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SANDS ANNIVERSARY
金沙周年慶

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GROWTH AND SUCCESS

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EVERYONE WHO HAS MADE OUR SUCCESS POSSIBLE AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO
THE COMING YEARS WITH ENTHUSIASM AND EXCITEMENT



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Times

“ THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’ ”



VIOLENT CRIME ON THE RISE

Though limited to a handful of cases, more incidents of kidnapping and rape were recorded in the first quarter, according to police data

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MACAU AND HENGQIN: PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT

P9 GREATER BAY



HUAWEI BAN TO RIPPLE THROUGH TELECOM NETWORK

The U.S. issued an executive order yesterday aimed at banning Huawei equipment from its networks. The ramifications could be global

P12 TRADE WAR



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RENA TO MARQUES

Ho Iat Seng looks to Chui for manifesto thoughts

P4



WORLD BRIEFS

INDONESIA Police arrested nine suspected militants following a tipoff about a possible attack during the announcement of presidential election results next week. The counterterrorism squad arrested suspected militant instructor Joko Supriono in East Java's Madiun town and eight others were apprehended separately in Central Java province. Seven of the suspects had just returned from Syria.

AP PHOTO



THAILAND'S Election Commission recommended that the leader of the Future Forward party, Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit (pictured), opposed to military rule be barred from taking his seat in the soon-to-be-convened parliament because he is accused of violating electoral rules.

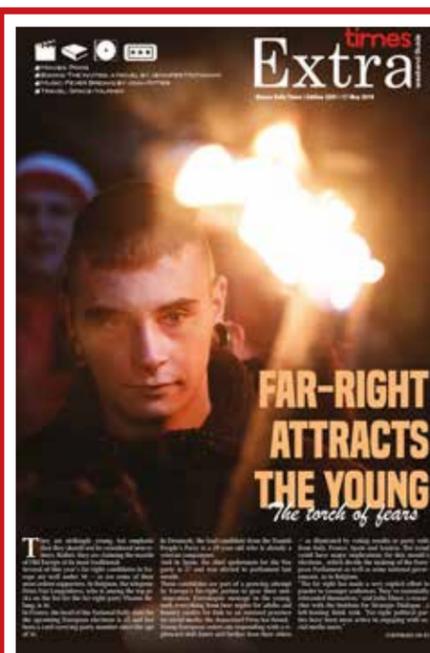
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SANDS MACAO'S 15TH BIRTHDAY

The game changer

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FAR-RIGHT ATTRACTS THE YOUNG
The torch of years

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE ELECTION

Ho's manifesto picks up from 2014 with the same topics as Chui

Renato Marques

WHEN in 2009 Chief Executive 'candidate' Chui Sai On presented his manifesto, Macau was living in troubled times under the shadow of the corruption scandal involving the former Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Ao Man Long. Ao had, in the previous year, been found guilty of 40 counts of bribe-taking, amongst other crimes, and sentenced to 27 years in prison.

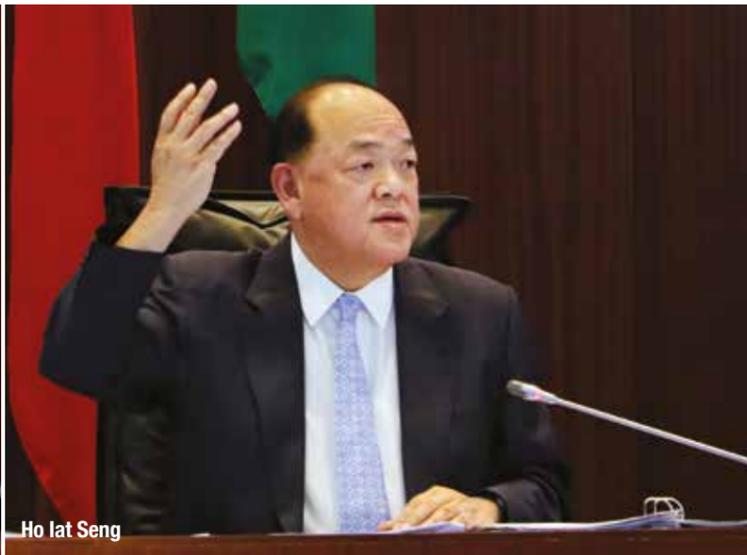
With the case clearly on the collective mind of Macau, the candidate, or near-candidate Chui, presented a manifesto where he highlighted efforts in creating a "clean, honest and efficient government," as his main target, also addressing the intention of initiating a timetable for the reform of the political system in Macau toward universal suffrage.

At the time Chui said, "I'm willing to listen to the people. If I am elected, I will listen to the residents' opinions. Then we will analyze them to begin this gradual process."

On Wednesday it was Ho Iat Seng's turn to begin to address his manifesto, nominating topics such as housing, transport, and the youth as his main concerns.



Chui Sai On



Ho Iat Seng

"[These] are [the problems] that we have to deal with on a daily basis and that we can't possibly [ignore] as they are issues that concern the whole society," he said, apparently picking up from where Chui left off in 2014.

That's because Chui, standing for re-election in 2014, also said he would be concerned primarily with issues of livelihood.

In this manifesto, much more specific than his first and focusing on people's livelihood, Chui gave priority to issues such as housing, transport, environmental protection, social security, and human re-

sources.

He was also keen to demand much more from gaming operators, not only for Macau residents but also for the non-resident workers. Regarding the livelihoods of the non-resident workers, Chui said at the time that "casino operators should facilitate the provision of accommodation and transportation to their migrant workers," although again he failed to elaborate on what such idea would represent in practical terms.

Curiously enough, at the time, his 2014 manifesto was presented in Chinese, Portu-

guese and English, although the English version was "for reference only."

Another difference in Chui's election platform in 2014 is that he did not need to face down the type of antagonism he faced back in 2009.

At the time, Chui faced a significant amount of criticism and popular opposition with groups of residents creating Facebook groups and forums on the Internet criticizing the choice of Chui for the post.

A group of residents even created a bank account with the purpose of collecting dona-

tions that would serve to publish adverts in Hong Kong media with criticism of Chui, who had only just recently served as Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture. On the day that Chui presented his manifesto, two people disrupted the press conference voicing criticisms of Chui and his family.

More details on Ho's manifesto will only be known after the official candidacy presentation, expected to happen within the next couple months. He is currently the only declared candidate to become Macau's third Chief Executive.

SAR, Portugal sign fugitive extradition agreement

Lynzy Valles

THE fugitive extradition bill between Macau SAR and Portugal was signed on Wednesday by the Secretary for Administration and Justice, Sonia Chan, during the sixth Macau-Portugal Joint Commission at the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Chan signed the agreement with Portugal's Minister of Justice, Francisca Van Dunem, with the signing being described as a further step of cooperation in the area of justice.

However veteran lawyers in the SAR deemed the agreement impractical in

the context of international extradition practice, as countries do not hand over their own nationals.

Chan had previously explained that the agreement would follow international directives that exclude extradition when the wanted person is in the territory where he or she is a national.

With such directives, fugitives of Portuguese nationality wanted by Macau authorities in Portugal will not be surrendered and vice-versa.

The agreement is one of the three agreements that has been signed as part of Chief Executive Chui Sai

On's delegation visit to Portugal.

According to the president of the Macau Lawyers Association, Neto Valente, the signing of the agreement should have been raised with the association.

"It is one of the issues where, according to the law, [there] should be consultation with the association because it has to do with rights, freedom or changes in criminal laws," said Valente, as cited by TDM Radio.

Valente said on Wednesday that the association has no knowledge regarding the prepared bill and

that no text of agreement was sent to the group.

Back in March, Chan had already revealed that an agreement between the two regions on the surrendering of fugitives wanted by either one of the two jurisdictions would be signed.

Meanwhile, an extradition agreement between Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and mainland China is also being discussed, sparking criticisms amongst opposition lawmakers in Hong Kong.

It is suggested that this proposal would be handled on a case-to-case basis with the need for the city's

Chief Executive to issue a certificate allowing the transfer.

It would also enable local courts to handle extradition requests without oversight from the legislature.

The proposed law has sparked protests, including one at which organizers believe that nearly 130,000 residents joined.

One of the main concerns of the pan-democrats and legal experts was the fear that Beijing may prosecute fugitives due to political reasons and that it may erode the region's freedom. Democrats also deemed that the extradition

plans may only harm the region's judicial system.

Valente had also previously expressed concerns on the extradition negotiation between the SAR and Beijing, noting that it should meet minimum conditions to hand over the fugitives, and that it should not include politically motivated cases.

The Macau SAR currently has agreements for the transfer of convicted criminals with regions including Mongolia and Nigeria, while plans are already in place to develop similar agreements with Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines.

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Wilfred Wong



Sands Macao celebrates 15 years of operation

Lynzy Valles

SANDS Macao celebrated its 15th anniversary yesterday, presenting a series of performances and fireworks to commemorate the event.

Following its opening on May 18, 2004, the integrated resort became the first property of gaming operator Sands China Ltd.

According to the gaming operator's data, over 1,600 people have been with the company over its entire 15 years of operation, representing over one-third of Sands Macao's opening team. More than 8,300 team members are 10-year veterans of the company, 84% of whom are Macau locals.

The integrated resort is also commemorating its anniversary with internal celebrations

with staff in honor of their contribution to the company.

"Two decades ago, the dream of our chairman [Sheldon Adelson] became a reality. Cotai is a term made popular by Mr Adelson. It defines the reclaimed areas between Coloane and Taipa – of which became the most populated resort for high class integrated resort hotels rivaling Las Vegas," said Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd at the ceremony yesterday.

Wong pledged to remain committed to the firm's strategy of providing a diversified mix of attractions and experiences for its guests.

After starting with about 4,600 team members in 2004, the company has grown to over 28,000 team members, with the opening of the other four integrated resorts including

The Venetian Macao, The Plaza Macao, Sands Cotai Central and The Parisian Macao.

The company currently has a total of nearly 13,000 hotel rooms and suites combined and 150 dining options.

"The challenge of any integrated resort is the non-stop operation. Our success could not be [made possible] without the total dedication and professionalism exemplified by our team members - many of whom are locals," said Wong.

Wong further noted that 90% of their managerial staff are Macau locals.

Meanwhile, the gaming operator is also holding its "Sands Loves Macao" promotion, offering locals discounts on dining, transportation, entertainment and recreation until June 6.

Last night's commemoration

was themed on "The Greatest Showman," with an opening act by West End singer Daniel Koek.

Korean singers Kevin Woo and Jimin Park were also invited to perform a duet of the song "Rewrite the Stars."

In a gala dinner that followed, Hong Kong entertainment Liza Wang sang as the headline performer, while singer Daniel Koek joined the Rat Pack Showgirls act to perform.

The 15th anniversary of the integrated resort was officiated by the acting Chief Executive, Lionel Leong; deputy director of the Liaison Office, Yao Jian; director of the Macao Government Tourism Office, Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes and the director of the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau, Paulo Chan; amongst others.

Forex reserves reach MOP164.7 billion

The preliminary estimate of the foreign exchange reserves of Macau reached MOP164.7 billion (about USD20.39 billion) at the end of April, the SAR's Monetary Authority said yesterday. The reserves increased by 0.9 percent from the revised value of MOP163.3 billion for the previous month. The foreign exchange reserves at the end of April represented 10 times the currency in circulation. Meanwhile, the trade-weighted effective exchange rate index for the pataca rose 0.34 points month-to-month and 5.28 points year-on-year to 105.9 in April, implying that overall speaking, the exchange rate of pataca grew against the currencies of Macau's major trading partners.

Consumer Council representatives attend Portugal summit

Representatives of the Macau government, together with those from the Macau Consumer Council, attended the Consumers International Summit 2019 in Estoril, Portugal, from April 29 to May 2, participating in meetings and seminars during the event. The focus of the Summit is to put consumers at the heart of digital development. The Summit explored how artificial intelligence is leading the way to change the lives of consumers and also the impacts of the digital economy on them. It addressed issues that are important to consumers living in a digital society and economy, such as choice, access, data protection and regulation. The Consumers International Summit is held every four years. New policies on global consumer protection are laid out in each summit and a new president, and executive members are elected. Marimuthu Nadason of the Federation of Malaysian Consumers Association was elected President this time.

ECONOMY

IMF says Macau growth could dip further still

A representative of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has said that the worsening conditions of the China-U.S. trade war threaten to dampen economic growth prospects in Macau further. The warning comes just days after the IMF revised downward its growth expectation for the Macau economy next year.

Speaking to the South China Morning Post,

IMF mission chief for Macau Mariana Colacelli said that the trade war "has the potential to drag Macau SAR's growth below our medium-term projection of about 4 percent."

Last Friday, the IMF published its latest report on Macau, projecting that the local economy would expand by about 4.3% this year and 4% in 2020, down from 4.7% growth last year.

The latest suggestion follows a trend of worsening forecasts.

Just one month earlier the IMF had forecast 4.3% and 4.2% growth for 2019 and 2020 respectively, while in February it had expected 5.3% growth this year.

In the February assessment, the IMF warned that Macau faces several medium-term risks, including the diminishing spending power of mainland tourists and

the possibility that gaming revenue tax, which provides the bulk of government income, will be unable to keep up with mounting social welfare costs incurred by an ageing population.

The assessment found that risks to the Macau economy are "tilted to the downside" and "mainly emanating from mainland China."

Depending on how the latest round of trade tensions between China

and the U.S. play out, the IMF's Colacelli says that growth for 2019 could dip below the 4% mark.

"Economic growth for the Macau SAR is projected at slightly above 4 percent for 2019 and 2020," Colacelli said. "However, downside risks cloud this forecast."

The main risk remains the flow of tourists from Macau's major market: the mainland.

Any policy that undermines mainlanders' spending power abroad or leads to weaker-than-expected growth of the Chinese economy would hurt the economic growth of Macau, she told the SCMP. **DB**

IC's research grant applications open until May 31

The application deadline for the academic research grants launched by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) is May 31, 2019, according to a statement from the government. The annual academic research grants aim at encouraging original academic research on the culture of Macau and on the cultural exchange between Macau, mainland China and other countries. Local or overseas doctorate degree holders with proven academic research experience, and local or overseas researchers with sufficient research experience and recognized academic accomplishment are eligible to apply for the grants. Eligible academics may now submit their applications. Late applications will not be considered.

Renato Marques

MINOR crime is declining in Macau while violent crime is on the rise. This is the conclusion reached from the most recent report on criminality in the region during the first quarter of 2019 (Q1), which was presented yesterday morning by the Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak.

According to the figures presented, violent crimes have increased by 8.3% in Q1, when compared year-on-year with the same period of 2018. The first quarter of this year saw a significant rise in the crime of rape, which increased by four cases to total 10 in the first three months of this year. Besides rape, kidnapping also registered significant growth by 34% year-on-year.

In the meantime, crimes such as theft, drug consumption, trafficking, and arson have fallen by between 17% and 20% in the same period.

Concerning crimes against property, the greatest increase seen was in scam cases which, as the Times has reported, have risen by 23% in the first three months of the year. Extortion also represents a significant increase, registering growth of 25%, a little higher than usury which ranked third with about 20% growth.

On the decline were the crimes of motorcycle thefts (down 46%) and thefts in homes resorting to breaking and entering which fell by 25%.

Among crimes, classified by the authorities as uncategorized, the major change was in information technology and computer-related crimes which rose year-on-year by a whopping 110%.

Questioned on the topic, the Secretary then explained that "the crimes under this category are of great variety [with it] not being possible to explain in much detail exactly which ones [changed]."

"The crime related with [unlawful use] of credit cards is the most relevant one," he added.

Wong also noted that the government is continuously working to combat the so-called "spam messaging broadcasting stations," although, so far, the outcome seems not to be effective. According to the official, there is a new system being implemented in which the officers will make use of the internet to tackle such broadcasting stations "remotely," without the need to search for the physical locations from which the broadcasts originate, as it has been done until now.

Other topics that Wong said were "concerning" for the authorities include currency exchange - a crime that led the police to open 770 operations in the first three months of the year and which resulted in the interception of a total of 1,820 people who "were all repatriated."

Q1 CRIME REPORT

Petty crime declines while violent crime rare but growing



Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak (right)

Wong further noted that from the 1,820 people, some 1,363 people were also punished with a penalty of interdiction from reentering Macau for the period of one to three years.

Meanwhile, crimes classified as being related to gambling activities rose by one-third in the first quarter, according to the statistics presented yesterday, with the crime of usury rising by 37.3% in the first three months of this year, when compared with the same period of 2018.

Although the crimes related to the gaming industry have been increasing and some of them have involved serious consequences - namely homicides as well as kidnappings resulting from gambling debts - the Secretary continued to state that "in the majority of cases, the crimes took place inside the casinos. [There are] no existing signs that such criminal activity has been going beyond the boundaries of such venues, nor constituting a threat to the safety of Macau society," he said.

Wong added that the majority of crimes (over 93%) involved

non-residents.

In his conclusions, Wong said that the police "have not received any information regarding an abnormal development of secret societies brought due to the adjustment of the gaming sector."

Wong also left the warning that since "this is a special year with a lot of important events" - among them being the 70th Anniversary of the People's Republic of China, the 20th Anniversary of the Macau handover and the Chief Executive elec-

tions - "it is very important to effectively repress crime and reinforce the works on the execution of the law," he said, reaffirming that authorities would execute their role with severity according to the government's policy for this year.

Security Chief plays down terminology change for 'rumor spreading' crime

Renato Marques

SECRETARY for Security Wong Sio Chak yesterday played down the change in the Civil Protection bill that was recently presented by the Executive Council and sent to the Legislative Assembly (AL) for discussion and approval.

"Before it was named as the crime of social alarm but now it is called crime against safety, order and public peace during sudden incidents of public nature," he said noting that in fact not much has changed in terms of the definition of the crime.

Wong had been questioned by the media regarding the inclusion in the text of the bill (in the Portuguese version) of the terms "false or tendentious news or rumors," instead of the original writing that stated "false rumors."

Without addressing the topic in detail, the Secretary disregarded the terminology saying, "in our perspective, when the suspect has doubts if the news is fake or not we are not going to aggravate such behavior as intentional and as willful misconduct."

"It needs to be intentional and not by negligence. We are not going to arrest someone just because he disclosed some news."

The Secretary said that the bill will now enter its discussion at the AL and that the legislative body would perform changes if needed. "We still have time to improve it, although we would like to see it enter into force before the typhoon season this year as this is a very urgent matter."

Officially Macau has already entered the typhoon season, according to the information of the Weather Bureau, which places the season between May and November each year.

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 5: Community care and environmental stewardship

Missed Parts 1-4? Read them online at macaudailytimes.com.mo/tag/sandsmacao15

CORPORATE Social Responsibility (CSR) is a practise which most large companies engage in, and Sands China Ltd. undertakes it with a genuine desire to better the community. Dr Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd., stated that one of the company's core values is giving back to the community.

Sands China's desire to give back to the community has largely been carried out through contributing a significant amount of time, money and resources in a variety of charitable organizations within the MSAR across the 15 years it has been in Macau. This primarily takes the form of its long-term relationships with several non-governmental charities. As a result, Sands China has been a stalwart provider of aid and support to the Macau community in times of crisis.

Two years ago, the severely destructive typhoon, Hato, struck Macau, devastating the city. In the aftermath of the storm, people who needed to be transported to the hospital were facing the prospect of being stranded, as the "Rehabus" shuttle buses of Caritas Macau, the charity outreach of the Diocese of Macau, were damaged. Secretary General of Caritas Macau, Paul Pun, vividly remembered the immediate actions of Sands

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 final instalment of our five-part look at Sands Macao and Sands China Ltd. We close out the series with a focus on Sands China's community work and environmental sustainability efforts in Macau.

China as they "proactively got in touch with us to see what we needed. They decided to give us new Rehabuses." Moreover, while the new buses were being refitted by the manufacturer for their specialized purpose, "Sands China offered vans and drivers free of charge to meet our urgent needs."

While Sands China gives generous financial donations to charitable organizations in Macau, the reason the company makes a significant difference in the community is the generosity of spirit and expertise they offer to the organisations with which they partner.

Fifteen years ago, the Fuhong Society of Macau was struggling to set up a centre in Fai Chi Kei. Sands China partnered with them, and through their advocacy, made the centre a reality. The Fuhong Society is known for a laundry service it runs which is staffed by people with mental disabilities.

The organization's secretary general, Jennifer Chau, noted that Sands China has helped them overcome a significant number of difficulties to ensu-

re the service operates smoothly through its provision of on-site advice as well as financial support. "Sands China's engineering staff came to help us communicate with our contractor," Ms. Chau noted. The team was in fact vital to helping the setup, as "we didn't know we needed a special electric cable for the machines, not to mention how to connect it."

Indeed, the outstanding work that Sands China does to offer space and opportunities for disabled people, in an environment which often marginalizes them, is emphasized by Mr. Siu Yu Hong, national director of the Macau Special Olympics (MSO), which does work to provide a better livelihood for the mentally challenged through sports. Mr. Siu noted that "many of our members are formally employed by Sands China. They work in departments such as laundry, cleaning, and floristry." There is a particular capacity of organizations such as Sands China for employing mentally handicapped people as "mega enterprises have a lot of repetitive work that suits our members well, which smaller companies just don't have."

Mr. Siu said many of MSO's members are performing well at Sands China properties, and have been constantly provided job opportunities, as well as offered substantial support.

Sands China has placed a great deal of resources into advocating for mental health. They have invested a significant amount of money to prevent gambling disorders, and began working with Sheng Kung Hui in 2008. Mr. Lee Kwok Hoo, the service director of Sheng Kung Hui Macau Social Services Coordination Office, said that Sands China's donations to groups working in this space has helped support social workers and consultants in promoting responsible gaming, attending professional training, and improving service standards. Mr. Lee added that "Sands China has been supporting research into responsible gaming, and integrating experiences from Las Vegas into the Macau context. Our role is to localize these experiences to make it viable in Macau."

Marrying their push to raise awareness about the importance of responsible gaming in the broader community with

their core focus on employee wellbeing, Sands China started collaborating with the Macao Gaming Industry Employees Home in 2013. Supervisor Mr. Pak Kin Pong spoke about the work his organization does with Sands China: "We started our collaboration in 2013 promoting responsible gambling and psychological health. Sands China sponsored more than 100 training sessions on responsible gambling led by us, involving more than 3,000 Sands China employees. Sands China is a really responsible enterprise: they display many promotional materials about responsible gambling in their casinos and back of houses. They also proactively post materials on their shuttle buses."

As Sands China works to make a positive contribution to the Macau community through its volunteer work and other community-building efforts, the company is at the same time keenly aware of the importance of operating in an environmentally sustainable manner – especially considering the massive scale of Sands China's integrated resorts.

Sands China recently banned plastic straws from its internal operations and from its restaurants, and switched over to providing paper straws upon request. It has also put into effect a complete ban on shark fin, which covers the entirety of Sands China's internal food and beverage operations, as well as all restaurants owned by the company.



Paul Pun



Jennifer Chau



Siu Yu Hong



Lee Kwok Hoo



Pak Kin Pong

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Macau-Hengqin collaboration to deepen

Staff reporter

THE two neighboring territories of Macau and Hengqin are expected to have a larger role to play in each other's development, but how exactly that will work is yet to be agreed by officials from the respective cities.

At a presentation yesterday, Yuan Hao, a deputy division head from the national-level National Development and Reform Commission, stated that Macau and Hengqin should collaborate further in terms of each other's development, quoting Beijing's desire to build the island into a "promoter of moderately diversified economic development in Macau."

Collaboration efforts between Macau and Hengqin will adhere to five objectives, namely creating a business circle, building a consumer ecosystem, improving consumer environment, promoting consumer rights, and implementing competitive tax policies.

According to the capital's plans, Hengqin Island will be transformed into an international leisure resort island. Currently, Hengqin is working to build various attractions, such as the existing Chimelong Ocean Kingdom, the world's first Real Madrid experience center, and a project in collaboration with the National Geographic Channel.

In turn, Hengqin is planning to implement policies that will benefit Macau. For example, it



is planned that Macau tour buses will be allowed to fetch and alight passengers in Hengqin. Work will also be done to facilitate yachts from Macau and Hong Kong to berth at Hengqin.

Planning is also underway to commence cruise tourism at Hengqin, and marine tourism across the various islands under Zhuhai's administration.

Discussions will be conduc-

ted to set up a joint tourism talent education and training base between Macau and Hengqin.

The Macao Government Tourism Office's (MGTO) Director, Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, who was also at the event, said yesterday that another memorandum of understanding (MoU) will be signed with Hengqin. The MoU aims to clarify the future directions

of Macau and Hengqin in terms of the development of tourism, including how the two territories will collaborate.

She also disclosed that there are plans to allow Macau tour guides to work in Hengqin after they pass the requisite benchmarks. This policy will benefit future workers, according to the MGTO head. Under current provisions set forth by CEPA, tour guides from Macau

are already entitled to attain qualifications to work in the Mainland.

In closing his presentation, Yuan offered three suggestions to Macau: the territory should rely on historical and cultural elements to develop tourism; it should improve urban infrastructure and environment; and it should integrate with neighboring regions to achieve economies of scale.

Hong Kong dollar nears weak end of peg as trade war costs mount

Livia Yap

HONG Kong's currency is once again approaching the weak end of its trading band against the greenback, after a reprieve last month.

Falling demand for Hong Kong assets amid an escalation of tensions between China and the U.S. is weighing on the currency, and the gap between city's and U.S. borrowing costs has widened after narrowing in April. This makes the local dollar more appealing to short.

Further weakness will likely prompt the Hong

Kong Monetary Authority to resume interventions, after spending HKD22.1 billion (USD2.8 billion) defending the currency in March. That would reduce interbank liquidity at a time when the local economy is struggling as a fragile global outlook and the trade war damps activity.

The Hang Seng Index has retreated almost 5 percent in May. The gap between the borrowing costs on the Hong Kong dollar and the greenback has widened to about 70 basis points after falling to 34 in mid-April. A wi-

der spread spurs traders to sell the local currency and put the proceeds in the higher-yielding greenback.

The weaker stock market will add downward pressure on Hibor, helping to widen the spread with Libor and increasing pressure on the Hong Kong dollar, said Samuel Tse, an economist at DBS Bank Ltd. in Hong Kong.

"If stock market weakness is sustained, that means the Hong Kong dollar will depreciate further and that will trigger HKMA intervention," he said. **Bloomberg**

FORUM

MDT/Macauhub

China-Lusophone trade grows 11% in first quarter

TRADE between China and Portuguese-speaking countries grew 11.62% in the period from January to March 2019, increasing to USD33.7 billion (about MOP272 billion), according to official Chinese figures released by Forum Macau.

China exported goods worth a total of \$9.21 billion (an increase of 0.38% year-on-year) to the eight Portuguese-speaking countries and imported products valued at \$24.4 billion (+16.53%), registering a trade deficit of \$15.28 billion in the period.

Exchanges with Bra-

zil, China's main trading partner worldwide, had a total value of \$25.01 billion (+16.5%), with Chinese companies selling goods worth \$7.3 billion (-2.35%) and Brazilian companies placing products in the amount of \$17.71 billion (+26.57%) on the Chinese market.

With Angola, which ranks second in this context, two-way trade reached \$6.4 billion (-5.82%), with China selling goods worth \$378 million (-21.46%) and buying products worth \$6.03 billion (-4.62%).

Portugal and China recorded trade of \$1.57 billion (+17.24%) in the

period. Chinese companies sold goods worth \$1.03 billion (+26.36%) and Portuguese companies exported products worth \$545 million (+3.18%).

With Mozambique, trade amounted to \$644 million (+21.16%), with China selling products worth \$451 million (+23.7%) and buying goods worth \$192 million (+15.59%).

Trade between China and the other Portuguese-speaking countries – Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe and Timor-Leste – reached \$52.9 million in the first quarter of 2019.

REAL ESTATE MATTERS

Top 20 questions on renting a property in Macau - Part 2

Juliet Risdon is a Director of JML Property and a property investor. Having established the company in 1994, JML Property offers Investment Property & Homes. It specializes in managing properties for owners and investors, and providing attractive and comfortable homes for tenants.



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With sales prices at a record high, most people arriving in Macau for the first time are looking to rent a property rather than make purchase.

Here are the top 20 questions we are asked by tenants; this week numbers 6 to 10

6. HOW MUCH CAN BE CHARGED FOR A SECURITY DEPOSIT?

Ultimately, the security deposit can be agreed between the tenant and the owner. In general Macau owners require an amount equivalent to 2 months rent as a security deposit.

Occasionally, landlords may agree to 1 months deposit, but this is under special circumstances such as the tenant paying for the whole term of the agreement in advance, or the property being completely unfurnished.

7. AM I DEALING WITH AN EXPERIENCED LANDLORD?

This is a very popular question when tenants move into a new property.

As a tenant, you are in a better position when dealing with an experienced landlord or a property management company.

First time owners or owners who are renting a family property tend not to have rental systems in place to collect rents, make repairs and handle emergency issues.

8. DOES A LANDLORD HAVE TO PAY INTEREST ON A SECURITY DEPOSIT?

In some countries, owners or their representatives are duty bound to place the security deposit in a bank account and pay the accrued interest to the tenant.

However, no such requirement exists in Macau.

With interest rates at an all-time low, the most important factor when it comes to the security deposit is the safekeeping of the deposit.

9. IS THE LANDLORD WILLING TO BE FLEXIBLE WITH LEASE TERMS?

The lease terms can be agreed between the landlord and the tenant through the property agency.

A landlord's flexibility will depend on their personal circumstances and the property in question.

10. IS A TENANT RESPONSIBLE FOR DAMAGES TO THE RESIDENTIAL PREMISES?

Yes.

Under Macau law, any items damaged by a tenant must be returned to their original condition or replaced prior to leaving the property and retrieving the security deposit. For example, should a tenant decide to hang pictures on a wall, he or she is duty bound to return the wall to its original condition before the security deposit is released.

AP PHOTO



Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass.

GAMING

House approves bill to aid casino bid by Massachusetts tribe

THE U.S. House of Representatives on Wednesday (yesterday, Macau time) approved a bill reaffirming the right of a Massachusetts tribe to hold land in trust, a crucial step to building a USD1 billion casino.

The bill, approved 275-146, would allow the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe to hold 321 acres of reservation land in trust, despite a decision by the Trump administration that threatens its control. The Interior Department said last year that the tribe doesn't qualify to place the land in trust because it wasn't under federal jurisdiction when the Indian Reorganization Act passed in 1934.

The dispute was thrust into the national spotlight last week after President Donald Trump criticized the bill on Twitter and urged Republicans to oppose it.

Trump called the legislation a "special-interest casino bill" backed by Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, a Democratic presidential candidate. He called it unfair and said it "doesn't treat Native Americans equally."

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Bill Keating, D-Mass., said the measure was needed to ensure the survival of the tribe, which signed a treaty with the Plymouth colonists and shared a meal commemorated as the first Thanksgiving.

Keating contended that Trump opposes the bill because of "his well-documented alliance" with a lobbyist for two Rhode Island casinos that would compete with one planned by the Mashpee Wampanoag.

"This is the tribe of the first Thanksgiving, the very tribe that is integral to our founding story" as a nation, Keating

said. "To deny them the right to their land is an absolute disgrace."

He said that without the reservation land, the Mashpee Wampanoag would essentially become a second-class tribe with no ability to self-govern or provide essential services such as housing and education.

The bill now heads to the Senate.

Matt Schlapp, a prominent Trump supporter and chairman of the American Conservative Union, has publicly criticized the legislation and linked it to Warren, a frequent Trump foil. Warren co-sponsored a Senate version of the tribal bill in the last Congress but has not committed on the current effort. Representatives of Warren's Senate office and campaign declined to comment Wednesday.

Just two Democrats joined 144 Republicans in opposing the bill, which was supported

by 228 Democrats and 47 Republicans. Both Democrats who opposed the bill are from Rhode Island. They said the measure amounted to "reservation shopping" by allowing the tribe to build a casino in Taunton, Massachusetts, nearly 50 miles from its ancestral home on Cape Cod.

Approval of the bill could "open the flood gates" to other tribes nationwide hiring big-money lobbyists to push for off-reservation casinos, said Rep. David Cicilline, D-R.I. He called that possibility "disastrous."

Cedric Cromwell, chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council, disputed that. He said the bill was "a deeply honorable legislative effort [...] to correct the significant wrongs that have been perpetrated against our tribe over the years, and to ensure that our people have a chance to be self-sufficient." **MDT/AP**

PHILADELPHIA

Casino fined for serving 17 drinks to gambler

A casino in Philadelphia that served a gambler 17 free drinks over an eight-hour period has been fined USD17,500.

The Philadelphia Inquirer reports state regulators imposed the fine Wednesday on the SugarHouse Casino over the September incident.

Officials say the patron was playing Pai Gow, a table game with Chinese tiles similar to blackjack, and he was visibly intoxicated while gambling.

According to the casino's consent agreement with the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board, it wasn't until the gambler couldn't hold up his head anymore that a supervisor stopped him from getting more drinks and summoned security.

An altercation occurred as the patron was evicted from the casino, and he was arrested for public drunkenness.

SugarHouse agreed to retrain and discipline the beverage servers in addition to the fine. **AP**

STATE SECRETS

China formally arrests two Canadians in case linked to Huawei

CHINA has formally arrested two Canadian citizens it is believed to be holding to pressure Canada into releasing a Chinese telecoms executive, bringing the two men closer to trial on vaguely defined state security charges.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang said yesterday that Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor have been arrested for allegedly stealing state secrets.

"We always act in accordance with the law, and we hope that Canada will not make irresponsible remarks on China's legal construction and judicial handling," Lu said at a regularly scheduled news conference.

Lu gave no other details. Kovrig is a former Canadian diplomat and expert at the International Crisis Group, and Spavor is a businessman with lengthy experience in North Korea.

China had earlier accused the two of conspiring together to steal Chinese state secrets.



Huawei chief financial officer Meng Wanzhou is free on bail

Canada strongly condemned their "arbitrary arrest."

"We reiterate our demand that China immediately release Mr. Kovrig and Mr. Spavor," Britany Fletcher, a spokeswoman for Global Affairs Canada, said yesterday.

Both were detained on Dec. 10 after Meng Wanzhou, a senior

executive with telecoms giant Huawei, was arrested in Vancouver, Canada, on Dec. 1 at the request of U.S. authorities who want her extradited to face fraud charges.

Meng, the daughter of Huawei's founder, is accused of lying to banks about the company's dealings with Iran in violation of

U.S. trade sanctions. Her attorney has argued that comments by U.S. President Donald Trump suggest the case against her is politically motivated.

They were detained after Meng Wanzhou, a senior executive with Huawei, was arrested in Vancouver

Meng is free on bail and a judge this month granted her request to move into a larger Vancouver multimillion-dollar home that recently underwent renovation. The judge also ruled that she will hear arguments on evidence

disclosure in late September and October. A decision on whether Meng is extradited to the U.S. could take years.

Kovrig and Spavor are being held in detention facilities and have yet to be granted access to lawyers.

The U.S. has pressured other countries to limit their use of Huawei's technology, warning they could be opening themselves up to surveillance and theft of information.

China and the U.S. are currently embroiled in a trade dispute that has beleaguered global financial markets. Many of the U.S. complaints revolve around China's drive to acquire advanced intellectual property and dominate fields such as latest-generation 5G cellphone technology that Huawei has pursued.

Another Canadian held in China, Robert Schellenberg, was re-sentenced to death in a drug case following Meng's detention. His case is currently under appeal. **AP**

AD

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TRADE WAR

Huawei hit by US export controls, potential import ban

Frank Bajak & Tali Arbel

IN a fateful swipe at telecommunications giant Huawei, the Trump administration issued an executive order yesterday [Macau time] apparently aimed at banning its equipment from U.S. networks and said it was subjecting the Chinese company to strict export controls.

Huawei would be the largest business ever subjected to the controls, a law enforcement measure that requires it to obtain U.S. government approval on purchases of American technology, said Kevin Wolf, who had been the assistant secretary of commerce for export administration in the Obama administration.

"It's going to have ripple effects through the entire global telecommunications network because Huawei affiliates all over the planet depend on U.S. content to function and if they can't get the widget or the part or the software update to keep functioning then those systems go down," he said.

Asked if that could include barring Google from selling its Android operating system, which Huawei uses on its handsets, Wolf said it would be premature to say until he's seen a published order from the Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security to be sure of the scope.

The executive order declares a national economic emergency that empowers the government to ban the technology and services of "foreign adversaries" deemed to pose "unacceptable risks" to national security — including from cyberespionage and sabotage.

While it doesn't name specific countries or companies, it follows months of U.S. pressure on Huawei. It gives the Commerce Department 150 days to



come up with regulations.

Washington and Beijing are locked in a trade war that partly reflects a struggle for global economic and technological dominance, and yesterday's actions up the ante.

The export restriction is "a grave escalation with China that at minimum plunges the prospect of continued trade negotiations into doubt," said Eurasia Group analysts in a report.

"Unless handled carefully, this situation is likely to place U.S. and Chinese companies at new risk," the report said.

It appears the law invoked in the executive order, the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act, has never before been declared in a way that impacts an entire commercial sector. It has routinely been used to freeze the assets of designated terrorists and drug traffickers and impose embargoes on hostile former governments.

The order addresses U.S. government concerns that equipment from Chinese suppliers could pose an espionage threat to U.S. internet and telecommunications infrastructure. Huawei, the world's biggest supplier

of network gear, has been deemed a danger in U.S. national security circles for the better part of a decade.

U.S. justice and intelligence officials say Chinese economic espionage and trade secret theft are rampant. They have presented no evidence, however, of any Huawei equipment in the U.S. or elsewhere being compromised by backdoors installed by the manufacturer to facilitate espionage by Beijing. Huawei vehemently denies involvement in Chinese spying.

Huawei said blocking it from doing business in the United States would hamper introduction of next-generation communications technology in which the company is a world leader.

"We are ready and willing to engage with the U.S. government and come up with effective measures to ensure product security," the company said in a statement.

The restrictions "will not make the U.S. more secure or stronger," the company said. It said the United States would be limited to "inferior yet more expensive alternatives," which would hurt companies and consumers.

A senior U.S. administration official, who briefed reports on condition of anonymity, said in a hastily arranged call that the order was "company and country agnostic" and would not be retroactive. Officials said "interim regulations" were expected before final rules were set but were vague on what that meant.

In a statement, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai called the executive order "a significant step toward securing America's networks."

"It signals to U.S. friends and allies how far Washington is willing to go to block Huawei," said Adam Segal, cybersecurity director at the Council on Foreign Relations. Many in Europe have resisted a fierce U.S. diplomatic campaign to institute a wholesale ban on the Chinese company's equipment in their next-generation 5G wireless networks.

Democratic Sen. Mark Warner, vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee and a former telecoms executive, called the order "a needed step" because Chinese law compels Huawei to act as an agent of the state.

The order's existence in draft form was first reported by The Washington Post last June. Segal said that with U.S.-China trade talks at a standstill, the White House "felt the time had finally come to pull the trigger."

It is a "low-cost signal of resolve from the Trump administration," Segal said, noting that there is little at stake economically.

All major U.S. wireless carriers and internet providers had already sworn off Chinese-made equipment after a 2012 report by the House Intelligence Committee said Huawei and ZTE, China's No. 2 telecoms equipment company, should be excluded as enablers of Beijing-directed espionage.

Last year, Trump signed a bill that barred the U.S. government and its contractors from using equipment from the Chinese suppliers.

The FCC also has a rule in the works that would cut off subsidies for companies that use any equipment banned as posing a national security threat. Huawei's handsets are virtually nonexistent in the U.S., and last week the FCC rejected a Chinese phone company's bid to provide domestic service.

Huawei says it supplies 45 of the world's top 50 phone companies. But only about 2 percent of telecom equipment purchased by North American carriers was Huawei-made in 2017.

The domestic economic impact will be restricted mostly to small rural carriers for whom Huawei equipment has been attractive because of its lower costs. That could make it more difficult to expand access to speedy internet in rural areas.

Blair Levin, an adviser to research firm New Street Research and a former FCC official, said the order is likely to widen the digital divide.

Roger Entner, founder of telecom research firm Recon Analytics, tweeted: "Banning Huawei in the U.S. has the FCC in a conundrum: Low cost Huawei equipment helps to build out broadband in rural America faster." He wondered if the FCC would subsidize small rural carriers. **AP**

Beijing criticizes US action against Huawei

CHINA vowed yesterday to "resolutely safeguard" Chinese companies after Washington labeled telecom equipment giant Huawei a security risk and imposed export curbs on U.S. technology sales to the company.

A foreign ministry spokesman, Lu Kang, criticized the moves as an "abuse of export control measures" after the

Trump administration issued an order requiring Huawei to obtain government permission for purchases.

Huawei Technologies Ltd., the biggest global maker of switching equipment for phone companies, has spent a decade fighting accusations it facilitates Chinese spying.

"We urge the United States to stop the wrong approach," said a foreign

ministry spokesman, Lu Kang. "China will take further necessary measures to resolutely safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises."

Lu gave no details, but analysts warned the export controls threaten to worsen a U.S.-Chinese conflict over technology and trade.

President Donald Trump also issued an

executive order that bans phone carriers from using technology of "foreign adversaries" deemed to pose "unacceptable risks" to national security.

A Ministry of Commerce spokesman, Gao Feng, gave a similar warning about "necessary measures" at a separate news conference but also gave no details of possible official steps.

Chinese retaliation

against U.S. tariff hikes has included targeting American companies in China by slowing down customs clearance and issuance of business licenses.

Trump's order addresses U.S. government concerns that equipment from Chinese suppliers could pose an espionage threat to U.S. internet and telecommunications infrastructure.

Huawei said blocking it from doing business in the United States would hamper introduction of next-generation communications technology in which the company is a world leader.

"We are ready and willing to engage with the U.S. government and come up with effective measures to ensure product security," the company said in a statement. **AP**

OBITUARY

Eric Talmadge, AP's North Korea bureau chief, dead at 57

Foster Klug, Seoul

ERIC Talmadge, who as North Korea bureau chief for The Associated Press tenaciously chronicled life and politics in one of the world's least-understood nations, has died. He was 57.

Talmadge died this week in Japan after suffering a heart attack while running.

A decades-long resident of Japan with deep expertise on Asian security and military issues, Talmadge seemed to have found his ideal job when he was appointed in 2013 to lead the AP bureau in Pyongyang, North Korea's capital. From his base in Tokyo, he traveled almost monthly to report on the nuclear-armed country's remarkable evolution under its young leader, Kim Jong Un, who took over after his father died in 2011.

"For years, Eric's sharp work in North Korea has helped shape how the entire world saw a country that many of us knew little about," said Sally Buzbee, AP's executive editor. "He took that responsibility very seriously, and it was never far from his mind."

Talmadge was one of only a few international journalists with regular access to North Korea, where the AP established a video news office in 2006 and a text and photo bureau in 2012. With his frequently exclusive on-the-ground view, Talmadge latched onto and reveled in the small, telling details that upended widespread Western stereotypes about North Korea.

There were few journalists more insightful about the North's push to develop atomic weapons capable of striking the United States. But Talmadge also filled the AP wire with stylishly written stories of daily life, often seeded with traces of his bone-dry sense of humor.

He wrote about a beer festival in Pyongyang, where "brews are cheap and carry the ruling family's seal of approval." He wrote about the millions of North Koreans using mobile phones and the popularity of a game called "Boy General," describing it as "a spinoff of a new TV animation series that is both beautifully produced and genuinely fun to watch."

His intelligent, curious eye also regularly seized on the moments that often got lost or ignored in the frenzied coverage of the long-running nuclear standoff between Washington and Pyongyang. "He saw meaning in everything he came across," said Ian Phillips, AP's vice president for international news.



Eric Talmadge in front of the April 25 House of Culture in Pyongyang last week

In 2014, Talmadge wrote of a weeklong road trip through North Korea — unprecedented for foreign reporters — that stopped at the forest-covered Kaema Plateau, known as the "Roof of Korea."

He showed readers the "blink-and-you-miss-them villages," the government propaganda slogans that covered posters, murals, banners and stones, and the isolated truck stops where elderly folks sat on weed-covered embankments and smoked hand-rolled cigarettes.

"It's quite possible," he wrote, that "none of them had ever seen an American before."

Talmadge was candid about the constraints of reporting in North Korea: No interviewing random people; no photos of checkpoints or military installations; no breaking away from ever-present government minders, "even on the loneliest of lonely highways."

In an example of the clear-eyed wit that often appeared in even his most technical reporting on military hardware, he wrote that the road trip's preapproved route, "to no one's surprise, didn't include nuclear facilities or prison camps."

Ted Anthony, who as AP's Asia-Pacific news director supervised Talmadge from 2014 to 2018 and accompanied him on multiple trips to Pyongyang, said Talmadge once warned him: "Don't ever think you really

understand the North. It has more corners than anyplace I've ever been."

"Eric was utterly certain that with enough work and curiosity and stick-to-it-iveness, he could genuinely help the world understand North Korea. And he did," Anthony said. "He wanted to reach people who'd never really thought much about the country, and he would pull out all the stops to show them the North Korea they never knew existed, and make them think critically about it."

Born in Renton, Washington, Talmadge spent much of his life in Japan, where was a high-school exchange student. Fluent in Japanese, he appeared often on Japanese TV as a commentator on North Korea. He was an avid bowler and meditator, and loved riding his bike and swimming. He was the author of a 2006 book, "Getting Wet: Adventures in the Japanese Bath." He is survived by his wife, Hisako, and two grown children, Sara and Eugene.

Talmadge joined the AP in Tokyo in 1988 after working for the Mainichi Shimbun, one of Japan's national newspapers.

He reported throughout Asia for the AP and was a major contributor to the news agency's award-winning coverage of the deadly earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan in 2011, and the nuclear disaster that happened in its aftermath.

of a chain-smoking 19-year-old chimpanzee mentions dryly that the ape smokes about a pack a day: The Pyongyang zoo officials "insist, however, that she doesn't inhale."

Wong Maye-E, who worked alongside Talmadge during the five years she spent as chief photographer for North Korea, remembers sitting in their hotel in Pyongyang during a power outage one night, decompressing after a tough day's reporting, the room's windows thrown open and Steely Dan playing on Talmadge's phone as they watched the blinking lights from the flashlights of people going up and down the stairwells of nearby apartment buildings.

"He was very patient in a place that really tests your patience," Wong said.

His love of bowling, Wong said, also came in handy in the North, where he liked to amaze residents by showing off how his intense bowling habit had made his right arm much more muscular than his left.

Don't ever think you really understand the North. It has more corners than anyplace I've ever been.

ERIC TALMADGE

Talmadge continually pushed to expand the AP's presence in the North, negotiating with the government for more and longer reporting trips and better access. He prided himself on keeping his stories free of the clichés about North Korea so prevalent in outside media.

"I think there is a tendency abroad to caricature North Korea in ways that aren't constructive, and to resort to dismissiveness or mockery much too easily," Talmadge told The Washington Post in 2015. "During my time there, I have been surprised, and reassured in a way, to see how average North Koreans care about the same things everybody else does — their family, their finances, their health, their friends, how to get by."

And, he said, his immersion in the North made him appreciate even more his life outside the country.

"Every time I come back home, I wake up the first morning thinking, 'I can go anywhere I want today,'" he told the Post. "I could go to the beach, I could go see a movie, I could get on a plane and go to Florida if I wanted. Even if, in the end, I just stay home and eat potato chips on the couch, it's a very liberating feeling. I don't take it for granted anymore." AP

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EUROPOL

US, European officials bring charges in global malware case

TEN people, including five Russian fugitives, have been charged in connection with malicious software attacks that infected tens of thousands of computers worldwide and caused more than USD100 million in financial losses, U.S. and European authorities announced yesterday.

The malware enabled criminals from Eastern Europe to take remote control of infected computers and siphon funds from victims' bank accounts, and targeted companies and institutions across all sectors of American life. Victims included a Washington law firm, a church in Texas, a furniture business in California, a casino in Mississippi and a Pennsylvania asphalt and paving business.

Several defendants are awaiting prosecution in Europe, and five are Russians who remain fugitives in that country. An 11th participant in the conspiracy was extradited to the United States from Bulgaria in 2016 and pleaded guilty last month in a related case in federal court in Pittsburgh, where Thursday's indictment was brought.

Though the Justice Department has pursued multiple malware prosecutions in recent years against foreign hackers, this case stands out as a novel model of international collaboration, said Scott Brady, the U.S. attorney in Pittsburgh.

American authorities did not seek the immediate extradition of all 10 defendants, an often cumbersome process that can



take years of negotiations, even in countries that have treaties with the U.S. Instead, they sha-

red evidence with their European counterparts to allow officials in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia to initiate prosecutions.

■ The malware enabled criminals from Eastern Europe to take remote control of infected computers and siphon funds from victims' bank accounts

red evidence with their European counterparts to allow officials in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia to initiate prosecutions.

“It represents a paradigm change in how we prosecute cybercrime,” Brady said in an interview with The Associated Press before a news conference in The Hague with representatives of six countries.

Cybercrime networks “are increasingly targetable” when investigators work together, said Robert Jones, the FBI special agent in charge of the Pittsburgh office. “International cooperation is no longer a nicety, it’s a requirement,” he said.

Cybercrime has no borders, and criminals have taken advantage of the legal complexities of trying to fight it, said Steven Wilson, head of the European CyberCrime Centre at Europol. “Only through international cooperation can we hope to tackle it,” he said, adding the charges “provide for a safer internet for all of us.”

The charges in the indictment include conspiracy to commit computer fraud, conspiracy to commit wire and bank fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering.

The investigation was an outgrowth of the Justice Department’s dismantling in 2016 of a network of computer servers, known as Avalanche, which hosted more than 20 different types of malware.

The malware, GozNym, cited in yesterday’s case was among the ones hosted on the network. Law enforcement officials say it was formed by the defendants as they advertised their technical skills in underground, Russian-language online criminal forums.

“For the past three years, we have been unpeeling an onion as it were that is very challenging to investigate and identify,” Brady said.

GozNym infected more than 41,000 computers. It relied on spam emails, disguised as legitimate messages, that once opened enabled the malware to be downloaded onto the machines. From there, the hackers could record keystrokes from the victims’ computers, steal banking log-in credentials and then launder the stolen money into foreign bank accounts they controlled.

Brady said prosecutors always look to recover stolen funds, but that is especially challenging in international cybercrime cases.

“Proceeds were converted to bitcoin and without the private key, it is really hard to identify and access, let alone seize, those accounts,” Brady told the AP.

WHAT IS GOZNYM?

It is a hybrid of two other pieces of malware, Nymaim and Gozi, BBC reported.

The first of these is what is known as a “dropper”, software that is designed to sneak other malware on to a device and install it. Up until 2015, Nymaim was used primarily to get ransomware on to devices.

Gozi has been around since 2007. Over the years it has resurfaced with new techniques, all aimed at stealing financial information. It was used in concerted attacks on US banks.

Combining the two created what one expert called a “double-headed monster”. **MDT/Agencies**

FRANCE

Basque militant ETA chief arrested after 17 years

Alongtime chief of the Basque militant separatist group ETA was arrested yesterday on the streets of a French Alps town after being on the run for 17 years, Spain’s Interior Ministry said.

José Antonio Urruticoechea Bengoetxea, known by the alias Josu Ternera, has been the most wanted ETA member since 2002. Interpol, the global police body, had issued a red alert against him. Spanish authorities accuse him of crimes against humanity, multiple killings and belonging to a terrorist organization.

ETA, whose initials stand for “Basque Homeland and Freedom” in the Basque language, killed more than 850 people during its decades-long violent campaign to create an independent state in northern Spain and southern France. The militant group gave up its arms in 2017 and disbanded last year.

The Interior Ministry said the arrest took place early yesterday in Sallanches, a town of 16,000 in the French Alps. French intelligence services and Spanish Civil Guard agents took part in the operation. Spanish authorities

said Ternera had been living near Saint-Gervais-les-Bains, a winter sports haven close to the borders of France, Switzerland and Italy.

The Paris prosecutor’s office said Ternera was arrested in the street by France’s domestic intelligence service DGSI, based on a 2017 French conviction in absentia for involvement in a terrorist group. That verdict carried a sentence of eight years in prison and barred him from French territory.

Ternera was taken to the police headquarters in Sallanches and asked

to see a doctor, and has now been transferred to a hospital, the prosecutor’s office said.

He will be taken to Paris in the coming days to be formally served the arrest warrant. Since he was convicted in absentia, Ternera has the right to request a new trial, the official said.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said the end of ETA showed that “our commitment against terrorism and for a peaceful coexistence of all people is eternal.”

Spain will ask France to extradite Ternera to stand trial for his alleged cri-



Jose Antonio Urruticoechea Bengoetxea, known by the alias Josu Ternera, in 2000

mes, before he completes his prison sentence there, according to Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska.

“The arrest of Josu Ternera has been a maximum priority,” Grande-Marlaska said. “The collaboration and cooperation with French police and courts

has been a decisive element in this victory of the rule of law over the ETA terrorist organization.”

Ternera’s voice was identified as one of the two ETA members who read a statement announcing the group’s dismantling on audio recordings released on May 3, 2018. **AP**

TV canal macau



FRIDAY

18:55	TDM Talk Show (Repetição)
19:30	Livros com João Guedes (Repetição)
19:35	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	Semana Internacional
21:50	Sinais de Vida
22:35	Portugal Culto e Oculto
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Resumo Liga Europa 2018/2019
00:10	Almas Penadas
01:15	Telejornal (Repetição)
02:05	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



One of the dams as it stands today

1943 RAF RAID SMASHES GERMAN DAMS

An audacious RAF bombing raid into the industrial heartland of Germany last night has wrecked three dams serving the Ruhr valley.

The attack disrupted water and electricity supplies in a key area for the manufacture of Germany's war munitions.

The Secretary of State for Air, Sir Archibald Sinclair, called the raid "a trenchant blow for victory".

The mission, known as Operation Chastise, has been planned for months.

The crews were specially selected for the job, and have been training in absolute secrecy.

The bombs themselves were invented specifically for the task by the aircraft engineer Dr Barnes Wallis, the designer of the Wellington bomber.

They were barrel-shaped, and used the principle of a "ducks and drakes" stone bouncing on the water to bypass the defences around the dams.

The Lancaster bombers flown by 617 Squadron were extensively modified, and the crews trained to fly at less than 100ft (30.48m) above the water, the height required to drop the bombs successfully.

The mission began yesterday evening, under the command of Wing Commander Guy Gibson.

The targets were three huge water barrage dams - two on the rivers Möhne and Sorpe, and a third on the River Eder.

The Möhne and Sorpe dams control about 70% of the water supplied to the Ruhr basin, and were built to prevent water shortages during the summer.

Wing Commander Gibson led the attack on the Möhne dam personally.

A flight lieutenant who watched what happened at the Möhne dam described the scene:

"The wing commander's load was placed just right and a spout of water went up 300 feet (91.44m) into the air," he said.

"A second Lancaster attacked with equal accuracy, and there was still no sign of a breach.

"Then I went in and we caused a huge explosion up against the dam. It was not until another load had been dropped that the dam at last broke.

"I saw the first jet very clear in the moonlight. I should say that the breach was about 50 yards (45.72m) wide."

The Eder dam - the largest in Europe - was also breached in two places.

Reconnaissance flights showed flood waters sweeping through the Ruhr valley, damaging factories, houses and power stations.

The power station at the Möhne dam has been swept away, rivers are in full flood, and railway and road bridges have disappeared.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The mission became popularly known as the Dambusters raid, and was immortalised in a 1954 war film.

It was one of the most famous air operations of World War II.

Casualties for the raid were high.

Eight of the original 19 Lancaster bombers were damaged or shot down, and of the 133 aircrew, 53 were killed and three captured.

On the ground, too, almost 1,300 people were killed, including 749

Ukrainian prisoners of war based in a camp just below the Eder dam.

The Möhne and Eder reservoirs poured about 330 million tons of water into the western Ruhr valley. The flood waters spread for about 50 miles (80km) from the source.

The spectacular, daring nature of the raid was a significant boost to British morale.

But militarily, it was a failure. The squadron failed to breach the Sorpe dam; and the disruption to the German war production was minimal.

Water supply in the Ruhr valley was back to original levels six weeks later.

The aircrew, however, became famous as war heroes, and the leader of the raid, Wing Commander Guy Gibson, was awarded the Victoria Cross.

He died less than 18 months later, shot down at the age of 26 in September 1944.

Offbeat

CALIFORNIA CAFE TOUTS ITS \$75 COFFEE AS THE WORLD'S PRICIEST



A California cafe is brewing up what it calls the world's most expensive coffee — at USD75 a cup.

Klatch Coffee is serving the exclusive brew, the Elida Natural Geisha 803, at its branches in Southern California and San Francisco.

The 803 in the coffee's name refers to the record-breaking \$803 per pound the organic beans sold for at a recent auction after winning the Best of Panama coffee competition, said Bo Thiara, co-owner of the Klatch branch in San Francisco. He calls the annual competition the coffee world's equivalent of the Oscars.

Only 100 pounds of the beans were available for purchase, and most went to Japan, China and Taiwan, Thiara said. Klatch secured 10 pounds and is the only chain in North America to have it.

The coffee's high quality and limited supply set off a bidding war that determined its astronomical price, topping last year's winning beans that sold for \$601 per pound, Thiara said.

Klatch describes the coffee as a rare variety of Arabica from Panama that has a floral, tea-like flavor with hints of jasmine and berries. The 10 pounds of beans will produce about 80 cups of coffee, Thiara said.

A few lucky coffee lovers got to try free samples Wednesday at the San Francisco branch, where promotional signs are on display advertising, "World's Most Expensive Coffee."

One of them was San Francisco resident Lauren Svensson, who said it was "very different" from any coffee she'd ever tasted.

"My mind was a little blown about the fact that a \$75 cup of coffee even exists," she said, "but it was shockingly good."

Her friend, Charlie Sinhaseni, also gave his free sample a positive review.

"When I first looked at it, I thought it would be hyper pretentious, and I would think of all the different notes for the coffee, but I was too busy enjoying it," he said.

YOUR STARS

Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Avoid the temptation to do your own thing today — even if it's the hottest thing ever! Your friends or family (or maybe coworkers) need you more than you realize, and that karma is irreplaceable.

Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

Is romance in your future — or your present? If today's energy is any indication, the answer is yes! Just look around if you're single, as someone right for you is tantalizingly close.

Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Today is all about activity, and you need to make sure that you're not just sitting around. Your social energy is lively and vibrant, so make the most of it and meet some new people or go on a date.

Libra

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Your energy levels are super-high today, and you may find that your friends and family are riding your draft and enjoying every second of it. It's a good day to get out there and mix it up with new people!

Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Your great social energy guarantees fun almost all day long — or at least a better mood than you think you deserve. It's a great time to reach out to friends who are going through hard times.

Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Try something different today — routines don't work for you, at least not right now. Your great mental energy makes you more prone to boredom, and that's something you just can't tolerate!

Taurus

April 20-May 20

Your health may need some adjustment — so get to a gym, see a nutritionist or find a way to think positive thoughts even during that dreaded performance review. It all helps in the long run!

Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Today is all about partnership — but that can be hard to deal with. You should find out if you can get your mate or your business associates to see things your way, but the road is long and hard for now.

Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

You are having a hard time figuring out what you want to do next — but you're not the only one! Make sure that your people know your quandary, as you and a friend can help each other in a big way.

Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

It's a good day to hang out on your own and try to do things quietly. Loud parties and raucous meetings just aren't your style now, so try solitary activities and see what new ideas you can come up with.

Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Try not to worry too much when your plans are challenged today — that's just nature's way of testing your willpower. If you can meet this stress with good humor, you are sure to do well all year!

Pisces

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Are you having cash flow issues? Now is the time to deal with them — before they deal with you! Your great energy is perfect for handling all kinds of financial burdens, so get on it ASAP!

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

CHINA

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
Beijing	14	30	cloudy
Harbin	11	30	clear
Tianjin	17	30	cloudy
Urumqi	13	26	clear
Xi'an	11	27	cloudy
Lhasa	7	22	clear
Chengdu	15	25	clear
Chongqing	17	27	cloudy
Kunming	15	28	cloudy
Nanjing	15	28	cloudy
Shanghai	16	27	clear
Wuhan	14	29	cloudy
Hangzhou	17	28	cloudy
Taipei	21	24	drizzle
Guangzhou	21	29	cloudy
Hong Kong	22	26	cloudy

WORLD

Moscow	15	24	drizzle
Frankfurt	8	18	drizzle
Paris	12	17	drizzle
London	7	15	drizzle
New York	11	20	drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- ___ -shanter (Scottish cap); 5- Cameo shape; 9- Mrs. Dithers, in "Blondie"; 13- Irish island group; 14- Nicholas Gage book; 15- Sir Guinness; 16- Pealed; 17- "Circle of Friends" author Binchy; 18- Long luxuriant hair; 19- Soak up; 21- Fix; 22- Individuals; 23- Memo starter; 25- Goneril's father; 27- Conduct, as business; 31- Layers; 35- Ladder step; 36- Silver salmon; 38- Artist's support; 39- Cockpit abbr.; 40- Put into law; 42- Sign of a hit; 43- Tractor pioneer John; 46- Not taken in by; 47- Poi base; 48- Compositions; 50- Square head scarf; 52- Summer shirts; 54- Steadfast; 55- Kind of prof.; 58- UK fliers; 60- Mistakes; 64- Nada; 65- Extraterrestrial; 67- Diva's solo; 68- Winglike parts; 69- Assume as fact; 70- Await judgment; 71- Autograph; 72- Tolkien tree creatures; 73- Indian exercise method;

DOWN: 1- Scarlett's home; 2- Bedouin; 3- ___ best friend; 4- Continuing; 5- Suffix with pay; 6- Change course; 7- Smith's block; 8- Vassals; 9- Secret society of Naples; 10- "The Good Earth" heroine; 11- Jeweler Laliq; 12- Great serves; 14- Hug; 20- Hosp. workers; 24- Low-budget prefix; 26- Did lunch; 27- Wall Street transaction; 28- Governs; 29- Pays to play; 30- Express gratitude; 32- Very, to Verdi; 33- ___ Haute; 34- Standoffish; 37- Group of eight; 41- Deluge; 44- Heavy napped woolen fabric; 45- Looker; 47- Treatment of disease; 49- Shawl worn in Mexico; 51- Mangy mutt; 53- Drawing room; 55- Literary collections; 56- Arias, usually; 57- Hitch or glitch; 59- Clenched hand; 61- Nabisco cookie; 62- Circular band; 63- Actress Thompson; 66- Sue Grafton's "___ for Evidence";



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- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IACM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
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- [Taipa] *Ocean Gardens* 4 B 4 L 3,700 ft² \$32,000,000 (ref: 19015576)
- [Taipa] *Kinglight* Car park \$1,450,000 (ref: 19035001)

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- [Macau] *Macau Square* Office 837 ft² \$21,000/mth (ref: 18100691)
- [Taipa] *Nam Long* 1 B 1 L 720 ft² \$12,300/mth (ref: 17110658)
- [Taipa] *Nova Park* 2 B 2 L 1,134 ft² \$16,400/mth (ref: 17020638)

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FOOTBALL

Man City, Watford seek landmark win in FA Cup final

Steve Douglas

Sunday, 00:00am
Man City v Watford
H 1.25, D 7, A 15

ONE team is looking to complete an unprecedented domestic treble, bolstering its status as possibly the greatest ever in English soccer. The other is trying to capture a major trophy for the first time.

For either Manchester City or Watford, this FA Cup final tomorrow will come to represent a landmark moment in their respective clubs' history.

Many, though, can only see Saturday's match at Wembley Stadium going one way.

City, already the Premier League and League Cup champion, is the undoubted favorite to cap what would be a historic season with a third domestic trophy. Or fourth, if you ask City manager Pep Guardiola, who is also keen to add the Community Shield — a preseason contest between



Man City celebrates another Premier League title under Guardiola

the reigning league and FA Cup winners — to his roll of honor.

The FA Cup was the trophy that launched City's rise as the modern-day soccer superpower in England. Winning it in 2011, by beating Stoke 1-0, ended a 35-year wait for silverware for a club that lived for so long in the shadow of neighbor Manchester United but was ready to make serious strides, backed by money from its Abu Dhabi ownership.

Eight years later, the team is back in the final and seeking to win its 10th major trophy in this decade.

"We're very hungry to make something different for this club," City playmaker Bernardo Silva says.

Given that winning the treble would be such a remarkable feat, it has slightly gone under the radar this week.

First, there was the fallout

from the sensational Premier League title race, which saw City edge Liverpool to first place by a point at the weekend after winning its last 14 games in a row.

There came further developments in UEFA's investigation into alleged financial wrongdoing by City, which could yet land it a one-year ban from the Champions League — the competition that still eludes

the club. City is suspected of breaking rules that monitor commercial income and spending on player transfers and wages, in particular disguising revenue from commercial deals secured by the club's owners.

The case threatens to mar City's success on the field, with many saying the team isn't on a level playing field with the rest.

Watford certainly looks over-matched going into the final.

The Hornets, as they are nicknamed, have been swatted aside in recent years by City, which has won each of their last 10 meetings by an aggregate score of 32-6.

Watford has finished runner-up in the top flight once, in 1983, and lost the FA Cup final a year later in its only previous appearance. That was in the era when musician Elton John was chairman and former England coach Graham Taylor was manager.

Under Spanish coach Javi Gracia, Watford has been harder to beat — even if an 11th-placed finish in the Premier League, after ending the campaign with three straight losses, doesn't really show it.

"Everyone says we have zero chance," Watford midfielder Etienne Capoue says, "[...] everyone says Man City is a top team, everyone thinks they are going to win it easily. AP

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opinion

Bizcuits
 Leanda Lee



TALENT OUTSIDE THE BOX

A few years ago, Ernst & Young, the fifth largest recruiter of graduates in the UK, removed from their employment criteria the requirement for a university degree. It is not that academic qualifications are not important, but as all good evidence-based management goes, E&Y looked at their data and found that university grades were not the best predictor of job success; a part but not the whole story.

Beyond our areas of expertise, we are notoriously poor at assessing quality. That's why we latch onto and take cues from symbols of quality, like brands. My father started to complain when labels appeared on the outside of clothes in the 70s: "They should pay me to wear their advertising," he'd joke.

Marketing was beginning to take a hold in the garment industry and shoe trade (now the "Fashion Industry") in which he had worked for over 40 years. His thinking was driven by a distaste for two things: for what he perceived – and often rightly so – to be a manipulation by marketers to make something appear what it is not, and for the uninformed consumer who didn't know the difference.

We use shortcuts to get a sense of worth of things and people. We haven't the capacity to sift through all the information we have, let alone collect the information we need, to observe with fidelity and then objectively assess a person's suitability for a role. Even with perfect information, we are humanly fallible: our biases, our preferences, our inattention, our interpretations from our limited lived experience, ego and self-protection, and the influence of others mean we can never really know someone well enough to make a foolproof assessment of their fitness for a role. Good recruitment processes attempt to remove those biases through things like psychometric tests, selection panels which triangulate viewpoints, and multi-stage onboarding processes. It's such a pity a simple cue like success at a decent university does not sift the chaff from the wheat anymore.

It is not that Ernst & Young suddenly decided that the massification of education had undermined the value of the once elite university degree. The professional services company simply recognised that by making it a hurdle requirement, they had been missing out on some potentially very talented people. It's akin to male dominated hiring practices of yore – what's the sense in restricting the talent pool by gender, race, residency status, or even academic qualifications when evidence suggests it's not a valid criterion?

A friend used to bemoan not having a tertiary degree to put on his CV, limiting his career opportunities. The degree is but one cue, yes, I acknowledged that, but it is not the only indicator of individual intellectual worth; good hiring practices will see beyond that. Well, friend, E & Y's decision – and PwC's since – has vindicated me.

At the other end of the spectrum from the laudification of higher degrees are the sub-C-suite executives who "came from the shop-floor/mail room/dirt-digging apprenticeship to where I am today". Many managers in this cohort belittle any knowledge and skill acquisition that is not gained from direct experience climbing the corporate ladder. In this kind of atmosphere, anyone with a higher degree risks being labelled as (inexplicably) 'too' academic and of narrow experience, to the extent that PhD holders become all but unemployable outside academic circles, regardless of the depth of any prior experience or the self-evident ability to learn anything new. It's the tall-poppy syndrome.

As author Brian Herbert once said, "The capacity to learn is a gift; The ability to learn is a skill; The willingness to learn is a choice." A&Y have learnt not to put people in boxes, or to be too quick to judge on outdated criteria. Neither the degree, nor lack thereof, should define you.

The Nation, one of Thailand's two English-language dailies, has announced it will stop publishing its print edition by the end of June but will continue with an online version. The CEO of the Nation Multimedia Group, Somchai Meesaen, said yesterday the newspaper will switch to digital platforms starting July 1 because its profit has declined in the past decade.

The Nation was founded in 1971 largely as a progressive alternative to the English-language market-leading Bangkok Post, which was seen as too conservative as pro-democracy activists were struggling against a military dictatorship.



Station	Air quality
Roadside	25-45 Good
High Density Residential Area	15-35 Good
Ambient	20-40 Good

WORLD BRIEFS



INDIA'S Election Commission cut off campaigning early in the eastern state of West Bengal yesterday after days of clashes in the final stretch of the country's marathon elections, a drastic and unprecedented action in the world's largest democracy.



PAKISTAN A court has upheld death sentences for three Muslims but acquitted two others in the 2014 mob killing of a Christian couple accused of blasphemy in the eastern city of Lahore. The ruling comes five years after Shahzad Masih and his wife Shama Bibi were beaten to death and thrown into a brick kiln in a town in Punjab province.



AUSTRALIA Bob Hawke, Australia's longest-serving Labor Party prime minister, whose charisma and powers of persuasion earned him near-folk hero status among many Australians, died yesterday, his wife said. He was 89.

ISRAEL Facebook says it has identified a private Israel-based influence campaign aimed at disrupting elections in various countries and has canceled dozens of accounts that engaged in spreading disinformation. Nathaniel Gleicher, head of cybersecurity policy said the tech giant had purged 65 accounts, 161 pages and dozens of groups.



EU They are strikingly young, but emphatic that they should not be considered newcomers. Rather, they are claiming the mantle of Old Europe at its most traditional. Several of this year's far-right candidates in Europe are well under 30 – as are some of their most ardent supporters. *Inside Extra*

Taiwan to vote on formal recognition of same-sex marriage



Ralph Jennings, Taipei

TAIWANESE legislators are scheduled to decide today on legalizing same-sex marriage, marking a potential first in Asia.

Lawmakers pressured over the past two years by LGBT groups as well as church organizations opposed to same-sex marriage will choose between bills that broadly legalize the unions and give couples many of the tax, insurance and child custody benefits available to male-female married couples.

If the legal changes are approved, Taiwan would become the first place in Asia with a comprehensive law supporting same-sex marriage.

Taiwan's Constitutional Court in May 2017 said the constitution allows same-sex marriages and gave parliament two years to adjust laws accordingly.

The court order mobilized LGBT advocacy groups pushing for fair treatment, as well as opponents among church groups and advocates of traditional Chinese family values.

"It's a breakthrough, I have to say so. I could not imagine that could happen in just a few years," said Shiau Hong-chi, professor of gender studies and communications management at Shih-Hsin University in Taiwan.

Religion, conservative family values and political systems that discourage LGBT activism have stopped momentum in Asian countries from China through much of Southeast Asia into the Middle East. Thailand, however, is exploring the legalization of same-sex civil partnerships.

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SHIAU HONG-CHI
 PROFESSOR
 GENDER STUDIES

Taiwan's acceptance of gay and lesbian relationships began in the 1990s when leaders in today's ruling Democratic Progressive Party championed the cause to help Taiwan stand out in Asia as an open society. Although claimed by China as its own territory, Taiwan is a self-governing democracy with a vibrant civil society. Opponents have raised

fears of incest, insurance benefit scams and children confused by having two mothers or two fathers. Both sides of the issue have held colorful street demonstrations and lobbied lawmakers.

In November 2018, a majority of Taiwan voters rejected same-sex marriage in an advisory referendum.

Bills on the table today include one authored by the government. Another version plays to both sides of the debate by allowing marriages but with conditions such as calling them "unions" and imposing restrictions on adopting children.

"If it doesn't go through, that would be disappointing," said Hsu Pei-chieh, 30, a Taipei office worker hoping to marry her female partner and raise at least one child. "If we're married it would be easier for the outside world to understand us."

Opinion surveys in 2012 and 2015 found that slight majorities of Taiwanese backed legalizing same-sex marriage.

A defeat for the bill in the legislature on Friday would allow the Constitutional Court order to proceed, effective May 24. Same-sex couples could register their marriages then with local governments, but without guarantees of the legal benefits given to male-female couples. **AP**