

衛生局
Seasonal influenza vaccination is free for all Macao residents
Hotline
28 700800

www.rcr-macau.com
MACAU electronics

A CYBERSECURITY RESPONSE CENTER DESIGNED TO HELP THE POLICE ADAPT TO A NEW ERA OF INTERNET CRIME HAS BEEN INAUGURATED P4

HO IAT SENG EXPLAINS DECISION TO DROP ALEXIS TAM, LIONEL LEONG P5

LOCAL DIRECTORS QUESTION CLOSURE OF CINEMATHEQUE PASSION ATTRIBUTED TO RENOVATION WORKS P7

China The government yesterday attacked the newly created U.S. Space Force as a “direct threat to outer space peace and security.” Foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told reporters that China is “deeply concerned about it and resolutely opposed to it.”

China The government said it plans to slash tariffs as of Jan. 1 on more than 850 products including frozen pork, asthma and diabetes medications and some high-tech components to better develop its economy.



North Korea A new satellite image of a factory where North Korea makes military equipment used to launch long-range missiles shows the construction of a new structure. The release of several images from Planet Labs comes amid concern that North Korea could launch a rocket or missile as it seeks concessions in stalled nuclear negotiations with the United States. *More on p15*



New Zealand The death toll from a volcanic eruption in New Zealand earlier this month has risen to 19 after police said yesterday another person died at an Auckland hospital overnight. There were 47 people visiting the tourist destination of White Island when the volcano erupted Dec. 9, killing 13 people initially and leaving more than two dozen others hospitalized with severe burns.

More on backpage

DEPARTING PRESIDENT XI JINPING LEAVES
MESSAGE FOR HK MADE IN MACAU P2-4



BLOOMBERG

CRIME GANGS PREY ON LUXURY RETAILERS

P8 HONG KONG

CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEADS SENIOR DELEGATION TO GUANGDONG

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng is leading a senior government delegation on a two-day visit to Guangzhou and Zhuhai, which began yesterday. According to the government, the visit is being held in order to exchange views on how to strengthen cooperation between Guangdong and the Macau SAR. Ho met with leading Guangdong province officials in Guangzhou yesterday afternoon and was due to meet with leading Zhuhai officials in Zhuhai today. The delegation will also inspect several projects related to Macau before the end of the trip. The government delegation includes four of the five policy secretaries, as well as several other senior officials in the government. While the Chief Executive is away, Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak will take on the role of acting Chief Executive.

AP PHOTO



President Xi Jinping (right) presides over the inauguration of Macau's new Chief Executive, Ho Iat Seng

CHINESE REGULATOR OPENS WAY FOR MACAU BANKS

China will support and encourage Macau banks to set up branches on the mainland as part of efforts to stimulate the region's economic and financial development, the China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission said in a statement on its website on Friday. Mainland financial leasing firms are now also allowed to operate in Macau, according to the statement. The regulator announced on December 16 that Chinese insurers could invest in the special administrative region.

CONSUMER PRICES INCREASED 2.7% IN NOVEMBER

The Composite Consumer Price Index (CPI) for November 2019 increased by 2.7% year-on-year to 102.73, according to the latest data provided by the Statistics and Census Service, which was 0.16 percentage points lower than the 2.86% growth seen in October 2019. The data showed that the increment was attributable to higher rental prices for dwellings, dearer charges for eating out and the rising prices of fresh pork and gasoline. The price index for food and non-alcoholic beverages rose by 5.4% year-on-year, while the index for education grew at a similar rate of 5.2%. Meanwhile, the price indexes for communication dropped 2.76% and the index for clothing and footwear fell 4.57% year-on-year. For the 12 months ending in November 2019, the average Composite CPI increased by 2.78% from the previous period, with notable growth in the price indexes of education (5.72%) and transport (4.84%).

BEIJING LOYALIST HO IAT SENG TAKES HELM IN MACAU

Ho Iat Seng was inaugurated Friday as the third Chief Executive of the Macau Special Administrative Region since the territory's return to Chinese rule in 1999. The 62-year-old businessman read his oath of office in front of Chinese leader Xi Jinping at a ceremony Friday morning held at the Macau East Asian Games Dome in Cotai.

To warm applause from an audience comprising local politicians, members of the business elite and invited foreign guests, both men delivered speeches stressing the importance of the 'One Country, Two Systems' framework under which the former Portuguese colony has been ruled since its handover.

In his address, Ho pledged improvements to the territory's administration, infrastructure, transportation and economy, reflecting calls for it to diversify away from its heavy dependence on the gambling industry.

Xi's speech focused overwhelmingly on the need for strict adherence to the 'One Country, Two Systems' framework, which has come under sharp criticism in Hong Kong, where the opposition says China is chipping at civil liberties it promised the two territories would retain under Chinese rule.

Other senior officials of the executive branch were also inaugurated Friday morning, each swearing an oath to act in accordance with both the Chinese National Constitution and the Macau SAR Basic Law.

The officials include the five new policy secretaries, namely Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong Weng Chon, Secretary for Economy and Finance Lei Wai Nong, Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Ao Ieong U, and Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raimundo Arrais do Rosário.

Other senior members of the new government present included Commissioner Against Corruption Chan Tsz King, Commissioner of Audit Ho Veng On, Commander General of the Unitary Police Service Leong Man Cheong, Customs Director Vong Man Chong, and Prosecutor General Ip Son Sang, as well as the members of the Executive Council, the advisory body for the Chief Executive.

The same roster of Macau's political elite attended the annual flag raising ceremony on the morning of December 20, where the Chinese national flag and the Macau SAR flag were hoisted to the sound of the na-

tional anthem as performed by a local children's choir.

The flag raising ceremony was also attended by Carrie Lam, the embattled leader of Hong Kong, who was present at the celebration events last week. Lam reportedly met with the Chinese President Thursday afternoon, however the content of their meeting was not disclosed.

A week earlier, Lam had traveled to Beijing to update Xi and other senior mainland officials on the situation in Hong Kong, telling the press that the purpose of her visit was to "give a full account of what has happened in Hong Kong over the past year."

Notably absent from the

inauguration events was the pro-democrat faction of the Legislative Assembly. Lusa News Agency reported that at least three pro-democracy lawmakers had either not been invited to the official events or had chosen not to attend.

Lawmaker Au Kam San said he did not receive an invitation for the anniversary events, but told Lusa he was "used to not being invited." Ng Kuok Cheong, who is known for his participation in the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, said he was invited but had declined to attend. Sulu Sou told Lusa he had received an invitation only for "activities in which President Xi Jinping will not participate." DB/AGENCIES

EXCO CONVENES ITS FIRST MEETING

THE Executive Council (ExCo) of Macau convened its first meeting on Friday, with new Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng briefing the advisory body's members of their duties and responsibilities. Presiding over the meeting in his capacity as Chief Executive, Ho called on the ExCo to serve Macau in line with the requirements of the territory's Basic Law. He asked its members to contribute in such a manner that

would fulfil the public interest of Macau. All 11 members of the newly revamped ExCo were in attendance after having been officially sworn into office earlier in the day in the presence of Chinese President Xi Jinping. The ExCo members pledged to serve Macau with loyalty and integrity and in compliance with the Macau Basic Law. They also said they would strive to advance the implementation of the 'One Country, Two Systems' principle.

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

+ 4 Million page views
PER MONTH

Thank You!

+13,000 like us on facebook.com/mdtimes



MacauDaily 澳門每日時報
Times

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

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

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

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

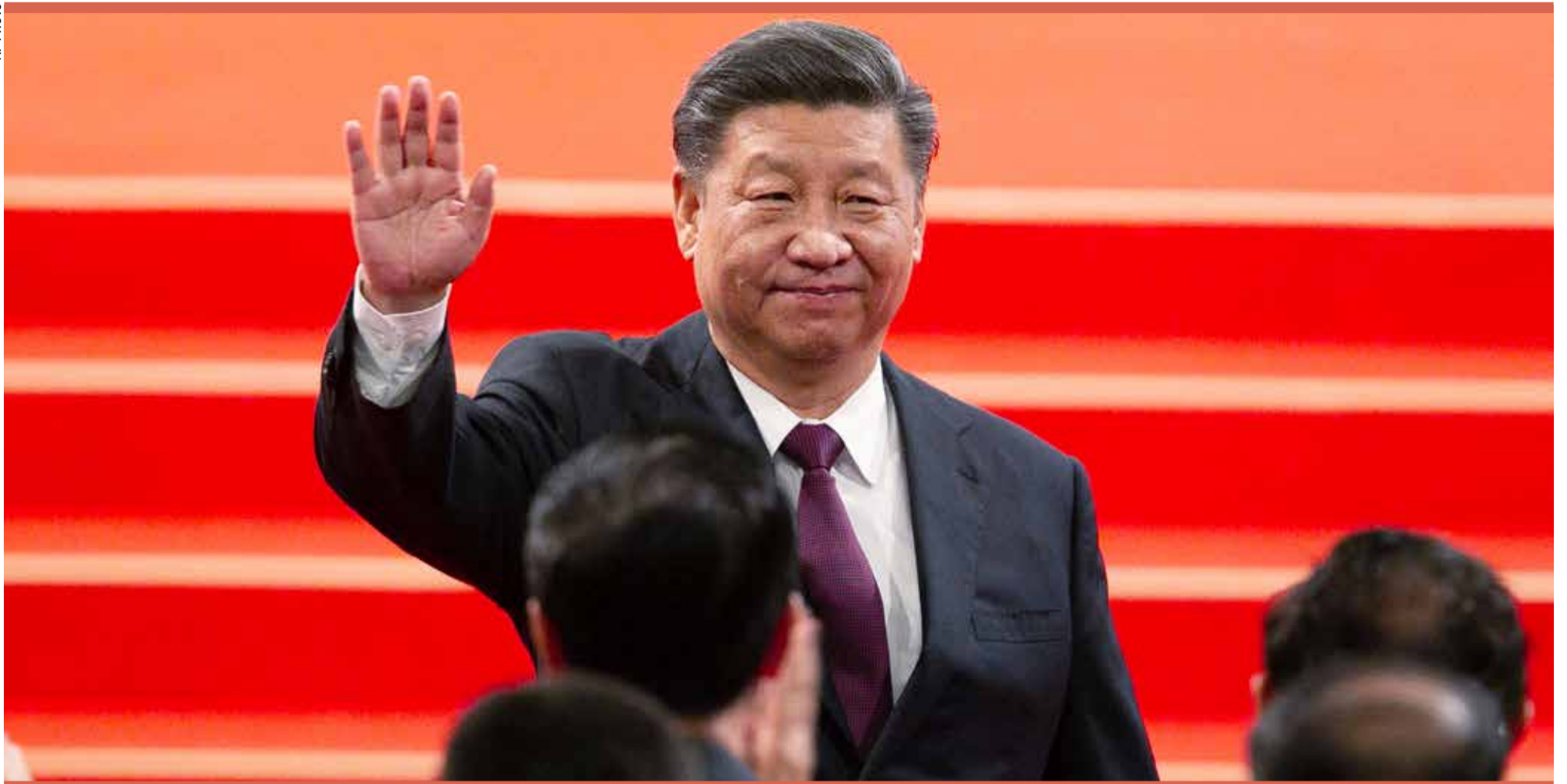
Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com

For subscription and general issues:

general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

AP PHOTO



ANALYSIS

Xi Jinping speech made in Macau for Hong Kong ears

DANIEL BEITLER

CHINESE President Xi Jinping used his visit to Macau last week to stress one message above all: that the benefits afforded by the 'Two Systems' are only made possible by first accepting 'One Country'.

That message, a recurrent theme throughout Xi's three-day visit, served more as a warning to neighboring Hong Kong than it did as praise for Macau.

It refers to the 'One Country, Two Systems' policy framework, formulated by former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s, and now the guiding principle underpinning the degree of political, economic and social autonomy enjoyed by the two Special Administrative Regions of China.

President Xi used a speech delivered at the inauguration of the new Macau SAR government last Friday to stress the need for strict adherence to the framework.

'One Country' is the prerequisite and basis of 'Two Systems,' Xi said. "Only by ensuring no distortion of the 'One Country, Two Systems' practice can the cause of 'One Country, Two Systems' go far and steady."

According to an official translation of his speech, Xi said that

the policy framework was "the best institutional arrangement to ensure Macau's long-term prosperity and stability."

To the international observer, Xi's visit to Macau last week served only to highlight stark differences between Beijing-friendly Macau and its more rebellious neighbor. Indeed, President Xi used a large portion of his speech on the day of the Macau SAR government's inauguration to talk about the situation in Hong Kong, mostly in indirect terms that served to also heap further praise on Macau.

Xi said that in the past two decades, Macau has firmly upheld the sovereignty of the Central Government and has swiftly adopted legislation designed to safeguard national security, including Article 23 of the Basic Law and the National Anthem Law. Hong Kong's attempt to pass national security legislation in 2003 was defeated by strong public opposition.

The President also contrasted the "inadequate law and order" of pre-handover Macau with its experience today as one of the safest cities in the world. Hong Kong, by contrast, has become considerably less safe since protests against the now-shelved extradition legislation erupted earlier this year.

"With a firm resolve, Macau has never wavered in the face of temporary complications or lost direction due to external interference," said Xi in his Friday speech. "Macau's successful experience speaks volumes about the viability and strength of 'One Country, Two Systems' as long as we are committed to it and act on it."

"Macau's successful experience proves that [...] as masters of their own house, [Macau people] are fully capable of meeting the challenges of our time and achieving success in running, building and developing the Macau SAR," added Xi.

NO MENTION OF FINANCIAL MARKETS

President Xi Jinping also stressed the need for Macau to reduce its reliance on gambling. The economic dependency led to a catastrophic recession in 2014 that wiped more than one-third off casino revenues at its lowest point. Xi's previous visit in that same year had kickstarted an ongoing drive in the city to diversify the economy.

The measures introduced since the 2014 visit have been largely unsuccessful in that they have not produced any single (or combined) economic activity capable of rivaling the

contribution to Macau's economy offered by casinos. Last year, gaming and junket activities accounted for over half of Macau's industrial structure for the first time since 2014.

The Chinese President did not acknowledge the shortcomings of these projects. He said that various emerging industries in Macau were on the rise, including the convention and exhibition sector, traditional Chinese medicine and distinctive finance.

The President also opted not to develop on this singular mention of financial activities in his inauguration day speech, nor did he use the occasion to lend his support to the development of a financial center in Macau, as various media reports anticipating his arrival had suggested he would.

The Monetary Authority of Macao announced earlier this year that it was studying the feasibility of launching a securities market in the city, which could include a yuan-based stock exchange. The market would build on other specialized financial products, such as financial leasing, wealth management and yuan clearing services, some with a view to facilitating trade between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

Xi said that it would be best for Macau to pursue "sound economic development" by determining the "main focus and relevant key projects for the appropriate diversification of Macau's economy."

He added that Macau needed to carve out a role in wider national strategies like the Greater Bay Area, which seeks to connect Hong Kong, Macau and Southern China, as well as the Belt and Road trade and infrastructure initiative.

In support of this directive, financial institutions have announced several minor policies aiming to bring the financial systems of Macau and the People's Republic of China closer together. Among them is a raise to the daily limit on individuals' remittance from Macau to Chinese yuan accounts in the mainland to 80,000 yuan, as announced by the People's Bank of China last week.

Lastly, Xi instructed that future economic development in Macau would need to be "fairer, more equitable and beneficial to all," particularly in relation to the improvement of public infrastructure in the transportation, energy and environmental sectors.

Macau's Gini coefficient stood at 0.36, according to latest government survey on income inequality held for the years 2017 and 2018, falling within the 'safe band' of between 0.25 and 0.40, which indicates a low level of inequality. Critics of the government regard this figure as inaccurate and say income in this city of approximately 650,000 is highly unequal by international standards.



ACTIVISTS: MACAU IS 'UNCONVINCING EXAMPLE' OF SEMI-AUTONOMY

DANIEL BEITLER

ACCORDING to Chinese President Xi Jinping, Hong Kong has a lot to learn from Macau when it comes to the 'One Country, Two Systems' policy framework, designed to safeguard Chinese sovereignty in the two special administrative regions while allowing them to exercise a "high degree of autonomy." That was the core of Xi's message last week, delivered on more than one occasion during the celebratory events to mark the 20th anniversary of the transfer of sovereignty over Macau to China.

But two young and influential

activists from opposite sides of the Pearl River Delta disagree.

Macau's Jason Chao and Hong Kong's Joshua Wong, both well-known pro-democracy activists, have penned an article in British broadsheet *The Independent* calling the Macau SAR "an utterly unconvincing example" of the semi-autonomy principle at work.

"Macau is an unconvincing example of 'One Country, Two Systems' as advertised by China," they wrote in *The Independent*. "Effective indirect control by and rapid assimilation with China is evident in the 'success story' of Macau. The essence of Macau's 'success' goes against the rights,

freedoms and autonomy guaranteed by China in the constitutional law and treaties."

Jason Chao, a well-known political activist who has increasingly found a voice in international media, is a former president of pro-democracy group New Macau Association. Joshua Wong is an activist-cum-politician in neighboring Hong Kong, who grew to prominence in the 2014 Umbrella Movement and his subsequent arrest and imprisonment. He has emerged as one of many unofficial figureheads in the 2019 protests.

In their joint article, the two activists cite the diminishing respect for the rule of law in Macau as a

sign that the autonomy supposedly guaranteed under the 'One Country, Two Systems' framework is disappearing.

The democrats say the court rulebook is thrown out when it comes to the most important cases. "The rule of law should be upheld not only in mundane matters but also in the most sensitive issues," they argue in the article.

The activists criticized recent rulings made by Macau's highest court, the Court of Final Appeal (TUI), that conveniently fall in with Beijing's political expectations.

They highlighted one such ruling in late September in which

the TUI sided with a police ban on a demonstration based on the court's interpretation of the accuracy of the claims made by rally organizers. The protest had been called to condemn what opposition forces in both SARs describe as the disproportionate use of force employed by Hong Kong police. The organizers had planned to raise awareness of some police action in neighboring Hong Kong that they view as tantamount to torture.

In early October, Chao, who was acting as a spokesperson for the protest organizers, told the *Times* that the decision was very concerning as it establishes a precedent.

"The most dangerous part of the ruling is that the TUI has made official proclamations a prerequisite for the people's exercise of freedom of assembly," he said at the time, echoing an earlier police explanation that "no public authority in Hong Kong has found that the actions of the police amount to [torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment] as charged by the applicants."

The activists also highlighted comments made earlier this month by a high-ranking Chinese official who praised the strategic deployment of loyalists in key judiciary positions.

Moreover, as the *Times* reported in October, even members of local academia have ascribed the efficacy of Macau's judiciary to a lack of "foreigners" within its ranks. This particular comment was made with impunity by a senior professor at the University of Macau, who was contrasting the situation in Macau with neighboring Hong Kong.

Chao and Wong argue that resorting to loyalists to overturn the political or judicial status quo in Beijing's favor at pivotal moments is exactly the type of approach that undermines the 'One Country, Two Systems' framework.

Cybersecurity law enters into force, PJ launches CARIC

RENATO MARQUES

TO cope with their new duties under the Cybersecurity Law, which entered into force on Sunday, December 22, the Judiciary Police (PJ) has begun operation of the Cybersecurity Incident Alert and Response Centre (CARIC). The center is tasked with preventing and coordinating responses to cybersecurity incidents, runs under the supervision of the PJ, and has the support of the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau and

Macau Post and Telecommunications Bureau.

The PJ released a statement informing of the inauguration of CARIC with all highly-ranked security officials present.

According to those responsible, the center aims to tackle cybersecurity emergencies, such as cyberattacks on "computer networks or the disclosure of data deemed to cause serious consequences for society, endanger the security of the MSAR government or national security."

The PJ also said that

the new department will "allow Macau to enter into a new era of cybersecurity protection in the areas of prevention and combat."

The law and its accessory measures were justified as per the "urgent demand from several sectors of society for protection, while also contributing to ensuring prosperity and Macau's long-term stable and sustainable development."

CARIC, a specialized technical structure that will immediately respond to any possible threats in this field, is located in

the PJ's headquarters in a newly designed area of about 300 square meters, and is equipped with advanced cybersecurity equipment and hardware, the PJ said.

The center operates continuously to address issues as they arise and will provide three principle services.

Firstly, it will monitor in real time cybersecurity matters for critical infrastructure operators, warning operators when any sign of attack is found.

Secondly, CARIC will serve as the Cybersecurity

Emergency Coordination; a the central point to receive and process information from operators concerning cybersecurity incidents. This will drive "efficiency and effectiveness when handling the case while minimizing its social impacts."

Lastly, the center is in charge of providing both technical and administrative support to the Cyber Security Commission, as well as to supervisors and operators of critical infrastructure, working as a consultative body to "help to analyze the cause

of the cybersecurity incident and proposing improvement measures to prevent the occurrence of a similar incident."

Both the Cybersecurity Law and CARIC's entry into operation have been repeatedly criticized by several voices in society since the public consultation of the draft bill. Several organizations and associations expressed concerns over the limitations of freedom that the law might place upon citizens and certain professionals in particular, such as the media.

Alexis Tam accused of overspending

THE new Chief Executive, Ho Iat Seng, has explained his two unlikely picks to succeed as Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture and Secretary for Economy and Finance in the government term that began last Friday.

In an interview with the TDM Chinese channel, Ho addressed his choices, namely his reasons for dropping the former Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, and Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, from the new government.

In the interview, the Chief Executive was particularly assertive when evaluating the work of Tam, who he accused of becoming increasingly unpopular and spending a very significant amount of public resources on projects whose outcomes could not be ascertained.

"Being wasteful is the biggest crime, I would say. Corruption is not the only crime, just one of the elements [to take into account]. But being wasteful is also among the biggest crimes," said Ho, speaking about Tam's tenure as secretary.

Ho recalled that as the president of the Legislative Assembly, one of the topics he often address-

RENATO MARQUES



sed and was concerned about was the "waste of public resources."

"Wasting resources is a current problem [from the previous government] and Tam's Secretariat

accounted for 35% of the annual budget - at least 30 billion patacas - and yet he was often a target of public dissatisfaction," said Ho. This, Ho noted, constituted a pro-

blem that has kept him from future government roles.

Ho also took the opportunity to highlight the abilities of the new secretary, Elsie Ao Ieong U.

Ho claims Ao Ieong has "thinking based on science and logic," the opposite of Tam, who Ho said is more focused on rhetoric, speeches and slogans, "using words that residents like to hear, but, can they actually accomplish anything?"

Commenting on the choice of Lei Wai Nong for the post of Secretary for Economy and Finance, the Chief Executive noted that his first criteria for choosing secretaries was related to their "loyalty and execution ability." He noted that Lei had better experience and insight into the problems and needs of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs).

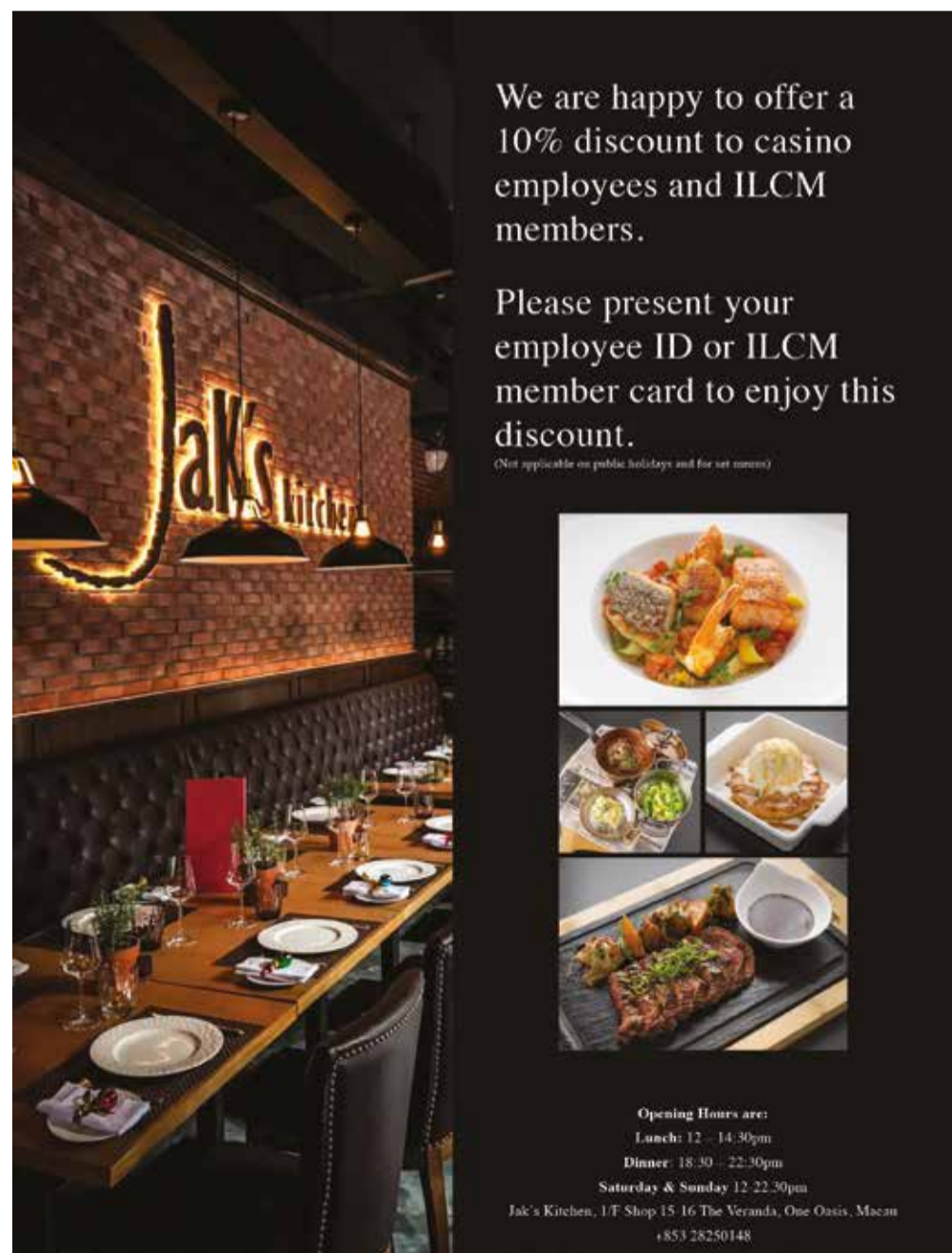
"It is not right to have a secretary just to serve the six large enterprises. It's unbalanced," said Ho.

The assessment of the Chief Executive is indicative of Ho's impression that Leong's work in the post was too focused on the gaming concessionaires. It shows that Ho believes Leong has not paid enough attention to the small and medium-sized enterprises, which the government says it wants to promote as the new "economic engines" of economic diversification.

"Most of our enterprises are SMEs and we need to push forward our local enterprises and create a living space for co-development. Helping large-scale enterprises is putting the icing on the cake while helping SMEs is to offer warmhearted support," the Chief Executive concluded. **RM**

"Being wasteful is the biggest crime, I would say. Corruption is not the only crime."

HO IAT SENG



We are happy to offer a 10% discount to casino employees and ILCM members.

Please present your employee ID or ILCM member card to enjoy this discount.

(Not applicable on public holidays and for set menus)

Opening Hours are:
Lunch: 12 - 14:30pm
Dinner: 18:30 - 22:30pm
Saturday & Sunday 12:22-30pm
Jak's Kitchen, 1/F Shop 15-16 The Veranda, One Oasis, Macau
+853 28250148



villa frangipani

20,000 square feet of privacy

At Villa Frangipani impeccable service means knowing when you want to enjoy a private moment.

Whether that is in the Private Spa, your suite, the garden bali, or any other area, our Villa Staff anticipate your needs at all times.

Please visit www.privatevillasofbali.com to get an idea of what we offer.

...wish you could stay forever...

PRIVATE VILLAS OF BALI

VILLA TIRTA KENCANA • VILLA FRANGIPANI

info@privatevillasofbali.com
www.privatevillasofbali.com
skype: ID: privatevillasofbali
+623618468513



+853 2835 2699
hello@jmlproperty.com
www.jmlproperty.com
 Avenida da Praia Grande No.599, Edf. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 andar C, Macau
 澳門南灣大馬路599號羅德禮商業大廈12樓C座



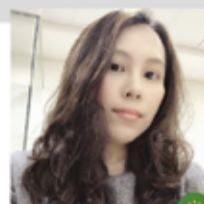
Juliet Risdon
 +853 6680 9804
 juliet@jmlproperty.com



Elda Lemos
 +853 6226 8566
 elda@jmlproperty.com



Sam Lee
 +853 6611 0975
 sam@jmlproperty.com



Kitty Lou
 +853 6630 0730
 kitty@jmlproperty.com

Property of the Week



Large 3/4 bedroom apartment, Coloane

HK\$13,800,000 2,530 ft² 3 2 2



A large and open plan apartment that underwent a full renovation from the previous owner. The Master Bedroom and 4th Bedroom have been combined to create a large 'Master Suite' with walk-in wardrobe space and a large bathroom area.

The open plan kitchen merges into the dining and living areas to give a tremendous feeling of space. Two further bedrooms and a bathroom are separated by stairs and a hallway.

Situated on the top floor, there is a generous balcony leading off the living room and access to the building roof terrace via the external staircase. There are two car parks included in this property, it will make a fantastic family home and investment property, there is always a very high demand for rental.

Viewing by appointment.

Property Hotlist



Hellene Gardens, Coloane

\$8,990,000
 1,663 ft²
 3 3



Beautiful apartment, Coloane

\$7,980,000
 1,665 ft²
 3 2 1



Vai Fung triplex, Macau

\$15,800/mth
 2 2



Manhattan, Taipa

\$23,800/mth
 1,720 ft²
 3 2



More Listings

For Sale

- [Macau] Lakeview Tower 3 2 1,344 ft² **\$11,000,000** (ref: n/a)
- [Taipa] Hoi Wan Garden 2 1 900 ft² **\$5,100,000** (ref: 19106003)
- [Macau] Unique Loft 2 2 2,200 ft² **\$9,990,000** (ref: 15115464)
- [Taipa] Nova City 3 2 1,515 ft² **\$11,750,000** (ref: 19106001)
- [Taipa] Taipa village 2 1 787 ft² **\$4,950,000** (ref: 19096008)

For Rent

- [Taipa] Nam Long 2 1 645 ft² **\$11,800/mth** (ref: 19111001)
- [Taipa] Manhattan 3 2 1,720 ft² **\$23,800/mth** (ref: 19091006)
- [Taipa] Nova Grand 2 1 935 ft² **\$17,800/mth** (ref: 19091005)
- [Macau] La Marina studio 1 **\$11,200/mth** (ref: 19091001)
- [Taipa] Studio (new building) 1 470 ft² **\$9,500/mth** (ref: 19101002)

Recent Movements

Rented Beautiful duplex, Macau
 480 ft², 1 bathroom

Rented Taipa studio,
 478 ft², 1 bathroom

Sold Nam Long, Taipa,
 550 ft², 1 bed



JML Christmas Office Hours

Friday 20th December
 Monday 23rd December
 Tuesday 24th December
 Wednesday 25th December
 Thursday 26th December
 Tuesday 31st December
 Wednesday 1st January

We will be available via phone on **6292 8166** and email home@jmlproperty.com during these periods.

LET'S CONNECT

[jmlmacau](https://www.facebook.com/jmlmacau)
[jmlproperty](https://www.instagram.com/jmlproperty)

hello@jmlproperty.com
www.jmlproperty.com

+853 2835 2699

Local directors question Cinematheque's reason for closure

AFTER having screened alternative films for three years, the Cinematheque Passion is set to stop operating by the end of the year due to contractual issues with the building.

With the project under the auspices of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), Rita Wong, CEO of Cinematheque-Passion, said that the bureau would have to conduct maintenance works to enhance the film screening quality.

The works are expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2020.

"The three-year contract of CUT for the operation of Cinematheque Passion will end at December 31. IC will have the maintenance and upgrade [works] afterwards," said Wong, referring to the association which has operated the arthouse since 2017.

However, a few directors believe that these reasons are untrue.

Local director Tracy Choi told Portuguese newspaper Hoje Macau that the closure is "due to the fact that the Cultural Affairs Bureau has not planned the issue well," thus not having enough time to sign a new contract.



The Hoje Macau report also cited a director linked to the Audio-Visual CUT Association, who said that there have been signs that the operation of Cinematheque Passion has been unclear since November.

The director, who wished to remain anonymous, said, "The people in the [IC] leadership did not carry out the proper procedures

to continue with the opening of the space."

"IC will announce the renewal of space to maintain this suspense, but it is temporary. But we know that they do not work very fast. I don't think this is the end of the Cinematheque, but 2019 should be the end of the first edition of the project. I believe it [will] not open within a year and a half,"

the director told Hoje Macau.

The arthouse, located at Travessa da Paixão No. 13, is a three-story, multifunctional building that offers film screenings, local video storage, and a lending library of film journals and books. Local film materials and videos, periodicals and magazines are available for residents at the site. LV

Final 'Ip Man' film premieres at Galaxy

World-renowned Hong Kong biographical martial arts film "Ip Man 4: The Finale" premiered locally at the UA Galaxy Cinemas on December 20, with actor Donnie Yen attending the event.

Produced by Mandarin Motion Pictures Ltd, the franchise now reaches its final film. Producer and executive producer Raymond Wong, action director Yuen Wo Ping, and actor Wu Yue also attended the premiere.

It has been 11 years since the first "Ip Man" film was released. However, after shooting had finished for the first three films, director Wilson Yip felt that there was still room to develop both the characters, and the belief in and the value of martial arts. Thus, the group decided to create "Ip Man 4: The Finale."

Yuen revealed that he has added several new elements to the franchise, such as karate and kickboxing.

Another highlight in the film is Scott Adkins, a British actor who was also in the Marvel film "Doctor Strange," and plays Donnie Yen's antagonist in "Ip Man 4: The Finale."

MACAU, HENGQIN COLLABORATE ON HANDOVER FIREWORKS

THE Macau-Zhuhai fireworks show commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Macau SAR's handover to China featured 16 special-effect launching platforms to launch 160,000 fireworks shells, along with unmanned boats and drones making their debut into the show.

The 30-minute fireworks show on Sunday was merged laser effects, lights and music.

The sound of the pyrotechnics could be heard from outside Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre and on the Taipa shoreline near Ocean Gardens.

Spectators gathered at popular viewing points, including Macao Science Center, the top of Penha Hill, and from the Anim'Arte Nam Van zone by the lakeside at Nam Van.

The show, which started at 9 p.m., began its first chapter, "Beautiful China, Celebrate for Homeland." The highlight was fireworks in the shape of the number "20," symbolizing the 20th anniversary of Macau's handover to the motherland.

In the second and third chapters, "Glorious Years, Ga-



ther in Macau" and "Macau and Zhuhai as one Family, Close Friendship as Neighbors," the fireworks danced in harmony with patterns formed by unmanned boats and drones, creating a symphony of pictures across the skyline of Macau and Zhuhai.

"The show culminated in the fourth chapter 'Support each other, Build the Bay Area together' bestowing best wishes for both cities to support each other and join hands to build a brighter future and the beautiful Bay Area together," as cited in a joint statement from the organizers.

Tens of thousands of fireworks shells were launched

in different patterns in the air.

The "Macau-Zhuhai Fireworks Show in celebration of the 20th Anniversary of Macau's Handover to the Motherland" was jointly organized by the SAR government and the mainland.

The show was coordinated by the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) and the Administrative Committee of Hengqin New Area, making it larger than the usual fireworks presentation.

According to the statement, innovative ideas for cross-territory collaboration were adopted to present the fireworks show in the region, blended with a diverse range of new elements. LV

Inter-chambers Business Lunch

Gavin Morgan - Jones Lang LaSalle
Real Estate within the GBA
15 January 2020

@ MGM Cotai - Wednesday 15 January 2020

Decoding the Real Estate Opportunities within the GBA

1. Overview of broad policy trends and development directions	MGM Cotai
2. Where are investors placing their bets?	12:30: Registration and Drinks 13:00: Lunch 13:40: Presentation and Q&A 14:30: Close
3. What are the challenges real estate investors face?	
4. The role of infrastructure in creating opportunities	Members - MOP/HKD 450 Non-members - MOP/HKD 600
5. Opportunities in Hong Kong & Macao	Strict No-Show/Late Cancellation policy applies for this event Vegetarian meal to be requested in advance

Enquiries and RSVP

 tel: + 853 2857 5059 @: info@amcham.org.mo	 tel: + 853 8798 9697 @: info@britchammao.org	 tel: + 853 8798 9699 @: info@francemacao.com
---	---	---



CRIME GANGS PREY ON HONG KONG PROTESTS

JOHN LEICESTER,
HONG KONG

THE Hong Kong seller of luxury watches looked on in horror as masked men wielding the biggest sledgehammer he'd ever seen smashed through the door of a neighboring watch store, held a machete to the owner's throat, scooped up hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of timepieces, and then scattered into the city's maze of streets.

Less than two weeks later, armed robbers attacked again. This time, the watch merchants of Kowloon fought back.

Among them was the watch seller who had witnessed the previous robbery. He says he grabbed an iron pipe he had handy for just such a confrontation and sprinted out to join the battle against the robbers who were smashing the front of Past & Future Times with hammers, trying to get to the store's high-end watches, while other gangsters brandishing machetes formed a menacing shield around them.

"I heard 'Boom! Boom! Boom!' People shouting," said the merchant, who asked that he be identified only by his surname, Pan, because he feared for his safety. So much so that he now keeps a large meat cleaver in the drawer of his front desk and has protected his store with a new double door and toughened glass.

The robbers came at the merchants with their knives and then,

seemingly scared off, ran away, he said.

"All the shops came out to help. We're very united now," Pan said.

They have to be. Hong Kong's 30,000-strong police force has been so stretched by a half year of anti-government protests that it is struggling to keep the peace. Armed robbers and burglars are seemingly exploiting policing vacuums caused, in part, by the redeployment of officers to riot-control duties. Police say the proud reputation of the semi-autonomous Chinese territory of 7.5 million people as an Asian haven of tranquility, with crime rates lower than other cities its size, is being eroded.

"We used to be a very safe city, six months ago, but somehow we face a lot of challenges," said Chief Superintendent Kwok Ka-chuen, a spokesman for the police force.

Still, Hong Kong remains a city where visitors don't need to think twice about venturing out at night. It had six times fewer homicides last year than New York, seven times fewer burglaries and 88 times fewer robberies.

But the mass demonstrations that erupted in June over proposed extradition legislation and then mushroomed into a sustained anti-government movement pushing for full democracy and other demands have burned through police manpower.

Officers have been diverted

from crime prevention as police fought street battles with hard-core protesters — black-clad youths who have hurled gasoline bombs and destroyed property. Prison officers and customs and immigration agents have been drafted to bolster police ranks. The police overtime bill has soared, approaching 1 billion Hong Kong dollars (\$128 million).

May Chan says police patrols that used to walk the beat, morning and afternoon, past the Times watch store in Kowloon,

"We're all armed with weapons. I never believed it would happen in Hong Kong."

LUXURY WATCH RETAILER

where she sells timepieces for tens of thousands of dollars, stopped abruptly in August, after the protest movement picked up steam and radicalized. It was also around that time that a man brandishing a knife burst into her store, cowering Chan's colleague into submission before making off with about \$130,000 in watches, she says.

"It's the protests," Chan said. "It has become dangerous. The police no longer come out. They don't have enough people."

The latest police figures appear to bear out the suspicions of store owners in Kowloon — where riot squads and demonstrators have repeatedly clashed on canyon-like streets of high rises — that Hong Kong is experiencing a protest-related crime wave.

In the first half of the year, police recorded just 44 robberies — or about one every four days. But the number soared to 126, closer to one robbery per day, from July to November as the protests and related violence increasingly stretched the force. When compared to the same period of 2018, robberies increased by 147%. Burglaries also increased in the past five protest-gripped months, to 1,270, or eight per day, double the number for the same period of 2018.

Some protesters suspect police are turning a blind eye to robberies to reinforce Hong Kong government arguments that protests are damaging the city. That charge is denied by Kwok, the police spokesman. But trust in the force among supporters of the protest movement has largely evaporated in the clashes, in which police have used 26,000 tear gas and rubber-bullet rounds and made more than 6,100 arrests.

On a recent peaceful day with no mass protests, timepiece seller Jan Leung said she does not understand why she's still seeing no police patrols on her Kowloon

street even after two nearby robberies, including of the Po Tat watch store earlier this month. Video posted online showed a masked robber stuffing a bag with loot while another stood guard with a machete.

"It's so peaceful now. There is nothing happening. But there are still no police," Leung said. "Saying the police are busy at protests ... it's excuses."

Police say officers are patrolling instead in vehicles and that foot patrols have been scaled back in part to protect them from violent protesters. Police also say that because protesters deliberately seek to avoid riot squads by popping up out of the blue, and because demonstrations have been so widespread, the force has had to set aside reserves of manpower to quickly respond to any unexpected violence, further directing resources away from day-to-day crime.

Pan, the watch seller, says police patrols are resuming again in his repeatedly robbed area of Kowloon, but in larger squads of around a half dozen officers because they fear being "hit with a petrol bomb or a brick."

And if robbers do come back, the watch merchants are ready. They're hiring private security and have set up an alarm system so they can alert each other if attacked, he said.

"We're all armed with weapons," he said. "I never believed it would happen in Hong Kong." AP

BEI HU & CHESTER YUNG

HONG KONG

HONG Kong police arrested a 19-year-old after coming under fire Friday night, and also seized a semi-automatic rifle they say the man planned to use at a public event.

The suspect shot at police with a semi-automatic pistol when they intercepted him, the force said in a video posted on its Facebook page. Officers fired tear gas at a crowd that confronted them at the scene of the incident in Tai Po, according to the post.

Police said the suspect was previously arrested in December 2018 for illegal possession of firearms. He was released on bail in late February and failed to report to police as required this month, according to the post. Officers seized an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle and 211 rounds of ammunition in an apartment in the neighborhood after Friday's arrest, they said.

"According to our intelligence, we know he was hoping to use the gun to cause chaos and hurt police officers during the public gathering," senior superintendent Steve Li of the Organized Crime and Triad Bureau said in the video.

Hong Kong has been gripped by increasingly violent protests that were ignited in June by the government's plans to enact a law which would have allowed extraditions to jurisdictions including mainland China. The government scrapped the bill after continued public pressure but the unrest continued and protesters' demands expanded to include broader democracy and an independent commission of inquiry into police conduct.

Demonstrators hurl petrol bombs and launch arrows at riot police almost weekly, while officers have fired more than 10,000 rounds of tear gas, and used rubber bullets and water cannons. At least 6,000 protesters have been arrested since June.

Police arrest man, seize gun 'he was hoping to use'



Friday's arrest comes as Chinese authorities are reported to have ruled out the formation of an independent commission of inquiry. Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam sought the central government's response to the idea during her four-day trip to Beijing this month, South China Morning Post reported on Saturday, citing an unidentified person close to the government.

In another blow for Lam, several retired judges approached

by the government have turned down requests to join an independent review committee to look into the ongoing unrest, the Post cited the person as saying.

Public sentiment in Hong Kong seems to be squarely behind the demonstrators, with pro-democracy candidates winning a landslide victory against pro-government rivals in local elections last month. There has been a relative lull in the scale and frequency of the violence since the polls, but

the protests are continuing, including rallies planned for this weekend.

Meanwhile police have intensified their efforts to limit financial support for the protesters. On Thursday evening, officers announced the arrest of four people for suspected money-laundering in the first case related to funding of the demonstrations.

About 80 school teachers and teaching assistants have been arrested for their involvement in

anti-government protests, South China Morning Post reported on Saturday, citing Secretary for Education Kevin Yeung. He called for schools to suspend educators held for serious offenses, out of concern for students' safety.

There were 123 complaints against teachers over protest-related misconduct from mid-June to late November, he said. Four teachers have resigned or been suspended by schools, according to Yeung. **BLOOMBERG**

HONG KONG

Protests ease after weekend of arrests

STANLEY JAMES & IAN FISHER

HONG Kong's streets returned to relative normalcy going into the Christmas holiday after a tense weekend in which a police officer drew and pointed his revolver at a protesting crowd but no shots were fired.

Sunday's incident came after a reported attack on

police during a demonstration in support of minority Muslim Uighurs, who have been subject to a crackdown by the Chinese government in the far western region of Xinjiang. There was no escalation beyond what have become routine weekend scuffles and arrests in the Asian financial hub.

Often-violent protests over the last six months

have centered on the city's freedom from China's grip. But the latest round of demonstrations expanded to the rights of the Uighurs. A United Nations assessment has estimated that tens of thousands to "upwards of 1 million" members of the minority have been detained in the mainland. Beijing has said its crackdown is fighting separatism and religious

extremism.

Hundreds of demonstrators gathered - at first peacefully - at Edinburgh Place in support of the Uighurs. Police stormed the rally, witnesses said, after a Chinese flag was ripped off a pole near City Hall.

The police said in a statement that when they tried to make an arrest, protesters hurled objects, and one person tried to

snatch an officer's gun. At least two people were arrested, police said.

The government said in a statement late Sunday that it "strongly" condemned some participants' waving flags and making speeches advocating Hong Kong independence. It also condemned their removal of the Chinese flag and placing it on the ground.

The protest is in support of the Spark Alliance, a group that has raised money to help support the demonstrators. Last week, the police arrested four

people connected with the alliance for suspected money laundering, and authorities froze HKD70 million (\$9 million) in local bank deposits and personal insurance products linked to the fund, while confiscating HKD130,000 in cash. The alliance says the allegations are malicious.

Hong Kong's protests began in June over since-scrapped legislation allowing extraditions to China and have expanded into calls for greater democracy in the former British colony. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**

CAUGHT IN TRUMP'S TRADE CROSSFIRE, ISRAEL CHASES DEAL WITH CHINA

IVAN LEVINGSTON

ONE of Donald Trump's top allies and his chief economic adversary are drifting closer, at least when it comes to trade.

In what could be a test of how much leeway the U.S. president gives to close partners, Israel hopes to conclude a free-trade agreement with China as early as next year, according to a senior Israeli official, who requested anonymity because the discussions aren't public.

Talks have been underway since 2016, but the latest round coincides with heightened scrutiny around cooperation between Israel and China, as the U.S. pressures Israel to be cautious with the role of China in its economy. For Israel and other close American allies in the Middle East, it's a balancing act they've had to perfect in the face of a more assertive China as the U.S. reconfigures its military posture in the region.

While Israeli and Chinese officials met about a month ago for the seventh round of talks, the official cautioned it's still unclear if Israel will be able to clinch the deal next year because of the ongoing political deadlock that's preventing formation of a new government in Jerusalem.

Since taking office, Trump has ratcheted up tariffs on Chinese products in a signature bid to renegotiate a new trade agreement. At the same time, China has emerged as the largest foreign investor in the Middle East, ensuring that countries like the United Arab Emirates take no sides in the trade confrontation.

While the U.S. still dwarfs China in terms of overall trade volumes with Israel, its exports

BLOOMBERG



Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's prime minister

to America have declined every year since 2015. Over the same period, Israeli sales to China grew by almost two-thirds, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

"We need to avoid drawing a false line between trade with China, and betrayal of the U.S. alliance," said Assaf Orion, a brigadier general in the reserves and director of the Israel-China program at Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies.

A spokeswoman for Israel's Foreign Trade Administration declined to comment on the recent talks or timeline. China's

embassy in Israel said it didn't know the details but cited the Ministry of Commerce as noting

In what could be a test of how much leeway Trump gives to close partners, Israel hopes to conclude a free-trade agreement with China as early as next year

the progress made during the latest round of the negotiations, which focused on issues ranging from customs procedures to sanitary measures and the environment.

Economic ties between Israel and China date to 1979, before China had formally recognized the Jewish state. Diplomatic relations were formalized in 1992.

Total trade between the two countries totaled \$15.6 billion last year, according to Israel's Export Institute, with electrical equipment and machinery dominating transactions. On infrastructure, China has also staked out a major role in Israel as an investor and builder.

For the U.S., the key points of contention have centered on whether Israel is giving enough scrutiny to China's investment

and limiting its influence on advanced 5G wireless infrastructure. It's also expressed concern over the presence of a state-controlled Chinese operator at a commercial sea port near where the U.S. Navy's Sixth Fleet sometimes docks.

American officials have taken issue with the relationship, including Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who threatened to limit intelligence sharing with Israel unless the country falls in line.

China has looked to the Middle East as a springboard to European and African markets, making it a key part of its massive infrastructure project known as the Belt and Road Initiative. But it's been careful not to antagonize the U.S. by encroaching on its defense footprint in the region. And despite U.S. warnings, companies in the U.A.E., among other countries, are set to roll out 5G services provided by Huawei Technologies Co.

A recent report by the European Council on Foreign Relations concluded that "China still has a limited appetite for challenging the U.S.-led security architecture in the Middle East or playing a significant role in regional politics."

In an interview, the head of Israel's Foreign Trade Administration Ohad Cohen said that talks with China were at "half-time" and focused on expanding market access for both sides -- though he declined to discuss specific sectors.

The fact that Israel - after U.S. pressure - has just rolled out a panel to vet foreign investment for national security risks, but is moving ahead with trade talks, show how it's trying to address security concerns while enhancing commercial ties.

Cohen said he doesn't "feel any challenges" because of the discussions between the U.S. and China. "We are the mouse and there are elephants fighting right now," he said. **BLOOMBERG**

What credit pros are watching as defaults rise in China

THESSE are perilous times for holders of Chinese corporate bonds.

Record domestic defaults and the biggest dollar-debt delinquency by a state-owned company in two decades have jolted investors this year, underscoring the need for increased vigilance as the economy slows and Chinese policy makers scale back support for a slew of cash-strapped businesses.

As bondholders adjust to a new - and arguably more healthy - environ-

ment where companies are allowed to default, these are some of the indicators they're watching to avoid getting burned.

Nearly half of all China's stressed-dollar debt - bonds yielding at least 15% - come due over the next 12 months. Market volatility is likely to increase around periods with big maturities as struggling companies attempt to pay off or refinance their debt.

Weekly growth in the volume of debt moving into stressed territory

rose to a record this year. The value of China dollar bonds with yields above 15% surged by \$4.1 billion on Dec. 10 from a week earlier, to \$25.6 billion.

Property companies dominate issuance in China's high-yield offshore bond market. They borrowed a record \$80.7 billion of debt in 2019, though that figure may drop by as much as 20% next year as new regulations aiming to restrict the industry's leverage take effect.

The spread between

China's AAA rated onshore corporate bonds and those with AA grades - considered as junk in China - continued to tighten towards the end of year. One-year premiums shrank to 20 basis points, the lowest level in more than a decade, suggesting investors are becoming comfortable with riskier bets as the country's capital markets become more efficient.

Similarly, the spread for speculative-grade dollar notes dipped, as the Federal Reserve monetary

easing stoked demand. As BB rated bonds rallied toward year-end, securities one rating group lower, at B, offered even better returns.

This could change if investors become spooked that onshore bond failures spill into the offshore market. "When I see offshore dollar high-yield spreads, especially single B to BB spreads, grow further apart, it can be a warning sign for how fearful people are of potential defaults," said Raymond

Wong, a fixed-income portfolio manager at China Galaxy International Financial Holdings.

Foreign demand for China's domestic corporate bonds has remained strong this year even as defaults climbed - a measure of the market's resilience. While government and state-owned policy bank debt is still favored, credit as a percentage of total onshore bonds bought by foreign investors rose to record highs in 2019. **BLOOMBERG**

Tesco suspends Chinese card maker on forced-labor allegation

ELENA MAZNEVA,
DAVID R. BAKER & QIAN YE

U.K. grocery giant Tesco Plc suspended its supply of Christmas cards from a Chinese factory and said it was investigating a newspaper report that prison labor was used in their production.

All the cards produced by the factory have been withdrawn from sale, Tesco said in a statement on Sunday. If the investigation shows a breach of the company's rule against using prison labor, then the factory will be removed from Tesco's supplier list "immediately and permanently."

The Sunday Times reported earlier that a 6-year-old girl from London, Florence Widdicombe, discovered a note in her Tesco Christmas cards that read: "We are foreign prisoners in Shanghai Qingpu Prison China. Forced to work against our will. Please help us and notify human rights organization."

Such notes have been discovered in products sold by brands like Walmart Inc. and Saks Inc. in



the past decade as western companies' reliance on Chinese production has meant exposure to chains of sub-contractors that reportedly make use of prison labor.

While paying inmates to work is not prohibited under International Labor Organization guidelines, most international companies say they avoid prison labor because it is often difficult to ascertain whether prisoners were forced to work.

Tesco said that its Chinese su-

ppplier, Zhejiang Yunguang Printing Co., was independently audited as recently as last month and there was no evidence that rules had been broken. "We abhor the use of prison labor and would never allow it in our supply chain," the company said.

'Ridiculous, Slander'

A representative for Zhejiang Yunguang said by phone yesterday that the report was "ridiculous and a slander."

"Someone may be wanting to

defame our factory and our country," said the representative, who declined to give his name.

Calls to Shanghai Qingpu prison were not answered.

Tesco donates the money raised from such Christmas cards to the British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research U.K. and Diabetes U.K.

"Like Tesco, we're shocked by these allegations," the charities said in an e-mailed statement yesterday. "We are in touch with Tesco, who have assured us that these particular cards have been removed from sale, and that the factory producing them has been suspended while they investigate further. We await the outcome of Tesco's full investigation."

Tesco shares were little changed yesterday morning in London.

The note, written inside a card featuring a cat in a Santa hat on the front, asked whoever found it to contact Peter Humphrey. Humphrey is a former journalist who spent 23 months in the same prison on what he calls bogus charges that were probably triggered by his work in China as a corpora-

te fraud investigator. The girl's father researched the name online and contacted Humphrey, who then wrote the story for the Times.

The father, Ben Widdicombe, told the BBC in an interview that Florence laughed when she first saw the note. The girl had been writing Christmas cards and told her mother, "Oh, Mum, look -- someone's already written in this card, isn't that funny," Ben Widdicombe said. "On reflection, we realized it was potentially quite a serious thing."

Prison Work

Humphrey told the BBC he believes he knows who wrote the note "but I will never disclose that name." When he was detained there, he said, prisoners had the choice to do manufacturing work to earn small amounts of money; he said the work now appears to be mandatory.

"These prisoners are living a very bleak daily life," Humphrey told the network.

Forced labor in China is an enduring human rights issue that has plagued Western brands ever since the country became the factory to the world in the 1990s. The issue has received renewed global attention after reports that upwards of 1 million Uighurs, a Muslim ethnic group, have been detained by the Chinese government in internment camps where they're forced to work as well as attend re-education sessions. **BLOOMBERG**

DIPLOMACY

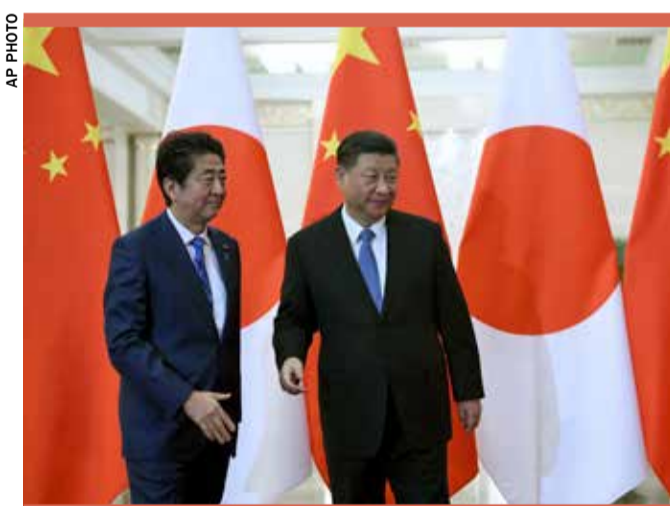
China, South Korea look to improve ties with Beijing summit

THE leaders of South Korea and China said yesterday that they look forward to improved ties following a protracted disagreement over the deployment of a U.S. anti-missile system that Beijing considers a threat.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in told Chinese leader Xi Jinping that while the sides may have felt "disappointed toward each other for a while," their shared culture and history prevented them from becoming completely estranged.

"It is hoped that South Korea's dream becomes helpful for China as China's dream becomes an opportunity for South Korea," Moon said in opening remarks before reporters were ushered from the room.

In his opening comments at the meeting at the Great Hall of the People in the center of Beijing, Xi described bilateral ties as "a substantial relationship in



the world and an influential relationship among world nations."

Ties between the Northeast Asian neighbors nosedived in 2017 after Seoul accepted the placement of a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, system in southern South Korea. Beijing insists its real purpose is to use its powerful radars to peer deep into its territory, rather than to warn of North Korean mis-

sile launches and shoot them down.

A furious China launched an unofficial boycott of everything from Chinese tour group visits to South Korea to South Korean television shows, boy bands and other cultural products. Major South Korean retailer Lotte, which provided a golf course where the missile system was deployed, was singled out for especially harsh treatment and its

China business operations were essentially destroyed. Even sales of ubiquitous South Korean auto brands such as Hyundai and Kia plunged for months.

Ultimately, Beijing was unable to force South Korea to remove the system and its fury appears to have subsided somewhat amid its trade war with the U.S. and tensions elsewhere in Asia. South Korea now hopes to have Xi visit next year and is also eager to have Beijing use its influence with North Korea to give a jolt to deadlocked denuclearization talks.

While South Korea appreciates the part China has played in that effort, the "current recent situations in which the talks between the United States and North Korea are stalled and tensions on the Korean Peninsula have become heightened are certainly not favorable, not only for South Korea and China but also for Nor-

th Korea," Moon said in his opening comments.

"I hope that we continue to closely cooperate so that the opportunities we have gained with difficulty can come to fruition," he said.

North Korea has set a year-end deadline for the U.S. to make concessions in the nuclear talks, without apparently making any offers of its own. The U.S. says it won't accept that demand and has called on North Korea to return to negotiations. While China is North Korea's most important diplomatic ally and chief source of investment and economic assistance, its ability to force Kim Jong Un's regime to alter policy is believed to be limited.

Along with meeting Xi, Moon is to take part Tuesday in a trilateral summit in the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang.

Xi met with Abe on yesterday afternoon in Beijing, saying the two are "jointly opening a new future for relations between the two countries."

"At present Sino-Japan relations are facing an important development opportunity," Xi said.

Ties between the longtime rivals have improved remarkably in recent years, despite lingering resentments over Japan's invasion and occupation of much of China last century and its continuing control of East China Sea islands claimed by Beijing.

Japan is also wary about China's rapid military expansion, and there has been a public uproar over the detention of more than a dozen Japanese citizens on spying allegations in China. Chinese naval and coast guard ships routinely violate Japanese-claimed waters around the disputed islands. **AP**

JAMEY KEATEN
& MATTHEW LEE, GENEVA

AS TRUMP SHUNS US MULTILATERALISM, CHINA UPS DIPLOMATIC ANTE

CHINESE leaders have long been sensitive about their communist country's international image. Now, they are battling back — investing in diplomacy and a courtship of hearts and minds, just as the United States digs in on the Trump administration's "America First" mindset.

A trade war and other frictions between the world's top economic power and the fast-growing No. 2 have exposed Washington's fears about technology, security and influence. U.S. political leaders have derided China's government over policies in protest-riddled Hong Kong, at detention centers in the majority Muslim Xinjiang region, and over allegedly underhanded business tactics by tech titan Huawei.

But increasingly, China is seeking to recapture the narrative — with a new assertiveness under President and Communist Party boss Xi Jinping, China's most powerful leader in decades.

"Almost overnight, we have awakened to the reality that while America slept, the Chinese Communist Party has emerged as an immediate and growing threat to our prosperity, our freedoms, and our security," Sen. Marco Rubio, (R-Fla.) said in a speech to the National Defense University last week.

Now the Chinese even have the world's biggest diplomatic arsenal to draw from. China's diplomatic network — including embassies, consulates and other posts — has overtaken that of the United States, according to the Lowy Institute, a Sydney-based think tank. Beijing has 276 diplomatic posts worldwide, topping Washington's declining deployment by three posts, the institute found.

China's growing diplomatic presence comes as Beijing is trying to expand its international footprint in places like resource-rich Africa or the strategic South China Sea, and to compete economically with Western countries, including with its much-ballyhooed Belt and Road Initiative that seeks to expand Chinese economic clout in places like Africa and Asia.

China's campaign to increase its influence on the global stage comes as the Trump administration retreats from multilateral diplomacy. Trump has pulled the United States out of the United Nations' educational, scientific and cultural organization and the U.N.-supported Human Rights Council, and this month the U.S. squeezed the World Trade Organization's appeals court out of action. His administration has announced a U.S. pullout from the Paris climate accord and shredded multilateral trade pacts.

It's part of a broader diplomatic retrenchment that has led to the loss of nearly 200 foreign service

AP PHOTO



posts at American embassies and consulates abroad.

"We've entered an era in which diplomacy matters more than ever, on an intensely competitive international landscape," said William Burns, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a former deputy secretary of state who has been highly critical of Trump's foreign policy. "China realizes that and is rapidly expanding its diplomatic capacity. The U.S., by contrast, seems intent on unilateral diplomatic disarmament."

The U.S. pullback has been particularly felt in Geneva, a hub of U.N.-backed multilateralism: More than 2 1/2 years into Trump's tenure, the U.S. finally brought in a new ambassador to U.N. institutions in Geneva only last month. Meanwhile, China's deployment has grown, complete with a months-long renovation to its WTO offices on the bucolic Geneva lakefront.

Trump's administration has initiated staffing draw-downs in Afghanistan and Iraq in particular, recalling diplomats from those countries to Washington but not sending them out to other overseas missions, according to the American Foreign Service Association, the union that represents U.S. diplomats.

"This the first time that any country has had more global presence than the United States and it's a concern," said union president Eric Rubin. "If we're going to meet the challenge of a rising China, we need to represent ourselves aggressively and with resources overseas."

In African nations like Angola, Mozambique, Tanzania and

Uganda, U.S. diplomats report being outnumbered five-to-one by their Chinese counterparts, according to a union presentation to the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Since Trump took office in 2017, at least five small nations in Latin America and the Pacific — Panama, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Kiribati and the Solomon Islands — have rejected intense U.S. lobbying and cut diplomatic ties with Taiwan in order to recognize China, which often promises them major investments of the kind that Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has warned against.

China's campaign to increase its influence on the global stage comes as the Trump administration retreats from multilateral diplomacy

And countries in Europe and elsewhere have been reluctant to heed U.S. admonitions to cut Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei out of their advanced communications networks. The U.S. says Huawei equipment is suspect, subject to intrusion by the Chinese Communist Party, and has warned nations including NATO allies that they could be stripped of intelligence cooperation with the United States if they grant the company a role in their national grids. Huawei denies the U.S. allegations.

There was a time when China was considered a potentially benevolent rising power. Nearly a

generation ago, the communist country was welcomed into the capitalist-dominated WTO in Geneva. Now U.S. officials complain that China has taken advantage of the trade body and isn't playing by its rules. That adds to the suspicion — even as Beijing insists it respects and abides by the rules-based international system.

In 2019, "we have seen a change in how the rest of the world sees China," said Steve Tsang, director of the SOAS China Institute at the University of London. "From Xinjiang to Huawei to now Hong Kong: China is no longer seen as the rising benign giant, but it is being seen as, 'Whoops, we need to get worried about it.'"

But in some areas, like its efforts to fight climate change, China is scoring political points abroad — while Trump's policies on the environment have drawn widespread scorn.

China's Communist Party has long believed in its monopoly on truth, history and narrative at home, Tsang said. Now, with "fake news" a buzzword, that belief may be ripe for export.

Chinese diplomats have claimed that China holds no political prisoners and insist the Xinjiang centers — which have been widely criticized for locking up Muslim Uighurs and others — were only there to provide "vocational" training and save them from religious radicalism.

"If Donald Trump can say anything he wants — whatever that happens to be, without too much regard to whether it's factually correct or not — why would the Communist Party of China not feel that they've been vindicated?" he said. "Therefore, Xi Jinping's idea of seizing the narrative is the right thing: You don't have to get worried about facts."

Chinese authorities have used advertising pitches, news conferences, TV and radio interviews, social media — including on the Chinese Foreign Ministry's new Twitter account — and other messaging to promote Beijing's positions and push back against criticism.

Barely a day goes by without Chinese officials speaking out in some part of the globe: The Chinese Foreign Ministry's web site lists 67 Chinese-language pages of statements, speeches, newspaper columns and other communications by Chinese diplomats and other officials since May alone. They blend tough talk, self-defense and self-congratulation.

China's ambassador in Poland has decried "unilateralist" U.S. trade protection measures; its ambassador to South Africa claimed a U.S. "hidden political agenda" with its criticism about the Xinjiang centers — calling them "innovative." One Chinese diplomat upbraided U.N. human rights chief Michelle Bachelet over a recent column she wrote airing her concerns about the Hong Kong protests and the government response.

The Chinese ambassadors in Britain and Sweden have been particularly outspoken. "China is not a country you can kick around," Ambassador Liu Xiaoming told the BBC's Hardtalk program last month, part of his one-man media blitz in London in recent weeks. He insisted no political prisoners are held in China, and faulted U.S. Vice President Mike Pence by name as a "China-basher" bent on "demonizing" the country. AP

INDIA

Main opposition party stages protest against new law

SHEIKH SAALIQ, NEW DELHI

INDIA'S main opposition party staged a silent protest in the capital yesterday against a contentious new citizenship law, a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi defended the legislation at a rally in New Delhi and accused the opposition of pushing the country into a "fear psychosis."

The protest was led by Congress party chief Sonia Gandhi along with other senior party leaders. Around 2,000 people joined the protest at the Raj Ghat, a memorial dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, where the party demanded "protection for the constitution and the rights of people enshrined in it."

Tens of thousands of protesters have taken to India's streets to call for the revocation of the law, which critics say is the latest effort by Modi's government to marginalize the country's 200 million Muslims.

The Congress party's former president Rahul Gandhi had urged young people in New Delhi to join the protest.

"It's not good enough just to feel Indian. At times like these it's critical to show that you're Indian & won't allow to be destroyed by hatred," Gandhi tweeted yesterday.

Other protests were held across the country, including in



the southern cities of Bangalore and Kochi.

Twenty-three people have been killed nationwide since the citizenship law was passed in Parliament earlier this month in protests that represent the first major roadblock for Modi's Hindu nationalist agenda since his party's landslide reelection last spring.

Most of the deaths have occurred in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, where 20% of the state's 200 million people are Muslim.

Police also resorted to a crackdown of sorts in the state by seizing some shops in the town of Muzaffarnagar. The crackdown,

which began Sunday, came after the state's chief minister, Yogi Adityanath, vowed Friday to "take revenge" against people who had damaged public property during the protests by seizing their assets.

The Uttar Pradesh government's spokesman, Shalabh Mani Tripathi, said authorities were "working as per directives of the Supreme Court, which has asked that the damages of public property should be compensated by rioters."

He did not say how the owners of the shops were identified as offenders.

Authorities across India have

taken a hard-line approach to quell the protests. They've evoked a British colonial-era law banning public gatherings, and internet access has been blocked at times in some states. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has asked broadcasters across the country to refrain from using content that could inflame further violence.

The communication shutdown has mostly affected New Delhi, the eastern state of West Bengal, the northern city of Aligarh and the entire northeastern state of Assam.

Undeterred, protesters have continued to rally throughout

the country.

The new law allows Hindus, Christians and other religious minorities who are in India illegally to become citizens if they can show they were persecuted because of their religion in Muslim-majority Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. It does not apply to Muslims.

Protests against the law come amid an ongoing crackdown in Muslim-majority Kashmir, the restive Himalayan region stripped of its semi-autonomous status and demoted from a state into a federal territory in August.

The demonstrations also follow a contentious process in Assam meant to weed out foreigners living in the country illegally. Nearly 2 million people, about half Hindu and half Muslim, were excluded from an official list of citizens — called the National Register of Citizens, or NRC — and have been asked to prove their citizenship or else be considered foreign.

India is building a detention center for some of the tens of thousands of people who the courts are expected to ultimately determine have entered illegally. Modi's interior minister, Amit Shah, has pledged to roll out the process nationwide.

On Sunday, Modi denied the existence of a detention center, accusing the Congress party of spreading fear that Indian Muslims would be jailed there. He also contradicted Shah, saying that there had been no discussion yet of whether to execute a nationwide citizens registry.

The protests against the law began in Assam, the center of a decades-old movement against migrants, before spreading to predominantly Muslim universities and then nationwide. AP

AUSTRALIA

PM defends climate stance amid wildfire disaster

AUSTRALIA'S embattled Prime Minister defended his government's climate policy yesterday, as authorities warned the wildfires crisis ravaging the country's most populous state could fester for months.

Around 200 wildfires were burning in four states, with New South Wales accounting for more than half of them, including 60 fires not contained.

The disaster has led to renewed criticism that Prime Minister Scott Morrison's conservative government has not taken enough action on climate change.

Morrison rejected calls to downsize Australia's lucrative coal industry. Aus-



Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison

tralia is the world's largest exporter of coal and liquefied natural gas.

"I am not going to write off the jobs of thousands of Australians by walking away from traditional in-

dustries," he told Channel Seven.

Morrison made the rounds on several Australian television networks yesterday morning in the aftermath of his much criticized

family vacation to Hawaii during the wildfires crisis.

He eventually cut short his holiday and returned to Sydney over the weekend before visiting evacuation and emergency control centers and the families of two firefighters killed battling blazes last Thursday southwest of Sydney.

"We all make decisions. You do as a parent, I do as a parent. We'll seek to balance our work life responsibilities and we all try to get that right," Morrison told Channel Seven.

More than 3 million hectares of land has burned nationwide during a torrid past few months, with nine people killed and more than 900 homes des-

troyed. Almost 800 homes have burned in New South Wales, which last week was paralyzed by a seven-day state of emergency amid catastrophic conditions.

There will be desperately needed relief this week for New South Wales, with cooler conditions forecast.

New South Wales Rural Fire Service commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons, however, painted a bleak long-term picture.

"We've got to keep in mind that we're not expecting any rainfall to make any meaningful difference to these fires until January or February," he said.

"That's still a way to go. We're still talking four to six weeks at best before we

start to see a meaningful reprieve in the weather."

Morrison's coalition government won a surprise third term in May. Among its pledges was to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26% to 28% by 2030 — a modest figure compared to the center-left opposition's pledge of 45%.

Morrison insisted Australia would meet its emission targets.

"I'm going to maintain the course of responsible management, responsibly addressing the changes of climate change and responsibly ensuring that we can grow our economy in what is a very tough climate at the moment," he said. AP

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

WHITE HOUSE PREDICTS PELOSI WILL YIELD ON IMPEACHMENT DELAY

HOPE YEN & ZEKE MILLER,
WASHINGTON

THE White House is projecting confidence that it will prevail in a constitutional spat with Democrats over the nature of the Senate's impeachment trial, which threatens to deprive President Donald Trump of the swift acquittal he seeks.

The House voted Wednesday to impeach Trump, who became only the third president in U.S. history to be formally charged with "high crimes and misdemeanors." But Speaker Nancy Pelosi has delayed sending the articles of impeachment to the Senate until Republicans provide details on witnesses and testimony in hopes of shaping the upcoming trial. Democratic and Republican leaders in the chamber remain at an impasse over the question of whether witnesses will be called, but the White House believes Pelosi won't be able to hold out much longer.

"She will yield. There's no way she can hold this position," Marc Short, the chief of staff to Vice President Mike Pence, said Sunday. "We think her case is going nowhere."



Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., have been at an impasse over the issue of new testimony, leaving open the possibility of a protracted delay until the articles are delivered. Trump complained Saturday that the holdup was "unfair" and claimed that Democrats were violating the Constitution, as the delay threatened to prolong the pain of impeachment and cast uncertainty on the timing of the

vote Trump is set to claim as vindication.

Schumer told reporters in New York that "the Senate is yearning to give President Trump due process, which means that documents and witnesses should come forward. What is a trial with no witnesses and no documents. It's a sham trial."

Short called Pelosi's delay unacceptable, saying she's "trampling" Trump's rights to "rush this through, and now we're going to hold it up to demand a longer

process in the Senate with more witnesses."

"If her case is so air-tight [...] why does she need more witnesses to make her case?" Short said.

White House officials have highlighted Democrats' arguments that removing Trump was an "urgent" matter before the House impeachment vote, as they seek to put pressure on Pelosi to send the articles of impeachment to the Senate.

McConnell has all but promised an easy acquittal of the president, and he appears to have secured Republican support for his plans to impose a framework drawn from the 1999 impeachment trial of President Bill Clinton. That trial featured a 100-0 vote on arrangements that established two weeks of presentations and argument before a partisan tally in which then-minority Republicans called a limited number of witnesses.

That has sparked a fight with Pelosi and Schumer, who are demanding trial witnesses who refused to appear during House committee hearings, including acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney and former national se-

curity adviser John Bolton.

A close Trump ally, Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said Pelosi would fail in her quest "to get Mitch McConnell to bend to her will to shape the trial." Graham is chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and was a House manager, comparable to a prosecutor, during the Senate's impeachment trial of Clinton.

"She'll eventually send the articles because public opinion will crush the Democrats," said Graham. Asked whether he expected witnesses in the Senate, he replied: "No, I don't."

At one point, Trump had demanded the testimony of witnesses of his own, like Democrats Joe Biden and his son Hunter, and the intelligence community whistleblower whose summer complaint sparked the impeachment probe. But he has since relented after concerted lobbying by McConnell and other Senate Republicans who pushed him to accept the swift acquittal from the Senate and not to risk injecting uncertainty into the process by calling witnesses.

The Senate's second-ranking Democrat, Dick Durbin of Illinois, said his party is looking for a signal from McConnell that he hasn't ruled out new witnesses and documents. But Durbin acknowledged that Democrats may not have much leverage in pushing a deal. **AP**

AD

TERRACE
HAPPY HOUR
Thursday to Saturday
15:00 to 20:00

Unlimited Bifanas
& Free Flow of Beer

\$168

VIC's Live Music
24 Dec - 31 Dec

*需受條款及細則約束。 Terms & Conditions apply.

BNU APP
GET EVERYTHING IN ONE TOUCH!
Install it now and try!

- Biometric Login
- Quick and Easy Transactions
- Authentication via Token
- Stock Trading
- New Card Activation
- Branches' Queuing Status
- Assets Summary

Find these services and much more!

Download on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play

BNU
Banco Nacional Ultramarino
大馬洋行

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

US watching North Korea for 'Christmas gift' missile launch

LOLITA C. BALDOR,
WASHINGTON

THE U.S. is closely watching North Korea for signs of a possible missile launch or nuclear test in the coming days that officials are referring to as a "Christmas surprise."

A significant launch or test would mean the end of North Korea's self-imposed moratorium and raise tensions in the region. It would also be a major blow to one of the Trump administration's major foreign policy initiatives: the drive to get North Korea back to negotiations to eliminate its nuclear weapons and missiles.

Earlier this month, the North conducted what U.S. officials say was an engine test. North Korea described it as "crucial" and experts believe that it may have involved an engine for a space launch vehicle or long-range missile. Officials worry that it could be a prelude to the possible launch of



AP PHOTO

an intercontinental ballistic missile in the coming days or weeks.

Any test involving an ICBM would have the most serious impact on the diplomatic effort because it would be considered a move by North Korea to acquire the ability to strike the United States, or, even worse, to show they already have it.

"North Korea has been advancing. It has been building new capabilities," said Anthony Wier, a former State Department official who tracks nuclear disarmament for the Friends Committee on National Legislation. "As long as that continues, they gain new capabilities to try new missiles to threaten us and our allies in new ways,"

The North Koreans warned of a possible "Christmas gift" in early December, saying the Trump administration was running out of time to salvage nuclear negotiations, and it was up to the U.S. to choose what "Christmas gift" it gets from the North. President Donald Trump tweeted Friday that he discussed North Korea with China's President Xi Jinping.

Victor Cha, a Korea expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said a review of the possible launch sites in North Korea show that they are a "basically ready to go." He said the expected launch could be a test of a sea-based ballistic missile or a solid-fuel rocket.

Using solid fuel allows North Korea to more quickly fuel up a rocket, providing less lead time for the U.S. or others to prepare for a launch. Sea-based launches are also more difficult to locate and would give less warning or time for the U.S. to react.

Either one, he said, "would be a

new type of problem that the U.S. would have to deal with."

Defense Secretary Mark Esper told reporters earlier this week that the U.S. has heard all the talk of a possible upcoming test around Christmas.

"I've been watching the Korean Peninsula for a quarter-century now. I'm familiar with their tactics, with their bluster," he said. "We need to get serious and sit down and have discussions about a political agreement that denuclearizes the peninsula. That is the best way forward and arguably the only way forward if we're going to do something constructive."

Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun, the special U.S. envoy for North Korea, has also warned of a possible launch.

"We are fully aware of the strong potential for North Korea to conduct a major provocation in the days ahead," he said. "To say the least, such an action will be most unhelpful in achieving lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula."

Army Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters on Friday that the U.S., Japan and South Korea are ready to defend against any move by the North. "We always maintain very high levels of readiness," he said. AP

D2 CLUB 男士俱樂部
www.d2club-macau.com

Macau Fisherman's Wharf, Edf. New Orleans 111
澳門漁人碼頭新奧爾良館 111
Tel: (853) 2872 3777

WELCOME TO Playmate's club
花心公子俱樂部

WILD NIGHT OUT

Come and buy a Standard drink Mop45 only
You can see a European Striptease Show

Attention
No admission under 18

Business Hours: 8:00pm-4:00am
Address: Basement, Hotel Guia, Macau Tel: 28532081 www.macauplaymatesclub.com

what's ON



THE LONG JOURNEY: THE FORBIDDEN CITY AND MARITIME SILK ROAD

TIME: 10am-9pm (Last entry at 6:30pm; closed on Mondays and public holidays)

UNTIL: 13 April 2020

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 87919814

RED DECEMBER – EXHIBITION OF CARLOS MARREIROS

TIME: 10am-9pm

UNTIL: 13 February 2020

VENUE: Tap Seac Gallery, located at No. 95, Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION ON THE PAST NATIONAL LOTUS FLOWER EXHIBITIONS

TIME: 9am-1pm & 2:30pm-5:30pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: December 31, 2019

VENUE: Guia Hill Nature Information Station (next to cable car station)

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: 2888 0087

Offbeat

WHOO'S THERE? GEORGIA FAMILY DISCOVERS OWL IN CHRISTMAS TREE

AP PHOTO



A Georgia family got a real hoot from its Christmas tree: More than a week after they bought it, they discovered a live owl nestled among its branches.

Katie McBride Newman said Friday that she and her daughter spotted the bird on Dec. 12. They had bought the 10-foot (3-meter) tall tree from a Home Depot, brought it back to their Atlanta area home and decorated it with lights and, coincidentally, owl ornaments.

"It was surreal, but we weren't really freaked out about it," McBride Newman said. "We're really outdoorsy people. We love the wilderness."

The family opened windows and doors near the tree hoping the owl would fly away, but it didn't.

"The owl seemed to be pretty comfortable, and I thought, 'Hey buddy, it's not going to go well if you just stay here. There's no food, I'm sorry,'" said McBride Newman's husband, Billy Newman.

So the family called a nonprofit nature center for help. The Chattahoochee Nature Center caught the bird and helped the family release it.

McBride Newman said she believed the bird had been in the tree since they bought it, but was hidden.

"We think he was just in there hugging the trunk," she said. "It's a very dense tree and it was very fresh. That's why we picked it."

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repetição)
13:30	Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)
15:00	Uma Canção de Natal
16:35	Zig Zag
17:10	Ingrediente Secreto
17:35	Cats
19:35	Michael Buble's Christmas in Hollywood
20:25	Mensagem de Natal do Bispo de Macau 2019
20:30	Telejornal
21:15	Antes do Adeus
23:15	TDM News
23:55	Natal do Senhor - Missa da Vigília 2019 (Directo)
01:30	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



1968 FIRST ASTRONAUTS ORBIT MOON

The Apollo 8 spacecraft has taken its crew of three astronauts safely into orbit around the Moon, the first manned space mission to achieve the feat.

The climax of the mission began at 0959 GMT, when Frank Borman, James Lovell and William Anders were about 78 miles (125 km) from the Moon.

Right on schedule, the crew fired their rocket engine to send Apollo 8 into the first of 10 elliptical lunar orbits.

The engine burned for just over four minutes, and then suddenly the avid audience of television-watchers on Earth had the first-ever eyewitness account of the lunar surface from astronaut James Lovell.

"The moon is essentially grey," he said. "No colour. Looks like plaster of Paris. Sort of a greyish beach sand."

Shortly afterwards, the spacecraft passed out of contact with mission control in Houston, travelling into the dark side of the Moon - never seen directly by humans before, as it always faces away from the Earth.

There followed a tense 45 minutes in which radio communication was impossible - a drama which will be repeated on each circuit around the Moon.

Once back in contact, Apollo 8 then fired another engine, sending it into circular orbit 69 miles (110 km) above the Moon's surface.

About two and a half hours afterwards, the astronauts beamed back the first television pictures of what they were seeing.

As the pictures flooded in, the astronauts broadcast the first words of Genesis, describing the creation of the world.

They then signed out: "From the crew of Apollo 8, we pause with good night, good luck and merry Christmas and God bless all of you - all of you on the good earth."

All three men appear to be in good spirits and health.

They have been able to sleep and eat according to schedule, although the food, in plastic packets divided into small "bites", apparently tastes as bad as it looks.

One of Captain Lovell's first comments today was, "Happiness is bacon squares for breakfast."

They were told by Houston control, "You can always bring them back if you have any left over."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The crew of Apollo 8 spent 20 hours in orbit around the Moon, before returning to Earth.

They splashed down in the Pacific on 27 December, landing just 5,000 yards (4,500 metres) from their target point. They were picked up by the aircraft carrier Yorktown.

They returned as national heroes. The next mission, Apollo 9, took off at the beginning of 1969, to test a Moon-landing module.

That same year, the crew of Apollo 11 became the first men to walk on the Moon.

James Lovell went on to command the ill-fated Apollo 13, which was crippled by an explosion on board in 1970. He and his crew returned to Earth safely.

Budget constraints brought the first phase of American lunar exploration to an end in 1972.

Then, in January 2004, US President George Bush announced American astronauts would return to the Moon by 2020 as the launching point for missions further into space.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Your thinking can't be constrained by the group — so let yourself roam free! Your terrific mental energy should help you come up with at least four great new ideas to get started on right away.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
 Your philosophical notions are making life a little sweeter today — so make sure that you're spending extra time pondering life's mysteries. You may actually stumble on something practical!

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
 Usually the deeper you delve into preliminary research, the more confident you feel in your eventual decisions. But sometimes, if you look too deeply, you will find out things that just confuse you further.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 You need to take care of yourself today — so make sure that you're on top of your own needs. It may feel weird to put yourself first, but sometimes that's just the way it is.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 You feel tireless today, so make sure that you're in a position to do something useful (or fun) with all this great energy. You can get almost anything done without too much trouble.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Try to go with the flow today — though you may feel like lashing out at the slightest provocation! It's one of those days when you've got to try to relax, if only to get past the small stuff.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Your communication should be especially expressive today — so much so that you may find it simple to reach out to someone who has shut you out almost entirely. Work your magic!

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Things seem pretty good right now — maybe a little too good! Your innate skepticism is worth deploying, because you are sure to find something suspicious at the edges of this deal.

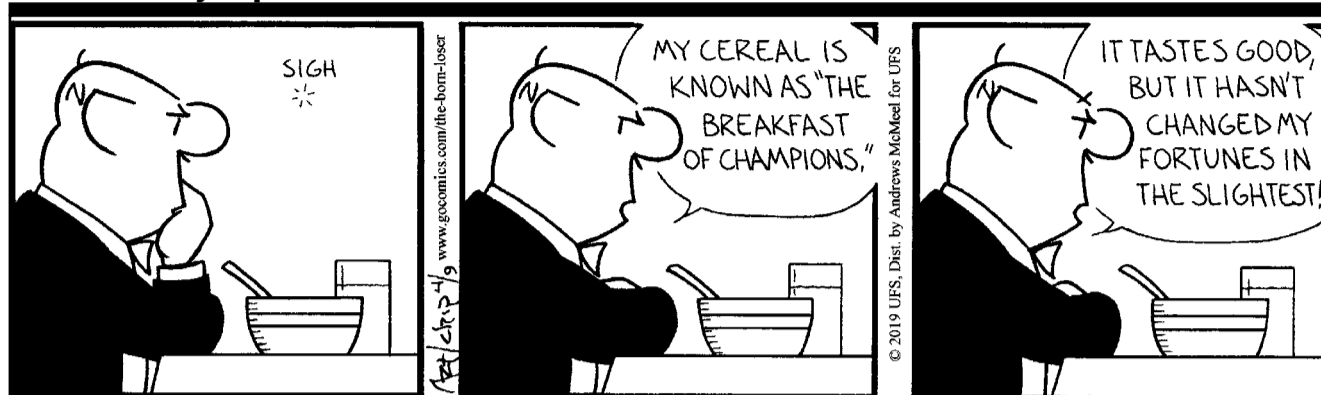
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Your admiration for a friend or family member shines brightly today — and it pays off, too! Hand out compliments freely and you may find that the gratitude comes back to you quickly.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 It's one of those days when the clock seems to move faster than usual. Unless you're under a hard deadline, that can be a good thing, as you may plow through lots of work without realizing it.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 You're the Welcome Wagon today — at work, in the neighborhood or among your friends. Make it easy for new folks to integrate into the group and you should score some much-needed karma.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Try to avoid blunt communication today — if you can give yourself time to craft your message, you should be fine. That could be hard in the heat of the moment, so you're better off retreating for now.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Gymnast Korbut; 5- Become closer to; 9- Vessel; 13- Rings of a chain; 15- River in central Switzerland; 16- Cleanser scent; 17- Sir ___ Newton was an English mathematician; 18- Baby carriage; 19- Novel conclusion?; 20- Giant Mel; 21- Pile; 23- Tooth covering; 25- Blue hue; 26- Puffer of menthols; 27- Highest amount; 30- May ___ of service?; 31- Actress Anouk; 32- Unequal; 37- Purim month; 38- Detest; 40- Strike out; 41- Errands; 43- Impression; 44- Goose egg; 45- Situated; 47- Clown Kelly; 50- Off base, in a way; 51- Monetary unit of Ghana; 52- You said it!; 53- George's brother; 56- Shoppe sign word; 57- Story; 59- Yielded; 61- Classic cars; 62- Some Ivy Leaguers; 63- Emulate Romeo and Juliet; 64- Highlands tongue; 65- Statistics, collection of facts; 66- Floating ice;


DOWN: 1- Miscellany; 2- Catalog; 3- Midge; 4- Alias letters; 5- Smell in 'Apocalypse Now'; 6- Lawman Wyatt; 7- Constellation near Scorpius; 8- Recall; 9- Talk; 10- Casino request; 11- Part of ICBM; 12- Rind; 14- Plot; 22- Seine contents; 24- Denials; 25- Stadium sections; 26- Prefix with Tibetan; 27- Palindromic address; 28- Helper; 29- December day, briefly; 32- Startled cries; 33- Standard of perfection; 34- Depression in a surface; 35- Otherwise; 36- Achievement; 38- Excited; 39- Waist band; 42- Again; 43- Candle holder; 45- San Diego suburb; 46- Be in the hole; 47- Certain fisherman; 48- PC acronym; 49- 1980s attorney general; 51- Go (over) carefully; 52- Came down; 53- Hero; 54- Seized vehicle; 55- Zip-___-Doo-Dah; 58- Chicken ___ king; 60- Will Ferrell movie;



Friday's solution

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

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222	Water Supply – Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone – Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity – Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
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	



<p>FOR SALE</p>  <p>Large 3/4 bedroom apartment, Coloane HK\$7,980,000 1,665 ft² 3 1/2 2 1/2</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p>  <p>Vai Fung triplex, Macau \$157,800/mth 2 1/2 2 1/2</p>	<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>[Macau] Lakeview Tower 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,344 ft² \$11,000,000 (ref: n/a)</p> <p>[Taipa] Hoi Wan Garden 2 1/2 1 1/2 900 ft² \$5,100,000 (ref: 19106003)</p> <p>[Macau] Unique Loft 2 1/2 2 1/2 2,200 ft² \$9,990,000 (ref: 15115464)</p> <p>[Taipa] Nova City 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,515 ft² \$11,750,000 (ref: 19106001)</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>[Taipa] Nam Long 2 1/2 1 1/2 645 ft² \$11,800/mth (ref: 19111001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Manhattan 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,720 ft² \$23,800/mth (ref: 19091006)</p> <p>[Taipa] Nova Grand 2 1/2 1 1/2 935 ft² \$17,800/mth (ref: 19091005)</p> <p>[Macau] La Marina studio 1 1/2 \$11,200/mth (ref: 19091001)</p>	<p>jml property Since 1994</p> <p>(853) 2835 2699 hello@jmlproperty.com www.jmlproperty.com</p> <p>f jmlmacau @ jmlproperty</p>
---	---	---	--	--

30-PLUS YEARS OF 'GARFIELD' COMIC STRIPS TO SELL AT AUCTION

CARTOONIST Jim Davis is offering up more than 11,000 "Garfield" comic strips hand-drawn on paper in an auction that will stretch into the coming years, with at least a couple of strips featuring the always-hungry orange cat with a sardonic sense of humor available weekly.

"There are just so many, and it was such a daunting task to figure what to do with them so that they could be out there where people enjoy them too," said Davis, creator of the comic strip that appears in newspapers around the world and has spawned TV shows, movies and books.

Dallas-based Heritage Auctions began offering up the strips in August. The auction house is selling two daily strips each week, along with longer Sunday strips being offered during the large-scale auctions throughout the year.

The strips span from the launch of "Garfield" in 1978 to 2011, when Davis began drawing the strip di-



gitaly. He says he still draws it by hand but now it's with a stylus on a tablet instead of on paper with a pencil, pen and brush.

Comic art collector Nagib Baltagi has purchased about 20 of the strips so far and plans to bid on more. The 36-year-old said the "Garfield" auction particu-

larly resonated because he loved as a kid watching the cartoons and reading the books.

Baltagi, who lives in Miami, said he's drawn to the strips that feature several of the characters and have a storyline that strikes a chord, in addition to ones that ran on meaningful dates.

"I tend to go for the ones that kind of remind me where I was in my life," he said.

Indiana-based Davis says that over the years he gave some strips to family, friends and staff, while others are on displays at museums, including the Smithsonian Institution, and he even

tried selling them on his website for a few years. But he kept most of them, he says, storing them in a fireproof, climate-controlled vault.

The auction, he said, "was just a logical thing to do with an awful lot of comic strips and an opportunity to allow not just collectors but a lot of the fans over the

years to have access to the strips as well without me having to send them out one at a time."

Brian Wiedman, a comic grader at Heritage, says the daily strips are currently selling on average from around \$500 to \$700, and the longer Sunday strips are selling for \$1,500 to \$3,000.

He said the value is often determined by "who is doing what, when and where."

"So Garfield eating lasagna, which is a trademark for him, that would be considered kind of one of the more expensive ones," Wiedman said.

Also adding value, he said, is an appearance by the strip's other characters, which include Garfield's owner Jon Arbuckle and Odie, his dog.

Davis, who is 74, said he has no plans to retire from drawing the comic featuring the orange feline known for his dislike of Mondays and diets.

"It's fun. It's just fun," Davis said. **MDT/AP**

AD

律師事務所



C&C
LAWYERS
& NOTARIES
SINCE 1996



合伙人 PARTNERS:

官樂怡 Rui José da Cunha • 山度士 Álvaro Rodrigues • 馬天龍 Nuno Sardinha da Mata • 趙魯 Zhao Lu ••

聯營律師 ASSOCIATES:

馬傑安 João Nogueira Marques
高文軒 Adelino Correia •
羅善齡 Zelina Rodrigues •
白秀蘭 Susana Batalha
馬潔冰 Maria João Marques
陶義德 António Isó de Azeredo
白穎怡 Ílida Berenguel
沈玲鳳 Mariana Afonso Esteves
薛明恩 Maria Antónia Giestas
飛嘉華 Carlos dos Santos Ferreira
杜力信 Nelson de Azevedo

實習律師 TRAINEE LAWYERS:

羅成軒 José J. Rodrigues
康靜雅 Viviana Hong
梁淑嵐 Ana Leon
黃瀚賢 Frederico Vang
張偉鴻 Cheong Wai Hong
李莉 Lei Lei

WWW.CCADVOG.COM
TEL: (853) 2837 2642 / 2837 2623



• 私人公證員 Notary Public • 中國委託公證人 China Appointed Attesting Officer • 顧問 Of Counsel



FOOTBALL

Racism protocol implemented for first time in Premier League

STEVE DOUGLAS

FIFA'S protocol for dealing with discrimination at soccer games was implemented for the first time in the Premier League on Sunday with three stadium announcements during a London derby between Tottenham and Chelsea after racist abuse was reported by Chelsea's Antonio Rudiger.

The announcements came in the second half, after Rudiger was kicked in the chest by Son Heung-min in an incident that led to the 62nd-minute sending-off of Tottenham's South Korea forward.

Rudiger, who is black, was seen putting his hands under his armpits - seemingly mimicking a monkey gesture - in the 63rd minute.

Chelsea captain Cesar Azpilicueta said Rudiger had told him he heard "monkey noises" toward him in the crowd, and therefore reported it to referee Anthony Taylor.

"We are very concerned and aware of this behavior," Azpilicueta said. "All together, we need to make it stop. I hope everything gets clear and we eradicate it as soon as possible. It's an issue not just in football but in life."

Anti-discrimination body Kick It Out said it was aware of "alleged racist incidents" at the game and praised the referee for following step one of FIFA's protocol, which calls on the stadium announcer to request that spectators stop the discriminatory behavior.

Kick It Out suggested the second and third stadium announcements repeated the first stage of the protocol rather than moving onto steps two and three, which would have led initially to the suspension of the match and the players returning to the locker room for a specific period. If the discrimination continued, the third step should

AP PHOTO



have been the abandonment of the match.

It was not immediately clear if there had been repeated incidents of racism.

"I saw the referee follow the protocol," Tottenham manager Jose Mourinho said. "He came to Andre Marriner [the fourth official], he came to me and [Chelsea manager] Frank Lampard and told us what was happening."

The racist abuse overshadowed an accomplished performance by Chelsea in a 2-0 win that cemented its fourth place in the Premier League.

Earlier, Manchester United lost 2-0 at last-place Watford, with a goalkeeper howler by David De Gea - for the second weekend running - leading to the first goal at Vicarage Road.

Chelsea is four points clear of fifth-place Sheffield United, while the gap is six points to Tottenham in seventh place and seven points to United in eighth with nearly half the season gone.

RASH TOTTENHAM

Chelsea's win saw Lampard get one over Mourinho, his one-time coach and mentor at Stam-

ford Bridge, in their first managerial head-to-head in the Premier League.

Mourinho will point to a pair of rash moments by his players, first goalkeeper Paulo Gazzaniga and then Son.

Tottenham was already trailing 1-0 to a goal from Willian following a quickly taken corner, when Gazzaniga came flying out of his goal and pole-axed Marcos Alonso with a studs-first, chest-high lunge to concede a penalty in first-half injury time. Referee Taylor originally awarded a free kick against Alonso, somewhat

bizarrely, only to reverse the decision after an invention by the video assistant referee.

Willian converted the penalty for his second goal of the game.

Son's red card came after he was tackled by Rudiger near the touchline. Son was unhappy at the challenge and, while on his back, flicked his right foot into the chest of Rudiger, who fell backward to the ground.

"Does Rudiger have broken ribs going to the hospital?" Mourinho said. "Other people call it intelligent by Rudiger."

DE GEA HOWLER

David De Gea's mistake was very different to Gazzaniga's but just as bad in its outcome.

The Spain goalkeeper allowed a tame volley by Ismaila Sarr slip through his grasp and trickle over the goalline off the post in the 50th minute. Embarrassed by his mistake, De Gea slid his arms down the post and dropped face-first to the ground before banging his fists on the turf.

It was another moment to forget for De Gea, who failed to punch clear a corner to allow Everton to grab an equalizer in a 1-1 draw at United last weekend. On that occasion, De Gea argued he was being fouled as he went for the ball but he had no excuses against Watford.

Troy Deeney converted a penalty down the middle four minutes later after Aaron Wan-Bissaka tripped Sarr, putting the seal on only Watford's second league win all season, and first under new manager Nigel Pearson.

Watford stayed in last place but moved level on 12 points with Norwich after 18 games. They are six points adrift of safety.

One positive for United was the return of Paul Pogba, the club's record signing who has missed nearly three months because of injury and, more recently, illness. The France midfielder came on as a 64th-minute substitute.

"He added urgency, quality, some great passes," United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said of Pogba. **AP**

Russia accuses doping whistleblower of modifying key data

Russia is blaming the World Anti-Doping Agency's star witness for modifying key laboratory data. His lawyer says that's nonsense.

The Russian Investigative Committee, a major law enforcement agency, alleges that former Moscow anti-doping laboratory director Grigory Rodchenkov remotely changed test results from abroad after

fleeing to the United States in 2015.

"All the evidence obtained by the investigation shows that Rodchenkov and unidentified persons intentionally made changes in the electronic database to distort the parameters and indicators of Russian athletes' doping samples," Russian Investigative Committee (IC) spokeswoman Svetlana Pe-

trenko said in a statement Saturday.

Since leaving Russia, Rodchenkov has become a key witness for WADA, which ruled this month that the doping data — known as the LIMS database — was doctored to protect Russian athletes who failed drug tests while the data was in the custody of the IC.

Handing over the files

in January was meant to be a Russian peace offering which could uncover past doping offenses involving star Russian athletes. It's turned into another legal battleground in the saga nearly six years on from Russia hosting the Winter Olympics in Sochi.

Rodchenkov's lawyer told the AP the new allegation against his client is a "farce."

"Rodchenkov could not and did not log into the LIMS database," Jim Walden told The Associated Press. "We are not aware of anyone else that logged in. The point is that this is all a charade."

WADA this month banned Russia from next year's Tokyo Olympics over the data manipulation, though Russian athletes can still compete as neutrals.

With Russia planning a legal challenge to WADA's sporting sanctions, the next step for Rodchenkov could be testifying at the Court of Arbitration for Sport in the spring. His lawyer said he's ready.

"If WADA or any other agency needs Grigory to testify, Grigory will uphold his promise to cooperate fully to help atone for his role," Walden said. **MDT/AP**

OPINION

Rear Window

Severo Portela



SARS THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

First... we have to apologize for the Lewis Carroll copycat when it would be better to submit to the always fresh cliché of the tale of two cities, or any other alternative involving twins or doubles.

Today, two decades after inception, we believe that the uncharted paths both SARs are travelling lead to different destinations, regardless of whether they chose to follow, or were made to follow them. Ultimately they lead to diverse fates.

Despite the unprecedented preparations and exceptional security restrictions Beijing demanded be in place, President Xi Jinping's presence at the MSAR's 20th anniversary can be considered the equivalent of Deng Xiaoping's Southern Tour. Then and now, apparently, China is about to reset the strategy to avoid what it views as chaos or luan.

More than merely illuminating the high marks of the "good pupil" MSAR in that mandatory task named the "One country, Two systems," China was looking across the PRD to a SAR unrelenting in its will to protest for autonomy and democratic development. Despite a declining GGR, marginally in part as a direct consequence of the situation in Hong Kong, Macau, on its way to overtake Qatar as GDP global number one, is to be an example for Hong Kong, or as Bloomberg wrote, a "glimmering showcase for the virtues of obeying Beijing."

Although some of the "prizes" that the well-behaved Macau earned may seem exuberant, to say the least, it is well known that Beijing would not spare a cent to prove a point, be it the secondary stock-exchange, financial tools to play with in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), reinforcing the Portuguese platform, or the space industry; all this, and keeping the affluent (to say the least) casino business.

Hong Kong may look to Macau, and vice-versa, to assess how to fill the basket of goods, but the question hanging over the future of both SARs, now 20, is what comes after the first two decades of construction. If we follow the intuitive pro-democracy legislator Sulu Sou, we have to fear a closure, an epilogue, a fracture, in the process of the implementation of the one country, two systems principle. Since that implementation has been greeted as success, Sulu Sou is warning about the interpretation of "success" as the task being done, with nothing more to be done. The following question is what next after construction? Deconstruction? The new motto is already in motion: integration into the GBA.

Well-behaved Macau would not denounce the fact that the democratic development that birthed the Basic Law is at a deafening standstill, or that the judiciary matrix looks likely to bend to outside winds. "Macau people have a very limited voice," Sulu Sou dixit.

The difficulty in squaring the circle or going back to basics is much more challenging in Hong Kong. China - here Carrie Lam simplifies - does not want to intone the same language. Now and for good... everything is a matter of social issues. Not even that clumsy idea of expanding the electoral college, born on the notion that Hong Kong people would be pleased with some suffragism, is seen otherwise. When the second wave of 2 million came, Lam kept her cool, thinking suffragism would go the way of the suffragettes: some action and they would go home. So now there are no political issues nor electoral issues. Just social issues. If we repeat and repeat there are only social issues... maybe no one in Hong Kong will forget that there is a Basic Law.

Finally, one note about the Common Law and the impossibility of coexisting with a francophone continental system under the same roof, like in distant Cameroon. Hong Kong SAR would be a solution to that imbroglio. And one more about Macau and Hong Kong looking to each other across de Delta: which one has the concave and which the convex mirror?

BRITAIN'S PRINCE PHILIP IN HOSPITAL AS 'PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE'

THE BUZZ

Prince Philip, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II, was admitted to a London hospital last week "as a precautionary measure," Buckingham Palace said.

The palace said the 98-year-old Philip was admitted to the King Edward VII hospital for observation and treatment of a preexisting condition. It is not clear if Philip will be released in time to join the rest of the royal family for Christmas at Sandringham, the queen's country estate in Norfolk.

Philip had been at the royal family's Sandringham estate in eastern England, where the queen and her family usually spend Christmas. The palace said Philip didn't travel by ambulance and his admission wasn't an emergency. He is expected to be in hospital for a few days.

Philip, also known as the Duke of Edinburgh, married Elizabeth in 1947 and is the longest-serving royal consort in British history. He and the queen have four children, eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.



AP PHOTO

POPE DENOUNCES 'RIGIDITY' AS HE WARNS OF CHRISTIAN DECLINE

NICOLE WINFIELD

POPE Francis warned Saturday that "rigidity" in living out the Christian faith is creating a "minefield" of hatred and misunderstanding in a world where Christianity is increasingly irrelevant.

Francis called for Vatican bureaucrats to instead embrace change during his annual Christmas greetings to the cardinals, bishops and priests who work in the Holy See.

Francis' message appeared aimed at conservative and traditionalist Catholics, including within the Vatican Curia, who have voiced increasing opposition to his progressive-minded papacy. Their criticisms have accelerated over the past year, amid Vatican financial and sex abuse scandals that may have predated Francis' papacy but are nevertheless coming to light now.

Francis issued a stark reality check to the men in the Sala Clementina of the Apostolic Palace, acknowledging that Christianity no longer holds the commanding presence and influence in society that it once did.

He cited the late Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, a leader of the progressive wing of the Catholic Church, who in his final interview before dying in 2012 lamented that the church found itself "200 years behind" because of its inbred fear of change.

"Today we are no longer

the only ones that produce culture, no longer the first nor the most listened to," Francis told the prelates. "The faith in Europe and in much of the West is no longer an obvious presumption but is often denied, derided, marginalized and ridiculed."

As a result, he urged the Catholic hierarchy to embrace the necessary pastoral reforms and outlook that will make the church attractive so that it can fulfill its mission to spread the faith.

"Here we have to beware of the temptation of assuming a rigid outlook," Francis said. "Rigidity that is born from fear of change and ends up disseminating stakes and obstacles in the ground of the common good, turning it into a minefield of misunderstanding and hatred."

He recalled, as he has in the past, that people who take rigid positions are usually using them to mask their own problems, scandals or "imbalances."

"Rigidity and imbalance fuel one another in a vicious circle," he said. "And these days, the temptation to rigidity has become so apparent."

Traditionalist Catholics have denounced Francis' emphasis on mercy and openness to doctrinal wiggle room on issues such as sacraments for divorced and civilly remarried Catholics. They also sharply criticized his recent synod

on the Amazon, which called for the ordination of married men as priests, and what they considered pagan worship of an Amazonian statue of a pregnant woman that was featured during the meeting.

Francis has defended his outlook and priorities as a reflection of the Gospel, and the axiom that the true tradition of the church is one of a continuous, discerned path of change.

"Tradition is not static, it's dynamic," he said Saturday.

In a tangible sign of change, Francis issued a new decree Saturday limiting the term of the dean of the College of Cardinals, an influential job that had previously been held for life. Francis accepted the resignation of the current dean, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, and decreed that going forward, the future top cardinal would only have a five-year renewable term.

Sodano had been the powerful secretary of state under St. John Paul II, and was blamed in part for the Vatican's refusal to crack down on pedophile priests, including the notorious Rev. Marcial Maciel. Sodano, 92, continued to wield behind-the-scenes influence in the two papacies that followed, acting most recently as something of a beacon for conservative opposition to Francis.

As dean, he delivered his final Christmas greeting to Francis on Saturday. AP



AP PHOTO

Iraq Politicians have missed another deadline to name a new prime minister because of disagreements over which is the largest bloc in parliament, deepening a crisis that has roiled the country since October amid mass protests and state crackdown that has killed hundreds of people.



AP PHOTO

Saudi Arabia sentenced five people to death yesterday for the killing of Washington Post columnist and royal family critic Jamal Khashoggi, who was murdered in the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul last year by a team of Saudi agents. The killing of Khashoggi stunned the international community and also many Saudi citizens, who were deeply shocked that a Saudi national could be killed by 15 government agents inside one of the kingdom's consulates.

Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani appears to have narrowly won a second term, according to preliminary results from September's balloting that were announced Sunday, although his main challenger rejected the outcome as illegitimate. If the outcome stands despite the complaints of ballot fraud, it could give Ghani the authority he has sought to demand a leading role in peace talks with the Taliban in the country devastated by decades of war.

HOLIDAY TIMES

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holiday. The Times will be back on the stands on Friday December 27. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times.