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SEVERAL HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS WILL REMAIN IN SENIOR PUBLIC ROLES AFTER THE NEW GOVERNMENT TAKES OFFICE LATER THIS MONTH P4

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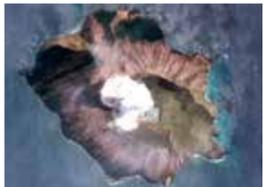
AP PHOTO



China-US Eleven Chinese migrants were discovered hiding in furniture and appliances inside a truck stopped by agents as it entered the U.S. from Mexico at a Southern California border crossing. At least one person was crammed inside a washing machine and another was curled up inside a wooden chest. [More on p12](#)

Myanmar's former pro-democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi denied that her country's armed forces committed genocide against the Rohingya minority, telling the U.N.'s top court that the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Muslims was the unfortunate result of a battle with insurgents. [More on p13](#)

AP PHOTO



New Zealand Police released the names of nine people missing in a volcano disaster. They are seven Australian tourists who made a day trip to White Island from a cruise ship that had left Sydney a few days earlier and two tour guides from New Zealand. The list is not complete because they have not been able to speak to all next of kin. Six people were earlier confirmed dead from Monday's eruption.

AP PHOTO



United Nations Nearly a half-billion people in the Asia-Pacific are still malnourished and eliminating hunger by 2030 requires that millions escape food insecurity each month, according to a report released yesterday by UN agencies. [More on p13](#)

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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REVAMP

INCOMING CHIEF EXECUTIVE HO IAT SENG WILL REPLACE ALL BUT THREE MEMBERS

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XINHUA



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BLOOMBERG



Three veterans of Executive Council to

DANIEL BEITLER, JULIE ZHU

MACAU'S incoming Chief Executive, Ho Iat Seng, has completed the procedures for the formation of the Executive Council for the fifth-term government, according to a statement released by the Government Information Bureau.

The 11 appointees for the Executive Council are André Cheong Weng Chon, Leonel Alberto Alves, Peter Lam Kam Seng, Chan Chak Mo, Frederico Ma Chi Ngai, Lee Chong Cheng, Chan Ka Leong, Iau Teng Pio, Ieong Tou Hong, Zhang Zong Zhen, and Chao Weng Hou.

Their appointment will be published in the Official Gazette on December 20, when the 11 will also be sworn into office.

Only three members of the current ExCo have been reappointed to stay for Ho Iat Seng's government, and they are Chan Chak Mo, Leonel Alverto Alves, and Lam Kam Seng.

Yesterday, Chan Chak Mo commented that the ExCo is a family where people can talk freely. Chao Weng Hou said he hopes to bring young people's voice to the Council, according to a report by TDM.

Ho said he believed that the appointees would fulfil their duties in line with the Basic Law, serve Macau with loyalty and integrity, and strive to advance the implementation of the 'One Country, Two Systems' principle. The role of the Executive Council is to assist the Chief Executive in policymaking.

After the announcement, current Chief Executive Chui Sai On extended his congratulations to all members of the ExCo.

Chui believes that, in the future, the appointed members will effectively assist the next Chief Executive in making decisions and jointly promote the sustainable development of Macau. Chui also fully endorsed the effectiveness of the work of the members of his Executive Council.



LEONEL ALBERTO ALVES

Born in Macau in 1957, Leonel Alberto Alves graduated in Law from the Classical University of Lisbon in 1980. He is a lawyer and member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, an existing member of the MSAR Executive Council, Chairman of the Macau Security Forces and Services Disciplinary Supervisory Committee, Chairman of the Supervisory Committee of the Monetary Authority of Macau, Chairman of the General Assembly of the Holy House of Mercy of Macau, as well as Chairman of the Council of the Macanese Communities. He was awarded the Professional Medal of Merit in 2002 and the Silver Lotus Medal of Honor in 2019.



CHAN CHAK MO

Born in Hong Kong in 1951, Chan Chak Mo holds degrees in business management from Menlo College of California, and the International Open University of Asia (Macau). He is an existing member of the Executive Council, as well as a lawmaker at the Legislative Assembly, member of the Election Commission for the Election of the Chief Executive, member of the Urban Renewal Council, Secretary-General of the Macao Olympic and Sports Committee, Chairman of the United Association of Food and Beverage Merchants of Macau, vice-president of the Industry and Commerce Association of Macau, and president of various sports associations, among others. He was awarded with the Medal of Merit for Tourism in 2003 and the Silver Lotus Medal of Honor in 2019.



PETER LAM KAM SENG

Peter Lam was born in Macau in 1949. In 2010, he received an honorary PhD in Business Management from the University of Science and Technology of Macau. He is a member of the MSAR Executive Council, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the University of Macau, Chairman of the Board of Directors of "Macau Renova Urbana, SA", Member of the Board of Trustees of the Macau Foundation, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Macao Chamber of Commerce, Vice President of the Macau Civil Construction and Property Development Association, Vice President of the Kiang Wu Hospital Charitable Association, and Vice President of the Tong Sin Tong Charitable Association. He was awarded the Medal of Merit for Industry and Commerce, awarded by the MSAR Government in 2001, and the Silver Lotus Medal of Honor in 2009.

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remain in next government



ANDRÉ CHEONG WENG CHON

Secretary for Administration and Justice of the next Macau government, André Cheong was born in Beijing in 1966. He graduated in Portuguese from the University of Foreign Languages of Beijing and graduated in Law from the University of Macau. Prior to the transfer of sovereignty, he was Director of the Macau Land and Real Estate Registry Office. From 2000 to 2014, he was Director of the Legal Affairs Bureau. He has been Commissioner against Corruption since December 2014, and will be succeeded by Chan Tsz King, currently the assistant chief prosecutor.



IEONG TOU HONG

Ieong Tou Hong was born in Guangzhou in 1954. He has a master's degree in economics from Jinan University, Guangzhou, acquired in 1996, and holds a PhD in business management from the Macau University of Science and Technology since 2013. He was a legislator in the third Macau Legislative Assembly. He is Chairman of the Supervisory Board of "Parafuturo de Macao Investimento e Desenvolvimento Lda.," an advisor to the Council for Economic Development, member of the Urban Planning Council, permanent member of the Guangdong Provincial Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Committee, and permanent Vice-Chairman of the Association for the Promotion of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation, as well as holding many other prominent roles.



FREDERICO MA CHI NGAI

Ma Chi Ngai, born in Hong Kong in 1973, acquired a PhD in economics from the Graduate School of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in 2006. He is a businessman, Chairman of the Board of the Macau Science and Technology Development Fund, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors and Chairman of the Strategic Studies Committee of the Macao Chamber of Commerce. He was awarded the Medal of Merit for Industry and Commerce in 2011.



IAU TENG PIO

Born in Macau in 1964, Iau Teng Pio holds a master's degree in law from the University of Macau and a PhD in law from the China University of Political Science and Law. He is an assistant dean and an associate professor at the University of Macau's Faculty of Law, where he is the program coordinator of the law degree (in Chinese) and the law degree (in Chinese and Portuguese). Iau is also lawmaker at the Legislative Assembly and member of the Committee of the Tianjin Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.



LEE CHONG CHENG

Born in Macau in 1965, Lee Chong Cheng has held a masters in management of public and philanthropic affairs from the Macau University of Science and Technology since 2015. He is Vice-Chairman of the Macau Federation of Trade Unions, and a member of the Guangdong Provincial Political Consultative Conference Committee. He was a member of the third and fourth Legislative Assembly of the Macau SAR.



ZHANG ZONG ZHEN

Born in Fujian Province in 1964, Zhang Zong Zhen graduated from Tianjin University in 1984, and then acquired a master's degree in optoelectronics from Huazhong University of Science and Technology in 1987 and PhD in management engineering from Huazhong University of Science and Technology in 2000. He is a businessman and Chairman of the Goldcommon Group, as well as a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and Vice President of the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, in addition to holding several other prominent positions at industrial bodies.



CHAN KA LEONG

A native of Taishan, Guangdong Province, Chan Ka Leong was born in 1977. He graduated in business management from Peking University in 2000, and holds a master's degree in mathematics from the University of Macau, acquired in 2006. He is the Deputy Director of the Escola Dos Moradores De Macau, a member of the advisory board of Municipal Affairs Bureau, Vice-President of the General Union of Macao Residents Associations and Vice-President of the Macau Education Association.



CHAO WENG HOU

Born in Macau in 1989, Chao Weng Hou completed high school at the Saint Paul School of Macau in 2006. He holds a degree in physics and economics from Peking University since 2010, a master's degree in economics from the University of Hong Kong acquired in 2011 and works at the Bank of China (Macau). He is a permanent member of the Shanxi Provincial Youth Federation, and a member of the Higher Education Council of the Macau government. In addition, the youngest member of the ExCo is also the president of the Macao New Chinese Youth Association, Vice President of the Bank of China (Macau) Youth Association and Vice President of the Macao Youth Federation.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

ALEXIS TAM TO LEAD MACAU OFFICES IN PORTUGAL AND EU

THE outgoing Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, has been appointed as the new head of the Macau Economic and Commercial Delegation in Portugal, TDM Macau reported.

According to the news outlet, Tam will replace the current head of the Macau Delegation in the country, O Tin Lin, from the start of 2020.

In the same report, it is also noted that besides leading the office based in Lisbon, Tam will also acquire duties as the head of the Macau Economic and Commercial Delegation for the European Union (EU), headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.

In addition to being the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture during the second term of the government led

by Chui Sai On, Tam was also appointed in the last few years as the head of Portugal affairs, coordinating the Macau-Portugal Joint Commission.

He also led the Guangdong-Macau Cooperation Framework Agreement and the Preparatory Office for the Hengqin Chinese Traditional Medicine and Industrial Park.

Tam entered the government when Chui, at the start of his first term as Chief Executive in December 2009, appointed Tam to head his office and be the government spokesperson.

From December 20, Tam's current government position will be assigned to the former Identification Services Bureau Director, Ao Jeong U, who will succeed Tam in the Secretariat. **RM**

HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS TO REMAIN IN SENIOR PUBLIC ROLES



SEVERAL high-ranking government officials due to step down from their current posts will remain in important positions, according to a report by TDM.

Secretary for Administration and Justice Sonia Chan will serve as chairman of the monitoring committee of a company that the SAR government will establish next year.

The Director General of the Macao Customs Service, Vong Iao Lek, will return to the Sports Bureau, where he had previously served as president.

Chief of the Office of the Chief Executive O Lam will become vice president of the

administration committee of the Municipal Affairs Bureau.

Secretary for Economy and Finance Lionel Leong previously told the Times he would pursue his PhD degree after stepping down from his role.

Both the Director of the Unitary Police Service, Ma Io Kun, and the Director of the Social Welfare Bureau, Vong Yim Mui, will retire once the new government steps into office.

A judge of the Court of Final Appeal, Viriato Manuel Pinheiro de Lima, will retire on December 17 to be succeeded by José Maria Dias Azedo, who is currently a judge at the Court of Second Instance. **JZ**

TOP JUDGE CALLS FOR MACAU-MAINLAND JUDICIAL COOPERATION

THE President of the Court of Final Appeal (TUI), Sam Hou Fai, has told mainland state media that there is an urgent need for enhanced cooperation between the judicial authorities of Macau and the mainland.

Talking to the mainland's state media in Beijing, Sam said that mutual judicial assistance must be initiated as soon as possible.

Such assistance is even more urgent for the cities of the Greater Bay Area than for other mainland cities.

Sam proposed that, before both the mainland and Macau reach a consensus on the topic, the governments of the involved parties should make a special arrangement regarding judicial assistance for specific cases.

Sam's interview is one

of a series of interviews conducted by mainland China amid the 20th anniversary of the Macau handover. Sam said that the TUI and Macau's judicial system are stabilizers in the implementation of the principles of 'One Country, Two Systems', 'Macau People Governing Macau', and a high degree of autonomy.

"It is gratifying to note that, in the past 20 years, there has not been [a need for] an interpretation of the Basic Law by the National People's Congress due to the decision of our TUI and other judicial organs," said Sam.

He further remarked that Macau has "sufficient litigation methods and systems to respond to cases that challenge national sovereignty, security and development interests." **JZ**

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Sands China honors local suppliers, pledging continuous support

SANDS China Ltd. recently recognised some of its exceptional suppliers at the 2019 Sands Supplier Excellence Awards at The Venetian Macao, exemplifying its commitment and trust to local micro and small and medium enterprises.

For seven consecutive years, the annual event is a global initiative of Sands China's parent company, Las Vegas Sands Corp., and acknowledges the cooperation and services of some of the company's most noteworthy suppliers worldwide.

For Dr. Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd., the company's success would not be possible without the wide variety of suppliers that work alongside.

"Together, they help us deliver the outstanding experiences that our guests and visitors have come to expect at our integrated resorts. The company is very pleased to take this opportunity each year to express our gratitude to our suppliers for doing their part to keep this massive operation running smoothly," said Dr. Wong.

"Congratulations to them all for being nominated in this year's awards, and a special thanks to our longstanding suppliers, who have been working with us for 15 years now," the president added.

For years, Sands China has strived to maintain a healthy relationship with several local firms, with some suppliers have had over 15 years of relationship with the integrated resort operator.

"We continue to give special support to some of these SMEs. [...] Such kind of mutual support and mutual benefits can let suppliers have better quality of products and services, which can also contribute to Macau's economy diversification," the president added.

Various Sands China business units and their employees nominated a total of 22 companies in this year's awards – 15 of them local enterprises. Nominees are chosen from a pool of thousands of service providers and suppliers



that do business with Sands China.

Awards were given to distinguished suppliers in nine categories: gaming; furniture, fixtures and equipment; ferry; marketing; outside services; food and beverage; operating supplies and equipment; development and project management; and facilities.

Eight out of the nine winners in this year's awards are local suppliers – a testament to their growth and to the opportunities provided by Sands China's continuous support to local enterprises. Among them, two are run by Macau young entrepreneurs, two are SMEs, and one is a micro enterprise.

Winner of the awards' Outside Services category, MSS Staffing Services Limited, said that the

award provides a platform for local SMEs to be recognized as they strive to pursue excellence in the products and services they provide.

MSS is a local SME founded in 2013, offering various human resource services, including providing support on recruitment, scheduling, payroll, and onsite service.

Seow Yuen Loh, managing director at MSS Recruitment Limited remarked, "this is extremely important and critical to MSS because Sands China has always been very supportive of its SME suppliers as evident to these supplier awards, which I think it is one of its kind in Macau."

For Loh, the recognition Sands China gave to MSS is significant as it acknowledged her team's hard work.

"Because a lot of times, the time works very closely with user departments but day in and out to be actually recognized officially and to be put into the limelight and given a big thank you, I think that outweighs everything else," she added.

Sands China is the firm's first client in its outsourcing services.

Since 2009, the firm has witnessed the growth of Sands China as it grew along together.

"Together hand in hand we grew with Sands' expansion and along the way, they have supported us and allowed us to grow as a local SME to where we are today. The awards tell us that we're doing what Sands [is expecting] us to be doing for them. [...] The recognition is more rewarding [...] It's like a like a big pat from your bosses," she added.

Echoing the same sentiments, recipient of the award in the Development and Project Management category, IN Design Studio Limited said that the awards is a testament of the integrated resort operator's ongoing support to local firms, allowing them to expand their businesses.

IN Design is a local micro enterprise providing Sands China with both lead consultancy and regulatory consultancy services for construction projects since its establishment in 2017.

"These awards are really encouraging for small companies like us and it's an honor to participate in the projects of Sands China," said Isabella Ng, Partner of IN Design.

"We started as a small company with two people and as we started to acquire projects [from Sands China], we slowly grew to 13 people. Getting to work with people from the company has helped us grow professionally," she added.

The awards ceremony event featured entertainment and an appreciation dinner themed on the hit film "The Greatest Showman," with around 500 guests attending, including more than 300 representing about 160 suppliers, mostly from Macau, Hong Kong and mainland China.

Award winners are selected each year by a judging committee composed of Sands China executive management. Judges consider several criteria, including suppliers' corporate culture and sustainability, cost management, service excellence, project management, quality management, and innovation.

With Sands China's current ongoing expansion for The Londoner, which is set to open progressively in 2020 and 2021, the USD2.2 billion project is also significantly involving local SME suppliers, allowing them to continually grow their businesses.

Dr. Wong is confident to carry along these SMEs in the expansion project.

"We have been doing that over the last 15 years when we built The Venetian Macao and The Parisian Macao. We were relying a lot on local suppliers. I'm very confident that in these phases of expansion, we will continue to grow along with the SMEs," he said.





Members of a Macau youth delegation are seen during a visit to the mainland's Hunan Province earlier this year, where they and students of sister schools in Hunan put together puzzle pieces resembling the national flag

MAINLAND'S EDUCATION THROUGH LABOR NOT APPLICABLE IN MACAU

JULIE ZHU

LAST month, at the Legislative Assembly, lawmaker Lei Chan U proposed that Macau should implement mainland China's Education Through Labor (ETL) approach.

ETL is a common approach in mainland China, which aims to bring every citizen to the realization that they should make contributions, most of which should be voluntary, to the development of socialism. In mainland China, ETL has a political agenda, aiming to instill a communist mindset into students from a young age.

It is highlighted that in Chinese socialism, working is viewed as an honorable obligation of every citizen. ETL in mainland China has been weakened in schools, according to Lei, softened in families,

and faded in society, "which has fostered the idea of becoming rich overnight and gaining without working."

Speaking to the Times, Sulu Sou, who is the youngest lawmaker at the Macau Legislative Assembly, remarked that mainland China's ETL is "incompatible" with Macau's society, especially because of the 'One Country, Two Systems' policy. The incompatibility is based on Macau's lack of a political, social and traditional background for the implementation of such an education campaign.

Sou suggests that even though ETL is not needed in Macau, a deeper comprehension of labor rights and labor protections

among the city's workers would nevertheless be beneficial

"Macau can still enhance the

" Macau can still enhance the promotion of labor laws, respect workers' values and care more about the protection of workers' rights.

SULU SOU
LAWMAKER

promotion of labor laws, respect workers' values and care more about the protection of workers' rights," said Sou.

A trade union bill seeking to enhance worker protections in Macau has been defeated at least 10 times at the Legislative Assembly since the 1999 handover. Supporters of the bill stem from the democrat and worker factions of the legislature, while the pro-establishment and business interests are generally opposed to it.

Recently, several lawmakers have proposed to implement some of mainland China's education campaigns in Macau, including Mak Soi Kun, who advocates civic education and the adoption of mainland history textbooks.

Speaking about Macau's youth policies and mainland-oriented

education propaganda, Sou hopes that Macau can provide its students with more diverse opinions to enrich their learning experience.

Believing that the propaganda aim of aligning Macau students with mainland China's national strategy has already been achieved, Sou hopes that the city can invest more resources into attracting students to visit other places rather than just mainland China.

In Sou's opinion, local students can still build independent thoughts even if they receive education in mainland China. Simultaneously, Sou acknowledged the difficulties in having few options within Macau's government-organized activities.

"First, you only have mainland China to choose from. Second, you only have mainland government official activities to choose from," Sou noted.

Educator Teresa Vong, who is an associate professor of education at the University of Macau, told the Times that Macau students indeed lack hands-on activities.

In Vong's opinion, Macau families do not provide opportunities for children to do hands-on activities because families where both the mother and father are employed hire domestic helpers and that makes it "very difficult" for children to learn to take care of themselves.

Macau's schools are also not offering students necessary hands-on activities, according to Vong.

The government can also do more to do develop the practical skills of young people in Macau. According to Vong, the Macau government's cash handout program does not help to teach students about the importance of working. "In such an environment, students do not need to work hard," said Vong.

Vong also proposed that Macau should organize more activities in kindergartens to train students' hands-on ability and Macau's school education should include more activities involving life skills.

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XINHUA PERSPECTIVE

Meet Macau's confident, happy millennial generation

XU LINGUI, REN YAOTI

CHOI Hio Lam was born in Macau near the turn of the millennium.

Like most millennials the world over, Choi grew up in an increasingly affluent society. But she and her Macau cohorts stand out from the international pack as 1999 marked a shift of fortune for the former Portuguese colony.

Choi was only eight days old when the sovereignty over Macau was transferred to China on December 20, 1999, and it became a special administrative region under the 'One Country, Two Systems' principle.

Today, Choi studies traditional Chinese music in Beijing and says she is as excited about the upcoming 20th anniversary of Macau's return as her 20th birthday.

In just two decades, Macau has been transformed into a prosperous cosmopolis with a rapidly developing economy, modern infrastructures and an promising social welfare system.

As the first generation born in Macau after the city's return, Choi and her peers benefit from the boom and are empowered to dream big. "It has been a good and happy life for our generation in Macao," said Choi.

Into the new millennium, more investment has been poured into the Macau Special Administrative Region to improve its infrastructure, education and public security.

Its gross domestic product has increased from 51.9 billion patacas at its return to 444.7 billion patacas (about \$55 billion) in 2018. The GDP per capita of the region reached about \$83,000 in 2018.

Fuller coffers have enabled the government to invest in better education. According to a recently released report from the Programme for International Student Assessment 2018, conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, among the 79 participating countries and regions, Macau's 15-year-olds ranked third in reading, math and science.

Macau students not only score better in tests but also have better chances to pursue their extracurriculum passions.

Choi began learning music at the age of three, starting with the piano. But influenced by her grandfather, Choi soon found her true passion was for gu zheng, a classical Chinese zither. And Choi was not alone, as Macau saw the popularity of traditional Chinese instruments grow markedly in the first decade of the century.

Cultural exchanges expanded and more attention was paid to the education of traditional Chinese culture. After graduating from high school, Choi set her sights on studying traditional Chinese music at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing.

Her parents tried to dissuade her from going and argued that finance or business might be better choices, but Choi insisted.

New to Beijing, Choi practiced hard, seven to eight hours a day, and managed to master her skills. In October, Choi was invited to play at the 33rd Macao International Music Festival. She now plans to go overseas to bring knowledge of traditional Chinese instruments to the world.

Choi is one of a growing number of Macau youth coming to study in or visit the mainland every year. This is made possible by both the public and private sectors through projects like exchanges between middle schools in the mainland and Macau and themed activities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area.

Alex Mok, the head of the Macao Youth Federation, said such exchange activities would help pass on the fine tradition of patriotism in Macau.

"We want to let young people in Macau know that without our motherland, we wouldn't have what we have," Mok said.

Macau's young generation also shines on the international stage.

The Labour Affairs Bureau of the Macau SAR trained a total of 104 young representatives to participate in the WorldSkills Competitions from 2001 to 2019. Fong Hok Kin, now 23, won the highest award for Macau competitors in 2017 when he bagged the gold medal for web design and development at the 44th WorldSkills Competition in Abu Dhabi.

Yet the gold medal was just the beginning. Apart from working at a start-up company, Fong is developing an online system for grocery stores and aims to promote it in the Greater Bay Area.

"The competitiveness of Macau's youth is reflected in their integrative qualities," said Sou Chio Fai, director of the Higher Education Bureau in Macau.

Bakery lover Choi Ka Kei, 21, won a medal for excellence in a WorldSkills Competition bakery contest by blending traditional Macao snacks. Choi said she would continue improving her bakery skills as Macau is striving to become a world center of tourism and leisure.

Tourism is a pillar of the local economy. In 2018, Macau received some 35.8 million visitors. Macau officials give credit to the central government's policy support and the mainland's rapid development for Macau's tourism boom over the past two decades.

Fanny Vong, president of the Macau Institute for Tourism Studies, said the school's enrollment is expanding every year to meet the tourism industry's huge demand for talent.

"Many students have secured job offers when they are on internships," she said.

In recent years, Macau has also been consolidating its position as a platform for commercial and trade cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, offering Portuguese-speaking Macau young people more opportunities in the Belt and Road Initiative projects.

Government statistics show that the proportion of Macau's students entering college after high school has grown to over 95 percent, and about 82 percent of Macau students are capable of getting a full-time job within half a year after graduating from universities in and outside Macau.

"They are a happy generation," said Sou.

The first 20 years after Macau's return has brought a huge number of opportunities for the younger generation, and the trend is expected to continue in the next 20 years. "Young people of Macau need to take the chances presented to them, and actively create opportunities for themselves," Mok said. XINHUA

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

FRINGE FESTIVAL RETURNS ACROSS 27 CITY VENUES

ANTHONY LAM

THE 19th Macao City Fringe Festival will be held early next year, with the largest number of venues in its history. The festival will take place across 27 different venues between January 10 and 19. Some 17 programs and 13 outreach activities will showcase the artistic side of Macau's streets and alleyways, the organizer, the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), revealed yesterday.

For the first major art scene in Macau next year, the IC organized a press conference announcement yesterday at the newly-opened Xian Xinghai Museum, dedicated to the Macau-born musician.

This year, the festival has launched a special series titled "Crème de la Fringe" with two sub-themes, namely "On Site" and "Puppet and Object Theatre Festival in Coloane." The former features three dance performances, ImprovFlashMob, Body Traveller and A Step to Theatre: Put out the Flame, as well as dance workshops and a sharing session.

"On Site" hopes to provide a transition from the street to theatre. Artists will use their bodies to present different possibilities, enabling the audience to feel the

power of physical movement at close range.

"Puppet and Object Theatre Festival in Coloane" will feature three contemporary puppet theatre productions, Fragile, Story Market, and Nightwalk: Pourquoi?, presented by artists from Macau, Taiwan and Canada in different styles, as well as extension workshops.

"The Fringe Festival seeks to establish itself as an event featuring exceptional characteristics and innovative ideas, and is committed to building a stage for diverse performances," said IC President, Mok Ian Ian.

Participating in the Macao City Fringe Festival has also proved beneficial to some smaller companies. "Each year's local productions, which promise great potential, are invited to the stage of the Macao Arts Festival for the following year, and will also be recommended for overseas events," said the cultural affairs official.

Some of the works have been selected to be presented in Chongqing, China and Gwacheon, South Korea, providing their respective creators opportunities to conduct intellectual exchange with counterparts in the two cities.

MATCHMAKING EVENTS TO MAKE DOUBLE DEBUT

One show and one activity will explore romance in the format of in-person matchmaking events.

That may sound and feel like relics from yesteryear. However, the increasing popularity of instant messaging systems may or may not make the initiation of a relationship, whether romantic or otherwise, any easier.

Two such matchmaking events will be held during this festival to play cupid for people afraid to experiment with pick-up lines.

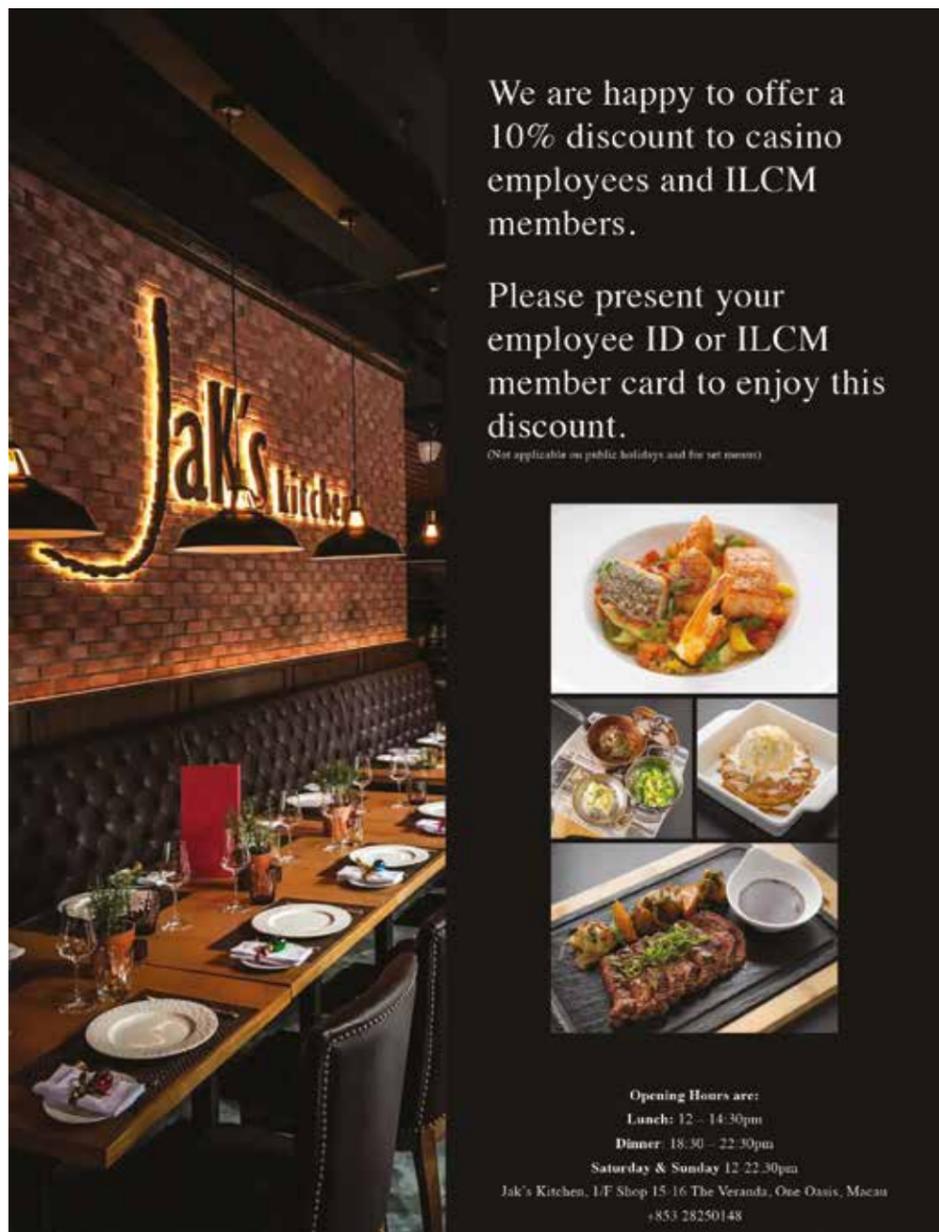
CK Chan, in association with Co-coism from Taiwan, will be presenting three cinematic sessions for single riders, although couples are also welcome.

The Cinematic Duo invites single riders on a cinematic journey filled with agreements and disputes that may arise in anybody's romantic relationship.

"It is not only suitable for single riders, but also couples who want to revisit the yesterdays they've gone through," said Chan, who stressed that her show welcomes people of all sexual orientations. "Our audience may find their partner during our shows," added Chan.



AD



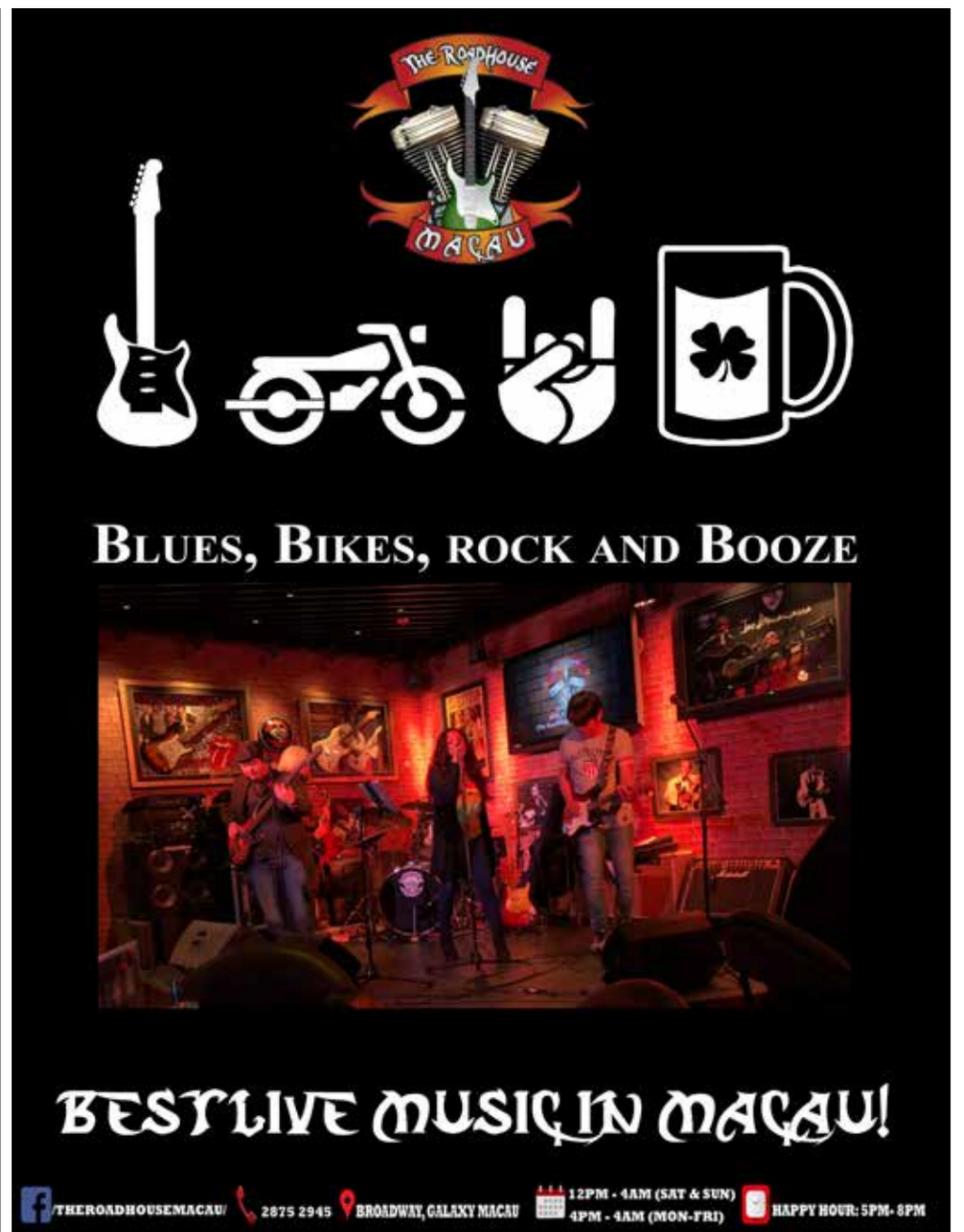
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This December 2017 shows the Canton Tower and Zhujiang New Town in Guangzhou

Hong Kong youth pursue entrepreneurial dream in Guangzhou

JASON Choi, a young entrepreneur from Hong Kong, is pursuing his long-held dream to establish a creative advertising festival geared toward youth from Guangdong province.

The Hong Kong youth, who now runs his own business on the Chinese mainland, is building a bridge between the youth of Hong Kong and the mainland.

The Lingnan Youth Creative Week kicked off in late October in Guangzhou, capital of southern China's Guangdong Province. The creative advertising festival, organized by Choi, attracted a group of insightful and creative young people from Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau and helped transform

their ideas into practice.

"Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau share the same culture of Lingnan, which lays the foundation of the creative week," Choi said.

In 2014, Choi was enrolled in Jinan University in Guangzhou to study advertising in the School of Journalism and Communication.

In Choi's eyes, students from the mainland are hardworking and industrious, and Choi has learned a new way of thinking from them. "We live in different cities, each with their own advantages, so there is a better chemical reaction among us."

While studying at university, he participated in various creative advertising competitions with

mainland students and won several international awards including the Crystal Award of ADS STARS in Busan, the Republic of Korea.

"It was the combination of our ideas that helped us succeed," he said.

After graduation, Choi threw his sights upon the broader start-up market in the Greater Bay Area. "I got the idea of starting my business in middle school but found it was not easy to do so in Hong Kong," he said.

He decided to pursue entrepreneurship in Guangzhou and studied at Jinan University.

"Guangzhou gives a lot of support to new enterprises, and Hong Kong students have the same opportunities as their

mainland counterparts," he said.

After graduation, he set up his own studio with most of the members coming from Hong Kong.

Since the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area was released in February, more and more youth from Hong Kong and Macau have set their sights on Guangdong.

In May, the Guangzhou government introduced its policies to support young people from Hong Kong and Macau to have careers in Guangzhou.

Guangzhou will strengthen its efforts to help boost innovation and entrepreneurship and set up a fund totaling 1 billion yuan (about 142 million U.S. dollars) to help Hong Kong and Macau youth at all entrepreneurial phases. Their start-up projects that land in Guangzhou can be given bonuses and subsidies worth up to 200,000 yuan.

"There will be more exchanges and communication between Hong Kong and Guangzhou. With policies in the Greater Bay Area being implemented, as entrepreneurs, we should take the lead," Choi said. **DB/XINHUA**

Hengqin economy has grown 64% over a decade

THE economy of Hengqin has grown by about 64% over the past decade, according to a senior Hengqin official.

Niu Jing, Chinese Communist Party Secretary for Hengqin New District, also said that there are 2,070 Macau businesses currently registered in the region, with 39 enterprises running traditional Chi-

nese medicine businesses on the island.

He also stated that there are 2.57 square kilometers of unused land in the Guangdong-Macau Cooperation Industrial Park. The usage of these lands is now under a joint evaluation led by the Macau Special Administrative Region Government. They are expected to be used for emerging high tech-

nological industries and modern service industries.

According to Niu, Hengqin has become the most popular entrepreneurship incubator for Macau entrepreneurs and start-ups. There is a youth entrepreneur incubation valley on the island, which has been officially recognized as the National Entrepreneur Incubator.

There is another policy supporting Macau youth entrepreneurs in Hengqin. The mainland city will offer a maximum interest subsidy of 3 million yuan to support the daily life, residence and office rental costs of young entrepreneurs.

The annual average increase in fixed assets on the island is 45%. As per end of November this year, a total of 280 billion Chinese yuan has been invested in fixed assets on the island.

As for joint legal services, Niu introduced that the first trilateral law

firm is now in operation in Hengqin. It is capable of providing one-stop legal services covering the legal systems in three different jurisdictions, namely mainland China, Macau and Hong Kong.

Meanwhile, Guo Yonghang, Party Secretary for Zhuhai City verified that construction work at the new Hengqin border checkpoint has finished. It will be operative once the necessary procedures and laws are in place. Construction at the Qingmao border checkpoint, located near Ilha Verde, is also complete. **AL**

SHENZHEN CUSTOMS RECORD IMPORTED CASE OF ZIKA VIRUS

Shenzhen customs has detected a case of imported Zika virus in a man returning from abroad, local health authorities said Tuesday. The patient, 33, has been put under quarantine and is in stable condition, according to the provincial health commission. Zika, a mosquito-borne virus, can cause symptoms including fever, rashes and arthralgia, and in rare cases it can be lethal. It has also been linked to brain abnormalities in unborn babies and the paralyzing Guillain-Barre syndrome. The General Administration of Customs has urged people to protect themselves from Zika when traveling abroad and called for voluntary reports if travelers begin experiencing typical symptoms of the virus. With the new case, China has reported a total of 30 cases of imported Zika virus since 2016.

HONG KONG EDUCATION BUREAU MULLS PUNISHING 30 TEACHERS FOR MISCONDUCT

The Education Bureau (EDB) in Hong Kong has mulled punishing teachers for professional misconduct related to social unrest. An EDB spokesperson said violations of teacher's code of conduct were found in 30 of 106 investigations the EDB carried out since June this year. As important role models for students, teachers' words and deeds must conform to the community's moral and professional expectations, the spokesperson said. The EDB's move came amid rising concerns about teachers' role in prolonged social unrest and even violent incidents in recent months. About 40 percent of 6,022 people arrested for offenses including unlawful assembly, participation in riot and possession of offensive weapons since June were students, the police have said. The EDB has asked for the suspension of a teacher arrested on Monday, the spokesperson said. The spokesperson added the EDB will follow up every case related to teachers, who, if convicted, may face cancellation of their registration.

FOSHAN MOUNTAIN FIRE NOW UNDER CONTROL IN GUANGDONG

A fire that broke out in a mountainous area in south China's Guangdong Province has been brought under control, with no casualties reported, said the provincial emergency management office. The fire started on a mountain in Gaoming District, Foshan, on Thursday afternoon last week. A total of 1,069 locals near the fire site were evacuated to safe areas. By Friday night, 22 rescue teams involving 2,423 people and helicopters had been dispatched to battle the fire. Firefighters blamed the blaze on both the dry weather in Guangdong since September and strong winds in particular last week.

IAIN MARLOW
& BLAKE SCHMIDT

FOREIGN EXPERTS EXIT HK POLICE PROBE AFTER DISPUTES

A panel of international experts advising Hong Kong's police watchdog announced it would withdraw from a review of officers' conduct, a move that will likely bolster criticism of the city's response to protesters demands.

The group of overseas experts advising Hong Kong's Independent Police Complaints Council said in a statement yesterday they would "stand aside" after disagreements over the need for more powers to investigate police behavior during four months of unrest. The "dialogue with the IPCC has not led to any agreed process" in which the panel could continue to support the review of police actions, the International Experts Panel said.

"We ultimately concluded that a crucial shortfall was evident in the powers, capacity and independent investigative capability of IPCC," the group said. "As a result, the IEP has taken the decision to formally stand aside from its role. As a group, we remain committed to supporting and engaging with the IPCC, if and when it develops the necessary capabilities and provides its draft interim report on the protests."

The withdrawal of the panel - led by Denis O'Connor, the former chief inspector of constabulary for England and Wales - will

AP PHOTO



likely spur more criticism of the government's decision not to appoint a formal commission of inquiry led by judges. The agency said officers have used a reasonable amount of force despite protester accusations of police brutality and condemnation by foreign governments and human rights groups, including Amnesty

International.

With the government refusing to meet protesters' demands, including a restart to electoral demands, the police have found themselves in increasingly violent confrontations with demonstrators. The police believe they were the intended targets of two homemade bombs defused Monday at

a Catholic school in the Wan Chai area, the South China Morning Post newspaper reported, citing people it didn't identify.

The IPCC said in a statement it "deeply appreciates" the panel's work and was pleased the experts wanted to remain engaged. IPCC Chairman Anthony Neoh acknowledged the criticism that

the agency lacks full investigative powers, but said the council had to push forward with its study under the existing framework.

The panel's decision to withdraw came after after Neoh criticized it in an interview with a mainland Chinese TV station, saying "They don't understand well our current situation." "I already told them, 'Thank you for your opinions. But we must work in accordance with the laws,'" Neoh told Shenzhen TV, according to Radio Television Hong Kong.

There were 1,386 complaints filed against the police between June 9 and Dec. 10, according to the IPCC's website, although protesters argue many grievances go unreported due to fear of retribution or lack of confidence in the panel.

In early November, Clifford Stott, a member of the panel and a professor at Keele University in the U.K., said on Twitter there was a need to "substantially enhance IPCC capacity."

"Given the scale of events in Hong Kong it remains to be seen whether a light touch, oversight body like the IPCC, can make sufficient progress to produce any decisive contribution to an account of developments, that might enable necessary policy changes in policing practice," the independent expert panel said Nov. 8. AP

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BLOOMBERG



Here's how miserable 2019 was for the airline industry

CHRISTOPHER JASPER
& SIDDHARTH PHILIP

AIRLINE industry profits will come in lower than forecast this year as passenger numbers and cargo volumes are held back by slowing economic growth and global trade wars, the International Air Transport Association said.

With less than a month left in 2019, the trade body lowered its annual profit estimate to \$25.9 billion - \$2.1 billion less than it predicted in June, and almost \$10 billion down from forecasts published a year ago. Geopolitical tensions, social unrest and uncertainty around Brexit are contributing to tougher business conditions, IATA said.

The new figure equates to a

5% decline from earnings last year, which were restated by IATA yesterday. The group expects an improvement in 2020, but there are big caveats: Concern about carbon emissions is spurring taxes on jet fuel and may already be eating into demand for air travel in Europe. An uncertain return for the grounded Boeing Co. 737 Max further clouds the outlook.

"The big question for 2020 is how capacity will develop, particularly when, as expected, the grounded 737 Max aircraft return to service and delayed deliveries arrive," IATA Chief Executive Officer Alexandre de Juniac said.

While the Max was idled in March after two deadly crashes, Boeing has been busy making

more. Hundreds of completed planes remain in storage while the U.S. company waits for regulators to clear the narrow-body workhorse to fly again.

Airlines are expected to suffer an overall loss this year in Africa, the Middle East and also Latin America

One worry is that a glut of new aircraft will expand airline capacity too fast, holding back fares and denting the forecast rebound in earnings, which IATA now pegs at \$29.3 billion for the coming year.

The emerging phenomenon of flight-shaming is another challenge for the industry, with changing passenger habits and a possible tax on airline fuel in Europe threatening industry profit.

De Juniac reiterated calls for investment in sustainable fuel and other steps to cut CO2 emissions, while keeping up an industry drumbeat against taxation. Still, he acknowledged that airlines must be more proactive in communicating to the public and to governments about the measures they are taking.

"People are adjusting their personal habits to manage their individual carbon footprints," De Juniac said at an event in Geneva. The head of SAS AB, Scandi-

navia's biggest network airline, said separately in an interview that the European Union's planned introduction of the kerosene tax under its "Green Deal" could leave carriers at a disadvantage to rivals from outside the bloc.

"This is a global industry, we meet competitors who are in all parts of the world that can fly here," CEO Rickard Gustafson said at Stockholm's Arlanda airport. "We can't have other costs that the others do not have."

Airlines are expected to suffer an overall loss this year in Africa, the Middle East and also Latin America, where growth at four carriers has been limited by the Max grounding. North America should be easily the most profitable region, accounting for 65% of industry earnings, according to IATA.

Latin America should end losses next year as regional economies strengthen, according to the trade group, which represents 290 airlines. At the same time, things could get tougher in North America, with earnings down as fares and margins are hit by slowing growth and a surge in jet deliveries, led by the Max.

European profits should improve in 2020 though the positive aggregate performance led by a handful of dominant carriers "hides a long list of airlines just breaking even or making losses" following a spate of bankruptcies in recent years, IATA said. De Juniac said on Bloomberg TV that further failures can't be excluded.

Cargo revenues will slip for a third year in 2020, the forecast suggests, and while Asia-Pacific, the biggest region for airborne exports, should show an upturn in earnings, the industry lobby said it's assuming there'll be no reversal of tariffs, with trade wars still simmering.

Britain's exit from the EU may also be problematic for the freight sector, creating increased paperwork and potentially weighing on U.K. shipments as the economy comes under pressure, according to IATA Chief Economist Brian Pearce. **BLOOMBERG**

TOURISM

Visitors surging to Singapore help push hotel deals to record

FARIS MOKHTAR

HOTEL deals in Singapore are set for a record amid a surge in tourist arrivals buoyed by people wanting to avoid the protests in Hong Kong.

Hospitality transaction volumes were an unprecedented SGD5.7 billion (\$4.2 billion) as of Nov. 30, according to prelimi-

nary figures from Colliers International Group Inc., about five times 2018 and the most in at least a decade.

A record 5 million visitors came to the island in the third quarter, led by tourists from Greater China, Singapore Tourism Board data show. That brought arrivals so far this year to 15.8 million.

Govinda Singh, execu-

tive director of valuation and consultancy services at Colliers, said that Singapore "no doubt" benefited from the protests that have rocked Hong Kong for the past six months.

The opening of a vast new entertainment complex Jewel Changi Airport - which boasts the world's tallest indoor waterfall - as well as the re-opening of the iconic Raffles Hotel

and additional business generated by the F1 Singapore Grand Prix also helped, he said.

A few major Singapore real estate investment trust mergers boosted transactions too, according to Tricia Song, head of research for Singapore at Colliers.

The biggest deal this year was the purchase of Mandarin Orchard for

SGD1.2 billion following the merger of OUE Commercial REIT and OUE Hospitality Trust. The group also bought the Crowne Plaza hotel at Changi Airport for SGD486 million, in what was 2019's third-biggest deal.

Barring an economic crisis, the near- to mid-term outlook for the hospitality market is favorable, said Christine Li, head

of research for Singapore and Southeast Asia at Cushman & Wakefield Plc.

With some large bi-annual events and exhibitions making a return and new ones surfacing, 2020 is expected to be another bumper year, Li said.

A slew of new attractions should also help solidify Singapore's position as a Southeast Asia tourism hub. **AP**

AP PHOTO



Chinese minister of propaganda Huang Kunming

BEIJING OFFICIALS LASH OUT AT US OVER NEW LEGISLATION

CHINESE officials lashed out at the U.S. yesterday over recent legislation passed by Congress criticizing Beijing for its policies in Hong Kong and the Xinjiang region in western China, as well as ongoing trade disputes.

They marked the latest salvos in an ongoing campaign of vilification over what Beijing considers hostile acts aimed at restraining its development as a world power.

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu did not mention the U.S. by name, but it was clear what nation he was referring to yesterday when he said a "certain individual country vigorously starts trade wars and constantly introduces so-called human rights and democracy bills to openly interfere in the internal affairs of

other countries."

Chinese diplomats have derided the legislation as "stupid" and "malicious" and sought to rally friendly foreign governments, politicians and academics to condemn it.

Ma also accused the U.S. of spreading conflicts and humanitarian crises elsewhere "under the banner of human rights," reflecting complaints that American interventions and the promotion of democracy have destabilized countries from Syria to Venezuela.

China has accused the U.S. of fomenting mass anti-Beijing demonstrations in Hong Kong that are in their seventh month, refusing to recognize protesters' de-

mands for expanded democracy through direct elections for the semi-autonomous Chinese territory's leader and members of its legislature.

"There is no universal human rights path and model in the world."

HUANG KUNMING

The U.S. legislation condemns the mass detentions of an estimated more than 1 million Uighurs, Kazakhs and others. It also raises possible sanctions against Chine-

se government officials deemed responsible for human rights abuses in Xinjiang. China claims that the vast system of detention camps is merely part of a program to provide job skills and fight poverty and religious radicalization.

Ma also attacked U.S. trade policy, saying — again without mentioning Washington by name — that the country referred to "wielded sanctions batons," and engaged in economic blockades, the decoupling of science and technology and financial sanctions against target nations, the main one presumably being China.

"These acts not only hinder the development of the world economy, but also violate the human rights of the people of the affected countries. They must be firmly opposed and resisted," Ma told participants at a forum on human rights in Beijing.

Also addressing the forum, Chinese minister of propaganda Huang Kunming reiterated Chi-

na's rejection of the notion of a universal human rights standard. China insists it is up to each nation to choose its own path when it comes to human rights, and dismisses Western concepts of free speech, liberal democracy and civil rights in favor of tough authoritarian control aimed at growing the economy and raising living standards.

"There is no universal human rights path and model in the world," Huang said. "The development of the cause of human rights must and can only be promoted in accordance with the national conditions of each country and the needs of the people."

According to Chinese state media, officials and scholars from more than 70 Asian, African and Latin American developing countries, as well as the United Nations, attended the two-day 2019 South-South Human Rights Forum, hosted by the Cabinet's information office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. AP

Chinese migrants found hiding in appliances at US crossing

ELEVEN Chinese migrants were discovered hiding in furniture and appliances inside a truck stopped by agents as it entered the U.S. from Mexico at a Southern California border crossing, federal officials said.

At least one person was crammed inside a washing machine and another was curled up inside a wooden chest, according to photos provided Monday by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Authorities searched

the truck Saturday evening at the border crossing between Tijuana, Mexico and San Diego, the federal agency said.

The truck driver, a 42-year-old U.S. citizen, was arrested on suspicion of human smuggling, a Customs and Border Protection statement said. He was not identified.

The 11 Chinese citizens were detained pending criminal and immigration proceedings, the statement said.

"These are human

beings that smugglers subject to inhumane conditions that could have deadly consequences," Pete Flores, director of field operations in San Diego for Customs and Border Protection, said in the statement. "Fortunately no one was seriously injured."

Six Chinese nationals were found last month at the same border crossing concealed behind a false wall in a truck trying to enter the U.S., officials have said. AP



This photo released Monday by U.S. Customs and Border Protection shows hands held up by a person or persons hiding in a washing machine

MYANMAR

Suu Kyi denies genocide allegations at top UN court

ALEKS FURTULA
& LORNE COOK, THE HAGUE

MYANMAR'S former pro-democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday denied that her country's armed forces committed genocide against the Rohingya minority, telling the U.N.'s top court that the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Muslims was the unfortunate result of a battle with insurgents.

In a measured tone, Suu Kyi calmly refuted allegations that the army had killed civilians, raped women and torched houses in 2017 in what Myanmar's accusers describe as a deliberate campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide that saw more than 700,000 Rohingya flee to neighboring Bangladesh.

She said the allegations stem from "an internal armed conflict started by coordinated and comprehensive armed attacks ... to which Myanmar's defense services responded. Tragically, this armed conflict led to the exodus of several hundred thousand Muslims."

Her appearance at the International Court of Justice was striking in that Suu Kyi was defending the very armed forces that had kept her under house arrest for about 15 years. She was awarded the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize in absentia

AP PHOTO



for championing democracy and rights under Myanmar's then-ruling junta. A small group of her supporters gathered yesterday outside The Hague-based court.

Suu Kyi told the court that the African nation of Gambia, which brought the legal action against Myanmar on behalf of the 57-country Organization of Islamic Cooperation, had provided "an incomplete and misleading

factual picture" of what happened in Myanmar's northern Rakhine state in August 2017.

Gambia alleges that genocide was committed and is still ongoing. It has asked the world court to take action to stop the violence, including "all measures within its power to prevent all acts that amount to or contribute to the crime of genocide" in Myanmar.

But Suu Kyi said developments

in one of Myanmar's poorest regions are "complex and not easy to fathom." She detailed how the army responded on Aug. 25, 2017, to attacks by insurgents trained by Afghan and Pakistan extremists.

Addressing the court in her capacity as Myanmar's foreign minister, Suu Kyi insisted that the country's armed forces had tried "to reduce collateral damage" during fighting in 12 locations. While con-

ceding that excessive force might have been used and that one helicopter may have killed "non-combatants," Suu Kyi said a Myanmar investigation is looking into what happened and should be allowed to finish its work.

"Can there be genocidal intent on the part of a state that actively investigates, prosecutes and punishes soldiers and officers who are accused of wrongdoing?" she asked the court.

Suu Kyi and Myanmar's legal team argued that the genocide convention does not apply to Myanmar. They invoked Croatia during the Balkans wars in the 1990s, saying that no genocide was deemed there when thousands of people were forced from their homes by fighting.

Earlier this week, Justice Minister Aboubacarr Tambadou urged the International Court of Justice to "tell Myanmar to stop these senseless killings, to stop these acts of barbarity that continue to shock our collective conscience, to stop this genocide of its own people."

Also, the U.S. slapped economic sanctions on four Myanmar military officers suspected of human rights violations. It sanctioned Min Aung Hlaing, commander of Myanmar's armed forces, over allegations of serious rights abuses. Deputy commander Soe Win and two other military leaders, Than Oo and Aung Aung, were also targeted.

"There are credible claims of mass-scale rape and other forms of sexual violence committed by soldiers under Min Aung Hlaing's command," a U.S. statement said.

The court's hearings on Myanmar are scheduled to end today. AP

UN: Nearly a half-billion in Asia-Pacific still going hungry

NEARLY a half-billion people in the Asia-Pacific are still malnourished and eliminating hunger by 2030 requires that millions escape food insecurity each month, according to a report released yesterday by UN agencies.

Data compiled by the United Nations show slow progress and even backsliding in the areas of child wasting and stunting and other problems related to malnutrition. Worsening inequality means that despite relatively fast economic growth, incomes in the region are not increasing fast enough to help ensure adequate, nutritional diets for hundreds of millions still living in poverty, it says.

The report urges that governments combine efforts to end poverty and with nu-

AP PHOTO



trition, health and education-oriented policies.

The UN's sustainable development goals for 2030 call for ending hunger and ensuring all people have adequate access to food all around the year.

"We are not on track,"

said Kundhavi Kadiresan, the FAO's regional representative. "Progress in reducing undernourishment has slowed a lot in the past few years."

More than a fifth of all people in the Asia-Pacific region are facing moderate

to severe food insecurity, meaning they must scrimp on food or go hungry part of the year, and in the worst cases go days without eating.

More than half of the 479 million in the region who are undernourished live in South Asia, where more than a third of all children suffer from chronic malnutrition, said the report written by the Food and Agriculture Organization, UNICEF, the World Food Program and the World Health Organization.

In India, nearly 21% of children suffer from wasting, a more acute form of malnutrition.

Failing to ensure children are well nourished jeopardizes their future development, especially their cognitive abilities — a crucial handicap in the 21st

century age of advanced technologies, said Michael Samson, research director of the Economic Policy Research Institute, who spoke at the report's release in Bangkok.

Cognitive abilities cannot be traded or manufactured, so "Investing in the first 1,000 days (of a child's life) is the most important investment you can make in future productivity," he said.

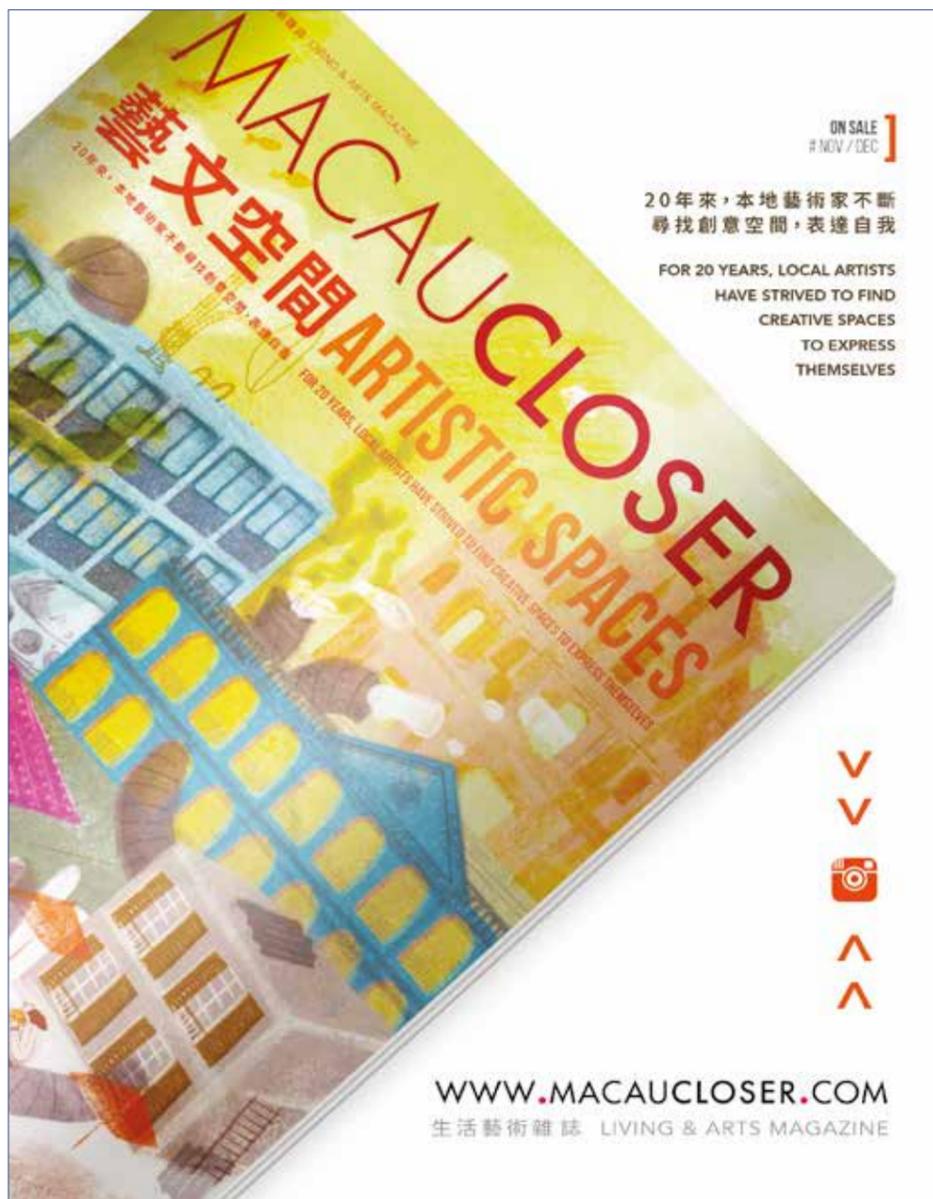
Governments have begun to implement some policies aimed at addressing the severe shortfalls in child and maternal nutrition. Thailand has provided subsidies that have helped improve the health and diets of families with young children. In neighboring Myanmar, trial programs in the Chin state are being ex-

panded to cover more of the country.

Cambodia is expanding a program called NOURISH that originally was funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development. It provides help for impoverished pregnant women and families during the first 1,000 days of a baby's life.

While many in Asia still do not get enough calories to thrive, in the Pacific the problem is too many empty calories: obesity rates in the Pacific islands are among the world's highest and rising fast, partly because healthy foods are costly and less available and partly because local cultures focus much on feasting, said Lu'isa Manuofetoa, the acting chief executive for Tonga's Ministry of Internal Affairs. AP

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

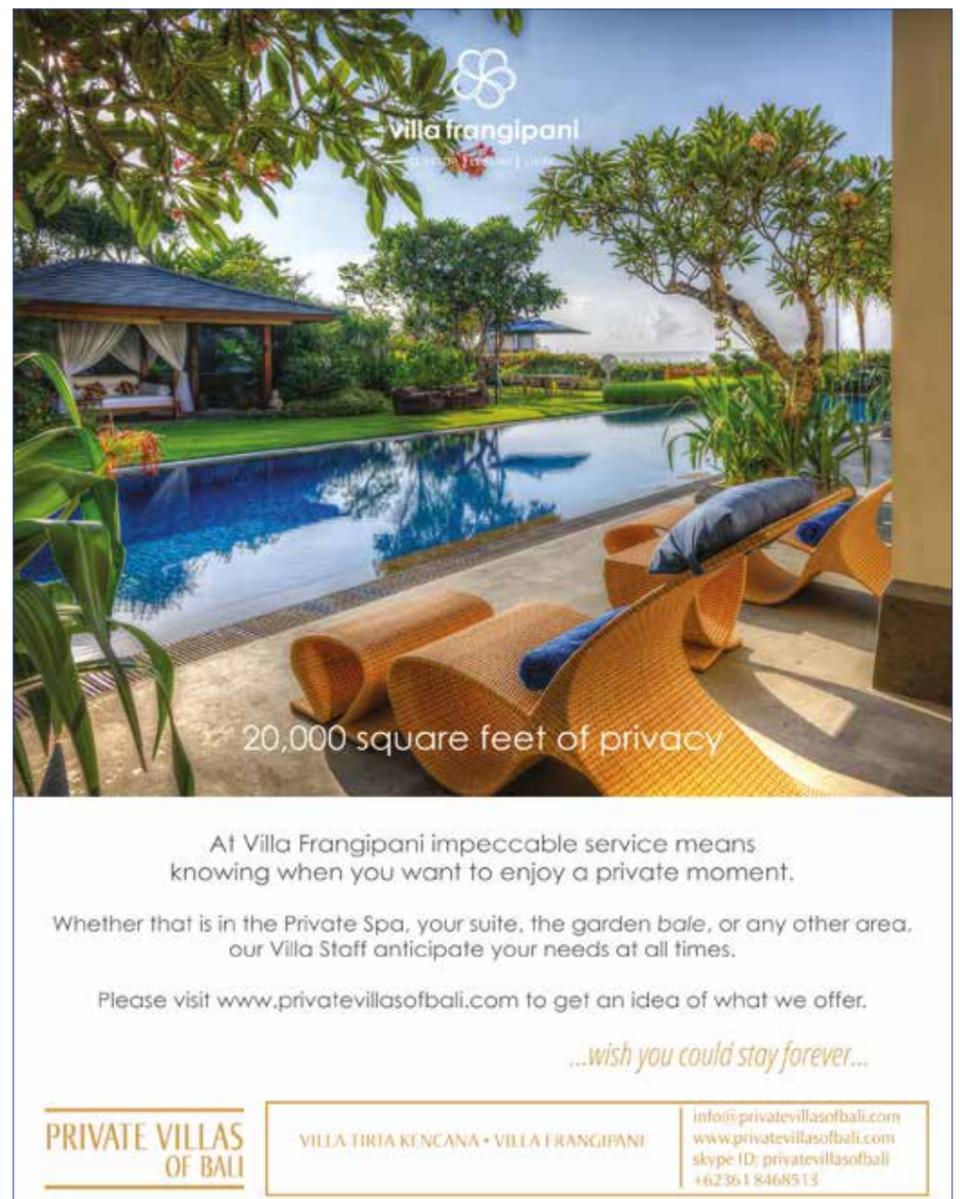


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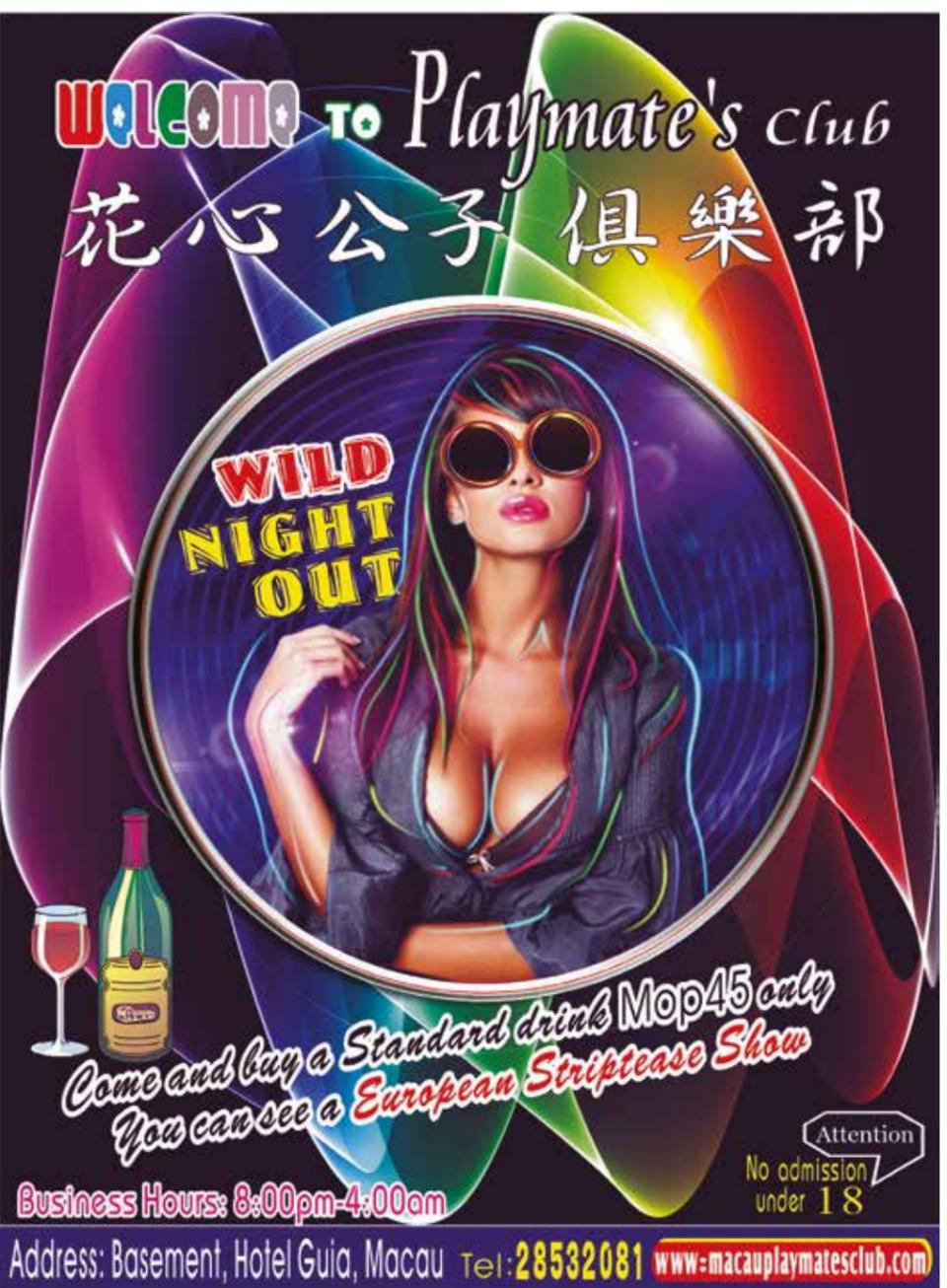
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Boris Johnson (left) and Jeremy Corbyn

UK ELECTIONS

Political leaders chase undecided voters on eve of vote

DANICA KIRKA
& JILL LAWLESS, LONDON

B RITISH political leaders rose early yesterday to pursue undecided voters on the eve of a national election, zigzagging across the country in hopes that one last push will get the wavering to the polls.

Though opinion polls have consistently shown Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative Party in the lead, surveys suggest

the margin may be narrowing before today's contest. All of the parties are nervous about the verdict of a volatile electorate weary after years of wrangling over Brexit, and increasingly willing to abandon long-held party loyalties.

All 650 seats in the House of Commons seats are up for grabs in the election, which is being held more than two years early in a bid to break the political impasse over Brexit.

Johnson has tried to focus minds on the potential of an un-

certain result and a divided Parliament, which would endanger his plan to lead the U.K. out of the European Union on Jan. 31. He started his day before dawn, helping load milk and orange juice bottles onto a delivery vehicle in northern England.

"This could not be more critical, it could not be tighter — I just say to everybody the risk is very real that we could tomorrow be going into another hung parliament," he said. "That's more drift, more dither, more delay, more

paralysis for this country."

The main opposition Labour Party said polls showed that momentum was moving in their direction. The party has tried to shift attention from Brexit and onto its plans to reverse years of public spending cuts by the Conservatives, who have been in power since 2010.

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn campaigned in Scotland and urged people to elect a government that would "give real hope."

"In this city of Glasgow, which

has some of the poorest people in this country, which has wards which contain the lowest life expectancy all across this country, they need an end to austerity," Corbyn said. "They need a U.K. government that will invest all across the country."

For many voters, Thursday's election is an unpalatable choice. Both Johnson and Corbyn have personal approval ratings in negative territory, and both have been dogged by questions about their character.

Corbyn faces allegations that he has allowed anti-Semitism to spread in the left-of-center party, and is seen by some as a doctrinaire, old-school socialist.

Labour was embarrassed on Tuesday by the leak of a phone recording of the party's health spokesman suggesting that the party would lose Thursday's election because voters "can't stand Corbyn."

Jonathan Ashworth said his unguarded remarks were merely banter with a Conservative friend.

Johnson has been confronted with past offensive comments, broken promises and untruths. This week he was caught out making a ham-fisted and seemingly unsympathetic reaction to a picture of a 4-year-old boy lying on a hospital floor because no beds were available.

Johnson ally Michael Gove said Wednesday that the prime minister was deeply concerned with the boy's plight but had suffered "a single moment of absent-mindedness." AP

Holiday rom-com 'Love, Actually' inspires election memes

L OVE, ACTUALLY" is all around this year in Britain's pre-Christmas election.

The 2003 romantic comedy about the love lives of assorted Londoners over the holiday season has played a surprisingly large role in the campaign for today's general election. It has inspired political ads from both Labour and the Conservatives, and "Love, Actually" star Hugh Grant has been out on the campaign trail urging voters to oust Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Johnson's Conservatives flooded social media this week with an ad parodying the "Love, Actually" scene in which Mark (Andrew Lincoln) stands at the door of secret crush Juliet (Keira Knightley), professing his love on a series of cue cards while her new husband sits obliviously inside.



British actor Hugh Grant poses for a photo with Liberal Democrats Party election candidate Monica Harding

In the political ad, Johnson stands on the threshold of a voter's home, promising that if she votes Conservative "by this time next year, we'll have Brexit done ... and we can move on." The ad ends with an entreaty to "Vote Conservative actually."

Johnson says he will lead Britain out of the European Union by the scheduled Jan. 31 deadline if he wins the election.

Opposition Labour candidate Rosena Allin-Khan accused the Conservatives of ripping off her own similar "Love, Actually" spoof, posted several weeks ago,

in which she persuades a Conservative voter to change his mind.

The Conservative ad also sparked a flood of parodies, with rival parties and social media users replacing the writing on Johnson's cards with less flattering slogans. Party campaigners probably won't mind: The Con-

servative's digital strategy throughout the campaign has been to get supporters and detractors alike talking about the party.

Former Justice Secretary David Gauke, who was expelled by Johnson for opposing his Brexit plan and is running as an independent, tweeted a photo of himself holding a card with the words "Brexit won't get done, actually."

For many Britons, "Love, Actually" has become a holiday season TV staple and a guilty pleasure. Some film fans cringe at its saccharine elements, like the adorable child, played by Thomas Brodie-Sangster, who is helped by stepdad Liam Neeson to woo a classmate. But just as many cherish the scene in which Grant, as a boyish British prime minister, berates a boorish U.S. president played by Billy Bob Thornton.

That role helped make

Grant a liberal heartthrob, and he has become increasingly political in real life, campaigning against press intrusion and the hacking of celebrities.

In this election, Grant has gone out on the campaign trail with non-Conservative candidates, urging electors to vote tactically to kick Johnson's party out of office.

Grant conceded that the Conservative ad was "quite well done, very high production values."

"But I did notice that one of the cards from the original film that he (Johnson) didn't hold up is the one where Andrew Lincoln held up a card saying 'because of Christmas you tell the truth,'" Grant told the BBC. "And I just wonder if the spin doctors in the Tory party thought that was a card that wouldn't look too great in Boris Johnson's hands." AP

what's ON



EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY TAM CHECK WUN AND LAO CHON HONG, ARTISTS WINNING THE GRAND PRIZE OF THE JURY AWARD OF THE COLLECTIVE EXHIBITION OF MACAU ARTISTS 2017

TIME: 10am to 7pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: March 1, 2020

VENUE: Exhibitions Gallery and the Nostalgic House of the Taipa Houses

ADMISSION: Free

KONG SENG TICKETING SERVICE: 8988 4000

FASHION INTERACTION - GUANGZHOU-HONG KONG-MACAO-SHENZHEN CREATIVE FASHION EXHIBITION

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

UNTIL: December 31, 2019

VENUE: Macao Fashion Gallery

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 3341

A CHERISHED MEMORY FROM 1999 - ARCHIVES EXHIBITION IN CELEBRATION OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RETURN OF MACAO TO THE MOTHERLAND

TIME: 10am-6pm; (Closed on Mondays and public holidays)

UNTIL: December 27, 2019

VENUE: Archives of Macao, Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida 91-93

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2859 2919

THE WORLD AS WILL AND IDEA - COLLECTIVE EXHIBITION OF EMERGING ARTISTS FROM MAINLAND CHINA

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

UNTIL: February 23, 2020

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

Offbeat

TEEN RUNAWAY FOUND 'CAMPING' INSIDE BED, BATH & BEYOND

Employees at a Bed, Bath & Beyond in North Carolina discovered an uninvited sleeper guest hiding in the store when they opened up Monday morning.

The Greenville employees called local police around 8:30 a.m. and officers responded to a "breaking and entering in progress," according to The News & Observer.

The intruder turned out to be a 14-year-old runaway who had "camped out" at the store overnight after leaving home, Greenville police spokeswoman Kristen Hunter said.

The teen wasn't harmed and was taken back to his house. His name wasn't immediately released.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Água de Mar
15:30	Bing
16:15	Caminhos de Irmandade
16:45	Portugueses Pelo Mundo Sr.1
17:45	Império (Repetição)
19:10	Resumo Liga dos Campeões 2019/2020
19:30	Ouro Verde Sr.1
20:30	Telejornal
21:10	Macau 20 Anos
21:25	TDM Talk Show
21:55	Livros com João Guedes
22:00	Viagens Gastronómicas
22:25	Império
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Cá Por Casa Sr.2
01:05	Telejornal (Repetição)
01:55	Liga Europa: LASK Linz - Sporting (Directo)
04:00	Liga Europa: Porto - Feyenoord (Directo)
06:00	RTPi Directo

cinema



CINETEATRO

12 - 17 Dec



JUMANJI, THE NEXT LEVEL

ROOM 1

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

Director: Jake Kasdan

Starring: Dwayne Johnson, Jack Black, Kevin Hart, Karen Gillan

Language: English

Duration: 123min



BRING ME HOME

ROOM 2

2:30, 4:30, 7:30pm

Director: Kim Seung-Woo

Starring: Lee Young-Ae, You Checa-Myung, Park Hac-Jun

Language: Korean (Chinese/English)

Duration: 99min

LAST CHRISTMAS

ROOM 2

9:30

Director: Paul Feig

Starring: Emilia Clarke, Henry Golding, Michelle Yeoh

Language: English

Duration: 103min

THE WHISTLEBLOWER

ROOM 3

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

Director: Xue Xiaolu

Starring: Tang Wei, Lei Jiayin

Language: Putonghua (Chinese/English)

Duration: 99min

FROZEN II

ROOM 3

7:30pm

Director: Chris Buck, Jennifer Lee

Starring: Kristen Bell, Jonathan Groff, Idina Menzel

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 103min

this day in history



1975 BALCOMBE STREET SIEGE ENDS

A six-day siege has ended peacefully in London after four IRA gunmen freed their two hostages and gave themselves up to police.

They are in custody at Paddington Green Police Station after what has become known as the Balcombe Street siege.

Police are also questioning them about a further 100 incidents which have taken place across the south east of Britain relating to the IRA.

The hostages John Matthews, 54, and his wife Sheila, 53, have been taken to University College Hospital where a spokesman said they were "shaken and weak" but doing well.

A breakthrough in the stand-off at the couple's west London home at Marylebone came at 1355 GMT today when the gang's spokesman "Tom" shouted to police they wanted to negotiate.

A telephone, replacing one earlier destroyed by the gunmen, was lowered on to the flat's balcony and detective chief superintendent Peter Imbert promised them hot food for the release of Mrs Matthews.

In the first of a series of dramatic scenes a masked man appeared at the balcony and was ordered to keep his arms raised.

Mrs Matthews emerged 90 seconds later and was assisted by the man to the safety of waiting police on a neighbouring balcony under a metal bar.

AT 1454 hot sausages, Brussels sprouts and potatoes, peaches and cream were lowered into the flat.

Police resumed contact with the men at 1550 and 25 minutes later they agreed to surrender.

Following precise procedures from deputy assistant commissioner Wilford Gibson they emerged one by one with their hands on their heads.

After the first two men were searched and handcuffed Mr Matthews was set free under police orders.

Then a third man was ushered out followed by the gang's spokesman Tom.

Cheers and applause broke out as relief replaced fear on the estate which police had evacuated and filled with officers.

The stand-off began when the men stormed the Matthews' flat as they fled from police after a shooting incident in Mayfair.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The collapse of the IRA's 1974-1975 ceasefire triggered a wave of bombings by the four men who became known as the "Balcombe Street Gang" - Martin O'Connell, Edward Butler, Harry Duggan and Hugh Doherty.

They detonated their first 10 devices in five days and killed Ross McWhirter, the co-editor of the Guinness Book of Records, after he offered £50,000 for information leading to their arrest.

When they were forced to surrender to police after the failed Balcombe Street siege they were charged with 10 murders and 20 bombings and jailed for life.

They were freed in April 1999 under the terms of the multi-party peace deal for Northern Ireland, known as the Good Friday Agreement, signed in 1998.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Your curiosity is stronger than ever right now, so why not unleash it? Go out into the world today and explore all the nooks and crannies you can find. Turn over every rock and examine what you see.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
 Your impatience has been growing lately, and today you may feel as if your life is moving at a frustratingly glacial pace. But this change of rhythm is a very good thing.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
 Take a lesson from the inappropriate behavior of someone who has been annoying you lately. They are speaking without thinking and being quite a blabbermouth.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 You can never be too careful in any type of business dealings, especially ones that pose a high level of risk to your financial status. You should think hard about how an investment could impact your bottom line.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Someone, in your opinion, is wasting time exploring high ideas when they should be hard at work making practical things happen. But perhaps today you should take a page from their lesson book.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 The workplace can sometimes feel like a battlefield. Other times, it feels like a love-in. Today, unfortunately, the former simile will probably apply.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 From time to time, there is nothing wrong with doing just enough to get by. The bare minimum of effort can be just the right amount. Life is a matter of balancing your energies.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Give yourself the gift of peace and quiet today. It's not selfish to want to be by yourself, it's healthy. You are in an inward phase now, which will help you recharge your emotional batteries.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Get ready for a lot of dramatic interruptions in your day—there is about to be a big power shake-up that might trickle down to you. Is this the chance to prove yourself that you have been waiting for?

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Getting in touch with your emotions is not a once-in-a-lifetime thing. You need to stay on top of them, especially today when unexpected events could make your moods unpredictable.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Something you've been holding on to has a great deal of meaning for you, and you should consider passing it on in order to add a new meaning to someone else's life.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Authority figures might cause you some stress today—they will have a tendency to micromanage you and be somewhat of a hovering presence. This is not because you are not doing a good job.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

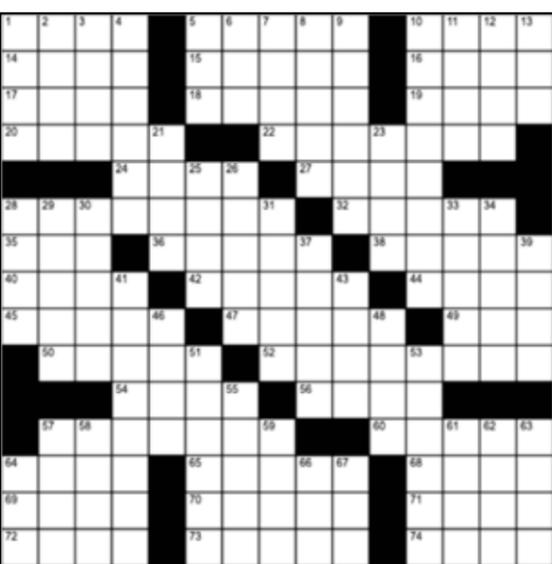
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-4	2	clear
Harbin	-24	-13	clear
Tianjin	-2	4	cloudy
Urumqi	-13	0	clear
Xi'an	-1	12	clear
Lhasa	-5	10	clear
Chengdu	6	13	cloudy
Chongqing	9	13	cloudy
Kunming	2	8	drizzle
Nanjing	1	13	cloudy
Shanghai	6	13	cloudy
Wuhan	2	14	cloudy
Hangzhou	5	14	overcast
Taipei	16	17	moderate rain
Guangzhou	12	17	overcast
Hong Kong	12	17	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	0	4	drizzle
Frankfurt	-3	3	clear
Paris	-2	4	clear
London	2	8	overcast
New York	-1	4	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Play to ___ (draw); 5- Variegated chaldedony; 10- Bearing; 14- Suspend; 15- Ventures; 16- "Bus Stop" playwright; 17- ___ extra cost; 18- Slow growth; 19- Trim; 20- Aromatic herb; 22- Flattered; 24- Scotch go-with; 27- Numbered rds.; 28- Soccer; 32- Have dinner at home; 35- Be off; 36- Killer whales; 38- Station; 40- Minn. neighbor; 42- Burn down; 44- Describes a gently cooked steak; 45- Prevent; 47- Give a wide berth to; 49- Old map abbr.; 50- Actress Witherspoon; 52- Hans Christian; 54- School orgs.; 56- First name in architecture; 57- Confident; 60- Kind of spray; 64- On the briny; 65- Cool; 68- Finished; 69- Went under; 70- Newsman Newman; 71- Itty-bitty bit; 72- Pay (up); 73- Units of force; 74- "National Velvet" author Bagnold;

DOWN: 1- Moby's pursuer; 2- Toodle-oo!; 3- Places to stay; 4- Self-centered person; 5- Paid notices; 6- Gangster's gun; 7- Stuck in ___; 8- Pavarotti, e.g.; 9- What you will; 10- Pastor; 11- Arrow poison; 12- Yikes!; 13- Take home; 21- Gray wolf; 23- Six feet under; 25- Feathered missile; 26- Big name in foil; 28- Ward off; 29- Command; 30- Speechify; 31- Insect stage; 33- "No bid." in bridge; 34- Like Thor; 37- Biscuitlike quick bread; 39- Sea swallow; 41- Remembrance; 43- Cover up; 46- Queue after Q; 48- "Jurassic Park" actress; 51- Merited; 53- Band aide; 55- Disreputable; 57- Slippery ___ eel; 58- Posted; 59- Daybreak; 61- In a bit; 62- ABM part; 63- Starring role; 64- Botanist Gray; 66- Overtime cause; 67- Switch settings;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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One Central lakeview high floor, Macau
HK\$12,500,000 1,269 ft² 2+2

FOR RENT

Taipa studio, Largo de Ponte
\$8,500/mth 426 ft² 1

FOR SALE

[Taipa] Apartment w/ balcony 2+1
 787 ft² **\$4,950,000** (ref: 19106001)

[Macau] One Central 2+2
 1,349 ft² **\$14,839,000** (ref: 19096004)

[Taipa] Manhattan 3+2
 1,720 ft² **\$12,980,000** (ref: 19096006)

[Taipa] One Grantal 4+2
 2,556 ft² **\$25,600,000** (ref: 19096001)

FOR RENT

[Taipa] Studio, Largo de Porte 1
 470 ft² **\$9,500/mth** (ref: 19101002)

[Taipa] Manhattan 3+2
 1,720 ft² **\$23,800/mth** (ref: 19101006)

[Taipa] Nova Grand 2+1
 935 ft² **\$17,800/mth** (ref: 19091004)

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

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The Art of Giving

Lurdes de Sousa *



WHY PHILANTHROPY MATTERS AND WHY CHINA MATTERS IN MODERN PHILANTHROPY

IT'S Christmas season and in about a month we will be celebrating the Chinese New Year. Both celebrations are most probably the most exciting times of the year in the West and the East (or wherever overseas Chinese communities are present geographically). It's a time for families and friends, but it's also undoubtedly the time of the year when we most spontaneously express an inner sense of solidarity, generosity, and love of humankind.

It's the time of the year when most of us turn into charitable human beings and philanthropists, be it because we donate a few pennies for causes that are close to our hearts and strengthen our values or because we decide to engage and commit more to our values by giving back to society institutionally.

Giving in the 21st century is different to what it was last century – not just because of globalization, but because of technology and the digital age (the fourth industrial revolution).

Today, 4 billion people, that is 60% of the world's population, have a cell phone. It just takes a click to donate.

Yes, the fourth industrial revolution has changed our way of living for ever but despite that phenomenal revolution, human beings are still (I would say astonishingly and admirably...) resilient. Culture and values still matter.

When an American gives online for the poor, or a Frenchman gives online for the Telethon, a Chinese person, despite living in one of the most digital societies, will still cherish the tradition of personally giving as they traditionally give a red envelope (laissi) to their loved ones during the Chinese New Year.

China has a long tradition of philanthropy and there is widespread consensus that it will grow and increase in impact over the next decades. Charity is deeply embedded in the ethics of Confucianism and the rise of private wealth brought about by China's development since the turn of the century will further boost the integration of China in modern philanthropy.

This is happening, but in a way not perceived or understood by the western world. One of the reasons that the level of philanthropy in China is not fully known may be that much giving is done informally or anonymously and therefore not captured in the existing data. What is predominantly known is that Chinese philanthropists tend to give back to the "traditional" sectors (education, poverty alleviation, arts and culture, health, disaster relief), while individual tycoons of philanthropy in the West are contributing to research on Artificial Intelligence, the reshaping of educational systems, and so on.

Another difference is that in China, the redistribution of wealth is more than a question of justice or social equality; it is a philosophical concept about what constitutes a harmonious society. Chinese philanthropists are very keen to learn about philanthropic practices elsewhere and particularly in the US, but there is also an affirmation that philanthropy, in China, must remain true to traditional Chinese values. As much as there is a "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics", there is a "Philanthropy with Chinese Characteristics" that the West at large must understand.

This can only be done by profoundly mastering the complexities of different cultural values for the ultimate purpose of the common good.

Where better to do that than a place that has, for centuries, accommodated and incorporated Eastern and Western history, traditions and values, a place called Macau...

***President, Associação Internacional de Filantropia (Macau)**
 國際博愛協會 (澳門)
 president@artofgiving.org.mo

Macau Daily Times is the official media partner of the Associação Internacional de Filantropia (Macau).

NO CHRISTMAS TINSEL IN IRAQ, IN SOLIDARITY WITH PROTESTERS

THE Christmas tree in the middle of a central Baghdad plaza occupied by anti-government protesters is bare, save for portraits of those killed under fire from security forces. A tribute, the demonstrators explained, to a recent decision by Iraq's Christians to call off seasonal festivities to honor the losses.

Leaders of Iraq's Christians unanimously cancelled Christmas-related celebrations in solidarity with the protest movement — but the aims of their stance go deeper than tinsel and fairy lights. Slogans of a united Iraq free of sectarianism resonate deeply within the community, which since the 2003 fall of Saddam Hussein has fearfully observed its diminishing influence amid growing Shiite-dominated politics shaping state affairs. The Christians have also left Iraq in huge numbers over the years, after being targeted by militant Sunni groups such as al-Qaida and the Islamic State group.

On a recent visit to Tahrir Square, the epicenter of the protest movement, Cardinal Louis Raphael Sako, patriarch of the Chaldean Church in Iraq, said

AP PHOTO



he was moved.

"Now there you feel you are Iraqi," he said in an interview with The Associated Press. "A new Iraq is being born."

The protests erupted in Baghdad and the predominantly Shiite southern provinces on Oct. 1, when thousands of Iraqis first took to the streets calling for sweeping political reforms and the end of Iran's influence in Iraqi affairs. At least 400 have died at the hands of security forces and unidentified assailants firing live ammunition and tear gas to

disperse the demonstrations.

"Morally and spiritually we cannot celebrate in such an atmosphere of tension ... it's not normal to celebrate our joy and happiness while others are dying. That doesn't work," said Sako. Chaldeans are the predominant Christian denomination in the country.

He called on the government and parliament to listen to the demands of the protesters and to find suitable solutions through dialogue. "The military solution is bad," he said.

HUNGARIAN ACTORS PROTEST PLAN TO BOOST CONTROL OVER THEATERS

HUNGARIAN actors and directors rallied this week to oppose government plans seen as boosting political control over theaters.

Legislation presented in parliament would give state authorities a bigger say in designating directors at municipal theaters that receive central state funding.

The bill is significantly shorter and narrower in scope than government plans for much of the culture sector leaked last week that drew condemnation from across the cultural landscape.

Speaking at the rally in downtown Budapest, Bela Pinter, director of a popular independent theater company, said that in light of the modified draft, he had rewritten his speech by replacing exclamation marks with question marks.

"The Hungarian government isn't going to eliminate the annual financing of independent theaters after all?" Pinter said to the crowd of a few thousand people. "From the day the new law enters into force, we independents are still going to get a few pennies from taxpayers' money?"

Renowned actor and director Tamas Jordan highlighted criti-

AP PHOTO



cism of the government's plans by the leadership of the Hungarian Academy Of Arts, which is close to the Orban government.

"In decisions about important professional questions, it's possible to rise above political points of view," Jordan said.

Still, critics view the bill as a new effort by Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government to stifle independence in the arts.

The legislation says that the "basic expectation" of cultural activities covered by the law is that they "actively protect the interests of the nation's survival, well being and growth."

The government said the new rules would create transparency and predictability in theater finan-

cing, while creating a "totally clear situation" where the theater's operation is the responsibility of the financial backer.

Culture in Hungary is heavily subsidized by the state, with museum, opera and theater tickets, for example, generally much cheaper than in Western Europe. At the same time, few municipalities have the means to finance their theaters and often rely on government funds for their upkeep.

Speakers at the rally also rejected as misleading and prejudicial one of the government's belated arguments for a new law, a case of sexual harassment by a theater director that was revealed only two weeks ago, even though it happened last year.

FOOTBALL

English clubs on the march again in the Champions League

STEVE DOUGLAS

THE English are on the march again in the Champions League.

Liverpool and Chelsea completed a sweep of Premier League clubs into the knockout stage of the Champions League yesterday [Macau time], a season after England had two of its representatives in the final.

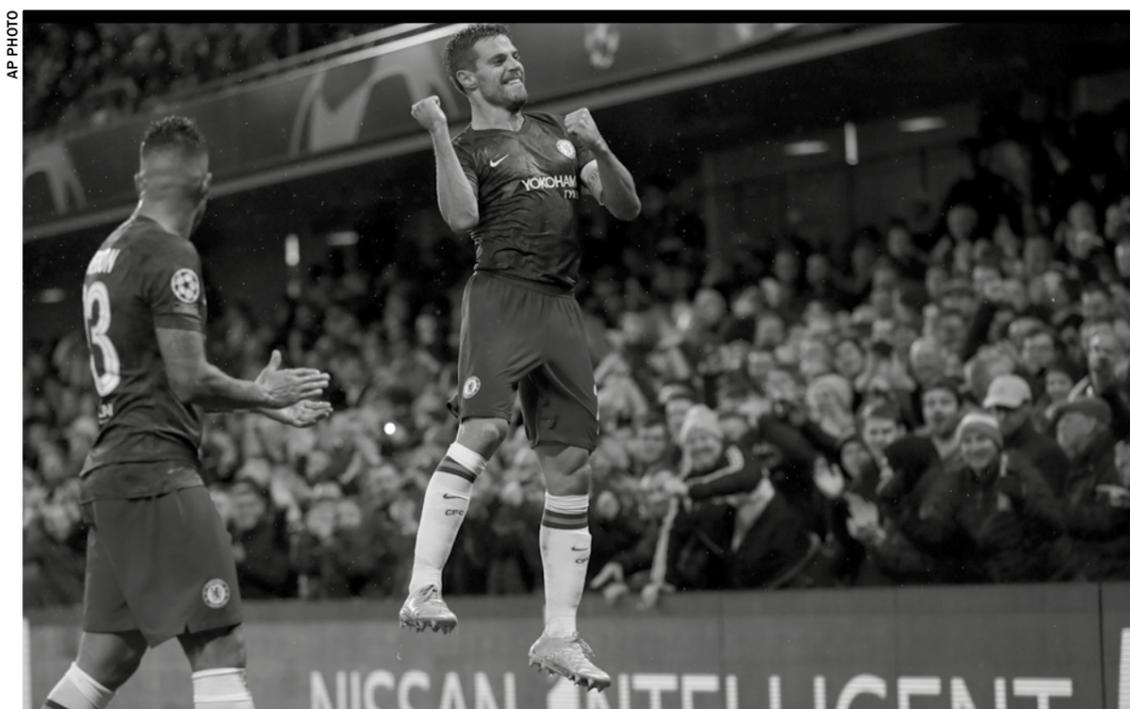
Liverpool, which beat Tottenham in the title match in June to become European champion for a sixth time, toughed out a 2-0 victory at Salzburg to advance as the winner of Group E and stay on course in its defense of the trophy.

It's shaping up to be a huge second half of the season for the Reds, who are also eight points clear in the Premier League in their pursuit of a first English championship in 30 years.

Chelsea was one of the teams to qualify from Group H after a 2-1 home victory over Lille under Frank Lampard, a Champions League winner with the London team in 2012 and in his first season as its manager.

Manchester City and Tottenham, the other English clubs competing in the Champions League, advanced last month with a game to spare.

It is the third straight season where England has provided four of the 16 representatives in the knockout stage, as teams in the lucrative Premier League start to show the benefit of having the biggest broadcasting revenues in



Chelsea's Cesar Azpilicueta celebrates scoring his side's 2nd goal against Lille

soccer and some of the world's most highly rated coaches.

Napoli was one of four other teams to advance yesterday — but it wasn't enough to keep Carlo Ancelotti in a job. He was fired by the Italian team a few hours after its 4-0 win over Genk which sealed second place in the group containing Liverpool.

Borussia Dortmund, Valencia and Lyon also reached the last 16.

ANCELOTTI'S FINAL STAND

Arkadiusz Milik did his best to save Ancelotti, scoring a first-half hat trick for Napoli before Dries Mertens added the fourth against

a Genk team which fielded Maarten Vandevoordt — the youngest goalkeeper ever in the competition at 17 years, nine months and 10 days.

That secured the team second place behind Liverpool, which denied Napoli a place in the last 16 in the final group game of last season's competition. But it wasn't enough for Ancelotti, who had previously failed to lead Napoli to victory in any of its last nine games in his second season as its coach.

Like Napoli, Liverpool knew a win would see them progress but found things much tougher

against Salzburg. Jurgen Klopp's team survived some early scares before scoring two goals in as many minutes from the 57th, through Naby Keita — who played for Salzburg from 2014-16 — and Mohamed Salah.

Salah's goal was exquisite, the Egypt forward breaking the offside trap to round the goalkeeper and score from an acute on the right with his weaker right foot.

AJAX'S REGRESSION

Ajax came within a last-gasp Tottenham goal of reaching the final last season. It won't even be playing in the knockout stage this

time around.

The Dutch club lost 1-0 at home to Valencia to drop from first place to third in Group H and fall into the Europa League.

Rodrigo scored the 24th-minute winner for Valencia, which is through to the last 16 for the first time since 2012-13.

Tammy Abraham, with a deft backheeled flick, and Cesar Azpilicueta scored Chelsea's first-half goals against already-eliminated Lille, which pulled one back late on through Loic Remy — a former Chelsea player.

INTER HEARTBREAK

For the second straight season, Inter Milan was eliminated after failing to pick up a home win in the final round of the group stage.

A year after only drawing 1-1 to PSV Eindhoven to exit the competition, Inter lost 2-1 to an already-qualified Barcelona — which was without Lionel Messi and a number of other rested players. Ansu Fati scored Barca's winner and became, at 17, the youngest scorer in Champions League history.

Borussia Dortmund capitalized, eking out a 2-1 win over Slavia Prague to qualify ahead of Inter.

Jadon Sancho scored one goal and set up another for Borussia Dortmund, which had Julian Weigl sent off in the 77th and was thankful to goalkeeper Roman Bürki for a string of saves.

LYON FIGHTBACK

Lyon came from two goals down at home to Leipzig to draw 2-2 and win a three-way fight with Zenit St. Petersburg and Benfica to advance from Group G

Memphis Depay's equalizer saw Lyon climb above Zenit, which lost 3-0 at Benfica and slipped to fourth — not even getting a consolation prize of a Europa League berth.

Leipzig had already qualified. AP

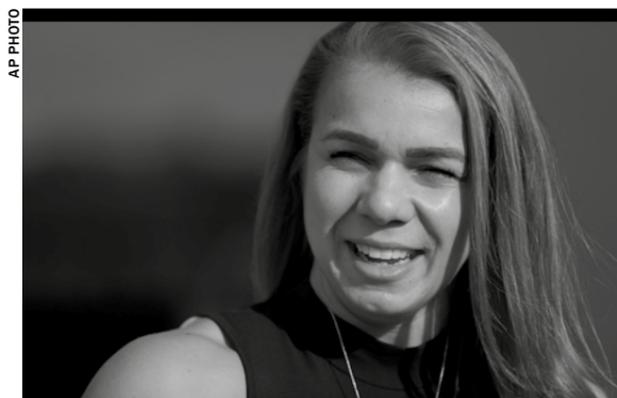
BASEBALL

Balkovec looks forward to breaking barrier as hitting coach

RACHEL Balkovec wants to be a hit with the New York Yankees — and the way to do that is to help their minor leaguers get more hits.

She was hired in November and starts work next month as a minor league hitting coach, believed to be the first woman hitting coach employed by a big league team.

"She was really impressive. I really look forward to having more conversations with her," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said yesterday after talking with Balkovec at the winter meetings. "She



New York Yankees minor league hitting coach Rachel Balkovec

has a really good understanding, especially when it comes to the pitch tracking."

A 32-year-old from Omaha, Nebraska, Balkovec was a minor league strength and conditioning

coordinator and coach for the St. Louis Cardinals from 2011-15, then switched to the Houston Astros as Latin American strength and conditioning coordinator. She worked with the Dutch national baseball and softball teams in the past year while studying for her second master's degree.

Yes, women have not been given the same opportunities as men in Major League Baseball. She is past that.

"My mom always used to say, life's not fair," she explained. "So is it fair? No. Does it matter? No. You have to keep standing at

that door banging on it."

All those hurdles in a male-dominated sport have toughened her.

"I view my path as an advantage," she said. "I had to do probably much more than maybe a male counterpart, but I like that because I'm so much more prepared for the challenges that I might encounter."

Balkovec interviewed with Kevin Reese, a former major leaguer who is the Yankee senior director of player development; Andrew Wright, hired in June as manager of staff development after four years as

baseball coach at the University of Charleston; and Dillon Lawson, who joined the Yankees before last season as a hitting coordinator after working in Houston's minor league system.

Born July 5, 1987, Balkovec played softball, basketball and soccer at Skutt Catholic High School in Omaha. She enrolled at Creighton, where she was a catcher, then transferred to New Mexico and received a degree in 2009 with a major in exercise science. Two years later, she got a masters in sports management from LSU. AP

OPINION

Made in Macao

Jenny Lao-Phillips



THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL

This is the season to be shopping. You see people making lists and thinking of buying special gifts, but it is getting harder to achieve. As soon as the Christmas decorations are up in town, all the shops will be preparing special Christmas gifts packages or offering Christmas sales. Every weekend people are going shopping to get presents for their friends and loved ones. It is the most difficult time of year for me.

For one thing, I am not one who loves shopping. Most of the time, I am even too lazy to shop for new clothes for myself. Usually, I'll wait till my mother complains that my clothes are worn out or they all look the same. Then my loving mother will shop for me. Then, there is the prosperous economic situation of Macao.

Everyone I know seems to have no lack of anything. In fact, I think most of my family and friends already have everything they need, so it is quite difficult to decide what to buy for others. Especially when one does not know what the others want or like. Finally, there is the problem of waste. If I get something for someone that they do not like or have no use for, it is an accumulative waste. Firstly, it wastes the time and money spent on buying it. Secondly, the product itself goes to waste for not being used. Most importantly, it takes up valuable space in other's home. While we have no lack of material things, space is something I believe lots of people lack. And it is not like I can afford to buy storage rooms for my loved ones to store their gifts.

I know my idea of gift-giving is very unromantic. A present itself is a sign of one caring for another, and it is supposed to be a symbol of love rather than purchased for its utility. But in this sense, it gives me an even worse headache. What if I accidentally get something that my friend is allergic to? To prevent this, one should avoid food and drinks, cosmetics, and other beauty products, unless we know what brands our friends are able to use. One can always try accessories, but it takes time to choose the right ones for the right people, and having very bad fashion sense, I do not seem to notice any of my acquaintances wearing the accessories I have given them in the past.

But accessories and clothing are easy choices. That is probably why clothes and shoes are the most widely bought gifts for Christmas. They are personal and it is assumed that everyone has a use for them. However, a website also showed that they are some of the most returned Christmas gifts. On another website, I have read that some of the most unwelcomed Christmas presents are cups and towels. Now, I don't understand that – cups and towels are things that everyone needs to use. They do not take up much space and they are durable and need replacing often. I think they are great gifts.

Every year, after a lot of pondering about what Christmas gifts to buy, I often end up with one of the greatest Chinese inventions – Lai Si (red packets). Lai Si are mostly given out during Chinese New Year. But Lai Si means luck, and luck is always welcome at any time of the year. They are small and will not take up space, and they are easy to carry, with no extra bags needed to carry a bunch of Christmas gifts. More importantly, they allow the receiver to actually buy something they like. So, I stand by my verdict that Lai Si is the greatest gift of all.

CLIMATE ACTIVIST GRETA THUNBERG IS TIME 'PERSON OF THE YEAR'

THE BUZZ

Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg was named Time's "person of the year", becoming at age 16 the youngest person to whom the U.S. magazine has given the title.

Thunberg emerged as the face of the youth climate movement after she started skipping school once a week to protest outside her country's parliament. In the past year and a half, she



has drawn large crowds at international conferences and demonstrations outside Sweden.

Some have welcomed Thunberg's environmental activism, including her speeches challenging world leaders to do more to stop global warming. But others have criticized the teenager's sometimes combative tone.

AP PHOTO



NEW ZEALAND VOLCANO VENTS STEAM, DELAYS RECOVERY OF BODIES

NICK PERRY, WHAKATANE

A New Zealand island volcano vented more steam and mud yesterday, prompting authorities to delay plans to recover the bodies of victims from a deadly eruption two days ago.

Volcanic tremors on White Island were intensifying to a level not seen since an eruption in 2016, the GeoNet seismic monitoring agency said, calculating a 40% to 60% chance of another eruption within the next 24 hours.

Meanwhile, Australia was sending a military plane to bring some of the Australians injured in the eruption to Australia for specialist medical care. Authorities expected to transport 10 injured patients to New South Wales and Victoria states, beginning Thursday.

Six deaths have been confirmed in Monday's eruption, which sent a tower of steam and ash an estimated 12,000 feet into the air. The

bodies of eight other people are believed to remain on the ash-covered island. And 30 people remain hospitalized, including 25 in critical condition. Many of the injured suffered severe burns and were being treated at hospital burn units around New Zealand.

GeoNet said in an early evening update that shallow magma within the volcano appeared to be driving the increased activity. It also said there was a low risk to the mainland. The volcano is about 50 kilometers off New Zealand's main North Island.

Police believe 47 visitors were on the island at the time of the eruption, 24 of them Australian, nine Americans, five New Zealanders and others from Germany, Britain, China and Malaysia. Many were passengers aboard the Royal Caribbean cruise ship Ovation of the Seas.

Survivors ran into the sea to escape the scalding

steam and ash and emerged covered in burns, said those who first helped them. Geoff Hopkins watched the eruption from a boat after visiting the island and told the New Zealand Herald the eruption quickly turned menacing.

He told the paper that injured people transported on their boat were horrifically burned on their exposed skin and even under their clothes.

The first confirmed death was of a local man, Hayden Marshall-Inman, a guide who had shown tourists around the island. Former Whakatane Mayor Tony Bonne said Marshall-Inman was a keen fisherman and well-liked.

In the town touted as the gateway to White Island, the volcano has an almost mystical significance, its regular puffing a feature of the landscape. Whether the island, also known by its Maori name Whakaari, will ever host tourists again remains uncertain.

Many people were questioning why tourists were allowed to visit the island after seismic monitoring experts raised the volcano's alert level last month.

The island had been mined for sulfur until a 1914 accident in which at least 10 people were killed, and a landslide destroyed the miners' village and the mine itself. The island became a private scenic reserve in 1953.

Daily tours allow more than 10,000 people to visit every year. AP

AP PHOTO



British political leaders rose early yesterday to pursue undecided voters on the eve of a national election, zigzagging across the country. Though opinion polls have consistently shown Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative Party in the lead, surveys suggest the margin may be narrowing before today's contest. More on p15

AP PHOTO



Iran said American authorities are holding about 20 Iranian nationals in jail, its official news agency reported, a day after Tehran said it was ready for more prisoner swaps with the U.S. A prisoner exchange over the weekend saw Iran free a Chinese-American scholar from Princeton who had been held for three years on widely criticized espionage charges.

AP PHOTO



US The Oval Office meeting with President Donald Trump yesterday was the second for Russia's foreign minister. The president of Ukraine is still waiting for his first. Trump sat down with Sergey Lavrov (pictured) at a moment of high drama in Washington — just hours after House Democrats announced articles of impeachment against Trump for his dealings with Ukraine, a U.S. ally that is battling against Russian aggression.

AP PHOTO



US The mayor of a New Jersey city said it's "clear" that gunmen targeted a kosher market during a furious shooting that killed six people and raised questions about whether anti-Semitism was involved. A police officer, three bystanders and two suspects all died in the violence yesterday [Macao time] in Jersey City, just across the Hudson River from New York City.

AP PHOTO

