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VIETNAM'S NATIONAL FLAG CARRIER WILL OPEN ITS FIRST DIRECT AIR ROUTE BETWEEN HANOI AND MACAU STARTING DEC. 15 P7

SEMINARIANS NEED TO COPE WITH DEMAND: FR CYRIL P2

TAIWAN OPPOSITION CANDIDATE HAN KUO-YU BACKS HONG KONG FULL DEMOCRACY P11

China pressed Washington yesterday to roll back punitive tariffs in a tentative trade deal. A tariff cut is an “important condition” for the agreement that is part of talks on ending a costly trade war, said Commerce Ministry spokesman Gao Feng.
More on p11



China invited observers to a successful test yesterday of its Mars lander as the country pushes for inclusion in more global space projects.



Malaysia An international team of investigators piecing together a criminal case in the July 2014 shooting down of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 over eastern Ukraine said yesterday that evidence suggests links between Russia and separatists in the region were closer than previously believed.

Cambodia Officials have ordered that elephants that serve as tourist attractions at the country's famed Angkor temple complex be moved to a new home in a suitable jungle area. The agency that oversees the Angkor site said in a statement yesterday it is important for the animals to be able to live in their natural habitat, and there are other ways to provide attractions and rides for tourists.

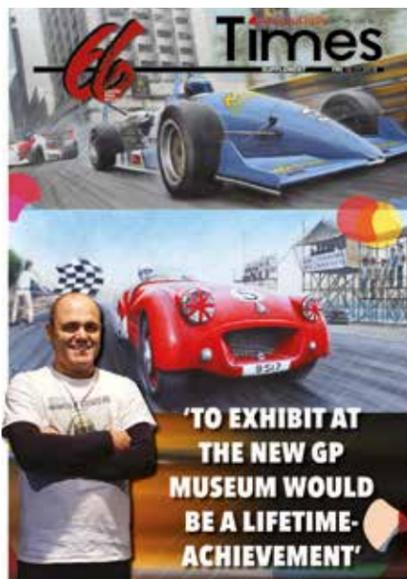
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MAYWEATHER ROULETTE

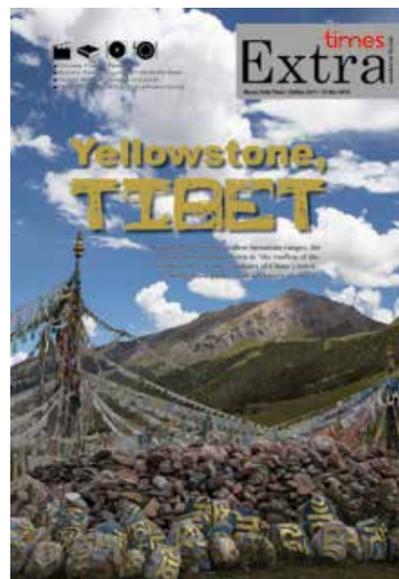


CHAMP FIGHTS FOR CASINOS IN JAPAN WANTS REMATCH VS PACQUIAO TO BREAK GROUND

P3



All about Grand Prix 66: News, views and interviews. From asphalt to canvas: an interview with the artist that brings speed to a static illustration.



Ringed by the world's tallest mountain ranges, the Tibetan plateau long known as ‘the rooftop of the world’ is now in the crosshairs of China's latest modernization push – with an American twist

times Extra

Q&A FATHER CYRIL LAW
CHANCELLOR

Priest highlights need for local seminarians to cope with demand

LYNZY VALLES

THE movement of missionaries has always been a constant feature of Christianity. However, the Macau SAR currently faces a lack of clergymen, thus leading to a shortage of resources.

According to Fr. Cyril Law, Visiting Academic at the Faculty of Religious Studies, the University of Saint Joseph, the global missionary movement is suffering from stagnation.

Currently, the Diocese has a total of seven seminarians, which the chancellor hoped could meet demand in the near future.

When asked for a comment regarding whether the church should intervene with the ongoing social unrest in Hong Kong, the priest remarked, "The Church can only defend actions which are objectively good and at the same time born out of a correctly informed conscience."

Earlier this week, the priest held a talk based on a document written by Pope Benedict XV titled *Maximum Illud*.

The talk was a part of the University of Saint Joseph's public lecture that speaks on the missionary activity of the church to be carried out in the future by missionaries from the very countries and cultures being evangelized.

Macau Daily Times (MDT) - Speaking about missionaries, putting it into today's context, is the Diocese actively raising missionaries, sending out local missionaries or inviting some from abroad to serve in Macau?

Dr. Cyril Law (CL) - Pope Francis recently said [...] that by the fact that we are baptized, we are a mission. In October, it was an extraordinary month of mission just because the Diocese had a huge mass on the façade of the Ruins of St. Paul last month. The context and the contemporary situation is that we are seeing the missionary activities in the world suffering from a kind of stagnation. We do not have enough local clergy, the time needed to train missionaries, learn a particular language and adapt to



Fr. Cyril Law

the culture – it's a strain on resources. Also, through globalization, in the past [...] Europeans were going to Asia, Africa and new America. But now it's also in multi-diverse directions. Indians are going to Europe, even Koreans are being missionaries across the world. Once upon a time, these were considered developing countries and are now sending out devoted missionaries - to what we call Christian West. This is called the New Evangelization.

In this movement of people, they may have been some unease in the past, [...] perhaps it was not foreseen in the past that what had once been the missionary-exporting countries, such as the predominantly Caucasian European countries, are now benefiting from the arrival of multi-racial missionaries from other parts of the world. I think we have already come to appreciate this reality by now. The challenge is brought forth by those navigating mixed sources

of missionaries. It is creating a new challenge that forces us to go back to the basics and not really so much on the externals. This is the new phase of mission today.

MDT- You have mentioned that Macau faces a lack of clergy members in the Diocese. When and how can we fill this gap in the coming few years?

CL- I think when we are talking about Macau, it's multi-ethnic. [...] When we say locals, we just don't mean Cantonese speaking. Currently we have seven diocesan seminarians, and they do not come from just Macau. With these seven, hopefully, if they persevere and if we have a steady intake every year then probably - talking about in 10- or 15-years' time - we may be able to have a steady supply of locally trained priests. However, it is not meeting the rate of retirement, and it is not catching up the rate of priests who are going to retire in

the very immediate future. We are still actively relying on the support of missionaries.

MDT - With that being said, what other challenges is the Diocese facing at the moment?

CL - I think secularization – that is the tendency of relativizing religion as a private interest. That is the main challenge because of our moral values – which reflect our belief in a good, just and merciful God – are not taken seriously or not seen as objectively true, so we have a problem. The Catholic church will just be reduced to a lobby group.

We have to be careful about how we articulate or present it, otherwise we can be easily accused of being draconian, or not open to communication and change. The church has to develop within its own set of truths that we inherited and that was revealed to us.

MDT - There may always be some kind of a clash between religion and politics. Does the Diocese of Macau have that kind of burden?

CL - If politics touches on human dignity and human rights then it's not just a political issue anymore. It's an issue that touches on the salvation of the person. If some political policies or tendencies are encroaching upon a person's right to freedom, to choose freedom or salvation [...] then it's no longer a political issue, rather, it's a personal issue. God has given us the duty to protect the weak, which means that the church is bound to speak on behalf of the morally persecuted.

MDT - In the case of ongoing social unrest in Hong Kong, do you believe that the Catholic church should integrate into it, hence the worsening scenarios that involve a recent death of an activist?

CL - In order to have a just response to something that seems to be unjust, we must have an adequate analysis of the gravity of the situation and the intentions of the people involved. It's a grave situation when lives are hurt, when violence is being perpetuated from whatever side. When it's a grave situation we must then consider the second criterion, which is the intentions of the actors. It would be morally plausible if the intention is to maintain peace and justice in charity and in truth. But when the external signals are severely mixed and contradictory, then it is very hard to make a fair assessment. The Church also has to say something to a third point, which is conscience. [...] If you are doing something out of pressure from your superior or peers against what your conscience dictates, then such actions defy truthfulness and honesty. The Church can only defend actions which are objectively good and at the same time born out of a correctly informed conscience. [...] The Church must speak about the formation of conscience, that's the Church's God-given role.

MDT - How is the Diocese's current relationship right now with the Vatican?

CL - We have a very transparent relationship with the Vatican. We were recently visited by Cardinal Fernando Filoni [which is a] sign of the Holy See's care and the confirmation of our work here. Our Bishop Stephen Lee will be going to Thailand and Japan to meet and welcome Pope Francis' visit in Thailand very soon, along with other Asian bishops. It's an event that shows our solidarity with the Holy Father himself.

A SHOOTING STAR IN THE DIOCESE

Fr. Cyril Jerome Law, Jr., entered the St. Joseph Diocesan Seminary of Macau in 2009, after receiving formation in Macau, Rome, and in England. He was ordained into the priesthood at the Macau Cathedral in 2014 where former Bishop José Lai presided over the ordination. Born and raised in Hong Kong, he

entered the Savio House Aspirantate at 13, and went to the United States to study Theology when he was 17. Following his studies in the U.S., he taught secondary school in Hong Kong. The priest is also the founding Co-ordinator of the Tridentine Liturgy Community in Hong Kong.

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GAMING

Mayweather wants to build casinos in Japan - and launch it with a rematch against Pacquiao: report

FLOYD Mayweather wants to build a casino empire in Japan - and could launch it by hosting a money-spinning rematch against Manny Pacquiao in the Far East, The Sun reported late yesterday.

That would be "a huge fight" but Mayweather is also keen on more exhibition bouts against non-boxers.

The 42-year-old launched TMT Japan (The Money Team) in Tokyo in June, after announcing a partnership between management company Libera and Kyoei boxing gym.

Hong Kong based promoter Jay Lau explained to SunSport, in Tokyo that "in Asia more and more casinos are setting up. Mayweather came to Tokyo to set up TMT Japan because of the Japan casinos" that are due to open next year.

"The Manny rematch is the biggest thing that can happen. I hope it does happen, it could be a big possibility that fight is the grand opening for the Japan casinos."

According to The Sun, Mayweather's ambition is to create a casino hotel in Okinawa, allowing him to stage fights in Japan, and revealed at a press conference in June his plan for more money-spinning exhibitions.

The champion boxer told the newspaper that, "negotiations are progressing, although it is not yet official, my opponent could



Floyd Mayweather

be a kickboxer or an MMA fighter."

"It's natural that I come up with this idea, because I'm buying a house in Tokyo so I don't have to repeat the long trips between the United States and Japan," he added.

The idea comes after the Japanese government announced in February they are attempting to compete with regional rivals including Macau, Singapore and South Korea with planned casinos to be built in 2020.

SunSport revealed Maywea-

ther put the brakes on an exhibition bout this year to focus on negotiating a rematch against Pacquiao.

According to the paper, DEF Promotions director and promoter Lau said, "Mayweather came two times to Hong Kong, he spoke with my son Jayson and we had communications but now he is focusing on the Pacquiao rematch."

"We were talking about an exhibition in China, a big event but not a recorded professional boxing fight. Something like Mayweather

vs Tenshin in Japan. We spoke a bit about doing a special fight in China, but half way through he turned to the Pacquiao rematch so we stopped."

Mayweather continued his tour of Asia this summer, and announced on Instagram plans to set up a second fight with Pacquiao in Tokyo.

A spokesman told South China Morning Post in September that "the event is postponed, due to his side having some problems. He didn't come. His side will issue a notice later." **STAFF REPORTER**

RESEARCH INDICATES NO SHORTAGE OF NURSES

Research into Macau's medical development plan shows that Macau has no shortage of nurses in public hospitals. According to a statement released by the Health Bureau (SSM), the bureau commissioned the Chinese University of Hong Kong to conduct research into Macau's medical development plan and on the city's demands for medical personnel. The research concluded that Macau already has a well-established basic medical service system that reduces dependence on specialists. The university's research findings complimented Macau's medical service by saying that it is more advanced than that of Hong Kong. The research suggested that, in the long term, Macau needs to be prepared for increased demand for medical services brought about by the aging population.

TWO ARRESTED FOR DEALING DRUGS

The Judiciary Police (PJ) has arrested two local residents for their involvement in drug trafficking, PJ reported yesterday. The first person arrested is a taxi driver who hid the drugs inside a building's electrical switch board so that buyers could pick it by themselves. He would drive his own car instead of his taxi to place the drugs inside the building's switch board. Inside this man's house, PJ seized cocaine and methamphetamine (ice). The man is also suspected of driving under the influence of drugs. The first suspect said that he once used his taxi to transport drugs, accompanied by one of his friends. His friend was also arrested. In total, PJ seized drugs worth 276,000 patacas. The two men were hired by mainland drug trafficking groups and have been couring drugs for three months in Macau.

HOTEL ESTORIL DESIGN PROGRESS AS EXPECTED

The design of the revamp of Hotel Estoril is progressing as expected, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) said in its reply to a lawmaker's interpellation. In August, last year, the government announced the successful tender for the design of the Tap Seac Youth Center for Cultural, Recreational and Sports Activities. The Companhia de Arquitectura Design Chan Kam Limitada has been awarded the MOP48.9 million contract to design the center within 233 days. The center will include a parking lot, drama academy, auditorium, basketball court, and a rooftop pool (heated during winter) to be open all year. The parking lot will offer 900 parking spots and there will be 400 to 500 seats in the auditorium.

Government study rejects criminalization of illegal guesthouses

A government study has determined that criminalizing illegal guesthouses is not an effective solution to the problem, according to a statement released by the government.

In December 2018, the SAR government organized a cross-departmental working group to explore the criminalization of illegal guesthouse operations. The group, which was chaired by Secretary

for Administration and Justice Sonia Chan, consisted of representatives from the administration and justice sector, the security sector, and the social affairs and culture sector.

The inter-departmental working group consulted with various interest groups, legal professional bodies in Macau, and with lawmakers for their opinions.

For the public referen-

ce, the government also published a report on whether the criminalization of illegal guesthouses should be implemented.

The majority of the opinions and suggestions collected indicate the problem is not whether to criminalize the operation of illegal guesthouses or not but, more importantly, to understand the causes in order to solve the problem and find effective ways to curb

wrongdoing.

Taking into consideration the resources of law enforcement if criminalized, and the fact that there is no clear relationship between illegal guesthouses and criminal activities, and having also regard to experience elsewhere, especially Portugal, mainland China and Taiwan, the government believes that criminalizing the issue is not a solution.

In addition, the report also said that it is not appropriate to attribute the operation of illegal guesthouses to insufficient sanctions under the existing law, and concludes that criminalization cannot solve the problem.

The government's stance is that improving and strengthening law enforcement, enhancing awareness of the regulations, and other measures should be considered. **JZ**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

E-GOVERNMENT NOT APPLICABLE FOR JUDICIAL PROCEDURES: CHAN CHAK MO

JULIE ZHU

YESTERDAY, the Second Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL) continued its discussion on the e-government bill, with officials suggesting that the bill should not apply to judicial procedures.

Chairman of the Second Standing Committee of AL, Chan Chak Mo, explained that e-government should be promoted at various departmental levels.

The bill may apply to public departments, companies, residents and civil servants.

Any party who wishes to enroll in the e-government system should apply to the administration. The government hopes that ultimately, e-government will be used to issue licenses, notifications, payments, labor tendering, and other documents.

According to Chan, the government representatives clearly stated that the electronic option would not be used for judicial procedures.

Currently, the government is amending the code of civil litigation procedure, in order for



e-government to be used in civil litigation in the future.

Chan said that the e-government bill is not too complicated, and once submitted a new draft, the committee can write its opinion on the bill.

The Macau SAR government hopes to implement the bill in 2020.

Also yesterday, the First Standing Committee of the AL continued reviewing the amendment to the affordable housing bill.

Chairman of the First Standing Committee, Ho Ion Sang, told the media that the government did not have sufficient clarity on the content of the bill.

Ho believes that it is impossi-

ble for the current government to complete the bill before the next opening of affordable housing applications and both the current government and the next need to examine the opinions of the committee.

Ho noted that the amendment to the bill will be dealt with by the new government.

Approximately half a year ago, the AL's First Standing Committee met with some government representatives to discuss the bill. After the meeting, the committee requested local government submit a new draft, and only until recently did the government submit technical documents to the committee.

The committee believes that revisions are needed, and according to the text, the government did not accept the committee's submissions on core issues, such as the eligible age to apply for affordable housing, or the units prices.

The bill proposed that when affordable houses enter the real estate market, their value will remain unchanged.

The committee wants the government to remove the restrictions on this specific proposal.

Ho said that the committee wants the government to allow affordable houses to be treated as commercial properties upon transfer. The committee argued that some families may want to sell their affordable houses for profit in the commercial market place.

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GBA key to Belt & Road, says mainland academic

ANTHONY LAM

THE Greater Bay Area, which consists of the Guangdong Province, and the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau, has a strategic position in the country's master plan.

The comment was made by Zhang Jianping, who is the Director General of the Center for Regional Economic Cooperation, and the Director General of the Institute for Western Asia and Africa at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation.

Although not his field of expertise, Zhang began by talking about translation. He said initially that the Belt-and-Road Initiative was translated into "One-Belt-One-Road," until the national government in Beijing offered an official translation.

The current reference became the name of the initiative because, according to Zhang, "There are a lot of belts and a lot of roads in that area. If it is called 'One

Belt, One Road,' English speakers will find it illogical."

The academic went on, "Because the idea of 'economic belt' was still new, in order to sweep away confusion, Belt-and-Road is a better reference."

Both special administrative regions have their respective roles and responsibilities within the Greater Bay Area. Zhang reiterated that Macau has been chosen to act as the pivotal city for international tourism and recreational industries.

"Macau should transform from a tourism city to an international MICE hub," Zhang suggested. He added that Macau can explore opportunities in the financial industry in collaboration with neighboring Hengqin.

In Zhang's opinion, transportation infrastructure has improved significantly to facilitate both the Greater Bay Area and the Belt-and-Road. He recalled when he first visited Macau in 2017, it was days after Typhoon Hato hit the city. He flew to Guangzhou and came by road to Macau.

The next year, his visit coincided with Typhoon Mangkhut. This time he landed in Zhuhai and traveled to Macau by car. He explained that these journeys were easy.

With all these advantages in location and policy, the Greater Bay Area will attract talent from around the world. It will support scientific projects and facilitate the flow of capital.

Compared with the four famous Bay Areas in the world, Zhang said in terms of per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Macau is only behind New York, which generates USD70,900 per year.

Looking at the Greater Bay Area as a whole, it is generating USD41,500 per year in GDP per capita, which is higher than both the San Francisco Bay Area and the Tokyo Bay Area.

In conclusion, he introduced the policies in place to help Hong Kong students obtain foundational education in Shenzhen. He said a similar policy can be considered for Macau.



Zhang Jianping

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HOTEL JOURNAL

KEVIN HO JOINS MARRIOTT GROUP TO OPEN LUXURY HOTEL IN PORTO

THE building of Portuguese newspaper *Jornal de Notícias* (JN), in the northern city of Porto, will be converted into a hotel to be managed by the Autograph Collection by Marriott and will be named Hotel Journal in order to honour the building's past and perpetuate its memory, said Macau businessman Kevin Ho.

The businessman, whose company KNJ already owns 30% of Portuguese group Global Media, told Macau Business that the new 213-room hotel will require an investment of between 35 million and 45 million euros.

The JN building cost the Authentic Empa-

thy group almost 10 million euros, which, according to Portuguese magazine *Sábado*, is managed by Lei Ka Kei and David Siu, managers of Burgosublime, whose parent company is the Portuguese branch of KNJ.

The JN building dates back to the 1960s and has 17 floors, and the newspaper's editorial office will now move to the building that the group acquired on Rua Latino Coelho, also in Porto.

Ho also said that an investment in a residential project in the Foz area of Porto, called Torre Miramar was planned, "and there are other projects," which he did not specify, which would "create

about 1,500 jobs in the next five years."

KJN Investment, a Macau-based investment company, in November 2017 acquired a 30% stake in the Global Media Group for 15 million euros, the Portuguese media group said.

The Global Media group controls the TSF radio station, newspapers such as *Diário de Notícias*, *Jornal de Notícias*, sports daily *O Jogo* and online financial news brand, *Dinheiro Vivo*, regional magazines and newspapers such as *Açoriano Oriental* (the oldest newspaper in Portugal), *Jornal do Fundão* and *Diário de Notícias da Madeira*.
MDT/MACAUHUB



COURTESY PUBLICO

VIVA MACAU RETURNS WITH 80 PERFORMING GROUPS

THE 2019 Macao International Parade is set to feature some 1,800 artists from 61 local groups and 19 groups from across the globe on December 8, as announced by the Macao Government Tourism Office yesterday in a press conference.

Themed around the cultures of countries and regions along the initiative "One Belt, One Road," the participating groups will depart from the Ruins of St. Paul, passing through the Senado Square and will continue its way to the VIVA Carnival on Avenida Panorâmica do Lago Nam Van.

On the day of the Parade, performing groups Traditions Association and Portugal Artfusion will tell the story of Portuguese tea farmers through stilts and physical theatre performances, while the group Acrobatic Kenya will present a series of acrobatic

moves; among others.

In addition, performers from Zhanjiang of Guangdong Province will present Zhanjiang Human Dragon Dance, one of the first art performances in Guangdong to be inscribed in the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

Meanwhile, a series of outreach activities will be extended to various districts, and a series of promotional activities such as a photography contest and interactive games will also be launched.

The parade will also hold "Lectures on Cultural Topics," inviting foreign art groups to teach and share their experience with students about arts in campuses, and would hold performing workshops.

The performing groups will come from Angola, Ukraine, Poland, Belarus, Hungary, Chili, Cyprus, New Zealand, Italy and Russia among others. IV

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'Are you married? Do you have children' top interview questions to women

ARE you married" and "do you have children" are the most frequently asked questions at job interviews of female job seekers in the city, according to the Macao New Chinese Youth Association.

Recently, the association held a seminar discussing the difficulties faced by working women. During the discussion, the association vice president, surnamed Chan, noted that marriage and children seem to have become the most questioned topics during interviews.

Some participants also pointed out that when a female job seeker is not married or does

not have children, some prospective employers may prefer to hire male employees in consideration of operating costs, which may increase if the company hires this demographic of job seekers.

More than 10 female participants said they are unwilling to be a full-time mother at home.

One of the participants, surnamed Choi, said that men should share more family responsibilities with women at home. She suggested that women should not give up their careers just because of their children.

Lawmaker Wong Kit Cheng also agreed that, as a nurse, she thought that giving birth to a child is the natural obligation of women, but

she also thought that women's lives should not be defined by their children. She expressed her hope that local men could understand more about the circumstances of local women.

Another participant, Si Nei Na, voiced that the ideal time for women to have children is between 25 and 35. She thinks that the Macau government should adopt policy changes for matters of fertility, such as improving Macau's fertility medicine and reducing the costs of giving birth. She wants the local government to help women become aware of potential fertility problems, and to increase the number of indoor facilities for children. JZ



NEW VIETNAM-MACAU AIR ROUTE TO BE LAUNCHED

VIETNAM'S national flag carrier Vietnam Airlines will open its first direct air route between the capital city of Hanoi and the Macau SAR starting from Dec. 15.

The new route, first linking Hanoi with Macau, will mark Vietnam Airlines' 17th route between Vietnam and China and its 62th international route.

With the frequency of one flight per day, the route will open up attractive opportunities for passengers wishing to visit one of Asia's most popular travel and entertainment centers, Vietnam News Agency quoted the carrier as saying yesterday.

Earlier this month, Vietnam Airlines also announced its operation of the new air routes connecting Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City with China's Shenzhen, with the first flights scheduled on Nov. 27 and Nov. 28, respectively. XINHUA

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What to expect?**

Mike Goodridge is currently artistic director of International Film Festival & Awards Macao (IFFAM), which will have its fourth edition in Dec 2019. He joined the festival in 2017 and steered the event through its highly successful second and third editions.

He is also an independent film producer with several projects in development through his new company Good Chaos.



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HONG KONG

SAR police deny curfew rumor, Xi urges end to violence

PATRICK QUINN
& KEN MORITSUGU, HK

HONG Kong police warned protesters yesterday that they were moving "one step closer to terrorism" by sinking the city into chaos, as riot squads skirmished with militant students at major universities.

China's leader said ending the violence and restoring order are Hong Kong's most pressing task, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

President Xi Jinping, who is attending the BRICS summit in Brazil, said his government would continue to firmly support Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam, the police and the courts in "severely punishing the violent criminals."

Police spokesman Tse Chun-chung denied his department had been asked to enforce a possible curfew this weekend. A Chinese state media outlet later deleted its tweet saying authorities were considering a weekend curfew.

The Hong Kong government, in a short statement, also called the curfew rumors "totally unfounded."

"The force is certainly capable and determined to control Hong Kong's social unrest at the moment," Tse said. "We welcome any new measures that can help us to achieve the goal of restoring the public safety and order in Hong Kong."

In unusually harsh language, Tse said students were turning



university campuses into "weapons factories" and a "hotbed" of crime.

"Their acts are another step closer to terrorism," Tse said, warning of a major disaster if gasoline bombs stored on campuses were to catch fire.

He said violence that broke out this week at Chinese University of Hong Kong is spreading to other campuses "like a cancer cell," mentioning specifically Hong Kong University and Baptist University.

"It's time to wake up. No society can tolerate this much senseless violence," he said.

With no end to the protests in sight, the beleaguered police force is appointing a group of prison guards as special constables.

Up to 100 officers from the Correctional Services Depart-

ment who are already familiar with anti-riot equipment will be given additional training and deployed mainly to guard government premises.

"The ongoing riots over the past few months, with their massive scale, simultaneous occurrence in various districts and grave severity of violence, make it necessary to strengthen the support for the police's front-line officers," a statement from the police spokesman's office said.

Residents endured a fourth day of traffic snarls and mass transit disruptions as protesters closed some main roads and rail networks.

Police said protesters shot several arrows at them near Hong Kong Polytechnic University. No officers were injured, and six arrows were seized at the scene, po-

lice said.

Life in this city of 7.5 million has been strained as thousands of commuters have been unable to get to work or endured lengthy commutes.

The government appealed for employers to show flexibility. "For staff who cannot report for duty on time on account of conditions in road traffic or public transport services, employers should give due consideration to the circumstances," a statement said.

A business and high-end retail district in the center of the city was once again taken over by protesters at lunchtime, as it has been every day since Monday. Office workers watched from the sidewalks and overpasses as protesters littered the streets with bricks and other items to block traffic and police.

At one point, a group of police swooped in and kicked the bricks to the curb along one major thoroughfare, but the standoff continued.

The Education Bureau extended the suspension of classes for kindergarten to high school students until Monday. It ordered schools to remain open, though, to handle children whose parents need to send them to school.

Protesters have hurled gasoline bombs and thrown objects off bridges onto roads below during clashes at campuses this week. The Chinese University of Hong Kong suspended classes for the rest of the year, and others asked students to switch to online learning.

Students at Chinese University, site of some of the fiercest clashes where students hurled more than 400 firebombs at police on Tuesday, have barricaded themselves in the suburban campus.

Early yesterday they used chainsaws to drop trees onto streets around the campus and prepared for a possible confrontation with police, who were not intervening.

A major rail line connecting Kowloon to mainland China was closed for a second day and five major underground stations were shut along with seven light rail routes, the Transport Department announced.

"Road-based transport services have been seriously affected this morning due to continued road blockages and damage to road facilities. In view of safety concerns and uncertain road conditions, buses can only provide limited services," the department said.

One of the main cross-harbor tunnels connecting Hong Kong Island to Kowloon and the rest of the city was closed after protesters set some of the toll booths on fire Wednesday night.

Traffic was also disrupted because protesters have destroyed at least 240 traffic lights around the city.

Anti-government protests have riven Hong Kong, and divided its people, for more than five months.

The movement began over a now-withdrawn extradition bill that would have allowed criminal suspects to be sent to mainland China for trial. Activists saw it as another sign of an erosion of Hong Kong's autonomy and freedoms, which China promised would be maintained for 50 years under a "one nation, two systems" principle when the former British colony returned to Chinese control in 1997. **AP**

XIAMEN

Chinese sea goddess Mazu 'flies' to Thailand for cultural exchanges

AN airplane departed from Xiamen, a coastal city of Fujian Province yesterday morning, carrying a special passenger - the Chinese sea goddess Mazu (A-Ma). She is heading to Thailand for cultural exchanges.

As the statue of the Chinese sea goddess Mazu arrived at the Xiamen Gaoqi International Airport, passersby craned their necks and took out their phones to take photos of her.

"I've never seen a statue of a goddess taking a plane," said Ricardo Solis, a Mexican who took a raft of pictures to record this once-in-a-lifetime scene.

The goddess, known for her benevolence, had no privilege in this trip. The name on her boarding pass showed her original name, Lin Mo, and she sat in economy class.

The airline removed a seat configuration with three seats to place the

goddess statue together with two other fairy figures that traditionally protect Mazu.

Prior to her arrival in Xiamen, a ferry, with the statue of Mazu aboard, set sail on Wednesday morning from Meizhou Island in the city of Putian, where her ancestral temple is located.

With drums beating, thousands of locals in red lined up along the road to the quay to pay tribute

and see their beloved idol off for a seven-day trip to Thailand.

In Thailand, Mazu will attend a series of cultural exchange activities.

Mazu is the deified form of a devoted woman named Lin Mo, who lived in the 10th century, dedicated herself to helping those in need, and died attempting to rescue shipwreck victims at the age of 27.

In memory of Mazu's

benevolence and dedication to others, local people started venerating her statue and consecrating her as the goddess of oceans who could bring peace, fortune and good luck.

"Mazu is a goddess, and also a human," said Zhou Jinyan, deputy secretary-general of the Chinese Mazu Cultural Exchange Association. "Mazu is considered as a member of our family."

Mazu is widely worshipped in Taiwan and other coastal regions of southeast China.

As more and more Chinese people have ventured abroad and become involved with other parts of the world, Mazu's spirit

of integrity, kindness and love has also been spread all around the globe.

Her believers are also found in some eastern and southeastern Asian countries. It is estimated that the number of Mazu followers around the world exceeds 300 million.

For more than a thousand years, innumerable sailors gained courage from Mazu and sailed out to the vast oceans in spite of the dangers and difficulties lying ahead, becoming the pioneers of maritime cultural exchanges.

In 2009, Mazu beliefs and customs were inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. **XINHUA**

COLLEEN BARRY, ROME

Ferrari aims to entice new clients with Roma coupe

FERRARI unveiled yesterday a new, easy-driving coupe dubbed Roma aimed at attracting buyers who have been intimidated by sports cars and perhaps even the Prancing Horse's racing heritage.

The Ferrari Roma is the fifth new model launched by the luxury sportscar maker this year, and one of 15 to be rolled out through 2022 under an ambitious model overhaul.

"We believe we will attract an important number of new-to-Ferrari clients," said commercial and marketing director Enrico Galliera.

Unveiled in the Italian capital, the Roma is designed "for people who would like to drive a sports car, or a Ferrari, but are a little bit afraid of Ferrari and sportscars," he said.

It brings a sportscar sleekness with the comforts of so-called Gran Turismo cars meant to be easy to drive over longer distances. Together with the SF90 Stradale, Ferrari's first production series plug-in hybrid launched earlier this year, it represents a new kind of offering.

Despite its newer technologies, the SF90 Stradale is nevertheless meant to appeal to traditional Ferrari fans "looking for the maximum performance without compromise," Galliera said.

The Roma has a V8 engine, 620 horsepower, and will be priced at over 200,000 euros (\$220,000);

AP PHOTO



Ferrari Chief Marketing and Commercial Officer, Enrico Galliera (left) and Ferrari design senior vice President, Flavio Manzoni, present the new Ferrari Roma car yesterday

the first deliveries will be made by summer.

It taps the romance of the iconic mid-front-engine grand touring Ferraris of the 1960s, combining it with luxury, comfort and drive-ability.

It has two small back seats to squeeze in passengers or extra luggage, while both the driver and front-seat passenger are encased

in their own "cockpits" with state-of-the-art video displays.

With a less flashy customer in mind, Ferrari unveiled the Roma in blue-gray, titanium gray and white versions, rather than in the than typical Ferrari red. Buyers will have access to all of Ferrari's personalization options, one of the carmaker's luxury services.

Pegging the Roma's competitor

is tough, said Ben Miller, editor of U.K.-based Car magazine. Candidates include the Porsche 911, the Aston Martin DB11 and the McLaren GT, which Miller said "seems the squarest rival." Still, the Roma pricing is considerably higher than others in the segment.

Ferrari will produce about 10,000 cars this year, its highest level ever. Galliera said Ferrari

is not chasing volumes with the new Roma, despite its intention to create a new customer base.

The market shouldn't expect the same number of new Ferraris next year.

"We have to make sure our network is able to understand the placement of the new models," and guarantee their success, Galliera said. AP

INTERNET

Pope demands tech companies prevent kids from viewing porn

POPE Francis called yesterday for Facebook, Apple, Microsoft, Google and other tech companies to urgently take measures to remove child porn from the web and prevent children from accessing pornography online.

Francis told a Vatican conference of religious leaders and high-tech representatives that it's no longer acceptable to merely follow the law in monitoring online content, because technology is fast outpacing regulation.

He said tech and computer software companies should assume a moral responsibility to protect young people from what he said were the ruinous effects of pornography on their emotional and sexual development.

"There is a need to ensure that investors and managers remain accountable, so that the good of minors



and society is not sacrificed to profit," he said.

Francis was addressing participants at the conference "Promoting Digital Child Dignity," which

follows on a 2017 conference hosted by the Jesuit university in Rome and a 2018 meeting in Abu Dhabi.

Francis cited obligatory

age verification technology and artificial intelligence to eliminate criminal porn from the web as two concrete measures high tech companies and software-

makers could take to protect children.

The Vatican has sought to raise awareness about protecting children online as part of its response to the Catholic Church's dreadful record with clergy sexual abuse. The issue has hit close to home for Francis, after one of his diplomats was sentenced to five years in prison by a Vatican court for viewing child pornography, and one of his own Argentine bishops was placed under investigation by the church after porn was found on his cellphone.

The two-day conference at the Vatican featured speakers from Microsoft, Apple, Amazon, Google, Facebook and Paramount Pictures, U.N. and EU officials, as well as the spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians and the grand imam of the Al-Azhar university in Cairo,

the seat of Sunni learning. Francis' secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, was to close out the conference on Friday, in an indication of the importance the Vatican placed on it.

In his remarks, Francis said technology has obvious benefits for children, but also poses risks and negative effects that often aren't apparent until it is too late to remedy them.

He indirectly dismissed claims by Facebook and other social media companies that they are merely "platforms" for others to share content.

"It is now clear that they cannot consider themselves completely unaccountable vis-a-vis the services they provide for their customers," he said. "So I make an urgent appeal to them to assume their responsibility toward minors, their integrity and their future." AP

Taiwan opposition candidate backs Hong Kong full democracy

TAIJING WU, TAIPEI

THE China-friendly opposition candidate in Taiwan's upcoming presidential election is urging Hong Kong to adopt universal suffrage as the best way of stemming months of anti-government protests.

Han Kuo-yu of the Nationalist Party told reporters yesterday that Taiwan stood as an example of how it was possible to transition to full democracy without major changes to national identity.

The "political crux" of the situation in Hong Kong is that "the people question the legitimacy of their leaders. They think that they're not sufficiently representative," Han said.

That could be easily fixed by allowing direct elections for chief executive and members of the local legislature, he said, despite Beijing's firm objections.

Han's remarks are not greatly different from those of his opponent in the Jan. 11 election, incumbent President Tsai Ing-wen, whom Beijing has sought to isolate politically over her refusal to agree that Taiwan is part of China. Beijing regu-



Han Kuo-yu

larly lashes out at her government's calls for reform in Hong Kong and dialogue with political opponents.

Han, in contrast, has endorsed a 1992 agreement with Beijing that says Taiwan is part of

China, while maintaining its own interpretation of what that means.

That, he said, is the "best foundation" for interaction between the sides. He urged Tsai to also adopt the agreement out

of purely practical considerations.

Speaking at a gathering with foreign reporters in Taiwan's capital, Taipei, Han, 62, did not directly answer when asked whether his concept of "one China" was the same as that of Chinese President and leader of the ruling Communist Party Xi Jinping, who says Taiwan must inevitably come under Beijing's control, by force if necessary.

A former legislator, Han was elected mayor of Kaohsiung in December 2018. Shortly after that, he traveled to China to sign deals to sell 5.2 billion New Taiwan dollars (\$165 million) worth of Taiwanese agricultural products.

He also met with leading officials for relations with Taiwan, including the head of the Cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office, Liu Jieyi, and ranking Communist Party officials in Hong Kong.

That reinforced the view in the minds of some voters that Beijing was strongly backing Han's candidacy, largely seen as a negative in Taiwan, where antipathy toward the Communist government runs strong.

However, Han said he doesn't accept the label that he is Beijing's preferred candidate, pointing out that officials from

the ruling Democratic Progressive Party have also had interactions with Chinese officials.

Han is seen as a maverick, pro-China populist with a brash, combative style.

The son of immigrants from the central Chinese province of Henan, Han is seen as the standard bearer for the roughly 10% of Taiwanese who fled China with Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists in 1949, along with their descendants.

Han has attracted controversy by overseeing a purge of Nationalist Party lawmakers seen as insufficiently loyal and by labeling television pundits as corrupt. Questions have also been raised about the source of his personal wealth and his tendency to deny having said things, despite video evidence to the contrary.

After an initial burst of voter enthusiasm, Han's poll numbers have plunged and he has lagged well behind Tsai in most recent surveys. He said he wasn't "the least bit worried," however, describing polls as "cold" in contrast to the warmth he experiences from voters.

Ultimately, the election will be a referendum on Tsai's performance over the past four years, Han said. He has attacked her both over the impasse with China and with Taiwan's continuing sluggish economic growth and stagnating wages.

"If the 23 million people of Taiwan are not feeling happy, or even feeling distressed and anxious, then please vote for Han Kuo-yu," he said. **AP**

TARIFF WAR

Trade talks hit bump as China resists US demands on agricultural purchases

A U.S. demand that China spell out how it plans to reach as much as \$50 billion in agricultural imports annually has become a sticking point in negotiations on a phase one trade deal, according to people familiar with the matter.

Chinese negotiators are resisting a proposal from American officials that it provide monthly, quarterly and annual targets for purchases, said the people, who asked not to be named discussing the private talks. China also insists that the two sides must agree to rollback tariffs in phases if a deal is reached, the people said. U.S. President Donald Trump said earlier he had not agreed to ease any levies.

A teleconference between deputy-level officials scheduled for late Wednesday night in Washington was expected to cover issues beyond agriculture such as intellectual property, forced technology transfer and enforcement, people familiar with the matter said.

There have been small signs that China and the U.S. are easing restrictions on imports of each other's goods. Yesterday, China lifted a ban on American poultry that began in 2015, saying it would allow imports from qualified suppliers. The move comes after the U.S. Department of Agriculture made a similar decision to allow Chinese poultry into the U.S.

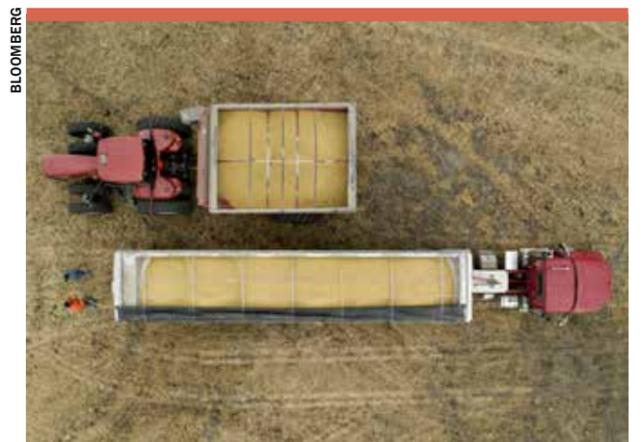
However, optimism that the U.S. and China are close to a limited trade deal has faded in recent days due to uncertainty over whether Washington would agree to rollback tariffs and also how any agreement would be enforced. Trump has said that the U.S. will substantially increase tariffs on China if the first step of a broader agreement isn't reached.

China has also taken actions that could signal imports of U.S. farm goods are in jeopardy if talks sour. While China restarted purchases of some agricultural products as talks progressed, it is now delaying the unloading of American soybeans at its ports, the people said, which could

slow down further purchases.

About 1.8 million tons of soybeans, mostly for state reserves, are being held up at China's ports. Local buyers have to pay a hefty deposit to customs before they can collect refunds on the 30% tit-for-tat tariffs which China adopted because of the trade war. The deposits can cost as much as 60 million yuan (\$8.5 million) per cargo and unloading can take about 28 days.

China's Ministry of Commerce and General Administration of Customs did not immediately respond to faxes seeking comment on the enforcement mechanism and port delays respectively.



The two sides are conducting thorough talks on a phase one deal and removing existing tariffs is an important condition for an agreement, a Chinese commerce ministry spokesman reiterated at a regular briefing yesterday. The Wall Street Journal reported earlier that China is wary of putting a numerical commitment into writing, citing people familiar.

Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping had planned to sign the par-

tial agreement at an international conference this month in Chile that was later canceled because of social unrest in that country. A new site for the signing hasn't been announced.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Chinese spending on U.S. farm goods will scale to an annual figure of \$40 billion to \$50 billion over two years as part of a partial trade agreement, though China has not publicly committed to that value and time frame. **BLOOMBERG**

EDITH M. LEDERER, UNITED NATIONS

GERMANY, FRANCE, UK, CONDEMN NORTH KOREAN MISSILE LAUNCHES

GERMANY, France and Britain strongly condemned the dozen sets of ballistic missile launches by North Korea since May and urged Pyongyang to engage in "meaningful negotiations" with the United States on its nuclear and missile programs.

The three European countries said the tests, "including what appears to be a medium-range missile launched from underwater," undermine regional security and violate unanimously adopted Security Council resolutions.

They issued a joint statement after Germany's U.N. ambassador, Christoph Heusgen, briefed the council behind closed doors on implementation of sanctions against North Korea.

The three countries urged North Korea to take "concrete steps" in new talks with the U.S. "with a view to abandoning all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner."

North Korea has ramped up its missile tests in recent months, and experts say the launches are likely to continue as a way to pressure Washington into mee-

ting Pyongyang's demand for new proposals to revive nuclear diplomacy by the end of December. Diplomatic efforts have largely remained deadlocked since a second summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un failed last February.

This week, North Korea protested planned U.S.-South Korean military drills, which Pyon-

The three countries urged North Korea to take "concrete steps" in new talks with the US

gyang calls rehearsals for an invasion.

The German, French and British statement also called on all U.N. member nations "to strictly enforce" sanctions against North Korea.

The Europeans stressed that this must include repatriating all North Koreans "earning income" abroad no later than Dec. 22, as required by a Security Council

resolution adopted Dec. 22, 2017.

The joint statement reiterated that the humanitarian situation in North Korea "is the result of the misallocation of resources and restrictions" the government imposes on humanitarian workers and officials. It called on Kim's government to address food shortages by "prioritizing the well-being of its own people" over the development of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles.

British Ambassador Karen Pierce, the current Security Council president, told reporters there was no statement from the full 15-member council because the consultations were informal. But she called it "a good discussion."

She said council members are "going to track this important issue very closely."

There are no plans now for a more formal council meeting or council action on the latest North Korean launches, Pierce said. "but as you know, things can change at short notice," she added. AP

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Cambodia's opposition leader in Indonesia ponders next move

NINIEK KARMINI
& SOPHENG CHEANG, JAKARTA

AP PHOTO

EXILED Cambodian opposition leader Sam Rainsy arrived yesterday in Indonesia to meet some of the country's lawmakers as he considers when and how to make his long-awaited return to his homeland.

Sam Rainsy, head of the banned Cambodia National Rescue Party, flew in from Malaysia after failing to make his planned return to Cambodia on Saturday. He was barred by Cambodian authorities who also won cooperation from some neighboring countries and airlines to hinder his freedom of movement.

On arrival in Jakarta he said that he would meet some Indonesian lawmakers and civil society groups during his visit. He said he intends to return to Cambodia at the earliest possible opportunity to continue his mission to lead a nonviolent movement to unseat Cambodia's long-serving authoritarian prime minister, Hun Sen.

Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Sar Kheng said on Saturday after Sam Rainsy failed to return that he would now be allowed to enter the country, but would have to face justice for several convictions and pending court cases, all of which Sam Rainsy says are politically motivated.

However, the opposition leader still faces trouble traveling in the region. Thailand, from which



he had intended to cross by land into Cambodia, barred his entry.

Although he was admitted to Malaysia, it was only after negotiations about his stay. He did not fly as scheduled to Jakarta on Wednesday, with Malaysian Airlines initially saying it would not carry him because Indonesian authorities had advised them not to.

Indonesian immigration officials said he was not barred from entry, and the airline later chan-

ged its story. Sam Rainsy would say only that he missed his flight.

"They don't want me to come to Cambodia. The government," he replied when a reporter asked why he was being deterred from returning. "Why is he (Hun Sen) afraid of me? I have bare hands. I have no weapons. I have no arms. I have no money. I just have two colleagues with me. So, why are they so afraid of me?"

His said his message to the

Cambodian people was: "Keep up the hope. Keep up the fight. Democracy will prevail."

Asked when he would return to Cambodia, he told reporters it could be "anytime."

"Maybe tomorrow, maybe the day after tomorrow," he said. "Anytime because the situation in Cambodia can change very quickly."

In Cambodia, Hun Sen said yesterday that he had ordered the

Justice Ministry to work with the courts to arrange the release on bail of scores of opposition supporters who were arrested in the run-up to Sam Rainsy's planned return.

He said their release would have conditions attached: the charges against them would not be dropped, they could not leave the country, and they have to show up whenever requested by the authorities.

"This task is importantly needed for the sake of national unity, for the sake of maintaining peace and safety for the entire people, because those people were deceived by their leader." Hun Sen said in a speech at the opening of a cement factory in southern Kampot province.

He also repeated his frequent assertion that he intended to remain prime minister until 2028. He has already held power for 34 years.

Hun Sen said that he would not ask King Norodon Sihamoni to grant Sam Rainsy a pardon, though he did not mention the opposition leader by name. Other exiled opposition members would be welcome to return without being arrested or charged, he said.

His speech came a day after his government declared it had "fully defeated" plans by Sam Rainsy and his colleagues to topple his government.

The co-leader of the Cambodia National Rescue Party, Ken Sokha, was released from house arrest Sunday in what is seen as a move to win favor from the European Union, which is considering taking away preferential trade terms for Cambodian imports because of Cambodia's poor record on labor and human rights. The EU is supposed to issue its final decision in February. **AP**

SOUTH KOREA

Ex-justice minister summoned in financial probe

SOUTH Korean prosecutors yesterday summoned the former justice minister as they expand an investigation into corruption allegations surrounding his family that sparked huge protests.

Cho Kuk's questioning at the Seoul Central District Prosecutors' Office came weeks after the arrests of his wife, brother and another relative over their suspected involvement in financial crimes and faking credentials to help get Cho's daughter into medical school and obtain scholarships.

Cho, a reformist law professor and confidant of South Korean President



Moon Jae-in, resigned as minister last month, citing the burden of the investigation into his family. He

has denied legal wrongdoing while apologizing over the perks his daughter is alleged to have received.

Cho exercised his rights to remain silent during the interview that went on for eight hours, saying

that it felt "pathetic and unnecessary" to answer prosecutors' questions over allegations he had already denied, according to a statement he released through lawyers.

On Monday, Cho wrote on Facebook: "Everything about me will come under suspicion and I might get into trouble for things that I didn't know about or don't remember [...] I feel miserable, but I will invest every effort to establish the truth and restore my honor."

Huge crowds of Cho's supporters and critics have marched in Seoul for weeks, demonstrating how the monthslong saga

has deepened the country's political divide.

Before Cho's resignation, Moon stood firmly by the key political ally he appointed in September despite parliamentary resistance. But the controversy surrounding Cho caused the president's popularity to slide.

Prosecutors last month arrested Cho's university professor wife, Chung Kyung-shim, who has been indicted over her suspected involvement in dubious private equity investments and faking materials to help their daughter's admission to a medical school in Busan. **AP**

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AP PHOTO



House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff (left)

Battle lines harden as Trump impeachment inquiry goes public

LISA MASCARO & MARY CLARE JALONICK, WASHINGTON

WITH historic impeachment hearings underway, Democrats and Republicans are hardening their arguments over the actions of President Donald Trump as they set out to win over a deeply polarized American public.

Democrats say Wednesday's extraordinary public session in the House revealed a striking account of Trump abusing his office by pressing the newly elected president of Ukraine for political investigations of rival Democrats, all while holding up needed military aid. "Bribery," they said, and "extortion."

Republicans counter that the hearing showed none of that. They say the two seasoned diplomats at the witness table had, at best, secondhand accounts of Trump's July 25 call that's central to the impeachment inquiry. There was no pressure on the young Ukraine leader, they argue, and eventually the aid flowed, though only after Congress intervened.

Day One of the rare public hearings in the House — part of only the fourth formal impeachment effort in U.S. history — set the contours for a once-in-a-generation political struggle. Images and audio from the hearing popped up on television, in earbuds and on the partisan silos of social media, providing the first close-up look at the investigation.

"The president sought to advance his political and personal

interests at the expense of U.S. national security," said Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the Democratic chairman of the House Intelligence Committee leading the probe.

"Is this now going to be the new normal?" Schiff asked.

Hosting the president of Turkey at the White House, Trump insisted he was too busy to watch the hearings being broadcast live across the country and the world. He denied a fresh detail from one of the witnesses about a phone call in which he was overheard asking about "the investigations."

"First I've heard of it," Trump told reporters during a news conference.

A different conversation sparked the impeachment investigation, Trump's July 25 phone call with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, heard by several government officials and detailed in a partial transcript released to the public weeks ago. The core moment came when Trump asked the newly elected leader for "a favor."

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., said Wednesday that the Democrats' first witness "wasn't on the phone call, never met with the president, never talked to the chief of staff. And he's their star witness?"

Trump wanted Ukraine's government to investigate Democrats' activities in the 2016 election and his potential 2020 rival

Joe Biden — all while the administration was withholding military aid for the Eastern European ally as it confronted an aggressive neighbor, Russia.

All day, the two diplomats delivered a dramatic, though complicated, account. They testified about how an ambassador was fired, the new Ukraine government was confused and they discovered an "irregular channel" — a shadow U.S. foreign policy orchestrated by the president's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, that raised alarms in diplomatic and national security circles.

Trump restated his aggressive defense with rapid-fire tweets, a video from the Rose Garden and a dismissive retort from the Oval Office: "It's a witch hunt. It's a hoax."

"The president sought to advance his political and personal interests at the expense of US national security."

REP. ADAM SCHIFF
CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE

Career diplomat William Taylor, the charge d'affaires in Kyiv, offered new testimony that a staff member recently told him of overhearing Trump when they were meeting with another diplomat, U.S. Ambassador Gordon Sondland, at a restaurant the day after Trump's July 25 phone call.

The staff member explained that Sondland had called the president and they could hear Trump on the phone asking about "the investigations," Taylor said. Sondland told the president the Ukrainians were ready to move forward, Taylor testified as he repeated the staff member's account.

In the face of Trump's denial, Schiff expects the person to appear before investigators for a closed-door deposition. He is David Holmes, the political counselor at the embassy in Kyiv, according to an official unauthorized to discuss the matter and granted anonymity.

Across the country, millions of Americans were tuning in — or, in some cases, deliberately tuning out.

Viewers on the right and left thought the day underscored their feelings. Anthony Harris, cutting hair in Savannah, Georgia, had the hearing on in his shop, but he said, "It's gotten to the point now where people are even tired of listening."

The hours of partisan back-and-forth did not appear to leave a singular

moment etched in the public consciousness the way the Watergate proceedings or Bill Clinton's impeachment did generations ago.

"No real surprises, no bombshells," said committee member Rep. Chris Stewart, R-Utah.

Still, the session unspooled at least partly the way Democrats

wanted with the somber tones of career foreign service officers telling what they knew. They sounded credible.

The witnesses, the graying Taylor and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State George Kent in his bow tie, defied White House instructions not to appear. Both had received subpoenas.

They are among a dozen current and former officials who already testified behind closed doors. Days of public hearings will stretch into next week.

Both Kent and Taylor, who was asked by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to return to Ukraine as Trump was firing Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch, defended their ousted colleague. She is set to testify Friday.

A Trump ally on the panel, Republican Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio, mockingly called Taylor the Democrats' "star witness" and said he'd "seen church prayer chains that are easier to understand than this."

Taylor, a West Point graduate and an Army infantry officer in Vietnam, responded: "I don't consider myself a star witness for anything."

The top Republican on the panel, Rep. Devin Nunes of California, said Trump had a "perfectly good reason" for wanting to investigate the role of Democrats in 2016 election interference, giving airtime to a theory that runs counter to mainstream U.S. intelligence which found that Russia intervened and favored Trump.

Nunes accused the Democratic majority of conducting a "scorched earth" effort to take down the president after the special counsel's Russia investigation into the 2016 election failed to spark impeachment proceedings.

The veteran foreign service officers delivered heartfelt history lessons about Ukraine, a young and hopeful democracy, situated next to Russia but reaching out to the West.

Republicans sought to hear from the anonymous whistleblower whose official complaint alerted officials to the July 25 call by subpoenaing him for a closed session. The panel voted down the request and Schiff repeatedly denied the GOP claim that he knows the person.

"We will do everything necessary to protect the whistleblower's identity," Schiff declared.

The Constitution sets a dramatic but vague bar for impeachment. There's no consensus yet that Trump's actions at the heart of the inquiry meet the threshold of "high crimes and misdemeanors."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was initially reluctant to launch a formal impeachment inquiry. But she pressed ahead after the whistleblower's complaint. She said Wednesday it was sad that the country has to undergo the inquiry with Trump but "he will be held accountable." AP

TV canal macau 

13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Agua de Mar
15:30	Zig Zag
15:30	Os Ursos Boonie e o Fantástico Outono
16:30	Quem Quer Ser Milionário
17:30	Literatura Agora
18:00	Império (Repetição)
18:50	TDM Talk Show (Repetição)
19:20	Livros com João Guedes (Repetição)
19:30	Ouro Verde Sr.1
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	TDM Reportagem
21:30	Viagens em Série
21:50	Solteira e Boa Rapariga
22:25	Império
23:15	TDM News
23:50	A Casa dos Mortos
01:20	Telejornal (Repetição)
02:05	RTPi Directo

cinema 

CINETEATRO

14 - 20 Nov



FORD V. FERRARI
ROOM 1
2:30, 4:0, 9:00pm
Director: James Mangold
Starring: Roberta Sparta, Caitriona Balfe, Christian Bale
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 152min



CHARLIE'S ANGELS
ROOM 2
2:30, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30pm
Director: Elizabeth Banks
Starring: Kristen Stewart, Naomi Scott, Ella Balinska
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 118min



DOCTOR SLEEP
ROOM 3
2:30, 4:30, 9:30pm
Director: Mike Flanagan
Starring: Ewan McGregor, Rebecca Ferguson, Kyliegh Curran
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 152min

GUILTY BY DESIGN
ROOM 3
5:00, 9:30pm
Director: Siu Kwan Lai, Wing Tai Lau
Starring: Nick Cheung, Kent Cheng, Hans Zhang
Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)
Duration: 93min

this day in history 



1985 ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT SIGNED

Britain and the Republic of Ireland have signed a deal giving Dublin a role in Northern Ireland for the first time in more than 60 years.

Britain's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said it brought new hope of ending the violence in Northern Ireland.

But Treasury minister Ian Gow - one of Mrs Thatcher's closest political allies - has resigned in protest at the deal which is also opposed by the Ulster Unionists.

In a letter, Mr Gow told Mrs Thatcher the government's change of policy on Northern Ireland would "prolong and not diminish the agony of Ulster."

The Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed by Margaret Thatcher and Irish Prime Minister Garret FitzGerald at Hillsborough Castle in County Down, Northern Ireland.

It sets up a framework for regular conferences between British and Irish ministers to discuss matters affecting Northern Ireland.

However, if a devolved government were established in Northern Ireland, matters transferred to its power would no longer fall under the remit of the conferences.

That is being seen as an inducement for unionists who want to remain part of the United Kingdom and keep Dublin at bay.

But, for the first time, the British Government has officially committed to promoting legislation for a united Ireland if a majority is in favour.

The deal has been met with anger and bitterness by the majority loyalist community in Northern Ireland.

The 15 Ulster Unionist MPs have accused Mrs Thatcher of treachery and have said they will resign unless a referendum is held on the agreement.

However, opposition leaders at Westminster have pledged their support and the government seems certain to secure a big majority when the deal comes up for approval.

Irish MPs also have to approve the agreement which will be reviewed after three years.

Courtesy BBC News

Offbeat

RESCUE: 'UNICORN' PUPPY DOESN'T NOTICE 'TAIL' GROWTH ON HEAD



A rescued puppy is attracting a lot of attention because of his resemblance to a unicorn.

The nearly 10-week-old puppy, named Narwhal, has a tail-like appendage growing from his forehead.

Narwhal was rescued over the weekend and sent to Mac's Mission in Jackson, which specializes in fostering animals with special needs.

Mac's Mission founder Rochelle Steffen (pictured holding the puppy) says Narwhal doesn't notice the extra tail and is otherwise a happy, healthy puppy. Although it looks like a tail, Narwhal cannot wag it.

Steffen says the rescue group has been flooded with requests from people wanting to adopt Narwhal since his picture hit social media. But he'll remain at Mac's Mission so his caretakers can be sure the tail doesn't grow out of proportion to his face and cause him problems.

IN CONTEXT

Thousands turned out for demonstrations led by unionist MPs against the agreement.

Ian Gow was among Conservatives who set up an anti-agreement group in 1986 to fight the case for keeping the status quo in Northern Ireland.

In July 1990 Mr Gow was killed by a bomb planted at his home in Sussex by the IRA.

The Anglo-Irish agreement followed a failed attempt in 1973 to set up a power-sharing executive of nationalist and unionist politicians and an all-Ireland Council.

No deal accepted by all sides was reached until the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998 which created the Northern Ireland Assembly and new cross-border institutions.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Things might not feel like they're moving along as quickly as you would like, which could cause a certain degree of fraying when it comes to your nerves right now.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
It will be a productive, active day—even if your energy is a bit slow this morning. Don't worry if you can't quite get out of bed, or if the idea of getting dressed seems insurmountable.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Do you think someone is not being totally open with you right now? Your instincts are right on. But their tight-lipped status is not due to an inability to trust you.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
This morning's news will stimulate your already quick mind, allowing you to come up with many different plans for what you want to do with your day.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
If you feel your blood pressure mounting today, you should do more than take a deep breath. Take a different attitude towards the situation! There is a funny side to any stressful situation.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
For especially incisive insight on your latest problems, turn to one of your friends today. You need to consult someone who either is in the same situation as you are, or has been before.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
One of your friendships is starting to feel one-sided—and you are not on the right side. Do you feel like you are giving more than you get? Compromising more than they do?

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
If your routine is starting to get boring, resist the urge to create a problem just for the sake of having something to talk about! You need to avoid conflict now more than ever.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
If you are working on starting or strengthening or shoring up a romance today, you had better take it all the way! Have fun with it. Be over the top. Flirt to a ridiculous degree.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Do you want to try out a new sport or hobby, but you're afraid you'll fail at it? Worrying too much about what might happen is only going to prevent you from trying new things.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Today, you should let your heart push you to get involved more in helping your community become a more supportive, welcoming place. Whatever group of people you feel could be made better.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
People are going to respond a lot better to concrete examples than to ambiguous concepts today, so if you are trying to make a point or sell an idea, you'll have to do it with facts and figures.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

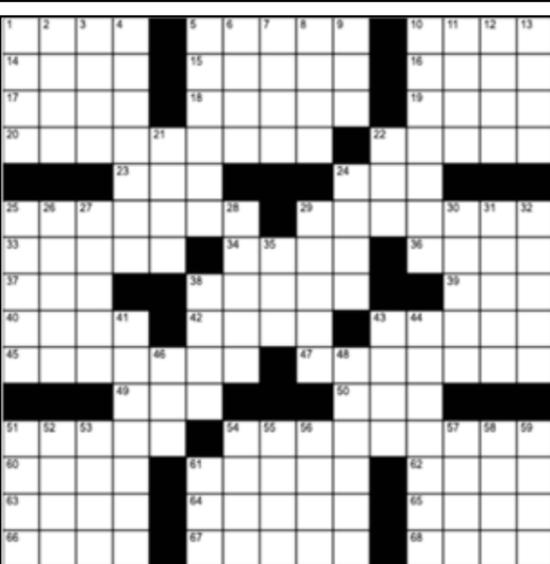
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-2	9	clear
Harbin	-17	-4	clear
Tianjin	2	11	clear
Urumqi	-3	7	clear
Xi'an	5	17	clear
Lhasa	0	19	cloudy
Chengdu	10	16	clear
Chongqing	12	20	cloudy
Kunming	9	21	clear
Nanjing	7	23	cloudy
Shanghai	12	20	cloudy
Wuhan	8	24	clear
Hangzhou	9	22	clear
Taipei	17	21	cloudy
Guangzhou	14	27	clear
Hong Kong	20	25	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-1	4	clear
Frankfurt	0	6	drizzle
Paris	2	9	moderate rain
London	7	9	drizzle
New York	-3	1	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Practice in the ring; 5- Tempest; 10- "Dracula" author Stoker; 14- Poi ingredient; 15- Big bone; 16- Character; 17- Bones found in the hip; 18- Crazy as ___; 19- I could ___ horse!; 20- Goatfish; 22- Brother of Moses; 23- Follower; Suffix; 24- Call off; 25- Food packaging factory; 29- The month of May; 33- Lees; 34- Sheikh's peer; 36- Head-cover; 37- Gun; 38- Compile, accumulate; 39- Yank; 40- Till stack; 42- Saxophone part; 43- Demote; 45- Pertaining to Mars; 47- Against; 49- PC key; 50- Romanian coin; 51- It may be cultured; 54- Make laws; 60- Formerly, formerly; 61- Earth; 62- Double; 63- Authentic; 64- Have dinner at home; 65- Small purse; 66- Pitchfork part; 67- Role for Clark; 68- Degenerates;

DOWN: 1- Paint can direction; 2- Lacking color; 3- Dry; 4- Wandering; 5- Not as fresh; 6- Cash drawer; 7- It's found among the reeds; 8- Uproar; 9- Game piece; 10- Width; 11- Crowd sound; 12- Kind of sax; 13- Nasty; 21- Colorado natives; 22- Unspecified quantity; 24- Piercing places; 25- PC storage medium; 26- Stadium; 27- Not once; 28- Arabian republic; 29- Botch; 30- Scintillas; 31- Cursor mover; 32- Created a border; 35- Fannie ___; 38- I smell ___; 41- Surprise; 43- Gorillas, chimpanzees and orangutans; 44- Large rock; 46- Under the weather; 48- Flexible; 51- Saucy; 52- ___ saw Elba; 53- Slippery ___ eel; 54- Jacob's first wife; 55- Romain de Tiroff, familiarly; 56- Pluck; 57- Type of pilot; 58- Lacking play; 59- Some Ivy Leaguers; 61- Thrice, in prescriptions;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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Laborious saffron harvest unites Moroccan village

A 10-year-old boy calls for the dawn prayer in an isolated village in Morocco's Atlas mountains, announcing a laborious day racing against the clock to harvest fields that produce the most expensive spice on earth: saffron.

It's mainly older women who respond to his call, making their way out of Askaoun village and its mud-brick homes before the sun rises and into fields of purple saffron flowers whose crimson stigmas will become aromatic orange saffron sold around the world.

"Isn't the flower just calling to be picked? Look at it, it gives itself to your hand," says villager Biya Tamir. She doesn't know her age, but estimates that her body is in its sixties and says her spirit is that of a child.

Though the women's bent backs ache and their hands are blistered by the morning cold, they sing and chat as they pick the flower that thrives in only select places on earth. Morocco is among the world's top five saffron producers, with output of 6.8 tons last year according to the Agriculture Ministry, though Iran is by far the largest producer.

The saffron plants bloom for

AP PHOTO



only two weeks a year and the flowers, each containing three crimson stigmas, become useless if they blossom, putting pressure on the women to work quickly and steadily.

Every step is done by hand, and

if stigmas aren't picked out and dried within a few hours of harvesting, their quality drops drastically, making saffron one of the most laborious agricultural activities and giving it the nickname "red gold."

Few crops can thrive in the arid

soil of the lower Atlas range, so the village depends solely on saffron to survive. The harvesters see only a fraction of the money consumers spend for the spice, however, and the weather can wreak havoc on their livelihood. This year, precipi-

tation was irregular, snow was scarce and the cold period too brief.

"There's at least a 50% drop in the harvest compared to last year. And the farmers are feeling defenseless," says Rachida Baha, president of Tamghart Al Filahya cooperative, which focuses on helping women saffron farmers.

"The women are simply not aware of the real value of saffron," she said. "For years, the women worked for free. Many still do."

The village has no nearby health services, and women all give birth at home.

"If a person gets sick, we give them warm soup and then we take them to the graveyard," says Fatima Ait Tahadoucht, sitting around a table of women extracting stigmas, each wearing distinctive, colorful headscarves.

They start describing painful, bulging leg veins and other health problems, but the sobering discussion is interrupted by singing from an adjacent house.

"The saffron season is hard but it is still a time for us to forget our sorrows," says Khadija Safieddine, 23. "We come together and have a good time and for that alone, we love the saffron." AP

AD

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

FOOTBALL

European weekend: What to watch in the main leagues

ENGLAND. Arsenal hosts Wolverhampton on Saturday after sliding to fifth in the Premier League by collecting only one point from its last two games. That came from a draw against Crystal Palace after throwing away a lead and seeing captain Granit Xhaka run into dispute with his own Arsenal fans.

North London rival Tottenham is faring even worse, traveling back to Merseyside on Sunday to play Everton after losing at Liverpool a week earlier to remain winless on the road in the league since January and in 11th place.

Leader Liverpool is at Aston Villa on Saturday holding a six-point lead over champion Manchester City, which hosts Southampton. The south-coast club was thrashed 9-0 in the last round by Leicester, which is flying high in third place.

The 11th round opens with Manchester United only ahead of opponent Bournemouth on goal difference and 15 points behind Liverpool in seventh place.

SPAIN. With Lionel Messi co-

AP PHOTO



ming off his best performance of the season, Barcelona is at Levante on Saturday chasing a sixth consecutive league win.

Messi scored twice and had two assists in the champion's 5-1 rout of Valladolid on Tuesday. Barcelona is one point in front of Real Madrid at the top of the standings.

Barcelona and Real Madrid have a game in hand because their

"clásico" match scheduled for last weekend was postponed until December because of a separatist rally in the Catalan capital.

Real Madrid, which routed Leganés 5-0 on Wednesday, hosts Real Betis on Saturday when fourth-place Atlético Madrid visits fifth-place Sevilla.

Surprise performer Granada, Atlético and Sevilla are two points

behind Barcelona. Granada hosts sixth-place Real Sociedad on Sunday.

ITALY. Juventus is unbeaten ahead of the Turin derby against Torino at the Stadio Olimpico on Saturday.

Roma and Napoli are both on five-match unbeaten runs ahead of Saturday's lunchtime meeting, but experiencing mixed fortunes.

While Roma has gained confidence and climbed to fourth under new coach Paulo Fonseca, Napoli has sunk to sixth.

Second-place Inter Milan visits Bologna on Saturday and struggling AC Milan hosts Lazio the following day.

GERMANY. Promoted Union Berlin hosts Hertha Berlin in the highlight of the German league's 10th round on Saturday. It's the first meeting of the capital's biggest clubs in the Bundesliga and it comes one week before the city celebrates 30 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Union warmed up with a 3-1 win at Freiburg in the German Cup on Tuesday, while Hertha has a day less to recover after a penalty shootout win over Dynamo Dresden on Wednesday.

The clubs previously enjoyed a friendly relationship going back to when the city was divided, but the rivalry has developed in recent years, particularly since the sides competed in the second division.

League leader Borussia Mönchengladbach visits Bayer Leverkusen, also Saturday, when defending champion Bayern Munich visits coach Niko Kovac's former side Eintracht Frankfurt and Borussia Dortmund hosts Wolfsburg, the only unbeaten side remaining in the league.

Also Saturday, Leipzig welcomes Mainz and Freiburg visits Werder Bremen. **AP**

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OPINION

Bizcuits

Leanda Lee



CSR: SUSTAINABILITY OR REGENERATION?

The Macau Institute for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Greater China held their first forum as reported in the Times this week.

While the main focus was on the recently introduced regulatory regimes in Hong Kong and the evolution of CSR in China over nearly 20 years to which listed companies need to comply, mandated CSR is neither the beginning nor the end of the responsibilities that companies and other entities have to their communities and environments.

The recent focus on CSR and sustainability are positive movements: sustainability is about minimising harm, and preferably about stopping the harm altogether. It is about companies meeting the needs of today without compromising the future. But the sustainability movement is also an acknowledgement that what we are doing is damaging, and we are being pressured to find better models of business because the existing ones create too many externalities – costs to people, communities and the environment – caused by producing and consuming the way we do. Natural systems are now beyond their capacity to absorb what humanity pumps into it.

Among the discussions on mitigation and minimisation at the forum I presented a higher order aspirational message of regeneration. Why sustain what we are currently doing within the same paradigm, just trying to minimize external costs, when the alternative can be businesses and communities which thrive? Like regenerative agricultural practices that harness natural processes and systems, growing stronger, more resilient, more nutrient-dense food and livestock, while sequestering meaningful amounts of carbon, economies and businesses can shift to systems of production that can regenerate local and global ecologies. As the Economist, Kate Raworth, of the Doughnut Economics fame, has said, “We need to move from economies that need to grow, whether or not it makes us thrive, towards economies that make us thrive, whether or not they grow.”

Scientists have warned of the natural feedback loops for decades (i.e., sea-level rise, severe weather events, droughts, bio-diversity loss, bush fires as are currently burning out of control in the eastern states of Australia), but now the average person is seeing and responding to them. The sorts of protests like the Student Strikes led by Greta Thunberg, mutually supported and strengthened by the UN Action Summit held in September, and the more radical and disruptive groups like the Extinction Rebellion are calling out unsustainable practices. The global citizen movement is against waste and destruction of natural systems on which life on earth depends.

The average company has been very slow to accept its part in the global ecology of things, although some are realizing they have responsibilities to their local communities. So, globally, Environmental, Social and Governance standards are being introduced. Of course, choosing to shift to sustainable business practices because they are mandated is a step over a low bar but if these regulations serve to nudge companies that would otherwise not act, they have merit.

Companies risk losing legitimacy in the community, or their license to operate, in both the social and regulatory sense if they don't comply. It is no coincidence that we are seeing a higher uptake of sustainable practices and CSR by the gaming concessionaires leading up to the uncertainties of 2022.

When reading the Public Relations blurbs on CSR, I look for leadership, not commitments to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) or adherence to government guidelines or green award criteria on sustainability because these baseline ideas are already lagging responses to concerns, problems, tragic events and difficult lives, let alone emerging ones.

Leaders in sustainability don't wait to be told what to do. Their focus is not on mitigation but on regeneration: Not on liquidating the current common and community assets to a lesser extent, but on investing in all forms of capital for the future: human capital, institutional relationships, financial capital, their customers, their suppliers (all along the value chain, including waste management), social capital (community), and environmental capital (what it extracts and returns to nature).

Regenerating all forms of capital is true sustainability.

AT LEAST THREE HURT IN CALIFORNIA SCHOOL SHOOTING, GUNMAN SOUGHT

THE BUZZ

At least three people were injured early today [Macau time] during a shooting at a Southern California high school and a search was underway for the gunman, authorities said.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said deputies responded to Saugus High School in Santa Clarita, about 30 miles (48 kilometers) northwest of downtown Los Angeles.

The department said a male suspect in black clothing was seen at the location.

White House spokesman Judd Deere said President Donald

Trump was monitoring the reports and advised those nearby to follow the advice of law enforcement and first responders.

There were three confirmed patients with injuries, and it was not immediately clear if they were gunshot wounds or other types of injuries, fire spokesman Christopher Thomas said.

Initial reports of at least six injured were likely due to duplicate reports, he said.

Saugus High School and other schools in the area were locked down.

ITALIAN GOVT SET TO DECLARE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN VENICE

ITALY'S government is set to declare a state of emergency in flood-ravaged Venice, to swiftly secure the historic city funds to repair damage from the highest tide in 50 years.

Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte described the flooding as “a blow to the heart of our country.”

He said a cabinet meeting will declare a state of emergency and approve the first measures aimed at helping the city's recovery.

Conte spent yesterday [Macau time] in Venice, where world-famous monuments, homes and businesses were hit hard by the exceptional flooding. The water reached 1.87 meters above sea level Tuesday, the second-highest level ever recorded in the city.

Venice's mayor said the damage is estimated at “hundreds of millions of euros.”

Earlier in the week, the worst flooding in Venice in more than 50 years prompted calls to better protect the historic city from rising sea levels as officials calculated hundreds of millions of euros in damage.

The water reached 1.87 meters (6.14 feet) above average sea level Tuesday, the second-highest level ever recorded in the city and just 7 centimeters (2½ inches) lower than the historic 1966 flood. Another wave of exceptionally high water followed Wednesday.

“Venice is on its knees,” Mayor Luigi Brugnaro said on Twitter. “St. Mark's Basilica has sustained serious damage, like the entire city and its islands.”

One death was blamed on the flooding, on the barrier island of Pellestrina. A man in his 70s was apparently electrocuted when he tried to start a pump in his dwelling, said Danny Carrella, an official on the island of 3,500 inhabitants.

In Venice, the crypt beneath St. Mark's Basilica was inundated for only the second time in its history. Damage was also reported at the Ca' Pesaro modern art gallery, where a short circuit set off a fire, and at La Feni-



ce theater, where authorities turned off electricity as a precaution after the control room was flooded.

Italy's culture minister, Dario Franceschini, said no damage had been reported to art collections in museums throughout the city. Many sites remained closed to tourists, and La Fenice canceled concerts this week.

Tourists floated suitcases through St. Mark's Square, where officials removed walkways to prevent them from drifting away. Wooden boards that shop and hotel owners have placed on doors in previous floods couldn't hold back the water.

The water was so high that nothing less than thigh-high boots afforded protection, and one man was even filmed swimming bare-chested in St. Mark's Square during what appeared to be the height of the flood.

“I have often seen St. Mark's Square covered with water,” Venice's patriarch, Monsignor Francesco Moraglia, told reporters. “Yesterday there were waves that seemed to be the seashore.”

Brugnaro said damage would reach hundreds of millions of euros. He called on Rome to declare a state of emergency.

“We are not just talking about calculating the damages, but of the very future of the city” Brugnaro told reporters. “Because the population drain also is a result of this.”

He described “untold

damages, to houses, shops, activities, not to mention monuments and works of art. We risked our lives as well.”

The flooding was caused by southerly winds that pushed a high tide, exacerbated a full moon, into the city.

Rising sea levels because of climate change coupled with Venice's well-documented sinking make the city built amid a system of canals particularly vulnerable. The sea level in Venice is 10 centimeters (4 inches) higher than it was 50 years ago, according to the city's tide office.

Damage included five ferries that serve as water buses, a critical means of transportation. Photos on social media showed taxi boats and gondolas grounded on walkways flanking canals.

Brugnaro blamed climate change for the “dramatic situation” and called for a speedy completion of a long-delayed project to construct offshore barriers.

Called “Moses,” the moveable undersea barriers are meant to limit flooding. But the project, which has been opposed by environmentalists concerned about damaging the delicate lagoon ecosystem, has been delayed by cost overruns and corruption scandals, with no launch date in site.

Luca Zaia, governor of the Veneto region, told SkyTG24 that the barriers were almost complete, but it wasn't clear if they would work against such flooding. AP

India The Supreme Court said yesterday it will set law on women's entry into temples and mosques after being asked to review its decision lifting a ban on some women entering the Sabarimala temple in Kerala state. The court deferred a decision on petitions seeking a review of its 2018 ruling to lift a ban on women of menstruating age entering the temple's grounds.

Australia The death toll for wildfires raging across Australia's most populous state has risen to four as authorities warned yesterday of worsening weather conditions to come.

Afghanistan An official says the results of the country's presidential election held nearly two months ago are being delayed once again. Spokesman for the Independent Election Commission Zabi Sadat didn't explain the new postponement. The results were supposed to be announced yesterday in Kabul. There was no new date for the results.



Gaza Militants fired a barrage of rockets into Israel hours after a cease-fire was declared to bring to an end to two days of intense fighting. Air raid sirens went off in several communities yesterday near the Gaza Strip as at least five rockets could be seen blasting out of the territory.



Vatican City Pope Francis yesterday appointed a fellow Jesuit to be the Vatican's finance minister, filling a crucial position left vacant for more than two years after Cardinal George Pell left Rome to stand trial on sex abuse charges in his native Australia.