**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.

**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.

**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.
MACAU CHOSE RICHES OVER DEMOCRACY, UNLIKE HK

MACAU has long provided Chinese leaders with a gleaming, shining example of the virtues of obeying Beijing. President Xi Jinping is expected to use his visit this week to send a message to the protest-scarred 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 fate 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 Alexandria, 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 indiffere-
cent, 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 ‘interested-oriented,’” said Ieong Meng Hoi, 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 handout 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 yung family 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 being “Eurasia’s crossroad,” stating: “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, the future is 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.”

For The message still carries well in Macau, where rent, restaurants and groceries are all cheaper, according to cost-of-living data from the World Bank. As an affluent 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 Sin, 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 mainland a lot. We residents know this very 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 reprise. “The Communist Party wants to grab all the money in Macau to maintain their regi-
me.”

DB/BLOOMBERG

Xi Jinping’s wife, Madame Peng Liyuan

Xi Jinping's wife, Madame Peng Liyuan
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 Ziyi, 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 PoTecT BiodiversiT y

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 Pali Koi. 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. Chan also thinks that the officers sustained injuries to their arms and hands. The man ultimately confessed it had cost him 8,000 yuan to be in Macau. The man was later sentenced to two years in prison.

Lawmaker WanTS MorE sPoRTs FielDS

Lawmaker Chan Hong wants Macau’s urban renewal to create more spaces for sports facilities. In his 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 facing the need to go to other districts should they wish to use sports facilities.

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.

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 denied 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 aforementioned 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.

More Hong Kong activiSTS, JoURNALISTS DeNied EnTry to MACAU

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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.

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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 Hong Kong’s handover are not undermined.

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.
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 Macao’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 participation 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-Macao Double anniversary. 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.”

Melco Star Macao – Youth Talent Competition
Melco promotes Chinese culture and sense of national pride in young people

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
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.

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.

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 question of the children had been flawed.

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 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: 15%
Tenderer experience and CV Portfolio: 15%
Team experience and CV Portfolio: 15%
Production Value: 15%

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 MOP 120,000.00 (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. 800391119 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.


Acting Director
Cheng Wai Tong
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 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 government 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
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 a statement by SUNG 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 Shuang, deputy party secretary of the Zhuhai Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China.

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

HARRY WILSON & ALFRED LIU

ONG 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 Bof’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-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 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

HONG Kong has canceled its traditional New Year’s Eve fireworks show over security concerns, the latest popular event to be scrapped 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

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

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

Please email your letters to gba@macaudailytimes.com
“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.

For some, the solution is 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 spreading 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 years.

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

For some, the solution is to 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.
China commissions first home-built aircraft carrier

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

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 Confucius 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 Office 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 institutions "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

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.
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 service 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 testing 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 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.”

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 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.

As a Muslim it is complicated” because he and Ozil are both Muslim, but I think he was wrong to say that,” said Toure during a trip to the United States in November last year.

ANGRY EXPATS

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FOOTBALL & POLITICS

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

ROB HARRIS, DOHA

Arsenal forward M'Baye Diagne revealed he has no plans to stay at the Emirates when his contract runs out next year. The Senegal international has been linked with a move to China, but Diagne said he wants to remain at the club.

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

Secret documents reported to 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 one 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.

"As a Muslim it is complicated" because he and Ozil are both Muslim, but I think he was wrong to say that,” he said during an interview with The Associated Press.

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 grotesque/ HumanRights violations 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.”
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 those 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 U.N. restrictions 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 aimed 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, calling on all parties to consider implementing “further practical steps to reduce military tension on the Korean peninsula and the capability of any military confrontation by all appropriate means.” Its suggestions included adoption of a formal declaration and a peace treaty ending the 1950-53 Korean War.

It also calls for “prompt resumption of the six-party talks or new rounds 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 Pyongyang agreed 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.

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 against him and delivering a historic verdict against the country’s powerful army.

The verdict “will have a major positive impact on democracy and the rule of law as after decades, 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.

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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 start 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.’s financial services industry. “Politicians across the spectrum should recognize that financial and professional services make a significant contribution, 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 more 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 citizens’ rights. The future relationship between Britain and the E.U., 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.

The CityUK, 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.’s economy and generated 29 billion pounds ($38.6 billion) of tax revenue 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 U.K. financial industry has already rejected an open-ended UK-EU “equivalence” 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 53% in the same period and the DAX 31%.

The pound jumped briefly after the election, adding to a rally that has advanced 11% in August, but some experts doubt that Johnson would secure a deal with the EU. The currency is still down almost 10% since the referendum. “One scenario is 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**

**Movie! 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)

**Admission:** MOP60 (Planetarium 2D dome or 2D sky shows)

**Admission:** 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, Traversa 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 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” (“Work sets you free”) are at the entrance of the Nazi camp.

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).

British has agreed to return Hong Kong after guarantees it will enjoy 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.

**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 Sin-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 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.”

**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.

**This Day in History**

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**TV Canal Macau**

**13:00** TDM News (Repetição)

**13:30** Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)

**15:00** Aquário de Mar

**15:30** Bingo

**15:45** Os Ursos Bonito na Nave

**16:15** Caminhos de Imandade - Fm

**16:55** Portugueses Pelo Mundo Sr. 1

**17:40** LiteratorAquí

**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** Viajantes Gastronómicas

**22:25** Império

**23:15** TDM News

**23:50** Ca Por Casa Sr. 2

**01:20** Telejornal (Repetição)

**02:05** RTPi Direto

**Cinema**

**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 Hamil, Adam Driver, Daisy Ridley

Language: English

Duration: 141min

**My Tyranno: Together Forever**

**Room 1**

5:00

Director: Kōbus Shimanuma

Starring: Kaori Ishihara, Shin’ichirô Miki, Aoi Yûki

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 108min

**Bombeiro**

**Room 1**

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

Director: Jay Roach

Starring: Charlize theron, Nicole Kidman, Margot Robbie

Language: English

Duration: 108min

**Jumanji: The Next Level**

**Room 1**

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

Director: Jake Kasdan

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

Language: English

Duration: 123min
If you're feeling blue, you're feeling sad. Try to change your mood—if you will, you will be all right. Do today, if you just follow your heart. Today, if you just follow your heart.

Often, two heads are better than one, and the one that includes the people you're related to, the people you grew up with, and the one that contains the ideas. Don't worry that collaboration will take away from your independence. Often, two heads are better than one.

You have a big supply of energy—so good, in fact, that you'll feel full of good morning, you'll feel full of good energy, you'll feel full of good energy, you'll feel full of good energy. Today, if you just follow your heart.

You have a big supply of strength buried deep down inside of you right now, and the one that includes the people you're related to, the people you grew up with, and the one that contains the ideas. Don't worry that collaboration will take away from your independence. Often, two heads are better than one.

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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 weeks ago, and I haven’t even published a new novel that I wrote a few months ago,” 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 Mikanu 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 Bruchner 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 in the beginning of the 16th century 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 Eiterhauer; 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.
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 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 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
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 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 there was not a “tougher 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.

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 improvement.

To be fair, roughly a year ago, the government proposed to extend maternity leave to 70 days, but the majority of the legislature 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 certainly one issue that the Chief Executive might not want to overlook, as it is an area that is lacking improvement.

Finland offers crash course in artificial intelligence to EU

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 — as the alma mater of Linus Torvalds, the Finnish software engineer who helped create the Linux operating system.

For technology aficionados, the University of Helsinki’s computer science department is known for involving children laboring in African cobalt mines.

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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 Schible, 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 curricula.

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