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DECEMBER GROSS GAMING REVENUE DOWN 16% SO FAR, BUT PENT-UP DEMAND MIGHT BE UNLEASHED BEFORE THE MONTH IS OUT

P3

STARLUX AIRLINES TO ADD THREE DAILY FLIGHTS TO TAIPEI TO MACAU'S ROSTER

P3

HK'S GOVERNMENT SAID IT WILL NOT FLINCH AS THE CITY IS SET TO ENTER 2020 WITH THE ECONOMY STILL IN THE GRIP OF PROTESTERS

P8-9

AP PHOTO



China A state-owned utility says it has bought 49% of the power distribution grid in the Gulf nation of Oman. State Grid Corp. described the purchase as part of China's multibillion-dollar Belt and Road initiative to build trade-related infrastructure across Asia to Europe. *More on p20*

Belarus has reached an agreement with China to receive a \$500-million loan, officials in the ex-Soviet country said. Belarus' Finance Ministry said the loan will be provided by the Shanghai office of the China Development Bank. The Chinese credit offers much-needed cash to Belarus amid a dispute with its main sponsor and ally, Russia.

AP PHOTO



India Student protests that turned into violent clashes with police galvanized opposition nationwide yesterday to a new law that provides a path to citizenship for non-Muslim migrants who entered the country illegally from several neighboring countries. *More on p12*

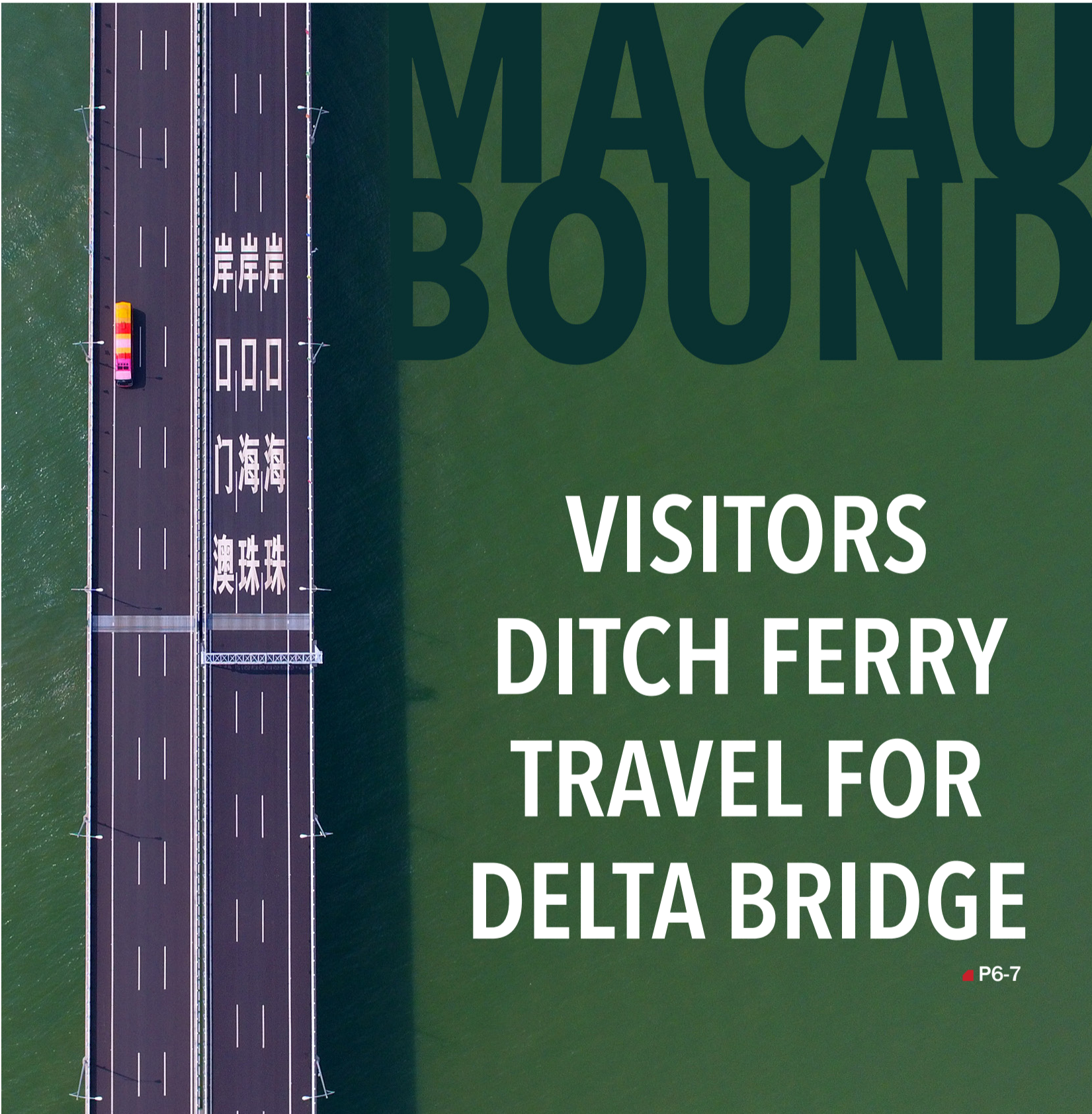
AP PHOTO



Australia Police said yesterday that an Australian teenager and a New Zealand tour guide are the two people presumed dead but whose bodies have not been found after last week's volcanic eruption on White Island that killed 18. New Zealand police said the bodies of Winona Langford, 17, of Sydney and New Zealander Hayden Marshall-Inman, 40, have yet to be accounted for.

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XINHUA



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RUMORS ABOUND AS PRESIDENT XI POISED TO ENTER MACAU

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MACAU EARNES BRONZE AT TOP ESPORTS TOURNAMENT

P4

FUEL AND CASH RUMORS CAUSE LONG QUEUES IN TOWN

DANIEL BEITLER, JULIE ZHU

ONLINE rumors about cash and fuel withdrawal restrictions in the coming days led to long queues in town this week at banks and gas stations, as residents hurried to fill their wallets and their cars ahead of the anniversary weekend.

Rumors of the restrictions were circulating online as early as Monday, with claims that there was a shortage of cash in some of Macau's cash machines. The rumors also claimed that gas refueling would be prohibited outside of a six-hour period starting at midnight.

In response to the rumors, some residents were seen forming long queues at gas stations and at cash machines.

Though untrue, the rumors are not as outlandish as they first appear.

They come in response to the unprecedented preparations being made by security and other government forces ahead of Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Macau. Xi arrives today and will stay in the special administrative region until the handover anniversary on Friday.



In this February 2019 file photo, customers use cash machines at an HSBC bank branch at night

sary on Friday.

On Monday, it was announced that the newly-opened Light Rail Transit would be suspended during Xi's visit. Yesterday, the large electronic notice boards for bus arrival times were disabled and a notice explained the service had been suspended. Real-time transportation surveillance cameras have also been turned off, according to

the Transport Bureau, in order to facilitate security measures.

In addition, security measures at Macau's ports of entry and exit have been bolstered in recent days. The Times has received reports of residents undergoing additional checks on the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, including being photographed by security agents.

Ip Sio Kai, chairman of the Macau Association of Banks, said that Macau's banking service has always been functioning normally. Macau's cash machines will continue supplying cash normally on the day of the handover celebration and on the following weekend. Ip wants the public to not worry about the situation.

Additionally, Ip remarked that

the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM) has requested that local banks ensure that there is sufficient cash on holidays, and that all of Macau's banks are fully prepared to provide ordinary financial services.

Macau residents can also choose other payment methods, such as electronic ones, in order to avoid affecting their holidays and daily lives, Ip suggested.

Meanwhile, the Economic Bureau (DSE) released a statement yesterday to tell the public that the government has an inter-departmental fuel monitoring team monitoring the city's fuel suppliers.

The DSE says that the team has been following the situation in the petroleum products market and maintaining close communication with local industry to monitor the supply and price of such products. It pledges to provide the latest information in a timely manner to protect consumer needs.

At present, various petroleum products in Macau, including unleaded gasoline, low-sulfur diesel and LPG, are stored in abundance. Prices are normal and ample reserves have been maintained, the DSE assured. The DSE has urged the public to go to the petrol station and fill their tanks according to their actual needs, rather in response to rumors of restrictions.

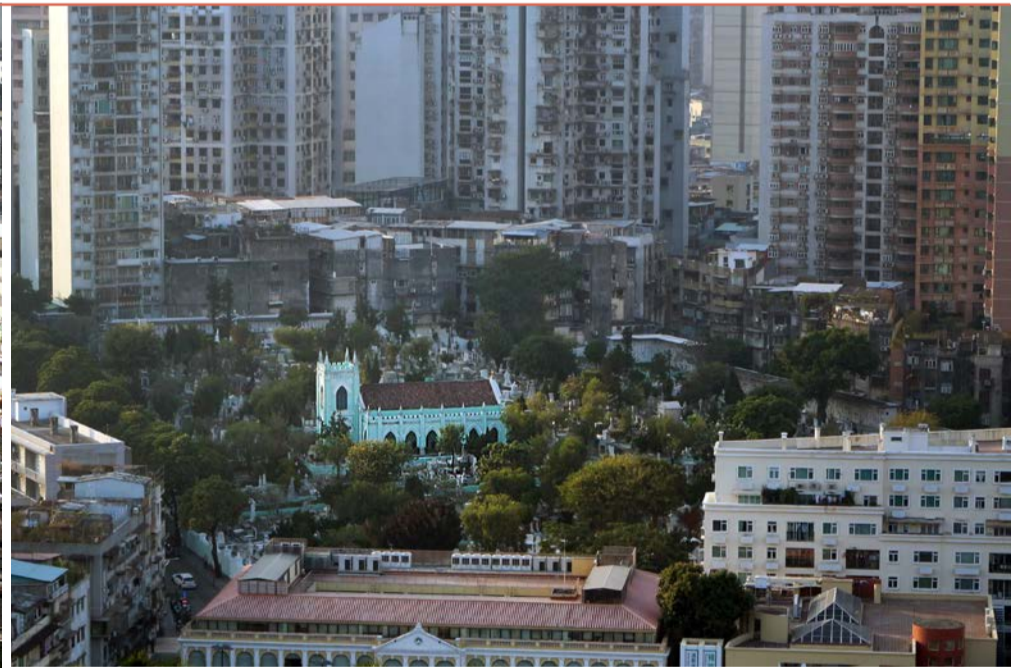
MEMORY LANE

Karsten Petersen

MDT/Renato Marques



The Chapel of São Miguel is found in São Miguel Arcanjo Cemetery, a Catholic cemetery located in the center of the city, close to Tap Seac Square. The still-active chapel was built in 1875. Today it has a green and white façade, and baroque features common to religious buildings in Macau.



The photo on the left dates to 1973, a time when the cemetery was an imposing part of the local area. Today, it is overshadowed by high-rise buildings that enclose it to the west. The cemetery is also the resting place of several well-known individuals from Macau, including Portuguese

symbolist poet Camilo Pessanha (1867-1926) and Vicente Nicolau de Mesquita (1818-1880), a junior artillery officer of Macanese origins who earned military honors after he led an improbable but successful assault on a nearby Chinese fort. DB

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

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

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

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com
ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR
Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

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AVIATION

Taiwan's Starlux to run three daily flights to Macau in January

ANTHONY LAM

SIX flights in and out of Macau will be added to the schedule from January 23, Taiwan's Starlux Airlines announced yesterday at an event in Macau.

The new airline specifically held a press conference in the city to meet with local press, in addition to making the announcement.

The three pairs of flights will cover the day, with flights in the late morning to early afternoon, and an evening flight to end the day. Tickets for the inaugural flights from Macau to Taipei will start selling on December 19.

Airline president Chang Kuo-wei has pitched his latest project as a premium airline which appeals to businesses and discerning travelers. The airline will, in its first phase, use three A321neo aircrafts to operate routes connecting Taipei with Macau, Da Nang, and Penang.

The company indicated in a press release that the visitor counts from both Macau and Taipei were supportive of the decision, supporting the company's move to include Macau as a destination.

"People from both places are enthusiastic [about] visiting each other," said Nieh Kuo-wei, Chief Communications Officer of Starlux.

Indeed, visitor counts from tourism regulators were satisfactory. In 2018, a total of nearly 1.1 million tourists from Taiwan visited Macau. About 90,000 Macau residents travel to Taiwan annually.



Furthermore, the increasing number of Macau residents interested in traveling further abroad was another factor.

The company plans to begin receiving 17 A350 long-haul wide-body aircraft at the end of 2021. It aims to expand its fleet of long-haul aircraft to 27 and have a fleet of 50 by 2030. The addition of the A350 will enable the airline to serve Asia-Europe and Asia-North America routes.

Pitched as a premium airline, the airline also unveiled several market-leading services and facilities during yesterday's press conference.

All three A321neo aircrafts will be equipped with Wi-Fi connectivity, with free text-over-Wi-Fi services for economy class passengers, and free Wi-Fi for business class. The personal screens in economy are 10 inches with 720p HD resolution, while business has

15.6 inch screens with 1080p.

Furthermore, the seats in both classes were designed by BMW Designworks with a theme called "Pure Tea," and are finished in an earthy tone that creates a homely atmosphere. Business class seats can also turn to flat beds, even on the A321neo.

Finally, the aircraft will be filled with fragrance and music made specifically for Starlux when passengers board their flights.

THREE NEW JUDGES STEP INTO OFFICE

Three new judges took oaths and stepped into office yesterday. José Maria Dias Azedo, who was previously a judge at the Court of Second Instance (TSI), will replace Viriato Manuel Pinheiro de Lima as one of three judges at the Court of Final Appeal (TUI). Meanwhile, Chao Im Peng will take over as President of the TSI, and Cheong Weng Tong has been appointed as President of the Court of First Instance (TJB). The trio was appointed yesterday by Chief Executive Chui Sai On, together with Lau Cheok Vá, chairman of the Independent Commission on the Recommendation of Judges.

LAWMAKER URGES GOV'T TO DEVELOP PUBLIC HOUSING

Lawmaker Ng Kuok Cheong has urged the local government to develop recovered land into public housing within the next five years. In his verbal inquiry to the local government, Ng cited the government's statistics which point out that, in total, the local government has 77 pieces of recovered land on their hands, with 49 land plots that have already completed the recovery process. The government should give priority to public housing projects when developing these lands, according to Ng. In addition, the lawmaker also requested other measures to support living and property purchasing mechanisms for Macau within the next five years, including the establishment of a points-based public housing waiting list and the reservation of land in order to supply houses for local residents when they need to move into new properties.

MORE FULL-TIME ATHLETES, BETTER PAY WANTED

Lawmaker Song Pei Kei wants more Macau residents to devote themselves to being full-time athletes. In her interpellation to the local government, Song said that Macau has only 20 people across 20 fields involved in full-time sports and that this number is still too small. The local government is paying athletes who receive professional training 15,000 Macau patacas, and non-professional athletes 5,000 patacas. In Song's opinion, the salaries are obviously not attractive when compared to the salaries in other sectors. Song wants the local government to review the relevant measures. In the long-term, the lawmaker hopes the local government will invest more in resources, spaces, and trainers to develop higher sporting standards for Macau.

GAMING

Mid-month checks show December GGR faring poorly

DANIEL BEITLER

MID-MONTH channel checks indicate that pressure on Macau's gambling sector will persist this December, with the data supporting predictions of a double-digit drop in gross gaming revenue (GGR).

Fears that Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit would hit the VIP and mass streams hard this

month have been realized.

Gaming analysts said this week that the average daily rate over the first 15 days of the month has fallen to 720 million patacas, or 16% less than a year earlier. That marks a slight improvement over the year-on-year comparison for the first eight days of December, which sat 19% lower than in 2018.

Still, Xi Jinping's visit,

which will extend until the anniversary of the handover on December 20, has analysts warning of "underperformance" in the gaming sector.

The President's last visit in 2014 coincided with an anti-corruption crackdown, which was interpreted by China's wealthy and powerful as a warning to rein in lavish spending and gambling. Today's visit is thought to

similarly deter high-roller visitation, while tighter exit controls amid heightened security protocols will dampen mass market visitor arrivals.

The double deterrent puts December on track to be the worst month of the year in both growth and absolute terms.

December was the third-highest monthly earner in 2018, recording city-wide revenue of

26.46 billion patacas and year-on-year growth of 16.6%. Even a moderate result for this month will fare poorly in year-on-year terms, given last year's strong comparison base.

Meanwhile, year-to-date gross gaming revenue up to November sits 2.4% lower than in the equivalent period last year.

The silver lining is a measure of pent-up demand ready to be unleashed after the President departs the special administrative region. Whether that translates into December gross gaming revenue or January remains to be seen.



Frederico dos Santos Rosário (left) and "Kengaroo" (right)

'Kengaroo' Ken's bronze medal achievement in eFootball PES 2020 at the 11th IeSF Esports World Championship in Seoul, Korea!" Grow uP eSports posted on social media, "once again, Macau has made history in Esports!"

According to Grow uP eSports, Kengaroo was the only participant who sat on stage with their country or territory's flag wrapped around his chair during the competition.

"What a historical moment for Macau!" association chairman Frederico dos Santos Rosário told the Times yesterday.

Last weekend's victory comes after an esports athlete also from Macau won a silver medal at the 2018 League of Legends competition.

"We hope that the Macau Government and our people could see and feel the positive impact that the unsung heroes and organizations in Macau are creating and further support us to continue this journey," said Rosário.

On the weekend, casino owner Pansy Ho told mainland state media that there was room for further esports development in the territory. "We are all now talking about esports as an appropriate, or even major component that can have a place in Macau," she said.

Her comments come amid a moment of controversy for esports in the greater China region.

In October, video gaming giant Blizzard Entertainment dished out punishment to a Hong Kong-based esports champion who used a tournament to voice support for pro-democracy protesters in the neighboring SAR. The suspension drew criticism from fans, players and commentators in the West, some of whom threatened to stop working with Blizzard. In response, the U.S.-based video game developer reduced the suspension period and allowed the champion to keep his earnings from the tournament.

MACAU WINS BRONZE AT ESPORTS FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

DANIEL BEITLER

MACAU won a bronze medal at a high-profile international esports championship in Seoul last weekend, losing only one match to the eventual champion from Iran.

Thirty-three countries and territories participated in the eFootball PES 2020 tournament, part

of the 11th International Esports Federation (IESF) Esports World Championship which was held in the South Korean capital this year.

Macau was represented by Kengaroo, a Macau-based esports player and member of local esports association Grow uP eSports.

Kengaroo progressed cleanly through the group stages without suffering a single defeat, staving

off Costa Rica (4-3), Finland (1-1) and South Africa (4-0) in rapid succession.

During the playoffs, Kengaroo defeated his rival from the United States 2-0, before being pitted against Vietnam in the quarter-final. Described by Grow uP eSports as "a fierce challenge," the local player scraped through by winning a penalty shootout to

play in the semifinals against Iran.

Here, Kengaroo's winning streak came to an end, with Iran earning a 2-0 victory over Macau.

In the playoff for third place, Macau defeated Poland (2-0) to earn a bronze medal, in what Grow uP eSports is calling an impressive performance by a local gamer on the international stage.

"Congratulations to Macau

RUA DA BARCA KIOSK TO BE REPLACED WITH AUTOMATIC MACHINE

THE last operating post kiosk, which is located on Rua da Barca, will be replaced by an automatic postal machine after 2019, the Post and Communication Bureau has said in response to an inquiry by the Times.

The Times made the inquiry because there was no explanation as to what would replace the post kiosk, if anything.

"To cope with urban development and to provide 24-hour postal

services in the district, the post kiosk will be replaced by an automatic stamp vending machine at the same location," the bureau indicated in their reply, adding that the exact launch date of the new facility would be announced later.

On social media, netizens expressed their sadness about the closure of the post kiosk. A report by the Times was posted to a Facebook group about historical aspects of Macau. As of

press time, the post had generated more than 660 reactions, 265 of which were "sad reactions".

Netizens revisited their memorable moments with the post kiosk, such as frequenting it 30 years ago and posting letters to friends when they were young. One netizen even said that they had sent a lot of job application letters at the kiosk. Some netizens suggested that the bureau turn it into a snack kiosk. **AL**

CCTV SPORTS KICKS OFF MACAU TELEVISION BROADCASTS

CHINA television channel CCTV Sports was made available to viewers in Macau beginning yesterday. The launch of the new channel represents an increase in coverage of big sporting events, and in sports programming and viewership in the region.

The start of transmission to Macau was marked with a ceremony yesterday, with several high-ranking officials from both Macau and the mainland present, including Chief Executive Chui Sai On, Deputy

Minister of the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee and President of China Media Group Shen Haixiong and Director of Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Macau Fu Ziyang, among many others.

CCTV Sports is part of the China Central Television family of networks and is the main sports broadcaster in the People's Republic of China.

The channel began broadcasting in January

1995, and it now broadcasts 24 hours a day, seven days a week, bringing viewers a wide range of international sports events and extensive coverage of events that take place on Chinese territory.

Famous for its coverage of both the summer and winter Olympic games, the channel previously assumed the name CCTV Olympics during the broadcasting of such events.

The new channel is broadcast on digital TV channel 79. **RM**

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HK insists detention of traveler to Macau 'legal and justified'

LYNZY VALLES

HONG Kong's acting Chief Executive Matthew Cheung has urged the public not to read too much into the arrest of a Hong Kong man by Zhuhai police, arguing that the actions of mainland Chinese authorities in exercising their jurisdiction over parts of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge were "legal and justified". The man had reportedly been on his way to the Macau SAR.

Such measures are being carried out, according to the authorities, to ensure a stable and advantageous environment for the celebrations of the 20th Anniversary of the Macau Special Administrative Region.

According to Cheung, who is Chief Secretary for Administration, the checkpoint on the artificial island was a temporary measure in place for President Xi Jinping's visit, which will begin today. Cheung urged the public not to overinterpret the incident.

"It's perfectly justified for them to exercise jurisdiction within their own territory, it's entirely legal and justified," he said.

The Hong Kong official said that he could not reveal further details on the case due to privacy concerns. However, he assured that the authorities were following up with the case.

Last week, a man was detained while traveling to Macau through the eastern artificial island of the mega bridge, which is under Chinese jurisdiction.

The Zhuhai Public Security Bureau confirmed that the man was arrested for cartel crimes, adding that he had been wanted by the Shenzhen Airport Customs Bureau since August 2012. They also revealed that the man, surnamed Chung, is believed to have organized the smuggling of mobile phones with a group consisting of cross-border truck drivers from Guangdong and Hong Kong.

Meanwhile, in the past week, netizens on social me-

dia said that they had witnessed squads of mainland police officers conducting checks on all passengers on the bridge. Guns and police sniffer dogs were also seen, according to social media posts.

Cheung also refused to comment on the refusal of entry to a Now TV reporter who was entering Macau through the mega bridge. He only noted that the Hong Kong government would provide assistance to Hong Kong people if needed.

The Hong Kong television channel said that they had given Macau authorities the names of employees covering the handover celebrations beforehand.

Only the cameraman was allowed to enter Macau, while the reporter was denied entry by mainland authorities without explanation. The reporter was reportedly detained for about an hour.

The reporter said that an officer told him that the ban on entering Macau would only be in place for a "few days."

Macau-bound visitors ditch ferry travel for HZMB

DANIEL BEITLER

SIX out of every 10 visitors from Hong Kong say they are dropping ferry travel to Macau in favor of the land route made possible by the delta-spanning Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HZMB).

The findings come from a new study commissioned by the Macau Government Tourism Office on how the HZMB is changing the way tourists enter the special administrative region.

A statement issued yesterday by the tourism authority concluded that just one year after its opening the bridge has already "transformed visitors' travel patterns."

Aside from the HZMB and the Border Gate, visitors can also enter Macau via the Lotus Checkpoint, Outer Harbor Ferry Terminal (Macau), Taipa Ferry Terminal or the Macau International Airport.

After nine years of construction, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau bridge opened to the public on October 23, 2018. It has already proven a popular method of transportation for some Macau-bound visitors, though it remains less utilized than the SAR's primary port of entry, the Gongbei Border Gate.

According to official data, in the first three quarters of 2019, some 4.29 million same-day and overnight visitors used the HZMB to cross into the territory. In the same

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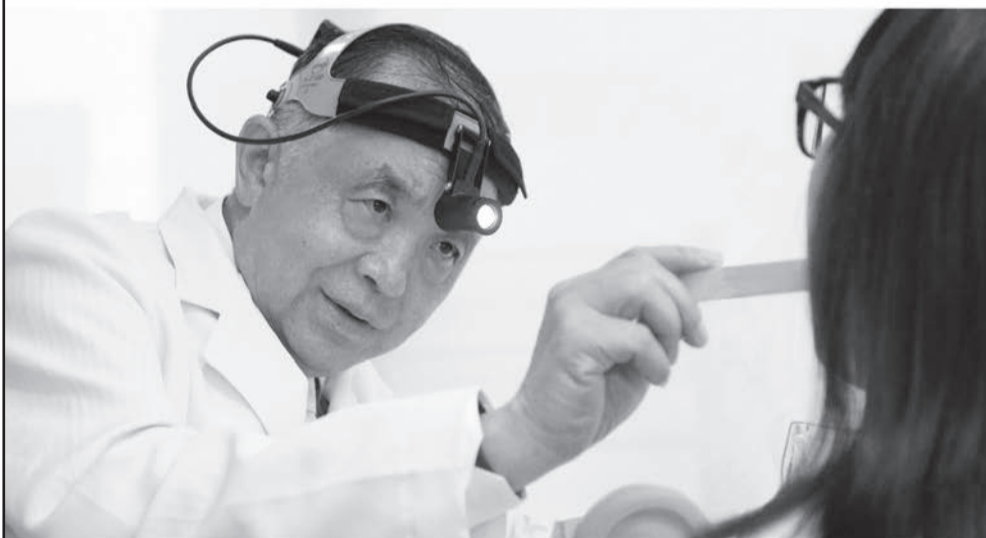
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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

XINHUA



period, a total of 2.86 million visitors traveled via the Outer Harbor Ferry Terminal, 2.07 million used the Taipa Ferry Terminal and over 15.82 million people entered the Macau SAR via the Border Gate.

However, one major reason for the bridge's use this year was its novelty factor. According to the study, visitors had primarily opted to use the bridge "out of curiosity to experience something new," followed by other rea-

sons such as reduced travel times and expense.

One area that warrants further examination is the bridge's role in facilitating multi-city visits within the Greater Bay Area. The study concluded that a relatively high proportion of visitors indicated that they were willing to travel to more than one of the three jurisdictions that administer the bridge.

Some 72% of mainland visitors said that the existence of the

HZMB encouraged them to visit both Macau and Hong Kong, while 60% Hong Kong visitors to Macau said they might also travel to the mainland during the same trip. Visitors to Macau said that the top four other cities they would consider visiting because of the bridge were Hong Kong, Zhuhai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen.

The study also found that while most visitors entered and exited the city via the same port of

entry, the bridge had an effect in drawing more visitors to harness the connectivity of the Macau International Airport. For example, nearly a quarter of visitors who entered Macau via the Zhuhai-Macau Port of the HZMB left the city via the Macau International Airport.

The effect was mirrored in the opposite direction, with almost 22% of visitors who arrived in the city via the Macau International Airport leaving via the bridge.

The study was conducted through in-person surveys with visitors to Macau upon their departure, probing into their experience and appraisal of the bridge. A total of 3,070 valid questionnaires were completed between April and September this year.

In its statement yesterday, the tourism authority said it would "draw on the study report as reference for future work on tourism planning, management and destination marketing."

AD



Global Tourism Economy Forum • Macao 2019 Adjourns with Success Creates New Avenues for Progress in Tourism & Leisure Navigates New Insights to the Roadmap to a Beautiful Life

The 8th edition of the Global Tourism Economy Forum • Macao 2019 was successfully held from 13th -15th October at MGM COTAI. Aligned with President Xi's concept of 'Beautiful Life' and highlighting key elements under the Belt & Road Initiative and the Greater Bay Area Plan, GTEF 2019 "Tourism and Leisure: Roadmap to a Beautiful Life," featured a range of programs including discussion panels, keynotes, special interviews as well as concurrent activities such as workshops, exhibitions, and customized business matching. The Forum engaged more than 2,000 participants including ministerial officials, industry leaders, experts, and scholars, from across the globe, along with delegations from Partner Countries Argentina and Brazil, as well as Featured Chinese Province Jiangsu.



Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Forum Chairman of GTEF, Ho Hau Wah

Global Tourism Economy Forum's success in 2019 is largely attributable to partnership with the following organizations and entities:

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Chief Executive of the Macao SAR, Chui Sai On

Leaders, Experts, and Guests of Honours

43 Guests of Honours officiated GTEF 2019 during the Opening Ceremony on 14th October. Among them included: Chief Executive of the Macao Special Administrative Region, Chui Sai On; Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Forum Chairman of GTEF, Ho Hau Wah; Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macao Special Administrative Region, Fu Ziyang; Secretary-General of World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Zurab Pololikashvili; Executive Vice Chairman of All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce (ACFIC), Xu Lejiang; Commissioner of the Office of The Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Macao Special Administrative Region, Shen Belli; Minister of Tourism of the Secretariat of State for Tourism of Argentina, Gustavo Santos; Minister of Tourism of Brazil, Marcelo Álvaro Antônio; Vice Minister of Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, Zhang Xu; Chairperson of China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), Gao Yan; Vice-Governor of the People's Government of Jiangsu Province, Wang Jiang; Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macao SAR Government and Executive Chairman of GTEF, Alexis Tam; Vice Chairman and Secretary-General of GTEF, Pansy Ho.

Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Forum Chairman of GTEF, Ho Hau Wah, expressed in his welcome speech, "According to the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area launched in early 2019, Macao is positioned as one of four GBA major hubs, offering a once in a lifetime and unprecedented opportunity for the city's development prospect."

Chief Executive of the Macao SAR, Chui Sai On, stated in his welcome remarks, "The Central Government has bestowed huge continuous support upon Macao in our move forward...As an international tourism hub in an unique East-meets-West milieu, Macao strives to harness talents and resources to promote cultural and commercial exchange across countries along the Belt and Road."

During the Closing Ceremony, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macao SAR Government and Executive Chairman of GTEF, Alexis Tam, stated in his closing remarks, "2019 is a momentous year for Macao as we celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China as well as the 20th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Macao Special Administrative Region. It is a high time to further our development as a world centre of tourism and leisure, under the colourful backdrop of the Belt and Road initiative and with the collaborative actions with our brother cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area."

In her concluding remarks, Vice Chairman and Secretary-General of GTEF, Pansy Ho, said, "GTEF was founded upon the mission of connecting East-West tourism interests...In Macao, not only have we continued to reinvest, but to reinvent. Blessed by our national policy, Macao is ready to take on another wave of development, as we continue to integrate into the Greater Bay Area framework, contributing our tourism experience to drive cross-industry collaboration with our neighbors, to share our culture and heritage with the world, and instill a sense of national pride among our people."



Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macao SAR Government and Executive Chairman of GTEF, Alexis Tam

Building Upon Previous Successes, Expanded Programme in 2019

The "GTEF - World Tourism Investment and Financing Conference" was also launched in this edition, inspiring delegates to explore new possibilities in the tourism markets along the Belt and Road and across the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. The Forum also deepened its collaboration with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) by bringing the finale of the "UNWTO Tourism Tech Adventure: SportsTech" to Macao for the first time, to foster reform and innovation in the tourism value chain.

GTEF 2020 Features Italy as Partner Country and Gansu as Featured Chinese Province

Announced during the Closing Ceremony, GTEF 2020 will be consists of Partner Country Italy and Featured Chinese Province Gansu. Italy, the first country in the Group of Seven (G7) to join China's Belt and Road Initiative, will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its diplomatic relations with China as well as Italy-China Tourism Year in 2020. GTEF also welcomed its renewed partnership with Gansu since the inaugural edition, a northwestern Chinese province enriched with profound traditions and plethora of untapped business opportunities.



Vice Chairman and Secretary-General of GTEF, Pansy Ho

**INTERCITY RAILWAY
CONNECTS GUANGZHOU,
DONGGUAN, SHENZHEN**

The Guangzhou-Shenzhen Intercity Railway began its official operation on Sunday, joining the cities of Guangzhou, Dongguan and Shenzhen in a "one-hour economic circle". Designed with a speed of 140 kilometers per hour, the route stops at a total of 15 stations in the Greater Bay Area, from Guangzhou East Railway Station to Shenzhen Bao'an Airport. Construction of the railway began in December 2008. It spans the length of 76 kilometers and traces roughly along the east bank of the Pearl River. According to Guangzhou Daily, the new railway will operate up to 37 trains per day, with a maximum capacity of 1,400 passengers and staff.

**RARE SIBERIAN CRANE
SPOTTED IN GUANGDONG**

The rare Siberian crane has been spotted for the first time in Guangdong Province, according to local researchers. Locals in Xinhui district in the city of Jiangmen recently reported nine birds that have not been seen before in a local pond. Researchers later confirmed that the birds, eight adults and one baby, are Siberian cranes, a protected animal. There are only around 4,000 Siberian cranes worldwide and the species is listed as "critically endangered" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. The birds usually migrate during winter to Poyang Lake in east China's Jiangxi Province. It is rare for these nine birds to fly south for another 800 kilometers to Xinhui District, said Zhang Min, an assistant researcher with the Guangdong Institute of Applied Biological Resources.

MATTHEW CHEUNG

**GOV'T WILL NOT FLINCH
IN FACE OF DIFFICULTIES**

MATTHEW Cheung, acting chief executive in Hong Kong, said yesterday that the local government will never flinch in the face of difficulties resulted from the months-long social unrest.

The government will, as always, continue to fully implement the "one country, two systems" principle and strictly enforce the law, Cheung said at a press briefing before the Executive Council meeting this morning.

"In the face of unprecedented pressures and difficulties, we will remain in unity and take all-out efforts to stabilize the society. We hope calm will return to Hong Kong and Hong Kong will get out of the predicament," Cheung said, adding that the HKSAR government will also step up efforts to address the deep-seated problems.

When talking about disruptive activities on Sunday, Cheung said many residents



Matthew Cheung

were disappointed that violence returned to the street after a week of calm and the scenes of violent incidents made people feel uneasy.

The police had to use the minimum force to disperse rioters who blocked roads and committed arson, Cheung said.

The official also said some

of the relief measures rolled out by the government since August will be implemented in the next month to reduce the burden of Hong Kong residents amid an ongoing economic downturn.

In January, the HKSAR government will grant a month of extra allowances for the elderly, the disabled, the

working families and transport, among others, benefiting more than 1.4 million residents. The government will also pay a month of home rent for about 780,000 low-income households and subsidize power use for about 2.7 million households, Cheung said.

Cheung said more measures will be implemented in the first quarter, including allowances to 900,000 students and financing support for small and medium-sized enterprises.

"The array of measures will support enterprises, stabilize employment and relieve the burden of residents," Cheung added.

The measures come in response to the economic headwinds battering Hong Kong in recent months, which have seen the economy contract in two consecutive quarters. Most analysts believe growth will not return before the second half of 2020. DB/XINHUA

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

HK economy limps into 2020 with fate tied to protests

HONG Kong's economy ends the year wounded, with the chances for stabilization in 2020 hanging on whether future protests are peaceful or lapse back into violence.

Economists forecast a 1.3% contraction for 2019 and predict year-on-year declines will continue in the first two quarters of 2020.

Yet the unrest has tapered in recent weeks after an electoral win for pro-democracy parties in November, and there's a chance that the contractions in visitor numbers and retail sales will ease up on a month-to-month basis. Businesses and households can look to the government's annual budget early next year as a potential source of fresh stimulus and structural support for the economy.

Also, the preliminary trade deal reached between the U.S. and China could ease economic pressures for Hong Kong.

Here is a snapshot of the economic pain Hong Kong's economy has weathered since last spring, from the political unrest as well as the effects of the trade war:

TECHNICAL RECESSION

Hong Kong's economic momentum has evaporated since the start of protests in June, with the city in the third quarter entering its first recession in a decade. The government forecasts an annual contraction of 1.3% amid the protests and as the U.S.-China trade woes take a toll on exports.



LABOR MARKET STARTING TO CRACK

The labor market has begun losing its resilience, with overall unemployment rising to 3.1% in October after spending much of the past year at a two-decade low. The jobless rate for the food and beverage sector hit the highest level in more than six years. Many businesses have cut hours or required staff to take unpaid leave to stave off layoffs. The November reading is due this afternoon.

RETAIL CATASTROPHE

The economic impact of the unrest has been illustrated most dramatically in the retail and tourism industries with many businesses hanging on

by a thread. More than 5,600 retail jobs could be lost and thousands of stores shuttered in the next six months unless conditions improve, the Hong Kong Retail Management Association said in a briefing. The holiday shopping season will be crucial for many as leases start coming up for re-

newal and bonuses have to be paid.

TOURISTS STAYING AWAY

Mainland Chinese tourists are staying away from Hong Kong amid the unrest, which has had an anti-China tone. Arrivals from China plunged a record 46% in October to sli-

ghtly more than 2.5 million, less than half of the record set in January. This trend will likely continue as mainland visitors account for about 75% of total arrivals each month and aren't expected to rebound, especially if the unrest drags on.

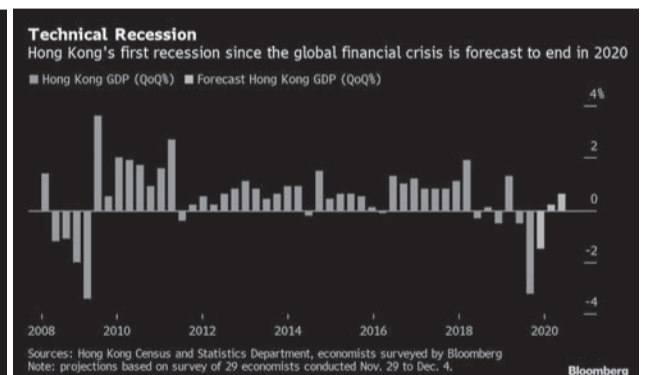
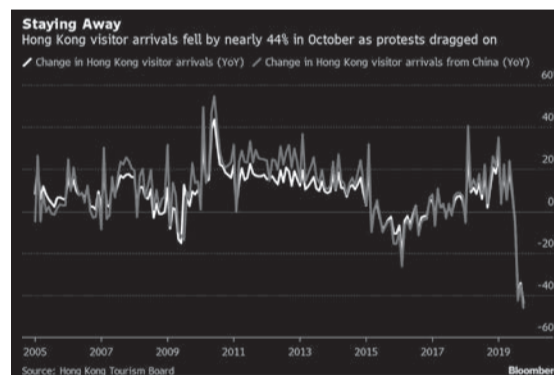
BUSINESS OUTLOOK AT 2003 LOWS

The outlook for businesses is at its lowest point since 2003, according to the November reading for Hong Kong's purchasing managers' index, from IHS Markit. The gauge has slid below the 50 level that divides expansion and contraction since April 2018.

MINOR PROPERTY SLIDE

One segment that has remained strong is the real estate market. Property prices have held up compared with other parts of Hong Kong's economy, easing 6% from a record set at the end of June. Loosened mortgage rules introduced by the government have allowed more first-time home buyers to enter the market, while demand for living space is solid.

"As long as the protests are peaceful, hopefully the violence is now settled down," Allan Zeman, chairman of Lan Kwai Fong Holdings Ltd., said in an interview. "I'm hoping that in general, the worst is over." **DB/BLOOMBERG**



HONG KONG

Protests led to \$5 billion fund outflow, Bank of England says

HARRY WILSON & ALFRED LIU

ESCALATING protests this year have led to about \$5 billion being pulled from investment funds in Hong Kong - raising the risk that strain in the Asian financial hub could spread to other parts of the world, according to the Bank of England's latest financial stability report.

That figure, equivalent to about 1.25% of the

former British colony's gross domestic product, amounts to a "significant" outflow, the BOE said.

"The protests, and their impact on the real economy, highlight political risk as a key vulnerability in Hong Kong," the BOE said. "And these political tensions pose risks, given Hong Kong's position as a major financial centre."

HSBC Holdings Plc and Standard Chartered Plc, among the biggest foreign-based lenders in Hong

Kong, have said that they have seen wealthy customers in the city opening overseas bank accounts as fears have grown since pro-democracy protests began.

Still, turmoil has eased lately, and a deal to avert a deepening trade war between China and the U.S. has rekindled optimism and stoked demand for assets in the city.

Hong Kong's currency has posted its longest rally in eight years, boosted

in part by foreign funds buying stocks. The city's benchmark stock index rallied 4.5% last week, though is still the weakest this year among major global markets.

City officials and bankers have said that outflows from the city have been limited, even as the tension pushed the economy into a recession. Output was already under pressure due to waning global demand.

Howard Lee, a deputy

chief executive at the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, said late last month that the flows in the city's currency, which is pegged to the U.S. dollar, have been "pretty balanced."

The most recent data from the authority showed Hong Kong dollar deposits rose to HK\$6.91 trillion (\$887 billion) in October from HK\$6.88 trillion the prior month.

Deal making for the city's banks has also con-

tinued apace, with Alibaba Group Holding Ltd.'s Hong Kong listing helping to propel the financial hub to its busiest year since 2010 in terms of new share sales.

The U.K. central bank keeps a close eye even in the city because of the outsized exposure of British banks. Their current combined exposure totals about 160% of their common equity Tier 1 capital, according to the BOE. **BLOOMBERG**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

HONG KONG'S AIRLINES FACE JOB CUTS AND EVEN BANKRUPTCIES

KYUNGHEE PARK

HONG Kong's airlines face the prospect of further job cuts and even bankruptcies as anti-Beijing protests continue to deter tourists from the city, adding to the pressure on an industry already facing headwinds globally.

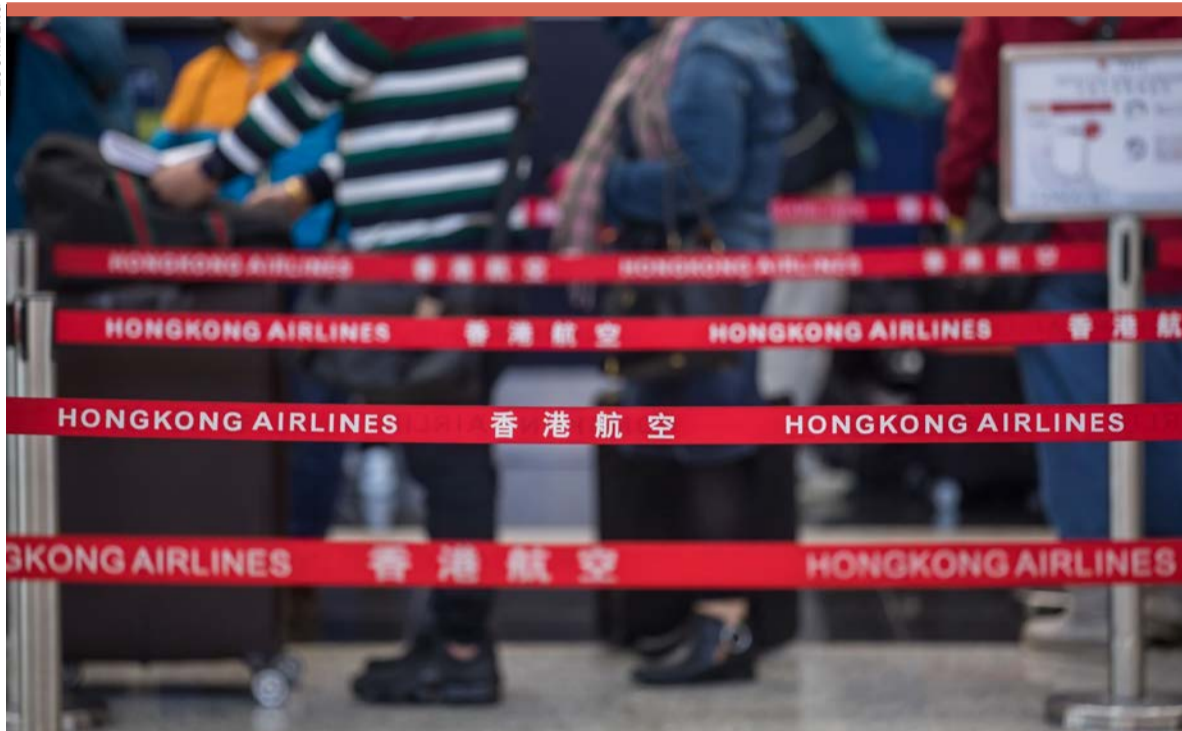
Six months of anti-Beijing demonstrations have sent passenger traffic tumbling in Hong Kong, producing a cascade of profit warnings, flight cancellations and cost cuts at airlines. The fallout intensified this week as market leader Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd. reported a fourth straight monthly drop in passenger traffic and Hong Kong's Airport Authority said it seized seven planes from Hong Kong Airlines after the embattled carrier failed to make certain payments.

Things could get worse. Confiscating aircraft is often a prelude for an operational collapse, according to Paul Yong, an analyst at DBS Group Holdings Ltd. Cathay, meanwhile, may have to cut as many as 1,000 jobs as the violent unrest deters visitors from all the world, according to aviation consulting firm Endau Analytics.

The crisis in Hong Kong — Asia's busiest hub for international traffic — is another headwind for a global airline industry whose profits have already been hit by slowing economic growth and trade wars. While Cathay and its units — Cathay Dragon and Hong Kong Express — have scaled back flights to cope with the slide in passengers, further unrest could require more drastic responses.

"They will have to take precautionary steps and one of them would be shedding jobs," said Shukor Yusof, founder of Endau Analytics. "There is no clear re-

BLOOMBERG



solution for what's happening there."

It's not just airlines. Dwindling visitors — arrivals to Hong Kong plunged 44% in October, the biggest drop in more than 15 years — have had a rippling effect. A local association has warned job losses at retailers could climb to records. Falling tourism has also hit hotels and Disneyland.

But the aviation market stands out as Hong Kong remains the world's most popular travel destination for international visitors despite the unrest, according to Euromonitor International.

Cathay last month warned that second-half results will be significantly lower than the first and that the situation in Hong Kong was incredibly challenging. Its shares are wallowing near a decade-low. Hong Kong Airlines, which has said its operations remain normal even after the planes

were seized, was pushed to the brink this month when regulators threatened to revoke its license if it didn't raise more cash.

Asked to comment on potential job cuts, a Cathay representative referred to past statements about the company freezing hiring. Hong Kong Airlines said it doesn't comment on market rumors and that the company is operating normally.

There's no end in sight for the unrest that's flared since June, roiling the city's economy and hurting its airlines. Hong Kong's Civil Aviation Department said passenger arrivals to its airport slumped 17% from a year earlier to 2.49 million in November, falling for a fourth straight month.

The biggest concern for Cathay is that the sharpest drop in traffic has come from the mainland, the primary source of visitors to the city. The company generates

almost half of its revenue from operations from Hong Kong and China.

Cathay had to deal with a backlash early in the protests after some staff took part in demonstrations, prompting a rebuke from Beijing and boycotts from employees at state-owned companies. The airline has also taken heat from protesters who accused it of kowtowing to the Chinese government after it warned employees about their involvement in rallies. Its chairman and chief executive officer both resigned.

Cathay cut 600 jobs in Hong Kong as part of its three-year transformation program that started in 2017 to thwart competition from Chinese carriers, which have been adding more direct flights to the U.S. and Europe and reducing Hong Kong's position as a transit hub for Chinese travelers. The airline is finalizing

further cost management and efficiency measures, according to a memo sent to staff last month.

The situation is even worse at Hong Kong Airlines given that it was already facing liquidity crunch even before the protests, CAPA Centre for Aviation said in a report. While the airline has met conditions set by Hong Kong regulators to stay in business, "the current environment will not make things any easier," CAPA said.

Airlines flying into Hong Kong have also cut capacity and services as demand weakened. China Eastern Airlines Corp., Virgin Australia Holdings Ltd. and PT Garuda Indonesia are among those who have suspended some flights to the city.

Andrew Lee, an analyst at Jefferies Hong Kong Ltd., recently wrote that Cathay may report a loss of HKD973 million (\$124 million) in the second half because of weak travel demand. The company posted first-half net income of HKD1.35 billion.

The 1.4% capacity cuts Cathay announced for next year following reductions in November and December may not be enough, said UOB Kay Hian Pte analyst K. Ajith.

"What they are probably trying to do is reduce their cash burn," Ajith said. The company may need to raise more funds next year as HKD15 billion in debt matures and there are needs for capital expenditure, he said.

Cathay has deferred deliveries of four Airbus SE A321neo and A320neo aircraft for its Cathay Dragon and Hong Kong Express units next year, according to a presentation for analysts in November. It will also accelerate the retirement of two planes.

"It's not just a Cathay problem," Shukor at Endau Analytics said. "The whole of Hong Kong has been affected. Their future is not in their hands any more."

BLOOMBERG

CORPORATE BITS

GEG holds respectful workplace workshop with women's association



Galaxy Entertainment Group and the Women's General Association of Macau recently held a workshop for nearly 200 employees at Banyan Tree Macau, aiming to provide information on creating a respectful workplace.

Focusing on psychological and legal perspectives, the workshop discussed workplace discrimination and harassment, as well as the prevention of domestic violence.

According to a press release

from the gaming operator, Lao Chan Fong, Psychology Director at the Psychotherapy Center of The Women's General Association of Macau introduced some basic ideas on maintaining a respectful workplace. He then provided tips on preventing discrimination and harassment and also discussed appropriate measures for dealing with issues that may arise.

Meanwhile, Bernardete Fan, Senior Associate of Manuela António Lawyers and Notaries, followed with an overview of the relevant laws in Macau.

Galaxy said that workshop participants reported they had developed a better understanding of the current situation of gender equity in the workplace.

Sands China takes trip to patriotic exhibition at Macau Forum



Over 40 Sands China employees enjoyed a guided tour of the Macau government's new exhibition at the Macau Forum on Monday — "The Broad Waves of a Great River: Exhibition on 70 Years of Folk History in China" — in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the

establishment of the People's Republic of China.

The activity is part of Sands China's ongoing effort to promote professionalism education, strengthen employee knowledge of the establishment of the People's Republic of China, and offer a wide va-

riety of activities for employees.

"Professionalism education is one of the important ways Sands China can invest in our team members," said Dr. Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd. "We hope this exhibition gives our team members the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the mainland."

The exhibition explores the development of modern China from 1949 to 2019 from the perspective of folk history, examining the rise in prosperity of the Chinese people and the development of the nation. It features over 600 historical photos, more than 300 exhibits, a documentary, and multimedia 3D experiences.



China and Russia urge UN to lift key North Korea sanctions

EDITH M. LEDERER,
UNITED NATIONS

CHINA and Russia are calling on the U.N. Security Council to terminate sanctions on key North Korean exports such as coal, iron, iron ore and textiles, “with the intent of enhancing the livelihood of the civilian population.”

A draft resolution circulated to council members yesterday [Macau time] by the two allies of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un would also lift a ban on North Koreans working overseas and terminate a decision to repatriate all those earning income abroad by Dec. 22.

The council expressed concern when the repatriation provision

was adopted two years ago that earnings from the nearly 100,000 overseas North Koreans, according to a U.S. estimate, are being used to support the North’s nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

China and Russia made these and other proposals 16 days before Kim’s end-of-December deadline for the United States to come up with new proposals to revive nuclear diplomacy.

At Kim’s second summit with U.S. President Donald Trump last February, negotiations faltered after the U.S. rejected North Korean demands for broad sanctions relief in exchange for a partial surrender of the North’s nuclear capabilities.

North Korea has carried out 13 ballistic missile launches since

May seeking to pressure Washington, and it has hinted at lifting its moratorium on nuclear and long-range missile tests if the Trump administration fails to make substantial concessions before the new year.

The proposed resolution, obtained by The Associated Press, welcomes the continuing dialogue between the United States and North Korea and calls on all parties to consider implementing “further practical steps to reduce military tension on the Korean peninsula and probability of any military confrontation by all appropriate means.” Its suggestions include adoption of a formal declaration and/or peace treaty ending the 1950-53 Korean War.

The draft resolution also calls

for “prompt resumption of the six-party talks or re-launch of multilateral consultations in any other similar format, with the goal of facilitating a peaceful and comprehensive solution through dialogue.”

The six-party talks involving North Korea, South Korea, the U.S., China, Russia and Japan began in 2003 and led Pyongyang to accept a deal in September 2005 to end its nuclear weapons program in exchange for security, economic and energy benefits. But after difficult negotiations, North Korea refused to accept U.S.-proposed verification methods, and the agreement fell through in December 2008. The six-party talks have been stalled since then.

The China-Russia draft resolution reiterates “that all parties

should commit to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.” It would call on the nuclear weapon states — the U.S., Russia, China, Britain and France — that are parties to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to work with North Korea on “the process of practical denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.”

It welcomes further development of relations between the two Koreas, in particular on rail and road connections, and would exempt the inter-Korean rail and road projects from sanctions.

The proposed resolution would terminate specific provisions in council resolutions adopted in 2016 and 2017 that banned the sale or import of coal, iron and iron ore, textiles and “statues.”

Then U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley said in December 2017 that those sanctions would ban over 90% of North Korea’s exports reported in 2016.

The draft resolution would also lift a ban on North Korea’s import of some industrial machinery and transport vehicles used for infrastructure construction that can’t be diverted to the country’s nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

It also would ask the Security Council committee monitoring sanctions on North Korea to adopt “the most favorable approach towards requests for exemption from existing U.N. sanctions... for humanitarian and livelihood purposes.”

The Chinese and Russians produced a long list of construction and humanitarian items ranging from railway or tramway materials, iron or steel parts for roofs and windows, screws and bolts, bulldozers, traffic control equipment, vehicles under 20 tons, and firefighting vehicles to sewing needles, radiators for central heating, kitchen articles, air conditioning, dish washers, micro-computers, vacuum cleaners, shovels, axes, agricultural equipment and fire extinguishers. AP

Woman gets 10 months for Chinese maternity tourism scheme

A Chinese woman was sentenced to 10 months in prison for running a business that helped pregnant women in China lie on visa forms and to immigration authorities so they could travel to Southern California to give birth to children who would automatically have American citizenship.

U.S. District Judge James Selna issued the sentence in Santa Ana, California to Dongyuan Li, who wiped away tears with her hand several times during the hearing.

Selna said he expected her to be released from custody later Monday due to time served.

Federal prosecutors opposed the sentence and said they believed Li should be face years in prison to deter others from helping women lie on visa applications and hide pregnancies in these so-called birth tourism schemes.

“I just think it sends the wrong message,” Charles Pell, the federal prosecutor, told the judge.

Li pleaded guilty in September to conspiracy and

visa fraud for running a birth tourism company in Southern California known as “You Win USA.”

Federal authorities said the company helped more than 500 Chinese women travel to the United States to deliver American babies, and that Li used a cluster of apartments in Irvine, California, to receive them.

Authorities said the company coached the women to lie on their visa applications and to hide their pregnancies when passing through customs

in U.S. airports.

Li was arrested this year following a years-long investigation into birth tourism schemes that charged Chinese travelers tens of thousands of dollars to deliver their babies in Southern California. Authorities said Li was a birth tourism customer and later got involved in running the business.

In a letter to the court, Li, a mother of four, said she has taken English and music lessons and read books and exercised daily while in custody.

“I am very sorry for the mistakes that I have made,” she wrote in the Dec. 1 letter filed with the court. “I truly sincerely apologize for any harm that I have caused to the American society.”

Her attorney, Thomas O’Brien, told reporters the sentence was fair as prosecutors only documented seven cases where travelers lied to engage in birth tourism. He said others stated on visa forms they were traveling for tourism or medical reasons.

Dan Showalter, super-

visory special agent for Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s homeland security investigations in Los Angeles, said Li has a valid visa in the United States but following the sentencing immigration authorities will begin proceedings to deport her to China.

He said agents will continue to investigate birth tourism cases, noting this one was the first of its kind.

“I don’t think we’re going to let the sentence sway us from doing what we do,” he said. AP



INDIA STUDENTS DECRY POLICE AS CITIZENSHIP PROTESTS GROW

EMILY SCHMALL & SHEIKH
 SAALIQ, NEW DELHI

INDIAN student protests that turned into violent clashes with police galvanized opposition nationwide yesterday to a new law that provides a path to citizenship for non-Muslim migrants who entered the country illegally from several neighboring countries.

Police fired tear gas in the Seelampur area of New Delhi to push back protesters who swarmed to barricades and threw stones. Protests were also reported in the states of West Bengal, Kerala, Karnataka and elsewhere.

A march by students from New Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia University on Sunday descended into chaos when demonstrators set three buses on fire. Police responded with rubber bullets and tear gas. Videos showed officers running after unarmed protesters and beating them with wooden sticks.

Hanjala Mojibi, an English major at the predominantly Muslim school, said that when he and others saw police enter the campus, they walked toward them with their hands up to indicate their protest was nonviolent.

"The police made all 15 of us kneel and started beating us. They used lots of abusive words. One of them removed my prescription glasses, threw (them) on the ground, broke them and told me to look down," Mojibi said at a news conference in tears.

Simultaneously, police stormed Aligarh Muslim University in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh on Sunday firing tear gas and injuring five students who were participating in a student-led demonstration, university spokesman Rahat Abrar said.

Shahid Hussain, a 25-year-old history major, said police broke

the windows of his dormitory and lobbed a tear gas canister inside. He said after fleeing the building to escape the fumes, police pushed him against a tree and beat him with sticks.

Police spokesman Sunil Bainsla denied the account, calling the allegations of police brutality "lies."

Police fired tear gas in the Seelampur area of New Delhi to push back protesters

The police response to Sunday's protests has drawn widespread condemnation. It also seems to have sparked a broader movement against the Citizenship Amendment Act, with demonstrations erupting across the country.

"The 15th of December is a black day in the history of this coun-

try," said human rights activist Farah Naqvi.

The new law applies to Hindus, Christians and other religious minorities who are in India illegally but can demonstrate religious persecution in Muslim-majority Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. It does not apply to Muslims.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party has described the new law as a humanitarian gesture.

While it was being debated in Parliament last week, Home Minister Amit Shah said it was "not even .001% against minorities.

It is against infiltrators." Modi told an election rally in eastern Jharkhand state yesterday, "No Indian citizen will be affected by the amended citizenship act."

Speaking about Sunday's protests, he accused the opposition Congress party of using students for political purposes. "The decisions made by the government should be discussed and any voice should be raised in a democratic manner. This government understands your concerns but some people use your shoulder for firing a gun," he said.

But critics say it is intended to help the party transform a multicultural and secular India into a Hindu "rastra," or distinctly Hindu state and further marginalize India's 200 million Muslims.

India is 80% Hindu and 14% Muslim, which means it has one of the largest Muslim populations of any country in the world.

"It is as if Indian citizens are rising to save the Indian Constitution from the Indian state and the state policy," said Naqvi, the rights activist.

Police spokesman M.S. Randhawa said 10 people were arrested during Sunday's protest at Jamia Millia Islamia University from Jamia Nagar, a Muslim neighborhood near the university.

"We found out that the arrested men had instigated the crowds and were also responsible for also vandalizing the public property," Randhawa said.

Students said police lobbed tear gas shells inside the campus, broke down the doors of the library and yanked students out to assault them. Dozens of students were taken to hospitals for treatment.

Police have denied the charges and said they acted with restraint.

The citizenship law follows a contentious citizenship registry process in northeastern India's Assam state intended to weed out people who immigrated to the country illegally.

Nearly 2 million people in Assam were excluded from the list, about half Hindu and half Muslim, and have been asked to prove their citizenship or else be considered foreign. India is constructing a detention center for some of the tens of thousands of people the courts are expected to ultimately determine came to the country illegally.

Home Minister Shah has pledged to roll it out the program nationwide, promising to rid India of "infiltrators."

The Citizenship Amendment Act could provide protection and a fast track to naturalization for many of the Hindus left off Assam's citizenship list, while explicitly leaving out Muslims. **AP**

PAKISTAN

Lawyer who fought for unlawfully held is abducted

APakistani lawyer known for pursuing cases of those unlawfully detained by the country's security agencies was abducted overnight from his home in the garrison city of Rawalpindi, his son said yesterday.

According to the son, several armed men in plainclothes knocked on the gate of the family's

home on Monday night. When the family opened the door, the men barged in and snatched his father, Inamur Rehman, shoved him into a car and then sped away.

Rehman, a lawyer and a retired military officer, was never a threat to anyone, said the son, Husnain Inam. He refused to speculate on who was

behind the abduction.

"We are still in a state of shock," said Inam, adding that the family was too terrified to cry out for help during the abduction.

Inam, a college teacher, said he's formally reporting the abduction to the police. No government official could immediately be reached to comment.

Rehman has been vocal

critic of Pakistani security agencies and has also represented several people detained by the country's military-backed spy agency in recent years. He has previously reported being harassed by security agencies.

In 2012, he petitioned a court challenging the government's move to keep outgoing army chief Gen.

Ashfaq Parvez Kayani in office for another three years.

Last week, dozens rallied in the capital, Islamabad, marking the the International Human Rights Day by urging the government to release hundreds of people who they say have been "forcibly disappeared" by security agencies in recent years.

The government has repeatedly denied the allegations. Although Pakistani law prohibits detentions without court approval, officials privately concede that intelligence agencies are holding an unspecified number of suspects. The officials say the detentions are because of ties to militant groups. **AP**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



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GUTERRES

UN CHIEF SAYS CROSS-BORDER AID INTO SYRIA IS ESSENTIAL

EDITH M. LEDERER,
UNITED NATIONS

THE U.N. chief is urging the Security Council to authorize the delivery of critically needed humanitarian aid across borders and conflict lines in Syria for another year, saying this aid mainly to rebel-held areas "has staved off an even larger humanitarian crisis inside Syria."

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a report to the council circulated yesterday that over 1 million people receive cross-border assistance every month.

"The United Nations does not have an alternative means of reaching people in need in the areas in which cross-border assistance is being provided," he said.

Since 2014, the Security Council has sent aid through four border crossings — Bab al-Salam and Bab al-Hawa in Turkey, Al Yarubiyah in Iraq, and Al-Ramtha in Jordan.

AP PHOTO



U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres (left) UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi (center) and Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis

Diplomats said the sponsors of this year's resolution — Germany, Belgium and Kuwait — circulated a draft that was discussed last week which would add a fifth crossing at Tel Abyad in Turkey and extend cross-border operations for a year.

The diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity because

the discussions were private, said Russia and China, which are allies of Syrian President Bashar Assad, didn't engage constructively on the sponsors' draft resolution.

Instead, Russia, supported by China, circulated a rival resolution that seeks to close the crossing points in Iraq and Jordan, leaving only the two

in Turkey, the diplomats said. And it would renew the cross-border operation for only six months.

Last year, Russia and China abstained in the 13-0 vote authorizing the crossing points.

Russian Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said he abstained because "the new realities in Syria" require that the program for cross-border deliveries be fine-tuned, "with the ultimate goal here being to gradually but inevitably wrap it up."

The mandate for the current resolution expires Jan. 10, and diplomats said they expect tough negotiations.

Guterres said 2019 saw "a further deterioration of an already extremely difficult humanitarian situation for people throughout Syria, where over 11 million people remain in need of assistance."

As the year draws to an end, the secretary-general said, he is "particularly concerned about the impact that a potential full-scale military offensive

in the northwest could have on the already vulnerable population, while also watching with concern the impact of ongoing hostilities in the northeast, as well as increasing tension in the south."

He said this year's humanitarian appeal for Syria for \$3.3 billion is only 55 percent funded, at \$1.8 billion, and urged donors to provide additional support.

Yesterday, in Geneva, the United Nations urged governments, businesses and others to "reboot" the world's response to refugees as the number of people fleeing their homes rises, along with hostility to migrants.

The U.N. and Switzerland are hosting the first Global Refugee Forum in Geneva yesterday and today, an event aimed at drawing pledges of financial, technical and other assistance, as well as encouraging changes of policy to enable refugees' better inclusion in society.

"Our world is in turmoil and 25 million refugees are looking to us for solutions," Filippo Grandi, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, told the event. He noted that the number is far higher if you add in people who are displaced within their own countries. MDT/AP

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Brazil's role questioned after UN global warming meeting

MAURICIO SAVARESE,
SAO PAULO

WITH the failure of the U.N. climate conference to produce an agreement, some Brazilians who participated in previous climate meetings say their country is now part of the problem in efforts to forge an international approach to global warming.

Others, taking a cue from Brazil's Environment Minister Ricardo Salles, are blaming the world's wealthy nations. Salles demanded money from industrialized countries to help with protecting the Amazon, accused those countries of being hypocritical about addressing climate change.

Salles also took a jab at environmentalists who wring their hands over what they consider damage caused by beef consumption. He tweeted a photo of his enormous beef meal "to offset carbon emissions" at the Madrid conference.

Activists questioned what Brazil's role will be in climate conferences, noting that the two-week conference held in Madrid originally was supposed to be put on by Brazil, before Jair Bolsonaro took office as president last Jan. 1. His government declined to do so, citing fiscal constraints.

Where previous Brazilian ad-



Brazil's Environment Minister Ricardo Salles

ministrations sought to join in multinational approaches to dealing with problems, Bolsonaro takes a more Brazil-centered view along with a combative, far-right political approach.

He has questioned whether activists were behind some of the fires that raged in the Amazon region this year and accuses nonprofit groups of working on behalf of international powers to hinder Brazil's development. He has presented no evidence for either claim.

Rubens Ricupero, a former Brazilian environment minister and head of the U.N. trade and development organization, said the government's approach in Madrid "had no pragmatism at all" and could hurt Brazil's trade and efforts to attract investment. He said he attended the U.N.'s historic 1992 meeting in Rio de Janeiro, where global warming discussions started gaining traction.

"Brazil's administration has moderated on a few topics, such as bringing Chinese investment in,

which they refused until not long ago. But there has been no moderation in environmental discussions, (or) in anything that has a relation with human rights," Ricupero said.

Claudio Angelo, communications coordinator for the nonprofit group Observatório do Clima, said the Brazilian delegation left journalists and activists in the dark about its positions during the negotiations in Madrid.

"Diplomats and nonprofits often have disagreements, but that never stopped conversations

during meetings, some of them very frank. But that didn't happen this time," Angelo said.

Two Brazilian diplomats who took part in the climate conference did not respond to a request for comment on their handling of negotiations.

Salles said rich countries were the cause of the failure to reach agreement in Madrid. "They want measures and point their fingers at the rest of the world, but when they have to put their hands into their pockets they don't want to," he said on Twitter.

Conservative pundit Rodrigo Constantino agreed with Salles' assessment.

"They are trying to kick the ladder out from under developing countries. One thing is for a rich country to talk about much more expensive alternative energy. Another is for developing countries like Brazil to replace their energy sources," Constantino said on Jovem Pan radio.

Celso Amorim, who led Brazil's delegation at the 2009 climate change conference, said the positions taken by Bolsonaro's administration at the U.N. meeting will have an impact on future discussions.

"Until recently, leaders of other countries looked to Brazil for some help on this issue," Amorim said in an interview. "Now Brazil is the problem, and that surely brings consequences for agribusiness, for example."

He added that he was a diplomat during Brazil's hard-line military dictatorship, but said that "even then there was much more moderation in international forums." AP

SURINAME

Convicted in massacre, leader Bourtese hangs on tight

ZAHARA Kamperveen laid white lilies before a glossy black plaque, then gently touched the name of her grandfather, a radio-station owner executed by a military junta in Suriname along with 14 other men nearly two decades before she was born.

"They were murdered because they fought for you and for me. For our future," the 19-year-old law student told a crowd that gathered to remember the victims.

The man responsible for the murder of André Kamperveen was President Desi Bouterse, according to a verdict delivered last month. Despite the finding that he ordered the 1982 killings known here as the December murders, Bouterse remains president and a pos-



Suriname President Desire "Desi" Delano Bouterse

sible candidate for a third term in elections next year in this sparsely populated former Dutch colony on the northeast edge of South America.

Bouterse, 74, says he's the victim of a politically motivated prosecution, and he retains strong support in his National Democratic Party, along with powerful

allies like China. For the relatives of the slain and other Bouterse opponents, the president's continued freedom and political power are troubling signs of tiny Suri-

name's inability to emerge from the era of brutal South American strongmen into the democracy that has taken hold in most of the region.

The burly, goateed army sergeant led a 1980 coup that established military rule for more than seven years. After an attempted counter-coup and street protests supporting it, Kamperveen and other junta opponents — including prominent lawyers, trade union leaders and journalists — were arrested and shot point-blank, in Fort Zeelandia, a 17th-century colonial fortress in the capital, Paramaribo.

Before the victims were slain, some of them, under pressure from the military, declared in a television recording that they had been

preparing an invasion with the help of foreign countries in order to expel the military regime. Military leaders declared that the victims were shot during an escape attempt.

After a brutal reign and 1987 transition to mostly free elections, under international pressure, Bouterse moved to the sidelines, where he started building a political party able to compete in free elections.

Suriname saw a halting progress toward democracy, including freer media and a largely independent judiciary.

As he built his party, both the former strongman and his son were convicted of narcotics trafficking, Bouterse by a Dutch court in absentia. AP

what's ON



MOVE! INTO THE WILDLIFE

TIME: 12pm-8pm
UNTIL: February 9, 2020
VENUE: 2/F, Broadway Macau
ADMISSION: MOP120
KONG SENG TICKETING SERVICE: 2855 5555

MACAU SCIENCE CENTRE

TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Except on Thursdays: open on public holidays)
VENUE: Macau Science Center
ADMISSION: MOP25 (Exhibition Centre)
MOP60 (Planetarium 2D dome or 2D sky shows)
MOP80 (Planetarium 3D dome or 3D sky shows)
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TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Last admission at 5:30pm; closed on Wednesdays, open on public holidays)
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TIME: 10am-5pm daily (Closed on Wednesdays, open on public holidays)
VENUE: St. Joseph's Seminary and Church, Rua do Seminário
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

Offbeat

MALNOURISHED DOG ADOPTED AFTER WALKING INTO HOME AMID STORM

AP PHOTO



A malnourished dog that wandered into a Philadelphia home during a storm has been adopted.

Sports podcast host Jack Jokinen said his wife found the dog when she went to grab a pacifier for their baby at 4 a.m. Saturday. She woke Jokinen up, and he rushed downstairs, where all the doors and windows were closed.

After watching surveillance footage of his home, Jokinen figured out that the wind had blown his front door wide open for several hours, he said in a video he posted on Twitter.

The surveillance footage showed a dog limp through the door at about 3:15 a.m. About 30 minutes later, a man walked up, yelled to check on everyone in the house and shut the door.

Jokinen took the dog, who is now named Suzy, to the vet where he learned that she had fleas, ticks and a heart murmur among other ailments.

"We didn't expect it but of all the bad things that could happen when your front door is left open — to end up with a sweet dog who just needs a good home," Jokinen said. "I mean wow this could have gone a lot worse."

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Água de Mar
15:30	Bing
15:45	Os Ursos Boonie na Neve
16:15	Caminhos de Irmandade
16:50	Portugueses Pelo Mundo Sr.1
17:35	Império (Repetição)
18:25	TDM Desporto (Repetição)
19:30	Ouro Verde Sr.1
20:30	Telejornal
21:10	Macau 20 Anos
21:25	TDM Entrevista
22:00	Índia Majestosa com Samira
22:25	Império
23:15	TDM News
23:50	Motel Bates Sr.4
00:35	Telejornal (Repetição)
01:20	RTPi Directo

cinema



CINETEATRO

12 - 18 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



1997 DAWN OF SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

A bill giving Scotland its own parliament for the first time in three centuries has been unveiled in Glasgow today.

Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar revealed his blueprint for the future of Scottish politics and called on the House of Lords not to delay or disrupt its passage into law.

"In well under 300 days we have set in train the biggest change in 300 years of Scottish history," he said.

The bill outlines the parliament described in the white paper, Scotland's Parliament, published in July.

It outlines a 129-member Scots parliament to be set up by the year 2000 with powers to legislate on all mainstream issues of national importance, including health and education.

Following elections in 1999 the majority party will form an Executive to act as government of the country.

The parliament, to be based in Edinburgh, will have the power to vary income tax by 3p in the pound.

Mr Dewar added: "This bill will give Scotland the power to boost its self-confidence, economically, culturally and political."

He said the Bill had clear backing from Scots, who overwhelmingly voted in favour of devolution in a referendum in September.

The Conservative party, which campaigned for a "no" vote at the referendum, now accepts a majority of Scots want devolution.

But Tory constitutional affairs spokesman, Michael Ancram, said: "That does not mean that we have to accept the Bill as it stands."

"There are areas of major concern such as the effect on the constitution of the UK as a whole."

Inter-party talks are already under way on how the bill will be handled.

All UK citizens aged 20 or over will be eligible to stand for election to the Scottish Parliament but only those living in Scotland, or with a main residence in the country, can vote at the 1999 election.

The bill will get its second reading during the first two days of Parliament's return in the New Year.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Scotland Act 1998 was introduced in 1997 and elections to the Scottish Assemblies were held in May 1999. Donald Dewar became Scotland's First Minister and later the same month the Scottish parliament met for the first time. Devolution Day on 1 July 1999 saw the Scottish parliament assume its full powers in the presence of the Queen - to cheers and applause. But the parliament was plunged into mourning when Mr Dewar, a much loved politician described as the "father of the Scottish nation", died in October 2000 aged 63. He had suffered bleeding on the brain following a fall. His death was marked by warm tributes from around the world and Scotland.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19

The journey you have been on has been quite a challenging one, so you'll breathe a sigh of relief today when you come across a person who offers you a chance to rest your weary feet for a while.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20

From far away, things look bright and beautiful—it's when you get close up and personal that you start to see the blemishes, the wrinkles and the cracks in someone's armor.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21

Are you waiting for other people to follow through on their promises? You could be waiting a long time—and you can't afford to. So skip waiting on everyone else and get to work.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22

A friend or family member has been walking on the wild side a bit too long, and today you might hear about something that causes you some concern.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Following the latest trends might make you feel like you've got your finger on the pulse of what's hot, but if all you care about is going along with the crowd, what is that going to achieve?

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22

A minor infraction in rules at work or school could leave you feeling like you're being unfairly singled out today. But before you fire back defensively, stop. Take a deep breath.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Truth is not the same thing as honesty. Today, you need to say what you know because it is the truth. In so doing, you will show the world what an honest person looks like.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Try to be very meticulous if you are dealing with any contracts or other types of legal documents today. Read the small print very carefully, because that's where the big catches lie.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Not every encounter has to be super-meaningful in your life—you are as entitled to a little goofing-off as anyone. So don't bust your hump trying to be the most philosophical person.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Today, your brain is operating like a well-oiled machine, and your intellectual skills have reached a perfect balance point. You can feel free to offer your suggestions in a group.

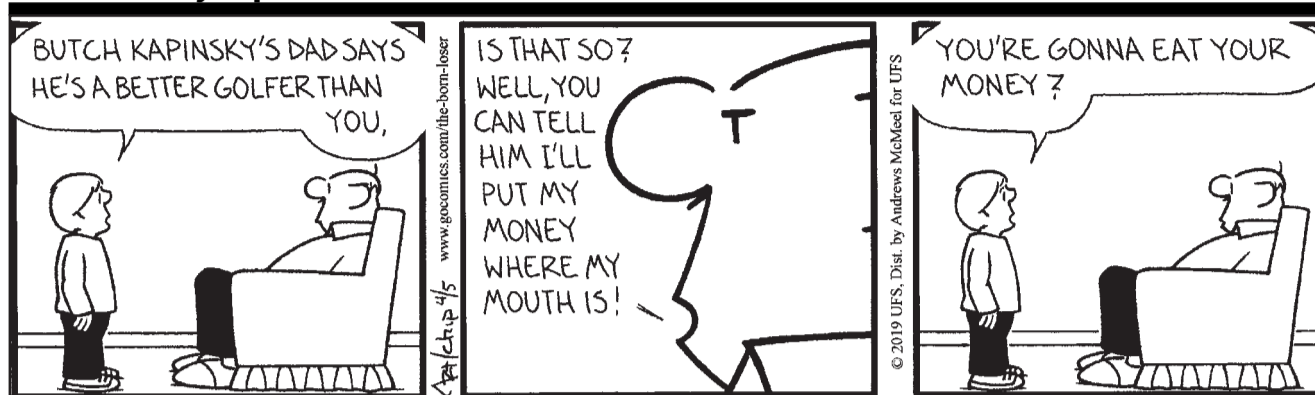
AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18

You'll see things in an usual way today because your creativity is on fire! It will help you see new uses for old tools. A pencil is more than a writing implement.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Today is not such a good day to move forward—too much is uncertain about your near future, including your energy level. Some non-serious health issues could pop up that put a wrinkle in your plans.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

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- Fastens a knot; 5- Gentle push; 10- Paraphernalia; 14- Character; 15- Run-of-the-mill; 16- Exhort; 17- Pizazz; 18- Where Hercules slew the lion; 19- Baldwin of '30 Rock'; 20- Chip dip; 22- Changed; 24- Humorist Bombeck; 27- Transmit; 28- Shackle; 32- Free of frost; 35- Blood letters; 36- Agitates; 38- Harder to find; 40- Narrate; 42- Unexpected pleasure; 44- Cairo's river; 45- More cunning; 47- ___ Park, CO; 49- Conger; 50- Embankment; 52- Coat of arms; 54- Between jobs; 56- Prefix with Tibetan; 57- 1920's decorative school; 60- Bird that gets you down; 64- Geographical expanse; 65- Group of students; 68- Apply powder to oneself; 69- Let it stand; 70- Spud; 71- First name in scat; 72- Short dog, for short; 73- Eye sores; 74- Some whiskeys;

DOWN: 1- ___ bien!; 2- Kansas city; 3- Tel Aviv server; 4- Had a hunch; 5- Convent dweller; 6- Manipulate; 7- Russian parliament before 1917; 8- Some Celts; 9- Ticked pink; 10- Protector; 11- Creator of Perry and Della; 12- Elderly, matured; 13- ___ room; 21- Parentheses, essentially; 23- Cabinet dept.; 25- Jeff's pal; 26- Belching flames; 28- Panama and bowler; 29- Clear as ___; 30- Honest; 31- New; 33- Wept; 34- Certain fisherman; 37- Satisfies; 39- Bank (on); 41- Float in the air; 43- Actress Hatcher; 46- Comic Foxx; 48- Levelheaded; 51- Chooses; 53- Linger aimlessly; 55- Acclaim; 57- Johnson of 'Laugh-In'; 58- Need a bath desperately; 59- Like Cheerios; 61- Tyne of 'Judging Amy'; 62- Women's magazine; 63- Some TV's; 64- Venomous snake; 66- Date; 67- Grads-to-be;



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- 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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HK\$8,580,000 1,390 ft² 3 1/2 🏠 2 🚗

FOR RENT

Nova Grand, Taipa
\$17,800/mth 935 ft² 2 1/2 🏠 1 🚗

FOR SALE

[Taipa] 2 connected apartment 4 1/2 🏠 2 🚗
1,404 ft² \$8,680,000 (ref: 19096006)

[Taipa] Nova City 3 1/2 🏠 2 🚗
1,515 ft² \$11,750,000 (ref: 19106001)

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

[Coloane] Large apartment 2 🏠 3 1/2 🚗 2 🚗
2,530 ft² \$13,800,000 (ref: 19096000)

FOR RENT

[Taipa] Studio (new building) 1
470 ft² \$9,500/mth (ref: 19101002)

[Taipa] Nam Long 2 1/2 🏠 1 🚗
645 ft² \$11,800/mth (ref: 19111001)

[Taipa] Nova Grand 2 1/2 🏠 1 🚗
935 ft² \$17,800/mth (ref: 19091005)

[Taipa] Manhattan 3 1/2 🏠 2 🚗
1,720 ft² \$23,800/mth (ref: 19091006)

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FOOTBALL

REAL MADRID TO FACE MANCHESTER CITY IN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

GRAHAM DUNBAR, NYON

MANCHESTER City's reward for winning its Champions League group was a guaranteed last 16 pairing with a team that only finished runner-up. It got Real Madrid.

The record 13-time champions will host the first leg on Feb. 26 against the ambitious Premier League title holders, who are trying to win the European Cup for the first time.

The match pits Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane against City manager Pep Guardiola. Zidane has won three Champions League titles in three attempts with Madrid, while Guardiola has been seeking his third title for almost a decade after winning twice with Barcelona.

"The only way to be top in Europe is going forward and (playing in) semifinals and finals and winning the Champions League," City director of football Txiki Begiristain said at UEFA headquarters after this week's draw.

City's best run in the Champions League was reaching the



AP PHOTO

semifinals in 2016, losing 1-0 over two legs to Madrid. That was soon after Zidane took over in Madrid, and just before Guardiola was hired to replace Manuel Pellegrini in Manchester.

Also, Liverpool was sent back to the Spanish stadium where it won the title last season. The first leg

against Atletico Madrid will be at the Metropolitan Stadium on Feb. 18.

"I think that Liverpool know (the stadium) very well," said Atletico director Clemente Villaverde, describing the unbeaten Premier League leaders as "at this moment the best team we have in Europe."

Liverpool coach Jürgen Klopp

said there were "pretty much four or five potential finals already in the last 16."

Spanish league leader Barcelona will face Napoli with the first leg in Italy, and Chelsea will face Bayern Munich in a rematch of the 2012 final. Chelsea won that title in Bayern's home

stadium, which will host the second leg on March 18.

In other matchups: Paris Saint-Germain coach Thomas Tuchel was paired with his former club, Borussia Dortmund; Lyon will take on Juventus; Tottenham will play Leipzig; and Atalanta will meet Valencia.

Lyon will face Juventus, a team led by Cristiano Ronaldo, without its own star forward. Memphis Depay left Sunday's French league game with a season-ending knee injury.

The Juventus games will be played on the same nights — Feb. 26 and March 17 — as Madrid plays Man City.

"The whole world will be watching, no doubt," Madrid director Emilio Butragueno said. "We will experience football at its best and then the fans will be lucky to enjoy this kind of game."

Two pairings feature teams playing in the knockout rounds of the Champions League for the first time. Leipzig will play the first leg at Tottenham and Atalanta will go up against Valencia.

For the first time, all 16 teams left play in the five wealthiest European leagues.

The first legs will be played between Feb. 18 and 26, with the return games from March 10-18.

The final on May 30 will be at the Ataturk Olympic Stadium in Istanbul. AP



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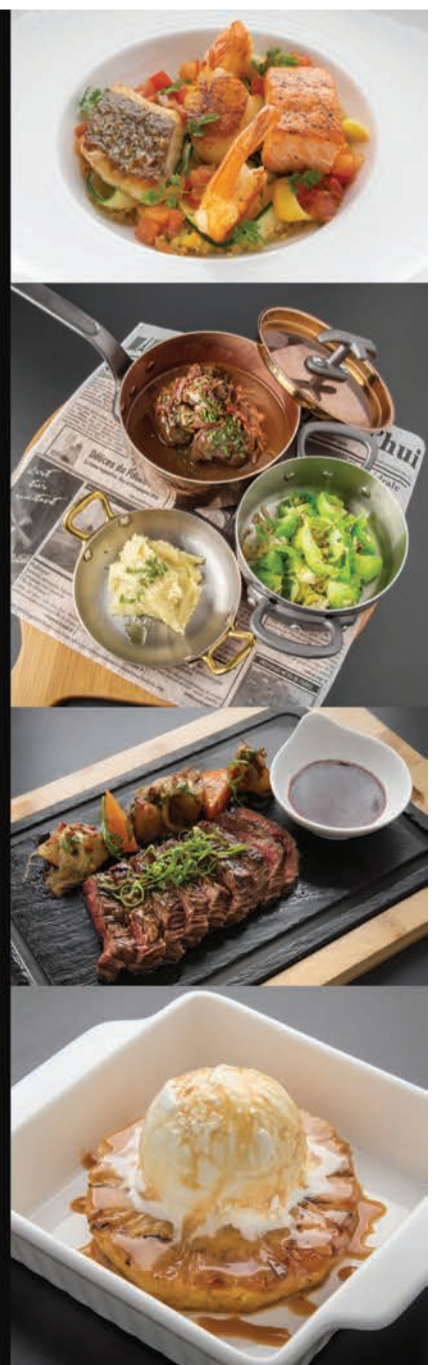
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AP PHOTO



Newtown's Ben Pinto (42) reacts after the Newtown Nighthawks beat the Darien Blue Wave with a walk-off touchdown in the Class LL state football championship at Trumbull High School

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Newtown celebrates title, but continues to grieve

PAT EATON-ROBB

ON the seventh anniversary of the massacre that killed Tricia Pinto's son Jack at Sandy Hook Elementary School, she found herself celebrating the state football championship by the team of her other son, Ben.

Ben Pinto plays linebacker for the Newtown High School Nighthawks, who won the Class LL

state championship 13-7 on a 36-yard touchdown pass Saturday from Jack Street to Riley Ward as time expired. The title was the first for Newtown since 1992.

"It's always so difficult to explain what it feels like to hold grief in your heart while celebrating these precious moments," Tricia Pinto said yesterday [Macau time]. "Our grief sometimes gets lost in this story of survival. That's not our story. Our story is

of loss and of love."

Reporters were warned in advance not to ask players about the tragedy, in which a gunman killed 20 students and six educators on Dec. 14, 2012. Players and coaches didn't publicly address it. There was some talk before the game about perhaps not playing or trying to get the date moved.

Pinto was not the only affected player. Jack Street was a fourth grader at Sandy Hook in 2012.

Everyone on the team, everyone in the town, was affected in some way, said Lorrie Rodrigue, Newtown's school superintendent.

"We knew obviously there would be challenges, obviously emotional challenges on that date," she said. "So we did, the principal and the athletic director, we consulted not only the team, but the family of loss who plays just to make sure we heard their voices. They wanted to play."

Football has been a part of the Pinto family's healing process since the shooting. Jack Pinto was buried in the jersey of his favorite player, New York Giants receiver Victor Cruz, who later came to the family's home, visiting and playing video games with Ben and his friends.

Cruz, now retired from the lea-

gue and working as an ESPN NFL analyst, said about 1,000 people sent him the video clip of Newtown's winning pass, and it brings goosebumps to his skin as he watches it over and over.

"For football to be able to be that kind of escape for them, to provide that moment for them, it's just incredible," he said. "I just want to congratulate them and Ben and the whole town for staying strong. I just remember how strong they were. And this is a testament to how strong they actually are."

But Tricia Pinto said she wants it understood that while they celebrate the win for Ben and his team, it does little to offset the pain of what happened. Their grief is ever present, she said.

"That heaviness in our hearts always returns," she said. "To be honest, as the weekend came and went, we're just missing Jack," she said.

As for Ben, she said, he would just like to be able to be normal. But he does appreciate the town's support.

"I come off the field, I look into the crowd and I can barely see an empty seat," Ben Pinto told Hearst Connecticut Media shortly after the final play. "Knowing that we have the whole town just right there behind us, it's unbelievable."

The town is making arrangements to hold some type of event to celebrate the championship, said Dan Rosenthal, Newtown's first selectman. But, that he said, should not be linked to what happened seven years ago.

"For our community, 12-14 will always be about what was lost and not what was won," he said. "But what those boys accomplished, in a game that just happened to be played on 12-14. It was amazing." AP

FOOTBALL

UEFA closes case of racial abuse alleged by Sweden player

UEFA has ended a case against Romania's soccer federation that was opened after a Sweden player claimed he was racially abused during a European Championship qualifying game.

UEFA confirmed its disciplinary panel's decision yesterday [Macau time] without citing reasons.

Sweden forward Alexander Isak told the referee he heard racist abuse during Sweden's 2-0 win in Bucharest last month. Play was briefly stopped to broadcast a warning to fans at National Stadium in Bucharest.

Isak follows Chelsea and Belgium forward Michy

Batshuayi and Liverpool forward Rhian Brewster in having their investigations of their racial abuse claims dropped by UEFA for lack of evidence. Both those cases were two seasons ago.

UEFA did fine Romania 40,500 euros (\$45,000) for other fan incidents at the Sweden game, including illicit chants and an offensive banner.

Romania's national stadium will host four games at Euro 2020 in June.

In the Champions League, UEFA has charged Lyon over clashes between players and fans after the team advanced to the round of 16 last week by

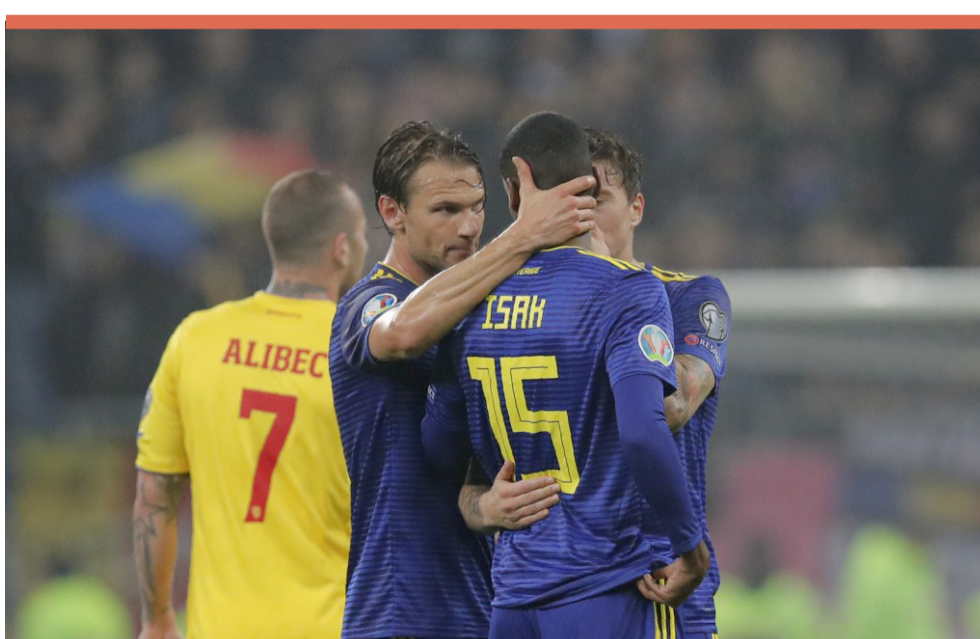
rallying to draw with Leipzig 2-2.

Lyon forward Memphis Depay objected to a fan banner insulting a teammate as a donkey, and tried to take it from a fan near the edge of the field.

UEFA's range of charges against Lyon include "insufficient protection of the playing area," and will be judged on Feb. 27. That is one day after Lyon's next home game in the competition, against Juventus.

Juventus faces UEFA punishment on the same day for fans going on to the field when the team played at Bayer Leverkusen last week. AP

AP PHOTO



Team mates hug Sweden's Alexander Isak (15)

OPINION

Our Desk

Julie Zhu



DÌ YÙ HEĪ

I do not dare to be so ignorant as to rigidly translate a term that has recently emerged from the Chinese language and has been trending into English. Nor have I managed to find a non-offensive way of determining what could be the corresponding English term to “Dì Yù Heī.”

Dì Yù Heī is a new term that has surfaced in mainland China, along with the rise of social media. The word “Dì Yù” stands for a region, a place, a city, a province, a location, and a country. The word “Heī” corresponds to an action of turning something dark, more precisely, speaking badly about something or someone, or creating a bad image of something or someone.

In mainland China, the two words combined represent a stereotype based on province.

This term interests me in the sense that it is similar to “racism.” When thinking about this term, I hope to reach the sound conclusion that throughout time, “stupidity” has always been labeled “racism,” meaning that people with “stupid” thoughts are never to be insulted, therefore making them feel smarter.

What is Dì Yù Heī then, and how is it related to racism while simultaneously having nothing to do with racism, only stupidity?

Dì Yù Heī examples follow a chain of discrimination. It starts from the city level, then it goes to provincial level, then national level, and later it will reach the planet level. This means that when two people come from a certain district, they often joke about each other’s streets. But when these two people are faced with a group of people who come from the same village but different district, their jokes will target them at a district level, because the interest of the former two is no longer conflict and they now share the same interest, which is fighting against the people from the other district.

At the provincial level, people from different provinces joke about another provinces, and this specific group is categorized as Dì Yù Heī.

If we keep elaborating on Dì Yù Heī, we will get to “racism” because people from the same country share more things in common and feel the need to pair up with their teammates to face other groups. Anthropologists will use cultural, physical, social, genetic approaches among many others, to explain this behavior, but this opinion only explains a small number of examples.

For example, it is said that Sichuan people eat spicy food; in Guangdong, people eat everything; Henan people are scammers, and so on. Each province in the mainland has its own labels. This is considered Dì Yù Heī in mainland China. Note that it has nothing to do with race or racism.

Outside of China, you find all these similar stereotypes. French people stay nude when going to the beaches; Brits don’t speak English well; Americans don’t know about the world because most of them have never traveled abroad.

How come these stereotypes, conclusions or whatever else are considered racism, while the rest of society refuses to point out the intellectual inferiority of these practices?

Why do we conclude that it is stupidity when your neighbors judge or comment on your affairs without knowing anything? And why, at the same time, do we conclude that it is racism when people from other countries judge or comment on another country’s or community’s affairs without actually having been to those places, or only having gone through the airport?

Why must stupidity be covered and wrapped inside the label of racism whenever the political term “country” is involved? Is it because people who are not racist are too nice to tell other people they are stupid?

A Chinese state-owned utility says it has bought 49% of the power distribution grid in the Gulf nation of Oman.

State Grid Corp. described the purchase as part of China’s multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road initiative to build trade-related infrastructure across Asia to Europe.

State Grid released no financial details but said its tie-up with the Omani State Grid Corp. is the biggest Chinese investment to date in Oman.

The company, which operates most of China’s power distribution sys-

tem, said it would draw on its technology and experience to improve the Omani grid.

State Grid is the world’s biggest utility but has made few investments abroad.

The Belt and Road Initiative calls for expanding trade by building ports, railways, power plants across an arc of more than 60 countries from the South Pacific through Asia and the Middle East to Africa and Europe.



AP PHOTO

**POPE ABOLISHES
 ‘PONTIFICAL SECRET’ IN
 CLERGY SEX ABUSE CASES**

**NICOLE WINFIELD,
 VATICAN**

POPE Francis has abolished the “pontifical secret” used in clergy sexual abuse cases, after mounting criticism that the high degree of confidentiality has been used to protect pedophiles, silence victims and keep law enforcement from investigating crimes.

In a new document, Francis decreed that information in abuse cases must be protected by church leaders to ensure its “security, integrity and confidentiality.” But he said “pontifical secret” no longer applies to abuse-related accusations, trials and decisions under the Catholic Church’s canon law.

Francis also raised from 14 to 18 the cutoff age below which the Vatican considers pornographic images to be child pornography.

The new laws were issued yesterday, Francis’ 83rd birthday, as he struggles to respond to the global explosion of the abuse scandal, his own missteps and demands for greater transparency and accountability from victims, law enforcement and ordinary Catholics alike.

The new norms are the latest amendment to the Catholic Church’s in-house canon law — a parallel legal code that metes out ecclesial justice for crimes against the faith — in this case relating to the sexual abuse of minors or vulnerable people

by priests, bishops or cardinals. In this legal system, the worst punishment a priest can incur is being defrocked, or dismissed from the clerical state.

Pope Benedict XVI had decreed in 2001 that these cases must be dealt with under “pontifical secret,” the highest form of secrecy in the church. The Vatican had long insisted that such confidentiality was necessary to protect the privacy of the victim, the reputation of the accused and the integrity of the canonical process.

**The new laws
 were issued
 yesterday,
 Francis’ 83rd
 birthday**

However, such secrecy also served to keep the scandal hidden, prevent law enforcement from accessing documents and silence victims, many of whom often believed that “pontifical secret” prevented them from going to the police to report their priestly abusers.

While the Vatican has long tried to insist this was not the case, it also never mandated that bishops and religious superiors report sex crimes to police, and in the past has encouraged bishops not to do so.

According to the new instruction, which was signed by the Vatican secre-

tary of state but authorized by the pope, the Vatican still doesn’t mandate reporting the crimes to police, saying religious superiors are obliged to do so where civil reporting laws require it.

But it goes further than the Vatican has gone before, saying: “Office confidentiality shall not prevent the fulfillment of the obligations laid down in all places by civil laws, including any reporting obligations, and the execution of enforceable requests of civil judicial authorities.”

The Vatican has been under increasing pressure to cooperate more with law enforcement, and its failure to do so has resulted in unprecedented raids in recent years on diocesan chanceries by police from Belgium to Texas and Chile.

But even under the penalty of subpoenas and raids, bishops have sometimes felt compelled to withhold canonical proceedings given the “pontifical secret,” unless given permission to hand documents over by the Vatican. The new law makes that explicit permission no longer required.

Individual scandals, national inquiries, grand jury investigations, U.N. denunciations and increasingly costly civil litigation have devastated the Catholic hierarchy’s credibility across the globe, and Francis’ own failures and missteps have emboldened his critics. **AP**



AP PHOTO

United Nations António Guterres is urging the Security Council to authorize the delivery of critically needed humanitarian aid across borders and conflict lines in Syria for another year, saying this aid mainly to rebel-held areas “has staved off an even larger humanitarian crisis inside Syria.” Over 1 million people receive cross-border assistance every month. **More on p14**



AP PHOTO

Iran A Princeton University scholar who was freed from Iran this month said that his release “is a victory of humanity and diplomacy across nations and political differences.” Xiyue Wang and his wife, Hua Qu, said to AP that the family is doing well and overjoyed by the support they have received. They say their joy is tempered by the fact that other prisoners remain in Iran.

Brazil With the failure of the U.N. climate conference to produce an agreement, some Brazilians who participated in previous climate meetings say their country is now part of the problem in efforts to forge an international approach to global warming. Others, taking a cue from Brazil’s Environment Minister Ricardo Salles, are blaming the world’s wealthy nations. **More on p15**



AP PHOTO

US A small group of President Donald Trump’s fiercest conservative critics, including the husband of the president’s own chief adviser, is launching a super PAC designed to fight Trump’s reelection and punish congressional Republicans deemed his “enablers.” The new organization, known as the Lincoln Project, represents a formal step forward for the so-called Never Trump movement.