders are not yet in panic mode.

The offshore yuan tumbled as much as 1.3 percent, the most since January 2016, before paring losses to trade 0.68 percent lower at 6.7815 a dollar as of 5:04 p.m. in Hong Kong. The onshore currency - which hadn't traded since April 30 due to a holiday - dropped 0.47 percent, the most in nearly three months, to 6.7667. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits



MELCO INCLUDED IN BEST COMPANIES TO WORK FOR IN ASIA

Melco Resorts & Entertainment Limited has been awarded a place among the Best Companies to Work for in Asia 2019 in the hospitality sector for Hong Kong and Macau, the gaming operator has announced in a statement.

Organized by HR Asia Magazine, this year's awards received nominations from over 200 companies among 20 industries, with close to 10,000 employee survey participants.

Lawrence Ho, chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Melco Resorts & Entertainment, said, "Melco places colleagues at the core of our corporate strategy and strives to be a company at which our colleagues choose to work and stay. It has always been our fundamental belief that if we take care of our colleagues, they will take care of our guests."

"As a luxury premium brand, we will continue to build on our culture of excellence. We are proud of our colleagues who are dedicated to the Melco brand and provide our guests with unparalleled service excellence," Ho pledged.

HR Asia Magazine is recognized as the most authoritative publication for senior HR professionals in Asia.

The award provides opportunities to strengthen employer branding by highlighting opportunities for improvement, recognizes outstanding employer practices and promotes for employers a deeper understanding of their workforce.



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TRADE

Trump's tariff threat leaves Beijing stalling on next talks

Jenny Leonard, Steven Yang & Lucille Liu

TALKS between the U.S. and China to resolve their year-long trade standoff appeared to be on life-support yesterday, with Beijing struggling to respond to a pair of tweets by President Donald Trump that threaten an escalation of tariffs by the end of the week.

China's foreign ministry said that officials were still planning to travel to the U.S. for the next round of talks -- but was unable to confirm when amid signs that a delay is now being considered. Meanwhile, a media blackout on Trump's threat left investors baffled as stocks and the yuan tumbled on rumors that the trade war is now back on.

"We are now trying to get more information on the relevant situation," ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a briefing in Beijing. "What I can tell you is that the Chinese team is preparing to travel to the U.S. for trade talks."

Trump on Sunday raised pressure on Beijing to strike a trade deal by announcing he would increase tariffs on USD200 billion of Chinese imports Friday to 25 percent from 10 percent. He also floated the possibility of exten-

ding a new 25 percent duty on another \$325 billion of imports not already covered.

"Risks of a full blown trade war are escalating," Chua Hak Bin, a senior economist at Maybank Kim Eng Research Pte. in Singapore, said before the ministry's announcement. "Trump's threat may backfire as China will not want to negotiate with a gun pointing at their heads."

Global equities tumbled and Treasury futures climbed on the news. The yuan slumped alongside crude oil. Futures on the S&P 500 Index sank as much as 2.2 percent, signaling a punishing start to the week on Wall Street, while European stocks slid and Chinese equities plunged.

China was considering delaying a U.S. trip this week by a trade delegation led by Vice Premier Liu He after Trump's tariff threat, according to people familiar with the matter. Liu and about 100 other officials had been scheduled to arrive Wednesday for what was shaping up to be the final round of negotiations.

It was unclear whether the threat reflected deeper concerns by Trump, who stunned North Korean leader Kim Jong Un by walking away from their nuclear summit in February, or a nego-

tiating tactic. The U.S. had been targeting May 10 to announce a deal, that would be finalized and signed by Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping later at an official summit, people familiar with the negotiations said last week.

The two sides have been locked in intense negotiations since last year for an agreement to address U.S. concerns over China's trade surplus, alleged theft of intellectual property and forced technology transfers. Trump and Xi agreed to a tariff truce on Dec. 1 to allow senior officials time to negotiate.

The truce helped soothe investors concerns about a fur-

■ **A media blackout on Trump's threat left investors baffled as stocks and the yuan tumbled on rumors that the trade war is now back on**

ther escalation in a trade war between the world's two largest economies, which imposed tariffs on about \$360 billion of each other's good last year. Trump's latest tweets mark an abrupt reversal in stance for the White House after both sides had been saying for weeks that negotiations were going well.

That shift reflects growing U.S. frustration with China's backpedaling on some of its earlier commitments, including on the crucial matter of technology transfer, two people familiar with the situation said. That's emboldened trade hawks within the Trump administration to push for a harder line, including the raising of tariffs, the people said.

White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow said on Fox News that the president was "issuing a warning." While "great progress" has been made in the talks, structural and enforcement issues remained, he said.

Trump imposed duties of 25 percent on an initial \$50 billion of Chinese goods last year and then 10 percent on an additional \$200 billion in products in September. Those duties were set to rise to 25 percent on Jan. 1 and then again on March 1, but Trump delayed that as talks continued. China has imposed tariff-

fs on \$110 billion of U.S. exports in retaliation and repeatedly warned it would counter tariffs with actions of its own.

That means there's a risk China would counter any extension of U.S. levies, though the smaller size of its imports may constrain its ability to do so.

"China isn't likely to make concessions that the U.S. want with a big stick hanging over its head," said Zhou Xiaoming, a former Ministry of Commerce official and diplomat. "If the tariffs that Trump threatens are implemented on Friday, China has to respond."

Based on calculations by Bloomberg Economics, tariffs at the current level add up to a 0.5 percentage-point drag on China's gross domestic product growth this year. An increase to 25 percent tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese exports from 10 percent would raise the drag to 0.9 percentage point. Tariffs on all of China's exports to the U.S. would increase the burden to 1.5 point.

Just as China's stock markets were opening, the People's Bank of China announced it would inject \$41 billion of longer term funds by lowering the proportion of deposits smaller banks need to lock away. Previous releases on such reserve required ratio cuts have taken place mostly in the evening or at weekends.

"The choice of announcing the targeted RRR cut today is very likely to be used to offset the negative impact of the sudden shift of the U.S.-China trade talks," said Lu Ting, chief China economist at Nomura Holdings Inc. in Hong Kong. **Bloomberg**

CHINA'S banking regulator has told the nation's major lenders to accelerate recognition of nonperforming loans, as officials seek to bolster the quality of lending, according to people familiar with the matter.

The China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission in recent weeks used so-called window guidance to inform banks with nationwide operations that they must classify corporate loans overdue for more than 60 days as nonperforming, down from 90 days previously, said the people, who asked not to be identified discussing private information.

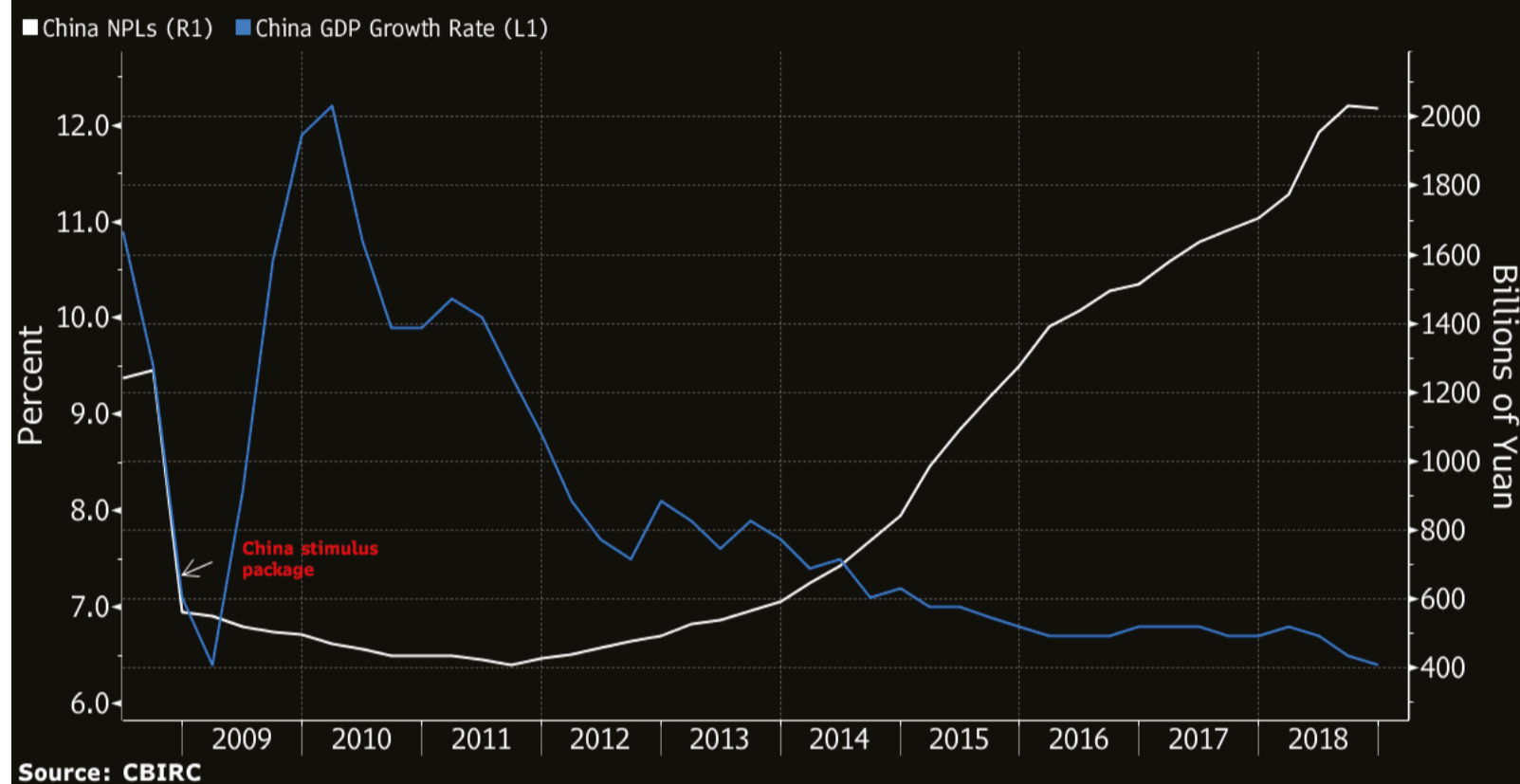
China's regulators are walking a tightrope as they balance the need to keep credit flowing in the face of U.S. trade sanctions with making sure bad debts don't spiral out of control. While forcing quicker recognition may help ensure banks make better lending decisions, some analysts also cautioned that the move could lead to a spike in nonperforming loans.

"For listed banks, the move will increase their NPL balance by about 50 billion to 70 billion yuan," Wang Yifeng, chief banking analyst at Everbright Securities Co. in Beijing, said by phone. "This is a prudent act. The regulator wants to ensure that banks can have bad credit exposed as early as possible and make up the shortfall in a bumper year."

China's largest state-owned banks and national joint-stock banks have until later this year to meet the new requirements, the people said. The CBIRC di-

Regulator said to tighten rules for banks after bad loans surge

Bad Loan Mountain
China's economic slowdown led to pileup of bad loans



dn't reply to a fax seeking comment.

Two tweets by U.S. President Donald Trump threatening steeper tariffs were enough to send the yuan plunging by its most since 2016 and roiled China's stock market on yesterday.

Chinese authorities are considering delaying the next round of trade talks, according to

people familiar with the matter.

The new requirements only apply to corporate loans. The four biggest lenders, including Industrial & Commercial Bank of China Ltd., started adopting the tougher bad-loan recognition last year, said the people. The so-called big four last month reported that they are seeing bad loans grow at the

fastest pace since at least 2017.

Chinese lenders are sitting on more than 2 trillion yuan of soured loans after flooding the financial system with cheap credit for years to prop up economic growth. While more prudent NPL recognition will boost the industry's health over the long run, it may also portend a new wave of bad loans on balance sheets and weaken

some banks' capital buffers.

Authorities have taken a stricter stance on dealing with bad-loan issues since early last year, when all lenders were forced to reclassify loans overdue for more than 90 days as non-performing. The move soon led to a record quarterly surge in soured debt and wiped out capital at some small lenders. **Bloomberg**

Gov't ramps up credit aid to small firms as trade tensions rise

CHINA decided to cut the amount of cash some banks must hold as reserves, and timed its announcement of the decision to help shore up domestic markets as uncertainties in the trade talks with the U.S. re-emerged.

The required reserve ratio for rural commercial lenders serving companies in the county where the bank operates or with less than 10 billion yuan of assets will be lowered to 8 percent, taking effect on May 15, the People's Bank of China said on its website early yesterday.

The unusual timing of the announcement, as markets were opening, appeared to be in response to an escalation of the tra-



de war by U.S. President Donald Trump. If trade tensions do resurface, China's monetary policy will "likely turn dovish again" in support of the domestic economy, economists led

by Song Yu at Beijing Gao Hua Securities Co. wrote in a note yesterday.

The cut will release 280 billion yuan of long-term liquidity, with about 1,000 county-level rural com-

mercial banks qualified for the reduction, and all the newly released funding will be used in loans to private and small companies, the central bank said.

The announcement had

"special timing" also because the PBOC has not cut the reserve ratio in May since 2012, a month usually with less liquidity pressure, Ming Ming, head of fixed-income research at Citic Securities Co Ltd, wrote in a report. "The unexpected targeted RRR cut is likely made to ease market volatility," he said.

Trump threatened in a tweet to raise tariffs in the U.S.-China dispute as soon as this week, overturning recent signs that a deal was almost done. China's benchmark Shanghai Composite Index closed down 5.6 percent, and both offshore and onshore yuan were weaker.

The announcement comes after the State Council last month called for changes to allow medium and small-sized banks to set aside less money in reserves. The decision continues the targeted easing

approach which policy makers have addressed the slowdown in the economy since last year -- attempting to provide credit to needy sectors without flooding the market with cash.

While the PBOC has come out twice in April to deny rumored reserve ratio cuts, the bank's newspaper Financial News published an article early yesterday to argue there is still room for more, signaling a policy tweak.

"There are unsolved issues in the trade talks and the U.S. economy is doing better than expected," said Nie Wen, an economist at Huabao Trust in Shanghai. "Hence there is a possibility for further escalation of conflicts if the two sides can't forge a deal in a short term, and more easing including a universal RRR cut and even an interest rate cut are both possible." **Bloomberg**



Indian soldier stands guard as an army convoy moves during a biweekly ban on the movement of civilian vehicles

INDIA

Modi flexes muscles in Kashmir to woo Hindu voters

Aijaz Hussain, Srinagar, India

SHORTLY before India's mammoth elections began in April, New Delhi did something unprecedented: It banned civilian traffic on the only major highway connecting the heart of disputed Kashmir with the rest of the country.

The government cited unspecified security threats for the twice weekly ban, but the move is indicative of the approach Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Hindu nationalist party have taken to the disputed Himalayan region since taking power in 2014.

Gone are the carrot-and-stick methods of previous governments that saw at least attempting to win hearts and minds as

a key part of maintaining security in the Muslim-majority region also claimed by Pakistan.

Modi's government instead has given the military carte-blanche to counter resistance to Indian rule, which means it has taken aim not just at armed militants but also the regular people increasingly supporting their cause.

While deeply unpopular in Kashmir, the campaign has resonated in much of the country, where few issues reach as broad a consensus as that Kashmir must remain a part of India at any cost.

Modi has capitalized on a February attack on Indian paramilitary forces in Kashmir and his response of bombing mili-

tant positions inside Pakistan to bolster his campaign-slogan claim to being India's "chowkidar," Hindi for watchman. And when the first phase of voting in India's five week election kicked off in Kashmir on April 11, it came amid a sweeping crackdown with police arresting hundreds of Kashmiri leaders and activists.

Among the districts voting in India's fifth phase yesterday are Pulwama and Shopian in southern Kashmir. The election concludes May 23.

The crackdown has been good optics for Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party base, and he hasn't had to worry about losing votes in Kashmir. In addition to there being just six seats in the state, turn-out for India's gene-

ral elections in the region have historically been low, with separatists calling them an illegitimate exercise under military occupation.

"Modi and his party have waged a war against people in Kashmir," said Nazir Ahmed, a trader in the outskirts of the region's main city of Srinagar. "This election doesn't matter in Kashmir. But Kashmir matters for election in India."

Modi repeatedly cites the airstrikes that followed the February attack, when a self-described Kashmiri member of the Pakistan-based militant group Jaish-e-Mohammed detonated a bomb in the middle of an Indian military convoy, as evidence of his tough, uncompromising stance on India's archrival.

"India has quit the policy of being scared of Pakistani threats," Modi said at a recent election rally.

Further efforts to project Modi and the BJP as India's protectors were made in billboards that went up across the country featuring the prime minister and party president Amit Shah with Indian Air Force pilot Wing Cmdr. Abhinandan Varthaman, who was captured by Pakistan during the February skirmish and given a hero's welcome when Pakistani forces returned him to India two days later.

India's Election Commission took the unusual step of asking parties not to use photographs of soldiers in campaign material.

"Optics matter a lot to Modi and his BJP. Be it surgical strikes, or killing militants or jailing separatists or clamping down on resistance groups, they are more of a well-oiled PR machine. They won't do anything quietly even if doing so has proven to be effective in the past for other parties," said Amit Kumar, a political historian in Srinagar, Kashmir's main city.

BJP leaders say the party has been pursuing national objectives and refuted being unfairly tough on Kashmir.

"If you want peace in Kashmir, the army needs to have a free hand," said Kavinder Gupta, a BJP leader in the region's Jammu city. "Once there's peace, soldiers will be back to barracks, but remember Pakistan is out there with its agents in Kashmir to create chaos."

Opposition parties have consistently said that Modi and his party are using Kashmir to pivot away from his economic record and other issues such as youth unemployment and farmer suicides.

Kashmir is divided between India and Pakistan but has been claimed by both in its entirety since the two nations gained independence from British colonial rule in 1947 and immediately started fighting over the territory. **AP**

SRI LANKA

2 arrested after clash in town hit by Easter blast

Eranga Jayawardena, Negombo

TWO people have been arrested and an overnight curfew lifted yesterday after mobs attacked Muslim-owned shops and some vehicles in a Sri Lankan town where a suicide bombing targeted a Catholic church last month.

Residents in the seaside town of Negombo say the mostly-Catholic attackers

stoned and vandalized shops. It is unclear how the dispute began but most residents say a private dispute took a religious turn.

Police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekara said earlier that the violence was brought under control and two people arrested.

A.M. Jeffry, a Muslim resident of Porutota village near Negombo, said the attackers burnt a

three-wheeler taxi and a motorbike.

Rizwan Jeffry, a gem-seller who is not related to the former, said about 400 people rampaging in the streets stoned his shop. Some of them took precious stones kept in showcases, he said.

Archbishop of Colombo Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith along with Muslim clerics visited the area yesterday to appeal for peace.

The government blocked

some social media sites overnight, including Facebook and WhatsApp, "in order to control the situation," the information department director Nalaka Kaluwewa said. The block was lifted early yesterday.

The clash was the first reported since the Easter bombings by Islamic extremists two weeks ago that killed more than 250 people.

A state of emergency has

been in place since then, with warnings that more attacks are possible. Catholic churches were closed for a second weekend, and Muslims are under security surveillance and subjected to hate comments on social media.

Military spokesman Sumith Atapattu said Sunday that several people had been injured in clashes in Negombo, where St. Sebastian's Church was targeted in the atta-

cks carried out by bombers who had pledged support for the Islamic State group.

Ethnic clashes aren't new to Sri Lanka. A civil war between rebels from the minority Tamil community and the Buddhist Sinhalese-majority government ended in 2009.

Most of Sri Lanka's majority ethnic Sinhalese are Buddhists, but Negombo has a majority Sinhalese Catholic community. **AP**

BRUNEI

Death penalty moratorium applied to new Shariah laws

BRUNEI'S sultan has said a moratorium on capital punishment is in effect for new Shariah criminal laws including stoning people for gay sex and adultery that sparked an international outcry.

The United Nations has called the laws implemented April 3 "draconian" while the U.S. and several other countries have urged Brunei to halt its plans. Celebrities including George Clooney, Elton John and Ellen DeGeneres have rallied for a boycott of nine hotels in the U.S. and Europe linked to Brunei.

Even before 2014, homosexuality was already punishable in Brunei by a jail term of up to 10 years. The new laws say those found guilty of gay sex can be stoned to death or whipped. Adulterers risk death by stoning too, while thieves face amputation of a right hand on their first offense and a left foot on their second. The new laws apply to children and foreigners, even if



they are not Muslim.

Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah said Sunday in a speech to mark the start of Ramadan that he was aware of the "many questions and misperceptions" over the penalties provided for under new sections of Brunei's Shariah Penal Code, but stressed that there should be no fear.

Brunei has had a "de facto moratorium" on capital punishment for over two decades and "this will also be applied to cases under the [Shariah laws] which

provides a wider scope for remission," he said. The announcement came as a surprise but appeared aimed at deflecting criticism that Islamic criminal laws are cruel.

"We are conscious of the fact that misperceptions may cause apprehension. However, we believe that once these have been cleared, the merit of the law will be evident," the sultan said.

Sultan Hassanal said Brunei will also ratify the U.N. Convention Against Torture to show its

commitment to human rights.

"Both the common law and the Shariah law aim to ensure peace and harmony of the country. They are also crucial in protecting the morality and decency of the public as well as respecting the privacy of individuals," he added.

In an immediate reaction, Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland yesterday the moratorium on the death penalty but also urged Brunei to revoke other harsh punishments such as amputation and flogging. Brunei is a member of the Commonwealth.

Sultan Hassanal instituted the Shariah Penal Code in 2014 to bolster the influence of Islam in the oil-rich monarchy of around 430,000 people, two-thirds of whom are Muslim. There has been no vocal opposition to the new penalties in Brunei, where the sultan rules as head of state with full executive authority. Public criticism of his policies is extremely rare in the country. **AP**

Powerful cyclone leaves 34 dead in India, 15 in Bangladesh

Arare summer cyclone that tore through parts of South Asia killed at least 34 people in India and 15 in neighboring Bangladesh and smashed thousands of thatched-roof huts, officials said yesterday.

The evacuation of more than 1 million people from about 15,000 villages and 46 towns in India's worst-hit Odisha state prevented a much worse death toll from one of the biggest storms in decades. The preparations demonstrated greatly improved disaster readiness since 1999, when a "super" cyclone killed about 10,000 people and devastated large parts of the state.

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FRANCE

Telecom giant Orange on trial over staff suicides

Nicolas Vaux-Montagny, Paris

THE toll is shocking: 19 suicides, 12 suicide attempts and eight cases of serious depression among employees over a three-year span at France's main telephone and internet company.

A Paris court yesterday begins a long-awaited trial accusing telecom giant Orange and seven former or current managers of

moral harassment and related charges. The company — then called France Telecom — was undergoing job cuts and modernization efforts at the time of the suicides a decade ago.

On trial are the former president of France Telecom, Didier Lombard, former human resources director Olivier Barbot and former deputy executive director Louis-Pierre Wenes. It's

the largest trial to date in France for moral harassment on a company-wide scale, and is expected to last two months.

The defendants are suspected of having "degraded work conditions of personnel that risked hurting their rights and dignity, altering the physical or mental health (of personnel), or compromising their professional future."

Four other officials are suspected of complicity in moral harassment.

In France, moral harassment can be punished by a year in prison and a fine of USD\$16,790. Orange itself is also on trial, and the court could order the company to grant additional damages to each civil party in the case.

An investigation into the wave of employee suicides between 2007 and 2010 was opened following a complaint from the Sud union. At the time, Lombard allegedly referred to the deaths as "the fashion."

Lombard, who was replaced as France Telecom chief in 2010, has denied all the charges. He attributed the suicides, attempted suicides and cases of depression to "local difficulties with no links to each other" and no relation to the company's job cuts at the time.

The indictment lists the employees who took their lives or tried, some on the job.

Michel, 50, left a note about his decision to end his life on July 29, 2009, according to the prosecutor's report. Michel's note denounced "the permanent sense of urgency, overwork, absence of training, the total disorganization of the company" plus "management by terror."

"I'm taking my life because of my work at France Telecom. It's the only reason," the note said.

A month earlier, Christel, 37, slashed her veins in an apparent bid to kill herself in front of two

superiors who told her hours earlier she would be transferred. In March 2009, 52-year-old Herve was preparing to jump from an office window but the noise he was making drew others to his rescue, who quoted him as saying that "I'm sick of this s----- job."

Jean-Michel, a father of three children, was 53 when he threw himself in front of a train on July 2, 2008, while on the phone with two union delegates.

France Telecom, once a state-owned monopoly, transformed into a private company in the 2000s. Lombard launched a restructuring plan aimed at shedding 22,000 jobs, but most employees were still considered civil servants and so were protected from layoffs.

As it sought to reduce staff, the indictment says the company imposed "excessive and intrusive control" on employees, assigned workers to demoralizing tasks, failed to provide training, isolated staff and used "intimidation maneuvers or threats and pay cuts."

Lombard's lawyer, Jean Veil, says his client is innocent because he could not possibly know what was going on in France Telecom's vast network of more than 100,000 employees.

"Mr. Didier Lombard is suspected of harassment of people he never saw," Veil said in 2012, when Lombard was handed preliminary charges. "Now there's a surprising accusation." **AP**

USA

Michael Cohen heads to prison in Trump hush-money scheme

Michael R. Sisak & Jim Mustian, New York

MICHAEL Cohen, the former lawyer, media attack dog and all-around fixer for President Donald Trump, was scheduled to begin serving a three-year prison sentence yesterday [local time] for crimes including campaign finance violations related to hush-money payments made on Trump's behalf.

Cohen faced a 2 p.m. deadline to report to the Federal Correctional Institution, Otisville, a federal prison in the countryside 70 miles northwest of New York City. A minimum-security prison camp there has become a haven for white-collar criminals.

Cohen, who has been disbarred, is trading plaid blazers for khaki prison garb after trying and failing in recent weeks to get his sentence delayed or reduced.



His legal team asked House Democrats last month to intercede after Cohen testified on Capitol Hill, but they were reticent to do so. Federal prosecutors in New York were also no help, Cohen's lawyers said.

Cohen was originally scheduled to start his sentence in March, but a judge

granted a two-month delay so he could recover from surgery and get his affairs in order.

Cohen, 53, is the only person charged with a crime in connection with the hush-money payments to women who allegedly had affairs with Trump.

Federal prosecutors have said Trump directed

Cohen to arrange the payments to buy the silence of porn actress Stormy Daniels and former Playboy model Karen McDougal in the run-up to the 2016 election. Trump denies that he had trysts with either woman.

Cohen also pleaded guilty to lying to Congress about a Trump Tower

project in Moscow, as well as to charges of tax evasion and bank fraud.

Once he gets to prison, Cohen will undergo medical and mental health screenings and be assigned a job, such as mowing the grounds or cleaning up the visiting room. He'll also get sets of clothing, bedding and towels.

At the prison camp, about 115 inmates sleep in bunks lined up in barrack-style halls, instead of individual or two-man cells like in higher-security facilities. Recreational amenities include tennis courts, horseshoes and bocce ball.

Forbes once ranked Otisville as one of "America's 10 Cushiest Prisons," but former employees and inmates say it's hardly "Club Fed." Inmates are still doing time and they're still separated from their families and friends.

"There's no free time to work on your book, or whatever," said former employee Don Drewett. "You get your downtime when you're supposed to be sleeping or when you can exercise, but that only

happens at certain windows of the day. It's not where in the middle of the day you can just opt to not go to work and go work out. That's not the way that works."

Cohen's fellow inmates include "Jersey Shore" star Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino, who wraps up an eight-month tax fraud sentence in September, and Fyre Festival fraudster Billy McFarland, who's serving a six-year sentence.

But Cohen should avoid acting like he's still in the spotlight, said Jack Denson, a former Otisville case manager who advises white-collar criminals on what to expect in prison.

Some high-profile inmates have been known to hire other prisoners to do their laundry and heat up their meals, but that's looked at by staff as a sign of laziness and entitlement.

So too are inmates who try to set themselves up with the cushiest accommodations by having a doctor write a note suggesting they sleep in a bottom bunk or wear soft shoes. **AP**

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VENUE: Taipa Village Art Space

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2857 6212/ 2857 6118

ONENESS: CALLIGRAPHY BY PROFESSOR JAO TSUNG-I

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

UNTIL: September 30, 2019

VENUE: Jao Tsung-I Academy

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2523

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

STROLLING AND FEELING: WATERCOLOUR PAINTINGS OF LAI IENG

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

UNTIL: June 16, 2019

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

Offbeat

MADONNA GIVES EMOTIONAL SPEECH AT GLAAD AWARDS



Madonna, a pioneer for gay rights, accepted the Advocate for Change Award at the 2019 GLAAD Media Awards with a rousing speech that went from playful to emotional, bringing the audience to its feet.

The 60-year-old pop icon turned heads as she walked to her table at the Hilton Midtown in New York over the weekend, before taking the stage to celebrate her three decades of advocacy work in the LGBTQ community.

"Why have I always fought for change? That's a hard question to answer. It's like trying to explain the importance of reading or the need to love. Growing up I always felt like an outsider, like I didn't fit in. It wasn't because I didn't shave under my armpits, I just didn't fit in, OK," she said. "The first gay man I ever met was named Christopher Flynn. He was my ballet teacher in high school and he was the first person that believed in me, that made me feel special as a dancer, as an artist and as a human being. I know this sounds trivial and superficial, but he was the first man to tell me I was beautiful."

Madonna went on to say Flynn took her to her first gay club in Detroit, and that the evening changed her life.

"For the first time I saw men kissing men, girls dressed like boys, boys wearing hot pants, insane, incredible dancing and a kind of freedom and joy and happiness that I had never seen before," she said. "I finally felt like I was not alone, that it was OK to be different and to not be like everybody else. And that after all, I was not a freak. I felt at home, and it gave me hope."

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Água de Mar
15:45	Zig Zag
16:10	T2 para 3 Remodelado
16:35	Maior que o Pensamento - Parte II - O Combate
17:35	Palcos Agora
18:05	Sonhar era Fácil
19:00	TDM Sports (Repetição)
19:35	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	TDM Interview
21:50	Linha da Frente
22:20	Filhos da Nação Sr.2
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Uma História de Autonomia
01:30	Telejornal (Repetição)
02:15	RTPi Directo

Cinema



CINETEATRO

01 - 08 May

AVENGERS: ENDGAME

ROOM 1
2:30, 5:45, 9:00pmROOM 2
4:45, 8:00pm

Director: Anthony Russo, Joe Russo

Starring: Brie Larson, Scarlett Johansson, Karen Gillan

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 181min



P STORM

ROOM 2
2:30pm

Director: David Lam

Starring: Chrissie Chau, Louis Koo, Kevin Cheng

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 96min



HOTEL MUMBAI

ROOM 3
9:30pm

Director: Anthony Maras

Starring: Dev Patel, Armie Hammer, Nazanin Boniadi

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 123min

this day in history



2001 THOUSANDS GREET POPE IN SYRIAN VISIT

Thousands of people have turned out to greet Pope John Paul II on his historic visit to Syria.

The pontiff drove in his popemobile through the narrow streets and was greeted by Syria's top Muslim cleric Sheik Ahmad Kufaro.

Sheik Kufaro said: "This is an occasion that goes beyond history and will begin the process of putting peace to work in the world."

The pontiff replied: "For me, too, it is a very important day. I am very happy."

Vatican and Syrian flags decorated the Umayyad Mosque in the old walled city of Damascus.

Security officers held back a crowd of curious onlookers from a nearby souk who were craning for a look at the visitor from Rome.

The Pope, who called on Muslims, Christians and Jews to work together to bring peace to the Middle East, became the first pontiff to enter a mosque.

As required by Muslim custom, John Paul II removed his shoes and put on white slippers before entering the mosque.

The 80-year-old, who has Parkinson's disease, stumbled slightly at the threshold of the mosque and again crossing the main hall.

John Paul II asked for a joint act of contrition, saying: "For all the times that Muslims and Christians have offended one another...we need to seek forgiveness from the Almighty and offer each other forgiveness."

At the tomb of St John the Baptist the Pope paused for a minute's silent meditation. He spent 95 minutes in the mosque, which was built in AD 705 on the site of a Christian church.

The pontiff also met Agnacios Hazim IV, the Syrian-Greek Orthodox archbishop, at the Church of St Paul on the Wall in the Syrian capital.

Earlier in the day, the Pope attended a four-hour Mass in a Damascus stadium.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Pope's visit to Damascus was overshadowed by a furious row between Syria and Israel.

On his arrival, Syrian president Bashar Assad accused Israel of trying to "kill the principles of all religions with the same mentality in which they betrayed Jesus Christ and...the Prophet Mohammed".

This sparked a stern response from Israel, who urged world leaders to "condemn" such statements.

Israel called on Roman Catholic leaders to reject such statements "with revulsion" but a papal spokesman said: "The Pope will absolutely not intervene. We are guests of this president and he has expressed his opinion." The Pope's visit was part of a six-day pilgrimage in the steps of St Paul, whose conversion occurred on the way to Damascus. His trip also included Greece and Malta.

The Pope died at 2137 (1937 GMT) on Saturday 2 April 2005 after he failed to recover from a throat operation.

YOUR STARS



Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Do not jump and run at the sound of someone else's alarm today - your sense of urgency is different from the next guy's. Base your actions on what you think is most important.



Taurus

April 20-May 20

Your ability to accept differing opinions and ideas is strong, but it could be stronger. Luckily, there will be no shortage of opposing viewpoints around you today - listen to them and be tolerant. Don't debate ideas.

Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

Pluck the nuttiest idea out of the back corner of your mind, knock the dust and cobwebs off of it, and mull it over today. Chances are, if you turn it over in your mind enough times.

Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Today you will see how successful many of the people in your life are. Unfortunately, this might awaken the green-eyed monster lurking deep inside of you.



Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

If you don't start patting yourself on the back more, you could become easy prey for people who like to manipulate or con others into doing the work that they should be doing.



Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

You have every right to brag to friends about your latest accomplishments, but you really shouldn't - at least not today. Too many of your friends with fragile egos might react negatively.



Libra

Sep.23-Oct. 22

Sure, a lot of the small details of an upcoming event are still up in the air, but the stars say that those details won't really matter in the end. Everything will work out well, so your job is done here!



Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Today you will definitely have the energy and strength to go the distance. So don't shy away from any type of challenge, no matter how out of your element you may feel or how high the stakes may be.



Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Your luck continues to be very good today, and you are getting used to having things go your way. This feeling of confidence is a huge boon to your creativity, so make sure you find some time to work all your ideas.



Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

You'll witness an ugly exchange between two people you respect today. One of them feels more deserving of the praise the other one received. You know what it's like to feel overlooked.



Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

If you spend too much time performing too many experiments, you aren't going to end up learning very much. Too many contradictory conclusions will be formed, and you'll be farther behind.



Pisces

Feb.19-Mar. 20

It might feel as though you're not quite living in reality today - the universe is sending you lots of fantastic energy, which will definitely be a welcome (and very entertaining) notion.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

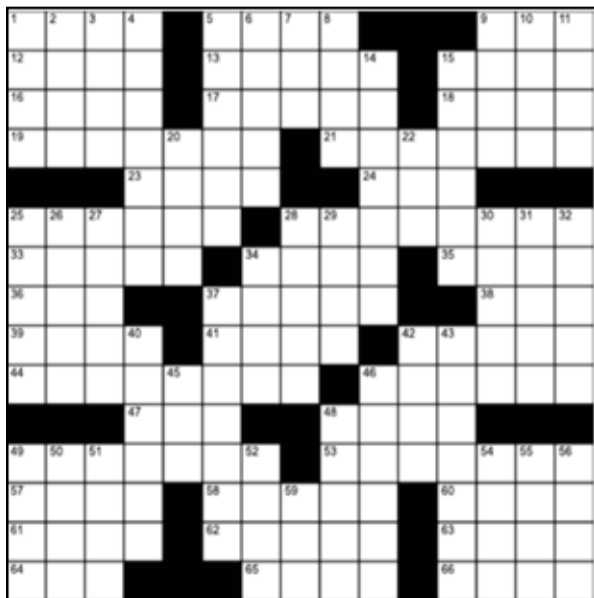
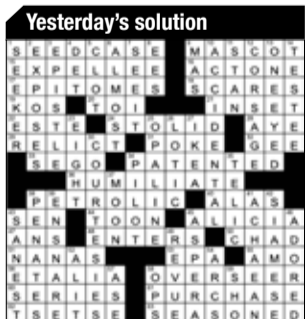
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	13	28	cloudy
Harbin	4	25	clear
Tianjin	17	29	cloudy
Urumqi	10	21	clear
Xi'an	14	28	drizzle
Lhasa	8	21	cloudy
Chengdu	16	21	drizzle
Chongqing	18	24	drizzle
Kunming	15	27	clear
Nanjing	12	25	clear
Shanghai	14	27	cloudy
Wuhan	14	27	cloudy
Hangzhou	13	25	clear
Taipei	19	23	cloudy
Guangzhou	20	27	cloudy
Hong Kong	22	26	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	7	15	drizzle
Frankfurt	8	15	drizzle
Paris	10	15	drizzle
London	8	14	drizzle
New York	10	21	moderate rain

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Don't look at me!; 5- Not at home; 9- Forty winks; 12- Checkup; 13- Flow controlling device; 15- Wall covering slab for a kitchen or bathroom; 16- Assist; 17- Actress Burstyn; 18- Volunteer's words; 19- Slant; 21- Least fresh; 23- Burden of proof; 24- Sue Grafton's "___ for Evidence"; 25- Ice cream topped with syrup; 28- Hallway; 33- Foreign; 34- Della's creator; 35- Record with a VCR; 36- Like Bruckner's Symphony No. 7; 37- Run in the wash; 38- Was ahead; 39- Shoestring; 41- Anarchist Goldman; 42- Jewelled crown worn by women; 44- Pericarp; 46- Sea off Greece; 47- ___ Plaines; 48- Termini; 49- Organized group; 53- Sweltering warmth; 57- Mayberry lad; 58- Atty.-to-be exams; 60- Birds that may be spotted; 61- Range; Abbr.; 62- Affirmatives; 63- ___ Nui (Easter Island); 64- Legal ending; 65- Shine's partner; 66- Steven Chu's cabinet dept.;

DOWN: 1- "M'A'S'H" soft drink; 2- Farm team; 3- Apply powder to oneself; 4- Burst inward; 5- Wide street; 6- Division of the United Kingdom; 7- Wholly; 8- Fashion first name; 9- Well done!; 10- Sad to say; 11- Confined, with "up"; 14- Went in; 15- Semihard light yellow cheese; 20- uproar; 22- Publicize; 25- Leaves port; 26- Arm bones; 27- One of the family; 28- ___ de menthe; 29- Olive genus; 30- Lama lead-in; 31- Musical drama, usually sung in Italian; 32- V-shaped fortification; 34- Desire Under the ___; 37- Monstrous; 40- Whirls; 42- Mary ___ Lincoln; 43- Toward the coast; 45- Average mark; 46- Actually existing; 48- Some Art Deco works; 49- A few; 50- Makes a choice; 51- Silver screen; 52- Belgian river; 54- McGregor of "Trainspotting"; 55- Mont Blanc, par exemple; 56- Old autocrat; 59- ___ was going to St. Ives...;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



AD

FOR SALE

PACIFICA
1,226 ft² 3 B 2 L \$9,888,000

FOR RENT

THE MANHATTAN
1,366 ft² 3 B 2 L \$24,800/mth

FOR SALE

[Taipa] Choi Long Meng Chui 3 B 3 L
3,398 ft² \$17,800,000 (ref: 18045555)

[Taipa] Nova Taipa Gardens 4 B 3 L
2,500 ft² \$12,500,000 (ref: 18115570)

[Taipa] Va Fat 2 B 2 L
550 ft² \$4,580,000 (ref: 18115566)

[Taipa] The Buckingham 2 B 1 L
1,186 ft² \$8,888,000 (ref: 18025544)

FOR RENT

[Coloane] Keck Seng Warehouse
3,788 ft² \$32,000/mth (ref: 18050678)

[Macau] Macau CBD Office
1,813 ft² \$21,000/mth (ref: 19010699)

[Taipa] Ocean Garden 4 B 4 L
3,700 ft² \$35,000/mth (ref: 18040674)

[Taipa] Nova Park 2 B 2 L
1,134 ft² \$16,400/mth (ref: 17020638)

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Joseph Wilson, Barcelona

Wednesday, 3:00am
Liverpool v Barcelona
H 2-5, D 3-9, A 2-95

PHILIPPE Coutinho is facing his most important match since joining Barcelona from Liverpool when the Brazil midfielder returns to Anfield with a place in the Champions League final at stake.

Despite flashes of his world-class talent, Coutinho has endured a troubled season and a half since Barcelona paid a club-record transfer fee to pry him away from Liverpool.

But a leg injury to forward Ousmane Dembele means that it is even more likely Coutinho will be in Barcelona's starting lineup today [Wednesday 3am] when the Spanish champion takes a 3-0 advantage into the second leg of its Champions League semifinal against Liverpool.

Unless coach Ernesto Valverde decides to play with an extra midfielder — and leave Lionel Messi and Luis Suárez alone in attack — Coutinho will be Barcelona's third forward.

Coutinho is in serious need of a strong showing in a high-stakes match to quell speculation among some Barcelona fans that he should be traded this summer.

Valverde has never lost faith in Coutinho, even when he has underperformed and come in for criticism from the media and the club's supporters.

Coutinho has scored 11 goals this season for Barcelona. His last one was a superb strike from outside the area to round off an aggregate 4-0 victory over Manchester United in the quarterfinals. Yet instead of celebrating the goal with his teammates, Coutinho enraged some of Barcelona's supporters by sticking his fingers in his ears in a gesture that seemed to suggest he didn't want to hear any more complaints about his performances.

Coutinho had a chance to redeem himself last Wednesday in the opening leg against Liverpool. But he was jeered again at Camp Nou when his sloppy passing let Liverpool counterattack and forced Barcelona's defense had to scramble back.

FOOTBALL

Crunch time for Coutinho as Barcelona goes to Liverpool



And when Liverpool hemmed Barcelona in its area in the second half, Valverde chose Coutinho to come off and replaced him with defender Nelson Semedo. That allowed Sergi Roberto to move forward from right back and strengthen Barcelona's midfield.

The move paid off by giving Barcelona more balance and control of the ball. That was all Messi needed to score his two goals and turn a game hanging in the balance into a commanding victory.

It had seemed like Coutinho's spot in the starting lineup might be at risk with Dembele's speed ideal to punish a Liverpool team that has to attack and score early.

But Dembele injured his right leg Saturday in a 2-0 loss at Celta Vigo. Barcelona had clinched the Spanish league title the week before and Dembele and midfielder Arthur were the only two players likely to have considerable game time against Liverpool who played against Celta.

"(Dembele) is an important player for us

and it would be a blow to lose him for what remains of the season," Valverde said.

If Valverde does leave Coutinho on the bench, his only other options in the forwards are the little used Malcom and Kevin-Prince Boateng. The more likely alternative would be starting Semedo and changing to a 4-4-2 formation with Roberto in midfield, along with Sergio Busquets, Ivan Rakitic and either Arturo Vidal or Arthur. Messi and Suárez can provide more than enough scoring punch with 73 goals between them this season.

Coutinho, now 26, scored 41 Premier League goals for Liverpool from 2013 until his move to Barcelona in January 2018 for 160 million euros (then USD192 million).

One more starring performance in Liverpool could help him finally win over fans at his new club, by sending Barca into the June 1 final in Madrid.

The opponent would be Ajax or Tottenham, which trails 1-0 heading into the second leg in Amsterdam tomorrow (Thursday 3am). AP

AD



MACAUBATS

RUGBY CLUB 澳門蝙蝠欖球會





JOIN US EVERY SATURDAY @ 10:00 AM,

TAIPA STADIUM

每週六上午10:00來打橄欖球, 氹仔運動場



macaubats@gmail.com



Macau Bats Rugby

opinion

Our Desk
Renato Marques



**WE NEED MORE
'THIRD-INSTRUCTED' PEOPLE**

A couple of weeks ago a newsroom co-worker expressed her feelings in this very column, talking about what she (forever) termed the "local sore losers."

Although I am risking my neck by proposing to return to the topic today, I want to do so in a different way (please lay down your pitchforks).

In fact, the topic has been rolling around in my mind for several years, almost since I arrived in Macau. I can even say that my feeling over it has suffered several changes during all this time, taking me back to the roots of my thoughts on it. In this case, the roots lie somewhere 20 years ago, when in an ancient room of an ancient building located right next to the Castle of Leiria, a city in central Portugal, a Professor by the name of Ricardo Vieira started teaching a subject titled Anthropology of Education to a group of "wild" students who wanted pretty much anything else rather than to be seated in that room for three straight hours.

At that time, I confess, I questioned about a zillion times the utility of such knowledge or why I would need it. Today, 20 years on, I am happy that I did sit in the room for long hours discussing topics that we simply did not know that we would someday need.

To cut a long story short, one of the major topics of those classes regarded "identity" and "multiculturalism" or "mixed cultures," a topic always trending when you talk about education and schools, because that is always what you will find in schools, no matter if you are talking about Portugal, Macau or New Zealand.

It was then that I learned for the first time the names of Pedro D'Orey da Cunha, Michel Serres and of Professor Vieira himself, as experts in the field.

To understand this issue of identity, according to them all, you need to understand three basic concepts: "Oblat," "Transfuga" and the "Third-instructed." In a simple and "non-academic" manner these can be interpreted as the person who comes from a certain culture, keeping firm hold of his ideas, convictions and cultural roots as dominant and correct; the person that comes from a certain cultural background "abandoning" his background and embracing a new culture in a new place as dominant; and the person that, coming from a certain culture, manages to keep his mind open to merge several cultures and integrate different knowledge and different concepts into a "mixed system."

I am sure that by this time, you already adding faces and names to these three "identities" or personas.

In Macau, as a small "village" in size but a large city in population, where people from very different cultures and cultural backgrounds share (virtually) the same space, this confrontation between different identity personalities is somehow obvious and clear. We all have that neighbor who comes from a different country but lives in Macau as though he never left his original city and looks at everything he sees with his "oblat" eyes.

The same way, we all know a few people who come from the American or European continents, yet are far more "Chinese" than many of the local people in Macau of Chinese ancestry and cultural backgrounds. However, what I really mean to say is that, above all, what we need in Macau is more "third-instructed" people. They are the ones hard to find and, ultimately, they are the ones who will keep Macau in the "special place" that it has always been; at the "Crossroads of Identity" as Professor Vieira likes to call them.

**THE TRADE TALKS US-CHINA SOUR
AND COMPANIES WITH EXPOSURE GET**

U.S. companies that do a lot of business in China are getting hit hard in early trading after President Donald Trump threatened more tariffs with trade talks between the world's two biggest economies faltering.

Wynn Resorts, with a host of casinos and hotels in Macau, gets about 75% of its revenue from China, according to FactSet. Wynn shares have tumbled

led nearly 5% in premarket trading.

Apple, Qualcomm and Broadcom, who rely heavily on Chinese business, fell close to 3% before the opening bell yesterday. According to data provider FactSet, 64.7% of Qualcomm's revenue comes from China. Broadcom's Chinese revenue is 48% of its total and Apple gets nearly one-fifth of its revenue from world's second largest economy.

Harry, Meghan 'over the moon' about their healthy baby boy



People gather outside Buckingham Palace in London yesterday, after Prince Harry announced his wife Meghan, Duchess of Sussex had given birth to a baby boy

Gregory Katz, Windsor

MEGHAN, the Duchess of Sussex, gave birth to a healthy baby boy early Monday morning (yesterday in Macau), a beaming Prince Harry announced to the world, declaring he's "incredibly proud" of his wife.

The baby weighed 7 pounds, 3 ounces at birth and was born at 5:26 a.m. Harry said the child was a little bit overdue and that had given the royal couple more time to contemplate names.

Harry said he was ecstatic about the birth of their first child and promised that more details — such as the baby's name — will be shared in the coming days. The couple said earlier they were not going to find out the baby's sex in advance.

"This little baby is absolutely to die for," he said. "I'm just over the moon."

The infant is seventh in line to the British throne and Queen Elizabeth II's eighth great-grandchild. Harry is the younger son of Prince Charles, heir to the throne, and the late Princess Diana, who died in a Paris car crash in 1997.

The 34-year-old Harry, speaking before TV cameras later yesterday in Windsor, said he was present for the birth.

"It's been the most amazing experience I could ever have possibly imagined," he said. "How any woman does what they do is beyond comprehension."

"We're both absolutely thrilled and so grateful for all the love and support

from everybody out there. It's been amazing, so we just wanted to share this with everybody," he gushed.

Meghan's mother Doria Ragland was reportedly also with her daughter and said she is overjoyed, according to British media. Senior royals were informed of the birth, as was the family of Diana, Harry's late mother, before he went before the cameras.

It's been the most amazing experience I could ever have possibly imagined.

PRINCE HARRY

The couple's Instagram account said: "It's a boy! Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Sussex are overjoyed to announce the birth of their child."

Harry said he planned to make another announcement, probably in two days' time, "so everyone can see the baby." It's expected they will pose for a family picture at that point.

The former Meghan Markle, 37, was an American TV star before retiring from acting to marry Harry at St. George's Chapel on the grounds of Windsor Castle a year ago.

The child will be eligible for dual British-U.S. citizenship if Meghan and Harry want to go through the application process.

The birth of Britain's latest royal baby marks the completion of Harry's transformation from a boy whose mother died when he was just 12 to a sometimes-troubled teen, a committed military man, a popular senior royal, a husband and now to a proud father. He has long spoken of his desire to start a family.

He and his older brother, Prince William, along with their wives, are seen by many in Britain as the new, fresh faces of a royal family that had become stodgy and aged. They are raising the next generation of royals amid a genuine groundswell of British public support for the monarchy.

Meghan in particular represents a change for the royals.

At 37, she is older than Harry, had a previous marriage that ended in divorce and has strong feminist views. As the daughter of a black mother and a white father, she says she identifies as biracial.

Meghan also achieved considerable success in her own right before agreeing to a blind date with Harry that changed both of their lives. Meghan had an important role in the popular TV series "Suits," pressed for increased women's rights around the world and had a wide following even before she joined the world's most famous royal family. **AP**

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	40-60 Moderate	☹️
High Density Residential Area	30-50 Good	😊
Ambient	30-50 Good	😊

WORLD BRIEFS



INDIA A rare summer cyclone that tore through parts of South Asia killed at least 34 people in India and 15 in neighboring Bangladesh and smashed thousands of thatched-roof huts, officials said Monday. More on p13



ISRAEL-PALESTINE The Israeli military lifted protective restrictions on residents in southern Israel yesterday, while Gaza's ruling Hamas militant group reported a cease-fire deal had been reached to end the deadliest fighting between the two sides since a 2014 war.



BRAZIL Police killings in the state of Rio de Janeiro have hit a record high, rising by 18% in the first three months of this year in a spike partly attributed to a zero tolerance campaign by state leaders.

PARIS A long-awaited trial began yesterday in Paris accusing telecom giant Orange and seven former or current managers of moral harassment and related charges. The company — then called France Telecom — was undergoing job cuts and modernization efforts at the time of the suicides a decade ago. More on p14

RUSSIA Emergency workers have recovered 41 bodies and two flight recorders from the wreckage of a plane that caught fire during an emergency landing in Moscow, officials said yesterday as they sought to discover the cause of the disaster. More on p14