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YOUNGEST MEMBER OF NEW EXCO PROPOSES THAT THE GOVERNMENT PREPARE HOUSING POLICIES SPECIFICALLY FOR YOUNGSTERS

MORE HONG KONG ACTIVISTS, JOURNALISTS DENIED ENTRY TO MACAU

MACAU RESIDENTS HAVE PURCHASED NEARLY 6,000 PROPERTIES OF VARIOUS TYPES, THE GREATER BAY AREA: XINHUA

AP PHOTO



Hong Kong The violent crash of a double-decker bus in Hong Kong killed six people and injured more than 30 others yesterday, police said. The crash in the New Territories tore away much of the left side of the bus and ripped a jagged hole in its roof. Police said three women and three men died. Fire services initially said four people were killed.

AP PHOTO



Thailand Police yesterday arrested a convicted serial killer who was accused of a fresh killing just seven months after his early release from prison. Somkid Poompuang (pictured, masked) was arrested aboard a train after a nationwide manhunt launched when he was identified as a suspect in Sunday's killing of a hotel maid in the northeastern province of Khon Kaen.

AP PHOTO



Indonesia Authorities said that they have arrested six foreigners for allegedly trying to smuggle drugs onto the tourist island of Bali. A Swiss man, a Thai man, a Singaporean woman, a Chilean man and two Hong Kong men wearing orange detainee uniforms were paraded with their feet and hands tied at a news conference in Denpasar, the capital of Bali province.

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MACAU CHOSE RICHES OVER DEMOCRACY, UNLIKE HK

MACAU has long provided Chinese leaders with a glimmering showcase for the virtues of obeying Beijing. President Xi Jinping is expected to use his visit this week to send a message to the protest-stricken financial hub some 50 kilometers to the east: work with us and get rich.

During his visit, Xi will likely highlight a raft of recent policies intended to help diversify Macau's tourism industry while - in a possible signal to Hong Kong - establishing a yuan-denominated financial market there. On Tuesday, an article in the state-run Xinhua News Agency stressed that Macau's patriotism toward the mainland - including Chinese flags flying from schools - have helped the region achieve strong growth and falling unemployment.

"More than just stable, Macau has achieved an economic miracle," the article said. "People in Macau know that the future of Macau and the mainland are closely linked together."

While Hong Kong and Macau share the Cantonese language, a common past as European trading outposts and a similar promise of autonomy from Beijing, they couldn't look more different to the Communist Party. Today, the enclave of 670,000 people ranks as the world's second-richest territory in terms of per capita economic output, after Luxembourg, according to data compiled by the World Bank. By that measure, it's almost 80% wealthier than Hong Kong.

"Jobs are chasing after Macau people, instead of the other way around," said Alexandra, a 29-year-old human resources worker in Macau, who asked to be identified only by her first name because she wasn't authorized to speak publicly about her work. "Young people can see a much brighter future here than in Hong Kong. They are indifferent, or even cold toward politics."

Macau has suffered little of the unrest that has gripped Hong Kong since the latter attempted to pass legislation earlier this year allowing extraditions to mainland China. Unlike Hong Kong, the government passed a Beijing-mandated national

security law a decade ago, and hasn't seen mass protests since the government withdrew legislation fattening the retirement packages for top officials in 2014.

"While Hong Kong people can be mobilized by fighting for abstract value as democracy and freedom, Macau is 'interest-oriented,'" said Ieong Meng U, an assistant professor at the University of Macau's Department of Government and Public Administration. "Only very few government policies can trigger widespread social grievances."

Much of Macau's stability can be traced to its monopoly over casino gambling in China, an industry that accounts for 80% of the government's total revenue and supports a roughly \$1,000 annual handouts for residents. How long that will last is unclear, as slowing Chinese growth and increased overseas competition cut into the returns of operators including Las Vegas Sands Corp., MGM Resorts International and Wynn Resorts Ltd.

Still, Macau's success would seem to bolster Communist Party arguments that Hong Kong's problems stem from its yawning wealth gap and outdated national security laws.

Macau's charter broadly resembles Hong Kong's, but lacks key provisions such as the goal of selecting the city's leader "by universal suffrage." Incoming Macau Chief Executive Ho Iat-seng, who Xi will swear in Friday, was chosen by 98% of the votes cast by a 400-member election committee.

During a similar anniversary visit to Hong Kong two years ago, Xi urged the city to profit from China, not defy it. Growth held "the golden key to resolving various issues in Hong Kong," the president said at the time.

"The messaging is clear to Hong Kong and the rest of the world, but primarily to Hong Kong - there is a way out, there is an easy and good way out, and it's called Macau," said Steve Tsang, director of the University of London's SOAS China Institute and author of "A Modern History of Hong Kong."

"But what they completely and utterly fail to see, is that if Macau is the future, most people in Hong Kong will say, thank you

very much, you can keep it for yourself."

The message still carries well in Macau, where rent, restaurants and groceries are all cheaper, according to cost-of-living data from Numbeo. In Hong Kong, an influx of mainland Chinese have gobbled up university slots, driven an expansion of luxury shopping and helped make it the world's least-affordable housing market for nine straight years.

Although Macau is much smaller - roughly half the size of Manhattan - its residents have been largely insulated from such pressures by policies that make jobs and passports harder to come by for mainlanders or foreigners.

"Hong Kong has long been a metropolitan center, but Macau was just a little city prior to opening up the gaming licenses," said Simon Sio, chairman of the real estate-and-investment firm Lek Hang Group. "Macanese don't have enough confidence in ourselves, as we have fewer opportunities in the world compared to Hong Kong. Macau benefits from the motherland a lot. We residents know this well."

Still, not everyone is satisfied with the local government, as the 2014 protests against retirement perks suggest. Gambling's dominant role in the economy has also prompted criticism, due in part to the criminal activity it has fostered, from loan-sharking and money-laundering to triad fights and prostitution.

Enough conversations with participants in Hong Kong's protests will turn up demonstrators from neighboring Macau. That points to a possible source of long-term concern for the Communist Party as casino growth slows.

"In my opinion, the economy of Macau is actually not so stable because the income from the gambling industry has gradually declined since the protests in Hong Kong started," said Christine, a 21-year-old Macau resident who has participated in Hong Kong protests and wanted to be identified only by first name to reduce the risk of reprisal. "The Communist Party wants to grab out all the money in Macau to maintain their regime." **DB/BLOOMBERG**



Xi Jinping's wife, Madame Peng Liyuan

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ARRIVAL IN 'BEAUTIFUL' MACAU

Xi Jinping pledges to engage with all peoples

CHINESE President Xi Jinping has kicked off a three-day visit to Macau by describing the special administrative region as "beautiful" and pledging to engage with people from all sectors during his visit.

President Xi Jinping and his wife Madame Peng Liyuan arrived at the Macau International Airport at 4 p.m. on a special flight, and stepped out onto the airport apron to be greeted by a host of Macau's most senior officials.

Among them was Chief Executive Chui Sai On and his wife Winnie Fok, Chief Executive-elect Ho Iat Seng and former Chief Executive Edmund Ho. Also present was the Director of the Liaison Office in Macau, Fu Ziying, the President of the Legislative Assembly, Kou Hoi In, the President of the Court of Final Appeal, Sam Hou Fai, as well as the five policy Secretaries and several other top officials in the region.

President Xi, who is also General Secretary of the

Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, was warmly welcomed by a cheering crowd of students waving Chinese national flags and Macau SAR flags.

In a short speech upon his arrival, Xi said that he was very happy to be back in Macau, a beautiful city with which he was familiar, having visited multiple times since 2000. The President's most recent visit was in late 2014, to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the special administrative region.

Xi also said that both the Central Government and the Chinese people were proud of the achievements and progress of Macau over the past 20 years.

On behalf of Beijing and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups, Xi extended warm greetings and the best wishes to all the people of Macau.

Speaking to reporters at the airport, the President said he was looking forward

to meeting people from all walks of life in the next few days in order to exchange views of mutual concern.

From the airport, Xi and his entourage were driven to San Chok Un Guesthouse, where he sat down with the outgoing Chief Executive.

Today, Xi will meet with other leading officials of the current administration, as well as members of the legislature and the judiciary. He will later attend a banquet and a cultural performance, described by the local government as a celebratory variety show.

On Friday, the President will deliver a speech to commemorate the city's return on Friday, the 20th anniversary of the transfer of sovereignty over Macau from Portugal to China. He is also expected to attend the inauguration ceremony of the next government and meet with the incoming senior officials responsible for the functions of the public administration, the legislature, and the judiciary. **DB**

LAWMAKER URGES GOVERNMENT TO PROTECT BIODIVERSITY

Lawmaker Lei Chan U is calling on the local government to study the biodiversity of Macau's animals and plants. In his interpellation to the government, Lei asked whether the SAR government would conduct a comprehensive biodiversity survey and provide necessary data support for the formulation of Macau's ecological protection policies. Lei pointed out that new species have been discovered in Macau in recent years, which suggests that Macau still has an environment in which wildlife can survive. Lei said that if Macau wants to become a world tourism and leisure center, Macau must attach importance to ecological protection and build a city in which people and nature live in harmony. Lei wants the government to reveal protective measures for endemic species and to suppress invasive foreign species.

MAN TRIES TO BRIBE POLICE OFFICERS UPON ARREST

A mainland man tried to bribe two police officers with 1,000 Macau patacas to let him go when his illegal immigration status was discovered, it has been reported. On December 14, two police officers from the Macau Public Security Police Force (PSP) found the man near R. do Pai Kok. Upon questioning, the man failed to show identification, and then offered 1,000 patacas to the two police officers in exchange "for another chance". The two officers refused. The illegal immigrant then tried to escape but was prevented from doing so by the officers. Over the course of his attempt, the officers sustained injuries to their arms and hands. The man ultimately confessed it had cost him 8,000 yuan to be smuggled to Macau for gambling purposes.

LAWMAKER WANTS MORE SPORTS FIELDS

Lawmaker Chan Hong wants Macau's urban renewal to create more spaces for sports fields. In her interpellation to the local government, Chan blamed the lack of sports fields for being the biggest barrier to the development of the city's sports. With a growing number of residents in Macau participating in sports activities, Chan wants the local government to reveal its short-, mid-, and long-term plans for exploring more sports spaces. In addition, Chan also thinks that the city's sports fields are not distributed equally, particularly in old areas, where residents are faced with the need to go to other districts should they wish to use sports facilities.



Pro-democracy activist Leung Kwok-hung (second right) and other protesters hold up placards of Chinese President Xi Jinping and Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam, after they were barred from boarding a ferry at a ferry terminal in Hong Kong

MORE HONG KONG ACTIVISTS, JOURNALISTS DENIED ENTRY TO MACAU

JOURNALISTS from more than five media outlets outside of Macau, including journalists from pro-establishment publications, have been refused entry to the territory.

Yesterday, five journalists from Hong Kong's Now News came to Macau to report on Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit. One of the five journalists was refused entry on the grounds that he poses a threat to Macau's public safety and order.

Some considered this surprising because the journalist had previously been registered, approved and issued a media pass by the Macau government to cover Xi's visit. However, the Macau immigration authority still deported the journalist back to Hong Kong.

Now News considers the immigration authority's decision unacceptable and difficult to comprehend.

Besides this journalist, yesterday two reporters from Hong Kong public broadcaster RTHK were not allowed to set foot in Macau to cover Xi's visit.

The procedure by which these two journalists were de-

nied entry was more complex. Both, upon their arrival, were not only questioned about their personal details, such as contact numbers, address, and parental information, but also had their personal and reporter IDs, which had been issued by the Hong Kong government, seized by Macau's immigration authority.

Macau PSP officers ordered the two abovementioned journalists to sign a letter declaring that they voluntarily allowed Macau's police authority to check their phones, including their photos and Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp profiles.

Macau police authority also questioned the journalists about whether they had installed Telegram or other messaging apps.

On the same day, two journalists from Commercial Radio Hong Kong were unable to enter Macau because the Macau police authority believed they would pose a risk to Macau's safety and order. Macau's Government Information Bureau had earlier approved these two journalists' interview requests.

One journalist from TVB

and another from the South China Morning Post were rejected entry to Macau earlier this week as well.

In addition to the official turndown from Macau's security authority, several local journalists were reportedly recently threatened by unknown sources amid the 20th anniversary of Macau's handover.

Yesterday, the New Macau Association issued a statement urging for respect and protection of freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

The association expressed strong concern over the incidents and condemned any act against freedom of the press. The association urges the SAR government to take steps to protect freedom of expression and freedom of the press from interference and threats so that the promise of One Country, Two Systems and Macau's international image can be maintained.

In addition to these journalists, activists from Hong Kong were also barred from approaching Macau's border.

A ferry company barred a group of Hong Kong protes-

ters, including a well-known pro-democracy activist, from boarding a boat.

The travel company gave the group a Macau police notice that said that the activist Leung Kwok-hung, also known as "Long Hair," among others, intended to disrupt activities around the 20th anniversary of Macau's return to Chinese control, prompting authorities to ban them from entering the territory.

Leung and around 10 protesters held up posters of Xi and Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam in a Hong Kong shopping center beside a ferry terminal. They spoke about the five demands Hong Kong's protesters have issued, which include universal suffrage, and recalled the Tiananmen Square democracy movement that ended in bloodshed in 1989.

Besides the entry bans, Macau's pro-democracy lawmakers said that they received invitations to only parts of the three-day Macau handover anniversary celebration events.

Sulu Sou, for example, the young pro-democrat, is only invited to attend the flag-raising ceremony and the gala. JZ



MELCO STAR MACAO – YOUTH TALENT COMPETITION MELCO PROMOTES CHINESE CULTURE AND SENSE OF NATIONAL PRIDE IN YOUNG PEOPLE

THIS month, the city's calendar is filled with events celebrating the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the People's Republic of China and the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Macao Special Administrative Region. One of the more prominent happenings – the finals of Melco Star Macao youth talent competition hosted by Melco Resorts and Entertainment in partnership with the National Conditions Education Association – recently took place at Studio City before an audience of around 2,000 guests.

The "China in Childhood"-themed Melco Star Macao competition focuses on the promotion of traditional Chinese culture, recruiting participants from the city's secondary and primary schools, kindergartens and community groups. The selection process included an initial and secondary audition, followed by semi-finals and finals, from which the competition's winners were nominated by the expert judging panel. Diverse performance categories included singing, dancing, instrument performances, musical bands, recitals, Cantonese opera, martial arts, fashion shows and original acts.

Melco Star Macao's objectives are to cultivate and strengthen the sense of national identity in Macau's young persons through the practice of traditional Chinese cultural performances, to exhibit the vitality and talent of Macau's younger generation, as well as to showcase the success of the "One Country, Two Systems" constitutional principle. Since June, the competition has been warmly received by the local community – including schools and organizations for the youth. Over the past few months, the competition has attracted participa-

tion from more than 650 youngsters who took part in over 170 original acts.

Mr. Lawrence Ho, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Melco, said, "Fostering creative talent in Macau through our signature youth development programs such as 'Dare to Dream' is a key focus of Melco's Corporate Social Responsibility. We are thrilled to integrate our objectives in youth development with the world-class, award-winning entertainment programs for which Melco is renowned through the Melco Star Macao competition in collaboration with the National Conditions Education Association. It has been a wonderful journey to witness the performance talents of all our participants through the competition's theme of 'China in Childhood' in celebration of the China-Macau Double anniversary.

"The competition helps to enhance national pride and a sense of belonging for young people in Macau, strengthening appreciation for the People's Republic of China."

LAWRENCE HO

We are also confident that the competition helps to enhance national pride and the sense of belonging for young people in Macau, strengthening appreciation for the People's Republic of China."

Mr. Jack Wang, President of National Conditions Education Association, said, "We are excited to celebrate the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the People's Republic of China and the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Macao SAR through the Melco Star Macao talent competition. The competition has been developed to promote a sense of belonging and identity towards the Motherland for young locals and to establish a platform through which they can showcase their talent, energy, and vitality. We thank all participants, schools and organizations of the local Macau community who have supported and taken part in this wonderful project, and congratulation to all our winners as Macau's rising stars."





EDUCATION

COSTA NUNES SEXUAL ABUSE CASE CLOSED

A staff member of D. José da Costa Nunes in Macau, who was under investigation for alleged sexual abuse of children, has been cleared of all charges, TDM Radio Macau reported.

According to the report, the judge in charge of initiating the case has dropped the charges, deciding to archive it late last month because of

a lack of evidence that could lead to a formal accusation.

The case had been previously considered closed by a different judge earlier this year for the same reason, but it was reopened in May by the initiative of a group of parents of the children involved in the case.

The parents appealed the decision taken by the Public

Prosecutions Office, which dismissed the case for a lack of evidence. Disagreeing with this decision, the parents had asked for the case to be reopened, claiming that the investigation and the questioning of the children had been flawed.

In the process that followed, a judge re-evaluated the earlier decisions to

drop the case and determined if the procedures of the Public Prosecutions Office were correct, according to the evidence or testimonies collected in the investigation phase.

In this case, the judge agreed with the opinion of the prosecution that the case did not have enough support to be presented to the courts.

A group of parents initiated the investigation almost two years ago by presenting complaints to the school at first and then to the Judiciary Police.

The institution, under the administration of the Association for Macanese Education, has also presented formal complaints and undertaken measures that included the suspension of a kindergarten class teacher and the school psychologist as well as the firing of the employee accused of criminal conduct.

Internal investigations into the behavior of the director of the kindergarten, the psychologist and the class teacher were carried out by the APIM, and they resulted in the dismissal of the teacher and the issuing of a warning to the director. **RM**

HOUSING POLICIES CONCERN NEW EXCO MEMBERS

THE youngest member of the new Executive Council (ExCo) Chao Weng Hou is proposing that the local government prepare housing policies specifically for younger people.

Yesterday, three new members of the ExCo, Chao, Chan Ka Leong, and Lee Chong Cheng, spoke on TDM's radio program.

Last year, Macau passed an amendment to the affordable housing bill which updated the eligible age for affordable housing to 25 years old. However, Chao, born in 1989, thinks there should be graded housing policies for younger people to help them transition from public to private houses.

Chan Ka Leong believes that affordable housing policies should retain the eligible age at 18 years old. Chan also recommended the government set up a timetable for creating a stable supply of affordable housing units.

Many lawmakers have previously proposed that the local government establish a point-based affordable housing distribution method to solve Macau's housing issues, a proposal which Chan supported.

A third new member of the ExCo, Lee Chong Cheng, who represents the workers' sector, considers that Macau must review its labor laws, and improve the management of non-local workers. Lee stated that Macau's salary level should not be affected due to the import of non-local workers, otherwise it may produce instability within society. **JZ**

AD



Macao Government Tourism Office

Notice

The Macao Government Tourism Office hereby announces an invitation to tender for the **Production of Macao Promotional Videos and TV Commercials in 2020**, in accordance with the approval of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture dated 18th November, 2019.

From the date of publication of the present notice, interested parties may visit the Macao Government Tourism Office Reception Counter, located in Alameda Dr. Carlos d' Assumpção, no. 335-341, "Hotline" Building, 12th floor, Macao, to view the Tender Process within normal working hours, and pay MOP 200.00 (two hundred patacas) to obtain the copies, including Terms of Tender, General Conditions of the Bid and other relevant enclosures; or visit the Macao Tourism Industry Net website – <http://industry.macaotourism.gov.mo> to download.

The explanation meeting will be held at **15:00, on 11th December, 2019**, at Meeting room, 14th floor, Alameda Dr. Carlos d' Assumpção, no. 335-341, "Hotline" Building, Macao.

The maximum price limit for the service is **MOP 6,000,000.00 (Six million patacas)**.

Criteria for evaluation and percentage:	
Price	: 15%
Creative concepts and storyboards	: 45%
Tenderer experience and CV Portfolio	: 5%
Team experience and CV Portfolio	: 25%
Production Value	: 10%

For any further enquiries, please visit the Macao Tourism Industry Net website (<http://industry.macaotourism.gov.mo>) to submit enquiries before **6th January, 2020**, all replies will be posted on the same website.

Tenderer must submit the tender within normal working hours by **13:00 on 17th January, 2020**, to Macao Government Tourism Office, located in Alameda Dr. Carlos d' Assumpção, no. 335-341, "Hotline" Building, 12th floor, Macao, the

tenders should be written in one of the official languages of Macao SAR or in English.

The provisional guarantee fee of MOP120,000.00 (one-hundred and twenty thousand patacas), to be paid by 1) Cash, cashier order or certified cheque directly to Macao Government Tourism Office, cashier order or certified cheque should be made payable to "Fundo de Turismo" as the payee; or 2) Cash deposit to the account of "Fundo de Turismo", account no. 8003911119 of Banco Nacional Ultramarino of Macau and with designation of the reason for the deposit; or 3) Bank guarantee; or 4) Wired Transfer to the account of "Fundo de Turismo" in Banco Nacional Ultramarino of Macau.

The tender opening session will be held in the Auditorium of the Macao Government Tourism Office, located at Alameda Dr. Carlos d' Assumpção, no. 335-341, "Hotline" Building, 14th floor in Macao, at **10:00, on 20th January, 2020**.

According to the article no. 27 of Decree-Law no. 63/85/M, of 6th July, the tenderer or the legal representatives of the tenderer should be present during the tender opening session for any complaints and/or to explain any doubts regarding their respective tender.

The legal representative of the tenderer may appoint, by a notary certified power of attorney, an authorized representative to attend the public action of the Opening of the Tenders on their behalf.

In case of closure of the services of Macao Government Tourism Office due to typhoon or force majeure, the deadline for submission, the opening of tender will be postponed until the first working day that follows immediately.

Macao Government Tourism Office, 28th November, 2019.

Acting Director
Cheng Wai Tong

NATIONAL EDUCATION

University of Macau to require all students to learn Basic Law

THE University of Macau will add classes on the National Constitution and the Basic Law to the curriculum of the general education course this academic year. The course will be compulsory for all undergraduate students.

The move comes as national security education is being promoted to students in Macau of all ages.

Knowledge of the National Constitution and the Basic Law are considered to fall under the general bracket of national security education.

National security promotion involves co-opting the civilian population to fulfill their patriotic duty and be on the lookout for anything that could undermine the country's stability.

President Xi Jinping previously outlined that "national security is of paramount importance for the people to live and

XINHUA



work in peace and for realizing the Chinese dream of national rejuvenation."

Vong Sou Kuan, Assistant Professor at the University of Macau's Faculty of Education, indicated that the Macau go-

vernment started to systematically implement national education in 2006. In that year, the government amended the educational laws and pinpointed the cultivation of patriotic students.

Recently, according to Vong, teaching staff from the mainland have been employed by local schools. This has altered the culture of teaching and preparation. She even described the ideology in Macau schools as similar to that in mainland schools.

Vong objects to this change, regarding it as over the top. She also worried that a single curriculum would obstruct students' adaptability to the increasingly globalized society.

Lawmaker Au Kam San, who is also a secondary school teacher, told the media that civil education is common in Macau, as more than half of the city's secondary schools are run by pro-government associations.

An academic at the Macau Polytechnic Institute attributed Macau's patriotism to the weakness of the Portuguese in governance.

Hong Kong newspaper Mingpao Daily recently wrote a

report concluding that Macau was ahead of Hong Kong in terms of national security education. The report is part of a serial review conducted to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Macau Special Administrative Region.

Macau's education authority has included ethics and civil education in the curriculum for primary and secondary schools. According to the report, some Macau schools with Catholicism or Protestantism background have opted to combine the curriculum with religious studies. In such cases, the civil education section will be lectured as "Knowing China".

The newspaper interviewed the principal, surnamed Lai, of Kiang Peng Middle School. Lai said that the school previously used textbooks printed in Hong Kong or Taiwan.

Lai then indicated that currently 90% of schools in Macau are using history textbooks co-compiled by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) and the People's Education Press in the mainland.

Lai said that although the DSEJ did not mandate the adoption of the textbook and teaching materials, the regulator strongly recommends their use. **AL**

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XINHUA PERSPECTIVE

MACAU RESIDENTS EMBRACE CONVENIENT LIFE IN GREATER BAY AREA

HU YAO, ZHOU QIANG

CHAN Chi Fai, a staff member with the General Union of Macau Residents Associations (GUMRA), moved his office in November to Hengqin New Area in the neighboring city of Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, to better serve Macau residents living there.

"We work as a bridge between Macau residents living in Hengqin and local neighborhood committees and government departments," Chan said in an interview with Xinhua.

He often visits Macau newcomers, listens to their appeals and gives feedback to the local neighborhood committees.

Chan and three other experienced colleagues moved

to Hengqin after the GUMRA opened its Hengqin service center in November.

The general union is one of the largest civil organizations in Macau, providing social welfare services, such as elderly care and family counseling.

In 2018, it opened an office in the city of Zhongshan, marking the first branch of Macau's non-governmental organizations on the mainland.

As a growing number of Macau residents chose to work and live in Zhuhai, Zhongshan, and other cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA), they have called for more services for housing, medical care and education.

In Hengqin alone, Macau

residents have purchased nearly 6,000 properties of various types, according to Xinhua. As of September, more than 2,000 Macau students were studying in universities in Guangdong.

Covering an area of about 2,200 square meters, the Hengqin service center features an entertainment room for the elderly, a children's recreation room, a toy library, a reading room, a multifunctional activity room and a counseling room.

"Cooperation between Hengqin and Macau has gradually expanded from the economic field to the areas of livelihood and social services," said Ng Siu Lai, president of the GUMRA.

Fu Ji Wen, a 61-year-old Macau taxi driver, and his wife have become regular

commuters between Hengqin and Macau after they bought a 130-square meter apartment four years ago.

Unfamiliar with local conditions in Hengqin, they came cross difficulties from time to time. "Our requests have been responded quickly since the arrival of Chan and his colleagues," Fu said.

"We are like accelerators to help Macau residents integrate into Hengqin," Chan said.

According to the development plan, Hengqin will provide houses and apartments for 10,000 Macau households. With the improvement of public facilities, more and more Macau residents are expected to move to Hengqin for living, studying and working.

So far, more than 300 Macau residents have participated in the basic medical insurance system provided by the local government in Zhuhai, which could only be enjoyed by local residents in the past.

"We are proud of contributing to making the GBA a livable place and suitable for work and travel," Chan said.

XINHUA

UM INAUGURATES HENGQIN BRANCH OF STATE KEY LABS

THE University of Macau (UM) has inaugurated the Hengqin branch of its State Key Laboratories, signing an agreement on the establishment of the Hengqin Intelligent Computing Platform in the Macau SAR.

According to a statement issued yesterday by the public university, the branch is expected to promote cross-border optic fiber connectivity and resource-sharing, and provide smart computing services for tech companies, higher education institutions, and research institutes in the city.

The establishment of the Hengqin branch of the three State Key Labs operated solely or jointly by the UM also aims to expand the scope of the training of technology professionals, explore new avenues for the commercialization of research results, and develop an industrial platform for technology and innovation in the western Greater Bay Area.

There are four State Key Laboratories in Macau. Two are operated by the UM, namely the State Key Laboratory of Analog and Mixed-Signal VLSI and the State Key Laboratory of Internet of Things for Smart City. A third, the State Key Laboratory of Lunar and Planetary Sciences, is operated solely by the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST). Macau's fourth State Key Laboratory, the State Key Laboratory for Quality Research in Chinese Medicine, is jointly operated by MUST and the UM.

According to Yonghua Song, the rector of UM, the university aims to play an active role in the development of a base for collaboration between Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macau.

"The university aims to participate in the development of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Macau Science and Technology Innovation Corridor and will help to create a high-quality platform for technological innovation and research, so as to make a greater contribution to the Greater Bay Area," the statement added.

Member of the Executive Committee of the Macau Science and Technology Development Fund, Cheang Kun Wai, expressed his hope that the science and technology industry in Zhuhai and Macau would formulate strategies for developing the Greater Bay Area into a center for technology and innovation.

Among the guests attending the inauguration were Xu Jun, deputy director of the Economic Affairs Department of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the SAR; and Zhao Jianguo, deputy party secretary of the Zhuhai Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China. LV

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Hong Kong disputes BOE estimate of \$5 billion fund outflows

HARRY WILSON
& ALFRED LIU

HONG Kong's de-facto central bank disputed the Bank of England's assessment that about \$5 billion has been pulled from investment funds in the Asian financial hub.

BOE's analysis from late Monday didn't necessarily mean there had been an actual outflow of money from its banking system, according to the Hong Kong Monetary Authority in an emailed statement. "The \$5 billion mentioned in BoE's financial stability report refers to the amount of portfolio capital changes via investment funds," HKMA said.

The Bank of England said in its latest financial stability report that escalating protests this year have led to billions of dollars 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. That \$5 billion figure, equivalent to about 1.25% of the former British colony's gross domestic product, amounts to a "significant" outflow, according to the U.K. central bank.

The estimate "could mean asset reallocation by or among investors and may not involve conversion of currencies, and therefore it does not necessarily lead to fund outflows from Hong Kong dollars or Hong Kong's banking system," HKMA responded in its statement.

HSBC Holdings Plc and Standard Chartered Plc, among the biggest foreign-



The Bank of England

-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.

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

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 HKD6.91 trillion (\$887 billion) in October from HKD6.88 trillion the prior month.

Deal making for the city's banks has also continued 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 on events 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**

HK CANCELS NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS OVER PROTEST CONCERNS

IAIN MARLOW

HONG Kong has canceled its traditional New Year's Eve fireworks show over security concerns, the latest popular event to be scrapped in the Asian financial hub amid ongoing pro-democracy protests.

The Hong Kong Tourism Board confirmed yesterday that the fireworks show had been canceled and would be replaced by an enhanced version of the daily light show that plays over the city's iconic harbor.

"The HKTB places high importance on public safety of all events it organizes," the group said in a statement. "In view of the current situation in Hong Kong, we have decided to adopt a new format for this year's New Year Countdown event."

The group will have a light show above Victoria Harbor with additional pyrotechnics from the rooftops of participating buildings, it said.

The Hong Kong Police Force had recommended abandoning the event over fears about holding a large-scale public event at a time when protests are still being planned, according to a police official who declined to be named. The demonstrations have turned violent on occasion in recent months.

The move was earlier reported by the South China Morning Post.

The fireworks show is the latest in a long list of events torpedoed amid the city's ongoing political unrest, including major business conferences, races, big-ticket concerts and a major music festival.

The protests began in opposition to since-scrapped legislation that would have allowed extraditions from the city to mainland China, but have expanded into calls for greater democracy in the former British colony.

Though unprecedented unrest over the last six months has tapered recently, it has severely damaged Hong Kong's economy. The tourism and retail sectors in particular have suffered as tourist arrivals plunge, events get postponed and many local residents stay home. **BLOOMBERG**



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HOTTEST JOB IN ARGENTINA

HELPING THE 1% HIDE THEIR CASH ABROAD

IGNACIO OLIVERA DOLL

FRANCO Reinson has never been busier, fielding calls and holding meetings in his office in downtown Buenos Aires. The wealth adviser can thank President Alberto Fernandez, who is making rich Argentines very nervous.

"They're afraid that the new government will be aggressive with its tax policies," said Reinson, the chief accounting officer at Amicorp's local subsidiary which specializes in organizing and administering trusts which have surged in popularity. Most of the firm's clients have just one request: help them protect the savings they've stashed overseas.

They have good reason to worry. Fernandez, a left-leaning populist, is bringing the country back to the days of the Peronists, the movement born in the 1950's under Juan Domingo Peron that favors social spending and local industry. In his first speech as president, he made it clear.

"In order to eliminate hunger we will ask for greater solidarity from those who have more capacity to give it," Fernandez said on Dec. 10.

Those simple words justify the concerns among affluent Argentines, according to economist Martin Tetaz.

"It's more taxes on personal assets," Tetaz wrote on Twitter. "If he were talking about export taxes he would say 'those who produce most,' if he were talking about income taxes, he would say 'those who make the most.'"

Argentines didn't have to wait long to see the first measures. Fernandez's cabinet chief, Santiago Cafiero, told La Nacion newspaper on Dec. 14 that a bill will be sent to Congress to outline tax policies which will include an increase on personal property tax and higher rates for those with assets abroad.

Farmers have already gotten ahead of export tax increases by unloading as much of their wheat, soybean and corn crop before the new government took office. Last weekend, Argentina confirmed the rise in export taxes to fund new government's spending. At the same time, officials announced a so-called tourism tax will be imposed to charge Argentines an extra 30% to buy international air tickets, pay for their monthly Netflix subscriptions or use their credit cards outside the country among other transactions.

Argentines have long stashed their money outside of the country to protect savings from the boom-to-bust cycles that have cursed the agriculture giant for decades. They currently have more than \$300 billion of sa-

vings abroad, according to data from the statistics institute Indec. New stringent rules that require certain countries to share bank account data have made it harder to find fiscal paradises around the world which is why the trust is becoming a hot product for the wealthy.

An Economy Ministry spokesman declined to comment, adding that any details will be announced with the contents of the bill.

Little known in the country until just recently, the irrevocable trust is in high demand. The instrument is normally structured for people close to retirement age who want to give control and benefit of their assets to others, until the end of their life. But now wealth advisers are even hearing of adults as young as 30-years-old with no heirs seeking out the instrument.

"There was a frenzy after the August primary elections and demand exploded after the new exchange controls," said Martina Caunedo, a lawyer at MBP Partners, which advises large banks and fund managers in Buenos Aires.

From 2018 to 2019, MBP Partners went from mainly advising companies on infrastructure investments and financing abroad to plan family fortunes.

Argentina already has a high tax load, close to 30% of gross

domestic product, which is substantially higher than the Latin American average of 22.8%, according to the Argentine Institute of Fiscal Analysis.

"The country has a real tangle of taxes, fees and contributions: 163 taxes at the three levels of government (national, provinces and municipalities)," Nadin Arganaraz, director of the institute, said. The tax load is close to 33% of income for individuals and reaches 50% when they do everything within the formal economy.

The high tax pressure has typically lead Argentines to try to hide part of their wealth in foreign currency outside of the country.

A challenge to the strategy to hide wealth from the new government, is that many Argentines were persuaded to take part in a sprawling tax amnesty plan under former President Mauricio Macri in 2016. In that process they paid a flat rate of up to 15% to declare what they had abroad with the expectation they would be safe from further taxation for now.

"Those who brought their assets back into the country during the tax amnesty, now want to take them abroad again," Caunedo said.

With Argentina on the brink of default yet again and the economy in recession with inflation

running at 50% annually, Fernandez doesn't have many options on where to raise revenue to spend on the poor. The most viable appears to be squeezing more money from the rich.

Fernandez told the Telefe network late Monday that taxes on personal assets held abroad will be double the 2015 level, meaning the rate could be as high as 2.5%. The measure is intended to persuade Argentines to bring their cash back to the country, he said.

"That's a lot of money," Mariano Sardans, CEO of wealth manager FDI in Buenos Aires, said. "For one person, this means the total of what they could obtain with the return on a bond investment or the rental of an apartment abroad."

For some, the solution is to change residency or move abroad to skirt the impact of Fernandez's tax policies, Martin Litwak, head of a boutique legal and tax advisory firm with offices in Miami, said. For those seeking a change of residency, they must live 180 days a year in their host country.

"Argentina is exporting wealth: thousands are leaving the country to live outside, others take their businesses abroad and others put their money in these trusts," Sardans said. "The government is set to lose taxable assets." **BLOOMBERG**

MILITARY

China commissions first home-built aircraft carrier

PRESIDENT Xi Jinping attended the commissioning of China's first entirely home-built aircraft carrier, underscoring the country's rise as a regional naval power at a time of tensions with the U.S. and others over trade, Taiwan and the South China Sea.

The Shandong is the second Chinese aircraft carrier to enter service after the Liaoning, which was originally purchased as a hulk from Ukraine and entirely refurbished.

State media reported that about 5,000 representatives from the naval forces and aircraft carrier construction groups attended the commissioning ceremony this week at a naval base near the city of Sanya.

The base in the southern island province of Hainan opens onto the South China Sea, where China is engaged in an increasingly heated dispute over territory and undersea oil and gas resources. China's claim to virtually the entire strategic waterway, through which passes an estimated \$5 trillion in trade annually, overlaps partially or in whole with five other governments.

Countries in the region, along with U.S. treaty allies including Japan and Australia, are also beefing up their navies and maritime law enforcement capabilities in response to Chi-

AP PHOTO



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with representatives of the aircraft carrier unit and the manufacturer at a naval port in Sanya

nese actions such as the construction of man-made islands that Beijing has equipped with airfields and missile batteries.

State television footage

showed Xi being applauded as he boarded the ship to present a flag and certificate, sign the log and visit with sailors. He also inspected aircraft and toured

the bridge and flight coordination operations center.

"Commending China's achievements in aircraft carrier construction, Xi encouraged them to

continue their efforts to make new contributions in the service of the party and the people," the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

Like the Liaoning, the Shandong is named after a northern province and is based on a Soviet design with a "ski jump" style flight deck for takeoffs rather than the flat decks used by much larger U.S. aircraft carriers. It is powered by a conventional oil-fueled steam turbine power plant, rather than the nuclear fuel American carriers and submarines use.

The 50,000-ton Shandong completed sea trials last year before returning to its construction yard in the northern port of Dalian. Following the arrival of its air complement Chinese J-15 fighter jets, it was due to be commissioned before 2020. It sailed through the Taiwan Strait on its way to Hainan last month, prompting the island's military to scramble ships and planes to monitor its passage.

China is seen as striving to overtake the U.S. as the dominant naval power in Asia and already boasts the world's largest navy in numbers of vessels.

Beijing says aircraft carriers are needed to protect its coastline and trade routes, but they are also seen as backing up Beijing's claims to self-governing Taiwan and the South China Sea. AP

University of Kansas will close Confucius Institute

THE University of Kansas plans to close its Confucius Institute in January, in part because federal funding for universities that host the China-linked facilities has been reduced.

An email distributed earlier this week to faculty and staff from University of Kansas interim Provost Carl Lejuez said the school believes strong engagement with China is critical to U.S. higher education, The Lawrence Journal-World reported.

"However, a Confucius Institute is not a necessary component for KU to productively engage with China, support collaborative faculty research, and prepare students," Lejuez wrote.

A military spending bill passed in August 2018 restricts Department of Defense funds to universities that sponsor Confu-

cius Institutes. Supporters of the restrictions noted the institutes are affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education, which raised concerns about possible political influence in academics. Former FBI Director Christopher Wray and some Republican U.S. senators said the organizations promoted the China's Communist Party and might engage in espionage.

The Confucius Institutes provides education in Chinese language and culture. At one point, China had about 500 Confucius Institutes around the world, including more than 100 in the U.S., but several universities closed the organizations in response to the criticism.

Kansas' Confucius Institute opened in 2006. It was established in part by Central China Normal University and the Offi-

ce of Chinese Language Council International, also known as Hanban, which provides partial funding.

In 2014, the American Association of University Professors recommended that universities move away from Confucius Institutes, saying the institutes "function as an arm of the Chinese state and are allowed to ignore academic freedom."

As of October, there were 89 Confucius Institutes still in the United States, according to the National Association of Scholars.

In his email, Lejuez said Kansas will continue its Mandarin Chinese language programs for K-12 students in Kansas through the academic year. He also wrote that the university's agreement with CCNU will not be affected by the institute's closing. AP

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TAIPEI ALLOWS EXPATS BACK INTO BIKE-SHARING PROGRAM AFTER UPROAR

ADELA LIN & SAMSON ELLIS

The first time Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je heard foreign residents were to be excluded from Taipei's much-loved bike-rental scheme was in the middle of an interview this week. He turned his wrath on one of his aides, telling them to call the transport department.

"Tell them to fix the problem tonight," he ordered, while simultaneously texting the head of the department himself. "They have to report to me tomorrow morning if they can't fix it tonight."

The YouBike issue, which triggered an online uproar from expats, highlighted the point Ko had made earlier in the interview with Bloomberg News: Taipei struggles to compete with the likes of Singapore and Hong Kong in attracting multinational companies and expatriates.

That may be changing, with the pro-democracy protests that have engulfed Hong Kong since June presenting an opportunity for Taipei to pitch itself as a good place to do business. The number of people moving from Hong Kong to Taiwan is set to reach its highest in at least four years in 2019, up 23% in the first 10 months of 2019 from a year earlier, according to the National Immigration Agency.

Taiwan's more affordable housing and schools are among attractions. But while Ko has established a task force to attract



businesses from Hong Kong, he conceded it had had little success so far.

"Taipei has to be more open, more multicultural," he said. "In the end, foreign companies prefer Singapore."

PRESIDENTIAL AMBITIONS

It's that blunt style that has endeared the 60-year-old former surgeon to many residents of the city, leading to regular speculation he'll one day seek Taiwan's presidency. First elected as an political newcomer unattached to any party in 2014, Ko won a second term in a close-run election in November last year.

While he toyed with the idea of a run for the presidency in upcoming elections in January, he instead set up the Taiwan People's Party, which will field 46 candidates in legislative elections running concurrently with the presidential vote.

He refused to confirm whether or not he will seek the presidency in the next election in 2024, but insisted he would prepare to do so.

"The future has too many unpredictable events. You should ask me in 2023," he said, illustrating his thought processes with a scrawled series of formulas on scrap paper.

ANGRY EXPATS

Ko needed no time - or calculations - to make a decision on the YouBike issue.

That's in part because Taipei is proud of its growing reputation among foreigners for quality of life and affordability. It's been ranked the best city in the world for expats for two years running in a survey by InterNations, a network for people living abroad.

Read more on how Hong Kong immigration to Taiwan surged amid protests

Ko touted his success in streamlining the application process for foreign businesses

looking to invest in his city, with Taipei City's approval of foreign investments climbed more than 50% to \$8.8 billion in 2018.

"H&M were on the verge of giving up on opening a store in Taipei after spending months going from department to department getting all the right permits," Ko said of Swedish clothing giant Hennes & Mauritz AB. "In the end I gave them the direct number to my office and told them if they have any more trouble to call me."

H&M opened its first shop in Taipei in 2015. When asked if he hands his personal number out to every company looking to invest in Taipei, Ko said: "As long as you're big or valuable enough."

FRUSTRATING BUREAUCRACY

Ko's exasperation with slow and burdensome bureaucracy was evident in his response to the YouBike fiasco.

The 10-year-old bike-rental scheme is hugely popular among residents and a draw for visitors, with 26.6 million trips last year. Over the weekend, the company running the program informed frequent users that they would have to re-register. The wrinkle? Only ID numbers from citizens would be accepted, effectively shutting out Taiwan's roughly 800,000 foreign residents.

When Bloomberg informed him of the issue, officials hastened to tell the mayor they were already working on a solution, saying it could be fixed by Christmas Eve. He demanded it be done immediately.

Within hours, the city said the issue was fixed, and foreign residents can now enjoy the orange and yellow bikes. **BLOOMBERG**

FOOTBALL & POLITICS

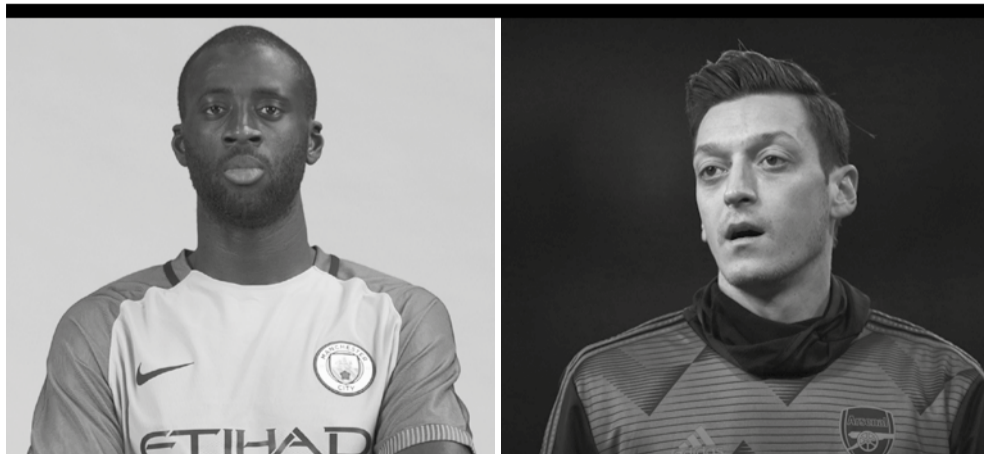
Toure against Ozil's public rebuke of China's crackdown

ROB HARRIS, DOHA

ARSENAL forward Mesut Ozil should not have spoken out to denounce human rights in China, former Barcelona and Manchester City midfielder Yaya Toure said yesterday [Macau time], fresh from a brief stint playing in the country.

Toure said that discussing the mass detention on Uighurs and others is "complicated" because he and Ozil are both Muslim, but took a different approach to the Arsenal midfielder over whether athletes should use their platforms to discuss political issues.

"Footballers have to stay with football and politicians to politics because you cannot be involved with this



Yaya Toure (left) and Mesut Ozil

kind of things because it's going to attract a lot of problems and a lot of things," Toure said in an interview with The Associated Press. "As a Muslim it is complicated and it is his choice. He's been doing his comments

but I think he was wrong to say that."

Ozil's criticism last week of Beijing's crackdown on Muslims in Xinjiang led to Arsenal's match being pulled from Chinese television. The Chinese government

accused Ozil of being "blinded and misled" before protesting about mass detentions and the closure of mosques in the northwest region.

One politician who did weigh in to support Ozil

was U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

"China's Communist Party propaganda outlets can censor (Ozil) and Arsenal's games all season long, but the truth will prevail," Pompeo wrote on his U.S. government Twitter account on Tuesday. "The CCP can't hide its gross #HumanRightsviolations perpetrated against Uighurs and other religious faiths from the world."

Toure, a former Ivory Coast international, has just completed five months playing at Chinese second-tier club Qingdao Huanghai. Toure's comments on Ozil echo the stance of Arsenal, which said it "adheres to the principle of not being involved in politics."

"I always love football," Toure said during a trip to Qatar with FIFA for the Club World Cup, "and that's why sometimes I don't want to be political."

Secret documents reported by the AP last month showed the Chinese government used mass surveillance and an integrated computing system to target pious Muslims and Uighurs who travelled abroad for detention in internment camps. China has been accused of detaining more than 1 million Uighurs and other minorities in Xinjiang and subjecting them to torture, beatings and food deprivation. The documents showed they were forced to learn Mandarin and Communist ideology. **AP**

US opposes lifting key sanctions against North Korea

THE United States said yesterday [Macau time] that it opposes a draft resolution proposed by China and Russia that would terminate U.N. sanctions on key North Korean exports, calling the measure "premature" at a time when Pyongyang is threatening to conduct "an escalated provocation" and is refusing to meet with U.S. officials to discuss denuclearization.

The U.S. State Department said President Donald Trump "remains committed to making progress toward commitments" he made with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un at their first summit in Singapore in June 2018 on transforming relations between the two countries, building lasting peace and ensuring complete denuclearization.

A State Department statement said the U.S. remains committed to diplomacy to make progress toward these goals, but it "cannot do this alone."

The draft resolution circulated to U.N. Security Council members Monday night would terminate sanctions on North Korean exports including textiles, seafood and statues with the intent of enhancing the livelihood of the civilian population. It would also lift a ban on North Koreans working



AP PHOTO

overseas and terminate a decision to repatriate all those earning income abroad by Dec. 22.

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.

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 capabi-

lities at Kim's second summit with Trump last February.

North Korea has carried out 13 ballistic missile launches since May trying 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.

China's U.N. ambassador, Zhang Jun, told reporters this week that the resolution is not ai-

med at splitting the 15-member Security Council but pursuing "a united approach approach in obtaining peace and security" on the Korean peninsula and "to send a positive, constructive message to the parties concerned that we do not want a deteriorated situation, we do not want a confrontation."

"You cannot simply expect one party to do more things and with the other party sitting there idle," Zhang said. "We need both parties to walk towards each other so as

to build up mutual trust. With one step forward from one party, and then the other party, makes that two steps forward. That's something positive, that's something constructive."

Otherwise, he said, there will be further mistrust leading to "more negative things and hesitation" and "we'll move backward again, and it will be" even further from denuclearization and peace.

The proposed resolution, obtained by The Associated Press, welcomes the continuing dialogue between the United States and North Korea, 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 included adoption of a formal declaration and/or a peace treaty ending the 1950-53 Korean War.

It 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, and the six-party talks have been stalled since then. AP

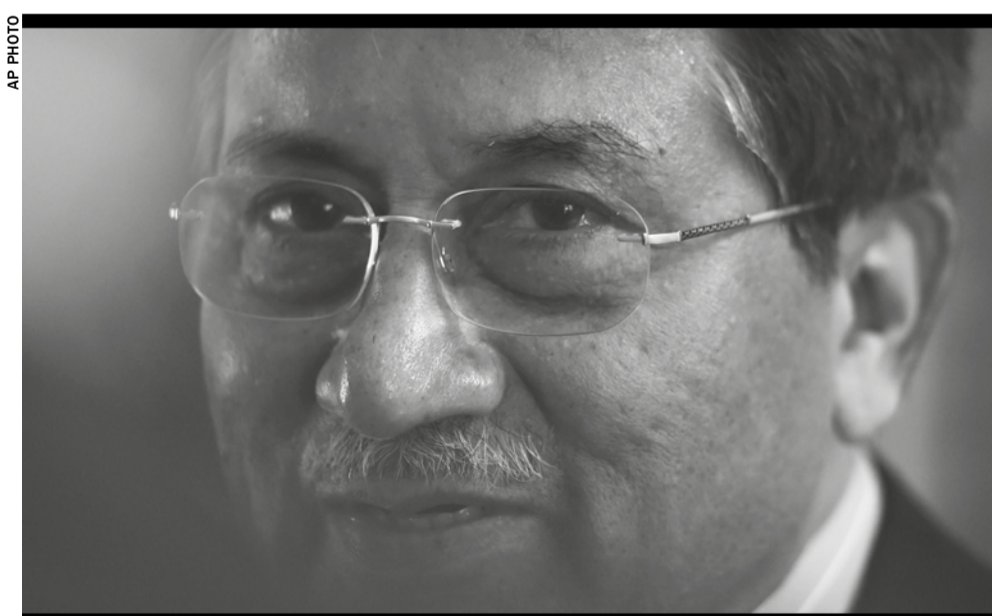
PAKISTAN

Ex-dictator Musharraf is first army general to get death penalty

A Pakistani special court sentenced former military dictator and president Pervez Musharraf to death in absentia, ending a six-year long high treason case against him and delivering a historic verdict against the country's powerful army.

The verdict - a two-to-one majority - drew a strong reaction from the military. Musharraf, who served for over 40 years and fought wars in the defense of the country "can surely never be a traitor," according to a statement released by military spokesman General Asif Ghafoor.

It's "been received with lot of pain and anguish by rank and file of Pakistan armed forces," Ghafoor said, noting the military expects justice will be dispensed in line with the constitution. "The due legal process



AP PHOTO

seems to have been ignored."

Musharraf, who has been in Dubai since 2016 seeking medical treatment and never attended the legal proceedings, has the

right to appeal in the Supreme Court. "We'll definitely challenge it in the Supreme Court," Musharraf's lawyer Raza Bashir said on the television channel Samaa, expressing concern the ver-

dict was given in hurry and his client didn't get fair trial.

It is the first time in Pakistan's 72-year history that a military ruler has been tried with high treason - in this case for imposing emer-

gency rule and suspending the constitution in 2007. Musharraf, as the army chief, toppled the civilian government of ex-premier Nawaz Sharif in 1999 and later became the country's military president. The south Asian nation has a history of being ruled by army dictators, who have imposed four martial laws since independence from the U.K. in 1947.

The verdict will "have a major positive impact on democracy and the rule of law as after decades, a person has been tried and sentenced," Ahmed Bilal Mehboob, president of the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency, said in Islamabad. "It will have a deterrent value."

Musharraf was a key ally of the U.S. after the

Sept. 11 attacks in New York until he was forced to step down in 2008 to avoid impeachment by Parliament. Sharif began treason proceedings against Musharraf soon after he came back to power in 2013.

Pakistan's biggest political parties, whose governments have been toppled at least once in past by military dictators, welcomed the verdict.

"The verdict is historic and it will be welcomed by all democratic forces," said Ahsan Iqbal, a senior leader of Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz party. "Democracy is the best revenge," tweeted Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, who is the co-chief of Pakistan Peoples Party, echoing his mother's comments before she was slain in a terrorist attack in 2007.


BLOOMBERG



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ANALYSIS

Coal in the stocking? Brexit still menaces key UK industries

DANICA KIRKA, LONDON

PRIME Minister Boris Johnson's decisive victory in last week's general election provided little comfort to Britain's once world-beating financial services industry, which has been battered by Brexit for more than three years.

While Johnson's triumph buoyed optimism that he would end the country's long-running political stalemate, it virtually guarantees the U.K. will leave the European Union on Jan. 31 and starts the clock on efforts to negotiate a trade deal with the bloc by the end of 2020.

As prime minister prepares to outline his government's priorities Thursday in a speech to lawmakers, the financial industry is seeking assurances that service businesses like theirs won't lose the unfettered access to European markets that has underpinned growth for more than four decades.

"Services are the lifeblood of the U.K. economy and vital to its growth," said Catherine McGuinness, policy chair at the City of London Corp., the historic base for the U.K. financial services industry. "Politicians across the spectrum should recognize that financial and professional services make a significant con-

tribution, employing 2.3 million people across the country – two-thirds outside of London."

The U.K. financial industry, whose roots stretch back to the investors who financed the British Empire and insured its ships, has flourished as a gateway to Europe for companies from around the world. That helped make London the world's top financial center, before Brexit eroded its advantages.

New York moved past London into the top spot last year, according to a ranking of 114 financial centers compiled by Z/Yen, a London-based commercial think tank, and the China Development Group.

In the most recent rankings, published in September, London dropped further behind New York, with Hong Kong just behind in third place. The Global Financial Services Index is based on information provided by more than 3,300 financial professionals around the world.

"Respondents in London continue to be less optimistic than those in other centers, reflecting the continuing uncertainty about future trading relations with the E.U. and the rest of the world after Brexit," the report said.

Johnson's Brexit deal covers only the so-called divorce issues, including payment of the U.K.'s

financial obligations and citizen's rights. The future relationship between Britain and the EU, including a potential free-trade agreement, will be the subject of a second round of negotiations that the government wants to complete by the end of next year.

"Services are the lifeblood of the UK economy and vital to its growth."

CATHERINE MCGUINNESS
CITY OF LONDON CORP

TheCityUK, which represents Britain's financial services, said that so far Brexit talks have largely focused on trade in goods, neglecting the services sector, which accounts for 80% of the economy.

"Ministers should seek to rectify this, consult widely, and focus their efforts on how the U.K.'s global leadership in services industries like ours can be sustained and enhanced over the course of this Parliament," Chief Executive Miles Celic said.

Financial services alone accounted for 6.9% of the U.K. economy and generated 29 billion pounds (\$38.6 billion) of tax re-

venue in the 2017-18 fiscal year. Related professional services such as accounting and legal services push the industry's total contribution to 10% of GDP.

The EU has already rejected Britain's continued participation in the bloc's "passporting" system, which allows financial firms that are authorized in any EU country to do business across the European Economic Area, which comprises all 28 EU countries plus Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein.

That leaves Britain and the EU to determine so-called "equivalence" agreements, which would permit limited access to specified areas if both sides agree to align regulations. Such agreements can be canceled by either side, however, and are subject to wider political considerations.

"This is going to leave loads of uncertainty because these things are not going to be negotiated in a hurry," said Vicky Pryce, chief economic adviser at the London-based Centre for Economics and Business Research.

Rather than wait to see the outcome of future discussions, firms ranging from the global investment bank Goldman Sachs to British insurance company Aviva have announced plans to reloca-

te some operations to other EU countries to ensure they maintain a foothold in the bloc.

At least 332 firms in the U.K. banking and finance industry have prepared for Brexit by relocating part of their business, moving staff or setting up new entities in the EU, according to a study by New Financial, a London-based think tank. It also identified some 5,000 staff moves or local hires made in response to Brexit, stressing that the figures are likely to rise when the terms of Britain's departure become clear.

"Financial services have resigned themselves to have a fairly hard Brexit from their point of view," said Jonathan Portes, a senior fellow at The U.K. in a Changing Europe, a non-partisan think tank at King's College London. "What we will essentially see is a slow drift away from London being by far the most dominant financial center in Europe."

Johnson's government has said it is seeking a "Canada-style free-trade agreement," stressing that the EU's deal with Canada covers trade in services.

But experts question whether the U.K. can hammer out a similar deal by the end of next year. It took Canada more than five years to negotiate its agreement with the EU, plus two more for it to be approved by each EU country.

Johnson says he won't ask for an extension and will introduce legislation to rule one out, leaving open the possibility that Britain could still leave the EU without a trade deal in a little over a year. Economists forecast this would have tough consequences for jobs and investment.

"The most important thing to remember is that Brexit may get done from a legal point of view on Jan. 31, but that does not get Brexit done from an economic point of view," Portes said. "British businesses are going to have to face the fact that uncertainty is going to continue."

That has weighed on financial markets.

The FTSE 100, Britain's benchmark stock index, has gained 4% since last week's election, beating the S&P 500 in the U.S. and Germany's DAX. But the long-term picture is less positive. While the FTSE 100 has risen 14% since Britain voted to leave the EU in June 2016, the S&P 500 jumped 51% in the same period and the DAX 31%.

The pound jumped briefly after the election, adding to a rally that began in August on optimism Johnson would secure a deal with the EU. The currency is still down almost 10% since the referendum.

"Anyone hoping that the election would draw a line under Brexit was sadly mistaken," Craig Erlam, senior analyst at market research firm Oanda.com, said in a note to investors headlined "Christmas Gift or Exquisitely Wrapped Lump of Coal?" 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)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

MANDARIN'S HOUSE

TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Last admission at 5:30pm; closed on Wednesdays, open on public holidays)

ADDRESS: No. 10, Travessa de António da Silva

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8820

TREASURE OF SACRED ART OF ST. JOSEPH'S SEMINARY

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

ITALY CARTOON DEPICTING EU AS NAZI CAMP SPARKS OUTCRY

A cartoonist in Rome has sparked a heated controversy in Italy and abroad after depicting the European Union as the Nazi death camp of Auschwitz and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson as an escaping prisoner.

Artist Mario Improta posted the cartoon on his Twitter account Saturday, after Johnson's Conservatives won a majority in the U.K. election. Johnson ran on a platform of "get Brexit done," vowing to take Britain out of the European Union by the scheduled deadline of Jan. 31.

The cartoon features Johnson waving a British flag as he flees a concentration camp with the inscription "European Union" in the same position as the words "Arbeit macht frei" ("Work sets you free") are at the entrance of the Nazi camp.

The comparison between the EU and a concentration camp immediately prompted a wave of criticism from politicians, Rome's Jewish community and even some of the artist's followers on Twitter.

The Auschwitz Memorial tweeted in Italian, noting that "Arbeit macht frei" was a cynical illusion that the SS gave to prisoners of Auschwitz. Those words have become one of the icons of human hatred. It is painful for the memory of Auschwitz and its victims to see this symbol used and shamefully abused."

The artist has become well-known in Italy as the author of an educational campaign for Rome featuring Mayor Virginia Raggi as a Manga hero. Raggi distanced herself from the cartoon and halted the collaboration with Improta.

After the widespread criticism, Improta earlier this week modified the cartoon, replacing the image of the Nazi camp with a toilet and saying it wasn't correct to "identify the EU with a concentration camp."

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 - Fim

16:55 Portugueses Pelo Mundo Sr.1

17:40 LiteratAqui

18:05 Império (Repetição)

18:55 Semana Internacional (Repetição)

19:30 Ouro Verde Sr.1

20:30 Telejornal

21:10 Macau 20 Anos

21:25 TDM Talk Show

21:55 Livros com João Guedes

22:00 Viagens Gastronómicas

22:25 Império

23:15 TDM News

23:50 Cá Por Casa Sr.2

01:20 Telejornal (Repetição)

02:05 RTPi Directo

cinema



CINETEATRO

19 - 25 Dec



STAR WARS: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER

ROOM 1

2:15, 7:00, 9:45pm

Room 2

4:30

Director: J. J. Abrams

Starring: Carrie Fisher, Mark Hamill, Adam Driver, Daisy Ridley

Language: English

Duration: 141min

MY TYRANO: TOGETHER FOREVER

ROOM 1

5:00

Director: Kobun Shizumo

Starring: Kaori Ishihara, Shin'ichirō Miki, Aoi Yūki

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 108min

BOMBSHELL

ROOM 2

2:30, 7:30, 9:30 pm

Director: Jay Roach

Starring: Charlize Theron, Nicole Kidman, Margot Robbie

Language: English

Duration: 108min



JUMANJI, THE NEXT LEVEL

ROOM 3

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

Director: Jake Kasdan

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

Language: English

Duration: 123min

this day in history



1984 BRITAIN SIGNS OVER HONG KONG TO CHINA

The British colony of Hong Kong is to be returned to China in 1997 after an historic agreement was signed in Peking today.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher signed the Joint Sino-British Declaration with her Chinese counterpart Zhao Ziyang.

It formally seals the future of Hong Kong, transferring it from a British colony of six million people to communist China in 13 years.

The agreement, which will end 155 years of British rule in the colony, also launches a new era in trade and diplomacy between the two countries.

Chinese president Deng Xiaoping, who pursued the recovery of Hong Kong, greeted Mrs Thatcher.

The champagne ceremony took place at the Great Hall of the People before delegates who helped draw up the agreement, including 101 guests from Hong Kong.

Mrs Thatcher said: "The circumstances are unique. The agreement is unique.

"It is right that we should feel a sense of history, of pride and of confidence in the future."

The declaration outlines Hong Kong will be "restored" to the People's Republic of China with effect from July 1 1997 and will apply for fifty years.

It will be known as the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR).

Britain has agreed to return Hong Kong after guarantees it will "enjoy a high degree of autonomy, except in foreign and defence affairs".

And China's principle of "one country, two systems" allows Hong Kong to have a capitalist economy and enjoy existing rights and freedoms.

The Prime Minister later revealed the negotiation process had been rocky.

When Mrs Thatcher last visited Peking in 1982 the atmosphere was hostile as an agreement could not be reached.

Talks restarted in July 1983 and today's agreement, which was finalised only ten days before the 30 September deadline, is being hailed as a diplomatic coup.

Mrs Thatcher will visit Hong Kong tomorrow during her whistle-stop world tour.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

A bloody crackdown by troops on protests in the Chinese capital, Beijing, in June 1989, known as the "Tiananmen Square massacre" soured relations between Britain and China.

The British Government, fearing for the colony's future, responded by granting British passports to 50,000 Hong Kong heads of families, building a new international airport, and introducing a Bill of Rights.

Chris Patten, the last Governor of Hong Kong introduced democratic reforms in 1992 which the Chinese Government opposed.

A series of diplomatic meetings between the two governments in 1995 and 1996 improved relations.

On 1 July 1997 a spectacular ceremony in Hong Kong celebrated a new era in its political life as it transferred to Chinese control.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
There are two families in your life: the one that contains the people you're related to, and the one that includes the friends you choose to have in your life.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
If you're planning a get-together with friends, try to plan it around a meal. There is nothing quite like socializing over food to get people laughing and feeling good about themselves and each other.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Just because one of your friends is being tight with money right now doesn't mean that they aren't up for some serious fun! So do not make assumptions about what someone is willing to do socially.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
As soon as you wake up in the morning, you'll feel full of good energy—so good, in fact, that you must see it as a responsibility. What are you going to do with all of this can-do spirit?

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
An unexpected encounter with an old friend might start off a bit awkwardly today, but their naturally warm personality will thaw whatever icy chill you were sensing.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Wherever you spend most of your time today, you will find encouragement from the people you are surrounded by. At the office, coworkers are suddenly ready to help out on big projects or small.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Often, two heads are better than one, and you might need the friction of someone else's perspective in order to achieve that high polish on your ideas. Don't worry that collaboration will be a tangle of egos.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
More than any other day this week, today is a very good day to get what you want. Your charm and intellect are both at their highest peak, and you'll be able to negotiate like an expert.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Today, if you just follow your mood, you will be all right. Do not over-think things and do not try to change your mood—if you're feeling blue, you're feeling blue for a reason.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
A lot of new ideas will be suggested to you today, and your first instinct might be to push them all way. They're too new for you to feel comfortable with them, and that's understandable.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
It might not be very easy to say something to a friend that you know you have been needing to say, but nothing worth doing is ever easy, is it? Find a place to talk where the two of you can be alone.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
You have a big supply of strength buried deep down inside of you right now, and when you combine it with your creativity, there is nothing that can slow you down today.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

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

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

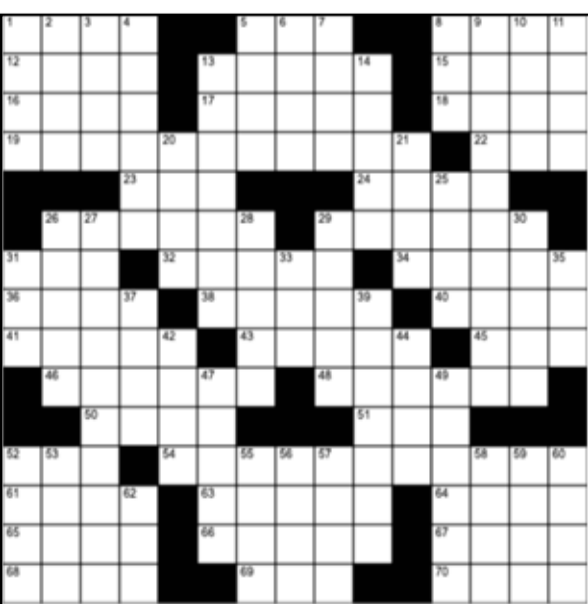
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-6	2	clear
Harbin	-21	-11	cloudy
Tianjin	-3	4	clear
Urumqi	-12	-6	foggy
Xi'an	0	9	cloudy
Lhasa	-6	10	clear
Chengdu	5	9	cloudy
Chongqing	8	10	overcast
Kunming	3	18	cloudy
Nanjing	3	7	overcast
Shanghai	6	8	drizzle
Wuhan	2	7	cloudy
Hangzhou	5	7	drizzle
Taipei	18	20	drizzle
Guangzhou	16	22	drizzle
Hong Kong	19	23	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	0	4	drizzle
Frankfurt	4	8	clear
Paris	10	12	cloudy
London	8	10	moderate rain
New York	-8	3	clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Aardvark's meal; 5- ___ loves me...; 8- Mimicked; 12- Exactly; 13- Primitive weapon; 15- Appraise; 16- Must've been something ___; 17- Waterlogged soil; 18- Fairway choice; 19- Temperature measuring instrument; 22- Blasting material; 23- Long, thin snake-like fish; 24- Polynesian carved image; 26- Gory; 29- Attitude; 31- Poseidon's domain; 32- Interlace; 34- Boors; 36- Fundamentals; 38- Thick-skinned charger; 40- Jeans color; 41- Writers of verse; 43- Shoot-'em-up; 45- Citrus drink; 46- Quickly; 48- Stay attached; 50- Capital city of Western Samoa; 51- Comparative suffix; 52- Wager; 54- Diaphanous; 61- I cannot tell ___; 63- Nebraska city; 64- Geographical expanse; 65- "Get Smart" baddies; 66- Add up; 67- Windshield option; 68- Forearm bone; 69- Plant; 70- Whizzes;

DOWN: 1- Working away; 2- Flood survivor; 3- London art gallery; 4- Sound investment?; 5- Junk e-mail; 6- Roll-call response; 7- ___ of Eden; 8- Jackie's second; 9- Specific; 10- It's across the Thames from Windsor; 11- Depression in a surface; 13- Burn without flame; 14- Role for Clark; 20- Alley cry; 21- 100 dinars; 25- Door part; 26- Jazz genre; 27- Wound; 28- Lou; 29- Actress Berger; 30- Practice piece; 31- Tree syrup; 33- By means of; 35- Visualize; 37- What to do "in the name of love"; 39- Like a certain complex; 42- Huff; 44- Periman of "Cheers"; 47- Fortuneteller's deck; 49- Book boo-boos; 52- Capital of Azerbaijan; 53- Tel Aviv server; 55- Book after Joel; 56- Western pact; 57- "Pygmalion" author; 58- Slang expert Partridge; 59- Branta sandvicensis; 60- Makes lace; 62- Conductor ___-Pekka Salonen;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



FOR SALE

Man Fai, Taipa
HK\$8,580,000 1,390 ft² 3 2

FOR RENT

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

FOR SALE

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

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

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

[Coloane] Large apartment 2 3 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
645 ft² \$11,800/mth (ref: 19111001)

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

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

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

ADVERTORIAL

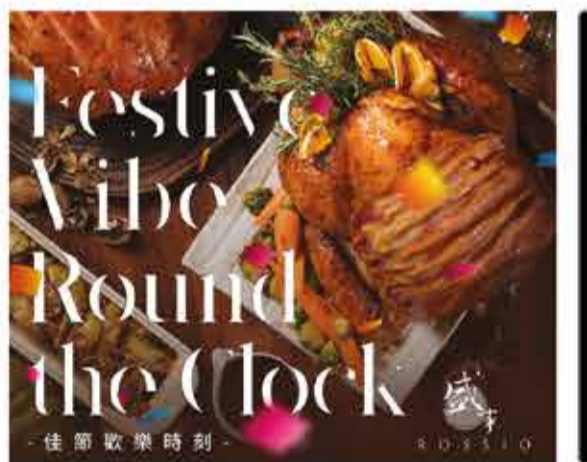
GREAT TIMES

Season's eatings from MGM!

TIS the season for scrumptious indulgence! The festive period is upon us and it's time to celebrate, especially as it's also the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Macau SAR! And what would the holidays be without delicious holiday delights? At MGM MACAU and MGM COTAI, discover an array of festive feasts of different cuisines from Western to Chinese, and even dessert!

Rossio is bringing the festive atmosphere early with Christmas lunch and dinner buffets starting December 14th and lasting until January 1st. Savour delectable "Turkey pâté en croûte", "Roast duck with Christmas pudding", and more! At Aux Beaux Arts, celebrate à La Française by dining on traditional favourites such as "Foie gras terrine" and "Capon ballotine" within a cosy French brasserie atmosphere. And if you're looking for somewhere to spend the new year, join their countdown party on December 31st!

If you want something different from the usual Christmas flavours, why not try a festive feast with Peruvian flair? At Aji, you can enjoy the traditional Peruvian Christmas dishes such as "Crispy pork belly", "Papa rellena" and "Panettone". You can also join the New Year's Eve Dinner and sample the best Aji has to offer with a full range of signature dishes, plus a brand-new dish to celebrate 2020.



Since this time of year is all about sharing, make a visit to Coast and invite friends and family to dig into their mighty platters of traditional dishes like "Whole Roasted Chicken with Sage Stuffing and Cranberry Sauce" and the classic "Yule Log". Besides Christmas, to bring some Winter Solstice warmth, both Chun, specialising in Cantonese gourmet cuisine, and Five Foot Road, known for its Sichuan style, will be offering special menus to celebrate the traditional Chinese festival.

What's more, you can round off your festive meals with a sweet treat at Pastry Bar. With hampers stuffed with delicious goodies and delightful afternoon tea sets, you'll be able to end your holiday celebrations on a sweet note.

Please visit mgm.mo for reservations and enquiries.



MURAKAMI HOLDS RARE PUBLIC READING TO MARK DEBUT ANNIVERSARY

A monkey that confesses he steals women's identity cards, causing them to temporarily forget who they are, starred this week as author Haruki Murakami marked 40 years since his debut as a novelist with his first public reading in Japan in nearly a quarter century.

Now 70 and one of the world's most popular and acclaimed novelists, Murakami debuted with "Hear the Wind Sing" in 1979, four years after he began writing while running a jazz bar in Tokyo. His 1987 romantic novel "Norwegian Wood" was his first best seller, establishing him as a young literary star. His latest novel, "Killing Commendatore," hit U.S. bookstores last year.

Media-shy Murakami's last public readings were in Kobe and Ashiya in western Japan, where he grew up, following a deadly 1995 earthquake there. On Tuesday, he was joined by award-winning young female novelist Mieko Kawakami, a longtime Murakami fan who was in the audience at both events 24 years ago before she became a novelist.

After the two authors took turns reading passages from their works, Murakami said, "Actually, I have a brand new novel that I wrote a few weeks ago, and I haven't even published it." He said it is called "Confessions of a Shinagawa Monkey" and is a sequel to "A Shinagawa Monkey," a story of a woman named Mizuki who forgets her name because a monkey had stolen it, published as part of a 2002 compilation,



"Five Strange Tales from Tokyo."

The new story takes place at a small Japanese hot spring hotel where a monkey appears as the protagonist takes a bath. The monkey, apparently speaking in Japanese, offers to wash his back, and explains he was raised by a professor and grew up listening to classical music such as Joseph Bruckner and Richard Strauss. The monkey faced discrimination in the conformist monkey community and ended up at the hot springs hotel where he is hired as a helper and given an attic to live in.

After the protagonist invites the monkey to his room for a chat over beer, the monkey says he is called Shinagawa Monkey and reveals he has a bad habit of stealing part of the names of women he falls in love with by taking their driver's licenses and other identification cards, causing them to forget their names.

Murakami said "Confessions of a Shinagawa Monkey" takes about 50 minutes to read, so he read a 30-minute abridged version for the event. Murakami comically acted out conversation between the monkey and the protagonist, setting off laughter from the floor. He said the story may be published in the near future.

Without any video cameras present, Murakami appeared relaxed as he and Kawakami took turns reading their works. Kawakami won the prestigious Akutagawa Prize in 2008 for "Breasts and Eggs" and has penned other award-winning novels including "Dreams of Love, etc.," "Yearning" and "Heaven."

The two authors have published a new book, "A Horned Owl Takes Off at Dawn: A long long interview by Kawakami Mieko," a collection of her interviews of Murakami.

RAPHAEL SHOW WITH FAMOUS MADONNA PAINTINGS OPENS IN BERLIN

BERLIN is opening the first of three Raphael exhibitions this week as the art world celebrates the 500th anniversary of the Renaissance master's death next year.

Five paintings of the Virgin Mary and her son that are usually not exhibited in the same space are all on display in one room at the city's Gemaeldegalerie museum. In addition, Raphael's famous "The Madonna of the Pinks" will be on loan from the National Gallery in London for the exhibition called "Raphael in Berlin. The Madonnas of the Gemaeldegalerie."

The six paintings belong to Raphael's early works from the beginning of the 16th century and depict Madonna and her child in different variations. One shows Jesus on his mother's lap with pink flowers in his hands, another with a goldfinch on his leg. On most of the paintings Mary has a solemn look, as if she already knew about her son's fate.

The exhibition's centerpiece is a tondo, or round painting, called "Terranuova Madonna" from



about 1505 that Raphael created shortly after his arrival in Florence. It shows Madonna with her child, surrounded by the infant St. John and an unknown child with a halo.

"The big Raphael year 2020 is already starting in Berlin in December 2019," the director of the Gemaeldegalerie, Michael Eissenhauer, told reporters on Wednesday. "The show gives a precise view on Raphael before he became the star artist at the Vatican."

Raphael was born in 1483 in Urbino and died at the age of 37 in Rome. Together with Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, he is one

of the most famous Italian artists of the Renaissance period.

The presentation takes a historical look at the collection of the Berlin museums, showing works by the "young Raphael" that were widely popular when the first museum was founded in the city in 1830.

The exhibition also sheds light on the early acquisition policies of the Gemaeldegalerie in the broader context of the history of art collecting in Europe and it shows the image that 19th-century Germany had of Raphael.

The exhibition opens to the public Friday and runs through April 26.

STEPHEN WADE, TOKYO

OLYMPICS

Latest Tokyo ticket lottery: 1m offered; 23m sought

TOKYO's Olympic tickets continue to be very hard to find — particularly in Japan.

Organizers yesterday said there were 23 million tickets requested in the latest lottery for Japan residents only. The bad news is that only 1 million tickets were available. Which means that almost everybody went away empty handed.

Next summer's Olympics have generated unprecedented demand. Organizers said 3.57 million tickets had been awarded to Japan residents in previous lotteries. Organizers confirmed for the first time the demand was almost 20 times over supply — about 60 million tickets requested.

And now Japan residents are running out of chances.

The next ticket offering in Japan will be early next year, but will be open to Japan and non-Japan residents on a first-come, first-served basis.

Overall, organizers say about 7.8 million tickets are available for all events. Organizers have said that at least 70% of the tickets will go to Japan residents. Large blocks also go to sponsors, international sports federations, national Olympic committees, and the International Olympic

AP PHOTO



Committee.

Millions are also sold outside Japan by official Olympic tickets resellers, which can charge a 20% handling fee on every ticket. They can also take advantage of fluctuations in currency exchange rates.

The lucky — and unlucky —

were quickly vocal in Japan on social media.

"It's like a dream," said one.

"What did I do wrong? This is unforgivable," said another.

Ticket shortages have led some to question why they cannot find tickets for a local Olympics, which is being funded by billions in

taxpayer money.

The opening ceremony on July 24 features the most expensive ticket — 300,000 yen (\$2,700). The most expensive ticket for the closing ceremony is 220,000 yen (\$2,000).

The demand is sure to create a vibrant secondary market, and

opportunities for ticket scalpers.

Japan earlier this year passed a law that prohibits ticket scalping, with the penalty of a 1 million yen (\$9,100) fine and a one-year jail term — or both.

Three years ago at the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, IOC member Patrick Hickey of Ireland was arrested on suspicion of ticket scalping. He is suspended from the IOC but remains a member and has denied any wrongdoing.

The Japan law, however, has large loopholes and does not apply to tickets distributed for free or given away as gifts, or tickets without a purchaser's name. This could apply to many tickets coming from the IOC, the 200 national Olympic committees, or some major Olympic sponsors.

The demand has driven up hotel prices and even created concerns about how Tokyo's efficient train system will handle the games. Part of the demand is simple to explain: Greater Tokyo has 35 million people and is one of the world's largest metro areas.

Demand for Paralympic tickets is also surpassing supply. Paralympic organizers expect the 2.3 million tickets available will be sold before the Paralympics open on Aug. 25. This would also be a first.

Organizers hope to raise about \$800 million in ticket sales. AP

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OPINION

The Stranger

Sheyla Zandonai



WE CAN DO BETTER
THAN THAT

The celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Macau SAR this week on December 20 is a good opportunity to remind the incoming government about certain women's rights, which have been forgotten over the past few years. It is high time for the politics of breastfeeding and maternity leave rights to be considered.

Currently, the conditions that exist for maternity leave in Macau are likely one of the lowest worldwide, requiring only 56 calendar days with no legal protection for breastfeeding. The new government, which will be inaugurated on Friday, should live up to previous promises and work to improve the living conditions of many who choose to start a family in the city.

Announcing his government as the government of continuity, Ho Iat Seng does not offer any reason to hold high hopes, but maternity leave is certainly one issue that the Chief Executive might not want to overlook, as it is an area that is lacking in improvement.

To be fair, roughly a year ago, the government proposed to extend maternity leave to 70 days, but the majority of the plenary killed the bill at its first reading. While the proposed improvement was minor, any help would be welcome for mothers in distress with a new baby who, in many cases, face the anxiety of returning to work when they have barely recovered from birth and want to keep breastfeeding. As a result, the message sent by choosing to deprive women of two more weeks of maternity leave is that of avarice.

In a city as wealthy as Macau, it is obscene and seems incomprehensible to see lawmakers in a male-dominated and business-oriented legislative body turning the bill down so quickly.

Really, are we reduced to this? It is a poor calculation on the lawmakers' part to believe that depriving women of even slightly improved conditions would make much of a difference. The choice of most casino corporations to extend maternity leave for employees to 90 days (the same amount as civil servants) is the best way to produce happier employees who are more loyal and more productive. Besides, it is incomprehensible that some women have more rights than others because they work for the government or a certain company.

The problem is that people still treat these few weeks as a currency. While it may still work to attract some employees, all women should be entitled the same right: at least 90 days of leave. Anything less than this is playing with people's lives. And if the coming government's approach to social affairs is serious, maternity leave should be extended beyond that length.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that women breastfeed for at least six months. Macau's mark is far lower than this, with only about 18% of mothers breastfeeding their babies up to six months in 2018. Although many opt out of breastfeeding because of fears it may damage their bodies, even many educated people in Macau still think formula milk is better than breast milk, which is nonsense. Many others give up breastfeeding when they return to work due to the lack of conditions and facilities, and the lack of encouragement. Because the private sector will still treat it as a currency, the government has a role to fill and an example to set.

The boards of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles and PSA Peugeot yesterday signed a binding merger deal creating the world's fourth-largest automaker with the scale to confront the challenges of stricter emissions regulations and the transition to new driving technologies.

The companies said in a joint statement the new group will be led by PSA's cost-cutting CEO Carlos Tavares, with Fiat Chrysler's chairman John Elkann as head of the board of the merged group. Fiat Chrysler CEO Mike Manley will stay on, though it was unclear

in what capacity.

No name for the new company has been decided, executives said, but both Tavares and Manley insisted it was not a "touchy subject."

The executives said they expect the 50/50 deal to take 12-15 months to close. It will create a company with revenues of nearly 170 billion euros (nearly \$190 billion) and producing 8.7 million cars a year — just behind Volkswagen, the Renault-Nissan alliance and Toyota.

FINLAND OFFERS CRASH
COURSE IN ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE TO EU

AP PHOTO



Social democrats minister Sanna Marin

JARI TANNER

FINLAND is offering a techy Christmas gift to all European Union citizens — a free-of-charge online course in artificial intelligence in their own language, officials said.

The tech-savvy Nordic nation, led by the 34-year-old Prime Minister Sanna Marin, is marking the end of its rotating presidency of the EU at the end of the year with a highly ambitious goal.

Instead of handing out the usual ties and scarves to EU officials and journalists, the Finnish government has opted to give practical understanding of AI to 1% of EU citizens, or about 5 million people, through a basic online course by the end of 2021.

It is teaming up with the University of Helsinki, Finland's largest and oldest academic institution, and the Finland-based tech consultancy Reaktor.

Teemu Roos, a University of Helsinki associate professor in the department of computer science, described the nearly \$2 million project as "a civics course in AI" to help EU citizens cope with society's ever-increasing digitalization and the possibilities AI offers in the jobs market.

The course covers elementary AI concepts in a

practical way and doesn't go into deeper concepts like coding, he said.

"We have enormous potential in Europe but what we lack is investments into AI," Roos said, adding that the continent faces fierce AI competition from digital giants like China and the United States.

The initiative is paid for by the Finnish ministry for economic affairs and employment, and officials said the course is meant for all EU citizens whatever their age, education or profession.

Since its launch in Finland in 2018 "The Elements of AI" has been phenomenally successful — the most popular course ever offered by the University of Helsinki, which traces its roots back to 1640 — with more than 220,000 students from over 110 countries having taken it so far online, Roos said.

A quarter of those enrolled so far are aged 45 and over, and some 40% are women. The share of women is nearly 60% among Finnish participants - a remarkable figure in the male-dominated technology domain.

Consisting of several modules, the online course is meant to be completed in about six weeks full time - or up to six months on a lighter schedule - and

is currently available in Finnish, English, Swedish and Estonian.

Together with Reaktor and local EU partners, the university is set to translate it to the remaining 20 of the EU's official languages in the next two years.

Megan Schaible, COO of Reaktor Education, said during the project's presentation in Brussels last week that the company decided to join forces with the Finnish university "to prove that AI should not be left in the hands of a few elite coders."

An official University of Helsinki diploma will be provided to those passing and Roos said many EU universities would likely give credits for taking the course, allowing students to include it in their curriculum.

For technology aficionados, the University of Helsinki's computer science department is known as the alma mater of Linus Torvalds, the Finnish software engineer who developed the Linux operating system during his studies there in the early 1990s.

In September, Google set up its free-of-charge Digital Garage training hub in the Finnish capital with the intention of helping job-seekers, entrepreneurs and children to brush up their digital skills including AI. AP

AP PHOTO



India's Supreme Court rejected the final appeal of one of the four men sentenced to death for the 2012 fatal gang rape of a woman on a moving bus in New Delhi, paving the way for the four to be hanged. The gruesome case made international headlines and exposed the scope of sexual violence against women in India, prompting lawmakers to stiffen penalties in rape cases.

AP PHOTO



Japan A Tokyo court awarded damages to a freelance journalist yesterday in a high-profile rape case that involves an attacker known for his close ties with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his ultra-conservative supporters. The court ordered former television newsman Noriyuki Yamaguchi to pay 3.3 million yen to freelance journalist Shiori Ito (pictured) for physical and psychological pain resulting from his sexual assault.

US A new lawsuit accuses several of the world's largest technology firms of knowingly profiting from children laboring under brutal conditions in African cobalt mines. The suit, filed this week in Washington by the nongovernmental organization International Rights Advocates, seeks damages from Apple, Dell, Microsoft, Tesla and Alphabet, the parent company of Google.

AP PHOTO



Australia experienced its hottest day on record and temperatures are expected to soar even higher as heatwave conditions embrace most of the country. The Australian Bureau of Meteorology said the average temperature across the country of 40.9 degrees Celsius Tuesday beat the record of 40.3 Celsius from Jan. 7, 2013.