



CHINA TO ISSUE 2 BILLION YUAN IN GOV'T BONDS

P3 FINANCE

MACAU SCORES LOW IN ENERGY COMPETITIVENESS

A ranking of environmentally-friendly cities places the SAR below more than two-thirds of the 294 Chinese cities surveyed, a result described by researchers as "rather behind"

P4 ENERGY



POPULARITY PLUNGE FOR CARRIE LAM

The Beijing-backed chief executive has seen her approval rating fall to a record low of 23% and her disapproval rise to 67%

P6 HONG KONG



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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



OSAKA SUMMIT The Group of 20 summit in Osaka this week will be Trump and Putin's first meeting since special counsel Robert Mueller ended his investigation with no finding that the Trump campaign in 2016 conspired with Russia. The agenda remains a mystery, as still does the outcome of their last meeting, nearly a year ago in Finland.

CHINA criticized the U.S.'s efforts to enforce its law abroad following a Washington Post news report three Chinese banks might be penalized over dealings with North Korea. The banks named by The Post denied they were under investigation. [More on p11](#)

SINGAPORE Drones buzzing around Singapore's Changi Airport have caused 63 flights to be delayed or diverted in the past week, triggering an investigation and raising questions about the motives of the offenders. [More on p12](#)



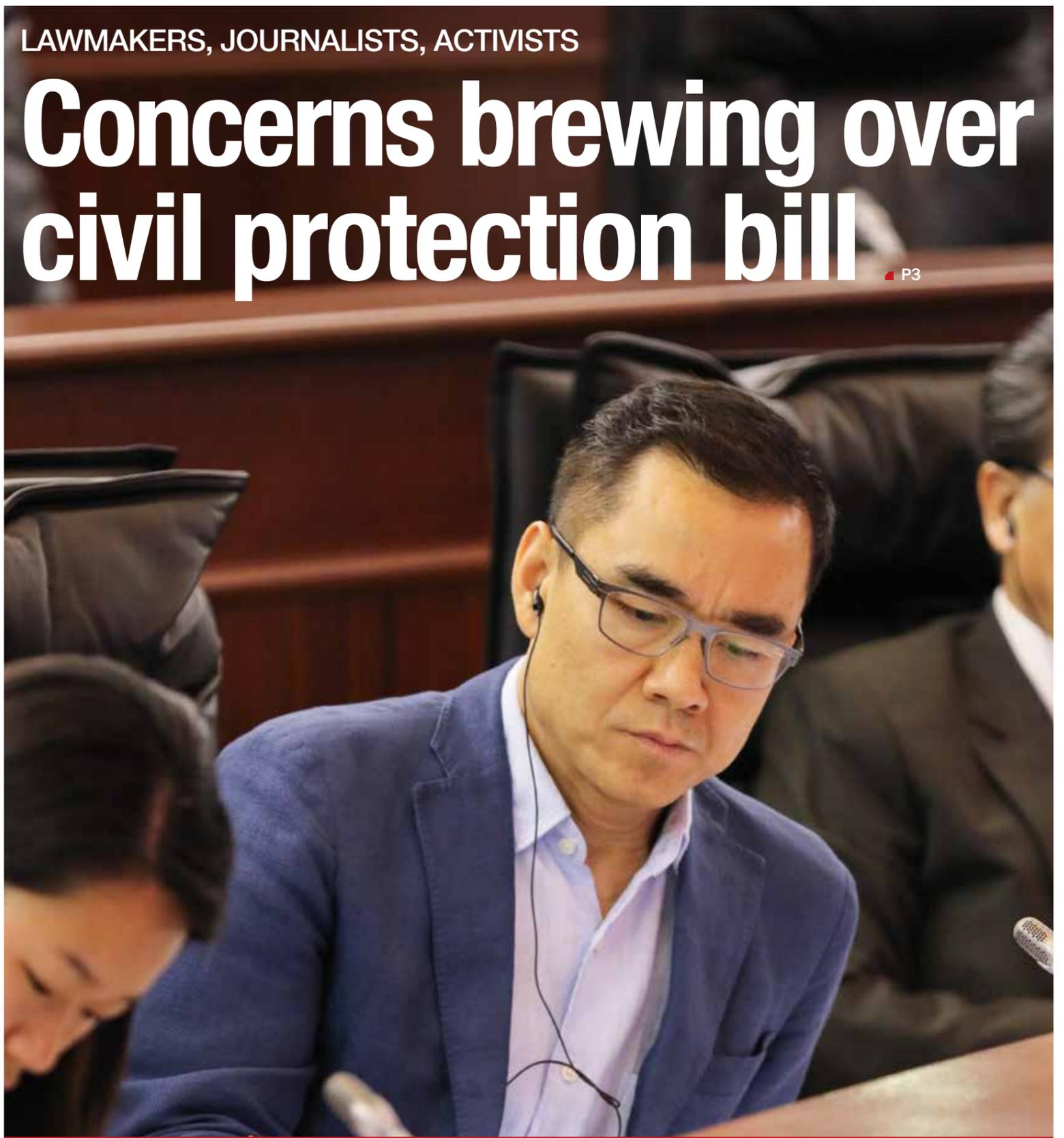
VIETNAM A court sentenced an American to 12 years in jail for what was described as an attempt to overthrow the Communist nation's government. Michael Nguyen (pictured) was also convicted of inciting people to participate in protests with the intent to attack government offices in Hanoi, and Ho Chi Minh City.

More on backpage

LAWMAKERS, JOURNALISTS, ACTIVISTS

Concerns brewing over civil protection bill

P3



TOURISM

Macau's travel alert coverage far from comprehensive

P5

ILHA VERDE HILL

CCAC says evidence supports Macau Diocese ownership

Staff reporter

THE Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) has stated that there is strong evidence to show that the land plot at Ilha Verde Hill, which formed the core of a corruption probe disclosed on Monday, belongs to the Macau Diocese. The statement was made during a press conference hosted by the CCAC to clear up several matters concerning the case.

"No legal or official document was found to prove that there had been, in the previous two centuries or so, any lawsuit or conflict related to the ownership of the Ilha Verde Hill land plot," explained Lam Chi Long, deputy commissioner and director of the Ombudsman Bureau of the CCAC.

"Some documents, however, have shown that the Portuguese administration in Macau had rented the Hill for military purposes for an extensive period of time. Also documented was the agreement that the Portuguese administration in Macau signed with the Macau Diocese about the ownership of the hill."

"As such, the CCAC found it groundless to overrule the ownership registration of the hill," he said.



On Monday, the CCAC disclosed the result of its investigation into the land plot at Ilha Verde Hill, which according to the property registration and cadastral records, consists of the hill itself and the adjacent areas.

During the course of the investigation, the CCAC uncovered a pattern of public depart-

ment mismanagement.

It found that, when it came to the conservation and planning of the land parcel, the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) and Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) had failed to adhere to regulations outlined in the Urban Planning Law and the Cultural Heritage Protection Law.

However, after the initial release of the report, the DSSOPT has been slow to respond, according to the CCAC. It has raised concerns within the anti-graft body that its suggestions are being taken as mere recommendations, and may be ignored by the entities that were investigated.

Commissioner André

Cheong admitted that the text of the report amounts to little more than suggestions. It does however, provide a legal perspective to government bureaus in the course of their work.

If serious breach was found, there would be mechanism to deal with the matter, added Cheong. "Because the CCAC directly reports to the Chief Executive, it can make suggestions to the Chief Executive, who can turn these suggestions into orders," he said.

The CCAC investigation revealed that the administration had not put sufficient effort into conserving the hill and landscape, which has been deemed to hold cultural heritage value under the Cultural Heritage Protection Law of 2013.

In December 2017, based on the opinions provided by the IC, the DSSOPT revised some of the contents of the urbanization plan, which expanded the green conservation zone to the entire hill, shrank the areas in which building is permitted and lowered the permitted maximum building height in some of the areas.

Meanwhile, the anti-corruption agency accused the IC of being complacent in its inspection works of the land parcel, saying that in a recent case, the bureau should have urged the mandatory inspection with the respective costs borne by the owner of the property.

The entire investigation had been triggered by complaints submitted by various companies and associations in Macau.

GPDP issues first fine against cold call marketing

FOR the first time, the city's Office for Personal Data Protection (GPDP) has issued a fine for a case of random cold calling. Recently, the GPDP issued the fine to parties involved in the cosmetics industry, who cold called numbers seeking business.

According to the GPDP, the office has been receiving complaints about marketing tactics, with the complaints worsening in 2019.

In response to the complaints and the subsequent investigation, a local cosmetic company was fined a total of MOP110,000 for two violations.

For the first five months of the year, the GPDP has investigated 15 cases, double that during the same period last year.

According to the GPDP, as is typical for such cases, many difficulties were faced during the investigation.

Currently, the Office is

conducting investigations into multiple cases, and it considers it to be inappropriate to disclose details from those cases.

In addition, the Office appeals to the public to cautiously respond to such sales calls and to avoid providing personal information or accepting invitations before confirming the caller's identity.

The GPDP said that it will continue to combat the illegal handling of personal data.

Five arrested for illegal lending

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) has cracked down on a group for illegal lending, arresting five local residents, with still more to be believed on the run, the PJ reported yesterday.

In total, the case involved HKD24 million and at least 86 incidences of profiteering.

The case was firstly reported to the PJ in June 2017, when 10 local residents filed a report to the bureau

and other governmental departments.

According to the victims, they were told that they were obliged to pay between 8% and 10% interest on the borrowing.

The illegal lender also requested that the borrowers pay the interest within 12 months of the borrowing, and during this period, the borrowers were not allowed to pay off their loan in advance.

Some of the victims who failed to repay were

sued by the loan group.

According to the PJ, the group started operations in July 2015. They advertised their business by handing out cards outdoors, and through an online platform.

Five people have been arrested, including four men and one woman. They were the brains of the group, aged between 28 and 59 years old. All five will be charged with profiteering and money laundering.

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A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

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Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com

For subscription and general issues:

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Civil Protection Bill continues to generate concern from all corners

Staff reporters

THE Civil Protection Bill, now being considered in detail by the First Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL), continues to raise concerns from all corners of Macau society, from lawmakers to journalists to activists.

LARGE IN SCOPE

The first impression of the Civil Protection Bill from the First Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly is that the proposed law is “small in size but large in scope.”

The Committee began its detailed discussion of the proposed legislation yesterday. The president of the Standing Committee, Ho Ion Sang, made his comments on behalf of the working group during a media briefing after the meeting.

According to Ho, “the committee considered that the number of articles in the bill is few but their scope is wide and the law’s provisions are also not clear and did not fully reflect the content of the civil protection work.”

Questioned on the proposal to establish a crime of order and public safety disturbances during emergencies, Ho said that similar provisions are already established by Macau’s Penal Code.

He said that the committee has the opinion that, if there is an amendment regarding this part, it should be an amendment to such a Code instead of being part of a Civil Protection Bill in order to maintain “coherence and consistency.”

Another of the topics addressed by the committee chairman is that the bill fails to clarify the powers of both the Chief Executive and the Secre-



tary for Security, adding that there are several points needing further consideration as well as clarification from the government.

The notes and questions by the AL committee on its first exposure to the bill hint that the earlier hopes expressed by the Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak, to have the law in force by this year’s peak typhoon season, would be a difficult task to achieve unless the government decides to drop significant parts of the bill.

THE CONTROVERSIAL ARTICLE 25

Yesterday, the Macau Portuguese and English Press Association (AIPIM) submitted a letter to Ho Ion Sang, in his

capacity as President of the First Standing Committee, requesting a meeting with the lawmakers responsible for reviewing the Civil Protection Bill.

The letter seeks to raise awareness of article 25, a particularly controversial aspect of the bill that proposes a prison sentence of up to two years (or up to 240 days’ fine) for the spreading of rumors, fake news or misinformation during emergency situations. The sentence could become three years if it causes public panic or constrains the response of civil protection entities.

“Our aim is to raise awareness on the need to amend article 25 of the bill in order to avoid a potential negative im-

pact on freedom of expression and press freedom whenever a ‘state of immediate prevention’ [state of alarm] is declared,” noted AIPIM.

MISLEADING THE PUBLIC

At an event held by this week by the New Macau Association (ANM), local activist Jason Chao argued that the government was not being entirely honest in using legal examples from foreign jurisdictions to lobby for the legislation.

Chao said that the government had misled the public by highlighting the cases of India, Switzerland and France to support the provision of punishable rumor spreading.

ANM expressed its concern with article 25 of the Civil Pro-

tection Bill, saying that the requirement of “proactivity” is extremely vague.

Moreover, the Association claims the government’s justification misrepresented international examples, which in turn misled the public. It raised questions about the real intention behind the bill, which they say is to control online speech.

The Association will submit its opinions to the Legislative Assembly, adding that the government should respond to their concerns. Otherwise, they say the relevant provisions should be withdrawn.

The Association thinks the provision will set up some kind of obstruction of communication. Director Rocky Chan said that the government had not elaborated on the concerned provisions, which may eventually cause a chilling effect that hinders the multifaceted spread of information.

The media may only be permitted to report “official” information under such conditions, suggested Chan.

The government claimed that many countries or regions, among them India, Switzerland and France, impose criminal punishment on the dissemination of rumors.

However, Jason Chao pointed out that the international examples cited by the government are highly misleading; courts in India have even ruled against the legislation, calling it unconstitutional.

The legislative intent of Switzerland and France is to punish certain people who intend to spread false information that poses a danger to a person or property, rather than to control the spread of rumors. Chao added that generally such legislation was enacted to help the media verify its information.

China to issue 2 billion renminbi in gov’t bonds

THE Chinese Central Government will issue 2 billion renminbi-worth (USD290.6 million) of government bonds in Macau on July 4, according to a joint announcement yesterday by the Ministry of Finance of the People’s Republic of China, and the local government in Macau.

Local authorities said

they welcome the issuance of the renminbi bonds in Macau.

In the statement, the government said the issuance would mark a milestone in the development of Macau’s financial sector and accelerate the development of a local bond market. It also assists with the diversification plan for Macau’s economy, the

government said.

The Monetary Authority of Macao is currently studying the establishment of a securities market in the city. It is an idea that dates back to the 1980s but was never seized upon by successive administrations.

The Central Government’s decision to issue government bonds in

Macau coincides with the year of the 20th anniversary of the special administrative region.

A source at the Monetary Authority told Reuters that China has never sold treasury bonds in the MSAR.

The Financial Times reported that the issuance is not the first renminbi-denominated

debt issued in Macau. That came in February 2018 with the issuance of RMB4 billion by the state-run Bank of China Macau Branch, it said, citing Standard Chartered.

The local government said the bonds will not only appeal to corporate investors but will also provide the Macau public with another option

for investment.

The public will be able to subscribe to the bonds via participating banks. Detailed information regarding the distribution network for the product will be made available in a guidance manual on the government bonds and via announcements by competent authorities. **DB**



Macau bested by 200 mainland cities on energy intensity

Julie Zhu

MACAU is not an energy-friendly city by Chinese standards, suggests a recently released report showing the SAR was bested by more than 200 mainland cities in terms of energy intensity.

The findings come from the 2018 China (Macau and the Greater Bay Area) Urban Competitiveness Report, released yesterday by the Institute for Sustainable Development (TISD) of the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST).

Among 294 cities in China - including the two special administrative regions - Macau ranks 250th in terms of ecological urban competitiveness.

Explaining the reasons behind the low ranking, Liu Chengkun, director of the TISD, revealed that the low ranking in respect of ecological urban competitiveness is due to the high energy consumption and the limited green land per capita.

"Sustainable competitiveness includes an evaluation of environmentally-friendly cities. Macau seems to be rather behind," remarked Liu.

The sub-index of the evaluation of environmentally-friendly cities includes energy intensity, where Macau ranks approximately 200th among all cities.

"Energy Intensity stands for energy per unit of GDP. Even though Macau is dominated by the gaming industry, Macau is not an energy-saving and environmentally-friendly city in terms of energy consumption," Liu explained.

"Another factor is the green area per capita; Macau is certainly very low compared to other cities," observed Liu.

The researcher elaborated by

saying that Macau is nearly a 100 percent urbanized city, whereas other mainland cities are still surrounded by suburbs containing large areas of green land.

Another contributing reason factor in Macau's low rank in ecological urban competitiveness is the fact that Macau does not have state-level nature reserves. However, Liu pointed out that since the survey adopted mainland criteria, the lack of state-level nature reserves in Macau is a factor which wrongly contributes to the city's ranking as it has other nature reserves which could be considered state-

level nature reserves.

Among 294 cities in China, the report ranked Macau 14th and 3rd in terms of urban comprehensive competitiveness and comprehensive efficiency competitiveness, respectively. Macau ranked 12th and 7th among the 294 cities in terms of conditions for business and living respectively.

Despite being ranked mostly in the top ten in the majority of indexes, Macau was shown to be the least competitive in terms of social environment, ranking 285th.

Inequality between local and non-local residents is one of the factors explaining Macau's low rank in terms of social environment competitiveness.

The report ranked Shenzhen 1st in terms of urban comprehensive competitiveness. Guangzhou, Dongguan and Foshan also placed ahead of Macau in that respect.

Talking about the Greater Bay Area (GBA), Liu noted that compared to the world's biggest bay areas, the GBA is unique in terms of economic and political systems.

However, instead of seeing the differences in political systems between Macau, Hong Kong and the mainland as a disadvantage, Liu suggested that systematic differences may actually bring advantages to the GBA.

AD



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Announcement for Accepted List: 7 August; Payment: 7 – 8 August

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants holding certificates issued by educational entities in Macao can register directly for the course • Applicants holding certificates issued by educational entities outside Macao should pass the academic qualification verification before course registration
Admission Exam:	Written exam (16 July, 1830 – 1930); Interview (between 23 – 25 July)
Medium:	Chinese (Cantonese or Mandarin), English, Korean, Japanese
Instructors:	Chan Chun Chin, Wong Un In, Sam Wai Chong, Lo Sio Sin, Lei Sin Man, Yin Shu Jen, Cheang Kei Tai
Course Fee:	<p><u>Chinese / English:</u> MOP5,500 (A)</p> <p><u>*Korean / Japanese:</u> MOP7,000 (A) incl MOP1,500 translation fee</p> <p>MOP9,100 (B) incl MOP1,950 translation fee</p> <p>* No subsidies for translation fee (A) Macao Resident (B) Non-Macao Resident</p>
Operation Hours:	0900 – 1300 & 1430 – 1900 (Monday to Friday); except public holidays
Register at:	Technical and Academic Support Division, Mong-Há Campus, IFT
Commencement:	26 August 2019
Conducted at:	Mong-Há Campus, Colina de Mong-Há, IFT
Certification:	Upon completion of the course and passing all exams, participants will receive a certificate issued by IFT.
Document Submission:	<p><u>Applicants holding certificates issued by educational entities in Macao:</u> Original and photocopy of school certificate and ID card, one passport size photo</p> <p><u>Applicants holding certificates issued by educational entities outside Macao:</u> IFT notification letter for passing the academic qualification verification</p>
Note:	<p>(1) Courses are only for applicants who reach the age of 15. (2) Student who attended no less than 80% of the total classes in each subject can take the final exam. (3) 50% of the paid course fee can be refunded if withdrawal request is submitted at least three working days (exclusive of the submission day) before course commencement. No refund will be made after the said period. (4) Applicants' DSEJ Continuous Improvement and Development Programme account will not be debited if withdrawal request is submitted at least three working days (exclusive of the submission day) before course commencement. The full amount of the course fee and deposit will be debited after the said period. (5) For amount over MOP5,000, please settle by VISA/MASTER card, Company cheque or Bank draft.</p>

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GGCT stresses: travel alert is recommendation, not prohibition

Renato Marques

MACAU'S Tourism Crisis Management Office (GGCT) issues travel warnings to countries and regions to serve only as recommendations, the Office stressed a day after it reminded the public that its second-most serious level warning would remain in force for Sri Lanka.

Travel warnings issued by the Office can influence trips made by local residents to such locations. The system has been used as a guideline or reference on several occasions, including the recent decision of the Macau Football Association to forbid the National Team from playing in Sri Lanka, a country on the level 2 travel alert list - countries to which unnecessary trips should be reconsidered.

The warning was issued in late April after a series of bombing attacks targeting churches and hotels in the country on Easter Sunday and is still in force, as reaffirmed by the GGCT notification on Monday. The notification advises Macau residents who intend to travel to Sri Lanka to reconsider their plans.

With the purpose of learning more about the system, and its evaluation and purpose, the Times contacted the Office yesterday.

"In the evaluation of the issuing, cancellation, elevation or decrease of the level of travel alert, risk factors and dangers involving socio-economic and political frame of the destinations are taken into account," wrote the GGCT in a note to the Times. The Office added that such risks can constitute a simple or more complex scenario, in which multiple dangers are present at the same time.

It also noted, regarding the purposes of the system, that the

BLOOMBERG



"Travel Alert System [...] acts only as an indicator of states of emergency in order to raise the awareness of individual people [...] and does not constitute a guarantee of security."

Neither does it aim to be a "prohibition on traveling."

Instead, "it is up to each person to decide to travel or to adjust their travel plan according to the information provided."

The equivalent authority in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Outbound Travel Alert (OTA),

publishes a more comprehensive list of dangerous destinations, including countries such as Syria, Pakistan and Lebanon. Asked about their absence from the Macau travel warning list, the Office said that their inclusion or not depends "on the degree of threat to personal safety, the duration of the threat, and whether the affected site is a travel destination sought by Macau residents."

The GGCT considers "whether tourists have been [di-

rectly] threatened, and if other travel alerts were issued by authorities in mainland China, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and other neighboring regions."

At present the local alert system includes 77 countries and destinations considered popular destinations by Macau residents. The examples of Syria, Pakistan, and Lebanon, which were noted in Hong Kong's OTA, are not on the list.

The OTA System says its mis-

sion is "to help people better understand the risk or threat to personal safety in traveling." It includes a total of 88 countries and territories considered popular travel destinations for Hong Kong residents.

According to information from the Hong Kong Security Bureau, factors that may affect the personal safety of Hong Kong residents include public health problems, food safety and the risk of contracting infectious diseases.

TOURISM

China reduces application fee for Macau travel document

CHINA has reduced the application fees for its citizens who wish to apply for travel documents to Hong Kong and Macau, and for mainland Chinese passports, according to an announcement by the country's National Immigration Administra-

tion. The measures will enter into force on July 1.

Originally, the application fee for a Hong Kong or Macau travel document was RMB80. The new price will be set at RMB60.

A Chinese passport can also be used by mainland

citizens to visit Macau. Mainlanders using their passport to visit Macau are granted a seven-day stay each time they have a layover in the SAR when traveling from the mainland to a third country, or when returning from a third country back

to mainland China.

The application fee for this document will be reduced from RMB160 to RMB120.

In 2018, China issued more than 100 million entry-exit travel documents to its own residents. In the same year,

China processed a total of 97.21 million applications for passports, Hong Kong and Macau visas, and Taiwan visas, representing an increase of 12.6 percent.

According to the mainland immigration authority, the fee reduction will benefit a total of 65 million people each year.

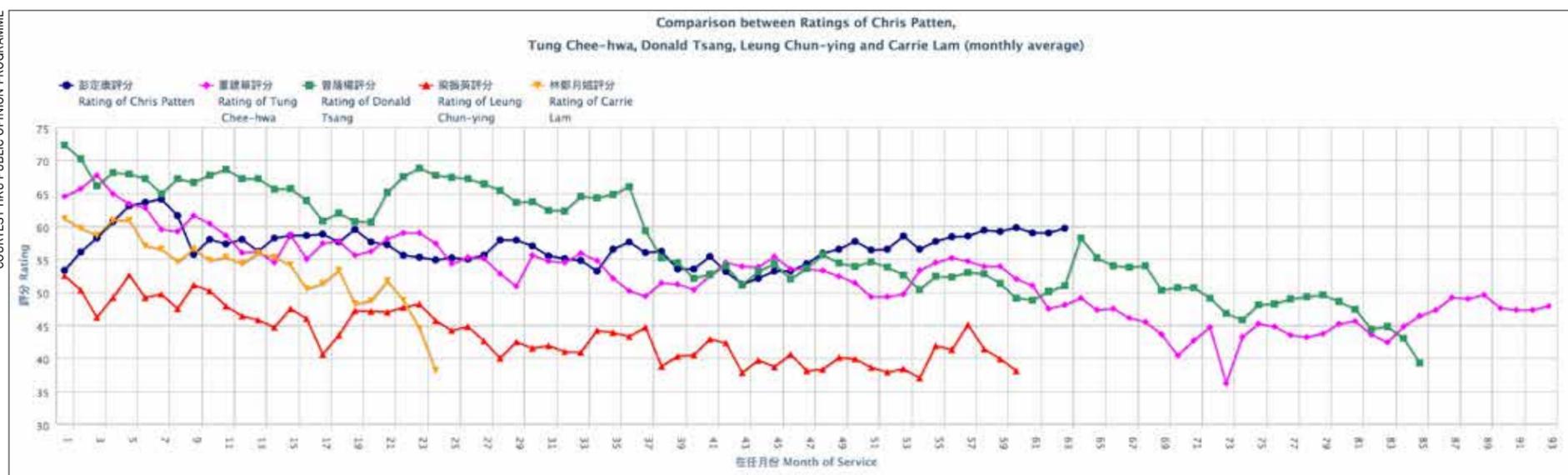
This year, mainland China eased several entry-exit measures for its residents, including allowing many residents to apply for travel documents, such as Hong

Kong and Macau travel permits, in any mainland Chinese city rather than only in their hometown.

Except for mainland tourists who traveled to Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, there were about 71.25 million trips to overseas countries in 2018.

The fee reduction will not necessarily lead to more mainlanders visiting Macau, because the fee reduction does not ease visa endorsement policies for mainland tourists. **JZ**

COURTESY HKU PUBLIC OPINION PROGRAMME



HONG KONG

Carrie Lam sees popularity plunge after historic protests



Natalie Lung & Stephen Tan

HONG Kong leader Carrie Lam saw her approval rating plunge 9 percentage points in a month, as her bid to ease extraditions to China prompted hundreds of thousands of protesters to take to the streets.

The Beijing-backed chief executive saw her approval rating fall to a record low of 23% and her disapproval rise to 67%, according to a survey released yesterday by the University of Hong Kong's Public Opinion Programme. Support for the former British colony's government fell to 18% - the lowest since 2003 - according to the poll of 1,015 residents conducted between June 17 and 20.

"The rallies, protests and related controversies as a result of the amendments of the extradition bill appear to have affected public opinion to a fairly large extent," the polling institute said. "The younger and the more educated the respondents, the more

critical they are of Carrie Lam."

The dismal poll performance will boost protesters' efforts to force Lam out over the bill, which would have for the first time allowed the transfer of criminal suspects to mainland China. While Lam suspended efforts to pass the legislation after clashes between demonstrators and police on June 12, rallies calling for its withdrawal and her resignation have continued.

The younger and the more educated the respondents, the more critical they are of Carrie Lam.

HKU PUBLIC OPINION PROGRAMME

The plunge means that Lam is poised to begin her third year in office next week more unpopular than any of her three predecessors at this point in their terms. By one measure, she performs almost as poorly as former Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa did after similar mass protests in 2003 - unrest that contributed to his decision to resign more than a year later.

HKU put her support rating - an average of the ratings given to her by all respondents, on a scale of one to 100 - at 32.8 points, down from 63.6 points during her first week in office. That's as low as either Tung or her immediate predecessor, Leung Chun-ying, at the depths of their unpopularity.

Lam has failed to heal divisions after taking over from Leung, who was forced to forego seeking a second term due to widespread discontent. While she may have underestimated the opposition to her extradition bill, her task was complicated by the requirement to serve two masters - Hong Kong and Beijing - without a public vote to provide a mandate.

The share of survey respondents who said they had trust in Lam fell to 28% - the lowest figure since HKU began collecting the data in 1992. **Bloomberg**

Tycoon Richard Li's FWD in talks to buy MetLife Hong Kong

FWD Group is in advanced talks to buy MetLife Inc.'s Hong Kong insurance unit in what would be the latest in a string of acquisitions by the insurer backed by billionaire Richard Li, people familiar with the matter said.

The companies could reach an agreement in the next few weeks, the people said, asking not to be identified because the discussions are pri-

vate. A deal could value MetLife Hong Kong at less than USD400 million and would help FWD boost its presence in the former British colony, the people said.

At that price, MetLife would sell the asset for less than its \$400 million embedded value, a measure of the value of its insurance contracts, when Bloomberg News first reported on the potential sale last

year. China has been working to curb demand for Hong Kong insurance products, which are popular with mainland Chinese customers who see them as offshore investments which can help to safeguard their assets and hedge against yuan volatility.

Still, some buyers have been willing to do deals betting on further growth in the industry. An arm of Hong Kong

property tycoon Henry Cheng's New World Development Co. agreed to acquire FTLife Insurance Co. for HKD21.5 billion (\$2.75 billion) in December. In 2017, Hong Kong-based investment fund Jeneration Holdings Ltd. agreed to buy Axa SA's local wealth management unit.

Talks over MetLife Hong Kong are ongoing and could still fall apart, the people said. Repre-

sentatives for FWD and New York-based MetLife declined to comment.

MetLife's Asia business saw adjusted earnings increase 9% in the first quarter thanks to growth in South Korea and China. The company said in May it also recorded strong momentum during the period in Japan, where it's focused on accident and health coverage as well as foreign-exchange products. The company also has operations in Australia, Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Nepal and Vietnam.

FWD has been buying insurance assets across

Asia, agreeing in October to acquire control of Commonwealth Bank of Australia's Indonesian life insurance arm. In 2017, it purchased American International Group Inc.'s Japanese life unit, after earlier doing deals in Singapore and Vietnam.

Earlier this year, FWD reached a preliminary pact with Siam Commercial Bank Plc on a potential life-insurance partnership. Siam Commercial, Thailand's biggest listed lender by assets, had unsuccessfully explored a sale of its life insurance business back in 2017. **Bloomberg**

SHENZHEN

Record land sale underscores China's housing demand

CHINESE developers are betting property curbs will eventually be loosened after splashing out for land in Shenzhen.

A sale of five plots of residential land Monday raised 22.4 billion yuan (USD3.3 billion), a record single-day haul since the city, part of the Greater Bay region with Hong Kong, started open land bidding in 2001.

Bidding was so fierce that each plot reached the maximum price set by authorities, leaving developers to compete on how much space they would set aside for affordable housing to be transferred to the government for free. On top of that, condo buyers will be banned from flipping properties for the first three years.

"These developers can hardly profit if current selling restrictions are maintained," said Zhang Dawei, an analyst at Centaline Group. "They're waging a huge bet on policy loosening."



China has unleashed a vast array of measures to control housing prices, from curtailing developers' fundraising to limit what they can pay for land, to raising deposits for second or third properties, and restricting ownership to holders of local residency permits.

More than 70 developers joined the auction, which lasted

almost three hours, the China Fund newspaper reported.

Logan Property Holdings Co. won a parcel near Shenzhen North Railway Station for the equivalent of about 63,100 yuan per square meter of available floor space, a record for the area, according to Zhang Xiaoduan, Cushman & Wakefield Plc's head of research in southern China.

"The land offer is the government's way of calming the market that more land supply is on the way," said Zhang. "But developers are hardly convinced. They know that lots of land resources will be reserved for affordable housing, so such commercial supply is still highly sought after, she said."

Bloomberg

Guangdong's foreign trade sees modest rise

FOREIGN trade in south China's Guangdong Province recorded a total of 2.71 trillion yuan (about MOP3.17 trillion or USD 393 billion) in the first five months of the year, up 1.4% year-on-year, customs authorities said. The modest rise comes amid a slowing of the Chinese economy, attributed in part to China-U.S. trade tensions.

The foreign trade volume of Guangdong from January to May accounted for 22.4% of the total foreign trade volume of the country, according to the Guangdong branch of the General Administration of Customs.

Guangdong's trade with ASEAN countries reached 360.58 billion yuan, an increase of 3% year-on-year. Meanwhile Guangdong's trade with the EU saw a significant increase of 15.7% in the first five months.

Guangdong is a leading foreign trade player in the country, with its imports and exports topping 7.16 trillion yuan in 2018, a historic high ranking first in the country for the 33rd year in a row.

Excluding Hong Kong and Macau, the population of the Greater Bay Area accounts for about 60% of that of Guangdong Province. **DB**

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“ THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’ ”

GAMING

Caesars deal catapults underdog Eldorado to casino powerhouse

Christopher Palmeri

IN the casino business, the minnow is swallowing the whale.

Eldorado Resorts Inc.'s USD8.58 billion acquisition of Caesars Entertainment Corp. means an underdog from Reno, Nevada - a town long in the shadow of Las Vegas - will become the largest owner of casinos in the U.S.

In the deal, announced Monday, Caesars shareholders will receive about \$12.75 a share, including \$8.40 in cash. That's a 28% premium to the casino chain's close on Friday.

While the combined company will retain the Caesars name, there's no mistaking who's buying whom in this transaction: Eldorado, with a market value of less than \$4 billion, is clinching the giant from Las Vegas and its flagship Caesars Palace.

Eldorado's quick ascent to the top of the industry benefited from a campaign by activist billionaire Carl Icahn, Caesars' biggest shareholder, who pushed for a sale in recent months. The Reno company is buying an ailing Caesars, still coping with the fallout of a 2008 leveraged buyout that left it with a mountain of debt. But it wasn't the only suitor: Golden Nugget owner Tilman Fertitta proposed merging his restaurant and casino empire with Caesars last year.

RENO ROOTS

Eldorado dates back to a single casino opened in Reno in 1973 by Donald Carano, a lawyer who died in 2017. The town, which calls itself "The Biggest Little City in the World," has always been the second fiddle of Nevada's gambling industry.

The business has grown exponentially in recent years under the direction of Tom Reeg, who is now chief executive officer and will lead the combined Eldorado-Caesars along with Chairman Gary Carano and the rest of Eldorado's management. Among its purchases, Eldorado acquired MTR Gaming Group and Isle of Capri Casinos, and last year added Tropicana Entertainment, which was controlled by Icahn.

"Eldorado is 5 for 5 in the merger department and everyone time they announce synergies, they find more," said Chad Beynon, an analyst at Macquarie.

Eldorado, which still counts the founding Carano family as its largest shareholder, had 26 casinos in 12 states. Combined with Caesars, it will boast 60

BLOOMBERG



owned, operated and managed casino-resorts across 16 states - including chains like Harrah's. Tellingly, the enlarged company will be headquartered in Reno.

ROUGH ROAD

Like Caesars, Eldorado has had its ups and downs. The Reno market was pummeled by competition from Indian casinos in Northern California and the expansion of gambling across the country. In 2012, the company put one of its subsidiaries - the Silver Legacy Resort Casino, a joint venture with MGM Resorts International - into bankruptcy.

For a time, it seemed the Carano family would be more likely to have long-term wealth from their winery Ferrari-Ca-

rano Vineyards in Healdsburg, California. Then the family set on a strategy of diversifying its casino business through acquisitions.

Reeg, a former banker who's now 47, joined the board of directors in 2007. With the demeanor of an accountant more than a casino boss, Reeg has built a reputation for cutting costs and boosting profits. He consolidated functions at resorts the company acquired and cut back on the promotions that often lead to vicious competition in small markets.

NEGOTIATING SKILLS

Eldorado also boosted results at its properties by adding additional hotel and dining options, such as the Row, a food court in

Reno, and a hotel near its property in Columbus, Ohio. Reeg has proven himself a shrewd negotiator outside of acquisitions, cutting deals with William Hill Plc and the Stars Group in the emerging market of sports betting. He's also teamed up with Maryland's Cordish Cos. to develop the area around a horse track in Pompano, Florida.

Still, Reeg will have his work cut out for him with Caesars, which is competing with newer resorts in places like Atlantic City, New Jersey. Apollo Global Management LLC and TPG, the two private equity giants in the 2008 leveraged buyout of Caesars, took a bath on the company before exiting the investment several months ago. Their departure allowed Icahn

to swoop in.

Caesars casinos are likely to contend with even steeper competition in states such as Illinois, which recently authorized six new casinos - including one in downtown Chicago.

Eldorado and Caesars said Monday that they have identified benefits of \$500 million by combining the businesses, and expect the deal to boost cash flow immediately. A parallel agreement will see VICI Properties Inc. acquire some of the companies' real estate, generating \$3.2 billion of proceeds to help pay down debt.

"As with our past transactions, we have a detailed plan for significant synergy realization," Reeg said in a statement. **Bloomberg**

Carl Icahn proves deft dealer again in Caesars win

IN M&A, much like in blackjack, players have to be wary of a stiff hand - bid too high and it could be a bust. That's especially true when the dealer is Carl Icahn.

Eldorado Resorts Inc., a casino operator, is being punished by shareholders for its acquisition announced Monday of Caesars Entertainment Corp. Eldorado's stock tumbled more than 8% percent.

The company agreed to buy its Las Vegas-based rival for USD17.3 billion, about half of which is made up of debt.

It's the biggest casino deal since Caesars' ill-fated leveraged buyout by TPG and Apollo Management in 2008 (which came together just before the financial crisis took hold and later led Caesars into bankruptcy). Eldorado also struck a parallel \$3.2 billion deal with

VICI Properties Inc. for certain related real estate assets, such as the Harrah's Resort in Atlantic City.

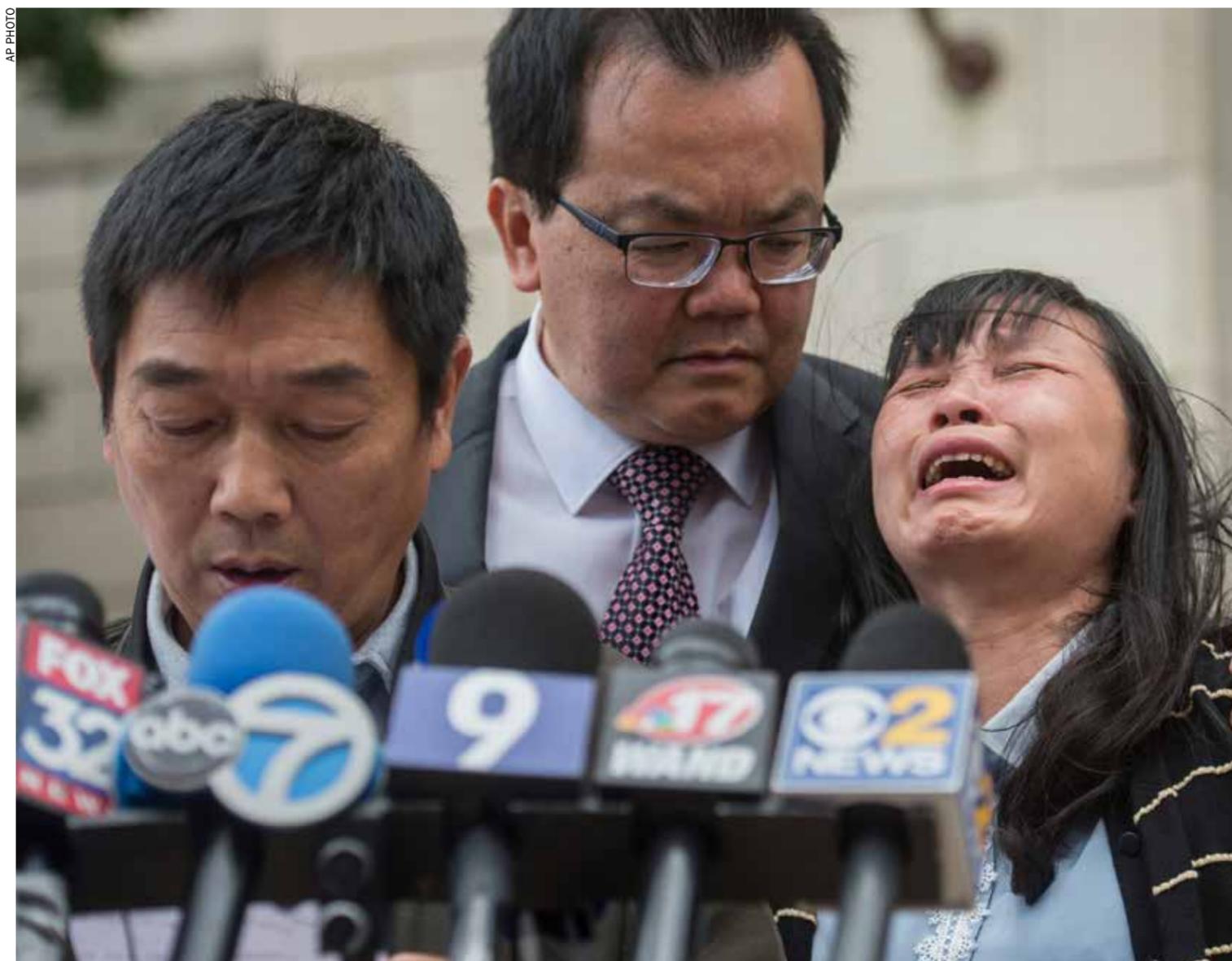
Icahn, Caesars' top shareholder, had been pushing for a sale of the company and helped install industry veteran Tony Rodio as its CEO in April. The situation happens to bear close resemblance to another deal Eldorado did last year, when it acquired Tropicana Entertainment from Icahn Enterprises LP, the billionaire's holding company, for \$1.85 billion. Rodio was CEO of Tropicana, too.

With the Caesars transaction, Reno, Nevada-based Eldorado is expanding its portfolio to 60 casino resorts and gaming facilities in 16 states. It had just two as of 2014, according to Bloomberg Intelligence. There are the benefits of getting bigger, but at the same

time, Eldorado's calculations leave little room for error.

Its offer for Caesars is a combination of cash and stock that amounts to \$12.75 a share, a significant bump from its earlier \$10.50-a-share bid that was reported this month by the New York Post, citing an unnamed source. On average, analysts pegged the stand-alone value of Caesars shares at \$11 apiece.

The final takeover price is a 35% premium to its average closing level over the past 20 trading sessions, though Icahn himself notes that it's 51% higher than Caesars' stock price before he won three seats on the board in March and began making his sale push. Icahn built his stake when the stock was trading below \$9. **MDT/Bloomberg**



Lifeng Ye, the mother of slain University of Illinois scholar Yingying Zhang, cries out in grief as her husband Ronggao Zhang addresses the media

COURTS

Former student guilty in slaying of visiting Chinese scholar

Michael Tarm, Peoria (Ill.)

JURORS deliberated less than 90 minutes before returning a guilty verdict yesterday [Macau time] in the federal death-penalty trial of a former University of Illinois doctoral student who abducted a visiting Chinese scholar from a bus stop and killed her at his apartment.

Brendt Christensen didn't move or show any emotion as the judge read the jury's verdict — a swift conviction that was widely expected after defense attorneys acknowledged at trial Christensen killed 26-year-old Yingying Zhang in June 2017 and said they would focus all their energy on persuading jurors to spare his life.

Zhang's mother, Lifeng Ye, cried inconsolably by the courthouse steps shortly after the verdict as someone stroked her hair and tried to comfort her.

Ronggao Zhang thanked jurors for what he called "this first step toward justice" for his daughter. He was alluding to the death penalty stage at which

the same jury must decide if Christensen should be put to death.

He has said previously that the 29-year-old Christensen — who prosecutors say raped, choked and stabbed Zhang before beating her with a baseball bat and decapitating her — deserved execution.

"We have missed Yingying tremendously," Ronggao Zhang said in Chinese, reading from a statement. "We still could not imagine how we will live the rest of our lives without her."

Zhang's body hasn't been found and her father said they still wish to "find Yingying and bring her home."

"We will not give up," he said.

Judge James Shadid set July 8 for the start of the penalty phase, a sort of mini-trial that could last several weeks. Illinois no longer has capital punishment, but Christensen could be sentenced to death because he was convicted in federal court.

Of the 45,000 students attending the University of Illinois in Champaign, more than 5,000 are Chinese students, which

is among the largest such enrollment in the nation. Those students have closely followed developments from the trial, which is being held at U.S. District Court in Peoria.

Zhang had been in Illinois for just three months — her only time living outside China. The daughter of working-class parents, she aspired to become a professor in crop sciences to help her family financially. Friends and family described her as caring and fun-loving.

"The tragic truth is Yingying is gone," prosecutor Eugene Miller said during closing arguments earlier yesterday. "There is only one person responsible — and he sits right there."

Christensen twisted and pulled at a rubber band at a nearby defense table as Miller spoke. Zhang's father sat on a front bench several feet away, listening to a Chinese interpretation of proceedings through a headset.

Miller said Christensen abducted a stranger who was "an object for him to fulfill his dark desire — to kill for the sake of

killing."

When Zhang still lived in China, Christensen had already decided he would kill "a petite woman who could easily be disposed of," Miller said, adding that Zhang was "the ideal victim" to Christensen.

Christensen, posing as an undercover officer, lured Zhang into his car when she was running late to sign an apartment lease on June 9, 2017, Miller said. He told jurors the muscular Christensen likely forced the 5-foot-4 Zhang into a 6-foot-long duffel bag he bought online days before to carry her up to his apartment in Urbana, Champaign's sister city 140 miles (225 kilometers) southwest of Chicago, where he raped and killed her. Miller suggested Christensen then carried Zhang's remains out of the apartment in the same bag.

The defense ended the trial as they began it, repeating the admission that their client, in fact, killed Zhang. The admission took the suspense out of the jury deliberation, and made a guilty verdict all but certain.

Legal experts say the risky strategy could also be a basis for an appeal by Christensen.

"It's Brendt's fault," Elisabeth Pollock, an attorney for Christensen, said about Zhang's death. She added that he was "someone who lost control ... who battled these dark thoughts." She said he lost that battle and that Zhang died as a result.

Pollock said prosecutors were, in some instances, asking jurors to infer things that can't be known from the existing evidence — including what Christensen did to Zhang before killing her.

When she added, "We are here because the government wants to take his life," prosecutors objected and the judge stopped her. Judge Shadid told jurors they were not yet in the penalty phase of the trial and the only issue now was the defendant's guilt or innocence.

Zhang's mother, Lifeng Ye, cried inconsolably by the courthouse steps shortly after the verdict

Jurors heard evidence that Christensen boasted he killed 12 others before killing Zhang, starting when the Stevens Point, Wisconsin, native was 19 and still living in Wisconsin. He began his studies in Champaign at the university's prestigious doctoral program in physics in 2013.

Miller referred to Christensen's serial killer claim during opening statements but not in his closing, which lasted more than an hour. The FBI said it could not rule out that Christensen killed 12 others. But Pollock, who addressed jurors for less than 15 minutes, told jurors there was no evidence that Christensen killed before.

Prosecutors said Zhang was in the wrong place at the wrong time and that Christensen, who had fantasized about killing, was determined to take someone's life that day and had cruised around in his car looking for a victim. They said he had approached a different young woman earlier posing as an officer, but she refused to get in the car.

Christensen and his girlfriend, Terra Bullis, attended a vigil for Zhang on June 29, during which Bullis wore an FBI wire and recorded him giving details about how he killed Zhang. As they were leaving the night of the vigil, Bullis said she'd rather not call a ride-sharing service, telling Christensen: "My version of safer is walking at night with a serial killer." He responded: "Yeah. That's me." **AP**

TRADE WAR

Beijing criticizes possible US penalties against banks

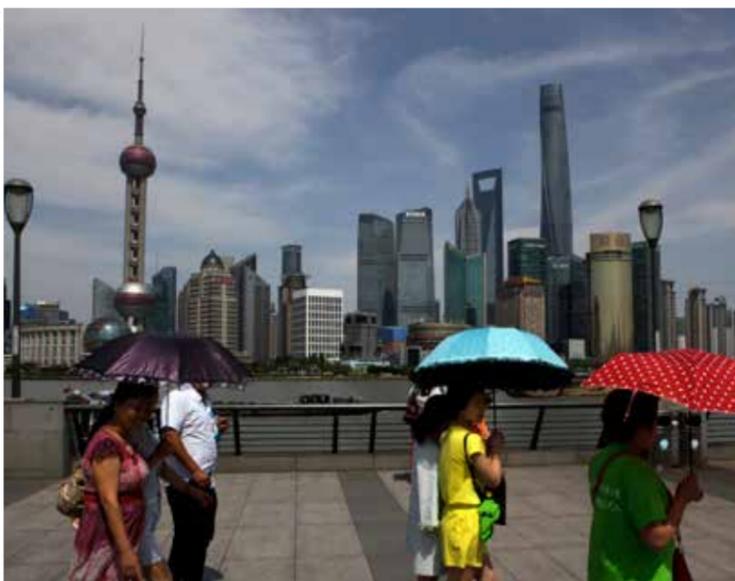
CHINA yesterday criticized Washington's efforts to enforce U.S. law abroad following a news report three Chinese banks might be penalized over dealings with North Korea.

The banks named by The Washington Post as facing possible loss of access to the U.S. financial system denied they were under investigation.

The Post said a court found three Chinese banks in contempt for ignoring demands for information about possible violations of sanctions imposed over North Korea's nuclear program. The newspaper said the court didn't identify the banks but their details fit the identities of Bank of Communications, China Merchants Bank and Shanghai Pudong Development Bank.

"We consistently oppose the so-called long-armed jurisdiction of the United States on Chinese companies," said a foreign ministry spokesman, Geng Shuang. Geng gave no confirma-

AP PHOTO



tion of the Post's report.

The order comes at a time of U.S.-Chinese tension over technology and trade disputes. The two governments have raised tariffs on billions of dollars of each other's imports. Washington has threatened to reduce Chinese tech giant Huawei's

access to U.S. components and technology.

The ruling by a federal judge in Washington means U.S. authorities can terminate the banks' ability to process transactions in U.S. dollars, the Post said.

The Post said the judge rejected arguments based on Chinese

privacy law due to Beijing's "dismal compliance record" with such requests and Washington's interest in countering North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

Beijing, long the isolated North's only major ally, has supported U.N. sanctions intended to force leader Kim Jong Un's government to give up nuclear and missile development.

The Chinese banks said they comply with U.N. sanctions on North Korea.

"China Merchants Bank has consistently and strictly complied with Chinese laws and relevant U.N. resolutions and other applicable sanctions and has not been investigated for alleged violations," the bank said in a statement reported by Chinese media.

A statement by Pudong Development Bank said it is legally barred from releasing customer information without permission. China Merchants Bank said requests should be made in line with a U.S.-Chinese judicial

assistance agreement.

Also yesterday, Geng Shuang said China hopes a meeting later this week between President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping will help build trust and resolve "outstanding issues."

Geng Shuang gave no details at a daily briefing, but there are hopes the planned encounter at the G-20 summit in Japan will help lower the temperature in the trade war between the world's two largest economies.

As part of preparations, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer spoke by phone earlier this week with the top Chinese negotiator, Vice Premier Liu He.

"We certainly hope that the meeting will help the two states to promote mutual trust, resolve their differences, and resolve some of the outstanding issues we are facing now," Geng said.

China remains "committed to working with the U.S. to develop China-U.S. relations based on coordination and cooperation," Geng said.

The meeting in Osaka is the first opportunity for the two leaders to discuss the trade dispute face-to-face since Trump said he was ready to target the \$300 billion in Chinese imports that he hasn't already hit with tariffs, extending them to everything China ships to the United. **MDT/AP**

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HIMALAYAS

30 tents abandoned by climbers add to trash pile on Everest

Binaj Gurubacharya, Kathmandu

AFTER every party it's time to clean up and Mount Everest is no different. The record number of climbers crowding this season has left a government cleanup crew grappling with how to clear away everything from abandoned tents to human waste that threatens drinking water.

Budget expedition companies charge as little as USD30,000 per climber, cutting costs including waste removal. Everest has so much garbage — depleted oxygen cylinders, food packaging, rope — that climbers use the trash as a kind of signpost. But this year's haul from an estimated 700 climbers, guides and porters on the mountain has been a shock to the ethnic Sherpas who worked on the government's cleanup drive this spring.

Moreover, the tents are littering South Col, or Camp 4, which, at 8,000 meters (26,240 feet) is the highest campsite on Everest, just below the summit. The high winds at that elevation have scattered the tents and trash everywhere.

"The altitude, oxygen levels, dangerously icy and slippery slopes, and bad weather of South Col make it very difficult to bring such big things as tents down," said Dawa Steven Sherpa, who led an independent cleanup last month and has been a leading figure in the campaign to clean Mount Everest for the past 12 years.

Exhausted climbers struggling to breathe and battling nausea



leave heavy tents behind rather than attempt to carry them down. Sherpa said the logos on the ice-embedded tents that identify the expedition companies were deliberately ripped out so the culprits could evade detection.

"It took us an hour to dig out just one tent out of the frozen ice and bring it down," said Sherpa. His expeditions have alone brought down some 20,000 kilograms (44,000 pounds) of garbage since 2008.

Sherpa estimated 30 tents had been left on South Col, and as much as 5,000 kilograms (11,000 pounds) of trash. Bringing it down is a herculean task when any misstep at such altitudes could be fatal.

It is impossible to know exactly how much litter is spread across

Everest because it only becomes visible when the snow melts. At Camp 2, two levels higher than Base Camp, the campaigners believe that around 8,000 kilograms (17,637 pounds) of human excrement were left during this year's climbing season alone.

Some climbers do not use makeshift toilets, instead digging a hole in the snow, letting the waste fall into small crevasses. However, rising temperatures have thinned the glacier, leaving fewer and smaller crevasses. The overflowing waste then spills downhill toward Base Camp and even communities below the mountain.

People living at the Base Camp use melted snow for drinking water that climbers' toilets threaten to contaminate.

"During our expedition to Camp 2, eight of our 10 Sherpas got stomach illness from bad water at Camp 2," said John All, a professor of environmental science at Western Washington University who visited Everest on a research expedition.

For the Nepalese who regard the mountain as "Sagarmatha," or Mother of the World, littering amounts to desecration. Climber Nima Doma, who returned recently from a successful ascent, gets angry thinking that the sacred mountain is being turned into a garbage dump.

"Everest is our god and it was very sad to see our god so dirty. How can people just toss their trash on such a sacred place?" she said.

The trash is creating danger for future climbers and spurring

calls for action now.

"When the snow melts the garbage surfaces. And when there is high wind, tents are blown and torn and the contents are scattered all over the mountain, which makes it even more dangerous for climbers already navigating a slippery, steep slope in snow and high winds," said Ang Tshering, former president of Nepal Mountaineering Association.

Ang Dorjee, who heads the independent Everest Pollution Control Committee, has demanded that the Nepal government — whose general oversight of Everest has come under scrutiny this year as climbers died waiting in line to ascend — institute some rules.

"The problem is there are no regulations on how to dispose of the human waste. Some climbers use biodegradable bags that have enzymes which decompose human waste but most of them don't," he said.

The bags are expensive and have to be imported from the United States.

"The biggest problem and concern now on Everest is human waste. Hundreds of people are there for weeks who go to open toilets," Tshering said. Melting conditions at Camp 2 create an odor that is sickening to climbers, and the waste will eventually contaminate water sources below and become a health hazard, he said.

Tshering and other mountaineers say the government should mandate the use of biodegradable bags. It would spare Dorjee and his team the unpleasant task of collecting the waste and carrying it down the dangerous slopes.

The government is working on a plan to scan and tag climbers' equipment and gear. All climbers would have to deposit \$4,000 before their ascent and might not get the money back if they return without their items **AP**

SINGAPORE

Authorities probe drones at airport that disrupted 63 flights

DRONES buzzing around Singapore's Changi Airport have caused 63 flights to be delayed or diverted in the past week, triggering an investigation and raising questions about the motives of the offenders.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore said yesterday that 18 flights at the airport were delayed and seven were diverted the night before "due to bad weather and unauthorized drone activities."

It had earlier confirmed

drones were seen flying near the airport last Tuesday and Wednesday. That caused the intermittent closure of a runway, delaying 37 flights and diverting one arriving plane to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

"A multi-agency team including the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore, Changi Airport Group, Singapore Armed Forces and the Singapore Police Force was activated for the search and locate operations," the regulator added.

Investigations are ongoing. No details on the number of drones involved and the perpetrators have been provided by the authorities.

Shortly after news broke of the drone activity at the airport, Singapore's defense ministry posted a photograph of a soldier pointing a jammer gun at a "rouge drone" on Facebook.

While the photo wasn't taken at Changi, it hinted at the anti-drone technologies that may be used to

track down offenders.

Drones are largely controlled by operators via a radio control link, on a frequency that's similar to Wi-Fi. A jammer gun temporarily disables this connection.

"In absence of a control link, most drones are designed to switch into 'fail-safe' mode, and may either attempt to return to its original location or immediately land," said Foong Shaohui, an associate professor who researches unmanned



Changi International Airport in Singapore

systems at the Singapore University of Technology and Design.

"It would be possible to identify the operators by analyzing the information stored in the drone" such as pictures and flight data,

he added.

Some observers said the incursions, which happened on two occasions and less than a week from each other, could signal the involvement of more sophisticated groups. **AP**

CAMBODIA

Court charges seven, including Chinese, in building collapse

A court in Cambodia said yesterday that seven people, including four Chinese nationals, have been charged with crimes related to a building collapse that killed 28 construction workers who were sleeping in the unfinished structure that doubled as their housing.

The Preah Sihanouk provincial court said the Chinese owner of the building in Sihanoukville was charged with unintentional homicide, involuntarily causing injuries and aggravating circumstances that cause injury. The Chinese builder, two Chinese building site managers and three other people of unspecified nationalities were charged with conspiracy to commit those crimes.

The four Chinese nationals were put in pretrial detention. The aggravating circumstances charge carries a penalty of five to 10 years in prison and the unintentional homicide charge carries a penalty of up to three years in jail.



A court spokesman, Lim Bunheng, said authorities were still looking to arrest the other three people.

The unfinished seven-story condominium collapsed early

Saturday as the workers slept on the second floor. Survivors said they heard loud noise and felt the building vibrate just before it fell.

Authorities haven't said what

caused the collapse, and the provincial court did not explain the basis of the charges in detail.

Rescuers found the last two survivors and the final victims Monday. In addition to the

dead, another 26 workers were injured.

Sihanoukville is a thriving beach resort town that has seen a boom of Chinese-funded projects in recent as part of wider wave of Chinese investment and influence in the impoverished Southeast Asian nation.

Chinese businesses have invested several billion U.S. dollars in sectors such as tourism, real estate, agriculture, seaports and casinos. Several skyscrapers and other big property developments in the capital Phnom Penh and in Sihanoukville and the island Koh Kong have been financed and constructed by Chinese companies.

But Chinese investors have attracted criticism in recent years as their influence in the country grows. Cambodia has become increasingly reliant on Chinese aid and investment, and at the same time has become a close political ally of Beijing, supporting its positions in regional and international affairs.

That has allowed Prime Minister Hun Sen, who has been in power for more than 30 years, to be less reliant on aid from Western countries that insist that human rights and democratic principles be observed.

Much of Cambodia's infrastructure in recent years has been financed by China and Chinese companies. AP

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IRAN SANCTIONS

Acting Pentagon chief Esper on global stage amid crisis

Lolita C. Baldor
& Robert Burns, Washington

WITH barely one day on the job, Acting Defense Secretary Mark Esper is heading to Europe to try to persuade reluctant and increasingly wary NATO allies to work with the Trump administration on Iran sanctions and security in the Middle East, amid worries that the U.S. and the Islamic Republic may be on a path to war.

When he steps off his plane in Brussels today [Macau time], Esper will also have to assure his international counterparts and military commanders in the region that the U.S. military is in stable and capable hands, even though President Donald Trump has had three Pentagon chiefs in the past seven months.

That's an extraordinary mission for an interim Pentagon leader at a time of global uncertainty about a range of U.S. defense and foreign policies — not just on Iran but also on countering China and Russia, preventing a resurgence of the Islamic State group and ending the war in Afghanistan.

Just in the last week the U.S. military was poised to conduct attacks on Iranian air defense sites in retaliation for Iran's shooting down of a U.S. military surveillance drone in the Strait of Hormuz. Trump called off the attacks at the last moment, citing the likelihood of Iranian casualties, and his top diplomat, Secretary of Sta-



Acting Defense Secretary Mark Esper arrives at the Pentagon in Washington

te Mike Pompeo, flew to the Middle East to attempt to galvanize international support for tougher economic pressure on Tehran.

Esper took over at the Pentagon on Monday for Pat Shanahan, who was acting secretary for six months but quit before he was formally nominated by Trump. This is by far the longest period the Pentagon has ever gone without a Senate-confirmed secretary. Trump's first defense chief, Jim Mattis, resigned in December in protest of Trump's policies and what the retired four-star Marine general considered Trump's destructive

approach to allies.

By coincidence, Esper's first major public appearance will be at NATO, the alliance that Trump has frequently bashed as a collection of freeloaders.

The two-day NATO meeting of defense ministers will include talks on many of the most worrisome international security topics: possible war with Iran; the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan; the continued fight against Islamic State militants in Syria and Iraq; and tensions with Russia. Esper, who until Sunday evening had been serving as the civilian leader of the U.S. Army, may be familiar with many of the issues but to

European defense ministers he is a relative unknown.

"Expectations are really low. They are not going to expect him to be able to speak authoritatively for the president and go beyond what's in his talking points," said Derek Chollet, who served in senior positions at the White House, State Department and Pentagon during the Obama administration. On the other hand, the Brussels gathering allows Esper to meet many of his key counterparts in a short period of time — "sort of like speed dating," Chollet said.

Retired Navy Adm. James Stavridis, a former top NATO commander, said the long absence of a Senate-confirmed leader of the Pentagon has impact around the world, "where our most important Cabinet department is perceived as weak and without a strong leader." He added that senior military officers will also need to see a level of stability, because the repeated use of acting secretaries "erodes the principle of civilian control of the military."

State Department officials said Monday the administration wants to enlist the help of a wider range of countries to monitor potential threats to commercial shipping in and near the Persian Gulf. This follows allegations — denied by Iran — that Tehran was behind recent attacks on commercial tankers in the Gulf of Oman.

At NATO headquarters, Esper will face the task of explaining

the U.S. strategy of compelling Iran through economic pressure to renegotiate the nuclear deal that Trump pulled out of last year. Trump wants a broader deal that would limit other Iranian behavior, including its support for what the U.S. calls terrorist groups and its buildup of ballistic missiles. Tehran, however, has said it will not negotiate as long as the U.S. keeps up its sanctions, which Trump intensified Monday by signing an executive order targeting Iran's supreme leader and his associates with financial penalties.

On his first day in his new role, Esper wrote in a message to all Pentagon employees that the transition from Shanahan does not signal a change in strategic priorities, which remain the same: make the military better prepared for combat, strengthen international alliances, and improve the Pentagon's business practices.

Katie Wheelbarger, a senior Pentagon policy adviser on international security, said the timing of the NATO meeting works well for Esper.

"It's actually fortuitous that on the first week the new acting secretary is on the job that he will be able to have face-to-face conversations with all his counterparts in the alliance," she said. "We come with a message of continuity, that a personnel transition does not mean a change in policy, particularly no change in U.S. adherence and devotion to NATO."

Wheelbarger said Esper will bring the allies up to date on the situation with Iran, including the intelligence information that prompted the U.S. to send an aircraft carrier and other military assets to the Gulf region in early May in response to what it called heightened Iranian threats. **AP**

UK

Boris Johnson again dodges questions over police visit

BORIS Johnson embarked on a media blitz yesterday, hoping to shift the subject away from his private life and back to Britain's pending departure from the European Union.

Johnson, who is running to be the next leader for both the Conservative Party and the nation, has refused to address personal questions despite an ongoing clamor to face public scrutiny amid the fallout from a reported quarrel with his girlfriend last week that prompted a

police visit. In break from his previous strategy, the front-runner took part in three interviews in less than 24 hours, responding to challenger Jeremy Hunt's criticism that he was a "coward" and needed to face greater public scrutiny if he is to become prime minister.

The winner of the contest will replace Theresa May, who stepped down as party leader after failing to secure Parliament's approval for her EU divorce deal.

Speaking yesterday on

LBC radio, Johnson was questioned over a picture showing him and girlfriend Carrie Symonds in the leafy Sussex countryside amid speculation that it was staged and released by his campaign. Symonds, a former Conservative Party press officer, has remained firmly out of the public eye since the reported quarrel Friday.

"The difficulty is that the minute you say one thing you obviously are bringing people, your loved ones, your family, into the public domain in a way that

is not fair," Johnson said.

Asked where the photograph had come from and when it was taken, Johnson said "the longer we spend on things extraneous to what I want to do ... the bigger the waste of time."

Host Nick Ferrari pressed on. He said the picture showed Johnson with a hairstyle he no longer wears and suggested it was an old image. Johnson simply refused to answer.

"This conversation is now descending into far-



Boris Johnson changed tack and embarked on a media blitz

ce," he declared.

Johnson is the favorite in the race against Hunt but has failed to appear at debates and has shunned the media before chan-

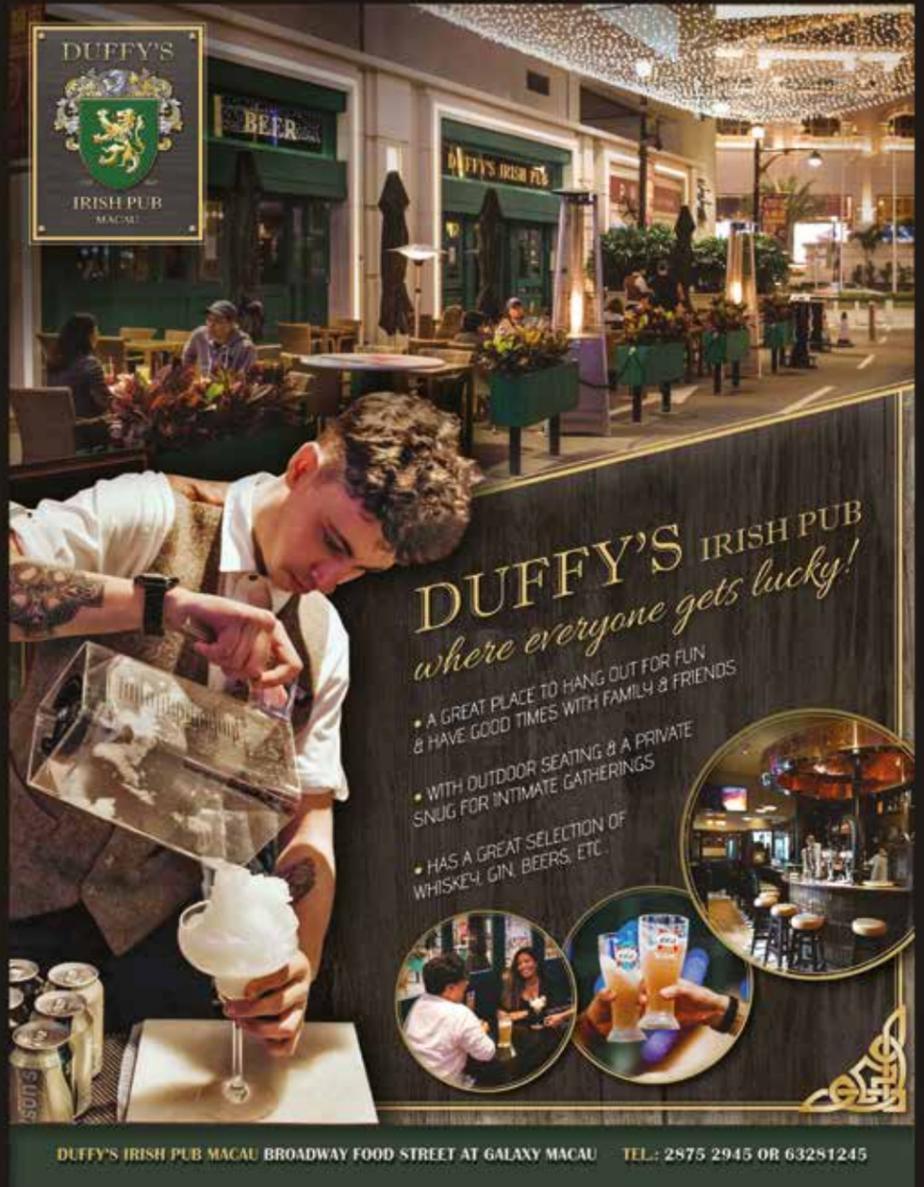
ging tack. He granted the BBC an interview that was broadcast Monday evening and took on two others appearances by yesterday. **AP**



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what's ON



SECRET LAND – SPECIAL EXHIBITION OF COIN DU JARDIN BY PAUL GAUGUIN

TIME: 24 Hours

UNTIL: June 30, 2019

VENUE: Macau Grand Lisboa

ADMISSION: Free

MGM PRESENTS: HUA YUAN EXHIBITION

TIME: 24 hours

UNTIL: September 3, 2019

VENUE: MGM Cotai

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8802 3333

STAMPS AROUND THE WORLD -

LIECHTENSTEIN, KINGDOM OF STAMPS

TIME: 9am-5:30pm (Closed on public holidays)

UNTIL: August 31, 2019

VENUE: Temporary Gallery, Communications Museum

ADMISSION: MOP10

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2871 8063

ONENESS: CALLIGRAPHY BY PROFESSOR JAO TSUNG-I

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

UNTIL: September 30, 2019

VENUE: Jao Tsung-I Academy

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRY: (853) 8598 6718

Offbeat



PRINCE HARRY, MEGHAN'S HOME RENOVATIONS COST TAXPAYERS \$3M

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex's home was renovated with 2.4 million pounds (USD3.06 million) of taxpayers' money, royal accounts revealed yesterday.

Prince Harry and his wife Meghan's residence near Windsor Castle, called Frogmore Cottage, underwent major work to turn five properties back into a single home for the couple and their baby son Archie. Fixtures, fittings and furnishings at the Victorian-era structure were paid for by the royal couple.

The figures were part of the release of the royal family's accounts, which showed that the British taxpayers spent 67 million pounds (\$85.2 million) on the monarchy during 2018-19, a 41% increase on the previous financial year.

"The property had not been the subject of work for some years and had already been earmarked for renovation in line with our responsibility to maintain the condition of the occupied royal palaces estate," said Michael Stevens, the keeper of the Privy Purse, who is responsible for the monarchy's accounts.

"The building was returned to a single residence and outdated infrastructure was replaced to guarantee the long-term future of the property," he said. "Substantially all fixtures and fittings were paid for by Their Royal Highnesses."

Anti-monarchy campaign group Republic questioned why so much money was spent on the renovations at a time when public services are under financial pressure.

"It is particularly galling that they're allowed to get away this whilst public services need money," said group spokesman Graham Smith.

Overall, spending rose primarily because of higher levels of expenditure devoted to critical renovations for Buckingham Palace in London. The iconic structure is in the second year of a 10-year project after a Treasury report concluded the building's infrastructure was in danger of a catastrophic failure.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Agua de Mar
15:45	Zig Zag
16:20	OndEstá o Tesouro
16:45	Quem Quer Ser Millionario
17:45	Palcos Agora
18:15	Amor Maior (Repetição)
19:00	TDM Entrevista (Repetição)
19:35	Os Nossos Dias Sr.2
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	Network Negócios
22:00	LiteraturAqui
22:30	Amor Maior
23:15	TDM News
23:50	5 Para a Meia-Noite
01:30	Telejornal (Repetição)
02:15	RTPi Directo

cinema

CINETEATRO

20 - 26 Jun



MEN IN BLACK: INTERNATIONAL

ROOM 1

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

Director: F. Gary Gray

Starring: Chris Hemsworth, Tessa Thompson, Liam Neeson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 109min

INVINCIBLE DRAGON

ROOM 2

2:30, 7:30, 9:30pm

Director: Fruit Chan

Starring: Jin Zhang, JuJu Chan, Anderson Silva

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 113min



THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS 2

ROOM 3

2:30, 4:15, 6:00, 7:45pm

Director: Chris Renaud, Jonathan del Val

Starring: Patton Oswalt, Kevin Hart, Harrison Ford

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 86min



ALADDIN

ROOM 2

4:30pm

ROOM 3

9:30pm

Director: Guy Ritchie

Starring: Will Smith, Mena Massoud, Naomi Scott

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 109min

this day in history



1963 KENNEDY: 'ICH BIN EIN BERLINER'

The US President, John F. Kennedy, has made a ground-breaking speech in Berlin offering American solidarity to the citizens of West Germany.

A crowd of 120,000 Berliners gathered in front of the Schöneberg Rathaus (City Hall) to hear President Kennedy speak.

They began gathering in the square long before he was due to arrive, and when he finally appeared on the podium they gave him an ovation of several minutes.

The president had just returned from a visit on foot to one of the Berlin Wall's most notorious crossing points, Checkpoint Charlie.

He was watched from the other side of the border by small groups of East Berliners unable even to wave because of the presence of large groups of the East German People's Police.

In an impassioned speech, the president told them West Berlin was a symbol of freedom in a world threatened by the Cold War.

"Two thousand years ago," he told the crowd, "the proudest boast in the world was 'civis Romanus sum'.

"Today, in the world of freedom, the proudest boast is 'Ich bin ein Berliner.'"

"Freedom has many difficulties and democracy is not perfect," he continued. "But we never had to put up a wall to keep our people in."

His speech was punctuated throughout by rapturous cheers of approval.

He ended on the theme he had begun with:

"All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words, 'Ich bin ein Berliner.'"

After the speech, the mayor of West Berlin, Willi Brandt, spoke out for the citizens of East Germany, saying they would be brought out in a few days to greet the Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, whether they wanted to or not.

"But they would much rather be with us, freely gathered here," he said.

"We tell them, we will not give up. Berlin is true to those behind barbed wire as to fellow countrymen in the West and friends in the whole world."

His words were followed by the tolling of the Freedom Bell from the belfry of the Rathaus in remembrance of those in East Germany.

For the first time that day, the massive crowd fell silent.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

President Kennedy's "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech was seen as a turning point in the Cold War.

It was a major morale booster for West Germans, alarmed by the recently-built Berlin Wall.

It also gave a strongly defiant message to the Soviet Union and effectively put paid to Moscow's hopes of driving the Allies out of West Berlin.

Two months later, President Kennedy negotiated the first nuclear test ban treaty with the Soviet Union, in what was seen as a first step towards ending the Cold War.

But on 22 November that year, he was assassinated, shot in the head as he drove through Dallas, Texas, on his way to a political festival.

The Berlin Wall was finally brought down, piece by piece, in November 1989 as communism collapsed and the Iron Curtain fell from Eastern Europe.

Germany was re-united in October 1990.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19
If you believe in yourself, all things are possible - at least on a day like today. Self-confidence is your secret weapon, and you should find that things start to open up if you just assume the best.

Taurus April 20-May 20
You are emotionally centered today - so much so that you may finally decide to confront that one friend or family member over their recent behavior. Things may heat up quite a bit!

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21
Your people are making life more difficult for you - can't they see that things are already tough enough? If you can isolate yourself, you may find it easier to get work done, but that may have its own problems.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22
This day is either a 1 or a 10 - there's not much room in between! You may find that you've got to just hunker down and wait for tomorrow - or that you hope the day never ends!

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You are enthusiastic about your new commitment to health, be it through exercise, diet, meditation or something unique to you. Try to keep it private and let others ask instead of evangelizing.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Your fun-loving ways are making people even happier to be around you, and you should find that socializing is its own reward. Head out to a party or nightclub and you won't be disappointed.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22
Delve into your history - but try not to live there! You need to dredge up the past a little in order to make sense of a problem that faces you in the here and now. Things are just about to get better.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
You need to put some of those killer ideas into practice today - otherwise, you may not have the right kind of energy to get started for another month or more! Put aside all distractions.

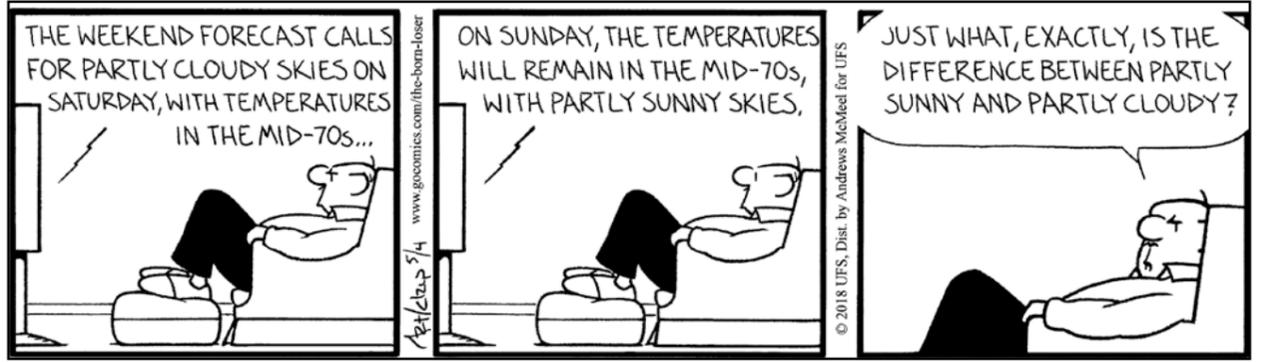
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21
It's a good time for reflection - your energy is turned inward somewhat, and you may find that you're starting to question one or more core values. Let yourself drift and see where you end up.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You are feeling quite energetic today - which means you could get a lot done, or you could just enjoy yourself and party all night long. Make the most of it, whatever you do.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You feel more exhausted than you should - but it's not a sign of illness or anything else. You're just at a low-point of personal energy, but the good news is that the upswing starts tomorrow.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20
You're part of a bigger system, and you should find that everyone that's part of it has something to add today. It's a good idea to ask for help, but also to offer it whenever you're asked.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles categorized by difficulty: Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard. Each category contains a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Tide type; 5- Swiss river; 12- Sailor's saint; 13- Valleys; 15- Language of Pakistan; 16- Goes out with; 17- Rub out or remove from memory; 18- Scottish Celt; 19- Nostalgic; 22- Exploit; 23- Crackerjack; 24- Starring role; 26- Lively Spanish dance; 29- Confined; 31- Frost's bite; 32- Unwashed; 34- Renter's sign; 36- Keats works; 38- Stadium sections; 40- Highest point; 41- Peter and a Wolfe; 43- New York city; 45- Sgt., e.g.; 46- Old West watering hole; 48- Detective; 50- Hades; 51- Recipe abbr.; 52- Sign of a smash; 54- Geyser in Yellowstone National Park; 61- Like Hawaiian shirts; 63- Senator Specter; 64- In a bad way; 65- ___ buco; 66- Animal trap; 67- Letterman rival; 68- Not now; 69- Singer Yoko; 70- Incline;

DOWN: 1- Capone foe; 2- Waiting for the Robert ___; 3- Right on!; 4- Mail-related; 5- River in central Switzerland; 6- Playwright Ayckbourn; 7- Remainder; 8- Summer mo.; 9- Dishonest; 10- Citrus coolers; 11- Dominion; 13- Mark given for offense; 14- Bobby of the Black Panthers; 20- On the rocks; 21- Shrove Tuesday follower; 25- At the summit of; 26- Waits; 27- Sydney has a famous one; 28- Constellation containing Rigel; 29- Funeral fires; 30- Fuzzy fruit; 31- Smoking or ___?; 33- Aviv preceeder; 35- Ring decision; 37- Boot bottom; 39- Chowder cracker; 42- Musical composition for one; 44- Cozy place; 47- Paella pots; 49- How rivers don't flow; 52- Type of machine found in Las Vegas; 53- ___ Hashanah; 55- First James Bond



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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
IAM 28 387 333
Tourism 28 333 000
Airport 59 888 88



JML New Website!!!
Screenshot of the JML website interface showing property listings and search filters.

FOR RENT
Carpark at One Grantai, Taipa
\$2,500/mth
Image of a modern building with a carpark.

FOR SALE
[Taipa] Kinglight Garden Loft 1 1 1
800 ft² \$7,380,000 (ref: 19055005ST)
[Taipa] Nice Court 3 2 2
1,600 ft² \$8,980,000 (ref: 19045002)
[Taipa] Man Fai 3 2 2
1,390 ft² \$8,980,000 (ref: 19065010ST)
[Taipa] Nova City 3 2 2
1,494 ft² \$13,980,000 (ref: 17050001RT)

FOR RENT
[Taipa] Soi Cheung Studio 1 1 1
660 ft² \$9,000/mth (ref: 18040675)
[Taipa] Pacifica Gardens 3 2 2
1,317 ft² \$15,000/mth (ref: 17050649)
[Taipa] Nova Grand 2 1 1
986 ft² \$16,000/mth (ref: 19055007RT)
[Taipa] Manhattan 3 2 2
1,720 ft² \$24,000/mth (ref: 18110695RT)

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FOOTBALL

Italy's attack faces China's stingy defense in round of 16

Joseph Wilson, Montpellier

LED by the vibrant play of forward Barbara Bonansea, Italy has proven to be one of the revelations of the Women's World Cup in its return to the tournament after a 20-year absence.

Bonansea's team surpassed expectations by winning its group over Marta's Brazil and Sam Kerr's Australia.

Now it will face China today [Macau time] in Montpellier in a round of 16 match that promises to be a classic clash of an up-tem-

po attack against a stingy, no-frills defense.

Italy was the fourth-highest scoring team in the field of 24 through the group phase with seven goals.

China only managed one goal through three matches, but still went through to the knockout round as one of the top third-place teams.

"We try to harmonize every aspect, whether it is in defense or building our attacks. We try to be creative, and I think that is a unique feature of Italian soccer," coach Milena Bertolini said through a translator Monday.

"We are going to play as we always have and we will try to carry out a good match showing our quality style of game playing."

With her speed and ability to score from distance, Bonansea has led Italy's three-prong attack from its left flank. The 28-year-old Juventus forward, who can also play in midfield, has scored 21 goals in 62 appearances for Le Azzurre.

Bonansea scored twice in Italy's 2-1 win over Australia to start the tournament. First she cancelled out Kerr's opener before she grabbed the winner in stoppage time.

Bonansea also earned the penalty that put Cristiana Girelli on her way to a hat trick in a 5-0 dismantling of Jamaica in the second match, sealing Italy's place in the round of 16.

She also had two good scoring chances against Brazil, before Marta converted a penalty to deal the Italians a 1-0 loss that didn't stop them from finishing the group in first place.

Despite struggling on offense, where it has yet to get a boost from Paris Saint-Germain forward Wang Shuang, China has deployed a disciplined defense

anchored by goalkeeper Peng Shimeng.

Peng has impressed at age 21 in her first major competition by only conceding one goal. She made several saves to help China hang on to a scoreless draw against Spain in the final group match.

Prior to that, China made second-ranked Germany work hard to eke out a 1-0 win in their opener. China got its sole goal from Yi Ling to beat South Africa 1-0.

"Over the last three games, China went through a difficult process, from the attacking third I think we could have done a better job," coach Jia Xiuquan said through a translator. "But I believe as we adjust to the games I am confident that the attacking third will be better and then we can improve our balance."

NETHERLANDS-JAPAN

The Netherlands will play Japan in Rennes in a rematch of their round of 16 meeting four years ago, when the Japanese won 2-1 en route to reaching the final. The Dutch won Group E with three victories, while Japan finished Group D in second place.

"We know our opponent well," said Netherlands coach Sarina Wiegman. "Four years ago they played the final. They are very dynamic, very skilled and very flexible, but we have our skills as well and have developed over the past four years."

RECAPPING MONDAY

The United States needed two penalties to squeak past a surprisingly tough Spain 2-1. Megan Rapinoe converted both spot kicks to set up a quarterfinal against host France. Sweden also advanced to the final eight after Stina Blackstenius scored early in the second half to earn a 1-0 victory over Canada. Sweden gets Germany next. **AP**

TENNIS

New No. 1 Barty's rapid rise could be just a start

ASH Barty never had been ranked inside the WTA's top 10 until April. As of this week, she is No. 1.

The 23-year-old Australian never had been as far as the quarterfinals at any Grand Slam tournament until January. As of this month, she is the French Open champion — and as of next week, she'll be among the favorites to win Wimbledon.

"It's been a whirlwind few weeks for me," Barty said. "A whirlwind year."

Sure has. Given the skills and all-court capability she's displayed, along with the strong head on her shoulders thanks in part

to a hiatus from the tennis tour while playing professional cricket, there is little reason to think this rapid rise will be anything but the start of a long run for Barty.

She will head to the All England Club — where she exited in the third round a year ago — on a 12-match winning streak, after following up her breakthrough championship at Roland Garros on June 8 with a title Sunday at the grass-court tuneup tournament in Birmingham, England, where she didn't drop a set.

That assured Barty of overtaking Naomi Osaka, the reigning champion at

the U.S. Open and Australian Open, atop the WTA rankings.

"You always dream of it as a little kid, but for it to become a reality is incredible," Barty said about getting to No. 1, something only 26 other women have done since computer rankings were introduced in 1973. "This year, we were aiming for top 10, and now to be where we are is a testament to all of the people around me."

Barty began 2019 at No. 15 and with one fourth-round showing in her 17 appearances in singles at major tournaments. Look at what she's done so far this season: tour-high 36

wins (in 41 matches), tour-high three titles (each on a different surface), debut Grand Slam quarterfinal at the Australian Open, then the trophy in Paris.

It was almost exactly three years ago that Barty returned to tennis, without a ranking at all, after a 1½-year absence because she needed time away from the grind of the tour. She stepped away at age 18, briefly switching sports to join a cricket team in Australia.

Her ability to play tennis was never an issue; she was, after all, a junior champion at Wimbledon in 2011, and reached three Grand Slam doubles finals. **AP**



Australia's Ashley Barty

opinion

Macau Matters

Richard Whitfield



TRoubles with PORK

I am a bit surprised that I have not heard about rising pork prices in Macau. But, I loathe all kinds of shopping, including for food, and we have not been eating much pork at home in recent times. I am surprised because an African Swine Fever epidemic seems to be decimating the Chinese pig herd.

Up until recently, more than half of the global pig herd lived in China – about 500 million animals. The next biggest herd is in the European Union, with about 150 million animals. The first officially reported case of African Swine Fever in China was in August 2018 and, again officially, about 1.3 million animals have been culled till now. However, unofficial sources estimate that over 150 million pigs in China have been infected and that several million have already died, or been culled to prevent the disease spreading.

African Swine Fever is harmless to people but fatal to pigs in 90+% of infections. It spreads by contact and ticks and by eating contaminated feed and usually kills the infected animal within 1 week. There is no vaccine so the only way to prevent contagion is by quarantine and culling.

Chinese pig farmers are eligible for compensation but it seems that many do not trust that they will actually receive the payments. These are made via local governments which often do not have the money to spare. This unfortunate situation means that outbreaks are under-reported and affected farmers and local officials conspire to sell infected animals.

The problem is further exacerbated because most pigs in China are owned by small farmers owning fewer than 500 animals. These small farmers cannot afford losses and do not know how to prevent infections (mostly good sanitation and feed practices).

It will likely take considerable time to develop a vaccine, and in the mean time millions and millions of Chinese pigs will die or have to be destroyed. It will also bankrupt many smaller farmers. It will then take several years to rebuild the Chinese pig herd. Looking for a silver lining, hopefully, larger scale more technically sophisticated pig farming will replace much of the existing industry so that the chances of similar problems in the future will be much reduced.

The Chinese government itself does not have the best record in managing bio-security problems for people or animals. It seems to be secretive and there have been past cover-ups and incompetence. It looks like the relevant regulators need to do more and act more proactively to resolve this major problem, and explain more about what is being done to reassure the general public.

In the last few months Hong Kong has stopped pig shipments from China twice, and culled 6,000 animals during the first shutdown and expects to cull about 4,100 animals in the most recent case.

The Macau government says that there have been no cases in Macau but I question how closely they are monitoring the situation and the stringency of the local inspections of live pigs and pig meat imported from China.

Given the severity of the situation and the problems that have been experienced in Hong Kong, I feel that the Macau government should be much more open and transparent and explain in much more detail exactly what they are doing to make sure that African Swine Fever infected pork does not get into Macau. We have a very big tourism industry here and the last thing we need is food health scares.

THE REPORT: HACKERS USING TELECOMS BUZZ LIKE 'GLOBAL SPY SYSTEM'

An ambitious group of state-backed hackers has been burrowing into telecommunications companies in order to spy on high-profile targets across the world, a U.S. cybersecurity firm said in a report published yesterday.

Boston-based Cybereason said the tactic gave hackers sweeping access to VIPs' call records, location data and device information – effectively turning the targets' cellular providers against them.

Cybereason Chief Executive Lior Div said that because customers weren't directly targeted,

they might never discover their every movement was being monitored by a hostile power.

The hackers had turned the affected telecoms into "a global surveillance system," Div said in a telephone interview ahead of the report's launch.

"Those individuals don't know they were hacked – because they weren't."

Div, who is presenting his findings at the Cyber Week conference in Tel Aviv, provided scant details about who was targeted in the hack.

Tributes to Michael Jackson flow on 10th death anniversary



Michael Jackson as he announces ten live concerts at the London O2 Arena in south London, in March 2009

Andrew Dalton, Los Angeles

MICHAEL Jackson's estate paid tribute to his artistry and charity yesterday as fans make final preparations for gatherings to celebrate his memory on the 10th anniversary of the King of Pop's death.

"Ten years ago today, the world lost a gifted artist and extraordinary humanitarian," the Jackson estate said in a statement to The Associated Press. "A decade later, Michael Jackson is still with us, his influence embedded in dance, fashion, art and music of the moment. He is more important than ever."

The estate called on fans to honor Jackson's memory by engaging in charitable acts "whether it's planting a tree, volunteering at a shelter, cleaning up a public space or helping someone who is lost find their way. ... This is how we honor Michael," the statement read.

Fans plan to gather at Jackson's last home in the Holmby Hills neighborhood of Los Angeles, where the singer received a fatal dose of the anesthetic propofol on the afternoon of June 25, 2019. He was declared dead at a hospital at age 50.

They also plan a vigil at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, Califor-

nia, where Jackson was laid to rest two months later.

Some planned to gather around Jackson's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The anniversary comes a few months after the HBO documentary "Leaving Neverland" brought back child molestation allegations against Jackson and threatened to upend an image that had been largely rehabilitated since his death. Jackson's estate and his family have vehemently denied the stories told by two men in the documentary.

Some planned to gather around Jackson's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The estate called on fans to honor Jackson's memory by engaging in charitable acts

One group of fans planned a Hollywood rally to declare his innocence. He was acquitted of the sexual abuse of a different boy in a 2005 trial.

Co-executors John Branca and John McClain, both major figures in Jackson's

career when he was alive, have taken his badly debt-ridden estate and grossed over \$1.3 billion through various Jackson-related projects in the past decade, including the film "This Is It," a pair of Cirque du Soleil shows and the sale of Jackson assets that included The Beatles catalog.

Jackson left everything to his mother, his children and charity in his will.

The singer's father, Joe, died last year and is buried in the same cemetery as his son, but Michael's 89-year-old mother, five brothers, three sisters and three kids remain alive and well 10 years later.

The death of Jackson was a massive cultural phenomenon, bringing an outpouring of public affection and revival of his songs and largely erasing the taint that remained after his criminal trial, despite his acquittal.

It was one of the earliest instances of the mass mourning on social media that would soon become common, and a massive worldwide audience both on TV and online watched his July 27, 2009 public memorial that included touching tributes from family members including daughter Paris and performances from Stevie Wonder, Mariah Carey and Lionel Richie. **AP**

Station	Air quality	Icon
Roadside	35-55 Good	😊
High Density Residential Area	35-55 Good	😊
Ambient	50-70 Moderate	😞

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS



CAMBODIA A court said that seven people, including four Chinese nationals, have been charged with crimes related to a building collapse that killed 28 construction workers who were sleeping in the unfinished structure that doubled as their housing. **More on p13**



PAKISTAN-QATAR Islamabad has thanked Qatar for the \$3 billion investment in Pakistan announced by the energy-rich Gulf Arab nation's ruler. An economic adviser to Pakistani prime minister, tweeted Pakistan's thanks, hours after Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani (pictured) made the announcement, which was carried on Qatar's official news agency.



BOSNIA Environmental groups called yesterday for urgent measures to combat air pollution in the central Bosnian city of Tuzla, saying dust concentration far exceeds legal limits and causes premature deaths. The activists also urged authorities in a report to scrap plans to build another coal-fired unit in addition to the local lignite power plant.



UK Boris Johnson embarked on a media blitz yesterday, hoping to shift the subject away from his private life and back to Britain's pending departure from the European Union. Johnson has failed to appear at debates and has shunned the media before changing tack. **More on p14**