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SECRETARY FOR ECONOMY AND FINANCE LIONEL LEONG HAS OFFERED A PIECE OF ADVICE TO HIS SUCCESSOR: PUT THE PEOPLE FIRST

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TOURISTS RUINED VENICE AND FLOODS ARE MAKING IT UNINHABITABLE

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THE CHINESE YUAN IS PLANNED TO FLOW FREELY IN THE ENTIRE GREATER BAY AREA BY 2022, SAYS THE MONETARY AUTHORITY

P8

China's foreign ministry urged Canada to free an executive of telecom equipment giant Huawei Technologies held for more than a year as she awaits an extradition trial. Canada arrested Huawei's chief financial officer, Meng Wanzhou, on Dec. 1 last year at Vancouver's airport at the request of the U.S., which is seeking her extradition on fraud charges.



Philippines Luzon is under a tropical cyclone warning for a typhoon forecast to hit early today. Local governments told thousands of people to evacuate vulnerable areas such as coastal communities. The worst conditions are forecast for southeastern provinces on Luzon, the most populous island in the archipelago. Officials said Manila's Ninoy Aquino International Airport would close from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. today.



India At least 25 people have died in recent monsoon rains that inundated low-lying areas in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, and hundreds more have been evacuated to relief camps, the state government said yesterday. Heavy rain toppled a wall in the city of Coimbatore, killing 17 people, and eight others have died in various other rain-related incidents since Nov. 29.

India Hundreds of people gathered in New Delhi, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and other Indian cities yesterday to demand justice in the case of a veterinarian who was gang-raped and killed last week. The protesters demanded a fast-track investigation of the case and stringent laws for the safety of women in India. More on p13

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HIS 'DIFFICULT' CHOICES

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BOBO'S SPECIMEN TO BE DISPLAYED BY SECOND QUARTER OF 2020

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The 4th International Film Festival & Awards establishes Macau as a hub for new film-makers in Asia. Local audiences will be drawn by a colorful and exciting program, while international guests will not only get to taste the excitement of Macau as a destination but meet the Chinese and Asian industries, exploring the best of new films.

INSIDE



THE NEW GOVERNMENT

HO IAT SENG HINTS AT DIFFICULTIES IN SELECTING UNEXPECTED SECRETARY DUO

JULIE ZHU

THE Chief Executive-elect, Ho Iat Seng, indicated that it was difficult for him to make the decisions to appoint Lei Wai Nong as the Secretary for Economy and Finance and Ao Ieong U as the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture.

Yesterday, Ho led his team out to meet the media at an event held at the Government Headquarters. There are three new appointments to the team of five policy secretaries, including the Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong Weng Chun, the Secretary for Economy and Finance Lei Wai Nong, and the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Ao Ieong U.

During yesterday's meeting, Ho hinted at difficulties he faced in making the decision to appoint the unexpected duo of Lei and Ao Ieong to such senior positions.

"We repeatedly made comparisons. These two were not seen in public that much, nor does the public know much about them. However, many civil servants in Macau are working discreetly," said Ho when answering the me-

dia's questions concerning the secretaries-designate.

Talking about the appointment of the two, Ho explained that Ao Ieong has done an excellent job in the Identification Department.

"The Secretariat for Culture and Social Affairs is the most demanding secretariat for a service mindset. The secretariat needs to face the public no matter if it's medical care, social welfare, culture, sports or other topics," remarked Ho.

Talking about Lei, Ho said that Lei had heard many opinions from members of the public when he was working at the Municipal Affairs Department. Lei's advantage, according to Ho, lies in the fact that he understands the problems surrounding SMEs.

During yesterday's press conference, Ho once again highlighted that the most important criteria for secretaries are loving the country and loving Macau, being clean, having strong executive abilities, and listening to the public's opinion.

"The nomination procedure was smooth, and it was highly endorsed by the State Council," said the Chief Executive-elect.

As previously stated, Ho has put administrative reform on the top of his agenda. Ho pledged that the change of government will not pose a negative impact on relevant departments' work. He also claimed that his team will fully listen to the public's opinions and is willing to accept them.

Questioned by the media, Ho said that he endorsed the installation of CCTV surveillance cameras in Macau, although he declined to remark in any depth about the unrest in neighboring Hong Kong.

"We will not think about Hong Kong. 'Love the Country' and 'Love Macau' have always been the foundation of Macau, the foundation of Macau's security and Macau's stability," he said.

After Ho, the secretaries took turns to answer the media's questions.

Lei acknowledged that the gaming industry involves various interests, but he will put the needs of Macau people first when it comes to the gaming sector. Lei expects that problems will occur in the next gaming concession, but said he will not delay the handling of the case. Lei's first task will be

to review the practical experience of Macau's gaming industry.

Ho Veng On, the head of the Commission of Audit, said that his department will not specifically audit any department. He claimed that his commission has been fair in its previous audit work.

Ho, who has already served two terms, hopes that any audited departments will pay attention to the content of the commission's audit report.

Ho's background means that he is entitled to retire within two years. However, he suggested that his retirement should be left for discussion later in the future, and that he will fulfill his current work's mission with full force.

Newly-appointed Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong, who is the current chief of the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC), said that Macau's public administration and legal system are not running at the same pace as society's development and residents' demands. He proposed that Macau promote public administration reform and improve the legal system.

Ao Ieong U said that she will

actively engage with stakeholders with different opinions and strive to build a consensus in society in addition to actively responding to society's demands and needs. She agreed with the importance of protecting Macau's cultural heritage.

When questioned by the media, Ho Iat Seng revealed that he had "persuaded a lot" to ensure that Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, continues working as a secretary in Ho's government. Ho explained that Rosário, during his two terms, solved many problems left by the previous two secretaries of the position, and that Rosário "is very clean." He deems the public work and transport sector a "very sensitive" sector which requires a clean government official.

Rosário thanked his team, which consists of more than 3,300 civil servants, singling out the five directors under his leadership.

Chan Tsz King, who will succeed André Cheong as Commissioner of the CCAC, pledged that he will continue to reform the CCAC, building a transparent government atmosphere.

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF (DIRECTOR) Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
MANAGING EDITOR Daniel Beitler daniel@macaudailytimes.com
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Eric Sautedé, Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Anthony Lam, Emilie Tran, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Julie Zhu, Juliet Risdon, Linda Kennedy, Lynzy Valles, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Viviana Segui
DESIGNERS Eva Bucho, Miguel Bandeira | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES Associated Press, Bloomberg, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua
SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

SEND NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION AND PRESS RELEASES TO: NEWSROOM@MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM WEBSITE: WWW.MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM.MO

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C,

MACAU SAR Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

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Lionel Leong offers advice to successor: put the people first

DANIEL BEITLER

OUTGOING Secretary for Economy and Finance Lionel Leong said yesterday that if his successor puts the needs of the people first then “everything will be on the right track.”

“I have a lot of confidence in the newly-appointed government,” said Secretary Leong. “I am sure they will secure the best for the sake of Macau and the interests of the country.”

When asked by the Times what advice he would offer to his successor as Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lei Wai Nong, Leong said, “as long as they know their job; as long as they understand the needs of Macau; as long as they understand the needs of the people, everything will be on the right track. But it needs to be people-based.”

The advice echoed comments made by Lei earlier yesterday, who promised at a special press conference that “serving the public interest” would be the cornerstone of his approach to the gaming license retender process, especially since the sector involves the interests of many people.

Unlike Secretary Leong, who was predominantly a businessman before entering politics, Lei has spent most of his career

inside the government, having joined the public service in 1992. His designation yesterday as economy chief, the second-most senior among the five principal secretaries, was taken by many as a surprise.

Speaking on the sidelines of a cocktail reception to celebrate the sixth anniversary of the establishment of the Macau European Chamber of Commerce, Leong said that he had no regrets from his time as a policy secretary.

“I am always looking forward,” said Leong. “I only look back to see if I must readjust myself to do things better in the future. But I don’t call these regrets; I call it the learning path.”

In looking to the future, Leong was also asked about his plans after he steps down in December.

The outgoing secretary said that, according to the law, he will need to acquire permission from the next Chief Executive before taking up post-government work within next two years. But he hinted that there were other interests that might keep him occupied.

“Right now, I don’t have any plans [for the future],” admitted Leong. “I have been studying for my PhD physics degree, which I haven’t finished yet. I hope I can settle down and think about the content of my thesis.”

DANIEL BEITLER



Secretary for Economy and Finance Lionel Leong

MECC CELEBRATES SIX YEARS

THE Macau European Chamber of Commerce (MECC) celebrated its sixth anniversary last night at a cocktail reception held at MGM Macau, inviting distinguished guests from Macau’s European and Europhile community. Since its establishment, the Chamber has facilitated relations between Macau and the European Union, counting on the participation of several national chambers of commerce. “Tonight we celebrate

our achievements and look forward to the opportunities that lie ahead,” said ambassador Carmen Cano, Head of the EU Office to Hong Kong and Macau, according to prepared statements, promising that although “our European companies are already very active in a wide range of sectors of the economy, we can bring additional European know-how, business ideas and economic strategies to Macau.”

HOTEL SECTOR EMPLOYEES GROW 4%, AVERAGE EARNINGS TRAIL

The number of people employed in the hotel sector grew by 4% year-on-year during the third quarter of 2019 to reach 60,600 persons, according to the latest survey on manpower needs and wages conducted by the Statistics and Census Service. Meanwhile, the average earnings (excluding bonuses) of full-time employees in the sector rose 3% year-on-year in September to MOP18,590. According to the same survey, the number of restaurant employees in Macau increased 3% year-on-year, while their earnings rose by just 0.4% to MOP9,830. At the end of the third quarter, job vacancies in the hotel sector dropped 1,041 to number 1,395, while those in the restaurant sector fell 475 to 1,844. Approximately 70% and 50% of the vacancies in the hotel sector required knowledge of Mandarin and English respectively.

MICE PARTICIPATION IN RETREAT IN THIRD QUARTER

Participation in MICE events was in retreat during the third quarter, falling 16.3% year-on-year, according to the latest data released by the government. A total of 583,000 people were registered in attendance at 320 meetings and conferences, 17 exhibitions and four incentives, which constituted the MICE sector in the third quarter. Nevertheless, the official data showed that the number of MICE events rose by 37 year-on-year. For the first three quarters of the year, a total of 1,075 MICE events were held, 109 more than in the equivalent period a year earlier. Meanwhile, the total number of participants and attendees decreased by 8.3% to 1.26 million.

MACAU STREETS HOME TO SLIGHTLY MORE MOTOR VEHICLES

There were more licensed motor vehicles in Macau this October - but not many more. That is according to official data released this week showing that the number of vehicles grew 0.4% year-on-year to 239,600 as of the end of the month. The growth was led by a 2.3% increase in the number of heavy motorcycles, while light motorcycles dropped 8.5% year-on-year. Light automobiles edged up by 1.2% over the same period. As for the registration of new motor vehicles, October saw an aggregate decline of 3.8%. The number of newly-registered heavy motorcycles reduced by 17.9%, while the number of newly-registered light automobiles rose by 13.8%.

DANIEL BEITLER



Ambrose So uncertain what new economy chief means for gaming

DANIEL BEITLER

THE Chief Executive Officer of SJM Holdings said yesterday that it was too early to tell what the Sunday appointment of Lei Wai Nong as Secretary for Economy and Finance-designate would mean for the future of Macau gaming.

SJM’s Ambrose So made the comments last night on the sidelines of an anniversary event for the Macau European Chamber of Commerce. Speaking to the Times, So said that the casino operator was waiting to learn the policy direction of the incoming government.

The effect of Lei’s

appointment “is yet to be seen,” So told the Times. “We will wait until the next government takes office and see what policy it decides to roll out. One thing that the Chief Executive-designate [Ho Iat Seng] has already said is that everything will be laid out in very clear legal terms, and I think that is

the way to continue.”

The six gaming concessions of the Macau SAR are scheduled to expire in June 2022, but little information has been released about the process.

On this matter, Lei will be advised by Paulo Martins Chan, the director of the city’s gaming regulator, who saw his appoint-

ment to the role extended for another year starting Sunday.

So also played down the contraction in gaming revenue this year, adding that he understands most analysts and trading houses expect moderate growth to return in 2020.

Gross gaming revenue reached almost 270 billion patacas over the first 11 months of this year, down 2.4% from the same period in 2018. Full-year revenue in 2017 amounted to 265 billion patacas.

THE Macao Animal Specimen Exhibition Hall is in the process of concluding its interior decorations project and is slated to open next year, featuring the specimen of Bobo the black bear.

Despite the public outcry last year about the controversial plan to preserve the Asiatic black bear's body through taxidermy for it to be made into a specimen for public display, the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) has informed the Times that the taxidermy process has concluded.

"At present, the bear Bobo taxidermy has been completed," the bureau told the Times.

Following the death of Bobo on November 20 last year, a total of seven animal protection groups held a memorial service in December at Flora Garden, the former home of the beloved black bear.

Local association Abandoned Animals Protection Association of Macau petitioned for a suspension of the taxidermy process as the decision went against the values of some residents.

Meanwhile, the IAM clarified that the specimen will be going on display by the second half of next year.

"The Macao Animal Specimen Exhibition Hall is currently undergoing interior decoration projects and is scheduled to open to the public in the second quarter of 2020," said the IAM.

"By that time, the Asian black bear Bobo specimen and other

BOBO'S SPECIMEN TO BE DISPLAYED BY SECOND QUARTER OF 2020



MACAU NEWS

animal specimens stored by the Institute will be displayed in the museum to show the public the appearance of animal species and ecological conditions," it added.

The President of the IAM, José Tavares, said last year that the new museum space is located along the seaside in Coloane village in a

building that will be restored.

Since residents have expressed their disappointment at the decision of the government to preserve Bobo's body, Tavares previously expressed the hope that broader society could understand that the preservation of Bobo was not meant to be dis-

respectful.

The official said that taxidermy was instead a way to show respect to Bobo as it would record the process and history of how the black bear was raised in Macau.

The move was also aimed at helping to popularize science education and allow Bobo's historical

footprint and impact to live on.

According to the official government account, Bobo was rescued by a Leal Senado staff member (the municipal authority of the time) in the summer of 1984. However, reports by TDM and Va Kio Daily on the baby bear appeared earlier in 1986. LV

Int'l film festival to close with Hong Kong film

THE 4th International Film Festival & Awards Macau - slated to commence in two days - has announced that it will close the festival with Hong Kong film, I'm Livin It.

The film revolves around social issues in Hong Kong. The main character, Bowen, once a member of the banking elite, sleeps

in a 24-hour fast food restaurant all the time. There, he encounters fellows with whom he can share mutual support and walk together out of the dark valley of life.

The film was produced by Cheang Pou Soi and directed by rising film director Danny Wong Hing Fan, starring Aaron Kwok and

Miriam Yeung.

The film has recently been screened in the Tokyo International Film Festival and featured as the closing film in the London East Asia Film Festival.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the SAR, the "20th Anniversary Macao Special Presentations" will screen local films di-

rected by nine directors in the non-competition section.

The Organizing Committee hopes to showcase the dynamic of the cultural and creative industries in Macau and pay tribute to the city's filmmakers.

Among other categories, this year's Director's Choice recommends three

acclaimed classics: The 400 Blows (1959), Tokyo Story (1953) and Blowup (1966). The latter was directed by Italian film director and modernist master, Michelangelo Antonioni.

Also, launched last year, New Chinese Cinema will bring more Chinese films to the stage of IFFAM and

feature a stronger line-up this year.

Seven entries are pitted against each other: Better Days, Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains, Lucky Grandma, To Live to Sing, Wet Season, Wisdom Tooth and Over the Sea. Five accolades will be presented to winners of this section, including Best Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay, Best Actor and Best Actress.

(More in IFFAM supplement)

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List of Winning Restaurants and Eateries of 2019 "Star Merchant Award" and "Service Star Award":

Deluxe Restaurant

Service Star Award : SW (Palácio Wynn)

Star Merchant Award:

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| 1. 456 XANGAI (Lisboa) | 7. GOLDEN COURT (Sands) | 12. NORTH (The Venetian Macao) |
| 2. 888 GOURMET PLACE (Sands) | 8. GOLDEN FLOWER (Wynn) | 13. SW (Wynn Palace) |
| 3. BELCANÇÃO (Four Seasons Hotel Macao, Cotai Strip) | 9. IL TEATRO (Wynn) | 14. WING LEI PALACE (Wynn Palace) |
| 4. CAFÉ ESPLANADA (Wynn) | 10. MIZUMI (Wynn Palace) | 15. WING LEI (Wynn) |
| 5. CANTON (The Venetian Macao) | 11. MIZUMI (Wynn) | 16. ZI YAT HEEN (Four Seasons Hotel Macao, Cotai Strip) |
| 6. COPA (Sands) | | |

First Class Restaurant

Service Star Award : PORTOFINO (The Venetian Macao)

Star Merchant Award:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. 8½ OTTO E MEZZO BOMBANA (Galaxy Hotel) | 18. GRAND ORBIT (Conrad Macao, Cotai Central) | 35. RED DRAGON NOODLE RESTAURANT (The Venetian Macao) |
| 2. 99 NOODLES (Wynn Palace) | 19. HANAMI (Wynn Palace) | 36. SEASONS HOT POT (Harbourview Hotel) |
| 3. BAMBU (The Venetian Macao) | 20. IMPERIAL HOUSE DIM SUM (The Venetian Macao) | 37. SENKIZEN JAPANESE RESTAURANT (Galaxy Hotel) |
| 4. BRASSERIE PARISIAN (The Parisian Macao) | 21. JADE ORCHID (Harbourview Hotel) | 38. SENKIZEN JAPANESE RESTAURANT (The Parisian Macao) |
| 5. CHA BEI (Galaxy Hotel) | 22. LA CHINE (The Parisian Macao) | 39. SHIKI HOT POT RESTAURANT (Lisboa) |
| 6. DRAGON PORTUGUESE CUISINE (Broadway Hotel) | 23. LE BUFFET PARISIAN (The Parisian Macao) | 40. SHIKI HOT POT RESTAURANT (Studio City) |
| 7. DUMPLINGS LAGO CHONG FA (Broadway Hotel) | 24. LITORAL (Rua do Almirante Sérgio) | 41. SOUTHERN KITCHEN (Sands Cotai Central) |
| 8. DYNASTY 8 (Holiday Inn Macao, Cotai Central) | 25. LOTUS PALACE (The Parisian Macao) | 42. SWEETS (Wynn Palace) |
| 9. EDO JAPANESE RESTAURANT (Venetian Shop) (The Venetian Macao) | 26. MADEIRA PORTUGUESE RESTAURANT (The Venetian Macao) | 43. TASTES (Sands Cotai Central) |
| 10. EDO JAPANESE RESTAURANT (Conrad Macao, Cotai Central) | 27. MARKET BISTRO (The Parisian Macao) | 44. THE GOLDEN PEACOCK (The Venetian Macao) |
| 11. EDO JAPANESE RESTAURANT (Mandarin Oriental Macao) | 28. NOODLE SHOP - MOONLIGHT FOOD MARKET (Sands) | 45. THE NOODLE KITCHEN (Galaxy Hotel) |
| 12. EDO JAPANESE RESTAURANT (NÚWA) | 29. PAK LOH CHIU CHOW RESTAURANT (Galaxy Hotel) | 46. TIM HO WAN, THE DIM-SUM SPECIALISTS (Broadway Hotel) |
| 13. FESTIVA RESTAURANT (Galaxy Hotel) | 30. PALACE CAFE (Wynn Palace) | 47. VIC'S (Hotel Rocks) |
| 14. FONG SENG LAI KEI RESTAURANT (Broadway Hotel) | 31. PASSION. BY GÉRARD DUBOIS (Galaxy Hotel) | |
| 15. FONTANA BUFFET (Wynn Palace) | 32. POOL CAFÉ (Wynn Palace) | |
| 16. FOOK LAM MOON (Galaxy Hotel) | 33. PORTOFINO (The Venetian Macao) | |
| 17. GOSTO (Galaxy Hotel) | 34. PRAHA RESTAURANT (Harbourview Hotel) | |

Second Class Restaurant

Service Star Award : RESTAURANTE LITORAL (TAIPA) (Rua do Regedor, Taipa)

Star Merchant Award:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. MUGS 2 (Praça de Lobo de Ávila) | 4. RESTAURANTE LITORAL (TAIPA) (Rua do Regedor, Taipa) |
| 2. NEW MENG MUN SEAFOOD HOT POT RESTAURANT (Avenida 1º de Maio) | 5. VINHA 2 (Macau Fisherman's Wharf) |
| 3. RESTAURANTE BIRMANES AROMÁTICO (Rua de Fernão Mendes Pinto) | 6. VINHA (Alameda Dr. Carlos D' Assumpção) |

Food and Beverage Establishments

Service Star Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS EDO JAPANESE (Lisboa)

Star Merchant Award:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. BORBULHAS DE AMOR (Wynn Palace) | 12. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HOI WONG (Avenida do Governador Jaime Silvério Marques) |
| 2. CAFÉ T.H.S. HONOLULU (Estrada do Repouso) | 13. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS IEONG CHI KAM LOU (Avenida de Demétrio Cinatti) |
| 3. COMIDA JAPONESA TOEI (The Venetian Macao) | 14. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS KAMLOU (Rua Um Bairro Iao Hon) |
| 4. COMIDAS RAMEN KOU-JI (Rua da Alfândega) | 15. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS PEPPER LUNCH (Rua de Pedro Coutinho) |
| 5. COMIDAS RAMEN KOU-JI (Rua Fernão Mendes Pinto, Taipa) | 16. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS PEPPER LUNCH (Rua do Campo) |
| 6. COZINHA BOA FORTUNA (Rua de Évora, Taipa) | 17. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TACOS by MiuMiu (Rua das Virtudes, Taipa) |
| 7. D'LIGHT DESSERT CAFÉ (Rua da Ribeira do Patane) | 18. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TIN TIN FO WO (Avenida Dr. Sun Yat Sen, Taipa) |
| 8. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS BOA FORTUNA (Avenida do Infante D. Henrique) | 19. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TURTLE ESSENCE SHOP (Lisboa) |
| 9. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS CENTO SABORES (The Venetian Macao) | 20. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS YAT WO (Rua Central) |
| 10. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS EDO JAPANESE (Lisboa) | 21. PONTE 16 TAK HENG (MACAU) FONDUE DE MARISCO (Rua do Padre António Roliz) |
| 11. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HIP SENG (Avenida dos Jardins do Oceano, Taipa) | 22. TAPAS DE PORTUGAL (Rua dos Clérigos, Taipa) |

List of Winning Travel Agencies of 2019 "Star Merchant Award" and "Service Star Award":

Travel Agency Sector

Service Star Award - Inbound Service : COMPANHIA DE DESENVOLVIMENTO TURÍSTICO KONG PAK MACAU, LIMITADA (Alameda Dr. Carlos d'Assumpção)

Service Star Award - Outbound Service : HN GROUP LIMITED (Alameda Dr. Carlos d'Assumpção)

Star Merchant Award:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. CHINA TRAVEL SERVICE (MACAU) LIMITED (Avenida do Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues) | 7. LAP KEI TRAVEL & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY LIMITED (Alameda Dr. Carlos d'Assumpção) |
| 2. CHONG LONG TRAVEL & TOURS LIMITED (Rua de Pequim) | 8. MACAU GONBEI TOURISM & DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED (Alameda Dr. Carlos d'Assumpção) |
| 3. EGL TOURS (Avenida da Praia Grande) | 9. SAM TONG INTERNATIONAL TOURIST COMPANY LIMITED (Alameda Dr. Carlos d'Assumpção) |
| 4. ENERGY TRAVEL AGENCY LIMITED (Avenida da Praia Grande) | 10. SINCERITY (Rua de S. Domingos) |
| 5. HN GROUP LIMITED (Alameda Dr. Carlos d'Assumpção) | 11. SMART (C & M) TRAVEL LTD. (Rua de Pequim) |
| 6. HONG THAI TRAVEL SERVICES (MACAU) LIMITED (Avenida da Praia Grande) | 12. T.K.W. TRAVEL & TOURS LIMITED (Alameda Dr. Carlos d'Assumpção) |

CUSTOMS OFFICER CAUGHT DRUNK DRIVING

A 50-year-old male officer of the Macao Customs was caught drunk driving during his off-duty period. On December 1, the Public Security Police Force caught the officer during a regular road inspection in the early hours of the morning. When the officer's car was stopped, police officers smelled alcohol in the car. Preliminary alcohol tests showed the driver had a blood alcohol level of 1.24 grams per liter. The suspect confessed that he consumed alcohol the night before. Since he felt ill, he was on his way to the hospital when he was caught. Customs has already launched an internal investigation against the suspect.

QINGMAO PORT READY BY THE END OF 2020

The construction company behind the Qingmao port project is confident that the port will be completed by the end of next year. Yesterday, a ceremony was held at the Qingmao port Macau Immigration building. The project's manager, Peng Jun, who is also the Chairman of the Board of Nanyue Group, the project concessionaire, said that the main structure of the Qingmao port has already been completed. Peng claims that the project is being implemented smoothly and expressed confidence that rushing the construction progress will affect the building's structure. During the upcoming period, the project will undergo internal refurbishment and electromechanical installation.

SARS' STANDARD FARM PRODUCTS PROJECT LAUNCHED IN MAINLAND

The Greater Bay Area Vegetable Basket project officially started operations yesterday. The Vegetable Basket project, which was launched in May, aims to build a platform in mainland China for farm products that meet the quality requirements of Macau and Hong Kong. Products included in this platform will serve all customers in mainland China and in both SARs. From yesterday, a total of 682 facilities in mainland China are selling these high-quality farm products. In 58 cities in mainland China, a total of 517 production basements are accredited. Additionally, there are 44 products process enterprises.

POLICE APPLAUD CROSS-BORDER CRIME COLLABORATION



ANTHONY LAM

YESTERDAY, the Judiciary Police (PJ) applauded the cross-border communication mechanism following the closing of two cases thanks to the help of law enforcement bodies on the mainland.

One of the cases involves a corpse. At 5:45 p.m. on December 1, the PJ received a report that a human body was spotted in the sea off the coast from the Ocean Gardens residential complex in Taipa.

An initial post-mortem examination found no suspicious wounds on the body. In the pockets of the body's clothing was a wallet with the identification document of the deceased that identified him as a 40-year-old male mainland resident surnamed Zhou.

The PJ immediately contacted the mainland police and shared this information. The PJ's mainland counterpart replied with information about a bust on an illegal border-crossing case that took place at 10:50pm on November 30 off the coast from Hengqin.

During the mainland police's operation, the boat carrying the suspects capsized, dropping six people into the sea. The mainland police managed to save two, while the other four went missing.

Both law enforcement bodies believe Zhou was among the passengers of the boat that went missing while the mainland police are still investigating the illegal border-crossing case.

There was also a recent robbery which required the activa-

tion of the cross-border communication mechanism.

At 3:38 a.m. on October 2, a robbery in the staircase of a condo building in Toi San was reported to the PJ.

The victim is a female tourist from the mainland in her 30s, who is believed to be staying at her relative's place.

She took the staircase alone on her way back to the condo at about 1:30 a.m. when she was attacked by a man who was following her, sustaining injuries to her head. Her handbag containing HKD70,000 in cash was taken.

She struggled back to her relative's condo where the police were notified. She was sent to the Conde S. Januário Hospital and was diagnosed with a serious condition.

The PJ examined surveillance camera footage and spotted a suspect who had left Macau through the Cotai border checkpoint. The PJ then notified the Zhuhai Police Force, which successfully caught the suspect at around noon of the same day.

For the time being, the PJ is still investigating the suspect's motives and the whereabouts of the money.

The PJ expressed its appreciation for the immediate action and assistance from its mainland counterparts. It also stressed the effectiveness of the cross-border communication and assistance mechanism.

SCAM FOR LOVE, LOVE FOR SCAM

Following last week's bust of syndicate running online romantic scams, the PJ has un-

veiled two other similar cases.

In the first case, the local victim, a worker in the beauty industry in her 30s, was with her father when the case was reported to the PJ on December 1.

On October 22, the victim began speaking with a person claiming to be a man over e-messenger. She soon fell in love with him. He subsequently asked her to download a mobile app into which he requested she deposit 1,000 yuan for games, promising that any winnings she made she could later withdraw as cash.

She won several rounds and withdrew the cash, giving her the confidence to take a further 80,000 yuan from her father's bank account and deposit it into the mobile platform under instructions from her suppose paramour.

After several rounds of games, she won 250,000 yuan worth of virtual money but was not allowed to cash it. The man told her that the withdrawal service had frozen her account and asked her to put in 108,000 yuan in order to reactivate it.

She still could not cash the fund after making the subsequent deposit, so she opted to tell her father everything. Her father, who has lost 188,000 yuan in total, believed she had been scammed and made her report the incident.

In the other case, the female victim got in touch with an individual claiming to be a male British citizen online on October 19. The man claimed to be from London but currently in Saudi Arabia for research

purposes.

On October 23, the man told the victim that he would meet her in Macau. However, he said his online banking system would not work. He then asked the victim to try opening the website for him.

The victim was asked to login for the alleged scammer with details he provided. After login, the page showed that he had a fund of more than 4 million British pounds. He asked the victim to lend him MOP25,000 due to his frozen account so he could buy tickets to Macau.

Afterwards, the man claimed that his employer would not allow him to leave the country unless he managed to send certain equipment to China. He said he could not pay the courier with a frozen fund, so asked the victim to lend him another MOP33,000.

The man later told the victim that he needed MOP334,000 for a medical operation which she also supplied, all while he reiterated that he was planning to come to Macau.

Finally, the man claimed he wanted to return the fund, but needed extra funds to reactivate his "frozen" account. She transferred MOP280,000 to the man who later asked her for another MOP491,000 as an "extra late surcharge". After that, the victim sent MOP25,000 more to the man.

In the end, her parents spotted several large transactions from her bank passbook and uncovered the case. The 29-year-old casino-worker has lost MOP1.19 million in total.



COURTS

Alan Ho to get eight years over prostitution ring

ANTHONY LAM

ALAN Ho, nephew of casino tycoon Stanley Ho and former executive director of the Hotel Lisboa, had his sentence extended by the Court of Second Instance to eight years' imprisonment, after the prosecutor filed an appeal.

In his first trial, the Court of First Instance issued a sentence of 13 months' imprisonment, which Ho had served as detention.

Two charges were pressed against Ho by the public prosecution: founding and leading a criminal cartel, and organized prostitution. The Court of First Instance found him guilty only of the latter charge.

The Court of Second Instance, however, altered the judgment at the end of last month. The Court found Ho guilty of founding and leading a criminal cartel, which has a jail term of six years' imprisonment.

Ho was then found guilty of 58 charges of organized prostitution. The Court sentenced him to nine months' imprisonment for each charge, issuing a total of eight years of imprisonment for both crimes.

Paulo de Sousa, a local lawyer, believes Ho "has nothing to lose by filing an appeal" as "the [Court of Final Appeal] cannot legally convict him with a more severe

sentence, which is stated in Article 399 of the Criminal Procedural Code," the lawyer said.

This is to avoid reformatio in peius, the lawyer elaborated, which

Lawyer Paulo de Sousa believes Ho 'has nothing to lose by filing an appeal' as the top court cannot legally convict him with a tougher sentence

assigns a more severe sentence if the person is found guilty on appeal. The phrase literally means "change for the worse" in English.

There is one more compelling

reason for Ho to file an appeal. "Until the final decision of the Court of Final Appeal, [Ho] will remain out of prison," explained the lawyer.

Apart from Ho, there are five other people involved in the case, surnamed Wong, Lun, Mak, Qiao and Pun. All of them were found guilty of organized prostitution and were sentenced to between five and 29 months by the Court of First Instance. The Court of Second Instance has also overturned these rulings.

Wong is now sentenced to a total of six years in prison for participating in a criminal cartel, which equates to four years in prison, and 58 charges of organized prostitution.

Lun, Mak and Qiao have all been sentenced to five years in prison for the same type and number of charges. Pun is sentenced to four years in prison for participating in a criminal cartel, as well as 15 months for three organized prostitution

charges, leading to a total of four years and eight months in prison.

The case involves more than 2,000 people and began in 2015, when the Judiciary Police held an operation to sweep the ground level, colloquially known as "the Turd", of the Lisboa Hotel. Several then-executives of the hotel were arrested and charged with various crimes.

"The Turd" used to be the area believed to be where sex workers attracted business. The practice started in the 1970s, according to the report by local Chinese newspaper Exmoo.

Born in 1947, Alan Ho completed a business administration degree in the United States in the early 1970s and taught at the Hong Kong Chinese University from 1979 to 1985. He then pursued a PhD degree at Harvard University and worked at a law firm before officially joining the Sociedade de Turismo e Diversões de Macau (STDM) in 1991.

Ho was the administrative director and manager of Hotel Lisboa. He was involved in the management of several hotels in Macau, as well as that of SJM.

AD

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**THREE REMAIN MISSING
IN GUANGZHOU GROUND
COLLAPSE ACCIDENT**

Three people who were trapped in a sudden ground collapse accident in Guangzhou remain missing, according to local authorities. The cave-in occurred on Sunday at a construction site of the Metro Line 11 in the city, sinking a cleaning vehicle and an electric scooter. Rescue efforts were hampered by multiple collapses occurring at the scene, which widened the range of surface subsidence, said the Guangzhou Metro company at a press conference held by the information office of the municipal government. Construction workers in the subway tunnel have been evacuated. Partial backfilling and side slope reinforcement are being conducted to avoid further sinking, with surrounding water and gas pipelines being shut down and nearby roads and buildings closely monitored. The search and rescue are underway, and the cause of the accident is under investigation.

**INTERNATIONAL CIRCUS
FESTIVAL DRAWS GLOBAL
PERFORMING TALENTS**

Over 200 performers from 22 countries and regions participated in the 6th China International Circus Festival last month in Macau's neighboring city of Zhuhai. A total of 24 circus troupes presented performances ranging from extreme sports, aerial acrobatics, clowns to magic shows and dancing during the festival. The Monte-Carlo International Circus Festival, known as one of the world's top circus venues, has also presented shows to the festival. First held in 2013, the festival is sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the provincial government of Guangdong.

**GUANGDONG EXPORTS UP
1.2% IN FIRST 10 MONTHS**

Guangdong Province exported goods worth 3.5 trillion yuan (\$497.7 billion) from January to October this year, up 1.2% year-on-year, according to official data. The province's foreign trade volume reached 5.76 trillion yuan during the same period. Its imports, however, dropped by 6.6% to 2.26 trillion yuan in the first 10 months, with its trade surplus widening 19.3% year on year. The province saw trade with the European Union rise 10.9% year-on-year to 722 billion yuan in the period, and that with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations rise 3.8% to 804 billion yuan. Private enterprises were the biggest driver. In the first 10 months of this year, the foreign trade volume of private companies in Guangdong reached 2.94 trillion yuan, up 2.7% in annual terms.

**CHINESE YUAN PLANNED TO
FLOW FREELY IN GBA BY 2022**

JULIE ZHU

THE Chinese yuan is planned to flow freely in the entire Greater Bay Area by 2022, according to Carol Lao, deputy director of the financial department of the Monetary Authority of Macau.

On Friday, the Financial Services Bureau (DSF) held a seminar on the opportunities and challenges of Macau special finance. During her presentation, Lao remarked that by 2022, the Chinese yuan should be accepted by the entire Greater Bay Area market, including Hong Kong and Macau.

Currently in Macau, the Chinese yuan, Hong Kong dollar and Macau pataca are accepted in most transactions. In Hong Kong, the Chinese yuan is also widely accepted.

Lao's information was included in the plan of the

Greater Bay Area development. According to this plan, China hopes to expand the scale of the Chinese yuan's acceptance in more markets, also upgrading the Chinese yuan's international status.

The specific means of achieving the policy includes banks in the Greater Bay Area, which can carry out lending in the currency. It is not entirely clear what this will mean for currency controls currently in force on the mainland.

The Outline Development Plan for the Greater Bay Area supports consolidating and enhancing Hong Kong's status as an international financial center, strengthening its status as a global offshore renminbi business hub.

According to the Greater Bay Area plan, the governments of the three regions will progressively expand

the scale and scope of the cross-boundary use of the renminbi.

Banking institutions in the Greater Bay Area may launch, in accordance with relevant regulations, cross-boundary renminbi inter-bank lending, renminbi foreign exchange spot and forward businesses, related renminbi derivative products and cross distribution of wealth management products.

Enterprises in the Greater Bay Area may issue cross-boundary renminbi bonds in accordance with relevant regulations.

Hong Kong's institutional investors can raise renminbi funds in accordance with the relevant regulations in the Greater Bay Area for investment in the capital markets of Hong Kong, and in participating in the investment of domestic private equity funds and venture

capital funds.

Hong Kong should also develop more offshore renminbi, commodity and other risk management tools.

Talking about the development of Macau's special financial services, Lao said that the specialty of Macau's system means that a special service or a product, such as financial-leasing, has the potential to exist in several sectors.

"We want to find Macau's special financial service and products," said Lao, adding that there were multiple options on the table.

Lao used Luxembourg as an example. She said that Luxembourg decided to transform the country from an industrial country into a financial country by issuing bonds. Luxembourg attracts issuers to list bonds to make profits and profits from the development of other industries' development.

**MACAU-ZHUHAI JOINT FIREWORKS
SHOW PROMISES TECH INNOVATION**

THE Macau SAR government and the Zhuhai Municipal People's Government will stage their first joint fireworks show together above the sea area in front of Macau Tower and Zhuhai Hengqin Financial Island on 22 December in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Macau Special Administrative Region.

According to a joint statement from the two organizing entities, the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) and the Administrative Com-

mittee of Hengqin New Area, some 160,000 fireworks shells will be skyrocketed from four barges and 16 special-effect launching platforms in the 30-minute show.

On the night of the show, fireworks launching locations will be set on both sides of Sai Van Bridge. Two barges and eight special-effect launching platforms will be stationed on each of the two locations.

For the first time, 56 unmanned boats and 600 drones will be harnessed to form a range of characters

and numeral patterns including "Macau and Zhuhai united as one family" (in Chinese characters) and the number "20", as well as the images of the Ruins of St. Paul's and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge.

The organizers said the show will "symbolize unity and celebration, bliss and prosperity."

At a press conference held yesterday, MGTO director Helena de Senna Fernandes said that the collaborative debut with Zhuhai would pre-

sent Macau's largest-ever fireworks show.

Meanwhile, Director of the Administrative Committee of Hengqin New Area, Yang Chuan, remarked that the fireworks show, although just a cultural event, represents deep collaboration of substantial significance. He hopes that this collaborative project will create a bridge for friendly exchange between the peoples of both places.

Foreseeing that more opportunities for wider and deeper cooperation will arise in the future, Yang also exhorted both sides to join hands in building a Greater Bay Area that celebrates culture. **DB**

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HK awaits 'enormous' retail hit as chaos cripples economy

ERIC LAM, JINSHAN HONG & NATALIE LUNG

HONG Kong is counting the economic cost of almost six months of political unrest, with the city expected to post its first budget deficit since the early 2000s.

Financial Secretary Paul Chan made the announcement to lawmakers Monday, explaining that the ongoing turmoil has hurt economic growth by some 2 percentage points this year.

There's more bad news coming: Retail sales data for October are expected to show a "very enormous" decline, Chan said. Arrivals from China plunged 45.9% from a year earlier in October, the biggest decline on record, meaning that the annual "Golden Week" holiday in mainland China failed to translate into a tourist bump for local retailers. Overall, visitors to Hong Kong fell almost 44% in the month.

For retail businesses, that raises the stakes for coming months. Many proprietors will have to make hard choices: whether to continue the fight into next year or give up as leases come up for renewal and employee bonuses must be paid.

Iris Pang, an economist with ING Bank NV in Hong Kong, sees a 70% chance of a wave of store closures among retailers if spending continues to be weak. The situation is especially dire for catering companies, who typically enjoy brisk business at the holidays though face the prospect of cancellations during periods of unrest.

AIRAM DATO-ON



"Make or break is the correct description for most catering businesses in Hong Kong as some of them have continued in the business just because their rental agreement has yet to be due," Pang said. "It is very likely that many catering businesses will close their business if their revenue doesn't make a comeback during this holiday."

Cosmetics retailer Sa Sa International Holdings Ltd. may close about 30 stores in the coming year depending on how the market shakes out and "the results of discussions with the owners on rent reduction," the company said in an emailed statement. Sa Sa shares have tumbled more than 40% this year.

Chow Tai Fook Jewellery

Group Ltd. will look to cut costs by seeking bigger rent discounts, reducing advertising and reviewing store networks in Hong Kong and Macau, the company said in a webcast after reporting that first-half net income sank 21%. The company has leases at more than 40 stores in Hong Kong and Macau expiring in the next fiscal year.

Hong Kong has been one of the world's largest centers for sales of luxury watches, but it has taken a hammering this year. Swiss watch exports to mainland China surpassed those to Hong Kong for the first time in October.

"If the situation persists, by the end of the year many watch companies will have to shut down business," said

Alain Lam, finance director with Oriental Watch Holdings Ltd. "At the end of the year, suppliers will ask for payment and employees will demand a one-month bonus -- this may cut off the cash flow of some companies."

Oriental Watch Holdings has managed to negotiate 8% to 10% discounts in rent from some landlords and will attempt to arrange better deals as leases come up, Lam said. But there's no guarantee the company will retain its significant presence in Hong Kong, as it has healthier operations elsewhere.

"If the numbers don't work out, we will close stores," he said. "We are shifting our strategic focus to mainland China, aggressively." **BLOOMBERG**

HONG KONG AIRLINES GIVEN ONE WEEK TO SAVE ITS LICENSE

HONG Kong Airlines Ltd., the city's only other competitor to Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd., is fighting for survival just as the busy Christmas season approaches.

The Air Transport Licensing Authority told the carrier that its finances had deteriorated so much that it needs to raise more cash or risk losing its license. The regulator will make a decision by Saturday, it said.

For Hong Kong Airlines, the ultimatum escalates a crisis that already forced the company to delay salary payments and cut flights to places such as Vancouver. More broadly, the move is the latest indication of how months of anti-Beijing protests in Hong Kong have roiled the city's carriers — Cathay shares are trading near the lowest in a decade — as people avoid flying in and out of the Asian financial hub.

Visitor numbers in Hong Kong have plunged since the protests flared in June.

Though Hong Kong Airlines, backed by Chinese conglomerate HNA Group Co., doesn't disclose its financials because it isn't listed, the company has acknowledged it's facing difficulties. On Friday, it said that protests have "severely affected" its business. The airline was already under strain as economic growth took a hit from the U.S.-China trade war, and facing scrutiny from authorities, who've been requesting updates and improvements on its financial situation this year.

ATLA said yesterday it found the situation "extremely worrying" after meeting with Hong Kong Airlines' senior management and requesting them to explain the company's finances. The Civil Aviation Department and Transport and Housing Bureau have also both demanded the company worked to improve its finances.

"HKA's financial position has deteriorated rapidly," ATLA said in its statement, which laid out two new licensing conditions: ensure a cash injection is made and that the company maintains levels of cash and equivalents determined by the regulator. It said if Hong Kong Airlines fails to improve its financial situation it could revoke or suspend the carrier's license. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

AD



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

The Greater Bay project is coming and it will bring both opportunities and challenges to our little-big town. Macau Daily Times wants to hear your voice. We invite our readers to write in with Letters to the Editor on the topic of the Greater Bay Area.

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TOURISTS RUINED VENICE. NOW FLOODS ARE MAKING IT UNINHABITABLE

TWO weeks after high tides and fierce winds produced the worst flooding in Venice in more than half a century, sirens sound about 6:30 a.m. to warn the fragile lagoon city's weary residents that "acqua alta" is arriving again.

Less than two hours later, temporary wooden platforms are in place to allow pedestrians to move through ancient cobble-stone streets. Vendors hawking cheap water-proof boots appear out of nowhere to cater to ill-prepared tourists.

Sergio Boldrin, one of Venice's most renowned mask makers, is used to the ritual. But the floods aren't the only sign of decay. The feeling in the city is that climate change is hastening a downfall that started with mass tourism.

"The city has become ugly. It's lost its soul," said Boldrin, as thrifty day trippers stream by to gawk at but not buy his masks, which can cost as much as 1,000 euros (\$1,100). "These people just don't recognize its real beauty."

The son of a gondolier, Boldrin is a living embodiment of Venetian tradition. From the stool of his tiny atelier Bottega dei Mascareri near the famous Rialto Bridge, the 62-year-old sees a string of small canvas-covered stands selling cheap trinkets, including low-grade plastic and ceramic knockoffs of his masks for as little as 10 euros.

The city—improbably spread across more than 100 small islands in the Venetian lagoon—attracted an estimated 30 million visitors this year. The crowds strain resources but provide little value for the local economy. Three-quarters of the tourists stay for just a few hours and spend an average 13 euros on souvenirs, according to research by Confartigianato Venezia, an association of local trade businesses.

Artisans are struggling to compete with the influx of cheaper products made abroad, and many can't afford rents that have been driven up by real-estate specula-



tion. Skilled craftspeople in the city's historical area have dropped by half since the 1970s to about 1,100 in 2018.

"A lot of it is generational change," said Enrico Vettore of Confartigianato Venezia. "Often there's no one in a family who can take over the business," but there's also the lack of demand as day trippers "don't buy real artisan products."

On the nearby island of Murano, Luciano Gambaro is waging a battle to preserve centuries of local glass-making traditions. The number of people working to produce the colorful, hand-blown vases and figurines has also halved, partly due to the impact of counterfeit products from eastern

Europe, China and India, says the 54-year-old, who runs the family's company and heads a consortium of business that promotes Murano glass.

The floods, which have become more frequent, disrupt the city's rhythm, suspending Vaporetto boat lines that connect stops on the Grand Canal to outlying sites like Murano, Burano and the barrier island of Lido.

Just before midnight on Nov. 12, Venice's "acqua alta" reached 184 centimeters (6 feet) above sea level. It was generated by a combination of rising tides and powerful winds of more than 75 miles per hour. City officials estimated the damage at about 1 billion euros.

Like many others, Mayor Luigi Brugnaro blamed climate change.

"I love my town, we've raised four children here, but the city has changed for the worse in the last five years," said Giovanni Giol, president of the Benedetto Marcello music conservatory.

Housed in a palace built in the early 1600s, manuscripts and books in the library were soaked in this month's historic flood. The worst affected items were sent to a restoration facility in Bologna, while others were carried to higher levels of the building and are drying out on floors of the museum alongside 17th century musical instruments.

"The storm brought home the

reality of the situation," said Jane Da Mosto, executive director of a non-profit organization trying to reverse the community's decline by controlling tourism, including a ban on cruise ships. "Venice is close to falling off the precipice. There's no control room."

About 1,000 residents leave every year, and about 50,000 people now call the lagoon home. The former city-state has been governed together with its larger mainland neighbor Mestre since they were linked in 1926 by Fascist leader Benito Mussolini.

Activists like Da Mosto say the city's issues are so unique that it needs to be separate. On Sunday, Venetians will vote on a referendum to give the community its own administrative structure, but it's non-binding and opposed by the mayor, who has called the effort "folly" because it risks creating bureaucratic bottlenecks and discouraging investment.

That puts more focus on the fraught MOSE anti-flooding project. Embroiled in several corruption probes, the system of water gates is way over budget at 5.5 billion euros and counting, and won't be ready until 2022—more than two decades after construction began.

And it will likely be useless in stopping rising tides, according to Nelli-Elena Vanzan Marchini, an Italian historian who has written several books on Venice.

Global warming has raised sea levels about 8 inches since 1880, according to Climate Central, an independent organization of scientists and journalists. The rate is accelerating and a recent report by the group predicted that high-tide lines could permanently rise above land occupied by around 150 million people by 2050, including 30 million Chinese.

That's a bleak outlook for residents like Boldrin. Along with creating masks, the artist paints images that evoke the "Death of Venice" theme—dark, solitary figures crushed by the weight of the city's decline.

"Many of us Venetians are tired," he said in the studio he founded with his brother in 1984 and hopes to pass on to his daughter. "Venice is suffocating." **BLOOMBERG**

CORPORATE BITS

Sands China launches pop-up store for disadvantaged groups

Sands China launched its Macao Creative Pop-Up Store — a platform for local non-governmental organizations and designers to display and sell their arts and craft products to guests and visitors at The Venetian Macao.

The initiative provides an opportunity for disadvantaged groups in Macao to showcase their talents and products.

"This event reinforces our commitment to bolster Macao's cultural and creative industries, and to support some of the local organizations that provide such important services to the Macao community," said Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd, as cited in a press released by the gaming operator.

The Macao Creative Pop-Up Store has been built for

four local non-governmental organisations: Macao IC2 Association, Fuhong Society of Macao, Macao Special Olympics, and Macao Handicraft and Creative People Association to display and sell their arts and craft products until December 20.

The store features more than 100 types of items, including umbrellas, t-shirts, shopping bags, scarves, key chains, magnets.

Melco to host in-house nursery to support working parents

Melco Resorts & Entertainment announced that it will have an in-house nursery at one of its properties to support the company's working parent employees — the first of its kind in the city.

Subject to relevant licenses being obtained, The Macau Holy House of Mercy will be the nursery's management operator, the gaming operator announced

in a statement.

Lawrence Ho, chairman and CEO of Melco, said, "A most important pillar for our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is women and families. [...] Encouraging taking care of the primary priority of children while working, the Melco in-house nursery will facilitate the wellbeing of families."

The Creche of Santa Casa was established in

March 2002, where pre-school education is provided in both Chinese and Portuguese.

"We are enthusiastic about operating the first in-house nursery in Macao as part of our aim to provide a range of regular social service facilities to the community of Macao," said António José de Freitas, president of The Holy House of Mercy.

Beijing to suspend US Navy visits to Hong Kong over new law

KEN MORITSUGU,
HONG KONG

CHINA said yesterday it will suspend U.S. military ship and aircraft visits to Hong Kong and sanction several American pro-democracy and human rights groups in retaliation for the signing into law of legislation supporting anti-government protests in the semi-autonomous territory.

While the nature of the sanctions remained unclear, the move followed Chinese warnings that the U.S. would bear the costs if the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act was approved.

The steps are "in response to America's unreasonable behavior," foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said in Beijing, adding that the legislation seriously interfered in China's internal affairs.

The law, signed last week by President Donald Trump, mandates sanctions on Chinese and Hong Kong officials who carry out human rights abuses and requires an annual review of the favorable trade status that Washington grants Hong Kong.

The legislation was backed by U.S. lawmakers who are sympathetic to the protesters and have criticized Hong Kong police for cracking down on the pro-democracy movement.

Police say their use of tear gas, rubber bullets and other force is a necessary response to escalating violence by the protesters, who have blocked major roads and thrown gasoline bombs back at officers in riot gear.



AP PHOTO

Hong Kong has been living with almost nonstop protests for six months. The movement's demands include democratic elections and an investigation into the police response. More fundamentally, the protesters and others in Hong Kong fear that China is eroding the rights and freedoms they have under a "one country, two systems" framework.

Hua said China would sanction organizations including the National Endowment for Democracy, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, Human Rights Watch, the International Republican Institute, Freedom House and others that she said had "performed badly" in the Hong Kong unrest.

"China urges the United States to correct its mistakes and stop any words and deeds that inter-

fere in Hong Kong and China's internal affairs," she said, adding that China could take "further necessary actions" depending on how matters develop.

Hua accused the groups of instigating protesters to engage in "radical violent crimes and inciting separatist activities."

"These organizations deserve to be sanctioned and must pay a price," Hua said.

China has long accused foreign groups and governments of fomenting the demonstrations in Hong Kong, singling out the U.S., former colonial overlord Britain, and democratic, self-governing Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory to be annexed by force if necessary.

Among the groups to be subject to the unspecified sanctions, the National Endowment for De-

mocracy receives funding directly from Congress, while others generally draw their running costs from a mixture of private and public grants.

Derek Mitchell, the president of the National Democratic Institute, said in Hong Kong last week that accusations it was colluding with protesters were "patently false."

The institute has no role in the current protests, and "to suggest otherwise spreads misinformation and fails to recognize the movement stems from genuine grievances," he said.

While China has in the past suspended U.S. military visits, the sanctions on the various groups could bring conditions for civil society in Hong Kong one step closer to those in mainland China.

Beijing imposes restrictions on

non-governmental organizations, and is particularly concerned about those involved in humanitarian causes, gender equality, the environment or minority rights.

In Hong Kong, several hundred people who work in advertising started a five-day strike yesterday to show support for the anti-government protests. They said they would not go to work, respond to work emails or take part in conference calls.

Some held up signs with protest slogans at an early afternoon rally to launch the strike in Charter Garden, a public square in the central business district.

Antony Yiu, an entrepreneur in advertising and one of the organizers, said they want other business sectors to join them.

"The government seems to be still ignoring the sound of the majority of the people," he said. The advertising industry wants "to take the first step to encourage other businesses to participate in the strike to give more pressure."

More than 10,000 people marched on Sunday to try to pressure the government to address the demands after pro-democracy candidates won a landslide victory in district council elections one week earlier.

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam has said she'll accelerate dialogue but hasn't offered any concessions since the elections.

The protests are blamed for driving the economy into recession. Tourism, airline and retail sectors have been hit particularly hard, with retail sales down about 20%.

"The willingness of tourists coming to Hong Kong has been significantly affected," the city's financial secretary, Paul Chan, said.

He said the government will run a budget deficit for the first time in 15 years because of falling tax revenues and greater spending to try to offset the economic slowdown. AP

CHINA and Russia launched yesterday a gas pipeline that is more than 6,000 kilometers long, an outcome of their long-planned energy partnership.

As its relationships with Europe and the United States have grown more volatile, Russia is looking to bring its vast natural gas resources to the east. China is the world's largest energy consumer and needs new supply sources to meet domestic demand.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin inaugurated the pipeline — dubbed the "Power of Siberia" — through a joint video conference.

"This step takes Russia-

China, Russia launch massive joint gas pipeline

-China energy cooperation to a whole new level and brings us closer to achieving the goal set together with Chinese President Xi Jinping of extending bilateral trade turnover to \$200 billion in 2024," Putin said.

The pipeline bolsters the nations' ties while China is embroiled in a trade dispute with the U.S. It stems from a \$400 billion deal signed in 2014 by Russian state energy giant Gazprom, which agreed to deliver 38 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually to China National Petroleum Corp for the next 30 years. Gazprom built the

Russian side of the pipeline, which runs from new Siberian gas fields to the Chinese border.

Russia began seeking alternative economic partnerships after the U.S. and European Union imposed sanctions over its annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in March 2014.

The Chinese side of the line starts in northern Heilongjiang province, reaching southward to Shanghai. Demand for natural gas has risen in northern China as the government seeks to control smog by moving households away from burning coal for heat

in the winter.

The Power of Siberia pipeline is a "project of symbolic importance for China-Russia cooperation," said Xi, who expressed hope that the pipeline will become a driving force for economic and social development in the regions it traverses.

"Over the past more than five years, the two countries' participating companies worked together closely, and numerous builders tread on ice and laid in snow, braving the elements to complete their construction tasks," he said. AP



AP PHOTO

Vladimir Putin (right) and other Russian officials attend a joint video conference with Xi Jinping during inaugurating the Power of Siberia pipeline in the Bocharov Ruchei residence in Sochi, Russia, yesterday

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

CHINA PLANS NEW COAL PLANTS, TRIMS SUPPORT FOR CLEAN ENERGY

AS world leaders gather in Spain to discuss how to slow the warming of the planet, a spotlight falls on China — the top emitter of greenhouse gases.

China burns about half the coal used globally each year. Between 2000 and 2018, its annual carbon emissions nearly tripled, and it now accounts for about 30% of the world's total. Yet it's also the leading market for solar panels, wind turbines and electric vehicles, and it manufactures about two-thirds of solar cells installed worldwide.

"We are witnessing many contradictions in China's energy development," said Kevin Tu, a Beijing-based fellow with the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University. "It's the largest coal market and the largest clean energy market in the world."

That apparent paradox is possible because of the sheer scale of China's energy demands.

But as China's economy slows to the lowest level in a quarter century — around 6% growth, according to government statistics — policymakers are doubling down on support for coal and other heavy industries, the traditional backbones of China's

AP PHOTO



Steel manufacturing in Hejin in Shanxi Province

energy system and economy. At the same time, the country is reducing subsidies for renewable energy.

At the annual United Nations climate summit, this year in Madrid, government representatives will put the finishing touches on implementing the 2015 Paris Agreement, which set a goal to limit future warming to 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Nations may decide for themselves how to achieve it.

China had previously committed to shifting its energy mix to 20% renewables, including nuclear and hydroelectric energy. Climate experts generally agree that the initial targets pledged in Paris will not be enough to reach the goal, and next year nations are required to articulate more ambitious targets.

Hopes that China would offer to do much more are fading.

Recent media reports and satellite images suggest that China is

building or planning to complete new coal power plants with total capacity of 148 gigawatts — nearly equal to the entire coal-power capacity of the European Union within the next few years, according to an analysis by Global Energy Monitor, a San Francisco-based nonprofit.

Meanwhile, investment in China's renewable energy dropped almost 40 percent in the first half of 2019 compared with the same period last year, according to

Bloomberg New Energy Finance, a research organization. The government slashed subsidies for solar energy.

Last week in Beijing, China's vice minister of ecology and environment told reporters that non-fossil-fuel sources already account for 14.3% of the country's energy mix. He did not indicate that China would embrace more stringent targets soon.

"We are still faced with challenges of developing our economy, improving people's livelihood," Zhao Yingmin said.

As a fast-growing economy, it was always inevitable that China's energy demands would climb steeply. The only question was whether the country could power a sufficiently large portion of its economy with renewables to curb emissions growth.

Many observers took hope from a brief dip in China's carbon emissions between 2014 and 2016. Today the country's renewed focus on coal comes as a disappointment.

"Now there's a sense that rather than being a leader, China is the one that is out of step," said Lauri Myllyvirta, lead analyst at the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air in Helsinki. He notes that several developed countries — including Germany, South Korea and the United States — are rapidly reducing their reliance on coal power. **AP**

AD

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Australia says China's treatment of writer is 'unacceptable'

ROD MCGUIRK, CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA'S foreign minister yesterday described as "unacceptable" the daily interrogation of a shackled Chinese Australian writer detained in Beijing since January on suspicion of espionage.

Yang Hengjun was taken into custody upon arriving in southern China's Guangzhou from New York in January with his wife, Yuan Xiaoliang, and his 14-year-old stepdaughter.

Foreign Minister Marise Payne said she was "very concerned" by reports from Australian officials following their latest monthly consular visit to Yang, who remains in criminal detention. Her office did not immediately say when the visit took place.

"His circumstances of detention include increased isolation from the outside world, with restrictions on his communications with family and friends and the resumption of daily interrogation, including while shackled," Payne said in a statement. "This is unacceptable."

At a daily briefing in Beijing, Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said an unidentified Chinese national security body would handle Yang's case "in accordance with law and fully guarantee the various rights of the person involved."



Australia's foreign minister Marise Payne attends a press conference in Sydney yesterday

"As far as I know, the person you mentioned is now in good condition. There's no so-called integration or torture," Hua said.

Australia has made repeated requests to Chinese authorities for an explanation of the charges against the 54-year-old spy novelist, Payne said.

"We have also made repeated requests for him to be afforded basic standards of justice, procedural fairness and humane treatment, in line with international

norms, including access to his lawyers and to his family, both of which continue to be denied to him," Payne said. "This has not led to any substantive changes in his treatment."

"We will continue to express our expectations in clear terms to the Chinese authorities — both in Beijing and in Canberra — including that Dr. Yang be released and that, while his detention continues, he be treated fairly and humanely," she added.

The Chinese Embassy in Australia did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Some analysts suspect Yang has been detained because of Chinese anger over Australian legislation passed by Parliament last year that outlaws covert foreign interference in Australian politics and institutions.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison yesterday announced an 88 million Australian dollar (\$60 million) investment in a new

Counter Foreign Interference Taskforce to disrupt and deter anyone attempting to undermine Australia's national interests.

Morrison said he shared Payne's concern for Yang.

"We would like to see the issues about access to lawyers, about getting a clear enunciation of what the matter is that have been brought against the Australian citizen at the center of this case, and ... that his access to family and treatment that would meet, you know, world standards is being provided to him," Morrison told reporters.

"The most recent consular access was a matter of great concern to me and the foreign minister and we will continue to make those representations on behalf of an Australian citizen," he added.

China says it doesn't threaten or torture criminal suspects, but both practices are routinely alleged by those who produce confessions that they later retract.

China has been angry over the allegations that it is interfering in Australian politics and manipulating members of the Chinese expatriate population there, including university students.

On Friday, Hua called the accusations, strongly backed by witness testimony, "nothing but ridiculous farces, like some shoddy soap operas."

Alleged Chinese spy Wang Liqiang told overseas media last month that he had been embedded in a Hong Kong-listed company to extend Beijing's influence in the territory, as well as in Australia and Taiwan.

China has attempted to discredit Wang, saying he is a convicted fraudster wanted by Shanghai police. AP

INDIA

People demand justice after woman gang raped and killed

HUNDREDS of people gathered in New Delhi, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and other Indian cities yesterday to demand justice in the case of a veterinarian who was gang-raped and killed last week.

The protesters demanded a fast-track investigation of the case and stringent laws for the safety of women in India.

"We are not safe anymore in India. We are scared to move out of our homes," said Sejal Kumar, a college student from New Delhi.

The burned body of the 27-year-old woman was found last week by a passer-by in an underpass in the southern city of Hyderabad after she went missing the previous night.



People shout slogans condemning rising cases of rape and violence against women during a protest in Ahmedabad, India, yesterday

Police said four suspects have been taken into custody.

Violent crimes against

women have been in the spotlight in India since 2012, when the fatal gang rape of a young woman

aboard a moving bus in New Delhi prompted hundreds of thousands to take to the streets to demand

stricter laws against rape.

The attack spurred quick action on legislation that doubled prison terms for rapists to 20 years and criminalized voyeurism, stalking and the trafficking of women. Indian lawmakers also voted to lower to 16 from 18 the age at which a person can be tried as an adult for heinous crimes.

According to the most recent available official crime records, police registered 33,658 cases of rape in India in 2017 - an average of more than 90 every day. But the real figure is believed to be far higher as many women in India don't report cases to police due to fear.

The data also show that more than 90% of cases of

crimes against women are pending in city courts.

Last week's incident was also discussed in Parliament.

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh said the attack had "brought shame to the entire country."

"It has hurt everyone. The accused must be given the most stringent punishment for their crime," Singh said.

Activists in India say the government has failed to control rising crimes against women.

Jyoti Badekar, a women's rights activist from Mumbai, said an inadequate number of female police staff is one of the factors contributing to the problem. AP

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NATO under friendly fire as leaders ready for London summit

LORNE COOK, BRUSSELS

NATO leaders will gather in London today as the world's biggest military alliance, marking its 70th birthday, battles with one of the most confounding of adversaries: Itself.

As thousands of troops stand ready along Europe's eastern flank to deter Russia — the reason the trans-Atlantic alliance was founded in 1949 — or help keep the peace in places like Afghanistan and Kosovo, the leaders of countries with NATO's largest armies are wildly taking pot shots at each other.

Before the two-day summit, to include receptions at Buckingham Palace and Downing Street plus a working session at a golf resort in outer London, Karen Donfried, president of the German Marshall Fund think tank, said the 29 NATO allies are approaching this meeting "with a sense of foreboding."

"Few anticipate a gathering that will both unify and stop the growing cracks in cohesion. Alliance leaders carry the responsibility to articulate NATO's common purpose and ongoing relevance. If they do not, Vladimir Putin will be raising a glass in Moscow to the fraught state of the alliance at 70," she said, in reference to Russia's president.

In recent months, U.S. President Donald Trump has declared that peace is nigh in Afghanistan — NATO's longest and most



NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg

costly operation in terms of lives and cash — only to call off talks with the Taliban. Now, it seems, they are on again. All the while, U.S. troop numbers are declining. Other allies are unsure what to make of it.

Last month, he precipitously pulled troops out of northern Syria. Turkey took that as a green light to launch an invasion that has alarmed its European NATO partners, many already struggling with the political fallout sparked by the arrival of tens of thousands of Syrian refugees via Turkey in 2015.

French President Emmanuel Macron, complaining of a U.S. leadership vacuum and sensing

an opportunity for France to fill it and boost Europe's security credentials, has lamented the "brain death" of NATO and says the allies need "a wake-up call."

Macron wants strategic talks about where NATO is going, who its adversaries really are, how to tackle terrorism, what to do about an unpredictable ally like Turkey, and how to improve relations with Russia, rather than a spend a third summit in self-flagellation about Trump's favorite topic: military spending.

In the latest act of political friendly-fire, Turkey accused Macron of supporting terrorism for agreeing to hold talks with a Syrian Kurd politician whom Ankara considers

to be part of an extremist group.

"You should get checked whether you're brain-dead," Erdogan said Friday, in remarks directed at Macron. "Kicking Turkey out of NATO or not, how is that up to you? Do you have the authority to make such a decision?"

Meanwhile, Erdogan plans to test a new air defense system, purchased from Russia, that its partners refuse to allow near any NATO military equipment.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, in the final period of her reign, has played the go-between, trying to keep the NATO leadership train on the rails.

From the outside, and quite possibly from the Kremlin, it looks

like a great act of self-harm.

NATO has no real wars to fight but its power, and Europe's security, lies in the abilities of the allies to deter adversaries like Russia and potential ones such as China. That deterrence depends on a balanced mix of military posturing and shows of political resolve by speaking with one voice.

Since Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014, NATO has deployed more than 4,000 troops to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland to discourage further military adventurism by Putin. The allies also ended their post-Cold War budget cuts and stepped up defense spending.

But it is the very public in-fighting among alliance heavyweights that undermines NATO's security efforts.

"The leaders have a responsibility for not undermining deterrence," said Tomas Valasek, senior fellow at the Carnegie Europe think-tank.

"Deterrence is not just about having bombs, bullets, missiles, airplanes or these days cyber geeks you can deploy against the adversary. Deterrence is also about communicating that we mean it when we say we're an alliance of 29 and we are ready to respond as 29 when something bad happens," Valasek said.

"Our adversaries are constantly looking for chinks in our armor. For cracks or signs of division. God knows there have been plenty of those," he added.

On its 70th birthday, NATO's summit declaration — should it survive the hail of friendly fire — will focus on the future; issues like new disarmament talks, the alliance's role in space, and its policy toward China. Its main challenge today could be surviving its go-it-alone leaders. **AP**

CLIMATE SUMMIT

Guterres disappointed by climate action so far



THE head of the United Nations said yesterday he's "disappointed" with pledges made so far by the world's bigger greenhouse gas emitters to reduce their contribution to the planet's rising temperatures.

But the European Union's initiative of a "green pact" could make the bloc of 28 countries a world champion to push other big polluters in the same direction, United Nations Secretary General António Guterres told The Associated Press on the first of 12 days of talks in Madrid aimed at increasing action against climate change.

"I'm convinced that Europe will be in a position to negotiate with China, with India,

with the United States, with Russia in a way that will allow all to understand that this must be a collective effort and that they all will have to correct their policies in order to be able to drastically reduce the emissions," Guterres said.

He also said that the "addiction to coal" in parts of Asia could undermine climate action.

"Our strong recommendation is for countries to think seriously before building new coal power plants and for those that can do it to start phasing out the old ones," he said.

Spain's interim prime minister said "only a handful of fanatics deny the evidence" of climate change — without

naming any individuals or countries.

In a speech at the opening of a two-week climate summit in Madrid, Pedro Sánchez said "alternative facts" must be fought back with actions.

The leader of Spain's Socialists, who is trying to assemble enough parliamentary support to remain in government, offered to host the summit after Chile was rocked by a wave of anti-government protests.

"There is no wall that will protect any country, as powerful as it might be," he said, calling for Europe to lead the global efforts for de-carbonization.

Sánchez also said development should not ignore wo-

men and the environment.

Democratic members of Congress said earlier the United States remains committed to the Paris climate accord despite President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the 2015 agreement.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi told an audience yesterday at this the meeting in Madrid that "we're still in it."

Pelosi, who led a delegation of more than a dozen members of Congress to the Spanish capital, said climate change poses a threat to public health, the economy and national security.

The United States technically remains a member of the Paris accord until Nov. 4, 2020.

Delegates from almost 200 countries have begun a two-week international climate conference in Madrid that seeks to step up efforts to stop global warming. **MDT/AP**

what's ON



RED DECEMBER - EXHIBITION OF CARLOS MARREIROS

TIME: 10am-9pm

UNTIL: February 13, 2020

VENUE: Tap Seac Gallery, Avenida Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida, No 95

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION ON THE PAST NATIONAL LOTUS FLOWER EXHIBITIONS

TIME: 9am-1pm & 2:30pm-5:30pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: December 31, 2019

VENUE: Guia Hill Nature INFORMATION Station (next to cable car station)

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: 2888 0087

THE 2ND MACAU OCEAN CULTURE FESTIVAL - CREATIVE DESIGN COMPETITION EXHIBITION

TIME: Open 24 hours

UNTIL: December 19, 2019

VENUE: Sai Van Lake

ADMISSION: Free

Facebook: porthistorymacau

The World as Will and Idea - Collective Exhibition of Emerging Artists from Mainland China

TIME: 10am-7pm (No admittance after 6:30pm, closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: February 23, 2020

VENUE: Macau Contemporary Art Centre - Navy Yard No.1, located at Rua de S. Tiago Da Barra

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

COLLECTIVE EXHIBITION OF MACAU ARTISTS 2019

TIME: 10am-8pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: February 23, 2020

VENUE: Old Court Building, Avenida da Praia Grande, n.º.459, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

Offbeat

CATS TO BE PUT ON LEASHES TO PROTECT WILDLIFE? EU SAYS NO

AP PHOTO



Put domestic cats on a leash to better protect threatened birds and the environment? The European Union says that would deny mankind's furry friend its unalienable right to roam.

The EU's executive said last week that it is "a strong defender of free movement rights — including of cats" and "categorically" denied it would ever force cats to be kept indoors or on a leash, as one scientific study suggests.

Tilburg University scientists wrote in Oxford's Journal of Environmental Law that free-ranging domestic cats "impact biodiversity through predation, disturbance, competition, disease and hybridization," and added that the predatory impact is worse than often assumed.

They argued that EU laws and directives could effectively force owners to keep them indoors or on a leash outdoors.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Água de Mar
15:30	BING
15:45	Os Ursos Boonie na Neve
16:00	História a História com Fernando Rosas
16:30	Quem Quer Ser Milionário
17:45	Império (Repetição)
18:35	Semana Internacional (Repetição)
19:10	Resumo Liga dos Campeões 2019/2020
19:30	Ouro Verde Sr.1
20:30	Telejornal
21:10	Macau 20 Anos
21:25	TDM Talk Show
21:55	Livros com João Guedes
22:05	Viagens Gastronómicas
22:30	Império
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Justiça de Chicago - Fim
00:35	Telejornal (Repetição)
01:20	No Ar

cinema



CINETEATRO

28 Nov - 05 Dec



FROZEN II

ROOM 1

2:15, 4:10, 6:00, 7:50pm

Director: Chris Buck, Jennifer Lee

Starring: Kristen Bell, Jonathan Groff, Idina Menzel

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 103min



21 BRIDGES

ROOM 1

9:45pm

Director: Brian Kirk

Starring: Chadwick Boseman, J.K. Simmons, Sienna Miller

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 103min

THE GOOD LIAR

ROOM 2

Director: Bill Condom

Starring: Hellen Mirren, Ian Mckellen, Russel Tovey

Language: English

Duration: 99min

KNIVES OUT

ROOM 3

2:30, 5:00, 9:30pm

Director: Rian Johnson

Starring: Daniel Craig, Chris Evans, Toni Collette, Jamie Lee Curtis

Language: English

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



1984 HUNDREDS DIE IN BHOPAL CHEMICAL ACCIDENT

Hundreds of people have died from the effects of toxic gases which leaked from a chemical factory near the central Indian city of Bhopal.

The accident happened in the early hours of this morning at the American-owned Union Carbide Pesticide Plant three miles (4.8 km) from Bhopal.

Mr Y P Gokhale, managing director of Union Carbide in India, said that methyl isocyanate gas (MIC) had escaped when a valve in the plant's underground storage tank broke under pressure.

This caused a deadly cloud of lethal gas to float from the factory over Bhopal, which is home to more than 900,000 people - many of whom live in slums.

Chaos and panic broke out in the city and surrounding areas as tens of thousands of people attempted to escape.

More than 20,000 people have required hospital treatment for symptoms including swollen eyes, frothing at the mouth and breathing difficulties.

Thousands of dead cats, dogs, cows and birds litter the streets and the city's mortuaries are filling up fast.

Bhopal resident, Ahmed Khan, said: "We were choking and our eyes were burning. We could barely see the road through the fog, and sirens were blaring.

"We didn't know which way to run. Everybody was very confused.

"Mothers didn't know their children had died, children didn't know their mothers had died and men didn't know their whole families had died."

The Union Carbide factory was closed immediately after the accident and three senior members of staff arrested.

Medical and scientific experts have been dispatched to the scene and the Indian government has ordered a judicial inquiry.

It is understood the Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, will be flying to the area within the next few days.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

This was one of the world's worst industrial accidents. Nearly 3,000 people died from the effects of the poisonous gas in the days following the disaster.

Estimates say that some 50,000 people were treated in the first few days suffering terrible side-effects, including blindness, kidney and liver failure.

Campaigners say nearly 20,000 others have since died from the effects of the leak.

Investigations into the disaster revealed that something had gone fundamentally wrong with a tank storing lethal methyl isocyanate (MIC).

In 1989 Union Carbide, which is now a subsidiary of Dow Chemical, paid the Indian Government £470m in a settlement which many described as woefully inadequate.

But in 1999 a voluntary group in Bhopal which believed not enough had been done to help victims, filed a lawsuit in the United States claiming Union Carbide violated international law and human rights.

In November 2002 India said it was seeking the extradition of former Union Carbide boss Warren Anderson from the US.

Mr Anderson faces charges of "culpable homicide" for cost-cutting at the plant which is alleged to have compromised safety standards.

In October 2004, the Indian Supreme Court approved a compensation plan drawn up by the state welfare commission to pay nearly \$350m to more than 570,000 victims of the disaster.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 No matter what kind of conversation you get involved in today, you need to make sure that you come off in a good light. Your reputation is your top concern right now.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
 Eavesdrop much? An overheard conversation will likely make your blood boil. A preachy type of person thinks they know all the answers—but you know better.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
 Keep your agenda hidden today, because there are a couple of people around you who would try to change your mind if they knew what you were really up to!

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 You'll have the graceful balance of an Olympic gymnast today, able to handle anything that comes your way with aplomb. This is a wonderful time in your life.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Is someone's confidence striking you as just a bit too much like arrogance for you to admire? Big personalities are likely to feel just a little bit too big for you today.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Try to go out and meet someone new. It doesn't have to be a new love interest or even a new friend. Just having a conversation with someone you've never talked to before will be a blast.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Mistakes happen, and assumptions are made from time to time—there's no harm in that. You made an assumption, and you were not correct. But don't let your honest mistakes get you down in the dumps!

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 You will definitely have to take the initiative today if you want the day to go smoothly. The folks in charge don't know as much about things as you do, and they could use a little help.

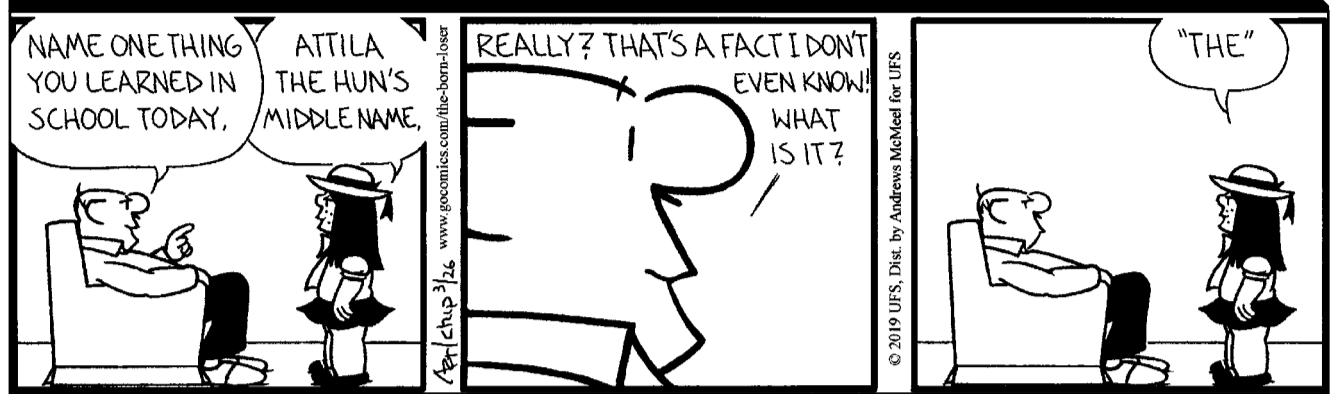
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 You have quite an original mind, which can be equal parts blessing and curse. It's good that you have such a unique take on things, but it might be difficult to maintain your objectivity.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Today, your plans for the near future might have to be revised quite a bit—a wrench will get thrown into the works by someone who holds a lot of power over you. There is little you can do other than react.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 There is a lack of discipline in your life right now, which might make it difficult for you to know what to do! Without the structure you are used to following, the sheer number of your choices risks becoming overwhelming.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Despite the fact that you have been running around, all your projects are humming nicely along and your relationships are doing quite well. Spinning plates is your specialty today.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

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

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

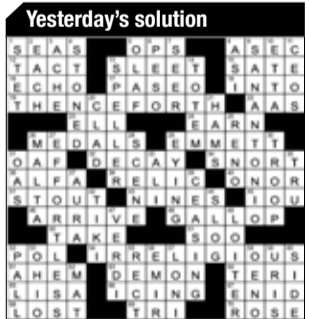
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	7	17	cloudy
Harbin	-3	6	drizzle
Tianjin	8	15	overcast
Urumqi	0	6	clear
Xi'an	4	18	clear
Lhasa	2	17	cloudy
Chengdu	14	19	cloudy
Chongqing	15	18	overcast
Kunming	12	18	shower
Nanjing	10	22	cloudy
Shanghai	12	21	cloudy
Wuhan	12	24	cloudy
Hangzhou	9	23	cloudy
Taipei	16	22	cloudy
Guangzhou	15	28	clear
Hong Kong	21	26	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	3	6	drizzle
Frankfurt	-1	9	clear
Paris	4	10	drizzle
London	3	7	drizzle
New York	0	4	clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Fit together; 5- Thanks, I already ___; 8- Broad valley; 12- Devour; 14- Walked heavily; 15- Inter ___; 16- Biscuitlike quick bread; 17- Stocking shade; 18- Castle protection; 19- Breaks; 21- U.S. gangster; 23- CD-___; 24- Scot's topper; 25- Devoted follower; 26- Wirelesses; 30- Novelist Joyce Carol ___; 32- The least bit; 33- Turn toward the east; 37- Singer Amos; 38- Oxlike antelope; 39- Fold females; 40- Wrigley's chewing gum; 42- Lively dances; 43- Storage center; 44- Violin; 45- Not him; 48- Startled cries; 49- Play on words; 50- Potemkin mutiny city; 52- Sweat; 57- Religious practice; 58- Clipper feature; 60- Have dinner at home; 61- Land measure; 62- "___ She Lovely?"; 63- Suppress; 64- School on the Thames; 65- Draft initials; 66- Lavish affection (on);

DOWN: 1- Untidy condition; 2- "From ___ according to his abilities..."; 3- Portico; 4- Search thoroughly; 5- Circle segments; 6- Rocky hilltop; 7- Learned; 8- Moist; 9- Indifferent; 10- Tropical vine; 11- Consumed; 13- Gasoline; 14- Division of a school year; 20- Aurora's counterpart; 22- Last word; 24- Spoil; 26- Darn it!; 27- At the summit of; 28- Challenge; 29- Greek epic poem; 30- Praying figure; 31- War horse; 33- Potpourris; 34- Impressed; 35- Narrate; 36- Start of North Carolina's motto; 38- Stress; 41- Classic cars; 42- Salon jobs; 44- Fine hair; 45- Goddesses of the seasons; 46- Court order; 47- Fashionably old-fashioned; 49- Animal skin; 51- Visualized; 52- Fasteners; 53- Discharged a debt; 54- Sock ___ mel; 55- Civil disturbance; 56- Feminine suffix; 59- Simpleton;



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



<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>Manhattan, High Floor, Taipa \$17,980,000 2,305 ft² 4 1/2 4 1/2</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>Beautiful Studio Duplex in Barra, Macau HK\$7,800/mth 480 ft² 1 1/2</p>	<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>[Taipa] Nova City 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,515 ft² \$11,750,000 (ref: 19106001)</p> <p>[Macau] Retail space 170 ft² \$3,200,000 (ref: 19096003)</p> <p>[Macau] Keng Ou office 3 1/2 2,352 ft² \$17,500,000 (ref: 19096002)</p> <p>[Taipa] Manhattan 1 1/2 \$1,530,000 (ref: 19045003)</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>[Taipa] Studio 1 400 ft² \$8,500/mth (ref: 19101001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Apartment 1 1/2 1 1/2 740 ft² \$10,900/mth (ref: 19101006)</p> <p>[Macau] Keng Ou 3 1/2 2,352 ft² \$38,000/mth (ref: 19096002)</p> <p>[Macau] One Grantal car park 1 1/2 \$2,500/mth (ref: 19091005)</p>	<p>jml 卓雅物業 property Since 1994</p> <p>(853) 2835 2699 hello@jmlproperty.com www.jmlproperty.com</p> <p>f jmlmacau @ jmlproperty</p>
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DAUGHTER IN ADMISSIONS SCANDAL RETURNS TO YOUTUBE CHANNEL

SOcial media star Olivia Jade Giannulli (pictured, left) posted yesterday [Macau time] her first YouTube video since the arrest of her parents, actress Lori Loughlin and fashion designer Mossimo Giannulli, made her one of the most visible figures in the college admissions scandal that ensnared dozens of wealthy parents and their children.

"Welcome back to my YouTube channel, obviously I've been gone for a really long time," Jade says in the two-minute video, titled "hi again," posted to her account that has nearly 2 million subscribers.

She says she debated for months whether to return to her channel, which focused on fashion, beauty and video-diary entries about her life.

"I'm terrified to make this video and come back," Jade says, "but I want to start taking smaller steps in the right direction."

Loughlin and Giannulli are accused of paying \$500,000 to have their two daughters

AP PHOTO



labeled as recruits to the USC crew team so they could gain admission to the school, even though neither participated in the sport.

Charged in federal court in Massachusetts with conspiracy to commit fraud, bribery and money laundering, they have pleaded not guilty and have refused to reach plea agreements with prosecutors as many other parents, including actress Felicity Huffman, already have done.

In her new video, Jade says

she stayed away from social media because she is legally prohibited from talking about the scandal, and it seemed pointless to appear and ignore it.

"If I can't talk about it, is there a point in coming back and not being able to say anything?" Jade says. It's not clear what legal restrictions would keep her from speaking or whether attorneys have simply advised her not to do so.

Jade said the pull of social media was too strong

to stay away.

"I actually really, really miss it," she says. "I feel like a huge part of me is not the same because this is something that I'm really passionate about and something I really like to do. ... I'm really excited to start filming again and start uploading again."

Jade went silent on social media after her parents' March arrest and lost advertising deals that included cosmetics retailer Sephora and hair products company TRESemme.

RELIC THOUGHT TO BE FROM JESUS' MANGER ARRIVES IN BETHLEHEM

A tiny wooden relic that some Christians believe to be part of Jesus' manger arrived last weekend in its permanent home in the biblical city of Bethlehem 1,400 years after it was sent to Rome as a gift to the pope.

Cheerful crowds greeted the ornately encased relic with much fanfare before it entered the Franciscan Church of St. Catherine next to the Church of the Nativity, the West Bank holy site where tradition says Jesus was born.

The return of the relic by

the Vatican was a spirit-lifting moment for the Palestinians, a small minority of whom are Christian. It coincides with Advent, a four-week period leading up to Christmas. Troubled Bethlehem in the Israeli-occupied West Bank is preparing for the occasion, where pilgrims from around the world flock to the city.

Young Palestinian scouts played bagpipes and the crowd snapped pictures as a clergyman held the silver reliquary and marched toward the church.

AP PHOTO



AD

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FOOTBALL

Inter leapfrogs Juventus to top Serie A as Bianconeri draw

DANIELLA MATAR, MILAN

A teenage goalkeeper restricted Juventus to a 2-2 draw at home to Sassuolo yesterday (Macau time) which dropped the eight-time defending champion into second place.

Juventus needed Cristiano Ronaldo's penalty to secure a point against Sassuolo before Inter Milan beat Spal 2-1 to move a point above the Bianconeri in the Serie A table.

Sassuolo's first-choice goalkeeper Gianluca Pegolo was recovering from surgery and reserve Andrea Consigli was also injured, so 18-year-old Stefano Turati was handed his debut.

Turati's youth was highlighted by the appearance of veteran goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon at the other end.

The 41-year-old Buffon had made 160 Serie A appearances before Turati was even born.

"Buffon told me 'very well done,' it was an honor to play against him, the idol of all children. As a kid, I used to watch him," Turati said.

"I don't know what to say, there's too many emotions, I feel like I'm in a bubble ... I'm going to call my mum now."

Juventus took the lead in the 20th minute through a long-range Leonardo Bonucci snapshot but it lasted just three minutes before Jeremie Boga rushed onto Francesco

AP PHOTO



Inter Milan's Lautaro Martinez scores his side's first goal

Caputo's assist and chipped it over Buffon.

Caputo got on the scoresheet two minutes into the second half after a series of defensive errors from Juventus.

That appeared to jolt Juventus into action and Turati needed an impressive save to

keep out Ronaldo's free kick. He later called it his most difficult save of the match.

The young goalkeeper was powerless to keep out Ronaldo's penalty in the 69th after Filippo Romagna had fouled Paulo Dybala.

Turati did well to withstand the late siege by the Bianconeri.

LAUTARO AT THE DOUBLE

Lautaro Martínez scored his second brace of the week to send Inter top of the table.

The Argentina forward had scored two in Wednesday's Champions League victory at Slavia Prague and he added another two in the first half yesterday.

That took the 22-year-old Martínez's tally to eight in Serie A this season.

Mattia Valoti pulled one back for Spal five minutes after the interval.

"We've been working since day one to cause our opponents problems. We're certainly doing a great job, but we've only played 14 games," Inter coach Antonio Conte said. "When a team like Juventus drops points, you need to make sure that you make the most of that. But we need to look at ourselves, we need to keep moving down this path of growth."

"We have to give even more and make the most of this positive enthusiasm, and we have to manage games like today's better. Just one unlucky moment would have been enough to slip to a draw in a match where we deserved nothing but a win."

OTHER MATCHES

Ciro Immobile remains at the top of the goalscoring charts after netting two in Lazio's 3-0 win over Udinese.

The Italy forward has scored 17 league goals this season, seven more than Inter's Romelu Lukaku, who is second in the standings.

Lazio remained third, seven points off top spot.

Napoli's winless run extended to eight matches after it lost 2-1 at home to Bologna.

Fernando Llorente had what would have been a stoppage-time equalizer ruled out on video review for a very marginal offside.

Elsewhere, Theo Hernández scored two minutes from time to send AC Milan to a 1-0 win at Parma.

It was only Milan's second win in seven matches.

Roma won 3-1 at Hellas Verona to move fourth, three points above Cagliari, which hosts Sampdoria today. AP

GOLF

Larrazabal stumbles, then rallies to win in South Africa

PABLO Larrazábal won the European Tour's season-opening Alfred Dunhill Championship after losing a three-shot overnight lead and then making three birdies on his last four holes for a 3-over 75 and a one-stroke victory yesterday [Macau time].

The final birdie was on the par-5 18th to finish at 8-under 280, one shot ahead of Sweden's Joel Sjöholm, who shot 69.

Larrazábal, who said he struggled with blisters on his feet, had six bogeys and a double bogey

until his rousing finish to capture his first European Tour victory in four years.

"I woke up this morning and I didn't think I was going to play," Larrazábal said. "I couldn't put my shoe on, I couldn't walk to the buggy. I really struggled on the back nine. I have a big blister on my right toe and I said to myself, 'If Tiger can win a U.S. Open with a broken leg...' and I just fought hard."

The 36-year-old Larrazábal's victory at Leopard Creek Country Club

came at the event where he started his professional career 12 years ago.

Charl Schwartzel (70) finished tied for third at 6 under on his return to tournament action for the first time in eight months because of a wrist injury. Branden Grace (73) and Wil Besseling (74) also tied for third.

Besseling led or held a share of the lead through much of the final round, but his approach on the 18th was too far and landed among rocks behind the green, leading to a

bogey. That set up the victory for Larrazábal, who hit wedge to tap-in range for the closing birdie.

OTHER TOURS

K.T. Kim closed with an 8-under 64 and rallied from three shots behind to win the Casio World Open on the Japan Golf Tour. Kim, who once reached as high as No. 20 in the world, won for the first time in three years. ... Anne Van Dam won the Andalucía Costa del Sol Open for the second straight year with a 2-un-

der 70 and plenty of help from Nanna Koerstz Madsen, who hit into water on the final hole and made double bogey to finish one shot behind. Van Dam won for the fifth time on the Ladies European Tour. ... Josh Younger won his first PGA Tour of Australasia title with a birdie on the second playoff hole to beat Travis Smyth in the NSW Open. Younger made double bogey on the 17th hole for a 1-under 71, getting into the playoff when Smyth (71) finished bogey-par. ... Seon-woo Bae closed

with a 4-under 67 for a four-shot victory in the Japan LPGA Tour Championship Ricoh Cup, the final event of the year on the Japan LPGA. ... Barry Lane closed with a 2-under 69 for a one-shot victory on the MCB Tour Championship-Madagascar, his second victory this year on Europe's senior Staysure Tour. ... Korean LPGA members won seven singles matches for a 15-9 victory over LPGA members from Korea in the Orange Life Champions Trophy Inbee Park Invitational. AP

OPINION

Our Desk

Lynzy Valles



IS IT CHRISTMAS YET?

The Philippine Consulate General held its Christmas party for the Filipino community on Sunday – a community that has been the butt of jokes about it celebrating the festive season once the “ber” months kick off.

In the Philippines, we usually start to play Christmas songs in the mall, supermarkets and streets once it hits September – three months earlier than the actual celebration.

Around this time, Christmas sales and other holiday promos start to appear in our e-mails, as well as great price deals in supermarkets for food that we usually have on Christmas Eve, including ham and queso de bola.

Social media users are also reminded that September has started when memes of the country's favorite Christmas songwriter Jose Mari Chan and even Mariah Carey appear as one scrolls down their news feed.

No one really knows when this kind of tradition started among Filipino households – but for sure, this is the community's favorite festive season back home.

Christmas lights, decorations and hymns start to fill up the street – particularly in big cities and districts.

The yuletide season is largely celebrated across the country. Data shows that 90% of Filipinos are Christians – the majority of whom are Catholics who consider their faith a significant part of their lives.

That is why I reckon the consulate makes sure that it does not fail to host its own Christmas party to accommodate those who are far away from home.

The community always finds ways to celebrate its traditional parties including preparing the traditional festive food, playing a variety of games and of course, singing ballads on karaoke machines.

It is also considered significant for families to be complete during this festive season.

Many overseas Filipino workers go back home to the Philippines in the middle of December as “many” of their family members (“many” almost always includes the neighbors) wait at the airport with a homemade welcome sign.

However, some remain in the city, as aside from not being able to go home due to work schedules, the price of plane tickets during this season is high.

Thus, during December, remittances from all across the globe to the Philippines remain high.

Last year, personal remittances from overseas Filipinos registered a record high of 3.2 billion U.S. dollars in December 2018, up 3.6% year-on-year – the highest annual level to date.

State bank Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas previously noted that the growth was driven by remittance inflows from land-based overseas Filipinos with work contracts of one year or more and remittances from both sea-based and land-based OFs with work contracts of less than one year.

Also for Filipinos – particularly Catholics – it is significant that they complete the nine days of Misa de Gallo – where believers attend church every night until Christmas Eve.

There is also a folk belief suggesting that God will grant the wish of anyone who hears all nine-dawn masses.

In Macau, the Filipinos do not forget to attend their churches for Missa de Gallo, their most important Christmas tradition.

Introduced by the Spanish friars in the 18th century to the Filipino farmers, the tradition of Simbang Gabi has continuously evolved in the Philippines through centuries of practice, and now Macau has access to this part of Filipino culture through the migrant workers that live in the MSAR.

As previously reported by the Times, with the support of the Filipino priests, three dawn masses have been held prior to Christmas day.

With two weeks to go before the nine-day mass commences, I'm pretty sure many Filipinos again will flock to their churches every night with a glimpse of hope that their wishes will be granted, and their faith will be honored.

The former governor of China's tense northwestern region of Xinjiang was sentenced to life in prison on charges of taking bribes, becoming one of the highest-profile ethnic minority politicians to fall in an ongoing anti-corruption campaign.

Nur Bekri had been among China's most politically successful members of the Turkic Muslim Uighur ethnic minority, more than one million of whom have been detained in political re-education camps in recent years.

State media reports said Bekri was sentenced yesterday and

showed pictures of him standing in the dock.

A statement on the official microblog of the People's Highest Court said Bekri had been sentenced by the Intermediate People's Court in the northeastern city of Shenyang and had stated he would not appeal.

It said Bekri had accepted 79.1 million yuan (\$11.23 million) in bribes while serving in his various positions between 1998 and 2018 in return for helping companies and individuals obtain government contracts, promoting their products or offering other illicit services.

**BELGIAN CARNIVAL TOWN
 RENOUNCES UNESCO
 TITLE OVER RACISM ROW**



RAF CASERT, BRUSSELS

THE famed Belgian Carnival town of Aalst wants to renounce its place on the U.N. cultural heritage list, saying it is sick of widespread complaints that this spring's edition contained blatant anti-Semitism.

Town officials say the float objected to, with stereotypical depictions of hook-nosed Jews sitting on piles of money, was trying to make a joke and they contend no one should try to muzzle humor of any kind during the three-day Carnival.

Aalst mayor Christoph D'Haese said yesterday [Macau time] that city officials “have had it a bit with the grotesque complaints and Aalst will renounce its UNESCO recognition.”

UNESCO, Jewish groups and the European Union have condemned the float as anti-Semitic, with the EU saying it conjured up visions of the 1930s.

UNESCO already was planning to consider at its Dec. 9-14 meeting in Bogota, Colombia, whether to kick Aalst off the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

“It was clear that we had to go, so we kept the honor to ourselves,” D'Haese told VTM network.

Aalst is one of Europe's

most famous Carnivals and it is a celebration of unbridled, no-holds-barred humor and satire. Politicians, religious leaders and the rich and famous are relentlessly ridiculed during the three-day festival ahead of Roman Catholic Lent.

Imposing limits on that

**Aalst is one
 of Europe's
 most famous
 Carnivals and it
 is a celebration
 of unbridled, no-
 holds-barred
 humor and satire**

would take away the essence of the town's Carnival, said D'Haese, who has seen revelers impersonating leaders of his Flemish nationalist N-VA party leadership go around in Nazi uniforms.

For him, it is the be-all, end-all of Aalst Carnival, in which a laugh trumps ethical concerns. The parade of floats draws some 100,000 visitors every year to the city close to Brussels. Most often it goes off without a hitch.

After the outrage in early March, D'Haese claimed city elders reached out to Belgium's “anti-discrimination center and several Jewish or-

ganizations, for whom it will never be enough.”

Hans Knoop of the Belgian Forum of Jewish Organizations told The Associated Press that the mayor had not been cooperative in discussing the issue.

And Knoop warned that renouncing the UNESCO cultural heritage tag should not open the way for more similar displays at the festival in late February.

“They are not at liberty to spew any more anti-Semitic dirt,” he said. “We will keep a close eye on Aalst.”

He insisted there are merry Carnivals around the world without a hint of racism or anti-Semitism.

D'Haese said it would be “unavoidable” that there would be Jewish ridicule at the next edition. He has said it was not for him to police humor.

“We are on a very dangerous slippery slope when people will be able to decide what can be laughed at,” he said.

A decision by UNESCO to remove Aalst would be a first since the 2003 convention that created the cultural heritage label.

The Aalst Carnival has been on the list since 2010.

Now, D'Haese said, “I want to give Aalst Carnival back to Aalst.” AP



UN The incoming head of the U.N.'s atomic watchdog agency said he will take a “firm and fair” approach toward inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities, and plans to visit Tehran in the near future. Argentine diplomat Rafael Mariano Grossi's (pictured) comments came after he was confirmed as the new director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency unanimously at a special session. His four-year term begins today.

More on p15



Russia Russian scientists yesterday showed off a prehistoric puppy, believed to be 18,000 years old, found in permafrost in the country's Far East. Discovered last year in a lump of frozen mud near the city of Yakutsk, the puppy is unusually well-preserved, with its hair, teeth, whiskers and eyelashes still intact.

US President Donald Trump accused Argentina and Brazil of hurting American farmers through currency manipulation and said he'll slap tariffs on their steel and aluminum imports to retaliate. Trump also called on America's central bank to take action to prevent other countries from devaluing their currencies.



US A storm that snarled Thanksgiving travel across much of the country brought a messy mixture of rain, snow, sleet and wind to the East, slowing yesterday's commute, closing schools and offices, and canceling or delaying hundreds of flights. The storm dumped one round of snow on parts of the region over the weekend and could drop 10 to 20 inches total by today from Pennsylvania to Maine.