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**CHINESE AUDIENCES ARE DICTATING WHAT TYPES OF FILMS ARE NEEDED, SAY FILM FESTIVAL JURORS, UNLIKE IN HOLLYWOOD** P4

**SOURCE SAYS LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PENNED FOR TUESDAY OPENING** P3

**NEW MACAU IS CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT TO RETHINK ITS URBAN REGENERATION PLAN, DESCRIBING ITS CURRENT ITERATION AS UNFAIR** P3

**Maldives-China** The Maldives foreign minister says his country needs to restructure its massive debt to China, which he says has put the Indian ocean archipelago in a difficult situation. Abdulla Shahid said the country's Chinese debt currently totals about \$1.4 billion.

**Indonesia** State-owned enterprises minister said yesterday he will fire and seek the prosecution of the head of the national airline after he was implicated in the smuggling of a Harley Davidson motorcycle into the country on a new jet.

**North Korea** threatened yesterday to resume insults of U.S. President Donald Trump and consider him a "dotard" if he keeps using words that provoke the North. Choe Son Hui, the first vice foreign minister, issued the warning days after Trump spoke of a possible military option toward the North and revived his "rocket man" nickname for North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.



**Pakistan** Journalists and rights activists have rallied in support of a leading newspaper in Islamabad and elsewhere, days after Islamists gathered at the newspaper, threatening staff and demanding its editor be hanged. At yesterday's rally, activists and journalists condemned this week's besieging of English-language newspaper Dawn's office in Islamabad.

**Mauritania** Scores of migrants who swam through rough Atlantic Ocean waters to safety from a capsized boat were receiving care yesterday in Mauritania after 58 others drowned in one of the deadliest disasters this year among people making the perilous journey to Europe.

More on backpage



# MACAU NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD

Two Chief Executives and a Chief-to-be say the last two decades have been the best in the SAR's history P2

**HK RESIDENTS STRESS OVER LIFE WITH TEAR GAS** P9



Many children of mix marriages – half-Chinese, half-N.Koreans – are alienated and frustrated as they struggle to navigate a strange culture

times Extra



# Three Chief Executives agree last 20 years were Macau's best

JULIE ZHU

**I**N separate interviews with mainland state media outlet CCTV, Macau's three Chief Executives each expressed that in their opinion, the last 20 years since the handover have been Macau's best period in history.

Yesterday, Chief Executive-elect Ho Iat Seng, current Chief Executive Chui Sai On, and former Chief Executive Edmund Ho were interviewed by CCTV, which serves as a mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party.

During their interviews, they all endorsed the implementation of "one country, two systems" in Macau and the necessity of maintaining the city's stability.

Chief Executive-elect Ho Iat Seng used Macau's budget as an example to demonstrate how Macau had achieved great economic growth since the handover.

He also remarked that Macau had a budget of only 13 billion patacas for 500,000 to 600,000 people in the first year after the handover, yet the budget will have increased almost ninefold to 103.3 billion patacas by next year.

"Without 'one country, two systems,' we couldn't have achieved it," said Ho Iat Seng. Previously, he had called stability Macau's first mission, and he highlighted the importance of stability once again during yesterday's interview.

"No change is the [bedrock] of our current stability. Our tradition of loving the country and loving Macau, our immutability for the country cannot change and will surely not change," he said.

Chui Sai On agreed that "stability is the most important." Chui then continued by saying that Macau especially cares about

the constitution law and the Basic Law. Not only has Macau implemented the Basic Law comprehensively, it also promotes the study of the Basic Law in society.

Chui also told CCTV that Macau values its young people and, in particular, it wants to pass on the core value of 'loving the country and loving Macau' to younger generations.

Former Chief Executive Edmund Ho declared that Macau "will become better and better" in terms of stability. Ho said that Macau's fate was intertwined with that of the country.

Both Edmund Ho and Ho Iat Seng voiced their opinions on Macau's economic diversification. Ho Iat Seng said that Macau hopes to develop the Chinese traditional medicine industry and reach African, Portuguese-speaking and Southeast Asian markets.

Edmund Ho then spoke about the Greater Bay Area strategy and the Belt and Road Initiative. He believes that the Greater Bay Area is a golden opportunity for Macau.

However, Edmund Ho also said that Macau lacks talented people and resources. He hopes that the central government will provide some beneficial policies for Macau in the upcoming 30 years for the development of the Greater Bay Area. The former Chief Executive believes that these beneficial policies "will lead Macau to participate further in the country's development."

MARCELO REBELO DE SOUSA

# Portugal's position on Macau unchanged since 1999

**P**ORTUGAL'S position on Macau has remained unchanged since 1999, according to Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, and "no change in the global, regional or another context" should undermine the footing on which the Special Administrative Region has operated for the past two decades.

Rebelo de Sousa made

the comments at an event held at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the handover of Macau from the Portuguese Republic to the People's Republic of China. The event was attended by China's ambassador in Lisbon, Cai Run; the last governor of Macau, Vasco Rocha Vieira; as well as a

former Portuguese head of state, António Ramalho Eanes.

First reported by Lusa News Agency, the Portuguese president called on all parties to comply with the principles governing the handover and stressed that his country's position on the semi-autonomous territory has not changed in 20 years.

"For Portugal, Macau is a specific reality, the result of a unique and unrepeatable historical process, and the solution reached in 1999 is therefore unique and unrepeatable, and as such must be respected and valued under all circumstances," he said, as cited by Lusa.

Rebelo de Sousa also highlighted the role of the Portuguese language in Macau.

"Without the economic, social and cultural component, without a natural emphasis on the underlining of the Portuguese language, the law runs the risk of being a dead letter, form without content, a more erasable reminiscence of the past, without present and future perspectives" he said, according to Lusa.

Rebelo de Sousa visited Macau in May this year, following a state visit to the mainland. While in the Macau SAR, the Portuguese president stressed how different Macau was from both China and Portugal, adding that this "mix of cultures, civilizations, religions, and people" was precisely the city's greatest wealth. **DB**

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# NEW MACAU STRESSES EQUITY IN URBAN REGENERATION

**PRO-DEMOCRACY** group New Macau Association (ANM) has said that individual owners should be better protected by the urban renewal legislation framework currently under public consultation.

Suggestions from the group regarding the legislation framework were submitted to the Legal Affairs Bureau (DSAJ) yesterday afternoon.

According to the Basic Law, land resources in Macau are national property. The ANM stressed that urban renewal should not equate to real estate projects and recommended that the project be conducted to improve residents' quality of life.

The group thinks that consideration of several aspects is required to achieve this. These include ensuring transparency and the participation of individual owners, regulating the terms and conditions of the letter of consent, allowing a cool-down period for the enactment of the letter, and prioritizing the "one-for-one" option,



ANTHONY LAW

with monetary compensation as an auxiliary measure only.

The group also recommended having an objective selection process for the developer, surveyor and valuator. Measures such as lot drawing from a pool of accredited professionals should be considered.

New Macau is concerned that if the future law does not specify measures to protect the interests of owners, the proposed mechanism of descending consent quorum will likely re-

sult in forced evictions, which the group considers detrimental to the stability of the city.

Aside from the abovementioned recommendations, the group also made a number of additional suggestions. First, full knowledge of the property should be ensured by the owner and the general public. Second, details of the current and the rebuilt properties, along with any extra compensation, must be stipulated.

Third, a cool-down period

should be introduced so that in situations where there is difference between the actual and the agreed-upon compensation, the letter of consent can be voided or amended. Fourth, under circumstances abiding by the Personal Data Protection Law, the valuation, the owners' consent and other relevant information should be publicized to the greatest extent possible to ensure transparency and the public interest. **AL**

# TAIPA LINE OF LRT TO OPEN NEXT TUESDAY

**T**HE Taipa Line of the Macau Light Rapid Transit (LRT) will open to the public next Tuesday, the Times has learned from a source close to the much-delayed infrastructure project.

The government is expected to announce the travel fares during the December 10 opening.

The metro system has been undergoing tests since at least the summer.

At a media preview event in August, government representatives assured that the Taipa Line would open to the public before the celebration of the handover anniversary on December 20.

The Taipa Line starts at the Taipa Ferry Terminal and passes through Cotai to terminate in northern Taipa. Along the way it stops at the Macau International Airport, the Macau University of Science and Technology, the Macau East Asian Games Dome, the Lotus Checkpoint, Pai Kok in Taipa Village, the Macau Stadium, the Macau Jockey Club, and Ocean Gardens.

The entire route will take about 25 minutes, according to officials, with the maximum speed of trains reaching 80 kilometers per hour in between stations. **DB**

AD

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### TAXI DRIVER LICENSE EXAMS TO BE MADE ELECTRONIC

Beginning in 2020, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) will organize the taxi driver's license exam electronically. In order to optimize the assessment method, which has been used for many years, and reduce paper use in compliance with eco-friendly initiatives, the taxi driver's license exam will be tested electronically from 2020. The first tests will be conducted on January 15, 2020. Those who apply for the special examination from now on will take the test electronically and will be able to obtain their results immediately after completing the electronic exam. The cost of first time license issuance plus the stamp duty fee is 880 patacas. The taxi driver's license is valid for five years.

### MUST STUDENTS INTRODUCED TO SOCIAL SECURITY POLICIES FOR THE ELDERLY

The President of the Administrative Committee of the Social Security Fund (FSS), long Kong Io, recently visited the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) to introduce social security policies for the elderly, such as the Social Security System and the Non-Mandatory Central Provident Fund System, to teachers and students of the educational institution. According to a statement from the government, some students were concerned about whether young people are saving for retirement too early and the investment issues of the Non-Mandatory Central Provident Fund. long said that investment mainly involves three major elements - principal, time and return rate. As long as the investment time is sufficient, the ideal savings goal can easily be reached, even if the principal is relatively small and the return rate is relatively low.

### BROAD MONEY SUPPLY GREW 0.7% IN OCTOBER

The broad money supply grew by 0.7% in October with a stable share denominated in patacas, according to statistics released yesterday by the Monetary Authority of Macao. Resident deposits grew 0.3% from the preceding month to 657.3 billion patacas, whereas non-resident deposits fell 5.9% to 242.5 billion patacas. On the other hand, public sector deposits with the banking sector increased 0.5% to 246.7 billion patacas. Meanwhile, domestic loans to the private sector dropped 0.8% from a month ago to 514.5 billion patacas, while external loans also fell 0.2% to 572.6 billion patacas. At end-October, the loan-to-deposit ratio for the resident sector dropped to 56.9% from 57.6% at end-September. At the same time, the non-performing loan ratio stabilized at 0.3%.



Film festival jurors Dian Saswardoyo (left) and Peter Ho-sun Chan

### CINEMA

# IFFAM jury: Online platforms play crucial role in film success

LYNZY VALLES

**O**NLINE ticketing platforms in mainland China play a critical role in the overall gross revenue of a film, as the platforms allow users to rate the overall quality of the film.

These online platforms include Alibaba's Tao Piao Piao, which has some 290 million users, with more than 40 million active users in 2018.

"Right now, it's a very interesting time," said Chinese film director Peter Ho-sun Chan during the press conference of the International Competition Jury of the ongoing International Film Festival Awards - Macau.

The president of the jury explained how movies in China - no matter how high the budget was or whether it cast renowned actors and actresses - would still fail.

For Chan, the voice of the Chinese audience continues to remain strong in the film industry.

"China really loves to watch Chinese films [...] and it's very interesting now that the audience in China dictates what kind of films need to be made," said Chan, "as opposed to [the situation in] Hollywood."

"A few years ago, we were very depressed and very pessimistic about the future of Chinese cinema. We were watching everything on streaming platforms because we felt that there was more freedom of expression for

filmmakers on streaming platforms," Chan added.

According to the director, the gross revenue of the first weekend of a release in China is typically less compared to upcoming weekends, contrary to what usually occurs around the globe.

Such is due to the influence of online platforms where users can vote on whether the movie is worth watching, which heavily influences other peoples' decisions.

"The opening weekend is equal to half of the total box office in other countries [...] but for the last two years in China, you often see the first weekend gross being actually the least and the second weekend tops the first, [and so on] and it becomes better," said Chan.

"People are going to the cine-

ma based on the scores by the audience on the online platforms. It's a very democratic process and that process is being taken up in China," said Chan. "Word of mouth has driven a lot of films," he added, and "the film world is becoming more and more interesting."

The director produced a film titled "Better Days," which was showcased yesterday at the Old Court Building. It shows the devastating impact of school bullying with rare attention to emotional details. The film investigates a socially grey area, where the limits imposed by law and morality are blurred, if not virtually non-existent.

Meanwhile, echoing Ho's sentiments about how films nowadays should be easily relatable to people, Indonesian actress, producer and jury member Dian

Saswardoyo said that similar moves are also occurring in Indonesia.

Saswardoyo said that it is a continuous challenge to produce and make films that are relatable to the market and to other countries.

"The market needs to be specifically catered to local audiences. [...] Once we're making something that is not relatable to the Indonesian market, it's not going to work. It is very democratic also," she said.

"[It is also] a challenge for us to really communicate what the market strategy is in terms of digital. The challenge is not only how to make it relatable locally, but how we can also make stories that can travel to other countries as well. That's why we need to make films that are universally relatable," the producer added.

## IFFAM HEAVILY PROMOTED IN THE MAINLAND

**S**PEAKING on the sidelines of the press conference, director of the Macao Government Tourism Office and president of the IFFAM'S Organizing Committee Helena de Senna Fernandes said that the festival had been heavily promoted in mainland China.

The tourism official stated that they changed one of the agencies that assists with their promotions in order to reach a larger audience.

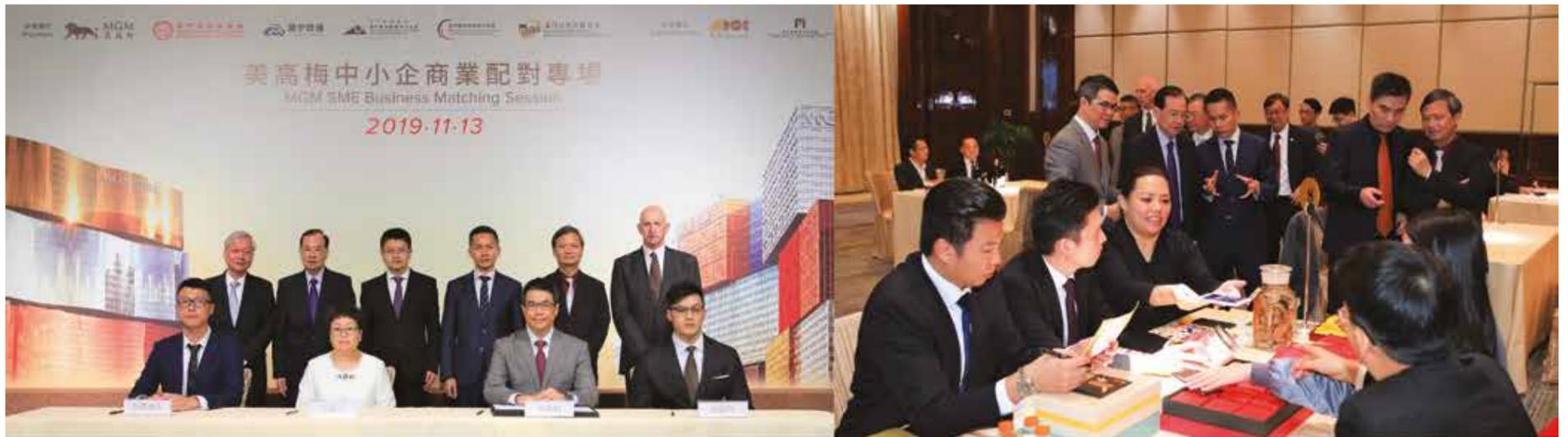
"We have seen a lot of social media coverage and a lot of people. The general public in China commented they want to come to Macau to watch films. I hope that translates into some

of them coming over to see films," she told the press.

Some of the films that are set to be showcased are already sold out. Although Fernandes said that some of the tickets have been reserved for sponsors and guests, but only in small numbers.

Since the festival is also screening some films at the Old Court Building, the committee is expecting that there will be more of an audience this year compared to last year.

"We are looking forward to seeing more [people] and hopefully, they will also appreciate the films we are bringing in," she added. LV



## MGM Joins Hands with SMEs to Create Win-win Partnership

In support of Macau government's effort to diversify the economy, MGM continues to join hands with local SMEs and help them open up business opportunities. Through innovative approaches, MGM broadens the skill sets of young entrepreneurs and emerging industries, with the goal of enhancing their professionalism and adaptability. MGM also strives to introduce premium mainland products to Macau with the help of local SMEs. On the one hand, it paves a way for the city to act as a sound business platform and creates opportunities for SMEs to go global on the other hand.

### PROCUREMENT FROM SMEs CONTINUES TO GROW

Since its opening in 2007, MGM has organized over 100 back-of-house roadshows at MGM MACAU and MGM COTAI for local SMEs to sell their products to the Company's 10,000-plus team members. In 2015, MGM took the initiative further and joined forces with Macao Chamber of Commerce (MCC) to organize the first MGM SME Business Matching Session, especially for Micro SMEs, Made in Macau and Young Entrepreneurs. Over the past years, all these efforts have come to fruition. At present, 80% of MGM's total procurement spending goes to local enterprises; over 25% of its total procurement spending goes to local SMEs.



On November 13, MGM hosted the 7th SME Business Matching Session in collaboration with MCC and other organizations. Management members from over 20 departments of MGM met with 200 SME representatives one-on-one to foster mutual communication, which was essential for successful matching. Participating vendors were mostly from design & advertising, facility management, food & beverage and information technology sectors.

### A LINK-UP FOR SICHUAN-MACAU COOPERATION

This year, the business matching session was marked by two significant signing ceremonies. The Sichuan Product Procurement Agreements, signed between MGM and three SMEs, were the positive outcome of MGM's participation in a Sichuan inspection tour of agricultural by-products organized by Macau Union Suppliers Association (MUSA) in October. Believing that Sichuan's liquor and oil products can well complement its cuisines, MGM decided to purchase the products through MUSA's SME members Vang Kei Hong, Seng Kei Hong and Yau Heng Frozen Meat & Food.



Simon Leong, Executive Director of Purchasing of MGM noted that Macau attracts over 30 million visitors every year. To satisfy the needs of visitors who yearn for hometown-style dishes, a variety of cuisines such as Sichuan and Shanghai food are currently served at MGM's dining outlets. MGM will continue to look for platforms that can facilitate the introduction of different products to Macau from around the world.

### YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP INCUBATION PROGRAM

MGM also signed the Memorandum of Understanding with Parafuturo de Macau (PFM Macau) to manifest its support for youth entrepreneurship. The signing celebrated a combined effort to stage the MGM X MYEIC Young Entrepreneur Mentorship Program, with MGM's management and experts providing professional training and advice to members of Macao Young Entrepreneur Incubation Center (MYEIC). The collaboration has great symbolic significance, as MGM is the first large-scale enterprise to conclude such agreement with PFM Macau.

Jose Chui, CEO of PFM Macau, remarked that PFM Macau joined hands with MGM to forge a deeper partnership and promote cooperation in procurement information exchange, business matching and professional training, with an effort to jointly create opportunities for young entrepreneurs. This year, MYEIC has begun hosting MYEIC ProQ Alliance's Pitching & Business Matching Session, and the center received strong support from MGM for the first event. Within only seven months, MGM achieved seven figures on the sum of purchase on MYEIC members' projects and injected a shot in the arm for their business development.

### GENERATING BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS

As a leader in developing cultural tourism, MGM is dedicated to nurturing local small and medium creative enterprises and young creative professionals. In collaboration with Macau Cultural and Creative Integrated Services Center (cCenter), MGM presents the "MGM Art Camp X cMarket" which runs from late September to January 3, 2020 at MGM MACAU. The project is an integration of creative workshops, industry talks and a local design shop. This perfect blend brings about an ideal arena for young creative professionals to showcase the distinctive creativity within Macau to locals and visitors alike.

Mr. Leong Heng Teng, President of Administration Council of Cultural Industries Fund, shared his thoughts on the project after the visit. He believed that the "MGM Art Camp X cMarket" best utilizes the creativity of local creative industries as well as the tourism resources of large integrated resort to generate a new horizon of business opportunities. The project is going to enhance the sustainability and competitiveness of the creative industries and act as a platform to showcase their works.



# IAS ATTENDS GENDER EQUALITY CONFERENCE IN THAILAND

**T**HE Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) attended a United Nations ministerial-level conference on gender equality in Bangkok, Thailand, where a new declaration was adopted to further progress equality in the Asia-Pacific region.

Ministers and high-level officials from 45 countries in the region attended the three-day conference. In order to expressly recognize women's contributions to society, specifically in combating poverty and inequality, as well as to ensure that adequate measures will be in place to safeguard the rights and freedoms of women, the participating states hence adopted the declaration.

"Asia and the Pacific have made remarkable advancements so far," said a statement by the United Nations Economic and Social Com-



mission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), an organizer of the ministerial conference.

"The declaration notes several emerging megatrends slowing the progress of gender equality and women's empowerment in the region, such as climate change, intensifying disaster risks, [the] growing digital divide, rapid urbanization, rising

inequalities within and between countries, and increasing acts of violence and extremism against women and girls," the ESCAP elaborated.

The ministerial conference was held in preparation for next year, the 25th anniversary of the enactment of the "Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on Gender Equality."

Principles concerning gender equality were publicized in the declaration. The Platform for Action, meanwhile, set out strategic goals for action and required its stakeholders to take responsibility.

At the conference, delegates from Macau and China shared the city's portfolio on advancing gender equality. Work, such as providing 15 years of education and healthcare for pregnant women free of charge, has been conducted by the Macau SAR government to ensure gender equality.

Another action that the city has completed is increasing the ratio of women-to-men receiving tertiary education, which now stands at 52.6%.

IAS officials attended the conference as part of the Chinese delegation, led by the National Women's Federation. **AL**

# SPORTS BUREAU OPENS NEW ATHLETES TRAINING CENTER

**A** new training center for athletes has now opened. The center is located near the Macau East Asian Games Dome, near R. de Tennis and R. da Patinagem, and occupies an area of 12,600 square meters, with a total sports space of more than 20,000 square meters.

The center includes two multi-functional gymnasiums, a five-storey training area, a 25-meter indoor pool and a weight training center which can accommodate training sessions for multiple sports simultaneously.

The center is mainly composed of venues A and B, and dormitory C. Training venue A has two large venues and a ground-level tourist bus parking lot. Training venue B consists of five practice venues with clear heights of around six to eight meters, and multiple ground-level conference rooms.

In addition, the center has nine dormitory floors,

which can accommodate more than 300 people, and other auxiliary facilities, including meeting rooms, restaurants, event rooms, fitness rooms, multi-functional meeting rooms and offices.

The local government claims that the space's high-quality, integrated training, sports medicine and accommodation functions will play a significant role in improving athletes' technical skills.

The training center is designed to provide a better platform and training space for local Macau athletes, coaches, and technicians.

This is the first phase of the integrated training center, costing 1.63 billion patacas to build.

The director of the Sports Bureau, Pun Weng Kun, said that the Macau SAR government will continue to provide better conditions and invest more resources in supporting the city's athletes. **JZ**

AD

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# EUROPEAN TRADITION FINDS HOME AT GRAND LAPA FOR FESTIVE SEASON

**T**HE festive celebrations arrived at Grand Lapa yesterday as it hosted a tree lighting ceremony, along with a live choir of students from The International School of Macao.

Grand Lapa has also invited a guest pastry chef, Thomas Hammerschmid from Austria, to provide an array of treats and sweets that will be available at its cake shop during the festive season.

"It goes very well with the story of Grand Lapa. We thought that not many hotels these days have the traditional European style for Christmas, and for us at Grand Lapa, it's our aim to bring Europe to Asia and China. It's really what Macau is all about," said Rutger Verschuren, general manager of Grand Lapa and Area Vice President of Macau Operations for Artyzen Hospitality Group.

"I think it's very nice to have a real Christmas tree and carol singers, and an Austrian pastry master-chef, and wine from an old recipe, and just enjoy it like a family around the tree," he added.



Grand Lapa has been doing the celebration as part of its tradition, and pledged that it would continue to do so with more interesting activities in the future.

This year, prior to the event launch, a traditional Christmas cookie decorating class led by guest chef Hammerschmid was hosted.

Meanwhile, Grand Colonne Resort has invited some 30

local vendors to participate in a Charity Christmas Fair this Sunday.

The fair is being held in collaboration with the International Ladies Club of Macau.

In addition, when speaking about the hotel's operations, Verschuren said that the renovations of three floors of the Grand Lapa have finished.

"We have concluded the renovations and we look forward

to 2020 with a clear vision," he said.

"It's quite a bright future for us because after the renovations, we can really stand out and make the difference for the type of hotel we are, which is a classic hotel under the Artyzen Hospitality Group, where we bring art, culture and heritage together for the community," Verschuren added. **LV**

## CULTURAL INDUSTRY COUNCIL DISCUSSES FOOD, CULTURE

**T**HE Cultural Industry Council has discussed strategies for the joint development of gastronomy and creative culture, two partially overlapping concepts. The topic was discussed at a regular meeting of the Council.

Macau was designated as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy in November 2017, joining the United Nations Creative Cities Network.

At the recent Council meeting, some members proposed that Macau should realize its designation as a Creative City of Gastronomy through cooperation between four entities, namely the public, the business, the education and the research sectors.

Efforts should be exerted top down, the Council suggested. Bonds between each sector must be strengthened to create dynamics.

It was also proposed that the government should create a database collecting establishment information and recipes. Students should be encouraged to acquire the knowledge of folklore and community food items.

Collaborations with creative industry practitioners are also encouraged, and digital technology was proposed as a means of conserving and promoting gastronomy as a creative industry element. **AL**

AD



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# HK residents living with tear gas worry of effects

EILEEN NG

**B**Y day, the small commercial kitchen in a Hong Kong industrial building produces snacks. At night, it turns into a secret laboratory assembling a kit for pro-democracy protesters seeking to detox after repeated exposure to tear gas.

Volunteers seated around a kitchen island sort and pack multi-colored pills into small resealable bags. At another table, a woman makes turmeric pills by dipping gelatin capsules into a shallow dish of the deep orange spice.

"Police have used so much tear gas and people are suffering," said the owner of the kitchen, speaking on condition of anonymity because she fears repercussions for her business. "We want to especially help frontline protesters,

who have put their lives on the line for the city."

Hong Kong police have fired more than 10,000 tear gas canisters to quell violent protests that have rocked the city for six months. The movement's demands include fully democratic elections and an investigation into police use of force, including tear gas.

Its heavy and prolonged use in Hong Kong — one of the world's most densely populated cities and known for its concrete jungle of high-rises — is unusual and has sparked health fears.

While there's no evidence of long-term health effects, it's also largely untested territory.

"I don't think there have been circumstances where there has been this level of repeated exposure for people to tear gas. What's going on in Hong Kong is pretty unprecedented," said Alistair Hay,

a British toxicologist from the University of Leeds.

Police have fired it in cramped residential areas and near hospitals, malls and schools, affecting not only protesters but also children, the elderly and the sick.

Some worry that tear gas residue could stick for days or weeks to asphalt, walls, ventilation ducts and other places. Parents, schools and various community groups have demanded to know the chemical makeup of the gas — which police won't divulge — so they can clean up properly.

In the absence of official information, some parents have stopped taking their kids to parks, and online tips urge mothers to refrain from breastfeeding for a few hours if they are exposed the gas. Many avoided fresh fruits after a wholesale market that supplies half of the city's supply was

gassed last month.

New daily rituals include using a baking soda solution to bathe, wash clothes and clean surfaces. Tips shared by protesters include not bathing in hot water after exposure as it is believed it will open pores and let the chemicals seep in.

The kitchen owner making detox kits said she wants to help protesters, who often avoid seeking treatment at hospitals to hide their identity and avoid possible arrest.

The kits contain capsules that include vitamins and other natural ingredients and are packed into a small pouch with 10 bottles of a cloudy caramel-colored drink that contains an antioxidant said to be an immune-system booster. They come with instructions for a 10-day detoxification program that includes no alcohol and smoking.

It has not been scientifically tested for treating tear gas symptoms, but the kitchen owner claimed that feedback was positive from a first batch distributed to frontline protesters through a clandestine network of first-aid and social workers.

Hay, the toxicologist, said that

excessive concentrations of CS gas, a common tear gas component, and residue that persists in the environment could cause prolonged symptoms and health complications for vulnerable groups.

A survey in August by a group of doctors of some 170 reporters covering the protests found most of them had difficulty breathing, persistent coughing or coughed up blood, skin allergies and gastrointestinal symptoms such as diarrhea or vomiting, according to Hong Kong media reports.

Further spooking residents are reports that the tear gas could emit dioxin, a cancer-causing substance. Hay said he wasn't aware of any cases of tear gas producing dioxin, although it could in theory be released if the canister burns above 250 degrees Celsius (480 degrees Fahrenheit).

Government officials say that any toxin found could come from the many street fires set off by protesters. They refuse to reveal the components of the gas, citing operational sensitivities.

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, where more than 1,000 rounds of tear gas were fired on a single day last month, hired an independent laboratory to test air, water and soil samples. Preliminary tests reportedly showed no harmful substances.

Nonetheless, a high school near the campus hired professional experts to decontaminate its grounds.

A 17-year-old volunteer helping make the detox kits said he has joined many protests and often experienced stomach cramps, nausea and rashes for days after being gassed. During a rally in June, he said he couldn't breathe and thought he was going to die.

Another volunteer said she can see clouds of tear gas in the streets below her apartment in Mongkok, a hot spot for protests, and smell it even with her windows closed.

She doesn't have the courage to join the protests, she said, but feels she must contribute.

Both spoke on condition of anonymity, fearing retribution in a city that has become starkly divided by the violent protests. **AP**

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AD

TECHNOLOGY

# Alphabet's new CEO finally has a title fitting his role

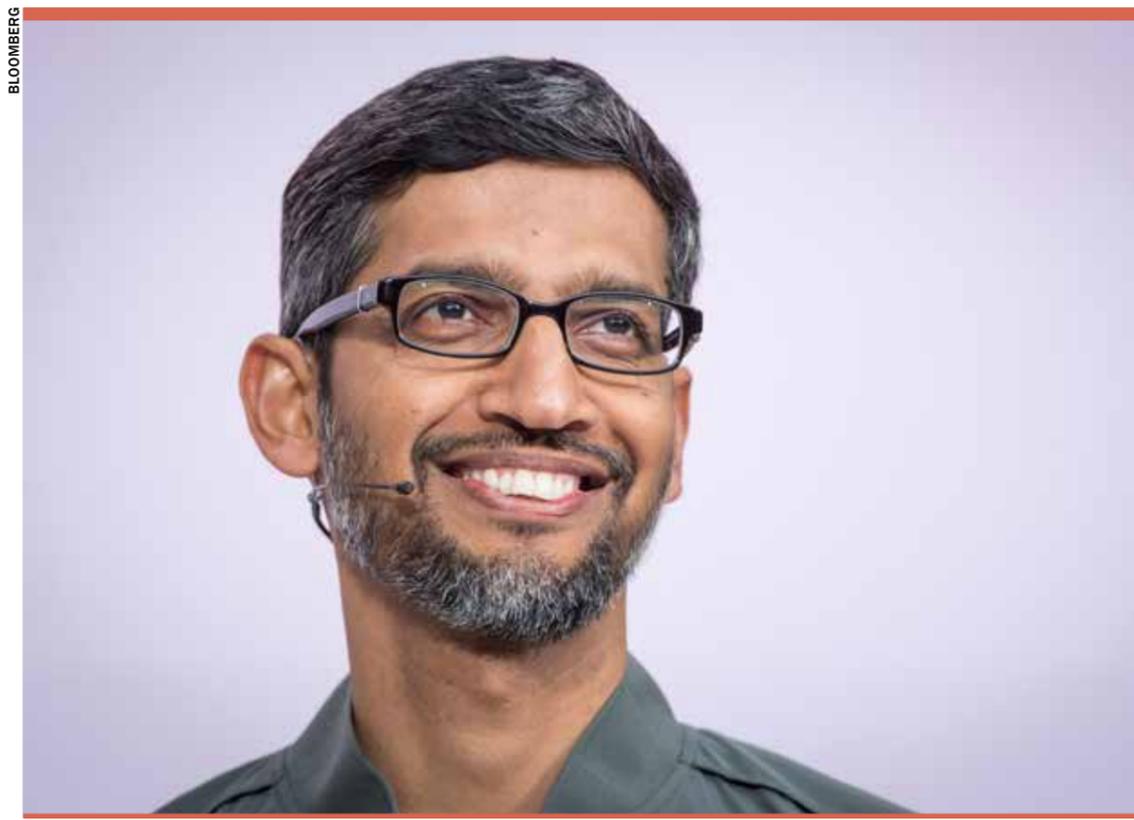
GERRIT DE VYNCK

**I**F you want to know how Alphabet Inc.'s new Chief Executive Officer Sundar Pichai will run the company you don't need to look very far - he's essentially been doing it for several years already.

Pichai, a 47-year-old engineer, grew up in India and immigrated to the U.S. to attend graduate school. His resume reads like the typical Silicon Valley operator: a Master's degree from Stanford University, an MBA from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and a stint as a consultant at McKinsey & Co.

He joined Google in 2004 and started amassing responsibility for some of Google's most popular products, including Gmail, the Chrome browser and Android. Former employees often describe him as a collaborative and loyal colleague. He even turned down a big new grant of stock in 2018 because he felt he was already paid generously, according to a person familiar with the matter.

When Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin created the Alphabet holding company in 2015, Pichai was chosen to run Google, whose businesses including YouTube, Maps and Gmail bring in almost all of the company's revenue. That left the founders to chase visions of building self-driving cars and technology to make people live longer. Brin and Page stepped away from their posts as president and CEO of Alphabet on Tuesday, handing total executive control to Pichai although they'll stay on the board.



BLOOMBERG

In Silicon Valley and on Wall Street, Pichai enjoys a positive reputation as the guy keeping the cash flowing at Google. But, partly because Brin and Page were still technically in the picture, Pichai is less well-known outside of tech circles. When the U.S. Senate held a hearing last year to ask what the big tech companies were doing to stop election meddling on their platforms, it invited Page first, not Pichai. Neither went and Google was represented by an empty chair, although Pichai made the trek later to a House Judiciary Committee meeting.

Now, there won't be any confusion about who the CEO is.

"Going forward, the story is much simpler: Sundar is the only sheriff in town," analysts at Evercore ISI wrote in a note on Tuesday.

Pichai has done more than just keep the lights on at Google. He's put artificial intelligence at the center of the company's pitch to customers and investors, arguing that Google's prowess in AI technology will give it an edge in all its different businesses, from cloud computing and search ads to health care software and mobile phones. He replaced Diane

Greene with former Oracle Corp. executive Thomas Kurian as head of Google's cloud business. Under Pichai, Kurian has started ramping up acquisitions to expand the unit's footprint, buying Alooka, Looker, Elastifile and CloudSimple this year alone.

Pichai's actions as head of Google could give a clue as to how he will run the broader conglomerate. In the last couple of years, Google has poached employees or whole units from the Alphabet constellation, bringing them inside to bolster its own projects. Chronicle, a cybersecurity unit, was supposed to be indepen-

dent, but in June Google's cloud division swallowed it whole. The same thing happened to health-related projects started by DeepMind, Alphabet's AI research arm.

Pichai has also leaned into his assumed role as Google's defender-in-chief, making trips to Washington to explain the company's decisions to lawmakers. Internally, he has pushed back against employee activists who are clamoring for change on a variety of issues from military contracts to the company's handling of sexual harassment allegations. He reduced the number of the once-hallowed town hall meetings Google workers use to vent their frustrations with management to once a month, down from every week.

And last month Google fired four employees who had been pushing for the company to stop selling software to U.S. immigration authorities. Google says the employees violated their colleagues' privacy by tracking the calendars of certain executives and sharing details outside of the company.

The four employees say they plan to file complaints with the National Labor Relations Board.

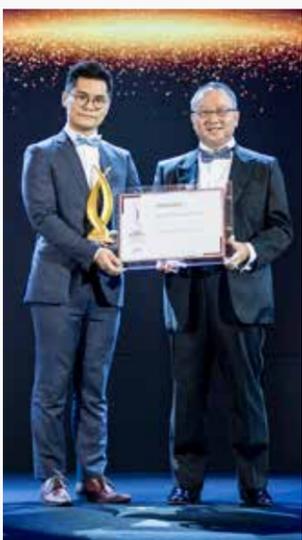
Managing worker dissent and regulatory scrutiny while playing catch-up in cloud and keeping up growth at the core ads business is a tall order, but the market seems to have confidence in Pichai. Google's stock ended the day up 1.9% after the announcement.

At a conference last year, an audience member asked Pichai about the employee revolts against Google's artificial intelligence work with the U.S. government. In a rare moment of directness, Pichai pushed back against the idea that instead of running the company, the company was running him.

At the end of the day, he's the CEO, Pichai said. "We don't run the company by referendum." **BLOOMBERG**

## CORPORATE BITS

### MGM receives special recognition for corporate social responsibility



MGM's commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) has once again been recognized at a regional level. Thanks to their outstanding endeavors in CSR, MGM has received the "Special Recognition in CSR - Mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau" at the PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards 2019.

MGM noted in a statement that the award truly acknowledges the company's ethos of sustainability and "Creating a Better Tomorrow Today."

This year, the PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards took place in Bangkok, Thailand on November 22. The "Special Recognition in CSR Award"

is an annual accolade that recognizes developers with distinguished CSR efforts in their region. Winners can only be nominated and selected by an independent jury comprised of industry heads from participating markets.

This is the second time MGM has been recognized at the Asia Property Awards. In 2017, MGM Cotai won an impressive six awards before it was even opened, making it the most awarded integrated resort in Macau that year.

The property received three regional awards and three local awards, highlighting the company's outstanding achievements in the field of resort development and architectural design in the highly competitive regional property arena.

### Melco supports the 2019 Macao International Parade



Melco Resorts & Entertainment is supporting the objectives of the 2019 Macao International Parade, which is organized by the Cultural Affairs Bureau, by holding a series of events to facilitate cultural and artistic exchanges with people from countries and regions along the mainland's Belt and

Road Initiative.

In line with the parade's theme as "an annual celebration for the entire city - VIVA!", Melco pledges to provide 300 tickets to the performing arts groups along the Belt and Road Initiative involved in the parade to enjoy "The House of Dancing Wa-

ter" show at City of Dreams.

Now entering its ninth iteration, the parade this year features an estimated 1,800 artists from around the world, including Portugal, Kenya, Angola, Ukraine, Poland, Belarus, Hungary, Chile, Cyprus, New Zealand, Italy, Russia, Myanmar, Thailand, Zhanjiang of Guangdong province, as well as Hong Kong.

Melco has also invited local secondary school students to an exclusive backstage tour of "The House of Dancing Water" theatre to witness the complex engineering that creates the show's stunning effects, and to experience the determination and hard work of the cast and crew, and much more.

ADVERTORIAL

# Moon calls for Chinese role in denuclearizing North Korea

AP PHOTO



KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

**S**OUTH Korean President Moon Jae-in said yesterday the global diplomatic push to defuse the nuclear standoff with North Korea is at a "critical crossroads" and called for China to continue serving a "positive role" in denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula and stabilizing peace.

Moon made the comments during a meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at Seoul's presidential Blue House. Wang made his first visit in four years amid efforts to patch up relations damaged by South Korea's deployment of a U.S. anti-missile system China perceives as a security threat.

"The process for the complete denuclearizing of the Korean Peninsula and permanently stabilizing peace is at a critical crossroads," Moon said. "I would like to ask for continuous support from the Chinese government until the new era of a peaceful and denuclearized Korean Peninsula opens."

Wang called for stronger "strategic communication" between Beijing and Seoul and took a jab at the Trump administration, which is locked in trade war with Beijing, saying that international order was being threatened by "unilateralism" and "forcible politics."

"China and South Korea as neighbors should strengthen dialogue and cooperation to jointly uphold multilateralism and free trade," Wang said.

The Blue House said Moon during his meeting with Wang called for stronger bilateral efforts to facilitate tourism between the countries and expressed hope that Chinese President Xi Jinping would visit South Korea at an "early time" next year.

Wang told Moon that China would continue to play a "constructive role" in the efforts to peacefully resolve the nuclear crisis despite "recent difficulties in the political situation surrounding the Korean Peninsula," the Blue House said.

Wang on Wednesday met with South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha and discussed issues related to North Korea and de-

tails of a trilateral summit between Seoul, Beijing and Tokyo planned later this month in China. They also discussed facilitating high-level exchanges and arranging a possible visit to South Korea by Chinese President Xi Jinping next year, South Korea's Foreign Ministry said.

His visit comes after years of tensions over the U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, system placed in southern South Korea and amid concerns that a U.S.-led diplomatic push to resolve a nuclear standoff with North Korea is beginning to fall apart over disagreements in exchanging sanctions relief and disarmament.

With the talks faltering, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has intensified his missile testing activity while issuing an end-of-year deadline for the Trump administration to offer mutually acceptable terms for a deal to salvage the diplomacy.

There's also uneasiness over the U.S.-China trade war, which has hurt South Korea's export-dependent economy and included U.S. demands that South Korean companies stop using equipment from Chinese technology giant Huawei based on security concerns.

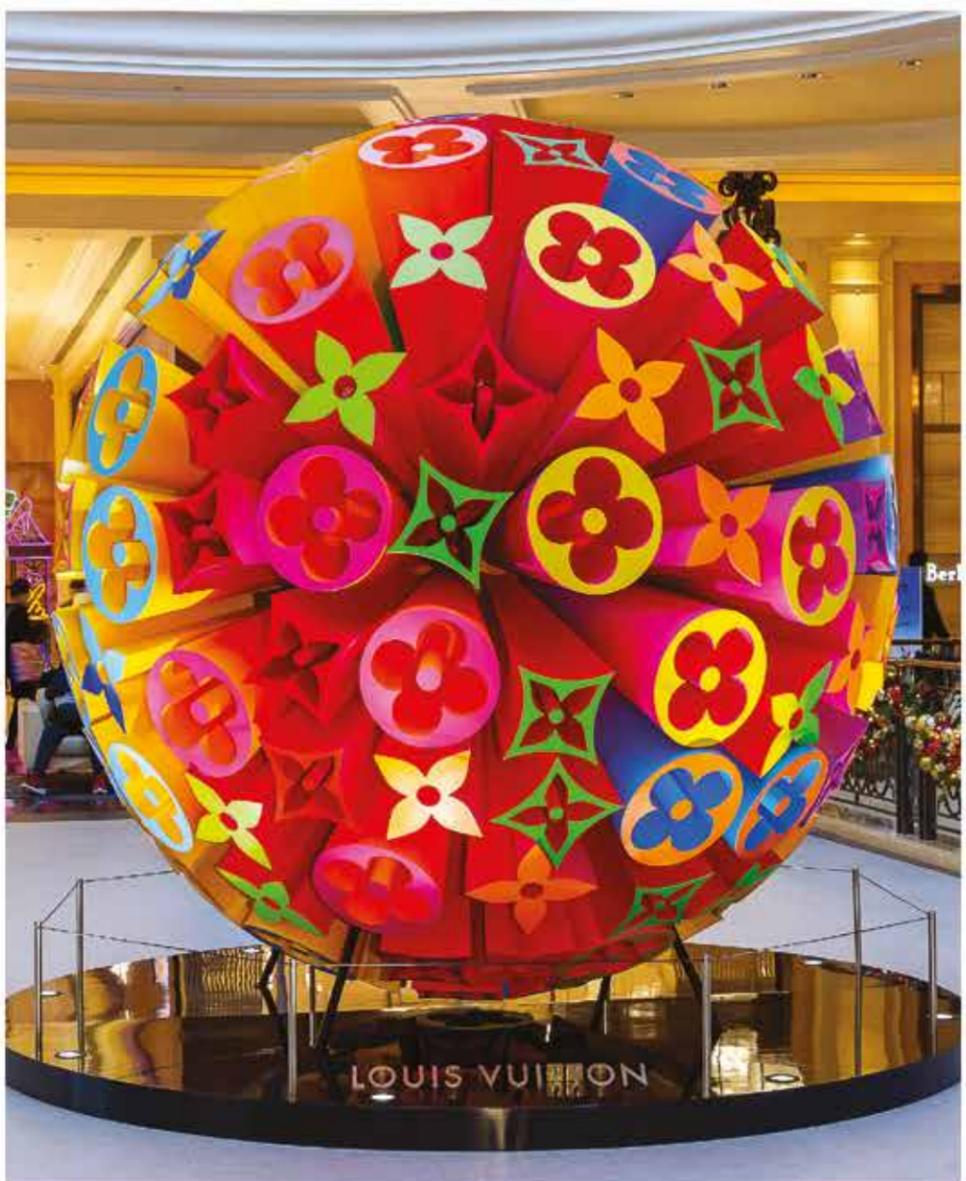
Wang last visited South Korea in 2015, a year before relations soured over Seoul's decision to deploy THAAD, which China claimed could be reconfigured to peer deep into its territory. South Korea has said China retaliated by limiting Chinese tour group visits to South Korea, whose economy is increasingly dependent on Chinese tourism, and demand for its industrial products.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying mentioned THAAD among issues affecting the bilateral ties that the sides had "agreed to continue to properly deal with."

Hua also reiterated China's position that North Korea's "legitimate concerns [...] in terms of security and development should be taken seriously," and that the North should be offered sanctions relief "in light of the development of the situation so as to encourage all parties to move forward in the direction of political settlement. AP

## CHRISTMAS CHEER

Christmas is coming and Sands Shoppes has partnered with Louis Vuitton to unveil a super-stylish festive display at Shoppes at Four Seasons. There are also special winter shopping rewards to enjoy. Head to Sands Shoppes and embrace that Christmas spirit.



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Illuminated installations featuring pop art animations make a sparkling statement at Shoppes at Four Seasons. Louis Vuitton's most iconic pieces are also in the spotlight, from the Twist bag and Archlight sneakers to the Damier Graphite Map leather goods collection and the new Coeur Battant fragrance. There's plenty of festive inspiration on display through 2 January.

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

# HUAWEI ASKS COURT TO THROW OUT US TELECOM FUNDS BAN

SAM McNEIL, SHENZHEN

**C**HINESE tech giant Huawei is asking a U.S. federal court to throw out a rule that bars rural phone carriers from using government money to purchase its equipment on security grounds.

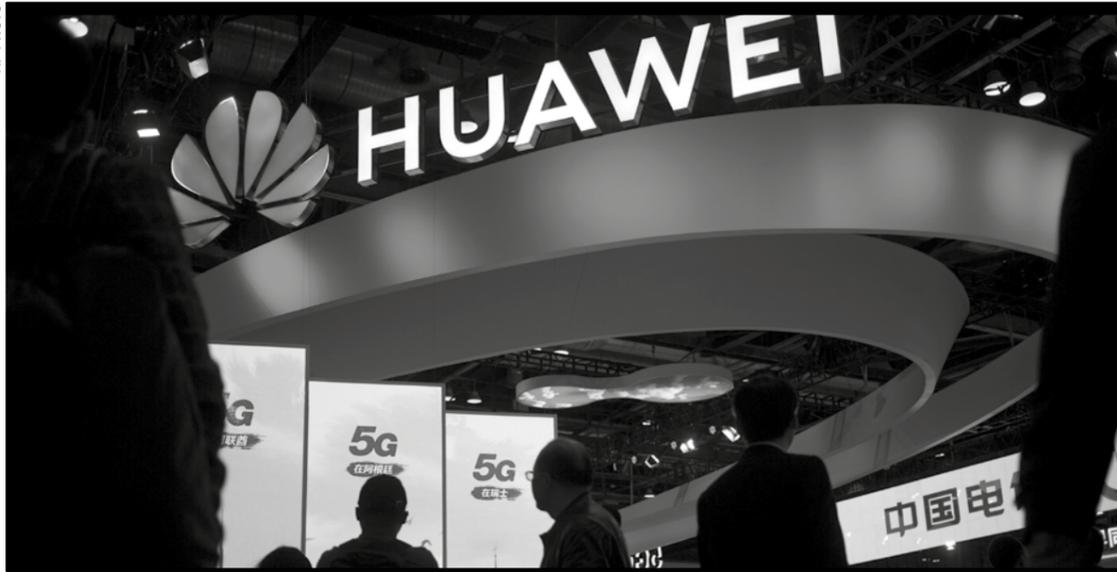
The lawsuit announced yesterday is Huawei Technologies Ltd.'s second legal challenge this year to Trump administration efforts to reduce its already minimal U.S. market presence. The company is scrambling to preserve its global sales of smartphones and network gear following sanctions announced in May that limit access to U.S. components and technology.

Huawei, which says it is employee-owned and has no government ties, denies U.S. accusations it is a security risk and might facilitate Chinese spying.

Huawei is at the center of U.S.-Chinese tension over Beijing's technology ambitions and complains the communist government steals or pressures foreign companies to hand over know-how.

Huawei's lawsuit in U.S. federal court in New Orleans says the Fe-

AP PHOTO



deral Communications Commission acted improperly when it voted last month to bar rural carriers from using government subsidies to buy equipment from Huawei or its Chinese rival, ZTE Corp.

The decision "is based on politics, not security," Huawei's chief legal officer, Song Liuping, told a news conference.

The lawsuit says the FCC exceeded its authority by making national security judgments, designating Huawei a threat without

evidence and violated its own procedures by adopting a rule without citing a legal basis.

American courts have traditionally been reluctant to second-guess government judgments about national security.

In a separate lawsuit filed in March, Huawei is asking a federal court in Texas to strike down a ban on the U.S. government using its equipment or dealing with any contractor that does.

Meanwhile, U.S. prosecutors

are trying to extradite Huawei's chief financial officer from Canada to face charges she lied to banks about dealings with Iran.

Chinese authorities say the United States is exaggerating security concerns to block a potential competitor.

Huawei warned the FCC rule will hurt rural American carriers, which buy the Chinese vendor's equipment because other major suppliers such as Nokia and Ericsson are more expensive.

Song said that while potential lost sales are minimal, if the rule is allowed to stand, Huawei might suffer "reputational losses" that will "have a further impact on our business."

Huawei's U.S. sales plunged after a congressional panel warned in 2012 the company and ZTE were security risks and told carriers to avoid them. However, its sales in Europe and developing markets in Asia and Africa have risen steadily.

Huawei earlier reported its global sales rose 24.4% in the first nine months of 2019 over a year earlier to 610.8 billion yuan (\$86 billion).

The Trump administration imposed curbs in May that threaten to disrupt Huawei's sales of smartphones and network gear by blocking access to U.S. technology and components including Google's music, maps and other mobile services.

The Trump administration has announced a series of limited reprieves that allow vendors to supply technology needed to support wireless networks in rural areas.

In November, Huawei started selling a folding smartphone, the Mate X, made without U.S.-supplied processor chips or Google apps. The company also has unveiled a smartphone operating system it says can replace Google's Android if necessary. **AP**

AD

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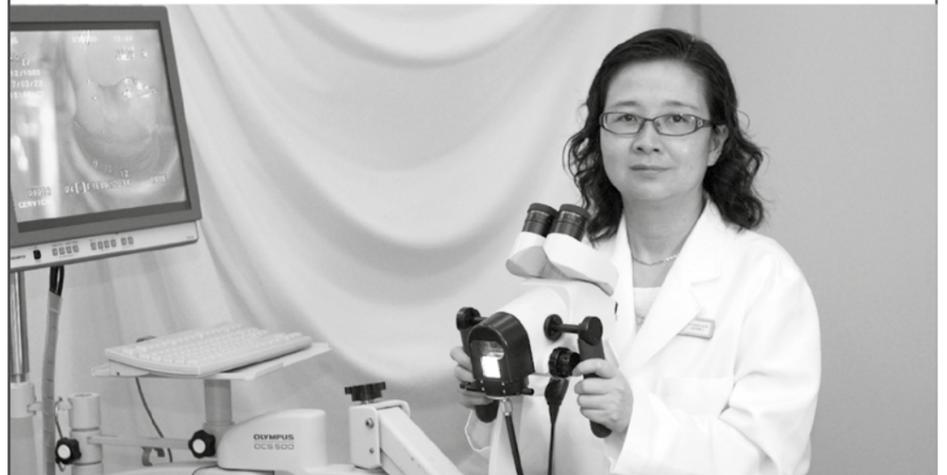
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# Three charged over Australia's largest crystal meth seizure

ROD MCGUIRK, CANBERRA

**T**WO customs agents and an information technology worker appeared in a court yesterday charged with drug offenses over Australia's largest seizure of methamphetamine, which had been smuggled to Melbourne from Bangkok in stereo speakers.

Police estimate the 1.6 metric tons of the drug also known as ice and crystal meth had a street value of AUD1.197 billion (\$818 million). The 37 kilograms of heroin also seized was the largest haul of that drug in Australia since 2017, police said.

"It's almost a quarter of the annual usage in Australia, so this will have an impact," Australian Federal Police Deputy Commissioner Neil Gaughan told reporters, referring to the crystal meth.

Married customs agents Rachel Cachia, 37, and Donovan Rodrigues, 38 appeared with their co-accused Stephen Mizzi, 37, in the Melbourne Magistrates Court on drug importation charges that carry potential life prison sentences.



They did not enter pleas or apply for bail. They will remain in custody until they appear in court next on May 7.

Customs agents are private-sector employees who facilitate cargo movements through ports. They do not have security clear-

ance at ports, but operate as independent import-export experts who know how the system works.

Gaughan alleged the couple were "middle-to-high up" in the drug trafficking operation.

"They are trusted insiders in the industry. They used their position of trust to circumvent the border controls that exist within Australia," Gaughan said. "This vulnerability has been fully removed."

Police were now working toward bringing the bosses of the operation to justice, Gaughan said.

The three were arrested after police executed search warrants on Wednesday at several Melbourne properties.

Australian Border Force officers detected the haul in vacuum-sealed packages concealed in speakers at the Melbourne waterfront in April.

The drug shipment came to Australia from Thailand, but Australian authorities suspect it originated from another Southeast Asian country, which they have not named.

A larger consignment of 1.7 metric tons of crystal meth bound for Australia was seized in California in January. Australian police said then it was the largest shipment of the drug bound for Australia and the largest ever domestic seizure in the United States.

Australia is an attractive market for international drug traffickers because of the relatively high prices that Australian drug users are willing to pay. **AP**

## ENVIRONMENT

# Experts say Mekong River's new color a worrying sign

BUSABA SIVASOMBOON,  
BANGKOK

**T**HE Mekong River has recently acquired an aquamarine color that may beguile tourists but also indicates a problem caused by upstream dams, experts in Thailand say.

The river usually has a yellowish-brown shade due to the sediment it normally carries downstream. But lately it has been running clear, taking on a blue-green hue that is a reflection of the sky. The water levels have also become unusually low, exposing sandbanks that allow the curious to stand in the middle of the river.

Low water levels pose an obvious problem for fishermen and farmers, but experts say the decline in sediment exposes a different danger that can result in greater erosion of the river's banks and bed.

The experts and people living along the river blame a large hydroelectric dam



upstream in Laos that began operating in October for contributing to both problems, though rainfall has also been sparse.

Around 70 million people depend on the Mekong River for water, food, commerce, irrigation and transportation. Critics charge that large-scale development projects such as the Xayaburi dam dangerously disrupt the region's ecology.

The dam blocks much sediment from moving further downstream, which accounts for the water becoming clear, said Pravit Kanthaduang, chief of the fishery office at Bueng Khong Long, a district in Thailand's Bueng Kan province. Less sediment means less nutrition for plants and fish in the river, threatening the ecological balance, he said.

With less sediment, the water also has more stream power, a phenomenon known as "hungry water," said Chainarong Setthachau of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science at Mahasarakham University in Thailand's northeast who has studied changes in the Mekong's ecology for the past two decades.

"The current has less sediment, which unleashes

energy onto the river banks downstream. This so-called 'hungry water' will cause much more erosion to the banks, uprooting trees and damaging engineering structures in the river," Chainarong said.

The dam's developers have denied that they were responsible for low water levels that some critics tied to trial runs of the generators that began in March. In October, the Xayaburi Power Co. Ltd. said the project has spent more than 19.4 billion baht (\$640 million) to mitigate negative impacts on the environment, including the building of outlets for sediment passage and flow and facilities to allow the passage of fish. The plant's total cost was \$4.47 billion.

Daeng Pongpim, from a farming family that used to fish in Ta Mui village in Ubon Ratchathani province, lives 800 kilometers downstream from the Xayaburi dam, but said she

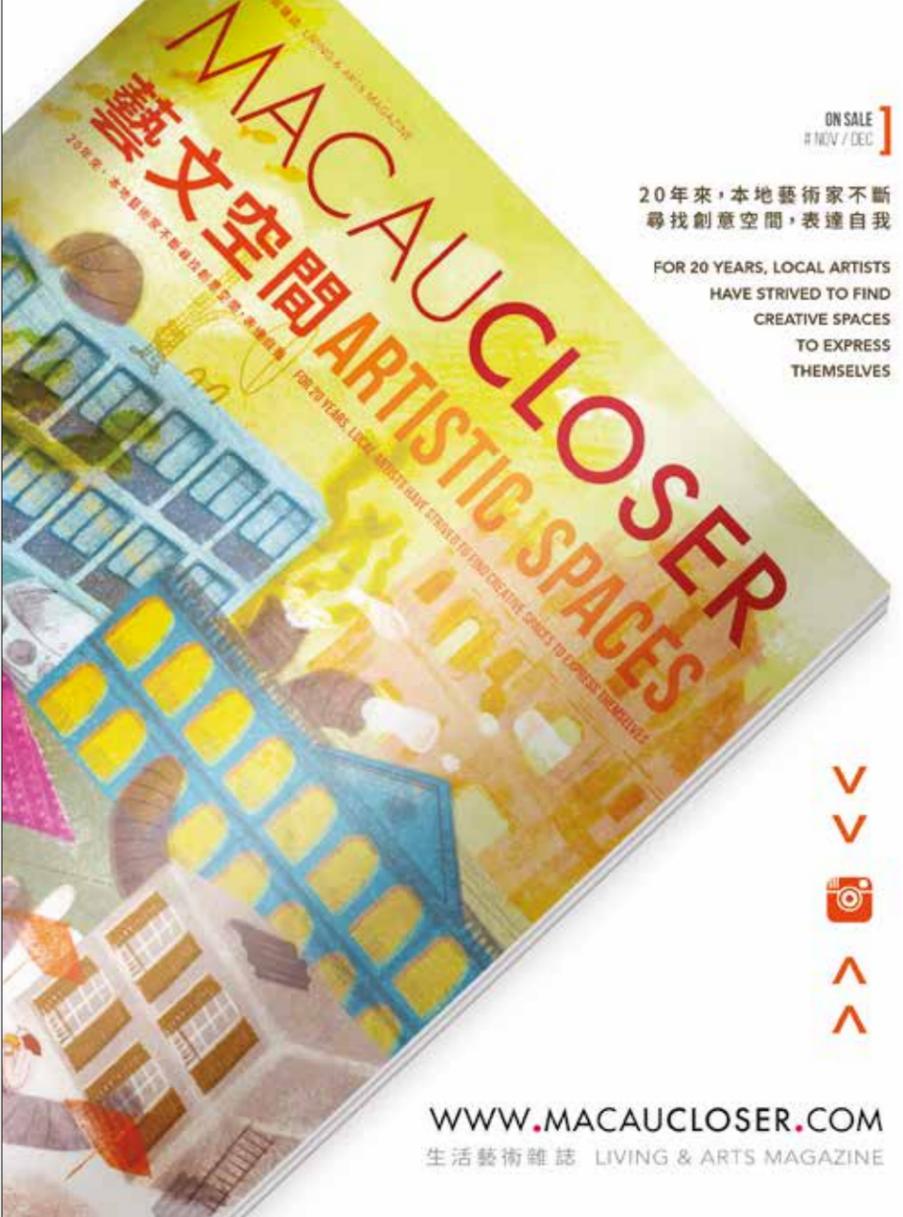
still believes it is responsible for the river's recent unusual condition.

"I am 67 years old and have never seen anything like it before. What makes me concerned the most is the low level of the water. Now, we are in early winter, the water level should not be this low. I can't imagine how hard it could be for us at the height of the dry season, in March and April."

Chaiwat Parakun, who lives 200 kilometers downstream from the dam, said he abandoned his fishing gear several years ago because of the declining amount of fish available to catch. He now has a tourism business.

"The Mekong has gradually lost its abundance. People who depend on the river like us could sense it many years ago. But that was nothing like the effects from Xayaburi. We cannot figure out how we can live with this degraded environment," he said. **AP**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



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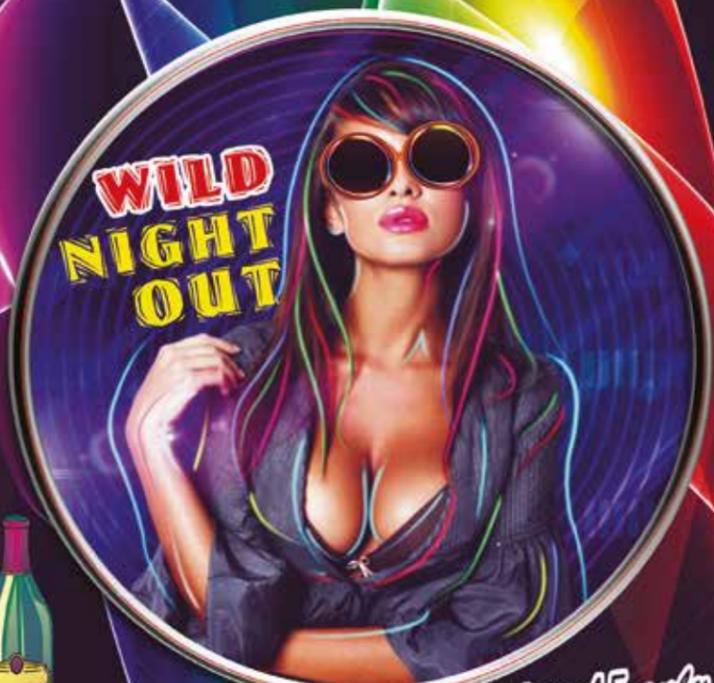
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# Anti-headscarf law activist sues Iran in US over harassment

JON GAMBRELL, DUBAI

**A**N Iranian-American activist famous for her campaign against the Islamic Republic's mandatory headscarf, or hijab, for women has sued Iran in U.S. federal court, alleging a government-led harassment campaign targets her and her family.

Masih Alinejad's lawsuit seeking monetary damages comes in the aftermath of nationwide protests in Iran over spiking gasoline prices that reportedly killed at least 208 people in November.

Dissent continues as Iranian authorities separately said yesterday that they broke up a plot to cause a gas explosion at a student dormitory at a Tehran university.

But even before the latest unrest, authorities had already announced that women face a possible 10-year prison sentence for sending videos to Alinejad's "White Wednesday" civil disobedience campaign against the mandatory head covering.

The harassment, including the imprisoning of her brother, was to



"preclude Ms. Masih Alinejad from continuing her career as a journalist, author, and political activist working to criticize the Iranian government and bring international attention to the regime's human rights abuses, in particular women's rights," alleges her lawsuit, filed on Monday in Washington.

Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment yesterday.

Alinejad, who recently published an autobiography, fled the country after the disputed 2009 presidential election and crackdown. She is a prominent figure

on Farsi-language satellite channels abroad that critically view Iran and has worked as a contractor for U.S.-funded Voice of America's Farsi-language network since 2015, according to the lawsuit. Alinejad, who lives in Brooklyn, became a U.S. citizen in October.

Her "White Wednesday" and "My Stealthy Freedom" campaigns have seen women film themselves without hijabs in public in Iran, which can bring arrests and fines. But there have been signs of women increasingly pushing back against the requirement.

During a trip to Iran in July, an Associated Press journalist spo-

tted about two dozen women in the streets without a hijab over the course of nine days. Many other women opted for loosely draped colorful scarves that show as much hair as they cover.

While there have been women fined and arrested, others have been left alone as Iran struggles with economic problems and other issues under re-imposed U.S. sanctions following President Donald Trump pulling out of Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers.

In recent weeks, Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard seized and began torturing her brother Alireza Alinejad-Ghomi, the suit alleges.

State television officials and security forces have pressured her mother as well, who at one point "threatened to pour gasoline on herself and set herself on fire" during a confrontation, according to the suit. Later, however, her mother called and disowned her over the telephone, "knowing that the phone lines in Iran are not secure and that she was essentially making a public statement that

could be used against Ms. Alinejad at any time," the suit said.

Alinejad seeks monetary damages in the lawsuit. Her suit comes after a U.S. federal judge awarded Washington Post journalist Jason Rezaian and his family nearly \$180 million over his imprisonment and torture in Iran.

Iran routinely does not respond to such lawsuits and has monetary orders levied against it. Some lawsuits end up receiving money from the United States Victims of State Sponsored Terrorism Fund, which has distributed funds to those held and affected by Iran's 1979 student takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and subsequent hostage crisis, as well as other events.

Alinejad also named the Guard and Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as defendants. Both have been sanctioned by the U.S. government under Trump, while the Guard has been designated by America as a terrorist organization.

Meanwhile, state TV read a statement from Iran's Intelligence Ministry on air that said authorities arrested suspects in the plot to cause a gas explosion at the Elm-va-Sanat engineering university in Tehran. The statement said they cut a hole into a gas pipeline there for a dormitory housing some 200 students. The report did not elaborate.

The explosion was to happen on Students Day, authorities said. AP

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## TV canal macau

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

## cinema

### CINETEATRO

05 - 11 Dec



**KNIVES OUT**  
ROOM 1  
2:30, 9:15pm  
Director: Rian Johnson  
Starring: Daniel Craig, Chris Evans, Toni Collette, Jamie Lee Curtis  
Language: English  
Duration: 152min



**FROZEN II**  
ROOM 1  
5:00, 7:15pm  
Director: Chris Buck, Jennifer Lee  
Starring: Kristen Bell, Jonathan Groff, Idina Menzel  
Language: Cantonese  
Duration: 103min



**LAST CHRISTMAS**  
ROOM 2  
2:30, 4:30, 7:30, 9:30pm  
Director: Paul Feig  
Starring: Madison Ingoldsby, Emma Thompson, Boris Isakovic  
Language: English (Chinese)  
Duration: 103min



**MARRIAGE HUNTING BEAUTY**  
ROOM 3  
2:30, 4:30, 7:30pm  
Director: Akiko Ohku  
Starring: Atsuko Hirata, Shinpei Ichikawa, Mei Kurokawa  
Language: Japanese (Chinese/English)  
Duration: 89min



**21 BRIDGES**  
ROOM 3  
9:45pm  
Director: Brian Kirk  
Starring: Chadwick Boseman, J.K. Simmons, Sienna Miller  
Language: English (Chinese)  
Duration: 103min

## this day in history



### 1978 SPAIN SET TO VOTE FOR DEMOCRACY

Spaniards have been turning out in force today to cast a vote for democracy and end almost 40 years of dictatorial rule.

The majority of the 25 million Spaniards eligible to vote are expected to endorse a new constitution in the historic referendum.

It would strip the monarchy of much of its current powers, many of which were handed down by the late dictator General Franco, who died in 1975.

King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia support the move and were among the first to cast their vote in a village school near Madrid.

Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez, leader of the Union of the Democratic Centre UCD, a moderate centre-right coalition, has drafted the new democratic constitution.

It could eventually put him out of a job if new elections are held as a result.

Last June saw Spain's first elections to the Cortes (parliament) since 1936 and in which Mr Suarez won 34% of the votes.

Tens of thousands of children, not able to vote, still had reason to celebrate as they have had the day off with schools converted into polling stations.

But there was still an air of tension in the country after a recent spell of murders and bombings, attributed to Basque separatists in the northern Basque region.

Riot police and soldiers are on high alert, guarding polling stations and communication centres.

The fear of violence is reported to have led an estimated 250,000 Spaniards to cast a postal vote.

Courtesy BBC News

## Offbeat

### MAN FOUND IN FREEZER WAS HUSBAND OF RECENTLY DECEASED WOMAN

A man whose body was in a freezer for as long as 11 years was the husband of the woman who had recently died in their apartment west of Salt Lake City, police said Tuesday.

But the autopsy that nailed down his identity didn't help investigators solve how he died, who killed him or exactly how long his body was tucked into the chest freezer inside the couple's apartment, said Tooele Police Sgt. Jeremy Hansen.

Officers discovered the body of Paul Edwards Mathers, 69, last Friday after finding his wife dead on the bed when they went there to check on her after she hadn't been seen in two weeks.

Detectives couldn't tell from looking at the fully intact body how he died, but suspect foul play, Hansen said.

The death of his wife, Jeanne Souron-Mathers, 75, is not considered suspicious.

They don't know if she was involved in her husband's death, Hansen said.

Detectives estimate the man's body was in the freezer from between 1 and 11 years based on when residents in the apartment complex say they last saw him. The autopsy didn't narrow down that time frame, Hansen said.

Souron-Mathers had lived in the apartment since 2007 in the city of Tooele, which has about 35,000 residents and is about 25 miles (40 kilometers) west of Salt Lake City.

## IN CONTEXT

The new constitution was overwhelmingly supported by voters with newspapers the following morning congratulating Spaniards with headlines such as "Good morning, democracy".

It established Spain as a parliamentary monarchy. Spain continued to shake off the Franco years which had left the country alienated internationally.

It invested heavily to win European support and became a member of the EC, now the EU, in 1986.

This required it to open its economy, modernise its industrial base and improve infrastructure.

The country has been dogged by separatist violence in a long-running campaign by the Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA), founded in 1959 and dedicated to promoting Basque independence.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
**Mar. 21-Apr. 19**  
 Subliminally, you may have been seeing opportunity as pressure, and have thus been preventing yourself from taking a challenge because you were afraid you would fail.

**TAURUS**  
**Apr. 20-May. 20**  
 Sometimes the road you're traveling gets shrouded in fog. If that happens today, don't pull over and wait for the weather to clear. Time is not to be wasted, so keep going, slowly but surely, on the same path.

**GEMINI**  
**May. 21-Jun. 21**  
 Weigh the choices you have to make today - does every single one of them require hours and hours of due diligence? You don't have time for all that, and you probably don't need to do it, either.

**CANCER**  
**Jun. 22-Jul. 22**  
 Things are much more under your control than ever before. You have proven yourself capable of the responsibilities you have been given, and everyone is ready to see what you have to offer!

**LEO**  
**Jul. 23-Aug. 22**  
 Whatever problems there are around your home can wait a few more days to be resolved - focusing on them too hard right now will only put more pressure on the situation.

**VIRGO**  
**Aug. 23-Sep. 22**  
 Social invitations will start piling up today - and don't be surprised if there are conflicts. Wait a few days before committing to anything, as you may have a better offer coming soon.

**LIBRA**  
**Sep. 23-Oct. 22**  
 Your engine is all revved up, but there's really no place for you to go today - all projects are moving forward nicely, and the people in your life are doing well.

**SCORPIO**  
**Oct. 23-Nov. 21**  
 It's all about the finishing touches today. Pay careful attention to grooming in the morning, and make sure you're stepping out the door dressed in the perfect look.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
**Nov. 22-Dec. 21**  
 The very first step to getting what (or who) you've been wanting is to express it. Saying it out loud makes it real and lets the universe know that you've got some expectations it can help fill.

**CAPRICORN**  
**Dec. 22-Jan. 19**  
 Too many people hold back their true feelings because they are afraid, intimidated or confused. But not you! Let it all hang out and wait for the reaction of the crowd.

**AQUARIUS**  
**Jan. 20-Feb. 18**  
 Right now, moving through your life without thinking too hard about what you are doing might not be such a bad idea. You are used to thinking things through - and that is certainly wise.

**PISCES**  
**Feb. 19-Mar. 20**  
 Beware of people who talk the talk but cannot walk the walk today. Aligning yourself too closely with them could mar your reputation and leave you feeling frustrated.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

**WEATHER**

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

**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS:** 1-Side; 5- Pueblo material; 10- Mata \_\_\_; 14- Dull pain; 15- Sorrow; 16- Wind in a pit; 17- Spoiled child; 18- Skirt style; 19- Sorry sort; 20- Underemployment; 23- Figure skater Midori; 24- Island; Fr.; 25- Planes, trains, and automobiles, e.g.; 33- Performance; 34- Dilute; 35- Miracle-\_\_\_; 36- Interpret; 37- For a specific purpose; 39- Author Wiesel; 40- Illustrative craft; 41- Nautical heading; 42- Thread holder; 43- Complete change; 47- Swiss river; 48- CPA's suggestion; 49- Overly detracting; 56- Cry of dismay; 58- Flies high; 59- Stadium topper; 60- A Sinatra; 61- River rental; 62- Ripe for drafting; 63- Nervously irritable; 64- Lulus; 65- Give temporarily;

**DOWN:** 1- Typewriter settings; 2- Neutral color; 3- Ishmael's captain; 4- Allot; 5- Goes with the flow; 6- Lump or blob; 7- Hodgepodge; 8- Emaciated; 9- Like a recluse; 10- Large stinging wasp; 11- Be tangent to; 12- Wade opponent; 13- Comparative suffix; 21- Chinese dynasty; 22- Joie de vivre; 25- \_\_\_ is human; 26- Lasso; 27- Besides; 28- Significant \_\_\_; 29- Letter after pi; 30- Ice house; 31- Constellation containing Rigel; 32- Christmas; 33- "Darn!"; 37- Outdoor, in Italy; 38- \_\_\_ gratias; 39- Center starter; 41- Quickly, quickly; 42- Sports figure; 44- Deny; 45- Reflecting surface; 46- Crops up; 49- Suspend; 50- Horse of mixed color; 51- Walking stick; 52- Object of worship; 53- Circle at bottom, point at top; 54- Right on!; 55- Starring role; 56- Got fed up?; 57- Tupperware topper;

**Yesterday's solution**

T	E	N	S	E	G	R	O	O	M	B	A		
A	R	E	T	E	L	A	D	L	E	A	L		
T	E	D	D	E	A	R	A	R	A	T	O		
R	E	T	I	R	E	O	R	D	E	R	S	O	N
L	E	A	D	E	D	A	N	I	T	A			
E	R	I	E	F	E	D	E	R	E	S	E		
S	I	G	N	T	H	E	M	A	T	S			
S	E	A	T	S	T	O	R	I	E	S			
I	S	A	C	E	S	S	E	N	E				
S	H	I	F	T		S	T	E	T	S	O	N	
K	E	N	Y	A	T	R	A	I	L				
A	W	L	I	D	I	O	T	E	L	O	P	E	
T	R	A		R	I	N	S	E	C	A	R	A	
E	D		S	P	E	E	D		T	B	O	N	

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



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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

## NEW ZEALAND FINDS PERFECT SPOKESMAN: STEPHEN COLBERT



AP PHOTO

**N**EW Zealand has relied on hobbits, bungy jumping and rugby to entice tourists in the past.

Now Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern may have found the perfect spokesman to embrace all of the above and more: American comedian Stephen Colbert.

In an interview yesterday, Ardern talked about the boost to the country's vital tourism industry that Colbert appears to have singlehandedly orchestrated.

Last month, Colbert recounted his adventures in New Zealand during a weeklong humorous segment on CBS's "The Late Show

with Stephen Colbert."

The first segment shows Ardern picking up Colbert from the airport in her car and hosting him for a backyard barbecue, with singer Lorde in attendance.

"It was an amazing opportunity to do something for New Zealand," Ardern said. "He had a genuine love of New Zealand though. Like, very genuine. So, it actually made it really easy."

Ardern said Colbert's segments went beyond the typical depictions of New Zealand's beautiful scenery and adventure sports. "It showcased our people really well, and just who we are," she said.



AP PHOTO

## CHANEL CELEBRATES ARTISANS IN GLIMMERING PARIS SHOW

**C**HANEL brought its itinerant off-season fashion show the "arts and crafts," with its swath of VIPs including Penelope Cruz and Marion Cotillard, back to home ground in Paris on Wednesday to mark its first collection since Karl Lagerfeld died earlier this year.

New designer Virginie Viard teamed up with film director Sofia Coppola this season to imagine a cinematic opus that saw the house's 1920s Rue Cambon atelier — replete with crystal chandeliers and mirrored cubist staircase — recreated under the lofty roof of the

Grand Palais exhibition space.

Unlike the seasonal collections that trickle down to set high street trends, the "arts and crafts" pre-collection aims at showing off and celebrating the work of the artisans that are the beating heart of Chanel, and the Paris fashion industry as a whole.

Celebrating their technical know-how is one way that storied Paris heritage houses have tried to distinguish themselves in the face of increased competition from other fashion capitals, such as New York and Milan.

## KID ROCK'S DETROIT EATERY CLOSING AFTER HIS ANTI-OPRAH RANT

**A** Kid Rock-owned restaurant in Detroit's Little Caesars Arena will close once its licensing agreement expires this spring, the singer and arena operator announced separately Wednesday.

The severing of ties between the suburban Detroit-born musician and Iltch Holdings came days after video surfaced showing Kid Rock ranting against Oprah Winfrey, though neither party tied the parting to the video or the backlash that followed. The split also points to a widening es-

trangement between Kid Rock and the city he calls home.

"I appreciate all who have patronized our place and still have much love for the city of Detroit and the people/organizations that I have helped there for years, black, white, whatever, but learned long ago, go where you're celebrated, not tolerated," he wrote Wednesday on Facebook.

Kid Rock's Made in Detroit opened in 2017 in Little Caesars Arena, which is home to the NHL's Red Wings and the NBA's Detroit Pistons.



AP PHOTO

AD

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

FIGURE SKATING

# Hanyu, Chen face off at Grand Prix Finals

**J**APAN'S Yuzuru Hanyu owns the last two Olympic gold medals. No man has won three in a row.

American Nathan Chen owns the last two world titles. No U.S. man has won three straight since Scott Hamilton in the early 1980s.

Hanyu, the world's most popular figure skater, and Chen, his biggest rival, face off at the Grand Prix Finals this week in Turin, Italy.

Chen has won the last two GP Finals, but Hanyu, who has battled injuries for years, didn't compete in either. Chen, a full-time student at Yale, did beat Hanyu at worlds in March, though.

Each won two Grand Prix events to get there. They'll certainly meet again at worlds in Montreal next March, but this is a matchup to savor, too.

"It's nice to have someone who pushes you on and off of the ice, who is competitive and also improving," Chen said. "And showing they are ahead of you in some areas, so I can say, 'This is how I can get better.'"

"I think we are both competitive people and understand how it works and how much time we must put into it. There's no bad blood there, and I realize most of the guys have the potential to be first in most of the events. I know it pushes me and I hope it pushes

AP PHOTO



Japan's Yuzuru Hanyu at the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea

him to have this competition. I am glad I have him to push me."

They are likely to push each other — and the rest of the men's

field — to heights previously unattained.

Already, Chen has lifted the men toward making all quadru-

ple jumps except an axel necessary parts of their free skates. Dismissing anyone also doing the 4 1/2 rotations — axels are the only

jump done with a forward liftoff — would be foolhardy in the current skating environment and scoring system.

Hanyu has upped the ante on performance, which isn't quite as significant in the scoring as it used to be, but certainly is a critical element. He is a master showman as well as an elite skater.

Chen is on quite a winning streak since his awful performance in the short program at the 2018 Olympics eliminated any shot at the podium. He hasn't lost an important competition since, and next month will attempt to win a fourth successive U.S. crown, which hasn't been done since Brian Boitano finished off that quad in 1988.

"I don't think about it at all," Chen said of the accolades. "The awards and medals I get and placement, there is no way to control that. It would make me stress out too much if I thought about that."

One thing Chen is thinking about is one of the stronger American contingents at the GP Finals, where the top six skaters or duos qualify. The United States has two ice dance couples: Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue, and Madison Chock and Evan Bates. And for the first time since 2015, a U.S. woman made the finals: Bradie Tennell. **MDT/AP**

AD

**ALBERGUE SCM**  
婆仔屋文創空間

11.12.2019 ~ 09.02.2020  
Exhibition by 個人作品展 Exposição de

**LioMan Cheong**  
廖文揚

On the Occasion of the Celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Macau Handover to China  
慶祝澳門回歸祖國20周年 Por Ocasião da Celebração do 20<sup>o</sup> Aniversário da R.A.E.M.

Duration of Exhibition: December 11th, 2019 until February 9th, 2020  
Opening Ceremony: December 11th (Wednesday) 6:30pm  
Opening Hours: Monday, from 03:00PM to 08:00PM; Tuesday to Sunday, from 12:00PM to 08:00PM  
Exhibition Venue: Albergue SCM - A2 Gallery  
Free Admission

ALBERGUE SCM / ALBcreativeLAB  
ADDRESS: CALÇADA DA IGREJA DE SÃO LÁZARO NO.8, MACAU  
TEL: + 853 - 2852 2550/ 2852 3205 FAX: + 853 - 2852 2719  
INFO: facebook.com/AlbergueSCMMacau  
EMAIL: creativealbergue@gmail.com

Organizer: ALBERGUE SCM ALBcreativeLAB  
Co-Organizer: CA CULTURA 澳門文化館  
Sponsor: 澳門基金會 FUNDAÇÃO MACAU  
Managed by: 藝竹有限公司 BAMBUNO

Sam, I left a copy of my ID documents and itinerary with the family. I've also prepared a list of emergency contacts.

Ann, and I've prepared enough cash, credit cards and took care of the travel insurance too!

**Travel tips:**  
Before your activities abroad  
Select activities that are within your capabilities  
Make sure the equipment for your activities are in good condition  
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旅遊危機處理辦公室  
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OPINION

World views

Bobby Ghosh, Bloomberg

TRUMP IS THE LEAST OF  
NATO'S PROBLEMS

It was meant to be a celebration of the 70th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. But the mood at a gathering of the alliance's leaders this week in London was anything but celebratory. There was no disguising the fact that NATO is in deep — even existential — trouble.

Nothing illustrated this unease more than the brief elation among NATO hands over Donald Trump's surprising defense of the alliance. If the American president, previously a NATO skeptic, had had a change of heart, perhaps things were not so dire after all.

Except Trump hadn't had a change of heart. His defense of the alliance was little more than a rhetorical stick with which to beat French President Emmanuel Macron, who had previously bemoaned the institution's "brain death." Credit must also go to NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who has done a masterful job of managing Trump, calming the president's tantrums and stroking his ego. Witness Stoltenberg's eagerness, at a joint press conference, to credit Trump for increased military spending by many members. "Your leadership on defense spending is having a real impact," he purred, as the president preened.

But Trump's skepticism was soon on display once again. He carped about Germany's paltry defense spending, threatened trade penalties against members who don't pony up and refused to commit to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, the all-for-one clause that requires the group to defend any member under attack.

Trump is Trump: There's every possibility that he'll arrive at the next NATO summit brandishing a flame-thrower, instead of the pea-shooter he has wielded in London.

And not even Stoltenberg's diplomatic skills can mask the fundamental problems — both philosophical and practical — that bedevil the alliance. These go beyond the previous spasms of disunity NATO has endured, such as the 1966 French withdrawal from the integrated military command or Turkey's 1974 invasion of Cyprus and showdown with Greece.

An important reason NATO has held together for 70 years is the common perception of the threat posed by the Soviet Union and, more recently, Russia. But core members of the alliance no longer agree on this. Turkey is buying arms from Moscow, including missile systems that endanger NATO defenses; President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is more suspicious about America's intentions than Russia's. Trump has been cozying up to Russian President Vladimir Putin at every opportunity, against the advice of his entire military and intelligence community. Macron is ambivalent at best.

Nor is there consensus over the other threats to the West: terrorism, cyberwarfare, China. Turkey and France have accused each other of harboring terrorists. The divisions over Russia compromise the alliance's ability to defend against online attacks. And some NATO members see China more as a source of money than menace.

Even if most member states were to agree on what constitutes a threat, it doesn't automatically follow that NATO is the best shield. Cyberwarfare requires subtler, more secretive approaches than the alliance is capable of deploying, and counterterrorism calls for swift, supple responses — not the kind of thing you leave to a giant multinational bureaucracy. Taking on China may require a North Pacific Treaty Organization, in which European militaries would play only a small part.

This doesn't mean NATO is no longer relevant. It is relevant for the same reason it was at its founding: the potent threat of Moscow. Getting all the members to recognize this, and to act accordingly, will require much more than Stoltenberg's diplomatic guile — it will take political leadership of a high order from the most powerful members. Nothing said or done in London this week suggested such leadership is at hand.

NATO leaders professed unity on Wednesday at a summit near London — but a spat over off-the-cuff chit chat at a royal reception rattled their show of solidarity.

U.S. President Donald Trump branded the leader of America's northern neighbor "two-faced" after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau appeared to gossip about Trump in comments caught on camera and microphone.

Trudeau was seen standing in a huddle with French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte and Britain's Princess Anne, daughter of Queen Eli-

zabeth II at Tuesday evening's Buckingham Palace reception for NATO leaders.

Trudeau could be heard saying incredulously, "he takes a 40-minute press conference off the top." Trudeau confirmed that was a reference to Trump's long and unscheduled question-and-answer session with journalists earlier Tuesday.

Trudeau also said: "You just watched his team's jaws drop to the floor."

Footage of the palace reception was recorded by a pool camera. The clip was posted online by Canadian broadcaster CBC and has been viewed more than 5 million times.

EIFFEL TOWER SHUTS  
DOWN AS MASS STRIKES  
CRIPPLE FRANCE



THE Eiffel Tower shut down, France's vaunted high-speed trains stood still and teachers walked off the job as unions launched nationwide strikes and protests Thursday over the government's plan to overhaul the retirement system.

Paris authorities barricaded the presidential palace and deployed 6,000 police as activists — many in yellow vests representing France's year-old movement for economic justice — gathered for a major march through the capital.

Organizers hope for a mass outpouring of anger at President Emmanuel Macron for his centerpiece reform, seen as threatening the hard-fought French way of life. Macron himself remained "calm and determined" to push it through, according to a top presidential official.

The Louvre Museum warned of strike disruptions, and Paris hotels struggled to fill rooms. Many visitors — including the U.S. energy secretary — canceled plans to travel to one of the world's most-visited countries amid the strike.

Unprepared tourists discovered historic train stations standing empty Thursday, with about nine out of 10 of high-speed TGV trains canceled. Signs at Paris' Orly Airport

showed "canceled" notices, as the civil aviation authority announced 20% of flights were grounded.

Some travelers showed support for the striking workers, but others complained about being embroiled in someone else's fight.

Beneath the closed Eiffel Tower, tourists from Thailand, Canada and Spain echoed those sentiments.

Subway stations across Paris were shuttered, complicating traffic — and prompting many commuters to use shared bikes or electric scooters despite near-freezing temperatures. Many workers in the Paris region worked from home or took a day off to stay with their children, since 78% of teachers in the capital were on strike.

Bracing for possible violence and damage along the route of the Paris march, police ordered all businesses, cafes and restaurants in the area to close. Authorities also issued a ban on protests on the Champs-Élysées avenue, around the presidential palace, parliament and Notre Dame Cathedral.

Police carried out security checks of more than 3,000 people arriving for the protest and detained 18 even before it started. Embassies warned tourists to avoid the protest area.

Elsewhere around Fran-

ce, thousands of red-vested union activists marched through cities from Marseille on the Mediterranean to Lille in the north.

The big question is how long the strike will last. Transport Minister Elisabeth Borne said she expects the travel troubles to be just as bad Friday.

Unions say it's an open-ended movement and hope to keep up momentum at least for a week, in hopes of forcing the government to make concessions.

Public sector workers fear Macron's reform will force them to work longer and shrink their pensions. And they see this fight as crucial to saving France's social safety net. Some private sector workers welcome the reform, but others support the strike.

While Macron respects the right to strike, he "is convinced that the reform is needed, he is committed, that's the project he presented the French in 2017" during his election campaign, the presidential official said. The official was not authorized to be publicly named.

After extensive meetings with workers, the high commissioner for pensions is expected to detail reform proposals next week, and the prime minister will release the government's plan days after that. **MDT/AP**



**New Zealand** Prime minister Jacinda Ardern (pictured) said she will do all she can to stop a man accused of killing 51 Muslim worshippers from spreading his message of hate at his trial, while she hopes artificial intelligence will one day stop such attacks from being broadcast online.

**Russia** The state-controlled nuclear fuel company said yesterday it has suspended a joint research project with Iran because of its move to resume uranium enrichment. The TVEL company that makes nuclear fuel components said in a statement that Iran's decision to resume uranium enrichment at Fordo facility makes it impossible to convert the facility to produce radioactive isotopes for medical purposes.

**Portugal** won't exclude Chinese companies from supplying technology for the country's next-generation 5G wireless network, senior Portuguese officials told U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo yesterday.



**US** House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (pictured) announced yesterday that the House is moving forward to draft articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump. "Our democracy is what is at stake," Pelosi said. "The president leaves us no choice but to act."

**Australia** Two customs agents and an information technology worker appeared in a court yesterday charged with drug offenses over Australia's largest seizure of methamphetamine, which had been smuggled to Melbourne from Bangkok in stereo speakers. Police estimate the 1.6 metric tons of the drug had a street value of \$818 million. **More on p13**