



JUST PASSING THROUGH

A dramatic 27% surge in same-day visitors, who stay for just a few hours on average, is rekindling fears of overtourism

■ P2 TOURISM



HEALTH AUTHORITY DISINFECTS SCHOOL WHERE 12 CAUGHT INFLUENZA



TWO HK ACTIVISTS GRANTED ASYLUM IN GERMANY

Germany's government says it is concerned about "diminishing space for political opposition" and freedom of expression

■ P7 GREATER BAY

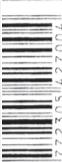


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ANALYSIS

When to forget recycling and start reducing

■ P4-5 MDT REPORT



WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA held the door open to resuming talks in the tariff war with Washington yesterday but lashed out at limits on access to key technologies that it said might hurt global supply chains.



TAIWAN Two U.S. warships have sailed through the Taiwan Strait in an apparent show of support for the government of the self-ruled island, which China claims as its own. [More on p10](#)

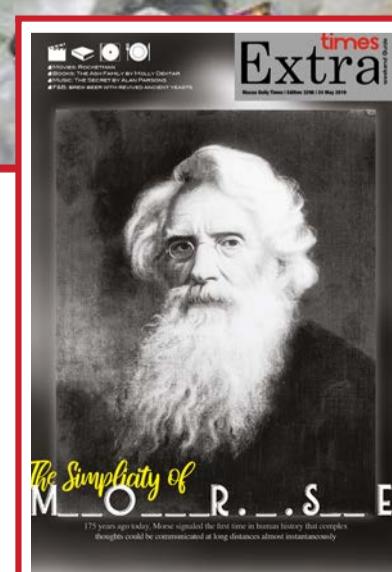


INDONESIA Seven people have died in election violence in the Indonesian capital, police said yesterday, as calm returned to the city and the losing presidential candidate prepared to challenge the result in court.

[More on backpage](#)

Studio City's Elēkrōn to close this July

■ P3 MDT EXCLUSIVE



Extra
times
weekend Guide
■ INSIDE

Illegal gambling marketer caught at G2E

A 27-year-old man from the mainland was caught by the Judiciary Police at G2E Asia held at the Venetian Macao for promoting an online gambling website. The promotion used the official emblem of the Macau SAR and fraudulently claimed that it had been licensed by the local government. The police pressed charges against him for counterfeiting and illegal operation of gambling activities. In response, the man claimed that the company he represented was involved in online entertainment only, and had nothing to do with gambling. He said he had no knowledge about the “online gambling license” shown on the website.

Two men arrested for drug dealing

The Judiciary Police arrested two men for drug dealing on Wednesday. One was reported to be from Hong Kong, 20 years old, while the other was from Malaysia. Both were reportedly hired by a Hong Kong drug cartel. The suspect from Hong Kong told the police he was paid HKD3,000 daily. The Malaysian suspect, on the other hand, was reportedly paid HKD40,000 per month to sell drugs in the territory. A total of 85.7 grams of cocaine, worth around MOP300,000, was confiscated by the police.

CCAC to improve accountability system

In response to demands in Macau for more rigorous anti-corruption activity, the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) says it will improve its accountability system for officials in the public service. The improvement comes after a suggestion made by a delegation from the United Nations concerning the implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in Macau. Drawing on its experience in corruption-fighting and ombudsman in recent years as well as the shared experience of the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong, the CCAC has commenced a review of the relevant criminal regime and the discipline regime of public servants. The conclusions of the review and subsequent recommendations will be revealed and rendered to the public shortly, noted the CCAC.

HEALTH

Influenza breakout infects 12 students

TWELVE students from two primary school classes of the Colégio de Santa Rosa de Lima (English Section) have reportedly been infected by the Influenza virus, a statement from the Health Bureau (SSM) revealed.

According to the same statement, the students, aged between 7 and 12 years, started to manifest symptoms of infection of the respiratory system such as fever, cough and throat pain, among others from May 17. All of them attended medical institutions for treatment but none of them reported any critical or concerning situation.

The SSM, following the established procedures for this kind of situation, had carried out sampling for laboratory analysis and informed the school to implement control measures such as carrying out disinfection, cleaning and maintaining air ventilation inside the facilities. The same bureau also reminded the institution to strictly comply with protocols which dictate that

AP PHOTO



infected students are not to attend school during the recovery period.

According to data being monitored by the SSM, there was a higher incidence of cases this week, compared to the previous week as well as with the same period last year. This has led the Bureau to say that there is a stronger activity of Influenza B virus during this period and that residents are to pay spe-

cial attention to prevention measures. In the same statement, the Bureau does not rule out the possibility of an increase in the epidemic situation in the coming weeks.

Data also provided by the SSM notes that the large majority of all the cases being detected (90.4%) relates to Influenza B virus, while Influenza A (H3N2) is involved in 9.6% of cases. No cases have been registered.

red for the virus Influenza A (H1N1).

From January to date, the SSM has recorded a total of 98 cases of influenza infection complications, such as pneumonia or other complications, resulting in eight critical cases involving two children and six adults. In two of these cases complications led to the death of the patients two males aged 89 and 69.

3 INFANTS INFECTED AT DAYCARE CENTER

In a separate report, the Health Bureau (SSM) revealed that three one-year-old infants have reportedly been infected by Enterovirus at the daycare center they attend.

The SSM was notified on May 22 by the “Andorinha” Daycare Center from The Women’s General Association of Macau, located in the Areia Preta District.

The two girls and one boy started to show symptoms of the disease on May 18, with parents taking them to several medical institutions for diagnosis and treatment. One of the infants was hospitalized as the ulcers commonly formed by the activity of this virus caused the child to have difficulty consuming food. The clinical status of the other children is now considered to be normal and there is no sign of serious complications. RM

TOURISM

Surging same-day visitors behind April growth

VISITOR arrivals increased 15.9% year-on-year in April 2019 to top 3.43 million, according to the latest information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), led by a dramatic 27.4% surge in same-day visitors. According to the DSEC data released yesterday, same-day visitors reached 1.8 million in April 2019, while overnight visitors grew 5.4% year-on-year to 1.62 million. The sharp rise in vi-

sitor arrivals comes as society discusses ways to combat a perceived overtourism problem. The Institute for Tourism Studies previously estimated that the city’s “optimal tourism carrying capacity” was about 40 million visitors per year; a figure that will likely be surpassed before 2019 is out.

The surge in same-day visitors, which in April accounted for 52.7% of all tourists, brought the

average length of stay for visitors down by 0.1 days year-on-year to 1.1 days. Meanwhile, the average length of stay for same-day visitors held stable at 0.2 days and overnight visitors stayed on average for 2.2 days, an increase of 0.1 days year-on-year. Visitors from mainland China increased by 13.5% year-on-year to 2.33 million, coming primarily from Guangdong Province (868,300), Hunan

Province (119,200) and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region (103,500).

Visitors from the cities of the Greater Bay Area grew by 17.6% year-on-year to 1.45 million. Some 48.1% of visitors from the Greater Bay Area came from Hong Kong (696,900), 30% more than in April 2018. Those coming from Zhuhai surged by 40.6% to 227,600 (15.7% of the total) whereas those from Guan-

zhou decreased by 6% to 140,900 (9.7%).

At the same time, visitors from South Korea (61,500) increased by 0.8% year-on-year, whereas those from Taiwan (91,800) dropped by 2.9%.

In the first four months of 2019, visitor arrivals reached 13.8 million, up nearly 20% year-on-year. Overnight visitors (6.36 million) and same-day visitors (7.43 million) rose by 8.3% and 31.9% respectively. The average length of stay of visitors shortened by 0.1 days year-on-year to 1.1 days, with that of overnight visitors (2.2 days) and same-day visitors (0.2 days) remaining unchanged. DB



ENTERTAINMENT

Elēkrōn to close in July

STUDIO City Macau's entertainment show Elēkrōn will halt its operations on July 21 – six months after its debut, the Times has learned.

Dubbed as the "world's first all-electric indoor theatrical stunt show," an insider said that the announcement was made to the employees of the show last month.

The employee believed that the closure was due to "not many sales" and that the "predicted income was not met."

"It was announced [to us] on April 26. They called for a full meeting where they announced [the closure]," said the employee, who requested anonymity.

Reports of the show's closure was confirmed by

others familiar with the matter, who also asked not to be identified.

The Times contacted Studio City operator Melco Resorts & Entertainment for comment, but no reply was received by press time.

On the operator's website, tickets for the show are unavailable for purchase after July 21.

The 75-minute show made its debut in January. A collaboration with entertainment company Stu-fish, the show had the aim to bring a "whole new audience" to Macau.

Frederic Winckler, executive vice president, chief marketing and brand officer of Melco Resorts and Entertainment had pledged to "enhance our already-rich portfolio of unique attractions following the

tremendous success of The House of Dancing Water."

The show has a cast of over 150 people paired with 70 specially transformed electric-powered vehicles.

Other highlights of the show include setting a Porsche on fire and driving it around the arena while motorcycle riders and buggy drivers drive up and drop in from the top of a projection screen at a height of 12 meters, at a steep 65-degree angle and come screeching to a halt just a couple meters from the audience.

Elēkrōn is one of Studio City's entertainment highlights aside from its Legend Heroes Park, Batman Dark Flight, Golden Reel and the Warner Bros. Fun Zone.

However, according to several reviews on travel website, TripAdvisor, not all visitors were satisfied with the show, with some complaining that the sound effects were too loud.

In October 2017, the previous show at Studio City, The House of Magic, also closed down. Analysts stated that the venue was not feasible, and that Melco Resorts & Entertainment was looking at repositioning portions of the property.

According to the gaming operator's statement, as of the end of April, Melco has extended close to 13,000 invitations to community beneficiaries to enjoy Elēkrōn as part of its corporate social responsibility program to promote the arts. LV

SPORTS

Qualification races for Macau GP start this weekend

Renato Marques

DRIVERS and their machines are ready to start another season of the Macau Touring Car Series (MTCS), which kicks off this weekend at Guangdong International Circuit (GIC) in the city of Zhaoqing.

Part of the MTCS, the Macau racing festival is

used as a qualifier for the Macau Grand Prix. The event will follow the same format as in previous years with four races being contested over two weekend events. The first event, which comprises races 1 and 2 is held from May 24 to 26 and the second will follow about a month later, from June 21 to 23 for races 3 and 4.

Drivers, organized in different categories according to the car class in which they are included, will battle for points that will determine if they are included in the racing program of the Macau GP in November.

The Macau Racing Festival will feature two racing categories, included under the umbrella of

the MTCS – the AAMC Challenge 1600cc Turbo Class and the AAMC Challenge Above 1950cc Class. Like last year, the best 18 drivers in each category at MTCS will qualify to race at the Macau Grand Prix's Macau Touring Car Cup.

As a novelty, the Festival will run the newly created Greater Bay GT Cup competition on the same weekends. The new competition is organized for GT4 specification vehicles and will be included in both the Macau and Hong Kong GT series calendar.

ARTS

Mr Ma & Son a reflection of East- meets-West curiosity



Fang Xu

Staff reporter

A stage adaptation of "Mr. Ma and Son", a novel written by influential Chinese writer Lao She 90 years ago, will be performed at the Grand Auditorium of the Macao Cultural Centre this weekend.

The play, written and directed by veteran Fang Xu, who also plays the role of Mr. Ma, portrays the "adventure" of two Chinese men in London.

In the play, Beijing native Mr. Ma reluctantly inherits an antique shop owned by Ma's late brother. He and his son stay at the English Mrs. Wedderburn's place.

With Ma and Mrs. Wedderburn growing fond of each other, the audience will be treated to a rollercoaster of laughter and tears as old-school Chinese values clash with Western ideologies.

Liu Xinran, a Beijing Opera player who will undertake the role of Mrs. Wedderburn, and Yu Guming, who will be playing the character of younger Ma, along with Fang, told the press yesterday that East-West relations are central to the story and as relevant today as they were when the novel was written.

"At the time when the novel was written, China was weak and poor; so these Westerners would discriminate against Chinese people," said Fang. "Now, China has become richer, and our nation is no longer weak, but on many occasions this discrimination still exists."

He explained that the novel is set in the 1920's, when Chinese people were very unfamiliar with the West. Being more informed today, it is senseless to stage the novel as it is. Certain tuning must be made to suit today's audiences.

Audiences will see a stage decorated with hats and newspapers. Fang explained that when he researched for this play, he realized that both items were icons of English people in those days. Fang has added these features to decorate the stage and set the scene to bring the audience to London.

Fang was worried that his rich Beijing accent might affect audience's enjoyment. "After all, drama relies much on verbal language. If there's a barrier, the audience may feel a loss of many elements." He said that he hoped the subtitles would offset his accent.

Urban planner opposes Sai Van Lake promenade

Urban planner Lam Iek Chit is opposed to a government proposal to build a wooden promenade along the coast of Sai Van Lake. In an interview with local Chinese-language newspaper Cheng Pou, Lam grounded his opinion in the fact that it fundamentally goes against the aim of conservation. Lam quoted three references in a Cultural Affairs Bureau consultation text regarding the Avenida da República - which is adjacent to Sai Van Lake, and the embankment area of the lake - to show the importance of preserving the area. Lam considers that the proposal will likely have a negative effect on the overall scenery.

AL tries to assuage fear of Internet surveillance

The first Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly has given its comments on the draft of the Internet Security Law. Ho Ion Sang, president of the Committee, said that the law does not authorize law enforcement staff to directly or indirectly obtain personal data, industry intelligence, or the contents of communications. Any breach would result in legal and disciplinary actions. Furthermore, Ho assured that this law would only be applicable to the operators of key IT infrastructure. There will also be mechanisms for citizens to file reviews or appeals if they suspect a breach by the law enforcement.

ENVIRONMENT | ANALYSIS

What is being done to reduce,

Staff reporter

IT is truly an era of saving when in even places like Macau, restaurants and eateries are starting eco-friendly initiatives.

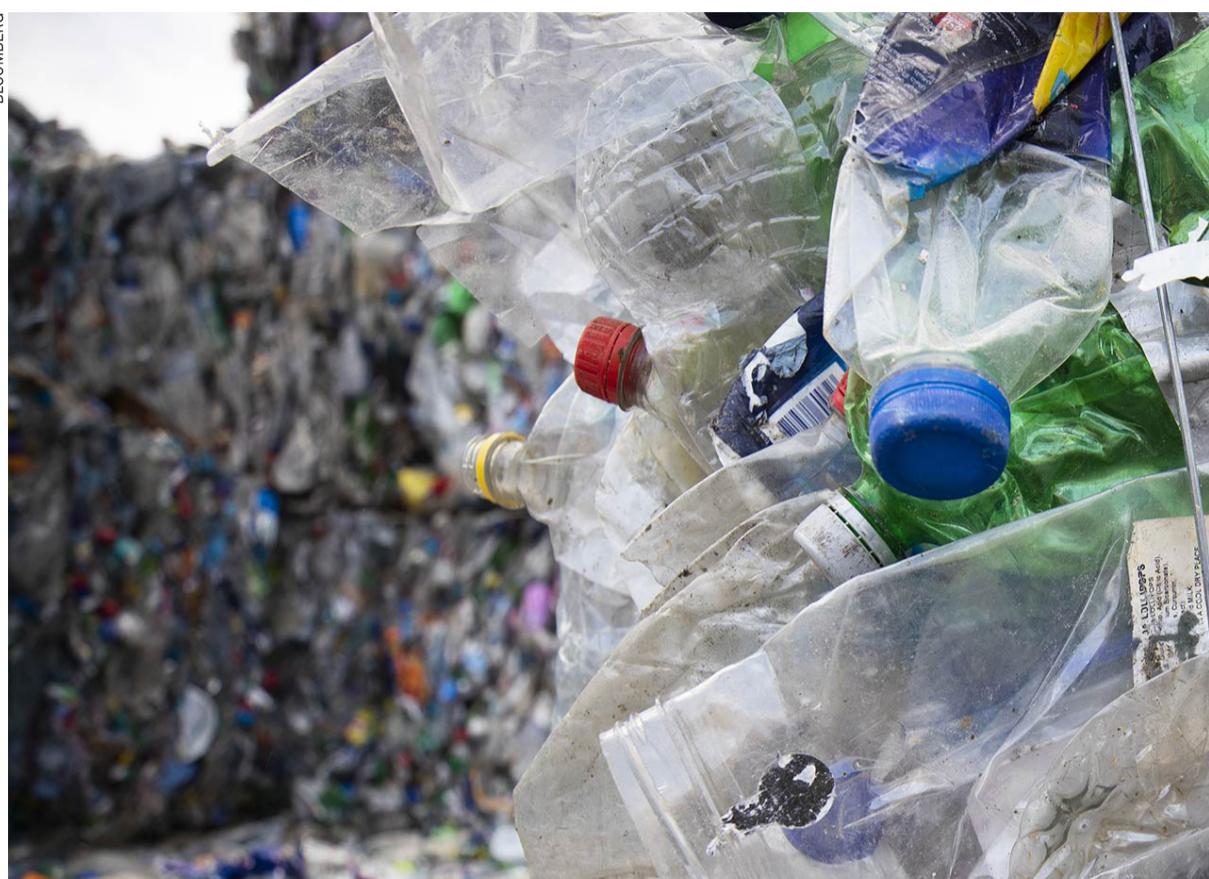
A coffee chain and a fast food chain have forgone traditional plastic straws, with the former turning to straw made with paper. A larger enterprise is about to substitute disposable water bottles with biodegradable paper cups. The Environmental Protection Bureau (DSP) is starting to work with the Public Security Police Force by adding reusable water bottles to officers' daily gear.

However, despite the noise about waste control work in Macau, the data shows that the city is not being very efficient when it comes to resource conservation and recycling.

According to the environmental authority, an average of 2.11 kilograms of waste per person is collected daily in the city, significantly higher than in Beijing (1 kilogram), Hong Kong (1.39 kilograms) and Singapore (1.49 kilograms).

Considering the population of Macau is approximately 670,000, this equates to about

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1,400 tons each day or about 515,000 tons per year.

In addition to the disproportionate amount of waste generated in Macau, just 20% of it enters the recycling process each year.

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

The famous three R's of waste management – reduce, reuse, recycle – have been the backbone of the global environmental protection movement in past decades. From

the "BYOB" (bring your own bag) action decades ago, to current "bring your own bowl" action - even promoted by the DSPA - most of these initiatives lie within the scope of the three R's.

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石頭記

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Cristina Vinhas - Jewelry Designer

Chí Chi - Jewelry

Maalé - Design . Creation

Maria Lourenço - Designer

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03.06 -15.06.2019
12h - 19h

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Nota informativa: Esta exposição apresentará acessórios de moda e peças decorativas de vidro realizados no Atelier de Joalharia da Escola de Artes e Ofícios da CPM. 簡介:此展覽將展示澳門葡人之家協會珠寶製作工作坊設計作品。

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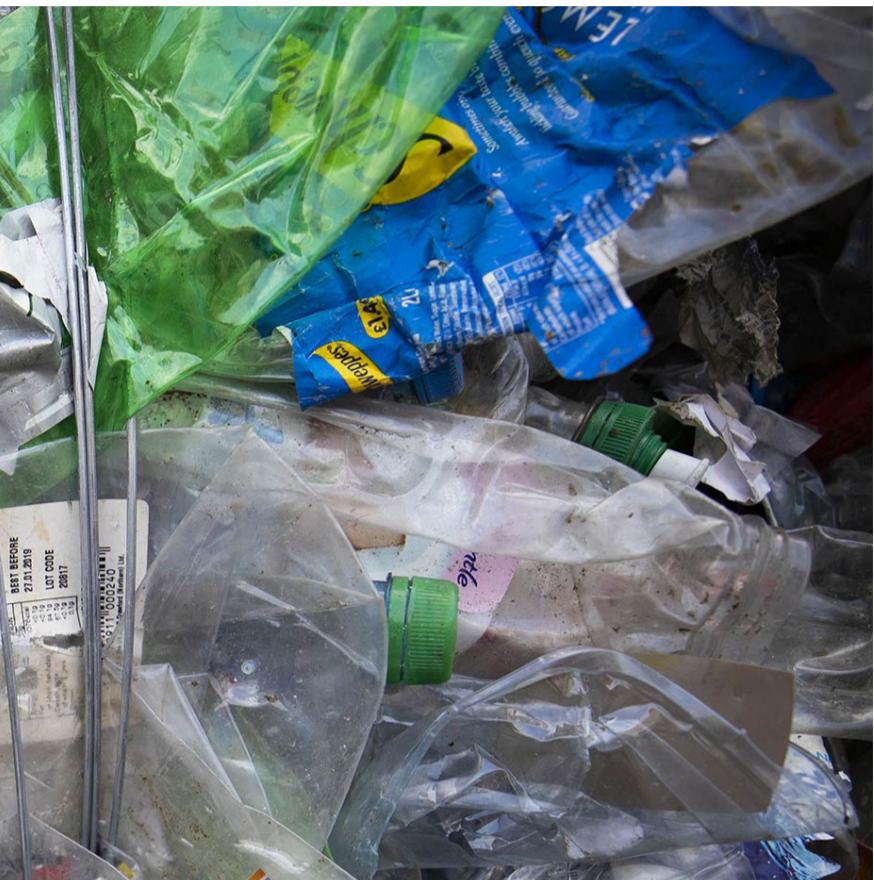
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reuse, recycle?



A consensus emerged in environment protection circles to prioritize “reduce” actions, meaning less resources should

be used in daily life. “Reuse” resources if using them is inevitable and “recycle” them as a last resort for resource conser-

vation.

That's because many daily items are surprising resource-expensive to make in the first place.

Take plastic bags, for example, which have long been subjected to government measures to restrict or ban their use. According to science website phys.org, one recent study in Denmark showed that in order to compensate a shopping bag's lifecycle, a polypropylene bag must be used 37 times, while a cotton bag must be used an astonishing 7,100 times.

A 2006 U.K. study considered only the bags' impact on climate change, but found that a non-woven cloth bag should be used 11 times and a cotton bag 131 times in order to offset its production's contribution to climate change. That's less astonishing, but still rather a lot.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation states that “reusable bags need to be used at least 50 times in order for their environmental benefits to be realized.”

FREE-CYCLE

GingerRice Kong, convener of the Macau Free-cycle Society, has been working to encourage people to “free-cycle” their resources, which is the process of passing on usable materials. This not only recycles resources,

but also reduces the amount of new products being made.

Kong said this initiative was started to spread the idea of treasuring the things around us. She also encourages people to avoid making waste. At the recent Tap Seac Craft Market, she ran a booth selling refurbished and decorated red packets. The packets were decorated with used materials as well.

In terms of reducing the use of disposable packaging, a new wave of “unpackaged purchases” is emerging. Several establishments, as far as the Times knows, one in Bairro Horta da Mitra and another opposite Fortune Tower, are offering this relatively new type of purchasing method in Macau. The former sells eco-friendly and fair trade ingredients, while the latter sells bio-degradable cleaning agents. Customers are encouraged to bring their own containers to reduce the use of new materials.

SEVEN TYPES OF PLASTIC

In April, the Times asked a DSPA representative about their work educating people on the seven types of plastics, only some of which the bureau is capable of collecting for recycling. The representative admitted that only certain types were ready for recycling in Macau, but did not answer about the

state of education efforts on the topic.

In their absence, it has fallen to non-governmental groups to disseminate information about the different types of plastics.

A campaign called “Waste No Mall” was recently brought to Macau. The initiative, originally from Hong Kong, aims to collect waste that cannot be recycled in Macau and bring it to Hong Kong for recycling in person. Collection points are set up at locations across the city on every third Sunday. The latest collection point has been installed at lawmaker Agnes Lam's office.

Lam was critical about the government's efforts. “[The DSPA] has just started collecting lighting gadgets for recycling. It should and could have been done long ago,” she said, “and the effort on collecting used batteries should have started much earlier.”

“Because current efforts are not working, the ‘Waste No Mall’ campaign symbolizes the general public's greatest effort to help save the world,” Lam told the Times.

“Waste No Mall” collection points take four types of plastic: Type 1 PET, Type 2 HDPE, Type 4 LDPE, and Type 5 PP. This will supplement the gap in the government collection of recyclables, activists say.

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Hong Kong's longest-serving CEO steps down as sons take over

Alfred Liu

DAVID Li, the longest-serving chief executive officer of a major Hong Kong-listed company, is stepping down from the top position at Bank of East Asia Ltd. after a 38-year run.

Li, 80, will withdraw from his day-to-day role as CEO from July 1 and will become executive chairman, according to a statement yesterday. His sons Adrian Li and Brian Li will assume the roles of co-CEOs.

David Li's tenure as CEO spans a tumultuous period in Hong Kong's history, from the adoption of a dollar peg in 1983 to the Asian financial contagion and Hong Kong's handover to

China in the final years of last century, followed by a seven-year property bust. During his reign, Li's bank suffered a mini-run on its deposits at the height of the global financial crisis, an insider-trading scandal and a challenge from one of the world's most powerful activist investors.

Li, who joined Bank of East Asia in 1969, was appointed CEO in 1981 and named chairman in 1997. His 38-year tenure marks him as the longest-serving CEO among all companies listed on the Hong Kong Composite Index, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

Among other long-serving current CEOs of companies in the Hang Sang Composite Index, Hengan International Group

Co.'s Hui Lin Chit has had a 34-year run and Want Want China Holdings Ltd.'s Tsai Eng-Meng has been head of his firm since 1987. Benjamin Pan's tenure as CEO of AAC Technologies Holdings Inc. is so far 26 years.

Hong Kong's business elite is undergoing a changing of the guard, with many of its 20th century titans handing the running of their companies to the next generation. Li Ka-shing, founder of CK Hutchison Holdings Ltd., last year stepped down in favor of his son Victor, while Macau gambling tycoon Stanley Ho has let his wives and children take control of his empire.

David Li has kept Bank of East Asia independent in a city that's dominated by HSBC Holdings

Plc and Chinese-owned rivals. His period in charge of the bank saw several notable challenges, including a bank run in September 2008 that saw hundreds of depositors line up outside its outlets, but which ultimately fizzled out. Earlier that year Li agreed to pay \$8.1 million to settle a U.S. probe in an insider-trading case without admitting or denying liability. He quit Hong Kong's executive council soon after the settlement.

In recent years, Bank of East Asia has been a target of Paul Singer's Elliott Management Corp., which owns about 8% of its stock. Elliott has alleged that the lender acted improperly when issuing stock that diluted minority shareholders and cited the bank's "chronically poor

performance" and "the inability of an entrenched executive management team to deliver proper value." The New York-based hedge fund started legal proceedings against the firm in 2016. That case continues.

Bank of East Asia was cut from the Hang Seng Index last year after a 34-year stay in the benchmark. Shares of the lender, which was incorporated in Hong Kong in 1918, have fallen 25% over the past year, while the gauge has dropped about 10%. None of the 11 analysts tracked by Bloomberg who follow Bank of East Asia have buy ratings on the stock, and it has a consensus rating of 1.91 out of 5, the lowest among the Bloomberg Asia Pacific Banks Index's 63 members. **Bloomberg**

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HONG KONG

Speakers at corruption symposium call for international collaboration

SPEAKERS at an ongoing international symposium hosted by the Hong Kong Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) called for international anti-corruption cooperation including cooperation in the areas of extradition and mutual legal assistance.

"As corruption often transcends borders, local efforts are not enough. International cooperation is called for. Chapter IV of UNCAC (the United Nations Convention against Corruption) is dedicated to international cooperation and covers a wide range of measures including extradition and mutual legal assistance," Teresa Cheng, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government's Secretary for Justice, said in her keynote address at the 7th ICAC Symposium.

Describing Hong Kong as "an active and responsible player in the area of international cooperation," Cheng said that under the principle of "one country, two systems", the Basic Law allows Hong Kong to establish its own regime of reciprocal juridical assistance with foreign states, including extradition and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

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Carrie Lam

"The existence of a suitable legal framework for surrender of fugitive offenders and mutual legal assistance is a hallmark for the rule of law [...] Hong Kong's surrender of fugitive offenders and mutual legal assistance regimes contain prerequisites of cooperation which are in line with international standards," she said, adding that "amendments to further enhance the legal framework have been put in place and under discussion at the moment" in Hong Kong.

Speaking at the symposium, jointly hosted

by ICAC and the World Justice Project (WJP), ICAC Commissioner Simon Peh said the fight against corruption is a shared responsibility of different stakeholders.

"It requires not only the relentless efforts of anti-corruption agencies but also the tenacious endeavor of different stakeholders in the public and private sectors as well as the civil society," said Peh.

Titled "Fighting Corruption - A New Perspective" and bringing together over 500 representatives of anti-corruption and law enforcement agen-

cies from more than 50 jurisdictions, the three-day symposium was opened Wednesday by HKSAR Chief Executive Carrie Lam at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center.

"From its early days, the ICAC has attached great importance to establishing and maintaining rapport with overseas anti-corruption and law-enforcement agencies," said Lam. "Corruption remains a global issue today and is affecting all countries. [...] The global efforts in fighting corruption must therefore continue." MDT/Xinhua

Germany grants asylum to two pro-democracy activists

GERMANY has granted asylum to two Hong Kong activists in a sign of growing concern over how dissent is dealt with in the territory.

In interviews with The Wall Street Journal and Financial Times published on Wednesday, Ray Wong Toi Yeung said he and fellow pro-democracy protester Alan Li Tung Sing were granted asylum last year.

Germany's Interior Ministry would not give names due to privacy regulations, but confirmed it had granted two people from Hong Kong asylum



Ray Wong Toi-yeung

last year. Wong and Li are the only dissidents known to have been in Germany seeking protection.

Wong told the Journal he chose to reveal his asylum status now in response to a proposed Hong Kong law that

would allow criminal suspects to be handed over to mainland China.

Germany's Foreign Ministry said later Wednesday, without referring directly to the case, that it considers the human rights situation in Hong Kong to be "good as a whole."

"At the same time, we are increasingly concerned about the diminishing space for the political opposition and a gradual erosion of freedom of opinion and the press, particularly in connection with sensitive political issues," the ministry said. AP

opinion

KYLE BASS IS WRONG ON HONG KONG'S PEG, TOO

Shuli Ren & Matthew Brooker, Bloomberg

HAVING failed to preside over a collapse in the yuan, hedge-fund manager Kyle Bass has a new target: the Hong Kong dollar peg. He's wrong about that, too.

Bass is shorting the Hong Kong currency and is "very long dollars," the founder of Hayman Capital Management told Bloomberg TV in an interview Tuesday. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority has spent 80% of its reserves over the past year defending the peg, he said in an investor letter on the city's "impending crisis." That prompted a riposte from the de facto central bank, which said his analysis was based on a misunderstanding.

"Once depleted, the pressure on the currency board will become untenable and the peg will break," Bass wrote in the letter, reproduced on the Zerohedge website.

Well, not quite. What Bass calls excess reserves is better known in Hong Kong as the aggregate balance. This can go to zero and stay there for years without the peg breaking. It is, in fact, how the currency board mechanism works.

Hong Kong fixed the value of its currency at 7.8 to the dollar in 1983 and has kept the system, with some minor adjustments, ever since. As the HKMA gently explains to Bass, when the aggregate balance shrinks, then local interest rates rise. Higher rates reduce the incentive for investors to sell the Hong Kong dollar. Bass's breathless analysis points to the "staggering" 80-basis-point gap between Hong Kong's interbank rate U.S. Libor and concludes that investors will switch into the higher-yielding currency. This is exactly what is supposed to happen.

If anything, the aggregate balance is still too big. Hibor has been subdued because banks kept on depositing cash with the HKMA, even at zero interest. As Bass correctly observes, Hong Kong benefited hugely over the past decade from inflows triggered by the Federal Reserve's quantitative easing and the city's proximity to China's credit boom. The aggregate balance is still higher than before the Lehman bust and needs to fall further so that Hibor can rise.

The hedge fund manager is on firmer ground when he says that Hong Kong rates will spike if the aggregate balance goes to zero. More questionably, he goes on to say that this could cause the banking system to collapse, prompting a Chinese government bailout that may leave foreign depositors of overseas-based institutions such as HSBC Holdings Plc and Standard Chartered Plc in the cold.

Well, probably not. Hong Kong banks still have plenty of money sitting idle. The loan-to-deposit ratio, while on the rise, stands at 87.8%. Even if Hong Kong dollar liquidity gets tight, the monetary authority can simply stop rolling over its issuance of Exchange Fund bills. It's amassed a stockpile of more than HKD1 trillion (\$127 billion), over five times as much as in the pre-Lehman days.

There are plenty of other objections to Bass's analysis, which market participants have been quick to leap on. He's right about some things, though. Banking systems that became overly large relative to the size of the local economy were crisis markers for Iceland and Cyprus. Hong Kong's total banking assets have ballooned to 850% of GDP, from about 460% at the end of 2002.

More importantly, there's the threat that the U.S. could stop treating Hong Kong as a separate customs territory because of the erosion of the city's autonomy by China – a risk heightened by the government's attempt to push through a controversial bill that would allow fugitives to be extradited to the mainland. That's an Armageddon prospect for Hong Kong, though remains a low-probability event.

But what's most striking about Bass's doomsday warning is the lack of historical awareness. After dubiously asserting that the Hong Kong handover triggered the Asian financial crisis, he notes that overnight rates jumped to 20% (one-month Hibor reached 27% at its peak in 1997) and real estate prices tumbled about 70 percent. Yet not a single bank went under. And the peg held.

To bolster his case, Bass invokes... Argentina, whose currency board collapsed in the early 2000s. Argentina? The South American country has been defaulting on its international obligations since the 19th century. Hong Kong, with its serial budget surpluses, has no such problems with its fiscal image. We can almost hear the guffaws from Hong Kong foreign-exchange trading floors.

Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it, as the philosopher George Santayana is reputed to have said. If Bass wants to brush up on the history of bets against the Hong Kong dollar peg, he could consult Bill Ackman.

GAMING

Atlantic City casino earnings way down amid more competition

Wayne Parry, Atlantic City

MORE casinos have meant less profit in Atlantic City since two gambling halls reopened last summer.

Figures released Wednesday by the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement show the nine casinos saw their gross operating profit decline by nearly 30% in the first quarter of this year compared to the same period last year, when there were only seven.

The casinos collectively reported an USD87 million profit in the first three months of this year.

Gross operating profit reflects earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and other charges, and is a widely accepted measure of profitability in the Atlantic City casino industry.

When the Hard Rock and Ocean casinos reopened last June, there was concern that the extra competition might drive down profits.

So far, that has proven to be the case. Hard Rock, the former Trump Taj Mahal, and Ocean Casino Resort, the former Revel, both opened on the same day last year. While they added thousands of jobs and additional hotel rooms to the market, they also spread the resort's gambling business a bit thinner.

For all of 2018, gross operating profit was down 15%.

AP PHOTO



"While the market has grown, profit margins remain tight, reflecting the competitive landscape," said James Plousis, chairman of the New Jersey Casino Control Commission.

But he cited other statistics showing that hotel occupancy was up nearly 19% and sales tax revenue were up almost 18% for the quarter.

In the first quarter of this year, only Resorts showed an increase in gross operating profit, up nearly 80% to \$3 million. But the large percentage increase is mainly because Resorts'

first quarter profit last year was so small.

The two newest casinos both reported operating losses as they continue the expensive process of promoting themselves and spending money to try to attract customers. Hard Rock showed a loss of \$6.1 million for the quarter, and Ocean lost \$10.3 million, although its acting CEO Eric Matejevich said the casino had returned to profitability in April.

Bally's reported the largest percentage decrease in operating profit, down more than 54% to \$2.8 million. Harrah's was down nearly 42% to \$16.5 million; Caesars was down 13.6% to \$10.8 million; the Borgata was down 12% to \$39.7 million; the Golden Nugget was down 5.6% to \$9.4 million, and Tropicana was down 5.3% percent to \$16.5 million.

Among internet-only entities, Resorts Digital swung from an \$815,000 first quarter loss last year to a profit of \$1.8 million in the first quarter of this year. Caesars Interactive Entertainment-NJ saw its profit decline by 5.7% to \$2.7 million. AP

corporate bits

WORLD-FAMOUS CABARET BACK AT THE PARISIAN BY POPULAR DEMAND



World-famous and celebrated cabaret, Crazy Horse Paris, will return to The Parisian Macao's The Parisian Theatre from September 25 to October 5 with its best of show,

Forever Crazy in Macao. Forever Crazy in Macao celebrates more than 65 years of Parisian glamour. Inspired by themes of femininity and sophistication,

Macau audiences will experience the most popular acts from the legendary cabaret, presented by a multicultural cast of 11 beautiful, classically trained dancers wearing little more than textured lighting and projection.

Forever Crazy was conceived in 1951 as a tribute to the founder of Crazy Horse Paris, Alain Bernardin, and celebrates the cabaret's artistic and avant-garde heritage while adding modernity, humor and sophistication. The performances are accentuated by original music and stylish costumes tailor-made for each dancer.

Tickets go on sale on May 23 at all Cotai Ticketing box offices.

MGM REIGNS IN HOFEX HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL CULINARY CLASSICS 2019



The MGM Culinary Team swept eight awards - three Gold, two Silver and two Bronze - in the prestigious Hong Kong International Culinary Classic (HKICC) at HOFEX 2019 this May, according to a statement from the gaming operator.

Among strong competition from Australia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Taiwan, Sous Chef Kwan Wing Fat from Imperial Court of MGM Macau obtained a Golden Bauhinia Cup, which is the most prestigious award in Chinese Cuisi-

ne category.

Meanwhile, Ip Wai Teng from Pastry & Bakery at MGM Cotai won a Gold with Distinction award by scoring full marks, being the only Gold with Distinction winner in this internationally-acclaimed competition.

Geoffrey Simmons, Director of Culinary of MGM, applauded the team's achievements. "I am incredibly proud of the team who spent almost 800 hours preparing well for the competition, and the success is the culmination of the past three months of continuous hard work and dedication of both participants and their trainers," he said. "Their outstanding results [...] are a testament to MGM's on-going commitment to nurturing talent diversity for Macau."



TOURISM

Saudi Arabia seeks to transform Red Sea beaches

SAUDI Arabia is seeking private sector investment to turn an archipelago, desert and mountains - an area about the size of Belgium - on its Red Sea coast into a global tourism destination.

The oil-rich kingdom's sovereign wealth fund has committed financing for the project's first phase, while the Red Sea Development Co. is in talks with banks to raise debt, according to the head of the firm managing the process. The project will cover 90 islands and 28,000 square kilometers (10,810 square miles), according to the company website.

"The funding is backed by the Public Investment Fund - they're funding the equity and we will source senior debt," John Pagano, chief executive officer of Red Sea Development, said in an interview in Riyadh. "While there's no absolute need for capital, bringing in private sector investors is seen as a good thing. We are actively engaged in discussions with numerous investors."

The company would seek to structure the investments as joint ventures and expects interest from domestic and regional investors, Pagano said.

Saudi Arabia is transforming its Red Sea coastline as part of plans to transform the economy and cut its reliance on oil. Bringing sun-seekers to the kingdom's beaches could transform a tourism industry that relies almost solely on Muslim pilgrims.

The proposal is part of

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's blueprint to prepare the biggest Arab economy for the post-oil era. Authorities are already relaxing rules on entertainment, and by 2030, they aim to double household spending on recreation to 6 percent.

The idea of creating separate areas for foreigners with looser rules also isn't entirely new to Saudi Arabia, and concerns about Western influences seeping into Saudi society might be assuaged by the promise to develop a rural area far from major cities.

However, past mega-projects to diversify the economy have struggled to get off the ground.

The first phase of the Red Sea project, due to be completed in 2022, will include 14 hotels and a commercial airport. The development is expected to be fully completed by 2030.

"We have much more to build over the coming years, so there will be an opportunity at the end of each stage to either convert into a real estate investment trust, which would then allow us to monetize these assets and recycle capital," Pagano also said. "There will be many options that we will consider. IPO being among those options but depends on market appetite at the time."

The company expects the development to create 70,000 jobs and contribute about 22 billion riyals (USD5.9 billion) to the country's gross domestic product. **MDT/Bloomberg**

ADVERTORIAL

THE YOUNG AND THE ACTIVE

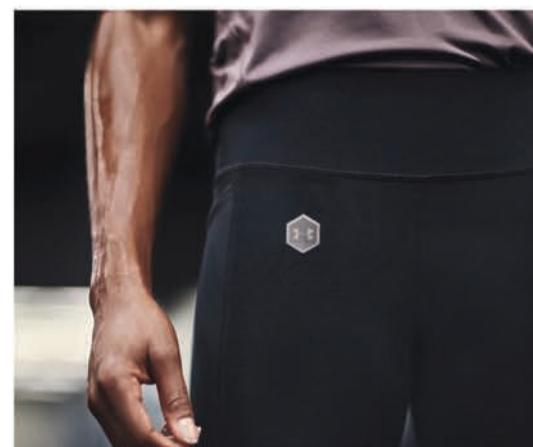
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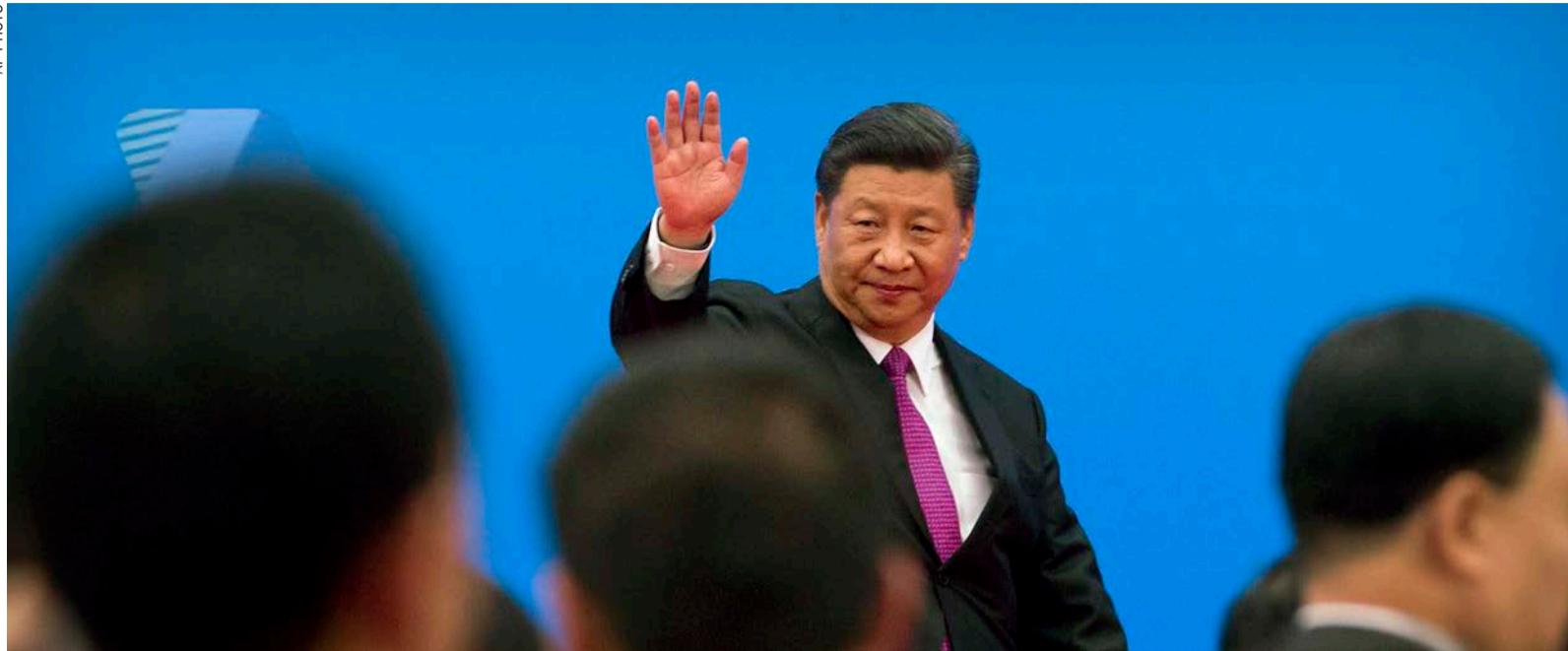
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Chinese President Xi Jinping

Gov't seeks Asian neighbors' support in trade fight with US

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

CHINA is seeking support from Russia and from its Central Asian neighbors in its escalating tariff fight with the U.S., while also stepping up protests against moves to penalize its technology sector.

Speaking Wednesday at a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Kyrgyzstan, Foreign Minister Wang Yi said representatives of the eight-nation grouping had expressed "broad support" for China's position.

In comments reported yester-

day, Wang reiterated China's stance that it would never accept unequal trading arrangements. Beijing will match "extreme pressure" from the U.S. with its own measures, he said in remarks posted on the ministry's website.

The trade frictions have "aroused great concern from the international community," Wang said. "I stress to everyone that China's actions are not just about preserving our own legitimate rights and interests but also to maintain the norms of international relations and safeguard the international free trade

trading system."

A security group dominated by Moscow and Beijing, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization also includes Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan. Several other countries are observer states and dialogue partners.

Wang's comments show how China attempting to global opinion in its favor.

Beijing has already responded to Trump's tariff hikes on USD250 billion of Chinese imports by slapping penalties on \$110 billion of American goods.

Based on last year's trade, that leaves about \$45 billion in imports from the U.S.

They include semiconductors and other critical inputs needed by fledgling Chinese tech industries.

China has hinted it could also leverage its role as the main global supplier of rare earths used in smartphones, lightweight magnets, batteries and other components to slap back. It could also target Apple and other companies that rely on Chinese manufacturing and sales.

So far, though, Beijing has sou-

ght to win sympathy and support by burnishing its credentials as a rules-abiding member of the World Trade Organization.

China's Commerce Ministry lashed out yesterday at an order by the Trump administration that will cut access for Chinese technology companies such as telecom gear giant Huawei to advanced American computer chips and other components.

The move, to take effect after a 90-day grace period, constitutes the use of "American national power to suppress Chinese companies," the ministry said in a statement on its website. This "not only seriously disrupts regular business cooperation between the sides' enterprises, but also seriously threatens the security of the global industrial supply chain."

The Trump administration has singled out Huawei, accusing it of posing a security threat. As a result, U.S. allies and their companies increasingly have put cooperation with the company on hold.

On Wednesday, Britain's EE and Vodafone and Japan's KDDI and Y! Mobile said they were pausing the launch of Huawei smartphones, including some that can be used on next generation mobile networks, amid uncertainty about the devices from the world's No. 2 smartphone maker.

A security group dominated by Moscow and Beijing, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization also includes Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan. Several other countries are observer states and dialogue partners. AP

Two US warships sail through Taiwan Strait, draw China protest

TWO U.S. warships have sailed through the Taiwan Strait in an apparent show of support for the government of the self-ruled island, which China claims as its own.

Taiwan's defense ministry said in a statement the ships passed through from south to north on Wednesday without incident, adding they were free to sail in the Taiwan Strait.

China, which last month complained about a French ship's passage through the strait, said it had expressed concerns to the U.S. side.

"According to information learnt from the relevant department, China followed closely the passage of the U.S. warships through the Taiwan Strait, and we are fully aware of the whole process," minis-



Taiwan navy personnel simulate a fire drill inside the Knox-class frigate during an exercise in the Suao port in Yilan County, eastern Taiwan.

try spokesman Lu Kang said at a news conference.

"We urge the U.S. to

[...] properly deal with Taiwan-related issues with caution so as to avoid

further negative impacts to China-U.S. relations and peace and stability

in the Taiwan Strait," Lu said.

China maintains a more ambiguous sea boundary than defined by international treaty and has asserted a claim to virtually the entire South China Sea, which is contiguous with the Taiwan Strait and where several governments have competing claims.

In a statement, spokesman for the U.S. 7th Fleet Joseph Keiley said the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Preble and the oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl conducted "a routine Taiwan Strait transit on Tuesday-Wednesday in accordance with international law."

"The ships' transit through the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific. The U.S. Navy will continue to fly, sail and operate anywhere international law allows," Keiley said.

Also on Wednesday, Taiwan's navy held a major live-fire exercise off the

island's east coast in an area increasingly threatened by Chinese ships and planes.

Navy craft fired cannons and missiles and released depth charges, while fighter jets launched munitions and anti-submarine warfare aircraft released buoys.

Submarines, along with a vast array of ballistic missiles, are considered among China's most potent weapons against Taiwan, which split from the mainland during a civil war in 1949.

China has boosted its military threat against Taiwan, with President Xi Jinping saying this year that Beijing would not rule out using force.

That comes on top of growing Chinese pressure to isolate Taiwan internationally and inflict economic pain to force independence-leaning President Tsai Ing-wen to agree to Beijing's contention that Taiwan is a part of China. AP

Chinese man guilty of defrauding Apple out of 1,500 iPhones

AP PHOTO



Andrew Selsky, Salem

OVER the span of two years, a Chinese national in Oregon sent devices that looked like iPhones to Apple, saying they wouldn't turn on and should be replaced under warranty. He didn't just submit a couple of the devices - he delivered in person or shipped to Apple around 3,000 of them.

Apple responded by sending almost 1,500 replacement iPhones, each with an approximate resale value of USD600.

But the devices that Quan Jiang sent Apple were fake.

Jiang, 30, a former engineering student at a community college in Albany, Oregon, pleaded guilty in federal court yesterday [local time] to trafficking in counterfeit goods, the U.S. Attorney's office in Portland announced.

The presence of fake iPhones and other high-tech gadgets has become an issue in global resale markets, with some counterfeit versions operating so well it's hard for users to tell the difference between them and the genuine products. But in the Oregon case, the makers of the thousands of fake phones apparently didn't even have to bother with having working operating systems.

An Apple official quo-

ted by Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent Thomas Duffy in a court document exposed a vulnerability that Jiang exploited.

"Submission of an iPhone that will not power on is critical to perpetuating iPhone warranty fraud, as the phone will not be able to be immediately examined or repaired by Apple technicians, triggering the Apple iPhone replacement process as part of its product warranty policy," Duffy wrote, quoting Apple brand protection representative Adrian Punderson.

The U.S. Attorney's office in Portland said Jiang would import the counterfeit devices from Hong Kong and submit them to Apple using various assumed names. The genuine replacement phones Jiang received would be sold in China. Jiang's associate would pay Jiang's mother, who lives in China, who then deposited the money into Jiang's bank account.

Jiang received packages containing between 20 and 30 counterfeit iPhones from associates in Hong Kong between Jan. 1, 2016, and Feb. 1, 2018, according to court documents.

Apple realized something was amiss as early as June 30, 2017, when its legal counsel sent Jiang a

"cease and desist" letter to an address in Corvallis where 150 warranty claims emanated. The lawyers said the company knew he was importing counterfeit Apple products, according to Duffy's affidavit. Jiang didn't respond, so the Apple lawyers sent a second letter.

Apple did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the case.

Apple rejected 1,576 warranty claims associated with Jiang, Duffy said. The 1,493 claims that resulted in replacement iPhones being delivered by Apple represented an \$895,000 loss to the Cupertino, California-based company, Duffy wrote.

Brad Bench, who heads the Homeland Security Investigations office in Seattle, said in a statement that trafficking in counterfeit goods hurts the economy, legitimate businesses, and impact consumers directly.

Jiang faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison, a \$2 million fine or twice his proceeds, whichever is greater, when he is sentenced on Aug. 28. Under a plea agreement, the U.S. Attorney's office will recommend a prison sentence of three years, at least \$200,000 in restitution to Apple.

And Jiang must forfeit his black 2015 Mercedes-Benz CLA 250 coupe. AP

AD



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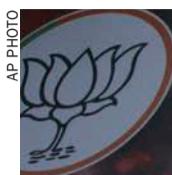
Emily Carr University, Canada; McMaster University, Canada; Queen's University, Canada; Ryerson University, Canada; Simon Fraser University, Canada; University of Alberta, Canada; University of British Columbia, Canada; University of Guelph, Canada; University of Toronto, Canada; University of Waterloo, Canada; Carnegie Mellon University, USA; Purdue University, USA; Michigan State University, USA; UC Berkeley, USA; UC Los Angeles, USA; University of Illinois at UC, USA; University of Maryland, USA; University of Michigan, USA; University of Minnesota, USA; University of Washington, USA; Durham University, UK; Imperial College London, UK; King's College London, UK; The University of Manchester, UK; University of the Arts London, UK; University of Bath, UK; University College London, UK; University of Edinburgh, UK; University of Glasgow, UK; University of Oxford, UK; Australian National University; Monash University, Australia; University of Auckland, New Zealand; University of Melbourne, Australia; University of New South Wales, Australia; University of Otago, New Zealand; University of Queensland, Australia; University of Sydney, Australia; École hôtelière de Lausanne, Switzerland; Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands; Istituto Marangoni, Italy; University of Amsterdam, Netherlands; University of Coimbra, Portugal; University of Vigo, Spain; Utrecht University, Netherlands; Chinese University of Hong Kong; City University of Hong Kong; Fudan University, China; Hong Kong Polytechnic University; Hong Kong University; Hong Kong University of Science & Technology; National Taiwan University; University of Macau.

* Bold denotes Class of 2019

We wish you every success as you pursue your academic careers.

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Angelica Da Conceicao	Lei Pui In	Anthony Si
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Afreen Ara Gouse	Tristan Leung, Leung Kai Yip	Darren Wee
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Wan Meng Hoi	Kyna Loughlin	Bebe Zhang
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Nikki Ip Chi Kio	Aitana Dy Macariola	Gigi Zhou
Chao Tek Ke	Joshua Mitchell	





INDIA

Ruling party claims win with assured lead in votes

Emily Schmall, New Delhi

INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party claimed it had won reelection with a commanding lead in yesterday's vote count, while the stock market soared in anticipation of another five-year term for the pro-business Hindu nationalist leader.

Election Commission data by midafternoon showed the Bharatiya Janata Party leading in contests for 299 out of 542 seats in the lower house of Parliament, with its main rival, the Indian National Congress, ahead in 50 contests.

The data didn't indicate what percentage of the estimated 600 million votes cast over the six-

week election had been counted. Although the final tally was not expected until yesterday evening at the earliest, BJP President Amit Shah claimed a victory, crediting Modi's "leadership."

Modi himself tweeted: "India wins yet again."

The election has been seen as a referendum on India's 68-year-old prime minister, whose economic reforms have had mixed results but whose popularity as a social underdog in India's highly stratified society has endured. Critics have said his Hindu-first platform risks exacerbating social tensions in the country of 1.3 billion people.

On the campaign trail, Modi presented himself as a self-made man with the confidence to

cut red tape and unleash India's economic potential, and labeled Congress party president Rahul Gandhi, the scion of a political dynasty that lost power in 2014, as an out-of-touch elite.

The BJP's performance "is absolutely stunning. Modi is the predominant leader in India today. He has pushed everybody else aside. Nobody in the opposition is a match for him," said political commentator Arti Jerath.

Half a dozen exit polls released after voting concluded Sunday showed Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party winning. A party or coalition needs a simple majority of 272 seats, or just over half the seats in Parliament's lower house, to govern.

"Mr. Modi's going to be the next prime minister, we are very assured of that," said Meenakshi Lekhi, a member of Parliament running for re-election in New Delhi. Shortly after officials began tabulating the votes, India's Sensex jumped 2.3% to an all-time high over 40,000.

If BJP's lead holds, it won't need a coalition partner to stay in power and could even improve its position compared to 2014, when it won 282 seats. This election may mark the first time in the party's history that it has two consecutive elections on its own.

World leaders, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Sri Lankan Pre-

sident Maithripala Sirisena, congratulated Modi on Twitter.

Trends in the election data suggest that BJP's strategy of pursuing an aggressive campaign in eastern India paid off, with the party breaking into the citadels of Trinamool Congress Party in West Bengal state and the Biju Janata Dal in Odisha state. Picking up seats in these two states would compensate for projected losses in Uttar Pradesh in northern India.

The biggest losers appear to be the communists who ruled West Bengal state for 34 years until they were ousted by Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress Party in 2011. Coalition partners of the Congress-led government in New Delhi between 2004 and 2008, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was leading in only three constituencies and the Communist party of India in two constituencies.

Outside BJP headquarters in New Delhi, hundreds of people cheered and shouted party slogans, lifting cardboard cut-outs of Modi and BJP President Amit Shah into the air as other people played drums and set off fireworks.

The BJP harnessed social media, including Twitter, where Modi has 47.4 million followers, and WhatsApp to reach out to millions of supporters.

Modi also capitalized on a suicide bombing in Kashmir in February that killed 40 Indian soldiers. India retaliated with airstrikes at alleged terrorist training camps in Pakistan, fanning the flames of nationalism and helping the BJP turn voters' attention away from the flailing economy and onto matters of national security.

The airstrike "gave him the narrative he needed to counter all these allegations of non-performance, unemployment and rural distress. It reenergized him and enabled him to reclaim his image as a strong leader India needs at this juncture," Jerath said.

As votes were counted across India, Pakistan's military said it has successfully test-fired a long-range ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. AP

JAPAN

Mobile app to warn gropers, get help proves popular

Mari Yamaguchi, Tokyo

A smartphone app developed by Japanese police is being widely downloaded by women trying to protect themselves from gropers on packed rush-hour trains. The "Digi Police" app was originally issued by Tokyo police three years

ago, but a function to scare off molesters was only added a few months ago. Since then, the app has reportedly been downloaded hundreds of thousands of times — unusual for a government-developed mobile application.

Women in crowded trains and other public

places in Japan often face sexual harassment, but are typically too afraid to call out for help due to a sense of embarrassment.

With the app, victims can press a "repel groper" icon to produce a written message saying "There is a groper here. Please help." With another press, the message turns

red and a voice repeatedly says, "Please stop!"

The app includes an alarm and can notify a designated email address when used — a feature that can also be used by children and their parents. Users can also locate crime-prone areas and police stations on a map. Violent crime is rare

in Japan, but groping — ranging from rubbing against victims to placing a hand under their clothing — is an everyday occurrence. It has been taken lightly as a "nuisance," so posters have been put up at stations and in train cars to remind passengers that groping is a crime.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Police said 2,620 sexual crimes were reported in 2017, including 1,750 cases of groping, mostly on trains or at stations.

The #MeToo movement has been slow to catch on in largely patriarchal Japan, where speaking out often draws criticism rather than sympathy. AP

JAPAN

Former Nissan chairman Ghosn appears in court

Yuri Kageyama, Tokyo

NISSAN'S former chairman, Carlos Ghosn, appeared in a Japanese courtroom yesterday for a hearing ahead of his trial on accusations of financial misconduct.

It was the first of a series of hearings to iron out logistics for Ghosn's actual trial. The trial date has not been set, and experts say it could be months away.

Ghosn, who led the Japanese automaker for two decades, was arrested in November and charged with underreporting his income and breach of trust. He was released on bail in March, rearrested in April on fresh accusations and then released again on bail on April 25.

Ghosn insists he is innocent and says he was targeted in a "conspiracy" by others at Nissan Motor Co.

Nissan, which is allied with Renault SA of France, has seen profits nose-dive amid the fallout from Ghosn's arrest.

Ghosn has hired a strong legal team as he fights to clear his name.

One of his top lawyers, Junichiro Hironaka, was seen walking into the courtroom yesterday with Ghosn.

One of the conditions of Ghosn's release on bail is that he is forbidden to contact his wife. Prosecutors say that's to prevent evidence tampering.

Ghosn's lawyers challenged that restriction, saying it is a violation of human rights, but the Supreme Court rejected their appeal Tuesday.

The lawyers can appeal again to have the restriction removed.

In a briefing, Deputy Chief Prosecutor Shin Kukimoto welcomed the Supreme Court's decision.

"For married people to be together is important, but I feel there was enough reason for the Supreme Court to support us in this restriction," he said.

Kukimoto declined comment on the hearing, which was closed to reporters and the public.

Kukimoto also said the maximum penalty upon conviction of all 15 counts of the charges Ghosn is facing is 15 years in prison and a fine of USD1.4 million. AP

AP Photo



AUSTRALIA

Geoffrey Rush awarded AUD2.9 million in defamation case

OSCAR-winning actor Geoffrey Rush was awarded an Australian record of 2.9 million Australian dollars damages by a Sydney judge yesterday in defamation case against a newspaper publisher and journalist over reports he had been accused of inappropriate behavior toward an actress.

The 67-year-old Australian had sued Sydney's The Daily Telegraph's publisher and journalist Jonathan Moran in the Federal Court over two stories and a poster published in late 2017.

Justice Michael Wigney found in April the publisher, News Corp.-owned Nationwide News, and Moran were reckless regarding the truth when they reported Rush had been accused of inappropriate behavior by actress Eryn Jean Norville. She played the daughter of Rush's character in a Sydney theater production of "King Lear"

in 2015 and 2016.

The judge found a poster and two articles contained several defamatory meanings, including that Rush was a pervert and a sexual predator, but the publisher had not proven the meanings were true.

Wigney at the time awarded Rush AUD850,000 in damages plus AUD42,302 interest for non-economic loss. But he wanted to consider further special damages, including loss of earnings.

Following an agreement between the parties, the judge yesterday awarded Rush a further AUD1.98 million for past and future economic loss.

The publisher and journalist are appealing the verdict.

Rush's lawyer, Sue Chrysanthou, said Rush had offered in early 2018 to settle in exchange for an apology and AUD50,000 plus costs, but Nationwide News did not respond.

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AP PHOTO



BREXIT

May hunkers down as premiership enters its end stage

Jill Lawless, London

BRITISH Prime Minister Theresa May was hunkered in 10 Downing St. with close allies on yesterday as she considered whether to give in to relentless pressure to resign, or fight on to save her Brexit plan and her premiership.

May was due to meet senior ministers to discuss her Brexit bill as plans to put it to a vote in Parliament were thrown into doubt.

May's fate looked sealed after the resignation late Wednesday of Cabinet minister Andrea Leadsom, who said she could not support the European Union withdrawal bill that May plans to introduce to Parliament.

Leadsom, as leader of the House of Commons, had been due to announce on yesterday when a vote on the bill would be held.

But Leadsom said she could not support May's Brexit plan because it did not "deliver on the referendum result" that saw voters in 2016 opt to leave the EU.

"No one has wanted you to succeed more than I have, but I do now urge you to make the right decisions in the interests of the country, this government and our party," Leadsom wrote in a resignation letter to May.

The government delayed plans for the bill, which is May's fourth and likely final attempt to secure Parliament's backing for her Brexit blueprint.

May previously announced that it would be published on today and put to a vote during the week of June 3. But there was no mention of the bill on the parliamentary schedule for that week, published yesterday.

Government whip Mark Spencer told lawmakers that "we will update the House on the publi-

cation and introduction of the Withdrawal Agreement Bill" when lawmakers return from an 11-day recess on June 4.

Meanwhile, the number of Conservative lawmakers calling on May to resign was growing. The party's legislators want May to agree on today that she will quit, triggering a Conservative leadership contest. If not, they are likely to try to topple her.

"I want her to give a timetable for when she will go," said Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, treasurer of the committee that oversees Conservative leadership races.

He said that if she did not set a departure date there would be "overwhelming pressure" for a no-confidence vote in her.

If May quits as party leader she will likely remain as caretaker prime minister for several weeks while Conservative lawmakers and members vote to elect a successor.

May's spokesman, James Slack, insisted she would still be in the post when U.S. President Donald Trump comes to Britain for a June 3-5 state visit.

"She looks forward to welcoming the president," he said.

May became prime minister soon after the June 2016 EU membership referendum, and has spent her entire term in office trying to deliver on that decision.

She seemed close to success when she struck a divorce agreement with the EU late last year. But lawmakers have rejected it three times, and Britain's long-scheduled departure date of March 29 passed with the country still in the bloc.

Many Conservatives blame May for the delay, and believe she is now an obstacle to Brexit. They want her replaced with a more ardent Brexiteer such as the former foreign secretary Bo-

ris Johnson.

May says another leader will not be able to strike a better deal with the EU. On Wednesday she urged lawmakers to support her Brexit bill, saying that if they reject it "all we have before us is division and deadlock."

If May stays on until next week, pressure is likely to increase when results come in from this week's elections for the European Parliament, with Conservatives expect to receive a drubbing. Many British voters on both sides of the Brexit debate look set to use the election to the EU legislature to express displeasure over the political gridlock.

The government delayed plans for the bill, which is May's fourth and likely final attempt to secure Parliament's backing for her Brexit blueprint

Opinion polls show strong support for the single-issue Brexit Party — largely from angry former Conservative voters — and for pro-EU parties including the Liberal Democrats and the Greens.

The election is being held on Thursday in Britain, but results won't be announced until all 28 EU countries have finished voting late Sunday.

British newspapers on Thursday were unanimous in declaring that the end is nigh for May.

The Conservative-backing Daily Telegraph said in an editorial that "either Mrs. May must go as soon as humanly possible, or the Conservative Party must finally remove her."

The Daily Mail, which has been supportive of May, said that "despite her valiant efforts to deliver an honorable Brexit, she has finally run out of road." AP

IRAN

Senior German diplomat in Tehran for nuclear deal talks

David Rising, Berlin

A senior German diplomat headed yesterday to Tehran to press Iran to continue to respect the landmark nuclear deal, despite the unilateral withdrawal of the U.S. and

increasing pressure from Washington.

Tensions have soared in the Mideast recently as the White House earlier this month sent an aircraft carrier and B-52 bombers to the region over a still-unexplained

threat it perceived from Iran.

In Berlin, the Foreign Ministry said Political Director Jens Ploetner was to hold talks with Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi yesterday to try salvage the nu-

clear deal signed in 2015 in Vienna. The accord has steadily unraveled since the Trump administration pulled America out of the deal, re-imposed and escalated U.S. sanctions on Tehran last year. The German envoy's

visit also follows Iran's declaration earlier this month that the remaining signatories to the deal — Germany, France, Britain, China and Russia — have two months to develop a plan to shield Iran from American sanctions.

"The situation in the Persian Gulf and the region, and the situation surrounding the Vienna nuclear agreement, is extremely serious," the German Foreign Ministry said in an e-mail to The Associated Press. "There is a real risk of escalation — including due to misunderstandings or an incident. In this situation, dialogue is very important."

With Iran's 60-day deadline, the ministry said there is still a "window for diplomacy to persuade Iran to continue its full compliance" and said Germany remains in close contact with the other nations that have been struggling to keep the deal alive. AP

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British Business Association of Macao

Business Luncheon

Thursday 30 May
with
Guest Speaker: Grant Bowie
CEO & Executive Director
MGM China Holdings

Diversification – what works & where does entertainment fit into the mix

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12:30 Drinks
12:55 Lunch
13:30 Presentation
14:30 Close

*Strict No-Show/Late Cancellation Policy applies for this event
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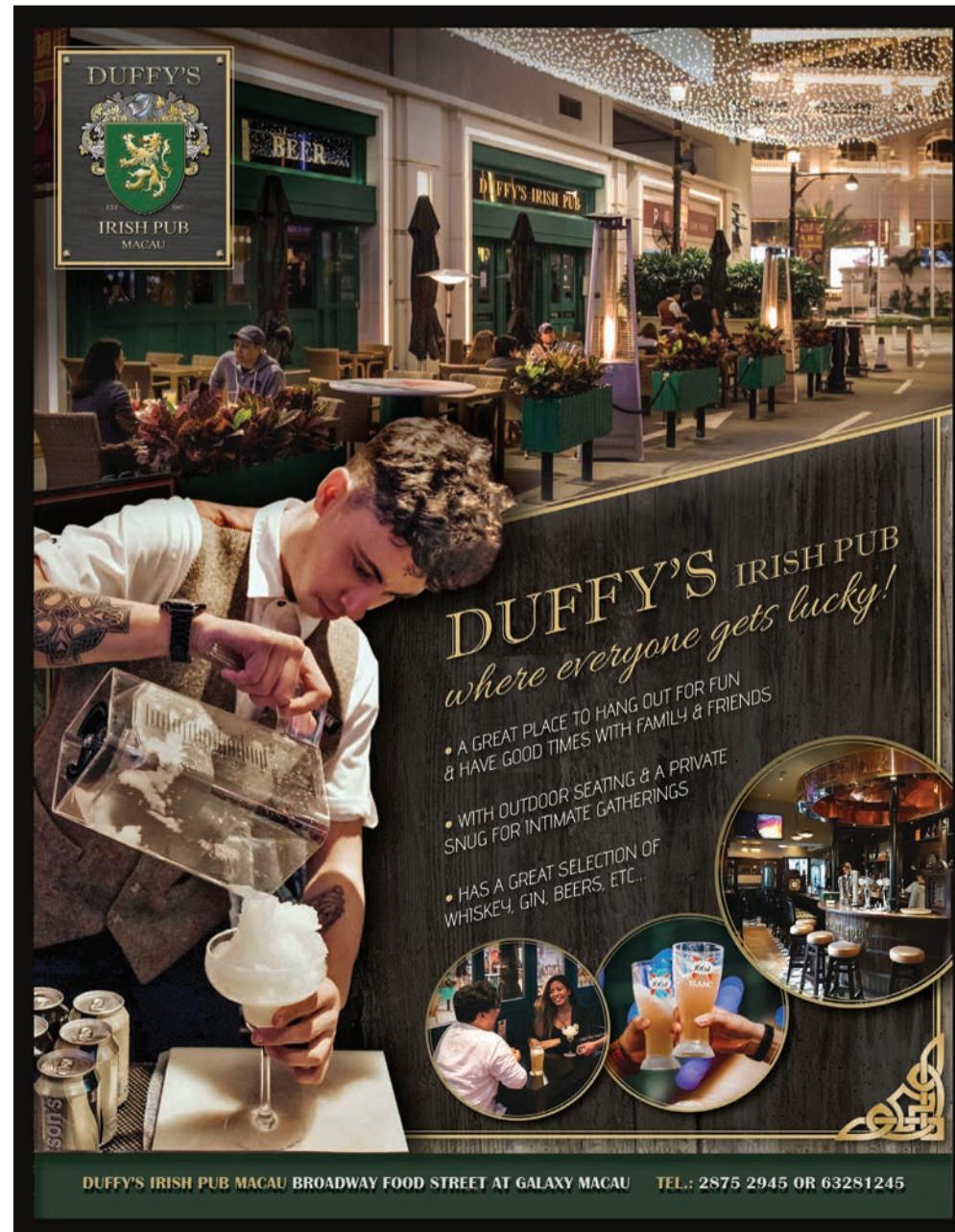
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FRIDAY

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

24 May



POKEMON: DETECTIVE PIKACHU

ROOM 1

2:30, 4:30pm

Director: Rob Letterman

Starring: Ryan Reynolds, Justice Smith, Kathryn Newton

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 104min

MAYDAY LIFE

ROOM 1

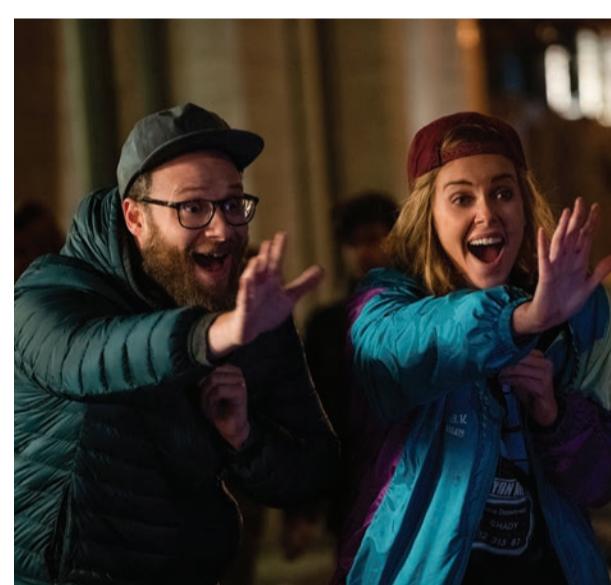
7:30, 9:30pm

Director: Muh Chen

Starring: Monster, Stone, Masa, Guan You, Ashin

Language: Putonghua (Chinese)

Duration: 101min



LONG SHOT

ROOM 2

2:30, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30pm

Director: Jonathan Levine

Starring: Charlize Theron, Seth Rogen,

Alexander Skarsgård, Andy Serkis

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 94min



ALLADIN

ROOM 3

2:30, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30pm

Director: Guy Ritchie

Starring: Will Smith, Mena Massoud, Naomi Scott

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 109min

this day in history



1975 JOURNALISTS LEAVE FALLEN SAIGON

A group of 80 reporters and cameramen - including nine Britons - have been allowed to fly out of Saigon to Vientiane in Laos.

They are the first Westerners to leave the capital of South Vietnam since it fell to communist forces on 29 April.

That day there were chaotic scenes in Saigon as desperate South Vietnamese citizens tried to board overcrowded US helicopters in a bid to flee their own country.

The next day, North Vietnamese tanks rolled in and forced a humiliating surrender.

There are still 16,000 foreign passport holders, including thousands of Vietnamese with French passports, waiting anxiously for exit visas and a way out.

After weeks of failed promises and delays, the Western journalists boarded a Russian-made plane belonging to the North Vietnamese Air Force to Vientiane in Laos, the only Indo-Chinese country that still has diplomatic ties with the US.

The fall of Saigon has been marked by victory parades by the communist forces over the last few days.

Posters of Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Viet Minh, have been placed on public buildings and marching bands paraded the streets.

Some South Vietnamese welcomed the victory - others loyal to President Thieu who could not get away committed suicide. Most are relieved that the war is finally over.

The communist authorities have so far been lenient on Thieu supporters and are more concerned with "re-educating" former soldiers and young people, tackling growing crime and food shortages in an attempt to bring some sort of order to the streets of Saigon.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Saigon was renamed Ho Chi Minh City, and North and South Vietnam were unified in 1976.

This was preceded by three decades of bitter independence wars, which the communists fought first against the colonial power France, then against US-backed South Vietnam.

The US had entered hostilities to stem a perceived "domino effect" of successive nations falling to communism.

The jungle war produced heavy casualties on both sides, atrocities against civilians, and the indiscriminate destruction and contamination of much of the landscape.

In 1986, the communist government allowed in elements of market forces and private enterprise.

But some party leaders still fear that too much economic liberalisation will weaken their power base and introduce "decadent" ideas into Vietnamese society.

In November 2000 President Bill Clinton's visit to Vietnam was presented as the culmination of US efforts to normalise relations with the former enemy.

Offbeat

FUGITIVE SAYS HE'LL SURRENDER IF PEOPLE LIKE WANTED POSTER

A Connecticut police department has reached a deal with a fugitive that would have him surrender if enough people respond to a wanted poster on social media, an agreement that at least one expert calls unethical.

Jose Simms, 29, who is believed to be somewhere in New York, has seven arrest warrants and is being sought as a fugitive after failing to appear in court on charges that range from breach of peace to risk of injury to a child.

Torrington police Lt. Brett Johnson posted on the department's Facebook page Wednesday that Sims had contacted him through the social media site and agreed to turn himself in if the post containing his poster gets 15,000 likes.

Johnson said he negotiated Simms down from 20,000 likes.

"It will be difficult but is doable," Johnson wrote.

He also suggested that if anyone knows where Simms is hiding they could let police know and save the department some suspense.

But Maki Haberfeld, an expert in police ethics and procedure at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, said Simms is using social media to manipulate both the news media and police, who she said have no business negotiating a deal with a suspect, never mind one that involves likes on Facebook.

"It turns this into a joke," she said. "People will start looking at these various violations of law as a game."

Simms, contacted by The Associated Press through Facebook, said he is serious about the offer.

"I wanted to give them a little incentive for all the hard work they put in to catch me," he wrote.

Simms said the charges stemmed from domestic problems and he is tired of running from authorities.

"Looking over your shoulder every 5 seconds can cause a lot of stress," he wrote.

Torrington police did not immediately respond to a request for further comment.

Simms said he is prepared to live up to his end of the agreement, insisting he is a "man of my word."

Haberfeld said Sims is clearly getting a lot of attention, and that is exactly what he wants.

"This is 100% manipulation," she said. "And for police, it's not an ethical thing to do." AP

YOUR STARS



Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

It's a good day to hash out disagreements at work or nearly anywhere else. Your ability to make your case is heightened, and you should find that your adversaries come around to your side soon.



Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

Don't get too excited about how much you've got to do — your energy is better spent on dreaming up new ideas and making plans. It's a good day for living in the present and letting others worry about the future.



Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

It's time for you to make a new friend! That doesn't mean you have to force anything, but you should at least open up to new coworkers or chat with folks in new social situations. It's easy!



Libra

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

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



Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

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



Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

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



Taurus

April 20-May 20

Take a second or third look at your situation — is it really as bad as you had feared? It may not be perfect, but you can still take something positive out of it if you have a mind to.



Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Try not to miss the point of whatever news comes your way — though it may be hard to discern which bits are most important. Think things through and make sure it's all coming to you.



Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

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



Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

The little details really matter — so make sure you're paying close attention! If you have to sign anything, read it twice and get someone else you trust to do the same. Even if you don't see anything, it's worth it.



Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

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

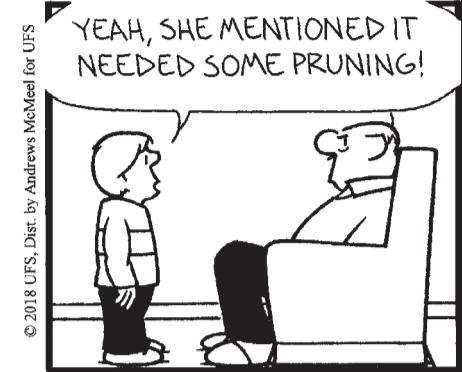


Pisces

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

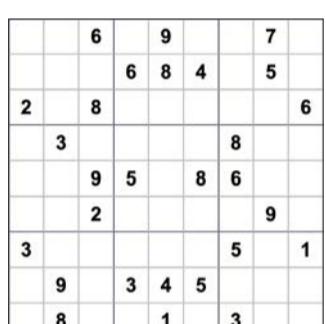
You have two conflicting goals today, but you don't have to worry too much about choosing just yet. If anything, you may be able to find a way to have your cake and eat it, too!

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom

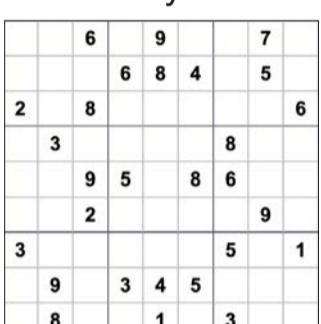


SUDOKU

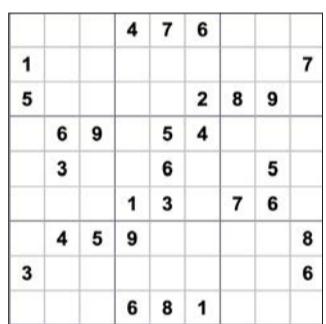
Easy



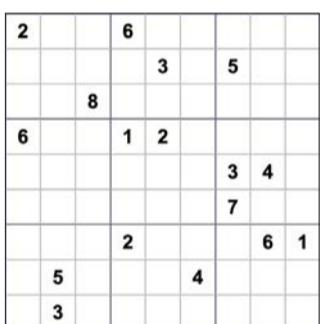
Easy+



Medium



Hard

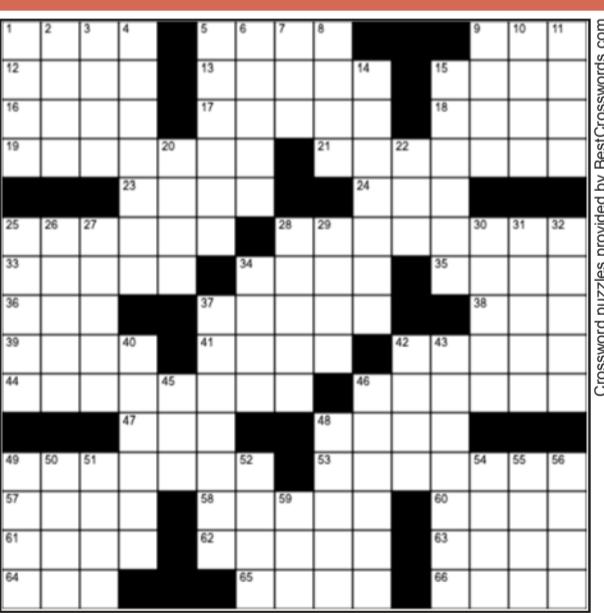


CROSSWORD

ACROSS: 1- Goblet part; 5- Parched; 9- I've got it!; 12- Roof overhang; 13- So spooky as to be frightening; 15- K-6; 16- Pulitzer-winning biographer Leon; 17- Give guns again; 18- Gilbert of "Roseanne"; 19- Pertaining to the roof; 21- Seesaws; 23- Profits; 24- Nutritional abbr.; 25- Leatherneck; 28- Assemble; 33- African antelope; 34- Fortuneteller's opening; 35- Comfort; 36- PD investigator; 37- Deli sides; 38- Skid row woe; 39- Bit of gossip; 41- moss; 42- Red as ____; 44- Founder of Detroit; 46- Humbles; 47- Leaves in the bag?; 48- At the peak of; 49- Most orderly; 53- Paper used to absorb ink; 57- Shoppe adjective; 58- Old Testament book; 60- New Rochelle college; 61- Parade spoiler; 62- Shouts; 63- Madcap; 64- Cockpit abbr.; 65- Preservative; 66- French summers;

DOWN: 1- Trickle; 2- And here it is!; 3- Robbie's daredevil dad; 4- Dark pigment in skin; 5- Oxygenize; 6- Staggers; 7- 401(k) kin; 8- Grime; 9- Winglike parts; 10- Munich mister; 11- Latin I word; 14- Appears; 15- Fancy home; 20- Minister to; 22- Author LeShan; 25- Doc; 26- Prince Valiant's wife; 27- Gave stars to; 28- Son of Abraham; 29- Small salamander; 30- Mythical hell; 31- Launder of cosmetics; 32- Takes five; 34- Intestinal sections; 37- Showy; 40- Fingerless hand cover; 42- Peek follower; 43- Christen; 45- Golfer Trevino; 46- Finally!; 48- Clear as ____; 49- Director Ephron; 50- Israeli airline; 51- Mine entrance; 52- Digits of the foot; 54- Perfectly; 55- Feminizing suffix; 56- Beams; 59- Hearst kidnap grp.;

Yesterday's solution



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999

Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283

Fire department 28 572 222

Water Supply – Report 2822 0088

PJ (Open line) 993

Telephone – Report 1000

PJ (Picket) 28 557 775

Electricity – Report 28 339 922

PSP 28 573 333

Macau Daily Times 28 716 081

Customs 28 559 944

S. J. Hospital 28 313 731

Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333

Commission Against

Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300

IACM 28 387 333

Tourism 28 333 000

Airport 59 888 88



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FOR RENT



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FOR SALE

[Taipa] Nice Court 3 2 1,600 ft² \$8,980,000 (ref: 19045002)

[Taipa] Nova City 4 2 2,503 ft² \$17,800,000 (ref: 19015574)

[Taipa] Wa Bao 2 2 1,020 ft² \$8,500,000 (ref: 18115568)

[Macau] Lakeview 2 2 3,430 ft² \$25,000,000 (ref: 18105565)

FOR RENT

[Taipa] The Manhattan 3 2 1,626 ft² \$23,800/mth (ref: 19030002)

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

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

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

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Attention
No admission under 18

PSG president targeted by French corruption probe

AP PHOTO



Samuel Petrequin
& John Leicester, Paris

PARIS Saint-Germain president Nasser Al-Khelaifi is under investigation for corruption related to Qatar's bids to host the 2017 and 2019 track world championships, a judicial official said Thursday.

The official told The Associated Press the preliminary charge of "active corruption" was filed against the beIN media group chairman in mid-May in a case focusing on the payment of USD3.5 million to an IAAF official.

The judicial official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the person wasn't authorized to discuss the investigation publicly, said Al-Khelaifi is suspected of corruption

"in regards with Qatar's track and field worlds."

Al-Khelaifi, who is from Qatar, denies any wrongdoing. His lawyer, Francis Szpiner, said the payments made in 2011 were "perfectly tracked" and added his client was not involved in the money transfer.

The chief executive officer of beIN, Yousef Al-Obaidly, was also handed preliminary charges of corruption, while former IAAF president Lamine Diack is suspected of "passive corruption" in the same case.

beIN media group declined to comment on the case because it said it "doesn't relate in any way to the company."

Investigative magistrate Renaud Van Ruymbeke based his suspicion on documents showing that a company owned by a former IAAF official

received two payments totaling about \$3.5 million from Qatari investors before the vote for the 2017 track world championships. Qatar eventually lost to London but was later awarded the 2019 worlds. The championships will be held in Doha from Sept. 27-Oct. 6.

The two payments from Oryx Qatar Sports Investments, an investment fund linked to the Qatari government, were made to Pamodzi Sports Marketing in October and November 2011, days before the vote.

Pamodzi was founded by one of Diack's sons, Papa Massata Diack. A former marketing consultant at the IAAF, he has been banned for allegations of extorting hundreds of thousands of dollars from a Russian marathon runner to avoid a doping ban before the 2012 Olym-

pics. France has issued a wanted notice for him via Interpol.

In his statement, Al-Khelaifi's lawyer said the payments made by Oryx to the IAAF's appointed agent were transparent.

"Pamodzi was mandated by Japanese company Dentsu/AMS to manage the IAAF's marketing rights in so-called emerging countries," he said, adding that only \$300,000 was ultimately kept by Pamodzi.

"Of this \$3.5 million relating in particular to the television broadcasting rights and sponsoring rights for the world athletics championships which are of interest to the judge, \$1.9 million was immediately transferred by Pamodzi to Dentsu/AMS, and \$1.3 million to the IAAF. A total of \$3.2 million was repaid by Pamodzi, which retained \$0.3 million as Pam-

dzi's remuneration for its contribution."

Al-Obaidly's representatives said that Oryx, which was set up to handle the sponsorship and rights for Qatar's bid, accepted to pay \$32.5 million for the event's commercial rights, including the \$3.5 million paid to Pamodzi as a non-refundable deposit. The full amount would have been paid only if Qatar's bid had been successful.

Al-Khelaifi, who was questioned by the judge in March, is an Oryx shareholder with his brother Khalid.

"Nasser Al-Khelaifi was neither a shareholder nor a director of Oryx in 2011," his lawyer said. "He was not directly or indirectly involved in Doha's bid to host the 2017 world athletics championships."

Al-Khelaifi is a member of the UEFA executive committee, representing European clubs, and is due to take part in the body's meeting on Wednesday in Baku, Azerbaijan.

He was selected as a club delegate, and confirmed by UEFA member federations in February, despite being the subject of a criminal proceeding for bribery in Switzerland since 2017. The Qatari television executive is suspected of bribing FIFA's then-secretary general with use of a luxury villa in Italy to help secure 2026 and 2030 World Cup broadcasting rights in the Middle East for Doha-based beIN Sports.

PSG is also under investigation by UEFA for possibly breaking financial rules.

In another case, Brazilian and French authorities are trying to find out whether Lamine Diack and his son played a role in arranging alleged bribes to help Rio de Janeiro earn the hosting rights for the 2016 Olympics. Diack, who ran the IAAF from 1999-2015, has also been accused of covering up failed Russian doping tests in exchange for money. AP

FOOTBALL

Borussia Dortmund shows its ambition with 3 new signings

BORUSSIA Dortmund isn't wasting any time. Days after narrowly losing out to Bayern Munich in the Bundesliga, Dortmund signed three internationals to better challenge for the title next season.

Julian Brandt and Nico Schulz have joined from Bayer Leverkusen and Hoffenheim, respectively,

while Belgium forward Thorgan Hazard has switched from Borussia Mönchengladbach.

"It's time to be more ambitious. We'll go into the season with the clear proviso to try again for the German championship," Dortmund chief executive Hans-Joachim Watzke said Tuesday, three days after Bayern won the title by two points.

"There is no second force in Germany other than Borussia Dortmund," Watzke said. "With the exception of 2018, we fought for a title to the end for the past decade. That's why we're going to be more offensive now. Let's see what we get for it."

The transfers - and the lessons learned from a season in which it frittered away a ni-

ne-point lead - should Dortmund become a serious rival for Bayern and possibly claim a first league title since 2012.

"We are worlds apart from Bayern financially," Watzke said. "We're not so foolish as to say we have to be German champions now. But to stay on the case would be pretty good." MDT/AP

MOTORSPORT

Hamilton fastest for Mercedes in 1st practice for Monaco GP

FORMULA One champion Lewis Hamilton posted the fastest time yesterday in first practice for the Monaco Grand Prix.

The Mercedes driver and championship leader was .059 seconds quicker than Red Bull driver Max Verstappen on the sinewy 3.3-kilometer (2-mile) street circuit.

Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas was third quickest and finished .072

behind Hamilton.

Ferrari again looked off the pace with Charles Leclerc fourth ahead of teammate Sebastian Vettel.

Leclerc, who is from Monaco, and Vettel were both fined 300 euros (\$334) for exceeding the pit lane speed limit of 60 kph (37 mph).

Mercedes has been dominant so far, placing 1-2 in all five races and with Bottas second in the title race. AP

opinion

Kapok

Eric Sautedé



AIMING HIGHER

Reference documents and generic resolutions adopted by the United Nations are usually dismissed by critics as either too broad, too generous or too normative, and sometimes the three together. Then they are often simultaneously considered rather weak when it comes to binding effects and even weaker when considering enforcement. Of course, there are exceptions, especially when peace, security, trade and sometimes international justice are concerned, but more often than not timing and whether or not powerful states get involved remain crucial and can prove either incapacitating or, on the contrary, expediting.

Yet, when it comes to global concerns — in particular the protection of the environment, but not only! — there are no better institutions than UN agencies to come up with eloquent and insightful perspectives. Such is the case with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that succeeded the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015. MDGs were broader and less numerous — 8 goals with 21 targets, whereas SDGs comprise 17 goals to be achieved by 2030 — but marked a turning point in the UN drive to be more results-oriented and multi-dimensional as well as inter-related in its approach to development — the United Nations Development Programme stresses that “often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another.”

Reviewing whether or not the claim that MDGs had been the “most successful anti-poverty movement in history”, analysts concluded in 2015 that even though it was quite an overstretch to proclaim “mission accomplished”, crucial progresses had indeed been made: the number of people living on less than \$1.25 had been more than halved even though the same ambition for people suffering from hunger was not fully realized; net enrolment rate in primary school had reached 91% (not fully universal, but pretty close); two-thirds of developing countries had achieved gender parity in primary education; child mortality rate as well as global maternal mortality had dropped by about 50% but had failed to drop by two-thirds; number of new HIV carriers had fallen by 40%, even though the spread had not been reversed as promised; but then halving the proportion of people without access to clean water had been achieved five years in advance and overseas development aid to developing countries had increased drastically by about two-thirds over the period.

There is thus hope for the SDGs, and reading reports from numerous Non-Governmental Organizations and International Organizations on a regular basis, I can testify to the fact that the renewed and more ambitious goals for the next decade have permeated all kinds of institutions, and help create a new consensus on what needs to be done.

Labor conditions and employment — a subject dear to my heart — are now covered by the standalone Goal No. 8 in the SDGs whereas they used to be minimalistically embedded and split inside the goals to eradicate poverty and achieve gender parity under the MDGs. The full name of the new goal actually resonates like a program in itself as the ambition is to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.” Under one goal stand some 10 targets, to which are appended 17 indicators that will allow policy-makers and citizens to assess the progress made towards the goal. And besides the usual GDP growth or unemployment rate, one finds the latest concerns related to the worrying spread of urban informal employment, all forms of discrimination affecting hourly earnings, fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries with a breakdown by gender and place of origin (migrants), and even the level of national compliance with labor rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on the International Labor Organization conventions.

Quite interestingly, this goal also comprises a recommendation to “devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products,” an objective that the Macao Government Tourism Office could easily make a requirement — why not even for the renewal of casino licenses — in order to make the ambition to become a “World Centre of Tourism and Leisure” slightly more meaningful for the good people of our SAR.

THE BUZZ MAKING HISTORY: RIHANNA LAUNCHES BRAND IN PARIS STORE

Rihanna, the first black woman in history to head up a major Parisian luxury house, is unveiling her first fashion designs for Fenty at a pop-up store in Paris.

The collection, named after the singer-turned-designer's last name, comprises ready-to-wear, footwear, accessories, and eyewear and is available for sale Paris' Le Marais area from Friday and will debut online May 29.

“This is a moment in history,” Rihanna, 31,

said at a preview of the store in a white structure tuxedo dress. “It's a big deal for me and my entire generation.”

News of the singer's groundbreaking new deal with LVMH, the world's largest luxury group, shook up the fashion industry earlier this month.

The Barbados-born star's lines are the second time LVMH has created an original brand.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	45-65 Good
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Good
Ambient	50-70 Good

SOURCE: DSGM

WORLD BRIEFS



THAILAND A Thai court yesterday blocked the leader of a new anti-junta political party from taking his seat in Parliament while it determines whether he violated election rules.



INDIA Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist party claimed it won reelection with a commanding lead in yesterday's vote count, while the head of the main opposition party conceded a personal defeat that signaled the end of an era for modern India's main political dynasty.

More on p12



IRAN A senior German diplomat headed yesterday to Tehran to press Iran to continue to respect the landmark nuclear deal, despite the unilateral withdrawal of the U.S. and increasing pressure from Washington.

EU Dutch and British voters were the first to have their say yesterday in elections for the European Parliament, starting four days of voting across the 28-nation bloc that pits supporters of deeper integration against populist euroskeptics who want more power for their national governments.



UK British Prime Minister Theresa May was hunkered down with close allies yesterday as she considered whether to give in to relentless pressure to resign, or fight on to save her Brexit plan and her premiership.

More on p14



This image provided by Marvel shows the cover of the first issue in “Agents of Atlas,” Marvel Comics’ five-part standalone comic book series set to roll out in August 2019

Others getting in on the action include Brawn and Cindy Moon, who is the Korean American web-shooter Silk.

Other recruits have only previously been seen in Marvel video games or web comics only available in Asian countries. Among them is Korean-born Luna Snow a.k.a. Seol Hee, a K-pop star who can manipulate frozen elements. There's also Aero and Sword Master, the products of creatives in China.

“That kind of diversity within diversity is amazing,” said Pak, who is half-Korean and half-white. “No one character here has to represent all Asian-ness or Asian American-ness. That's a ridiculous demand for any character.”

The rest of the “Atlas” creative team includes writer Jeff Parker and artists Nico Leon and Carlo Pagulayan. In the series, the do-gooders find that someone has flipped a switch and created a

“cross-Asian portal city” called Pan. In Pan, Asian neighborhoods get geographically scrambled and then stitched together into one city. So, the streets of Tokyo could be next to neighborhoods from Honolulu, Manila and some of Marvel's fictitious Asian countries.

Filipino American Loren Javier, 50, discusses Marvel comics on his “Castles, Capes & Clones” blog and podcast. There were few Asian characters in the lexicon he could look up to as a child, and many were often stereotypical mystics or man-servants.

“I love Marvel but I didn't necessarily see myself in the comics,” said Javier, who recalls being teased by a classmate who called him “the enemy.”

“Now, finally, I think about kids who are reading this new generation of comics and heroes and getting to see themselves a little bit more,” Javier said. “It's very powerful.”

MDT/AP