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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA A Huawei executive said yesterday that possible new U.S. restrictions on market access will have little impact on the Chinese tech giant due to its global reach. *More on p11*

CHINA's factory output and consumer spending weakened in April as a tariff war with Washington intensified, adding to pressure on Beijing to shore up shaky economic growth.

THAILAND's oldest political party chose an experienced insider as its new leader yesterday following an abysmal performance in recent elections that led to the resignation of its previous chief.



JAPAN A startup that launched a rocket into space earlier this month plans to provide low-cost rocket services and compete with American rivals such as SpaceX, its founder said yesterday.



IRAN's supreme leader issued a veiled threat in the same speech in which he stated that "no one is seeking war," saying it wouldn't be difficult for the Islamic Republic to enrich uranium to weapons-grade levels amid rising tensions with the U.S., state media reported yesterday.

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EXTRADITION BILL

Valente: Macau to watch Hong Kong

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Pro-democracy politician Wu Chi-wai scuffles with security guards in Hong Kong's Legislative Council

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS INVOKED

Macau Concealers wins appeal to CE

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DANIEL BEITLER



Scott Chiang

COURTS

Chiang's 're-trial' a violation of right to defense, say lawyers

Daniel Beitler

THE lawyers for defendant Scott Chiang, who was this week found guilty of unlawful assembly a second time by the Court of First Appeal, have described his most recent court session as a "violation of the

fundamental right of defense," of the concept of the rule of law, and of the Basic Law and the principle of 'one country, two systems' enshrined within.

Last year, Chiang and democrat lawmaker Sulu Sou were found guilty of the crime of unlawful assembly, even as they

had been brought to Macau's first court on charges of the more serious offence of aggravated disobedience.

There were many unorthodox aspects to the initial ruling of the Court of First Instance, according to lawyers familiar with the case. Accordingly, Chiang

filed an appeal to the Court of Second Instance, which sided with the defendant and ordered that the case be re-tried.

However, contrary to his expectations, Chiang was not afforded the chance to reexamine the facts or witnesses involved in his sentencing during the

April 30 retrial session. Hence the session became merely an opportunity for the Court of First Instance to review its earlier ruling, which it ultimately came to agree with.

Now Scott Chiang and lawyers Pedro Leal and Jorge Menezes are appealing both the guilty sentencing of the most recent session on April 30, as well as the process by which the retrial was conducted.

According to the 117-article appeal reviewed by the Times, by failing to give the accused the right to be heard, the Court of First Instance has both "violated the defendant's right to defense," as well as Law No. 9/1999, which stipulates Macau courts' "duty to comply with decisions rendered on appeal by higher courts."

"Since there has been a change in the type of crime, which relates to all the facts and the entire production of evidence [... the court] should have annulled the previous hearing [... and] ordered the April 2019 hearing to start afresh," argues the defendant's lawyers.

Moreover, the lawyers argue that no "effective" evidence was used against Chiang to reach the verdict. According to the law, the evidence produced in the initial trial had an "effectiveness" lifetime of just 60 days, but since the retrial was held almost one year later, "the evidence produced at the 2018 hearing had lost its effectiveness." As such, Leal and Menezes argue that the "accused must be acquitted" and "the 2019 hearing should be annulled."

PORTUGUESE Prime Minister Antonio Costa said yesterday (Macau time) that his country's relationship with China is an important element of its national policy. During his meeting with Macau Chief Executive Chui Sai On, Costa said that the recent mutual visits by the presidents of the two countries have consolidated bilateral relations.

Costa spoke highly of the Greater Bay Area development project, stressing that the infrastructure improvements will strongly promote the area's further development. Costa said that Macau has played a very important and special role in enhancing Portugal-China relations.

He expressed hope that Portugal and Macau will maintain unique friendly relations in se-

Portugal PM praises bilateral relations during Chui visit

veral fields, such as judicial assistance and youth entrepreneurship.

Costa said that he was glad to see the successful development of Macau since its establishment 20 years ago. He praised Macau for its efforts and contributions in promoting the relationship between China and Portugal, as well as other Portuguese-speaking countries.

Chui, who is on a nine-day visit to Portugal, said that Macau will continue to serve as the service platform of commercial and trade cooperation for China and the Portuguese-speaking countries.

For his part, Chui encouraged Macau students studying in Portugal to make good use of the opportunity to gain further knowledge from overseas study and deepen their professional skills.

Chui made the comments during a dinner hosted for approximately 200 Portugal-based students from Macau, according to a statement from the Government Information Bureau. Six of the students shared their experiences of life studying in Portugal, gave their views on the possibility of pursuing a further academic quali-

fication and talked about their career prospects in Macau.

Chui encouraged the students to return to Macau after their studies, bringing their knowledge and experience to both public departments and judicial bodies. He said that legal professionals played an important role in society and that their opinions and decision can have major a major influence on society.

Chui said that the existence of different legal systems within the Greater Bay Area presented huge challenges for a coordinated development

model for the nine cities in Guangdong and the two Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau. It was not an easy task to create a mechanism to facilitate integration within the Greater Bay Area, he stated.

Also during the visit, Portugal and Macau agreed to strengthen economic cooperation and promote mutual investments in order to maintain the sustainable growth of the two economies.

Earlier, the Macau SAR government and the Portuguese Ministry of Economy signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the fields of tourism, education, training and research, with the aim of promoting the joint development of training courses and joint degree programs. **MDT/Agencies**

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RENATO MARQUES



Lawyer's Day to promote mediation and conciliation

Renato Marques

THIS year's celebration of Lawyer's Day, an event organized by the Macau Lawyers Association (AAM), will for the first time feature free mediation sessions, wherein legal professionals will mediate presented cases as a way to promote this form of conflict resolution, the president of the AAM, Jorge Neto Valente, said yesterday in a press conference.

According to Neto Valente, the mediation and conciliation sessions will help the citizens to learn more about the new system, which is presented as an alternative to common court cases in certain situations.

The free sessions also aim to promote the AAM Mediation and Conciliation Centre, which was formalized late last year but has not yet received any cases for resolution.

The newly added mediation and conciliation sessions will be held alongside doubt clarification sessions that will be also provided by lawyers this year.

Both appointment sessions will be held at the Macau Business Tourism Centre in Senado Square. The same square will host most of the activities in the three-day program, running from May 17 to May 19.

In addition to the large number of leisure, recreational and entertainment activities available, there are also several other events of a more serious nature, namely the continuation of the sessions on the disclosure of the mainland's laws, an activity that counts the support of the China Legal Services and that will bring legal professionals from the mainland, specializing in different fields, who will inform participants on several specificities of the continental laws as well as relevant changes

or amendments made recently.

Another of the highlights noted by Neto Valente is the similarly traditional "Sports Day," to be held on the second day of the celebration at the University of Macau, at which sports teams composed of lawyers will meet and challenge one another. Participants include staff of the Public Prosecutions Office, as well as magistrates.

FIRST CONGRESS OF MACAU LAWYERS IN SEPTEMBER

During the press conference held at the AAM headquarters yesterday afternoon, the president of the Association stated that the first-ever Congress of Macau Lawyers will be held this

year, an event that is expected to take place in September.

According to Neto Valente, this has been a long-held ambition of the Association, which makes sense since the population of local lawyers has now surpassed 400, added to which is more than 120 interns for a total figure that he considers to justify the organization of such an event.

The president also disclosed that the first topic under discussion and analysis during this First Congress of Macau Lawyers will be, "the legal profession's changes and challenges over the past 20 years, since the Macau SAR has been established, as well as projecting the future of the profession in

Macau and in the Greater Bay Area," said Neto Valente said, adding, "the GBA presents a big challenge and also big opportunities."

On the topic, and replying to the questions of media present, the president elaborated, saying, "there are requests from other Associations within the neighboring cities so we can join together in the GBA."

However, "we don't want to enter through China and work on their field," said Neto Valente. "We have to keep our identity and difference, which makes us particularly special and different in Macau. The specificity of Macau is what [makes] us different from the remainder of China."

Fugitive Extradition Bill: Macau gov't will wait for Hong Kong

Renato Marques

THE president of the Macau Lawyers Association (AAM), Jorge Neto Valente, thinks that is too early to debate the possibility of the Macau government preparing a bill that, similar to the one being prepared in Hong Kong, would grant extradition rights over fugitives residing in other parts of the greater China region.

Questioned by the media on the topic, Neto Valente said, "[for the time being] we have no knowledge about any bill being prepared. Until this moment, as far as I know, the government of Macau has not disclosed any text of a possible agreement [among the several parties that could give a green light to the bill]."

"I think we are all, including the government, waiting to see what happens in Hong Kong, where the situation is not simple [to solve]."

"The only thing I saw in the media was actually an interesting reaction from the Taiwan side in which they said that is not enough for Hong Kong to decide [whether] they deliver or not deliver [fugitives] because this demands a position from [the] Taiwan side and apparently Taiwan is not in-

terested [in collaborating on such a topic]."

Focusing on the Macau side, Neto Valente said, "What is certain is in Macau we haven't yet discussed such topic and so I think it is a bit too early to have any official position."

Regarding a possible advance in reaching an agreement between the extradition of fugitives between Portugal and Macau, arising from the visit to Portugal of the Chief Executive and the Secretary for Administration and Justice, Sonia Chan, Neto Valente said, "This might be a false issue, first because the number of existing cases is very low and then because there is a matter that even the Secretary already clarified, [that is] the Portuguese nationals would never be extradited to Macau or somewhere else and because on these [matters] there is always a need for reciprocity, Macau would never extradite any Macau resident who is not a Portuguese [national] to Portugal."

The president of AAM also noted that in case something comes from the government on the topic, the Association should be heard during the process. However, that "does not mean that they will accept our opinions – and they often don't," he cautioned.

UM, Imperial College London to offer collaborated PhD

The University of Macau (UM) has announced that they will be offering a "1+3" PhD program with Imperial College London (ICL). The plan was secured with the signing of a memorandum of understanding. According to the plan, UM will recommend high-caliber post-graduate students who, if accepted by the ICL, will take a one-year Master of Science (MSc) program with the ICL and then a PhD at the UM. The announcement did not mention which faculty or specialization would be eligible for this collaboration. Additionally, the university promoted the UM Macao Talent Program, launched last year to encourage high-caliber students to remain at UM for further academic pursuits.

Lam Kam Seng made president of Urban Renewal Company

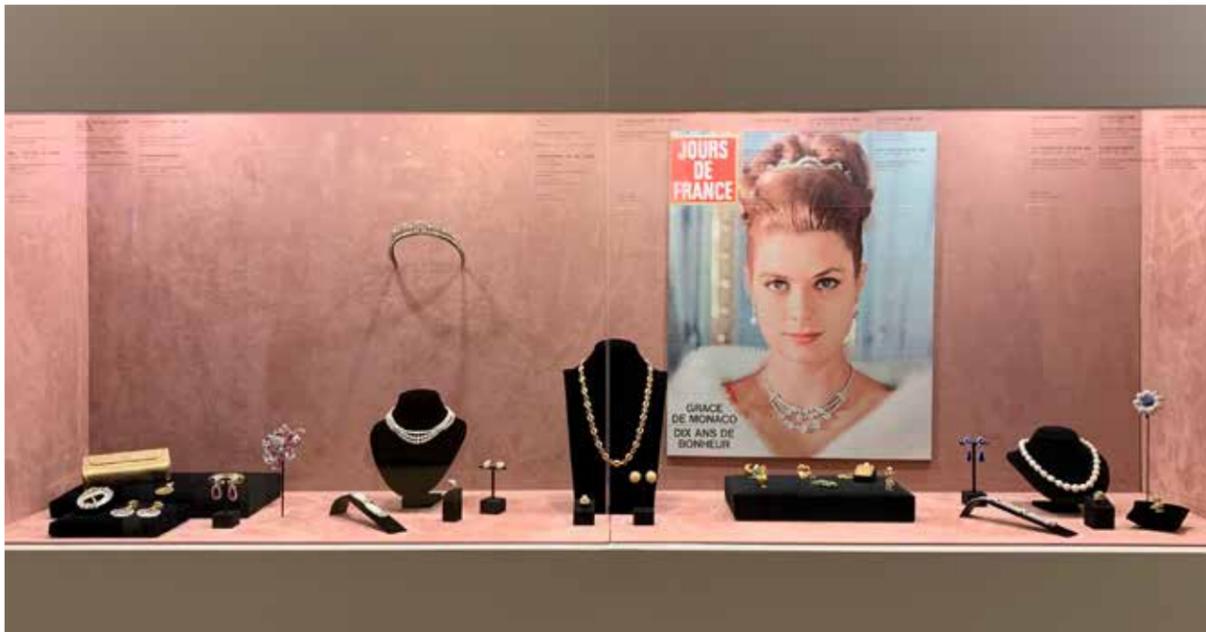
The government will be injecting funds to set up a company that focuses on urban renewal. Lam Kam Seng, who already holds five either consultative or managerial positions in various quasi-government bodies, has been appointed by the Chief Executive to be the head of the new company. Pursuant to the charter of the company, Lam will have a three-year term, unless otherwise decided by the Board of Directors. A known business figure, Lam is also a member of the Executive Council and the Trust Council of the Macau Foundation, president of the University Council of the University of Macau, and vice-president of the World Trade Centre Co. Ltd. and the Science and Technology Committee.

Macau Customs to start 'smart' law enforcement

Macau Customs will introduce new technology to assist with their work, including non-intrusive inspection systems at border checkpoints, a smart system to oversee the marine territory, and a heat detection system that can monitor the 85-square-kilometer marine territory of Macau with cameras installed at around 10 coastal points. The system will start operation at the end of this year. Moreover, Macau Customs has so far this year recruited 130 officers. They are expected to be ready in the second half of 2020. Within three years, the Macau Customs expects to achieve its headcount target of 1,660 officers.

ART MACAO

Grace Kelly exhibition opens at Galaxy Macau



Staff reporter

PART of the Art Macao campaign debuting this year, the “Grace Kelly: From Hollywood to Monaco” exhibition opened yesterday at Galaxy Macau.

Upon entering the exhibition

space, which was especially set up for this exhibition, visitors are greeted with a quote by Grace Kelly: “I don’t want to dress up a picture with just my face.”

Before becoming the Princess of Monaco, Kelly was an actress and cinema

icon, but many were primarily captivated by her beauty. “I’m sure she was talented, but her beauty seemed to be a distraction,” said Dr. Tan See Kam, associate professor of film studies at the University of Macau.

Tan said, “she was beau-

tiful, cool, and blonde — an icon of her time.”

The exhibition showcases many of Kelly’s achievements. Film posters feature as a core section. More than a dozen posters of her films are displayed in the gallery, plus replicas of film ads on aged Hong Kong newspaper.

Further into the exhibition, an Oscar Award for Kelly’s performance in the 1955 film “The Country Girl” is on display, among the many other awards that illustrate her career achievements.

Charming outfits she used to wear, including the wedding gown at her royal wedding, and the renowned Hermès handbag that was named after her, make a section in the exhibition, as does some of Kelly’s jewelry collection, which has its own dedicated area.

The closing section shows artworks, mainly photographs, created by Kelly. One of the photographs captured Kelly counter-photographing her photographer, with her image subtly revealed on the right of the photograph as a reflection in the mirror.

Excerpts from Kelly’s films - including Tan’s favorite “Rear Window” - and a picture of Kelly by Andy Warhol, are also on display.

The exhibition, located at the Crystal Lobby of Galaxy Macau, is open to the public for free until August 28.

MACAU CONCEALERS

Decision to block media outlet from gov’t info revoked

Staff reporter

A decision by the director of the Government Information Bureau (GCS) to prevent online media Macau Concealers from accessing a ‘media-only’ government information portal has been overturned by the Chief Executive, the Chinese-language media outlet reported yesterday.

The portal concerned is called GovInfo Hub, which is an information pool available only to registered media outlets. It is the channel through which the government releases statements and other information for distribution to the press. Not all information on the portal is shared with the public.

According to Macau Concealers, the media outlet applied to GCS on August 28 last year for access to the website. As the website is open to all registered media outlets, Macau Concealers considered itself eligible as it

already fulfilled that basic criteria, as recognized by the government.

However, its application was denied on November 9. The director of GCS, Chan Chi Ping, said that the Bureau had made the decision because of a need to prioritize outlets regularly covering current affairs. The Bureau also recommended Macau Concealers rely instead on the GCS website, which is publicly accessible, as opposed to the portal.

In the eight months that followed, Macau Concealers filed an objection with the GCS head, which was later rejected. It then filed an appeal to the Chief Executive, who supervises the GCS, claiming that the decision violated both the Basic Law and other laws, including the freedom of the press.

Eventually, the Chief Executive revoked the decision close to a deadline that would have led to a tacit denial.

Macao Creative Pavilion to promote culinary culture in Shenzhen

THE Cultural Affairs Bureau and the Cultural Industries Fund of the Macau SAR Government are jointly hosting the Macao Creative Pavilion at the 15th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair (ICIF), starting today and running until May 20. The aim of the pavilion, according to the two government entities, is to promote the creative and culinary culture of Macau.

The pavilion, themed “Macao creativity: gastronomy and community creativity”, is located in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area Cultural Industries Hall with a total area of 180 square meters.

The pavilion uses a house-shaped timber structure to separate itself as a distinct cultural and creative factory for viewers to enjoy. On the wall are a variety of hand-drawn designs related to Macau’s cultural and creative industries, such as creative gastronomy and handicrafts.

Participating in the fair this year are seven cultural and creative companies which have revamped their branding under the support of the Special Subsidy Program for the Cultural and Creative Community launched by the Cultural Industries Fund. The companies, namely Tai Long Fong Casa de Cha, U Bo Wo Chinese Herbal Tea, Veng Heng Cheong Jossstick Shop, Restaurant Fok Lam Seng, Dumpling Town, Golden Mix Dessert and San Song Song Pork Ball, will promote culinary culture and distinctive local flavors of Macau through the ICIF platform.

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Macau Bats Rugby

Sands Macao Celebrates 15 Years in Macau

A five-part series on the growth of Sands China since 2004



MACAU DAILY TIMES PRESENTS:

IT ALL STARTED WITH SANDS MACAO

Part 4: Supporting local SME suppliers

Missed Part 3? Read it online at macaudailytimes.com.mo

SINCE its arrival in the city, Sands China Ltd. has established itself as a significant supporter of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Macau, including those in artistic fields.

“Our procurement with local suppliers in 2018 amounted to MOP 10.8 billion, which is 77 percent of our total procurement. Meanwhile, 19 percent of our total procurement amount was with small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) based in Macau,” said Dr. Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd.

Sands China has forged long-standing partnerships with Macau businesses. Wa Toc Engineering Co. Ltd. is the current contractor for repair and maintenance of air-conditioning and ventilation facilities for Sands China. Their partnership started 11 years ago, but General Manager Mr. Wong Chan Pui, who currently oversees more than 40,000 units of air-circulation systems across all Sands China properties, initially worked as a fourth-level subcontractor on Sands China’s construction projects.

These partnerships are not simply longstanding, but are also very beneficial to the SMMEs themselves. Mr. Lei Iong Fai, managing director of Kin Nam Hong Co. Ltd., a local wholesaler of vegetables, attributes the growth of company to the amount Sands China purchases

from him: “Our collaboration started in 2004, before Sands Macao even opened,” Mr. Lei said. “At that time, we only had one truck and six employees. Now we have eight [refrigerated] trucks [and one regular one] and 40 employees. We also were the first [local] SMME [in this industry] to own a refrigerated truck.” Sands China’s high procurement standards, such as requiring suppliers to use refrigerated trucks in order to keep produce cold and fresh, helps raise standards for local suppliers like Kin Nam Hong. Moreover, Mr. Lei praised Sands China for its punctual settlement of bills, and attributes this consistency as being a key factor in facilitating his company’s development.

Indeed, cash flow is crucial to all businesses, something which Sands China understands when dealing with its suppliers. Many of the SMMEs the Times interviewed complimented Sands China on its punctual payments.

Sands China also values collaborating with Macau’s older enterprises. Long Tin Group, a local seller of Chinese cured and barbecued meats, who started doing business in Macau in 1964, began working with Sands China in 2004. Chao Pak Kei, a supplier of disposable utensils, is a third-generation establishment which has operated within Macau for over 60 years. For 15 years, they have been working with Sands China.

While older enterprises are often associated with outdated facilities and management practi-

The opening of Sands Macao on May 18, 2004, marked the beginning of an era of transformation for Macau’s tourism industry – a period that has witnessed enormous growth in the SAR and for Sands China Ltd.

Fifteen years later, the company’s first property continues to welcome millions of guests through its doors each year, and has since been joined by four integrated resorts on the Cotai Strip. Together, they have recorded 700 million visits to date, while setting ever-higher standards

of service excellence in a city that is establishing itself as a world centre of tourism and leisure – a city primed to be a key player in the development of the Greater Bay Area.

To mark this decade-and-a-half milestone, this is the fourth in a five-part look at Sands Macao and Sands China Ltd. Today we look at the company’s efforts to support the growth of Macau’s local SME suppliers, including those in creative industries.

ces, neither the managing director of Long Tin, Alan Mok, or the managing director of Chao Pak Kei, Stephen Chow, feel this is an accurate representation of their companies. Sands China’s stringent commitment to world-class quality and safety standards has ensured that both companies are at the forefront of quality and safety procedures, which has been of significant benefit to them in their business dealings outside of Sands China.

Chao Pak Kei has begun supplying eco-friendly disposables because “Sands China has turned to FSC-certified paper napkins from Germany,” due to its commitment to the environment (FSC is an international non-profit organization promoting responsible management of forests). Sands China has also begun using a new type of eco-friendly bio-degradable cup, which has in turn meant that Chao Pak Kei can feel secure in becoming an environmentally responsible company. Mr. Chow noted, “We wouldn’t dare try [such a product innovation] if we didn’t have the support from large enterprises like Sands China.”

Long Tin established their first food processing plant in 2005

– one year after starting their collaboration with Sands China. Setting up the plant meant that, “we were required to constantly improve our business,” according to Mr. Mok. Since then, the company has taken advantage of Sands China’s local supplier initiatives like F.I.T. (Financial Support, Invitational Matching, and Training and Development), having attended the Sands Procurement Academy, which trains local suppliers in the industry’s best practices and helps prepare them for working with large international enterprises like Sands China.

Sands China’s support of local SMMEs also includes helping nurture talented individuals in the creative industries.

The company has worked with local filmmakers to produce promotional material, commissioning an emerging local film company, Common Production, to produce Sands Macao’s 15th anniversary celebratory video. This is particularly noteworthy because Common Production is a youth enterprise, meaning it was founded, is owned, and is operated by young Macao entrepreneurs. Jackie Wong, the company’s executive director, voiced

his appreciation for Sands China, as working together has enabled him to improve his company’s hardware and software, adding that “our collaboration with Sands China has opened a lot of doors. Other enterprises told us that they were convinced of our quality after seeing our productions for Sands China.”

Dr. Wong echoed Mr. Wong’s comment by stating that “local SMEs do not necessarily do business with us only...If they provide quality products, we do refer them to our overseas sister properties, too.” Indeed, at Sands China’s SME Open Day last month, procurement executives from Las Vegas Sands and Singapore’s Marina Bay Sands were present and were introduced to local SMEs. While there is undoubtedly a benefit to doing business with local enterprises, Sands China seeks to not simply forge business partnerships, but to facilitate the thriving of Macao’s various local SMMEs, including those in creative industries. The future can only hold new and exciting ways for the company to fulfil its goal.

Don’t miss the final part in this series in tomorrow’s paper



Stephen Chow



Lei Iong Fai



Alan Mok



Wong Chan Pui

GAMING

Analysts expect strong visitation won't translate into growth

Daniel Beitter

ANALYSTS are not expecting much from gaming revenue growth this month after gloomy April disappointed amid soaring visitation in the special administration region.

Bank of America Merrill Lynch this week issued a note suggesting Macau's VIP segment remains weak, but that the strong visitation would aid earnings in the core mass segment.

Meanwhile, Citigroup yesterday affirmed its MOP25 billion gross gaming revenue forecast for the month. Citing sector sources, the broker estimated that casino revenues reached MOP11.7 billion for the first 13 days of May, with a daily run rate of MOP775 million in the past week. Extrapolated to the month-end, the daily run rate suggests a target of between MOP25 and MOP26 billion. However, considering macroeconomic volatility, the firm holds the gross gaming revenue forecast unchanged.

Analysts at Nomura appear to agree, forecasting flat revenue growth in May. They suggest that monthly year-on-year comparisons during the second half



of 2019 will provide a clearer picture of the state of Macau gaming than the ups and downs of the first half.

Macau recorded 10.36 million tourist arrivals during the first quarter of 2019, about 21.2% more than in the same quarter a year earlier, with the bulk of the increase carried by same-day visitors.

However, even the rapid rise in visitors was unable to overturn a

0.5% year-on-year contraction for the world's largest gambling hub. That casts doubt on the overall ability of Macau to translate soaring visitor growth into gaming revenue growth.

Gross gaming revenue dipped 8.3% year-on-year in April – its worst month of the year to date – even as visitors soared as much as 40 percent over the Easter holiday period.

Tourist arrivals appear to be

holding strong in May, according to official data provided by the Public Security Police Force. Thirty-seven percent more visitors were recorded at Macau's border checkpoints during this year's Labor Day holiday weekend, while the three-day holiday period for Buddha's Birthday saw 48 percent more tourists come to the SAR compared with the equivalent period in 2018.

Tourism authority: no plan for visitor tax

Staff reporter

THE director of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), Helena de Senna Fernandes, has said that there is no plan to implement a visitor arrival tax.

During the past Labor

Day holidays, Macau received more than 636,000 visitors, just 40,000 short of the total population of Macau in the first quarter of 2019. Even though the MGTO has been pledging to drive tourists into other districts, images still showed

popular attractions, such as the Ruins of St. Paul's, packed with people during the holiday.

In response to an enquiry from lawmaker Agnes Lam, the MGTO head explained that a levy would impact Macau's image as glo-

bal tourism destination and likely affect the travel incentive of the city. Additionally, mainland authorities might implement the same levy on Macau residents entering the mainland. She noted that most of the tourists in Macau are from

the mainland.

Senna Fernandes also emphasized that law enforcement agencies had been working hard to manage the flow of visitors during peak times. She noted that the MGTO will hold meetings with organizers after tourism events organized by businesses or neighborhood associations.

Daisy Ho to be keynote speaker at G2E Asia

DAISY Ho, chairman and executive director of SJM Holdings Ltd, is set to deliver a keynote speech at the G2E Asia 2019 Conference that will be held from May 21 to 23 at The Venetian Macao Cotai Expo.

According to information published by the trade show organizer, the keynote address is titled "China's Greater Bay Area: Opportunities and Challenges for Macau and for our Key Industry," and will be delivered before the official opening of the gaming event.

In the afternoon of May 23, Paulo Martins Chan, director of the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau, will speak on the bureau's role in promoting the SAR as a favorable city for tourism and leisure as part of his keynote address.

According to organizers, one of the program highlights of the three-day event will be the talk on Japan's gaming industry and its economic impacts on other Asian markets.

Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of the Macao Government Tourism Bureau, was also invited to speak on the government's strategy and direction for the development of the city's tourism.

This year, the trade show will feature a new show segment titled "Financial Technology Asia" focusing on the Asia-Pacific's FinTech industry, which is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 72.5% from 2015 to 2020, reaching USD72 billion.

The sessions will facilitate discussion of ways to increase the entertainment value of games in traditional land-based casinos, including the application of successful concepts from mobile/social games and eSports, and inclusion of newer technologies such as Blockchain.

Another new segment, "ArtBiz Forum," will also be launched during the event, focusing on art business. LV

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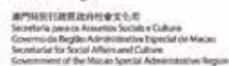
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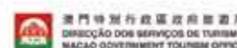
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A Hong Kong doctor's 'nefarious

THE Hong Kong billionaire known as the "King of Toys" says he was asleep at 8 a.m. on a Sunday morning two years ago when Roy Cho Kwai-chee showed up at his gated three-story town house. Cho, a doctor who ran a chain of health-care clinics, had brought his wife and elderly parents along, and he was crying. He said he needed money. A lot of money.

The billionaire, Francis Choi Chee-ming, had a lot of money. He controls the world's largest toy manufacturer, churning out Transformers and My Little Ponys for companies such as Hasbro Inc. and Mattel Inc. He's worth USD4.8 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, making him one of the richest men in Hong Kong.

Twelve years before that Sunday morning, Choi became an investor in Cho's company, Town Health International Medical Group Ltd. Over the years, he had loaned the doctor money — a few million dollars here and there — but this time was different, Choi recalls. A network of as many as 40 companies linked to Cho was crashing down. He needed HKD2 billion (\$255 million) to save it.

The collapse of Cho's network would lead to one of Hong Kong's most spectacular stock implosions and is now part of the biggest investigation of market malfeasance in the city's history, an effort to expose and shut down what the regulator has called "nefarious networks." These are groups of public companies, licensed dealers and other financial firms that "enrich themselves at the expense of unsuspecting investors," Securities and Futures Commission enforcement head Thomas Atkinson said in an October speech revealing plans for criminal and civil action against about 60 companies and individuals. Their activities, Atkinson said, are "having a deleterious effect on our markets."

Cho, the 55-year-old doctor-turned-financier, was at the center of one of these networks, according to company filings, lawsuits and people with knowledge of its operations. Cho-connected companies, which included businesses as diverse as finance, LED lighting and education, allegedly bought and sold each other's shares to artificially pump up prices while diverting millions of dollars of investors' money into their own pockets, principals of one of the companies say in lawsuits. Cho used the company, insurance and securities brokerage Convoy Global Holdings Ltd., to make margin loans to other businesses connected to him by directing confidants at the firm through a secret email account even though he didn't own a controlling stake, according to the lawsuits filed against Cho by

BLOOMBERG



Hong Kong activist investor David Webb

Convoy's new management.

The Cho network is now linked to tens of millions of dollars in unpaid loans, the suspension of trading in at least \$22 billion worth of shares in Cho-related companies, numerous lawsuits and 13 arrests — with more likely to come. Cho, who hasn't been charged with any crimes, declined through a lawyer to discuss any issues under investigation or litigation. Filings Cho made in response to the lawsuits aren't public.

The unraveling of Cho's network also led to a falling out with Choi. "When I saw all his family members in my house that early, I was a little bit scared," Choi, 72, recalls, sitting on a plush white sofa in his office at Early Light International Ltd., which is decorated with jade and wood carvings, a 30-foot fish tank and a photo of Choi with Donald Trump at the Daytona 500 racetrack in 1999. But when Choi asked Cho what he needed the money for, "he wouldn't tell me."

BROUGHT TOGETHER BY A COMMON COLD

Cho was born in India, where his father was a successful businessman, but the family fled amid anti-Chinese sentiment in the 1960s, when Cho was a child. They lost everything, eventually settling in public housing in Hong Kong's New Territories, according to local newspaper accounts. Cho did well academically and went to Hong Kong University's medical school.

In 1989, with several fellow graduates, he created Town Health, which would become the largest private health-care provider in Hong Kong. Eleven years later the company went public on the Hong Kong exchange's secondary board, the Growth Enterprise Market. Town Health raised HKD38 million with the backing of Hong Kong's richest man, Li Ka-shing, who had taken a large stake before the initial public offering. Private clinics were novel in Hong Kong, where the public medical system left by the Bri-

tish colonial government was the norm. Cho built a reputation as a charming, friendly clinician with superior doctor-patient skills, friends and associates say.

A common cold brought Cho and Choi together in 2005. Choi had walked into Cho's clinic seeking medical advice. The two men recognized each other from social events and started chatting. "Suddenly, he was like a friend," recalls Choi.

One of Town Health's partners was pulling out, Cho told Choi that day. Did Choi want to take his place? Cho said the investment would be structured as a partnership, in which Choi would put in HKD44 million and front another HKD44 million for Cho's share. Choi, who regularly lends money for investment opportunities, says he insisted it be structured 50.1% for Cho and 49.9% for him. "I said, 'You control it. You do everything. I don't want to do anything.'"

The Cho and Choi families became close. With Choi holding

a large stake in Town Health, he became a deputy chairman and nonexecutive director. His daughter Crystal, a Boston College-educated accountant who'd been running her family company's property unit, joined Town Health, too — first as head of corporate finance, then rising to chairman the following year. Shares in the company soared on the news, and all seemed well. But the share price started bouncing up and down without reason, enough to make Choi suspicious. "I asked why a stock like this is going up and down," Choi says. "He said, 'It's the funds. Fund managers do this.'"

Town Health graduated to the main board of the stock exchange in August 2008, just before the global financial crisis that would tank Hong Kong stocks and crush Town Health's shares to one-fifth of their IPO price. They bumped along at that level for the next five years, until 2013, when Cho turned himself into a financier.

network' sparks market inquiry



It isn't clear how or why he got the idea, but people familiar with his businesses say that's when Cho started taking stakes in multiple companies and funds and gained control or influence over many more in which he had no disclosed stake.

PULLING THE STRINGS

Most of the Cho-connected companies had nothing to do with medicine, yet many operated out of Town Health headquarters, a six-story building opposite a Coca-Cola plant in an industrial area in the New Territories, according to a former employee who asked not to be identified because of the ongoing investigation. Some shared the same directors. Executives would come seeking instructions from Cho, lining up every day, the person says, ticking off a list with his fingers.

An education business in which Cho didn't have a disclosed stake kept an 80-square-foot dedicated room, half the size of a

parking space, inside Town Health's office, the person says. Cho's influence wasn't visible through public filings, and he wanted to keep it secret as his companies continued to make more acquisitions and spread the network wider, the person says. He describes Cho as the real boss.

Other companies in the building included Hanergy Thin Film Power Group Ltd., run by a co-founder of Town Health, and Jun Yang Solar Power Investments Ltd., which Town Health acquired when it was a garment manufacturer with a different name in China. Jun Yang Solar provided millions of dollars of loans to Hanergy by holding the stock of its Beijing-based parent — a practice known as share pledging, which has been linked to other market price collapses in Hong Kong — company filings show. Hanergy in turn invested in Jun Yang Solar, which later changed its name to Power Financial Group Ltd. That company was an investor in Town Health and at least two other Cho-linked stocks.

One of the biggest companies connected to Cho, and one that lawsuits allege was used for illegal activities, is Convoy. Town Health began buying a 25% stake in 2013. Although never a controlling shareholder, Cho placed confidants throughout the firm, set up a secret email address and negotiated on Convoy's behalf with potential investors, according to the lawsuit brought by Convoy's current executives.

Convoy's regulatory licenses enabled its staff to trade securities, sponsor IPOs and lend money to investors on margin, all powers Cho used to make money for himself, the suit alleges. In one case, Cho used money from a HKD1.57 billion investment into Convoy in 2015 by the family that controls Fubon Financial Holding Co., Taiwan's second-largest bank, and diverted it for the personal benefit of people inside his network, according to the lawsuit. Members of the Tsai family declined to comment.

The lawsuit says the Tsais wanted to bring in former Citigroup Inc. Chief Executive Officer Sanford Weill as a co-investor, but Cho rejected the idea. Instead, he found supposedly independent investors who bought HKD1.4 billion in new Convoy shares. The new investors turned out to be a close relative of Cho's, the owner of the firm that handles Town Health's public relations and units of several public companies, according to the lawsuit.

'IT'S A CRAZY TOWN'

Cho then directed Convoy to lend more than HKD1 billion to companies and people associated with him, including using margin financing, on "uncom-

mercial, irrational, and/or seriously disadvantageous terms," a related lawsuit alleges. Cho also arranged for Convoy to invest HKD375 million in money lender First Credit Finance Group Ltd., pushing up the stock 260% in 2016, while people close to Cho, including his relative, offloaded their stakes, the suit says, basing its claims on research compiled by an outside investigations firm. First Credit didn't respond to requests for comment.

Cho also had Convoy pay a business owned by him a monthly stipend of HKD100,000 for consulting services that had "no discernible purpose or benefit" to Convoy, and then later had Convoy purchase the firm for about HKD90 million without telling the stock exchange, breaching disclosure rules on related-party transactions, the suit alleges. The company's current executives declined to comment.

Many HK investors don't care much about the risks, regarding the market like a casino where you might strike it rich

It's this mix of practices — non-disclosure, cross-holding, name changing, shape-shifting and share pledging — that the regulator has called nefarious, without singling out any specific companies. "Because these entities coordinate their activities behind opaque networks of apparently legitimate entities," the SFC's Atkinson said, "they are literally hiding in plain sight."

It was Hong Kong activist investor David Webb who helped light a fire under the regulator. In May 2017 the self-described "computer geek" published a diagram of 50 stocks to avoid. It looked like a spider web, and he called it the "Enigma Network." One nexus was Convoy.

Webb, 53, came to Hong Kong in 1991 after graduating from Oxford University. He worked as a banker and started managing his own portfolio later that decade, launching webb-site.com to shed light on the suspicious behavior he had noticed in the city's markets. Over the years, Webb amassed a fortune of at least \$170 million by investing in stocks while also calling for tougher regulation and more transparency.

Webb first warned about Cho after Town Health went public

in 2000. A British Virgin Islands-registered business headed by one of the company's founders hadn't disclosed its interests in the IPO prospectus. They were revealed only when Town Health bought that firm with half of the IPO proceeds a month later, leading Webb to conclude that he "wouldn't touch this company through three pairs of latex gloves." Town Health's share price fell 51% by year-end from its post-IPO high after soaring 220% in its first week.

The publication of the Enigma Network 17 years later set the stage for a wider crash. Town Health shares fell 54% and Convoy's 47%. It also embarrassed regulators, who by all accounts hadn't kept up with developments. "Investors are largely reliant on the regulators to do anything at all," says Webb, "and often they do too little, too late."

While Hong Kong stock markets have long had a reputation for shady dealings, nefarious networks have ratcheted things up a level, causing some meteoric share rises and spectacular plunges in recent years. It's not uncommon for shares in Hong Kong's lightly traded small-cap stocks to rise by thousands of percentage points, like a construction company that soared 9,800% in 2016, only to see \$1.4 billion vaporize in a single day.

Yet many Hong Kong investors don't care much about the risks, regarding the market like a casino where you might strike it rich. They're happy to "throw money" at the market and "stir-fry stocks," as the terms for "invest" and "trade shares" mean in Cantonese.

Some 60% of adults in Hong Kong trade stocks, foreign currency or other financial instruments, one of the highest rates in the world, and 41% of them are looking for quick profits yet lack the research and analysis to invest wisely, according to a 2017 study by the regulator.

"They don't really care what the fundamentals are, just that 7 cents is cheaper than \$70, and they're looking for a bargain," says Wayne Yu, a finance professor at City University of Hong Kong, explaining the affinity for small-cap stocks among people who trade tips over dim sum and watch morning TV call-in shows touting stocks of the day. "It's a crazy town. People lose money left and right."

ROOTING OUT MISCONDUCT

After the SFC started investigating Webb's Enigma Network, top officials promised to root out misconduct. "We found that these networks were gaming the system in a number of ways, from share warehousing and the use of

nominees to disguise actual control, to selling assets at absurd discounts or extreme overvaluations to divert public shareholders' wealth into private hands, leaving investors high and dry," Ashley Alder, the agency's CEO, said in a November speech. He cited Hanergy as one target. The regulator and the Hong Kong exchange declined requests for further information.

It was the market crash following the publication of Webb's Enigma Network that brought a distraught Cho to the toy magnate's door that Sunday morning in 2017, begging for HK\$2 billion.

Choi had loaned HKD300 million to Cho the previous year, around the time that shares of LED lamp maker Tech Pro Technology Development Ltd. fell 94% following a report by a U.S. short seller. At least one company connected to Cho, the firm that became Power Financial, held a 4% stake in Tech Pro, and Cho took a heavy hit, according to a fund manager familiar with Cho's dealings who requested anonymity. That money hadn't been repaid, Choi says. Nor had the original HKD44 million loan to finance Cho's stake in Town Health. Tech Pro didn't respond to requests for comment.

Choi says he met some friends for lunch the day after Cho's appeal and was stunned when they told him it was common knowledge that he owned 30 or 40 companies with Cho. Choi told his friends he didn't. "He just let people have an idea that I am the moneymen at the back, to help him," Choi says. "He used my name to help his deals."

The billionaire refused to bail out Cho again. "Before, he used to have a very smiling face, very gentle," says Choi, who's suing Cho for nonpayment. "But after that morning, he was very quiet. He never smiled."

Not long after backers failed to rescue him, Cho fled to Australia. He left behind his aging parents, wife and four children, including two toddlers. Choi says he arranged for others to help them financially, then sent Cho a letter urging him not to renege on his obligations in Hong Kong. When Cho returned months later, investigators from the city's anti-corruption agency questioned him for about nine hours, Choi says. A spokesman for the agency said it couldn't comment about individual cases or ongoing investigations.

Cho resigned from Town Health last year, though he still holds a large stake in what remains the biggest private health-care network in Hong Kong, with more than 100 clinics. Its largest shareholder is state-owned China Life Insurance Co., which purchased a 24% stake in 2015 to facilitate a move into high-end health care on the mainland. Crystal Choi, who declined to comment, remains chairman and executive director. **MDT/Bloomberg**



Year after Supreme Court win, New Jersey sports bets thrive

Wayne Parry, Atlantic City

THE anniversary of New Jersey's victory in a U.S. Supreme Court case clearing the way for legal sports betting across the nation was a happy one for the state's casinos and racetracks, which reported taking in more than \$300 million worth of sports bets for the sixth month in a row.

Figures released Tuesday by the state Division of Gaming Enforcement shows the casinos and tracks took nearly \$314

million worth of sports bets in April. So far, since sports betting began in New Jersey in June, nearly \$2.64 billion has been wagered in the state on sports.

"Sports betting without question has provided a major boost to the local economy, and we believe this excitement will translate into increased revenue and tourism throughout the summer," said Kevin Ortzman, regional president for Caesars Entertainment, which owns three casinos and two sportsbooks in Atlantic City.

FanDuel, which operates the sportsbook at the Meadowlands Racetrack in East Rutherford, just outside New York City, said it had another great month.

"April was our second biggest revenue month since launch, thanks in part to enthusiasm for the NBA and NHL playoffs, as well as the start of baseball season," it said in a statement.

The extra money from sports wagers, along with another stellar month for internet gambling, helped the state post an overall increase in gambling re-

venue of nearly 24 percent compared with a year ago, at over \$265 million.

On May 14, 2018, the high court ruled in favor of New Jersey's decadelong court battle to overturn a federal law that limited legal sports betting to only four of the 50 states.

Eight states currently offer it, and several more have recently approved it and are preparing to begin taking bets. And dozens of additional states are considering getting in on the fast-growing industry.

The nine Atlantic City casinos showed an overall increase of nearly 17 percent, to nearly \$251 million. Internet gambling was up nearly 59 percent to \$36.5 million.

The casinos are looking forward to the upcoming summer season, their busiest and most profitable time of year, said James Plousis, chairman of the New Jersey Casino Control Commission.

"Gaming and leisure customers have many options, both online and on site, and Atlantic City is positioned for a great summer season with its addition of new sportsbook lounges and other exciting amenities," he said.

The Golden Nugget saw its revenue increase in April by 3.7 percent compared with a year ago, to \$29.3 million.

The Borgata, which launched a new sports betting platform Tuesday, increased its revenue by 2 percent, to \$58.8 million.

Resorts saw its revenue decline by 24.2 percent in April, to \$13 million; Caesars was down 24 percent to \$22 million; Tropicana was down 9.7 percent to \$27.7 million; Harrah's was down 6.3 percent to \$27.2 million; and Bally's was down 4.7 percent to \$14.5 million.

For the two casinos that had not yet reopened as of last April, Hard Rock saw \$25 million in revenue, and the Ocean Casino Resort saw \$16.3 million.

Two New Jersey racetracks offer sports betting. The Meadowlands reported \$12.1 million in revenue from sports betting after paying off winning bets in April. That was about six times the level of Monmouth Park in Oceanport, near the Jersey shore, which saw \$2.5 million in sports betting revenue. **AP**

CK Hutchison rejects accusation of HKD7.4 billion in hidden debt

BILLIONAIRE Li Ka-shing's CK Hutchison Holdings Ltd. "may be concealing" HKD57.7 billion (USD7.4 billion) of debt as a result of aggressive accounting, a Hong Kong-based researcher said on its website, allegations the company denied.

GMT Research Ltd., which uses its own proprietary accounting and corporate governance analysis system, posted the research related to accounting treatment of debt by the company and recommended avoiding the stock. CK Hutchison

"rejects any innuendo or suggestion of accounting irregularity," it said in a statement this week, adding that the lead of the GMT report "appears selective, biased and materially misleading."

The latest annual earnings of CK Hutchison

was the first reported under the watch of Victor Li, who took over the empire following last year's retirement of the senior Li, the city's richest man.

GMT Research analyzes balance sheets for possible red flags, with the goal

to judge if a company is overstating - or understating - its profits by exploiting accounting standards.

In its earnings report for the year ended December, CK Hutchison reported HKD120.5 billion in assets classified as held for sale, and liabilities directly associated with them at HKD77.6 billion. For the previous year, both the categories were nil. By

deeming a portion of its assets as held-for-sale, CK Hutchison may be hiding HKD57.7 billion of debt, GMT Research said.

The aggressive accounting is being used to give CK Hutchison a "higher market rating and access to cheaper credit," GMT said in the report. The company may be masking its rising debt levels with this practice, it said. **MDT/Bloomberg**

corporate bits

CTM INTRODUCES PROMO TO CELEBRATE TELECOMMUNICATIONS DAY

In celebration of the annual "World Telecommunications and Information Society Day" event, CTM will introduce a series of promotions to its customers from May 17 to 31.

On May 17, CTM mobile custo-

mers are entitled to send and receive local SMS, MMS and also voice and video calls for free. Residents can also enjoy 60 minutes' free CTM Wi-Fi service on the day, the company announ-

ced in a statement.

Moreover, until the end of the month, customers subscribing to the 4G+ service plan, Fiber service plan, or purchasing either MOP100 4G+ prepaid SIMs or reload vouchers, will be eligible to redeem the Garmin vivofit jr. 2 child smart wristband or JNC Nano Steam Iron Combo.

MELCO CO-HOSTS ART WORKSHOP

Melco Resorts & Entertainment collaborated with the Macau True Goodwill Friendship Association to host an Ebru art workshop for nearly 40 local children between the ages of 6

and 12 and their families to create unique gifts for Mother's Day.

Ebru art is a traditional and distinctive genre of painting particularly popular in Turkey and Central

Asia, which utilizes water and dyes to create mesmerizing patterns.

Held at City of Dreams' Kids' City, the children worked with members of Melco's volunteer team to create hand-drawn fans, the gaming operator said in a press statement.

Trump poised to sign order restricting foreign telecom companies

Margaret Talev

PRESIDENT Donald Trump plans in coming days to sign an executive order that would prohibit American firms from using gear made by foreign telecommunications companies that pose a security threat, according to an administration official.

The official, who was granted anonymity to discuss a sensitive issue, said yesterday [local time] that the order was not meant to single out any country or company. U.S. officials have said that equipment made by Huawei Technologies Co., a Chinese telecommunications firm, could be used to spy on behalf of the Beijing government. Huawei has denied the allegations.

The official also said that the order has nothing to do with the recent escalation of the trade conflict with China.

In January, the administration was preparing the action, which could significantly restrict Chinese state-owned telecom companies from operating in the U.S. over national security concerns, people familiar with the matter said at the time.

The order, as it was conceived earlier this year, would not outright ban U.S. sales by the companies, but would give greater authority to the Commerce Department to review products and purchases by firms connected to adversarial countries, including China, one of the people said.

China's Foreign Ministry accused the U.S. of "deliberately discrediting" Chinese companies.



"This is neither graceful nor fair," ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said at a news briefing in Beijing. "We urge the U.S. to stop citing security concerns as an excuse to unreasonably suppress Chinese companies and provide a fair and equitable and non-discriminatory environment for Chinese companies to operate in the U.S."

Huawei is pushing to take a global leadership position in 5G technology, but many American officials suspect the company's products could be used by Beijing to spy on Western

governments and companies. Both Huawei and ZTE Corp. have also been targeted by the U.S. for alleged schemes to dodge American sanctions on Iran.

Canadian authorities last December arrested Huawei's Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou at the request of the U.S., which seeks her extradition over allegations of violating Iran sanctions.

Ren Zhengfei, the company's founder and Meng's father, has denied espionage allegations and a link to China's govern-

ment. Meng remains under house arrest in Vancouver while the legal proceedings unfold.

The administration official said the Commerce Department was expected to take as long as six months to fashion an approach to the order, so there might not be an immediate effect. And the order might eventually name specific companies or countries as Commerce carries out the process.

The U.S. has been trying without success to persuade other governments to exclude equipment made by Huawei from

super-fast 5G mobile networks that will connect billions of devices.

The administration has been urging allies to analyze risk before buying gear, Robert Strayer, deputy assistant secretary for cyber policy at the State Department, told the Senate Judiciary Committee at a hearing.

"We are concerned that China could compel actions by network vendors to act against the interests of U.S. citizens and citizens of other countries around the world," Strayer said.

We urge the US to stop citing security concerns as an excuse to unreasonably suppress Chinese companies.

GENG SHUANG
FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN

The U.S. says Chinese law compels Huawei to cooperate with Beijing's espionage agencies. U.S. officials said Huawei can build vulnerabilities, or backdoors, into equipment.

Last week, the U.S. Federal Communications Commission barred China Mobile Ltd. from the U.S. market over national security concerns and said it was opening a review of other Chinese companies. **Bloomberg**

Huawei exec: Possible US market curbs have little impact

Emily Wang, Beijing

AHuawei executive said yesterday that possible new U.S. restrictions on market access will have little impact on the Chinese tech giant due to its global reach.

David Wang was responding to a Bloomberg News report that President Donald Trump plans to bar phone carriers from using technology vendors that are deemed security risks. Huawei has spent a decade fighting U.S. accusa-

tions it facilitates Chinese spying.

Wang said he hadn't heard that news but he expressed confidence it would have little impact on Huawei, the biggest global maker of switching equipment for phone and internet companies.

"Due to our global operations, any change in one country has little impact on our global business," said Wang, who also a member of Huawei's board of directors.

Huawei's U.S. market

evaporated after a congressional panel labeled the company a security risk in 2012. The company says that had little effect on business in Europe and emerging markets, where it reports strong growth.

Wang spoke at an event to unveil Huawei's first standalone software product, a database management system called GaussDB, in an effort to break into a market dominated by Western suppliers such as Oracle and SAP.

The company, China's

first global tech brand, has steadily expanded into new industry segments despite pressure from Washington and other governments that say Huawei is a security risk.

"Some experts and governments have misrepresented the technological problems of cybersecurity as political problems," said Wang. "It does not help to build a truly security networked world."

The company has pushed ahead with initiatives despite the Dec. 1 arrest of its

chief financial officer in Canada on U.S. charges related to possible violations of trade sanctions on Iran.

In January, Huawei unveiled the Kunpeng 920 chip for servers to support smartphones, streaming video and other services. It developed the Kirin line of chips for smartphones and Ascend chips for artificial intelligence.

Huawei's smartphone brand, launched in 2010, passed Apple last year to become the global No. 2 seller behind Samsung.

The company founded in 1987 by a former military engineer is a national champion at the head of an industry the ruling Communist Party is eager to promote.

Huawei filed a lawsuit in March asking U.S. federal court to throw out a section of this year's American military appropriations bill that bars the government or its contractors from using Huawei equipment.

Australia, Japan and Taiwan have imposed curbs on use of Huawei technology. But Germany, France and other governments are balking at U.S. demands to exclude it from next-generation communications networks.

Huawei reported earlier global sales rose 19.5% last year over 2017 to 721.2 billion yuan. Profit rose 25.1% to 59.3 billion yuan. **AP**

Admiral: US hasn't stepped up sea patrols to confront China

Annabelle Liang, Singapore

A top U.S. admiral said yesterday the Navy has not stepped up maritime patrols to challenge China's sweeping territorial claims in the South China Sea but is maintaining a "consistent" presence in the disputed waters.

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson, addressing an international security conference in Singapore, sought to reassure regional partners, some of whom have opposing claims in the waters but benefit from good relations with China on other fronts.

"I've done the analysis so that I can state with confidence that our level of operations, our presence there, has been consistent over the decades," Richardson said. "There's nothing that has spiked recently."

The International Maritime Security Conference was attended by representatives from 33 navies, including 16 navy chiefs. A Chinese delegate was also present.

The U.S. Navy maneuvers in the South China Sea, so-called freedom of navigation operations, "are by design non-



provocative, non-escalatory. They're just challenging excessive maritime claims in a very consistent basis," Richardson told the conference.

China has built military installations on seven man-

made islands in the crucial waterways it claims on historical grounds. The other claimants, most notably the Philippines and Vietnam, have protested China's behavior but they also maintain

good relations with Beijing. Richardson said "routine" freedom of navigation operations will proceed with transparency, consistency and predictability.

They usually involve a U.S.

vessel sailing within an island's coastal waters without prior notification and draw sharp rebukes from China, which claims the South China Sea virtually in its entirety.

"This is not a zero-sum game. There is tremendous prosperity to be gained out there for all, and so we'll strive to do so in a way that everyone can grow," Richardson said.

Meanwhile, U.S. and Philippine coast guard ships conducted a joint exercise in the South China Sea.

Capt. John Driscoll, commanding officer of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf, told reporters during a port call in Manila that two Chinese coast guard ships were spotted in the vicinity of the exercise.

China is building naval vessels at a rate outpacing its rivals, including the U.S., and its missile destroyers and nuclear attack submarines are equipped with increasingly lethal weaponry. Its first domestically built aircraft carrier is set to enter service, with more believed to be in the works.

Richardson said China appears to be "early" in the process of constructing and operating aircraft carriers, but the U.S. is watching it "very closely".

"I just have a great deal of respect for how fast things can happen when it comes to China," he said.

He also pushed for strengthening partnerships with regional navies through exercises, information sharing and cooperative agreements. **AP**

AVIATION

Chinese airlines consider teaming up for Boeing Max compensation

CHINA'S biggest airlines are considering banding together to seek compensation from Boeing Co. for the disruption caused by the grounding of the U.S. aircraft manufacturer's 737 Max, people with knowledge of the matter said.

Air China Ltd., China Southern Airlines Co. and China Eastern Airlines Corp. are exploring their legal options on how to coordinate their claims, according to the people, who asked not to be named discussing private deliberations. The talks are preliminary and may not result in an agreement, the people said.

China's "big three" state-run carriers are potentially a formidable force to contend with. They operate 53 of the 96 Max planes

currently grounded in the country, according to data from VariFlight, a local aviation statistics company. The carriers also accounted for 65% of passengers who flew Chinese airlines in 2018, according to the Civil Aviation Administration of China.

A coordinated approach could give the airlines more leverage to gain concessions as China's influence in the aviation world keeps rising. The country was the first major authority to ground Boeing's top-selling 737 Max in March, despite assessments by the U.S. authority at the time that the plane was safe to fly, and upending a decades-long tradition among air safety regulators.

Representatives from China Eastern, Air China, China

Southern and Boeing declined to comment.

Lingers TUI Holds to Forecast Despite Spain Glut, Boeing Max Deadline Boeing Slid After Tweet Raised Prospect of Lost China Sales

Chinese carriers including Xiamen Airlines Co., Hainan Airlines Holding Co., Shenzhen Airlines Co. and Shandong Airlines Co. have also taken delivery of the Max, while Ruili Airlines Co., Donghai Airlines Co. and Okay Airways Co. are awaiting their first jets.

It's not unusual for Chinese carriers to coordinate. For example, they typically buy aircraft through a centralized, government controlled body, with planes later allocated to specific operators.

Bloomberg

Xi calls efforts to reshape other nations 'foolish'

CHINESE President Xi Jinping denounced as "foolish" foreign efforts to reshape other nations as he pushes back against U.S. trade demands.

"To think that one's own race and civilization are superior to others, and to insist on transforming or even replacing other civilizations, is foolish in understanding and disastrous in practice," Xi said yesterday at the opening ceremony of the Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations in Beijing. He made no direct mention of the trade dispute or the U.S. in his remarks.

Xi's speech at the regional gathering was closely watched since it was his first address since the U.S. proposed billions of dollars of



fresh tariffs on Chinese goods. His sentiments were likely to resonate for an audience including representatives from several former colonies, and the crowd applauded after his "foolish" remark.

"Exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations should be reciprocal and equal," Xi said. "They should be diversified and multidirectional, rather

than compulsory or coercive. They should not be one-way."

The presidents of Greece, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Armenia and Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni are attending this week's forum. China has invested in Sri Lanka and Cambodia under Xi's Belt and Road trade and infrastructure program. **Bloomberg**

SRI LANKA

1 dead, mosques attacked as communal tensions rise

Krishan Francis, Colombo

MOB attacks on Muslim communities in Sri Lanka's northwest have left one person dead and dozens of shops and mosques destroyed, a government minister said Tuesday, as communal violence worsened in the wake of Easter bombings that killed more than 250 people.

A Muslim man was hacked to death in Monday's violence in which members of the country's largely Buddhist majority ethnic Sinhalese attacked Muslim-owned shops and homes in several towns, said Rauff Hakeem, a Cabinet minister and leader of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress.

With communal violence also reported in Sri Lanka's west, the government imposed a nationwide curfew Monday and temporarily blocked social media and messaging apps.



Tensions have been running high in the Buddhist-majority Indian Ocean island nation since the April 21 attacks by seven suicide bombers who struck two Catholic and one Protestant church and three luxury hotels. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attacks, which were carried out by a local radicalized Muslim group.

Sri Lanka has a dark history of communal tensions. For more than a quarter century it was embroiled in civil war as Tamil Tiger rebels fought

to create an independent state for ethnic minority Tamils. When the conflict ended 10 years ago, the U.N.'s conservative estimates said about 100,000 people had been killed.

Two United Nations advisers warned that the latest attacks against Muslims could escalate further if not stopped immediately.

"The country is trying to move forward from a traumatic period of inter-ethnic armed conflict, but these attacks are pushing Sri Lanka

backwards. If not adequately dealt with, the recent violence has the potential to escalate even further," the advisers said in a statement.

The joint statement was released by Adama Dieng, the U.N. special adviser on the prevention of genocide, and Karen Smith, the U.N. special adviser on the responsibility to protect.

Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, the archbishop of Colombo, appealed to the public to maintain the peace and patience they showed in the first days after the attacks. He said that he found no religious nuances in the violence but that local level politicians have been found in the mobs.

"I ask the political leaders to keep their followers under control. It is no heroism in attacking Muslims and damaging their property — true heroism is to control and overcome oneself," Ranjith said. **AP**

North Korea says it is suffering worst drought in decades

NORTH Korea said yesterday it is suffering its worst drought in nearly four decades amid reports of severe food shortages.

The official Korean Central News Agency said an average of 54.4 millimeters of rain fell throughout the country in the first five months of this year. It said that is the lowest level since 1982, when North Korea received 51.2 millimeters of rain on average during the same period.

The report came after U.N. food agencies said in a joint assessment earlier this month that about 10 million people in North Korea were facing "severe food shortages" after the country had one of the worst harvests in a decade.

In February, North Korea's ambassador to the United Nations, Kim Song, issued an unusual appeal for urgent food assistance.

North Korean officials have blamed the food shortage on bad weather and international economic sanctions that were toughened after the country conducted a series of high-profile nuclear and missile tests in recent years.

KCNA said the drought is expected to continue until the end of May. **AP**

AD



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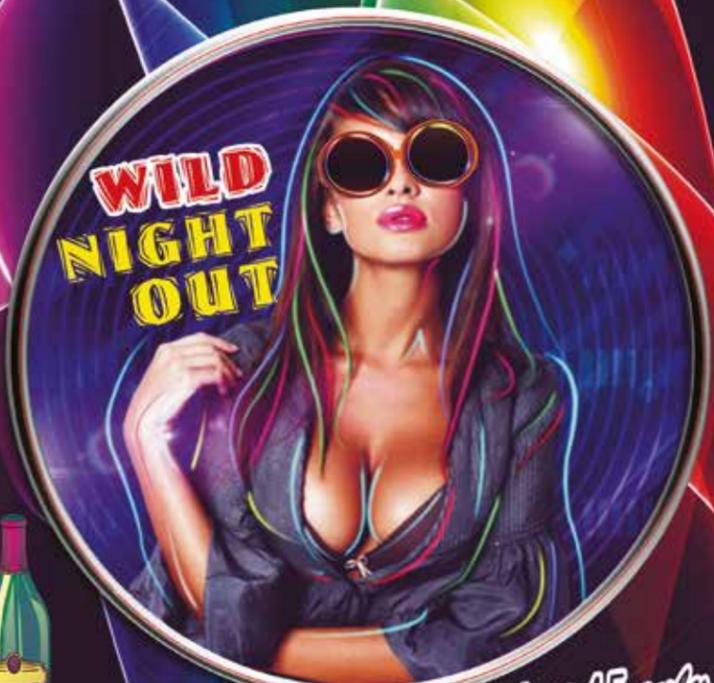

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USA

Alabama ban on nearly all abortions in GOP governor's hands

Kim Chandler, Montgomery

ALABAMA legislators have given final approval to a ban on nearly all abortions, and if the Republican governor signs the measure, the state will have the strictest abortion law in the country.

The legislation would make performing an abortion a felony at any stage of pregnancy with almost no exceptions. The passage yesterday [local time] by a wide margin in the GOP-led Senate shifts the spotlight to Gov. Kay Ivey, a fixture in Alabama politics who's long identified as anti-abortion.

Ivey has not said whether she'll sign the bill. Sponsor Rep. Terri Collins says she expects the governor to support the ban. And the lopsided vote suggests a veto could be easily overcome. But an Ivey spokeswoman said before yesterday's vote that "the governor intends to withhold comment until she has had a chance to thoroughly review the final version of the bill that passed."

In Alabama and other conservative states, anti-abortion politicians and activists emboldened by the addition of conservative justices to the U.S. Supreme Court hope to ignite legal fights and eventually overturn the landmark 1973 decision *Roe v. Wade*, putting an end to the constitutional right to abortion.

"*Roe v. Wade* has ended the lives of millions of children," Alabama Republican Sen. Clyde Chambliss said in a statement. "While we cannot undo the damage that decades of legal precedence under *Roe* have caused, this bill has the opportunity to save the lives of millions of unborn children."

Democrats didn't shy away from blasting their GOP counterparts.

"The state of Alabama ought to be ashamed of herself. You ought to be ashamed. Go look in the



mirror," Sen. Bobby Singleton said "Women in this state didn't deserve this. This is all about political grandstanding."

The bill would make performing an abortion a felony punishable by up to 99 years or life in prison for the abortion provider. The only exception would be when the woman's health is at serious risk. Under the bill, women seeking or undergoing abortions wouldn't be punished.

Kentucky, Mississippi, Ohio and Georgia have approved bans on abortion once a fetal heartbeat is detected, which can occur in about the sixth week of pregnancy. The Alabama bill goes further

by seeking to outlaw abortion outright.

Alabama senators rejected an attempt to add an exception for rape and incest. The amendment was voted down 21-11, with four Republicans joining Democrats in seeking the amendment.

Supporters had argued that exceptions would weaken their hope of creating a vehicle to challenge *Roe*. Collins said that the law isn't meant to be a long-term measure and that lawmakers could add a rape exception if states regain control of abortion access.

"It's to address the issue that *Roe v. Wade* was decided on. Is that baby in the womb a person?"

Collins said.

Democrats criticized the ban as a mixture of political grandstanding, an attempt to control women and a waste of taxpayer dollars.

During debate, Singleton pointed out and named rape victims watching from the Senate viewing gallery. He said that under the ban, doctors who perform abortions could serve more prison time than the women's rapists.

In a statement, Staci Fox of Planned Parenthood Southeast said, "Today is a dark day for women in Alabama and across this country. [...] Alabama poli-

icians will forever live in infamy for this vote and we will make sure that every woman knows who to hold accountable."

Outside the Statehouse, about 50 people rallied and chanted, "Whose choice? Our choice." Several women dressed as characters from the "The Handmaid's Tale," which depicts a dystopian future where fertile women are forced to breed.

If the bill becomes law, it would take effect in six months. Critics have promised a swift lawsuit. Randall Marshall, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Alabama, said a complaint is being drafted. **AP**

GERMANY

Deutsche Bank Panama Papers case spurs tax raids

Karin Matussek

A German probe looking at Deutsche Bank AG prompted by the Panama Papers brought a wave of raids by Frankfurt prosecutors targeting eight wealthy individuals who may have hidden money in offshore

companies.

The suspects' homes were raided yesterday as were the offices of more than 20 banks, tax advisers and asset-management companies in an investigation into tax evasion. The prosecutors in Frankfurt didn't identify

the banks, people or companies concerned. Once the raids are completed, they said, more information will be disclosed.

The case is related to searches of Deutsche Bank in November. That probe, looking into money-laundering allegations against

bank employees, stems from the 2016 disclosures known as the Panama Papers and focuses on a former unit in the British Virgin Islands that processed 311 million euros in 2016 alone. Yesterday's raids are now targeting the clients who enlisted help

from the BVI unit to set up offshore companies.

Deutsche Bank is one of the 11 lenders visited by investigators with a search warrant, according to a person familiar with the situation who declined to be identified because the case is still private.

"The investigations are not directed against Deutsche Bank," Christian Streckert, a spokesman for the Frankfurt-based lender, said in a statement. "Deutsche Bank is cooperating with the

public prosecutor's office and voluntarily gives all documents requested. A search of the bank's business premises has therefore not taken place."

The six asset management companies are based in Hamburg. There are also four tax advisers caught up in the probe.

The homes of the rich clients are in the German cities of Bad Toelz, Erkrauth, Hamburg, Konz, Simmerath and on Sylt, an island in the North Sea. **Bloomberg**

what's ON



ITALIAN RENAISSANCE DRAWINGS FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM
 TIME: 10am-7pm (No admittance after 6:30pm, closed on Mondays)
 UNTIL: June 30, 2019
 VENUE: Macau Museum of Art
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

SALINE BATHS
 TIME: 12pm-7pm (closed on Mondays)
 UNTIL: May 26, 2019
 VENUE: Post-Ox Warehouse Experimental Site
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2853 0026

3RD MACAU PRINTMAKING TRIENNIAL
 TIME: 10am-9pm
 UNTIL: May 31, 2019
 VENUES: Tap Seac Gallery
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

MIXING THIS MATCHING THAT
 TIME: 9am-10pm
 UNTIL: June 2, 2019
 VENUE: Team Building, IFT Main Campus
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2856 1252

STROLLING AND FEELING: WATERCOLOUR PAINTINGS OF LAI IENG
 TIME: 10am-7pm (no admittance after 6:30pm; closed on Mondays)
 UNTIL: June 16, 2019
 VENUE: 3rd Floor, Gallery of Exhibitions 2, Macau Museum of Art
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

Offbeat

DANISH CANDIDATE PLACES ELECTION AD ON ADULT SITE



A still of Olsen's porn site video publish by The Sun

While most of the candidates for Denmark's general election are making good use of the internet, posting their promises on websites and social media, one has gone a step further.

Joachim B. Olsen, an Olympic shot put silver medalist who has been a member of the Folketing for the center-right Liberal Alliance since 2011 placed an ad bearing the party logo and encouraging people to vote for him on one of the world's top adult websites, Pornhub.

On his official Facebook profile, Olsen confirmed that he was responsible for the ad: "Yes, it's me on Pornhub."

Olsen told Denmark's B.T. newspaper Sunday that "election campaigns are serious ... but there must also be some humor."

The June 5 elections are being held on schedule at the end of the parliament's four-year term.

The Copenhagen Post yesterday teased the candidate in a caption of a campaign poster by saying "Olsen also does traditional posters."

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Agua de Mar
15:45	Zig Zag
16:20	T2 para 3 Remodelado
16:50	Quem Quer Ser Milionario
17:45	Moda Portugal Sr.3
18:20	Portugal de... Ricardo Costa
19:00	Montra do Lilau (Repetição)
19:35	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	TDM Talk Show
21:50	Livros com João Guedes
22:00	Todas as Palavras
22:20	O Pátio das Cantigas
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Resumo Liga dos Campeões 2018/2019
00:10	Ocidente no Oriente - Macau nos Cantos da Memória
01:25	Telejornal (Repetição)
02:10	RTPi Directo

cinema



CINETEATRO

16 - 22 May



POKEMON: DETECTIVE PIKACHU

ROOM 1
 2:30, 4:30, 7:30pm
 Language: Cantonese

ROOM 1
 9:30pm

Director: Rob Letterman

Starring: Ryan Reynolds, Justice Smith, Kathryn Newton

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 104min

ARCTIC

ROOM 2
 2:30, 4:30, 9:045pm

Director: Joe Penna

Starring: Mads Mikkelsen, Maria Thelma Smáradóttir

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 98min



AVENGERS: ENDGAME

ROOM 2

6:30pm

Director: Anthony Russo, Joe Russo

Starring: Brie Larson, Scarlett Johansson, Karen Gillan

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 181min

FRIEND ZONE

ROOM 3

2:30, 4:45, 9:30pm

Director: Chayanop Boonprakob

Starring: Nutthasit Kotimanuswanich, Pimchanok

Leuwisetpaiboon

Language: Thai (Chinese & English)

Duration: 118min

THE HUSTLE

ROOM 3

7:30pm

Director: Chris Addison

Starring: Anne Hathaway, Rebel Wilson, Tim Blake Nelson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 94min

this day in history



1943 GERMANS CRUSH JEWISH UPRISING

All resistance in the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw has ended after 28 days of fighting.

In his operational report, the local SS commander, Brigadier Juergen Stroop, said the uprising began on 19 April when SS, police and Wehrmacht units using tanks and other armoured vehicles entered the ghetto to take Jews to the railway station for transportation to concentration camps.

They were repelled by Jews using homemade explosives, rifles, small arms and "in one case a light machine-gun".

He said his troops were involved in pitched battles day and night with groups of about 20 or 30 Jews - both men and women.

"On April 23 Himmler issued his order to complete the coming out of the Warsaw ghetto with the greatest severity and relentless tenacity. I therefore decided to destroy the entire Jewish residential area by setting every block on fire."

The last battle ended with the destruction of the Great Synagogue today.

Jewish leaders had sent their own reports of the situation during the fighting.

On 28 April the Central Committee of Jewish Labour and the Jewish National Committee in Poland sent a desperate message to the National Council of Poland in London.

It said the SS and German Army have laid siege to the ghetto, attacking the 40,000 remaining Jews with artillery, flame-throwers, high explosive and incendiary bombs.

They have also planted mines in buildings known to harbouring Jewish fighters, while German guards block large drain pipes that have served as escape routes.

"The ghetto is burning," read the message, "and smoke covers the whole city of Warsaw."

"Men, women and children who are not burnt alive are murdered en masse." It said the Jews managed to kill or wound about 1,000 of the enemy and burned down factories and warehouses.

There was an appeal for an immediate response from the Allies. "It is imperative that the powerful retaliation of the United Nations shall fall upon the bloodthirsty enemy immediately and not in some distant future, in a way which will make it quite clear what the retaliation is for."

A second message sent on 11 May said the resistance was nearly over.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Nazis created the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw in 1940 and about 500,000 people were crammed into an area not bigger than one square mile (2-6 sq km).

Its inhabitants were systematically transported to Treblinka and those who fought in the legendary Jewish uprising would rather have died with dignity than be taken to the death camps.

About 50 of the 1,000 fighters escaped through the sewers and some fought in the second Warsaw uprising by the Polish Home Army in August 1944.

About 40,000 Jews were massacred in reprisal for the uprising. When Soviet troops liberated Warsaw on 17 January 1945 only about 200 Jews remained and the old city had been virtually destroyed.

Stroop's copy of the operational report entitled "The Jewish quarter in Warsaw no longer exists" came to light during the Nuremberg war crimes trial in 1945.

Stroop himself was sentenced to death by a US military tribunal and sent to Poland to be executed in 1951.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 It's a good day to hash out disagreements at work or nearly anywhere else.

Taurus April 20-May 20 Take a second or third look at your situation - is it really as bad as you had feared?

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Don't get too excited about how much you've got to do - your energy is better spent on dreaming up new ideas and making plans.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Try not to miss the point of whatever news comes your way - though it may be hard to discern which bits are most important.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Its time for you to make a new friend! That doesn't mean you have to force anything, but you should at least open up to new coworkers or chat with folks in new social situations.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Work - or the lack of it - may cause problems today, but there's good news: You're on the way back into balance! Just keep pushing yourself and bit by bit, you will find that you're where you want to be.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Your fierce, brainy energy is making life easier for you today - but not in a boring way! Your great ideas and big plans help you to see the best way to cut through the bureaucracy and get your way.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 The little details really matter - so make sure you're paying close attention! If you have to sign anything, read it twice and get someone else you trust to do the same.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 People are not to be trusted today - though that's not to say they are actively trying to stab you in the back! It's just that a wave of selfishness has passed over the world, but it passes quickly.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You may be a little more social than usual today, but there's no need for you to go nuts. If anything, you may find that your energy is better spent on parties than on work projects or other stuff.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Your unique take on today's events makes you perfect for finding solutions - or opportunities! It's a great day to advance your agenda, whatever it may be, and to show others where to go.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You have two conflicting goals today, but you don't have to worry too much about choosing just yet. If anything, you may be able to find a way to have your cake and eat it, too!

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

WEATHER

Weather forecast table for China and World cities, including columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Food store; 8- Saliva; 15- Arbitrator; 16- Marmoset; 17- Lucerne; 18- Assign; 19- 1980s attorney general; 20- Short messages; 22- Poor grade; 23- Window piece; 24- Less healthy; 25- Cauterize; 26- Enterprise; 27- Examined furtively; 28- Burn a bit; 29- Young plant; 31- Drunken; 32- Pealed; 33- Make weary; 34- Humbert Humbert's obsession; 37- Apprehended; 41- "Goodnight" girl; 42- Nuremberg trial defendant; 43- Actor Wallach; 44- Lustrous fur; 45- Winning the race; 46- Very, in Vichy; 47- Gerund maker; 48- Warn; 49- Shrub of the cashew family; 50- Remarkable; 52- Conceive; 54- Inhabitant of Patras, Greece; 55- Elected legislator; 56- Faithfulness; 57- Oriental;

DOWN: 1- Large dolphin; 2- Free from confinement; 3- Transgression; 4- and desist; 5- Stanley Gardner; 6- TKO caller; 7- Lamb or kid; 8- Declared; 9- It beats rock; 10- Little devils; 11- The Way; 12- Three-pronged weapon; 13- Ancestry; 14- Went in; 21- Couturier Cassini; 24- Skater Slutskaya; 25- Locations; 27- Shallow circular dish; 28- More tender; 30- Imbibe; 31- Begat; 33- Commentary; 34- Situated at the limen; 35- River in N South America; 36- Very long; 37- Imitator; 38- White ant; 39- Bess's predecessor; 40- Perceive; 42- Lustrous; 45- once; 46- Pull on; 48- Cain's brother; 49- Lacking; 51- Drivers' org.; 53- Oh, give home...;



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PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
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Matteo Berrettini of Italy

TENNIS

Italy's men are starting to matter like its women

Andrew Dampf, Rome

AFTER four decades of dormancy, male tennis players in Italy are finally showing signs of becoming as good as the women have been.

Marco Cecchinato got things rolling by reaching the French Open semifinals last year — the first Italian man to reach the last four of a major since 1978. Fabio Fognini followed by becoming the first to win a Masters event by beating Rafael Nadal en route to the Monte Carlo title last month.

And players like Matteo Berrettini and Lorenzo Sonego are in the process of breaking through, while teenagers Lorenzo Musetti and Jannik Sinner represent a bright future.

All that success has resulted in record ticket sales at

this week's Italian Open — and some of the Italians could make a run at the French Open, which starts May 26.

"The men haven't reached this level in 40 years. So people are not coming only to see [Rafael] Nadal or [Serena] Williams, they're coming to root for the Italians," Italian Tennis Federation president Angelo Binaghi said. "It's one thing to have 10,000 spectators. It's another thing to have 10,000 fans."

"This boom in men's tennis is the next step in a process that began with the golden age of the women followed by the development of SuperTennis," Binaghi added, referring to the federation's highly successful TV channel. "A minute after Fognini won Monte Carlo I called the ticket office and they had already noticed a jump in sales."

The women's golden age that Binaghi was referring to includes the four Fed Cup titles that Italy won between 2006 and 2013 with a team featuring Francesca Schiavone, Flavia Pennetta, Roberta Vinci and Sara Errani. Schiavone (2010 French Open) and Pennetta (2015 U.S. Open) also won Grand Slam titles, while Vinci (2015 U.S. Open) and Errani (2012 French Open) were Grand Slam finalists.

Corrado Barazzutti captained those winning Fed Cup teams and remains Italy's Davis Cup captain. He's also Fognini's personal coach and played on the 1976 Italy team that won the Davis Cup — making him the link between generations.

"A lot of it is because the skill level of our coaches has improved," Barazzutti said. "We're growing together with the

players. And the federation is doing its part by assisting these coaches and players."

Berrettini, who recently won the Hungarian Open and reached the BMW Open final in Munich, Germany, in consecutive weeks, upset fifth-ranked Alexander Zverev yesterday [Macau time] before a raucous, soccer-like crowd at the Foro Italico.

Sonego, who is 23 like Berrettini, came through qualifying to reach the quarterfinals in Monte Carlo.

Musetti won this year's Australian Open boys' title at the age of 16 — and he's not even the country's most promising young player. That title belongs to Sinner, the only 17-year-old in the top 400 of the rankings at No. 263.

In Sinner's first Masters Series match on Sunday, he rallied past American veteran Steve Johnson in three sets. That made Sinner the youngest player to win a match at the Italian Open since Goran Ivanisevic 30 years ago.

"He's the real deal," said Riccardo Piatti, Sinner's coach.

"I've coached a lot of players and he's certainly one of the best I've seen," Piatti told The Associated Press, adding that Sinner has "similar potential" to top-ranked Novak Djokovic and Richard Gasquet, who he also coached to the top 10. "But we need to give him some time."

Piatti attributed the success of the home players to the proliferation of Challenger and Futures tournaments — the level just below the pro tour — around Italy.

At No. 12, Fognini is within striking distance of becoming the first Italian man in the top 10 since Barazzutti achieved the feat in 1979.

"Fabio has always been a talented player and now he's got another component: He's got a Grand Slam champion in his family," Piatti said, referring to Pennetta, Fognini's wife. "Flavia understands him, assists him and encourages him. It's definitely a favorable situation."

Fognini and the others are attempting to become the first local man to win the Italian Open since Adriano Panatta in 1976.

"I'm coming in here with a bit more confidence, which is what I lacked in past years," said Fognini, who is also known for his temper. "I'm a bit calmer. Winning a big tournament like Monte Carlo put me a bit more at ease."

The Italians' rise has also coincided with the addition of two big tournaments.

The Next Gen ATP Finals, a year-ending event for the world's top 21-and-under players, has been held in Milan since 2017. And from 2021-25, Turin will host the ATP Finals for the season's top eight singles players and doubles teams, taking over from current host London.

Players like Berrettini and Sonego are in the process of breaking through, while teenagers Musetti and Sinner represent a bright future

"I think this will change the whole thing in Italy," coaching great Nick Bollettieri said in Rome. "When you have three or four young ones that will inspire the other young ones to keep going."

When Turin was recently awarded the ATP Finals, Binaghi announced that he expects an Italian to be competing in the tournament come 2021.

"We've got players in the right position to make it there," Barazzutti said. "Why not?" AP

FOOTBALL

Ex-Wales coach Chris Coleman fired by Chinese club Hebei

CHRIS Coleman has become the first coach fired in the 2019 Chinese Super League season.

Hebei China Fortune made the move yesterday after the club posted just one win from nine games and with fans calling for the 48-year-old ex-Wales coach to be fired.

The big-spending Hebei, with former Barcelona star Javier Mascherano in its ranks, announced the news on social media.

"After friendly negotiation and agreement reached between the two parties, with immediate effect, Mr. Chris Coleman will no longer serve as head coach of Hebei

China Fortune Football Club," the club said in a statement.

Coleman guided Wales to the semifinals of Euro 2016 and had English Premier League coaching experience with Fulham and Sunderland. He had high ambitions for Hebei after taking over as manager from former

Manchester City and Real Madrid coach Manuel Pellegrino last June but was unable to turn the club's performance around.

After the latest loss on Sunday, a 3-2 loss to Henan Jianye, Hebei fans lifted a banner that read, in English, "Hello Mr. Coleman, please go home. You're fired." AP



opinion

World Views

Marilynn Marchione, AP Chief Medical Writer

**WHAT HELPS PREVENT DEMENTIA?
 TRY EXERCISE, NOT VITAMIN PILLS**

If you want to save your brain, focus on keeping the rest of your body well with exercise and healthy habits rather than popping vitamin pills, new guidelines for preventing dementia advise.

About 50 million people currently have dementia, and Alzheimer's disease is the most common type. Each year brings 10 million new cases, says the report released this week by the World Health Organization.

Although age is the top risk factor, "dementia is not a natural or inevitable consequence of aging," it says.

Many health conditions and behaviors affect the odds of developing it, and research suggests that a third of cases are preventable, said Maria Carrillo, chief science officer of the Alzheimer's Association, which has published similar advice.

Since dementia is currently incurable and so many experimental therapies have failed, focusing on prevention may "give us more benefit in the shorter term," Carrillo said.

Much of the WHO's advice is common sense, and echoes what the U.S. National Institute on Aging says.

That includes getting enough exercise; treating other health conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol; having an active social life, and avoiding or curbing harmful habits such as smoking, overeating and drinking too much alcohol. Evidence is weak that some of these help preserve thinking skills, but they're known to aid general health, the WHO says.

Eating well, and possibly following a Mediterranean-style diet, may help prevent dementia, the guidelines say. But they take a firm stance against vitamin B or E pills, fish oil or multi-complex supplements that are promoted for brain health because there's strong research showing they don't work.

"There is currently no evidence to show that taking these supplements actually reduces the risk of cognitive decline and dementia, and in fact, we know that in high doses these can be harmful," said the WHO's Dr. Neerja Chowdhary.

"People should be looking for these nutrients through food ... not through supplements," Carrillo agreed.

The WHO also did not endorse games and other activities aimed at boosting thinking skills. These can be considered for people with normal capacities or mild impairment, but there's low to very low evidence of benefit.

There's not enough evidence to recommend antidepressants to reduce dementia risk although they may be used to treat depression, the report says. Hearing aids also may not reduce dementia risk, but older people should be screened for hearing loss and treated accordingly.



THE WHATSAPP FLAW LET SPIES TAKE CONTROL WITH CALLS ALONE

Spyware crafted by a sophisticated group of hackers-for-hire took advantage of a flaw in the popular WhatsApp communications program to remotely hijack dozens of phones without any user interaction.

The Financial Times identified the hacking group as Israel's NSO Group, which has been widely condemned for selling surveillance tools to repressive governments.

WhatsApp all but confirmed the identification, describing hackers as "a private company that has been known to work with governmen-

ts to deliver spyware." A spokesman for the Facebook subsidiary later said: "We're certainly not refuting any of the coverage you've seen."

WhatsApp has released a new version of the app containing a fix.

The spyware did not directly affect the end-to-end encryption that makes WhatsApp chats and calls private. It merely used a bug in the WhatsApp software as an infection vehicle.

Encryption is worthless once a phone's operating system has been violated.

Fewer babies as US birth rate fails to rebound with economy



Carla K. Johnson

AMERICA'S baby bust isn't over. The nation's birth rates last year reached record lows for women in their teens and 20s, a government report shows, leading to the fewest babies in 32 years.

The provisional report, released yesterday and based on more than 99% of U.S. birth records, found 3.788 million births last year. It was the fourth year the number of births has fallen, the lowest since 1986 and a surprise to some experts given the improving economy.

The fertility rate of 1.7 births per U.S. woman also fell 2%, meaning the current generation isn't making enough babies to replace itself. The fertility rate is a hypothetical estimate based on lifetime projections of age-specific birth rates.

Whether more U.S. women are postponing motherhood or forgoing it entirely isn't yet clear.

If trends continue, experts said, the U.S. can expect labor shortages including in elder care when aging baby boomers need the most support.

"I keep expecting to see the birth rates go up and then they don't," said demographer Kenneth M. Johnson of University of New Hampshire's Carsey School of Public Policy.

He estimates 5.7 million babies would have been born in the past decade if fertility rates hadn't fallen from pre-recession levels.

"That's a lot of empty kindergarten rooms," said Johnson, who wasn't involved in the report.

Other experts are not concerned, predicting today's young women will catch up with childbearing later in their lives. The only two groups with slightly higher birth rates in 2018 were women in their late 30s and those in their early 40s.

■ If trends continue, experts said, the US can expect labor shortages including in elder care

"Our fertility rates are still quite high for a wealthy nation," said Caroline Sten Hartnett, a demographer at the University of South Carolina.

American women are starting families sooner than most other developed nations, according to other research. Other countries are seeing similar declines in birth rates.

Young Americans still want to have children, but they don't feel stable enough to have them yet, said Karen Benjamin Guzzo, who studies families at Bowling Green State University in Ohio.

The U.S. could do more to encourage childbearing with parental leave, preschool expansion and child care subsidies and other policies aimed at helping young adults struggling with student loan debt and housing costs, Guzzo said.

Births were down across racial groups, with small declines for Hispanics, whites, blacks and Asians. The number of babies born to native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders was stable.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report also found:

—Overall, the U.S. birth rate for women ages 15 to 44 was 59 births per 1,000 women, an all-time low.

—Last year, there were 2% fewer births than in 2017.

—Births to teenagers again reached a record low. The number of births to mothers ages 15 through 19 was 179,607, down 8%.

—The rate for premature births — delivery at less than 37 weeks — rose for the fourth straight year to just over 10%, from 9.9%. **AP**

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	25-45 Good	
High Density Residential Area	20-40 Good	
Ambient	20-40 Good	

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS



UNITED NATIONS Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said yesterday that he's traveling to three South Pacific island nations to see the effects of climate change firsthand.



FRANCE Facebook toughened its livestreaming policies yesterday as it prepared to huddle with world leaders and other tech CEOs in Paris to find ways to keep social media from being used to spread hate, organize extremist groups and broadcast terror attacks.

GERMANY Prosecutors have charged five people with trafficking Thai women to Germany and forcing them to work in a nationwide network of brothels.



USA Alabama legislators have given final approval to a ban on nearly all abortions, and if the Republican governor signs the measure, the state will have the strictest abortion law in the country. *More on p15*

ALASKA The bodies of two more people have been found after small sightseeing planes crashed in Alaska, the Coast Guard says. Coast Guard Lt. Brian Dykens said six people have died in the collision Monday afternoon near Ketchikan, a popular destination for cruise ships in Alaska.