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A VISITOR FROM WUHAN IS RECEIVING ISOLATED TREATMENT AT THE PUBLIC HOSPITAL, BUT IS IN A STABLE CONDITION WITH NO FEVER OR PNEUMONIA P3

RESEARCH SHOWS THOSE ON HIGHER INCOMES MORE ACTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA P4

ONE OF THE ARCHITECTS OF HONG KONG'S PEG TO THE USD HAS SLAMMED A 'NAÏVE' BANK OF ENGLAND REPORT, CALLING IT AMATEURISH P8



Thailand Thousands of anti-government protesters took part in the "Run Against Dictatorship" in the Thai capital yesterday in the biggest political demonstration in years. Organizers said more than 13,000 people turned up for the run at a park, demanding that Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha step down.



Iran In the face of mounting evidence, Iran yesterday acknowledged that it shot down the Ukrainian jetliner by accident, killing all 176 people aboard. The admission by Iran's Revolutionary Guard undermined the credibility of information provided by senior officials, who for three days had adamantly dismissed allegations of a missile strike as Western propaganda.

India Police in Indian-controlled Kashmir have arrested a long-serving counterinsurgency officer for allegedly having ties with rebels fighting against Indian rule in the disputed region, officials said yesterday.



Australia Crews battling Australia's wildfires said yesterday that they have been able to turn from defense to offense for the first time in weeks thanks to a break in the weather. Dale McLean, who is helping manage the response to a fire near the town of Bodalla in New South Wales state, was part of team that was bulldozing down small trees and burning scrub ahead of the fire's projected path to try to stop it from reaching a major highway by starving it of fuel. More on p12

More on backpage

TSAI WINS LANDSLIDE ELECTION VICTORY

P10-11



MACAU GOV'T HITS BACK AT US REPORT ACCUSING IT OF STIFLING DEMOCRACY

P2

ASSET EVALUATION MAIN FOCUS FOR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING APPLICANTS

Residents participating in the first subsidized housing explanation session focused their feedback in the valuation of assets criteria. Some were concerned about the valuation of real estate owned outside of Macau. The Housing Bureau replied on October 31, 2019, that the value of such properties would be taken into account in its equivalent in Macau patacas. Meanwhile, business-owner applicants must submit the accounts of their companies for income evaluation. While some owners do not keep monthly records of their accounts, the Bureau reiterated that the submission is a legal requirement, but reminded that the law offers a choice between submitting the 12-month average and the income from the previous month.

DANIEL BEITLER



Macau Government Headquarters seen through one of its gates

LAWMAKER MAK ASKS ABOUT AVIATION CONCESSION

Lawmaker Mak Soi Kun wrote an interpellation to the SAR government asking about the aviation concession. Air Macau's exclusive concession will expire in November. Mak wants to know whether the local government will draft new regulations to manage the aviation concession. In Mak's opinion, if the local government does not establish relevant rules and set up criteria, other aviation companies will not be able to make arrangements and Macau's aviation industry development will be affected as a result. The lawmaker also questioned the Macau International Airport facilities, saying that the airport's size will be insufficient to handle the expected number of passengers in future.

RED MARKET'S EXTERNAL VENDORS TO RETURN

Some of the external stall vendors of Red Market will be able to move back to their locations today, according to a statement released by the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM). Since October 2019, the external vendor area of the market has been undergoing a refurbishment program. The first phase of refurbishment of the Red Market's external vendor area is mostly completed, only awaiting tents to be installed. However, as the Lunar New Year approaches, vendors expressed their demands to return to their stalls before the holiday arrives, which the IAM has approved. In February, the IAM will start renovation works at the vendor area at Rua Norte do Mercado Almirante Lacerda. Affected vendors will be relocated to Rua Padre João Climaco.

LOCAL GOV'T HITS BACK AT US CONGRESS REPORT ON STIFLING DEMOCRACY

RENATO MARQUES

AN independent agency of the U.S. government has condemned the actions of the Macau government in the last year in what it describes as a stifling of the democratic wishes of the Macau people. The Macau government has hit back, accusing the U.S.-based Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) and its recent report of overlooking achievements in other areas of society since the city's handover to China in 1999.

In the commission's annual report, which is responsible for analyzing the developments in the greater China region over the past year, the U.S. Congress body noted that in 2019, the local government acted in a manner that stifled calls for democratic development in Macau.

The body accused the Macau authorities of working to stop any action, including public demonstrations, that would challenge the central government, especially regarding the ongoing social unrest in the neighboring region of Hong Kong, and more importantly, remarked on the lack of democratic standards in the election

of the new Chief Executive (CE) Ho Iat Seng.

"The Commission did not observe progress in Macau toward universal suffrage in the 2019 CE election. Former Macau Legislative Assembly president Ho Iat Seng won the uncontested election on August 25, 2019, because he was the only candidate able to garner enough nominations in the 400-member CE Election Committee, many of whose members are considered to be supporters of the central government," the report stated.

Giving examples of what the Commission considered as efforts to stop democracy, the report reads, "This past year, the Macau government continued to 'securitize' the city against pro-democracy forces that might challenge the central government's rule."

"In October 2018, the Macau Legislative Assembly (AL) approved the government's plans for a Cybersecurity Bill, which critics said would undermine freedom of expression

in the city and allow the Macau government to 'monitor, sensor, block and delete online speech.' In June 2019, the AL passed the Cybersecurity Bill into law, effective December 2019."

"The authors of the report selectively ignored the benefits enjoyed by Macau stemming from the 'one country, two systems' principle.

RESPONSE OF THE MACAU SAR GOV'T

Another example noted by the U.S. State Commission related to the amendments to the "National Anthem Law" passed in January 2019 and effective since June last year. These amendments penalize "acts disrespectful of the Chinese national anthem punishable by up to three years in prison," noting the opposition to such bill by pro-democracy lawmakers as well as by the Macau Journalists Association declaring that

the media should not be part of "the propaganda machine of the regime, and it has no obligation to cooperate."

The SAR government immediately replied to the report expressing its "strong opposition."

In a statement, the government refuted the accusation without addressing any of the topics mentioned by the CCEC report.

"The 2019 annual report overlooked the fact that the Macau SAR has made — over the course of the past 20 years since returning to China — remarkable achievements in various aspects. Such achievements were widely recognized and have triggered exponential leaps in the city's development," the government statement said in the statement.

"In addition, the authors of the U.S. report selectively ignored the benefits enjoyed by Macau stemming from the 'one country, two systems' principle, and the latter's great vitality."

The statement concludes with the government making use of the words of the central government on such matters, claiming "the U.S. report made baseless accusations and represents a brutal interference in the internal affairs of Macau, which are entirely part of China's domestic affairs," urging the Commission to "refrain from making biased statements, and to stick to the facts."

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Wuhan visitor in hospital isolation after pneumonia test

JULIE ZHU

A mainland woman from Wuhan is still receiving isolated medical treatment at the public hospital, according to a statement released by the Health Bureau (SSM). As of yesterday, the Wuhan resident, aged 37, was waiting at Centro Hospitalar Conde de São Januário (CHCSJ) to be tested for infection with the viral pneumonia detected in Wuhan. Last night, the SSM reported she has no fever or pneumonia, but is still in isolation.

The case comes after local health authorities were notified over the weekend that preliminary investigations have identified the pathogen involved in the Wuhan outbreak as a newly-categorized coronavirus.

On January 10, the mainland flew into Zhuhai airport from Wuhan and traveled to Macau via the Border Gate. On the same night, while she was already in Macau, she developed abnormal symptoms of fever and runny nose.

At midnight on January 11, the Wuhan tourist visited the CHCSJ to receive medical



treatment. At the hospital, her respiratory pathology results were negative for common respiratory diseases. Her situation is mild, and she does not show symptoms of pneumonia.

Between January 1 and January 11, the SSM says that Macau's medical organizations have admitted nine people (including the currently isolated woman) who had been to Wuhan in the past 14 days. The patients displayed symptoms

of fever and respiratory infection. The SSM rules out the possibility of the Wuhan viral respiratory disease in these eight patients.

On Saturday, SSM received notification from the National Health Commission on the latest information of the cluster of pneumonia cases detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province.

After the preliminary determination that the pathogen of "viral pneumonia with unk-

nown cause" is a novel coronavirus, the mainland health authorities immediately revised and improved the protocols on diagnosis, treatment and surveillance of viral pneumonia with unknown cause.

The Wuhan Municipal Health Commission reported over the weekend that one person had died from the new type of coronavirus. The Commission said seven other people were in critical condition among a total of 41 who were suffering from pneumonia. That was down from the earlier figure of 59. The others were in stable condition and at least two had been released from a hospital.

A total of 739 close contacts have been identified and 419 of them are healthcare workers. All have been put under medical surveillance, and no related cases have been detected so far.

For the time being, the investigation has neither identified any infection of healthcare workers nor definite evidence of human-to-human transmission.

China says the cause of the Wuhan outbreak remains unknown, but has sought to quash speculation that it could be a

reappearance of the SARS epidemic, which killed hundreds in 2002 and 2003.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some of which cause the common cold. Others found in bats, camels and other animals have evolved into more severe illnesses.

Common symptoms include a runny nose, headache, cough and fever. Shortness of breath, chills and body aches are associated with more dangerous kinds of coronaviruses, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Amid the continuous development of Wuhan pneumonia cases, Macau's inter-departmental working group still considers that the risk to Macau is "medium" and that the alert level should remain at "Level III (Serious)".

The local government said that members of the public have no cause for alarm regarding the Wuhan outbreak. Nonetheless, a heightened level of awareness should be displayed by members of the public and greater attention given to the maintenance of personal and environmental hygiene.

Lam Chong, director of SSM Center for Disease Prevention and Control, and two representatives of the public hospital will be sent to Wuhan to learn more about the pneumonia epidemic, patient diagnosis and treatment, as well as prevention and control measures, the government said.

HIGHER EDUCATION

UM plans to admit 1,500 local students in 2020

THE University of Macau (UM) plans to accept 1,500 local students this year, according to Song Yonghua, rector of UM.

Yesterday, during the UM's Open Day activity, Song said this year the school's admission plan for Macau students remains the same as that last year.

The admission rate of local students for undergraduate programs will be between 75% to 80%. In total, the school plans to welcome 2,000 new undergraduate students in 2020.

The exact admission plan for non-local students for undergraduate programs will be adjusted based on the number of applications

the school receives and also the eventual results of the applicants.

Before 2018, UM accepted approximately 1,300 Macau students for undergraduate programs and 1,600 in total.

However, non-local high school students from the Greater Bay Area, in this case Guangdong and Hong Kong, are given more opportunities to study in UM, Macau's only public university.

According to Song, in 2019, UM set up a special scholarship for high school students from the Greater Bay Area. "We enhanced enrollment towards students from the Greater Bay Area," said the rector.

Song explained that the special scholarship is intended not only for UM to serve local students better, but also to expedite integration into the Greater Bay Area.

Starting from 2019, UM started offering courses specifically to train science teachers for secondary schools and to respond to the demands for science and technology in the Greater Bay Area and Macau. In the school's Faculty of Science and Technology, new majors were also established as a response to big data and artificial intelligence development.

During the UM Open Day, many families with young children, as well

as high-school students, were seen participating in the events. The Open Day featured various activities, including course consultation, themed talks, and recreational and sports activities. The school's residential colleges, laboratories, and the library and sports complex were also opened to visitors.

The university invited student representatives from different departments to provide information to visitors and share their personal experiences of studying at UM.

One Macau local high school student, surnamed Kou, expressed hopes of getting into UM's Faculty of Business Administration, whereas another Open Day visitor, a high school student in his final year, was confident that he will be admitted to UM in the near future. JZ

OVER 6.3 MILLION LAI SEE RECYCLED IN THREE YEARS

IN the past three years, the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA) recycled a total of 6.37 million lai see (red packets), used to hold small amounts of money given as gifts during the Chinese Lunar New Year.

Starting from 2017, the DSPA has been implementing the "Recycling the Red Packet is Very Easy" program. According to the environmental authority, about 2.19 million recycled red packets can be reused this year or in future.

Starting from January 2, the DSPA has been handling out the recycled lai see free of charge to Macau residents for the upcoming Lunar New Year this month.

Between January 30 and February 15, the DSPA will set up recycling spots across town.

Meanwhile, on Saturday, DSPA Director Tam Wai Man said that the recovery rate of the computer and telecommunication devices' recycling

program was 95%.

Currently, the DSPA is implementing recycling programs specifically for batteries, large-size electronics, home appliances, among others. In total, the DSPA has already recycled 76,000 computers and 39,000 kilograms of batteries.

Last week, chairman of Macau Ecological Society Ho Wai Tim voiced that the local government must be concerned about the impact to small businesses posed by the DSPA's home appliance recycling program.

Tam explained that companies do not need a license to recycle home appliances. All members of the recycling sector can recycle home appliances and also work with other groups.

As of today, the DSPA has already recycled 800 home appliances. Over 200 pieces were obtained from the bureau's door-to-door service. JZ

MACAU HELIPORT CONDUCTED 'BOMB THREAT' DRILL

The Macau Heliport conducted a security drill simulating a bomb threat. Authorities said the drill was conducted in a smooth manner and all procedures were in place. According to an official statement, the drill took place at 11:30 p.m. on January 9 at the Macau Heliport of the Outer Harbor. The scenario began with a call received by the staff claiming that a bomb had been placed in the heliport. After conducting an assessment of the situation, the heliport activated the emergency plan and immediately informed all relevant government entities. The heliport staff found a suspected object in the staircase area which prompted the Heliport Command Centre to initiate an evacuation of all passengers and staff. The explosive disposal team of the Public Security Police Force examined the suspected object and eventually concluded that it was not a genuine bomb.

FIRE SERVICES HOLDS DRILL AT PHARMACEUTICAL FACTORY

The Fire Services (CB) held a fire and evacuation drill last week at the Hovione pharmaceutical factory, in conjunction with Hovione Farmaciência SA, so as to improve coordination and communication between both parties and prepare contingency measures in the event of an incident. In the simulation, workers had discovered a fire caused by static electricity at the factory. They immediately called the Fire Services for assistance and evacuated employees. Meanwhile, the CB dispatched nine emergency vehicles and 38 firefighters to the site to extinguish the fires and conduct search actions as per the defined plan. About 160 people from both the Hovione factory and the CB participated in the simulation, according to a statement from the CB.

HIGHER EARNERS PROVE MORE ACTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

JULIE ZHU

MACAU residents with higher incomes are more inclined than those on lower incomes to publicize their personal activities on social media, the Macau Media Research Center of Macau University of Science and Technology has found.

A total of 1,223 valid questionnaires were collected during the research process. Interviewees were aged between 18 and 40 years and approximately 60% have university degrees. The majority of respondents either work in the gaming industry or are civil servants.

According to the survey, 52% of respondents were active and made regular posts on social media. Over 10% of the interviewees reported that they never posted any information online, while 7% never engaged in any kind of online activity.

Younger respondents and wealthier individuals were found to be more active on social media.

ROBIN WORRALL



Macau residents are also relying on new media (such as internet blogs and streaming services) and social media more frequently than traditional media, with two-thirds of the respondents reporting that they never, or rarely used traditional media.

Macau local residents, in general, prefer to use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube for their media needs, but

also reported using Chinese social media applications such as WeChat and Weibo.

Respondents also tend to spend a larger portion of their time on social media on their mobile devices. Nearly 62% of respondents said they spend more than one hour per day on social media, while 26% spend more than three hours per day browsing social media.

Meanwhile, more than 81% of people who regularly browse new media do so for less than one hour per day.

While continuous growth has been recorded in the average time spent on social media in recent years, the time spent engaging with other forms of media has drastically declined to less than 30 minutes per day, according to the survey.

AD



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Alan Ho to appeal eight-year sentence

ALAN Ho, the nephew of gaming tycoon Stanley Ho, is appealing an eight-year prison sentence handed down by Macau's second court. The defendant's lawyers said that they do not agree with the conviction and are seeking an acquittal of Alan Ho, reported public broadcaster Radio Macau.

The former administrative director and manager of the Hotel Lisboa was arrested in 2015, alongside several other then-executives, on suspicion of running a prostitution ring at the Lisboa.

After a lengthy trial in Macau's Court of First Instance, Alan Ho was found guilty of organized prostitution and sentenced to 13 months' imprisonment in March 2016.

Having already served 14 months in police custody awaiting trial, Ho was released following his original sentence. But prosecutors filed an appeal with the Court of Second Instance in April.

The sentence was overturned by the Court of Second Instance last year, which found Alan Ho

BLOOMBERG



also guilty of a second crime, that of founding and leading a criminal cartel. Ho's sentence was revised to a total of eight years.

It was widely expected that Alan Ho would appeal the second court's ruling. One local lawyer, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, told the Times in December that Alan Ho "has nothing to lose by filing an appeal" as "the [Court of Final Appeal] cannot legally convict him with a more severe sentence."

Apart from Ho, there are five other people involved in the case, surnamed Wong, Lun, Mak, Qiao and Pun. All of them were found guilty of organized prostitution and were sentenced to between five and 29 months by the Court of First Instance.

The Court of Second Instance has also overturned these rulings, raising their periods of detention to between four and six years each. **DB**

BLOOMBERG



WYNN ANNOUNCES 'WINTER BONUS' FOR EMPLOYEES

WYNN Macau, Limited announced that a "Winter Bonus" equivalent to one month's gross salary, will be paid to all eligible Wynn Macau and Wynn Palace staff members. In the statement, the company explains that the bonus will cover over 97% of its 13,700 employees, excluding only senior management positions.

The company said that the bonus aims to show its appreciation to all workers for their "hard work and commitment during the second half of 2019."

Although these bonuses are discretionary, they have been widely popularized by all gaming operators, which have been awarding them semesterly or annually, normally coinciding with the festive

season of the Lunar New Year. It has also been popular to announce salary increases around the start of each new year.

Other operators such as Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd (GEG) and SJM Holdings Ltd had also recently announced similar bonus awards for their employees.

GEG said earlier this month that it would be granting a discretionary one-month bonus to eligible employees at senior manager grade and below. The bonus will be paid on January 23, 2020.

SJM has established a bonus system that grants such benefits for periods of three years. According to GGRasia, the company has already approved the continuation of the scheme starting this year until 2023. **RM**

AD

Academic Year 2020/2021

Central Registration for Children Entering Kindergarten for the First Time



Aims

To optimise schools' enrolment mechanism, simplify the procedures that parents complete for their children entering kindergarten for the first time and enable parents to confirm which school to enrol their children as early as possible.

Eligibility

Macao residents aged 3 by 31st December, 2020, who will enrol in infant education in Macao for the first time.

Timeline (Year 2020)

Enrolment information	Starting from 1 st January onwards, parents can consult the enrolment information on the DSEJ website or school website.
Central Registration	Parents register on the DSEJ website or at the DSEJ counters between 6 th and 20 th January.
Schools release the interview date and time	Between 18 th and 21 st February
School admission interviews	Between 1 st and 29 th March
Release of the admission list and the period for online confirmation	Release of the admission list on the DSEJ website and at schools on 3 rd April Parents can check the list and confirm which school to enrol their children on the DSEJ website between 3 rd and 5 th April
Parents of admitted students register at schools in person	Between 6 th and 8 th April (on school working days)
Release of the admission list of waitlisted students and parents of waitlisted students go in person to process registration / school transfer procedures	Between 9 th and 29 th April (on school working days)
Enrolment at other schools	If children have not been admitted to any school until 14 th April, i.e. after schools release the admission list of waitlisted students, or parents want to enrol their child in other schools, parents can visit the DSEJ website to check the status of K1 places available at different schools, and go to the schools that still accept enrolment for enquiries and registration.

Gentle Reminder:

- To enrol in Macao schools, non-Macao residents must possess a stay or residence permit for over 90 days issued by the authorised entity of the Macao SAR. Parents must process the registration at any of the DSEJ counters.
- Schools set no limit to the number of registrants and interviewees. There is also no priority for early registration in the Central Registration system. Therefore, parents do not need to rush to be the first to register.
- Parents only need to bring the identification document(s) of their children to the school to process the registration or school transfer procedure according to the requirement of the schools.
- The DSEJ will provide "Service of consultation and arrangement of school places" to parents who are in need.

For enquiries : 8397 2309

For details, please browse
DSEJ website: www.dsej.gov.mo



DSEJ account on Wechat
Wechat ID : dsejmacau





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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



One Central Lakeview Apartment On High Floor

\$12,500,000
 1,269 ft²
 2 2



Va Fat, Taipa

\$4,530,000
 725 ft²
 2 1



Manhattan High Floor, Taipa

\$26,800/mth
 2,305 ft²
 4 2



New Studio, Taipa

\$9,500/mth
 470 ft²
 1



More Listings

For Sale

- [Cotai] One Grantai 4 2 2,556 ft² **\$25,600,000** (ref: 19096001)
- [Taipa] Nova City 3 2 1,515 ft² **\$11,750,000** (ref: 19106001)
- [Taipa] Manhattan 3 2 1,720 ft² **\$12,980,000** (ref: 19096006)
- [Taipa] Jade Garden 4 3 3,180 ft² **\$18,000,000** (ref: 19126002)
- [Macau] Lakeview Tower 3 2 1,344 ft² **\$11,000,000** (ref: 19126001)

For Rent

- [Taipa] Nam Long 2 1 645 ft² **\$11,800/mth** (ref: 19111001)
- [Macau] Furnished Apartment 2 1 n/a **\$12,500/mth** (ref: 19101007)
- [Taipa] Nova Grand 2 1 935 ft² **\$17,800/mth** (ref: 19091005)
- [Cotai] One Grantai 3 3 2,122 ft² **\$23,000/mth** (ref: 19030001RT)
- [Taipa] Manhattan Luxury 3 2 1,720 ft² **\$23,800/mth** (ref: 19091006)

Recent Movements

Sold Lakeview, Macau,
 3 beds, 3 bath

Sold Nam Long, Taipa
 1 bed, 1 bath

Rented Taipa New Studio,
 1 bath



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CITY FRINGE FESTIVAL

Softly-softly: Macau still learning to love contemporary dance

ANTHONY LAM

THE 19th Macao City Fringe Festival commenced on Friday at Mount Fortress with an opening ceremony and contemporary dance performances.

Local and international performers took to the improvised stage - which was a corner of the viewing deck outside the Macao Museum - to present audiences with entertainment that the curator, Tracy Wong, described as "highlighting the cultural blend in Macau."

Body Traveler was the name of the opening performance, an outdoor contemporary dance piece

shown at Mount Fortress. It falls under the subtheme "On Site" of this year's festival. Wong's picks do not necessarily work only outdoors, but those that are held in open air venues seek to "enrich the experience of the festival," according to Wong.

This is the second year the curator and her group are running the initiative with the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), which organizes the Fringe Festival.

Similar to last year, the curator said she travelled to many cities in the past 12 months to sample and audition feasible acts for this year's festival. Asked what criteria she uses, Wong said she picked shows that were "suitable for Macau."

When asked to elaborate, Wong said, "Macau has a culture with features from both the East and the West. I thus chose performances that blend or mix up these various elements."

The curator said that contemporary dance is only starting to become popular in Macau, and that the market needs to be matured in the coming years in order to appreciate more sophisticated pieces. Accordingly, she picked more straightforward, less abstract performances for the festival.

By bringing the art form to the Fringe Festival, Wong said she hopes to familiarize local art viewers with this type of performance.

As the type of art is only at its primary stage in the city, "we think more abstract concepts, [such as] dances with dancers standing still for several minutes, will be for a later stage," the curator explained.

Her work may already be paying dividends. Wong said that the public's reception to contemporary dance in this year's lineup was warming, with "some people happy upon seeing a stronger line-up in the Fringe [Festival] this year."

The festival will run until January 19 at various locations in Macau. Besides performances, there are 13 outreach activities, as well as an exhibition on Macau's garment industry.

CE ENCOURAGES WORKERS' FEDERATION TO ACCOMPLISH NEW MISSIONS

The Macao Federation of Trade Unions celebrated its 70th anniversary last week. The celebration was attended by, among other guests, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng, who commended the federation's contribution to the city in the past two decades. He also addressed the federation's support to the governance of the Special Administrative Region. In the future, Ho hopes the federation can "accomplish new missions in a new era." He also assured that the government would continue its support for the federation by refining labor rights and workplace, progressing labor-related legislation, as well as introducing new and upgrading existing vocational training. All of this, Ho said, would be done in accordance with the 'one country, two systems' policy framework.

IC TO TURN OLD BRICK HOUSES INTO GALLERIES

Thirteen historic brick houses under the administration of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) are currently being renovated and will likely be turned into galleries to exhibit relics about traditional industries and handicrafts. The refurbishment and reopening will take place in several phases. Refurbishment on the house in the worst condition, numbered 24, began last month. It had major structural defects. The IC thinks any delay in the work on the houses will be severely hazardous to the entire project. After the renovation of the houses, the IC intends to exhibit history and relics of industries such as soy sauce manufacturing. An evaluation on the houses' capacity will be conducted by third-party professionals.

EDUCATION REGULATOR SAYS SCHOOL BAGS BECOMING LIGHTER

Spot check results from last year show that school bags are becoming lighter, the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau told the Northern District Advisory Committee, as mentioned during a press conference about the bureau's program to reduce the weight of school bags. The widely accepted standard weight of school bags should be no heavier than 15% of the carrier's weight. According to the bureau, preliminary data show that the situation is improving. One of the factors for the heavy weight is carrying unessential things such as 64-color pencil kits and a fully filled water bottle. The bureau suggests that school children carry empty bottles and only fill water up at school. It will also encourage schools to install more water dispensers.

Macau designers encouraged to submit entries to Shenzhen design award

DESIGNERS from Macau were encouraged to submit entries to the Shenzhen Global Design Award at an introductory forum held by the Macau Design Centre.

In 2008, Shenzhen became the first Chinese city to be listed by UNESCO as a City of Design. It is also the first city in China to join the Creative Cities Network, of which Macau is a member as well, but in the field of

gastronomy.

The award has been held annually in the South China coastal city since 2018. The winners of the award will receive prizes totaling 10 million yuan.

Co-organizing this year's award, the Macau Design Centre held an introductory forum over the weekend. Presided over by Kenneth Ho and Au Chon Hin, both local designers, the forum sought to familiarize lo-

cal designers with the prestigious award. They also hopes the award will inspire local designers to elevate their aspirations.

It was introduced at the forum that the award has five categories, namely architecture, interior design, industrial design, fashion design and communication design.

The four types of awards for each of the five categories are gold, silver, bronze and an honorary

prize. The gold award comes with a 500,000-yuan prize, while recipients of the silver and bronze prizes will be given 300,000 yuan and 100,000 yuan respectively.

Registration is open until February 9. The award ceremony will be held on April 16.

Meanwhile, the Centre is holding an exhibition showcasing the winning design in the Macau Design Award 2019 until end

of this month at the Macau Handover Gifts Museum.

Officially opened in 2015, the Macau Design Centre is operated by the Macau Designers Association. It aims to provide requisite resources to support the development of Macau's design industry. Not only does it spread news about design in Macau, it also connects local designers with those from other places. **AL**

FION LI & SHAWNA KWAN

HONG KONG

Property scion says social housing a top priority

ADAM Kwok, the young executive with the keys to Hong Kong's largest property empire, sees tackling the city's housing crisis as a top priority.

Kwok's family company, Sun Hung Kai Properties Ltd., announced it will lease three plots of land in the New Territories to non-governmental organizations for eight years for a nominal sum of HKD1. The donation will yield around 2,000 apartments for low-income families waiting for public housing, helping to ease pressure in the world's least affordable real estate market.

"When any decent-minded person sees these new immigrant families, just people lining up, living in these subdivided units in the city, you would have a heart for them," the 36-year-old tycoon said in an interview ahead of Friday's announcement. "Especially us being in the situation, we can do quite a lot more."

Hong Kong is notorious for its sky-high home prices. Unaffordable housing has forced many into dire living conditions, residing in steel container boxes, illegal industrial sites or apartments the size of a car-parking space. The government estimates that more than 200,000 people live in small subdivided units and one in five residents is below the poverty line.

Since the anti-government protests began in June, local property developers - almost all of them owned by billionaire families - have been criticized by Chinese state media as

BLOOMBERG



Adam Kwok of Sun Hung Kai Properties Ltd.

land hoarders and blamed for pushing up the cost of real estate. That's partially fueling young people's rage.

Kwok said this particular project started in June, before the protests erupted, and so wasn't related to the demonstrations. He declined to be drawn on the current political situation.

"I think when you see the

project, not only the launch announcement, but the thought we put behind it, you'll see that it's something we put our heart into," he said. An executive director at Sun Hung Kai, Kwok is responsible for leading the firm's property-development businesses.

At \$35.8 billion, the Kwok family is Hong Kong's wealthiest

clan, according to a Bloomberg Billionaires Index ranking of Asia's richest families. Their empire is also among the most exposed to the city's anti-government protests.

Late last month, Wheelock Properties Ltd. announced similar plans to donate land that can be used to build apartments for people waiting for public hou-

sing. Rivals New World Development Co., controlled by the Cheng family, and Henderson Land Development Co., controlled by the Lee clan, took the initiative earlier to give away plots.

Hong Kong's richest man, Li Ka-shing, of CK Asset Holdings Ltd., has offered HKD1 billion (\$129 million) to help small and medium-sized businesses impacted by the protests.

On Friday, CK Asset said it will also study using farm land for housing development, although cautioned that transforming such land for housing may take a "relatively long time" to benefit those in need.

Sun Hung Kai said Friday it will team with Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council. One project called United Court in Yeun Long, when completed in early 2022, should provide a home for 1,600 families and ultimately benefit 5,000 families, the developer said.

Sun Hung Kai also announced that it will develop transitional housing at two other sites, in Kam Tin South and Kwu Tung town. The three projects will span close to 400,000 square feet and provide 2,000 transitional apartments.

United Court is located near public transport and doesn't require government involvement in building large-scale infrastructure, such as roads. It will feature leisure and recreational spaces, as well as sports and children's facilities. Weekend flea markets will be held on a regular basis and there will be social enterprise stores, like a community kitchen and barter trade shops. **BLOOMBERG**

HK group cuts rents as protests slam retail, tourism

SHIRLEY ZHAO

HONG Kong-based real-estate and aviation group Swire Pacific Ltd. has been cutting some rents in the city, where months of violent protests choked off business for retailers and tourism operators.

Swire's Pacific Place mall has shops with brands including Cartier and Louis Vuitton, though its location has at times made it a refuge for protesters fleeing police tear gas and rubber bullets. Rent concessions have been offered to the company's tenants on a case-by-

-case basis, Michelle Low, the conglomerate's finance director, said in a briefing with analysts Friday. She didn't give the size of rent reductions or name any recipients.

"All of us are aware that Hong Kong's retail sales have dropped quite significantly," Low said. "It's important that we continue to support Hong Kong's retail industry as well as our tenants through this challenging time."

Swire, which also controls Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd., has taken a heavy blow from pro-democracy protests that have continued

since June, deterring visitors and turning popular shopping districts into battle zones between police and demonstrators. Marches prompted by a proposed extradition law have broadened into a movement against China's grip on the city, while Beijing has sought to shift anger toward some of the city's richest landlords for keeping housing prices high.

Sales slumped as much as 12% at Swire's shopping malls in Hong Kong through the first three quarters. Low said the full-year result would be worse.

The hotel business

also suffered, said Low, with an occupancy rate of between 50% and 60%.

International brands have also been scaling back in Hong Kong since the protests began in June. Luxury brand Folli Follie closed one of its shops in Central in December ahead of the lease's expiration. LVMH, the world's largest luxury conglomerate, plans to close a Times Square mall store in Causeway Bay after its request for lower rent was refused, the South China Morning Post reported, citing sources it didn't identify. **BLOOMBERG**

HK PEG ARCHITECT SLAMS 'NAIVE' BOE REPORT

THE Bank of England should apologize for a report which warned of risks resulting from fund outflows in the wake of Hong Kong's protests, according to one of the architects of the city's exchange rate system.

The U.K. central bank's Financial Stability Report, which cited \$5 billion of portfolio outflows, did not account for inflows of short-term capital which offset the withdrawal in the city's balance of payments, said John Greenwood, chief economist at Invesco Ltd. and an architect of Hong Kong's dollar peg.

He added that the fact that the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) had not stepped in to defend the currency peg shows there was no net outflow. Its last purchase of Hong Kong dollars took place in the spring, prior to the start of the protests.

"The Bank of England report was frankly misleading and they should apologize for it," Greenwood said at a press conference in Hong Kong last week. "That was so short-sighted and so naive as to be not worthy of a central bank."

Greenwood is a member of HKMA's currency board sub-committee, which monitors and reports on the linked exchange rate system that pegs it against the U.S. dollar in a range of 7.75 to 7.85. The currency has surged this month to the strong side of its trading band, appreciating to the firmest level against the greenback since April 2017.

HKMA has previously disputed the BoE analysis, saying it didn't mean there had been an actual outflow of money from its banking system. **MDT/BLOOMBERG**



HK'S FIRST DIGITAL BANK OFFERS 6% RATE THAT DWARFS HSBC'S

ALFRED LIU

THE first of Hong Kong's new generation of digital banks has announced its arrival with a 6% introductory rate for deposits.

ZA Bank Ltd., one of eight firms preparing to start digital-only banks in Hong Kong, has begun a trial run that pays a select group of depositors over 3 percentage points more than banks such as HSBC Holdings Plc and Standard Chartered Plc. Though many doubt the new banks will be able to maintain such rates, the offer is a warning of upcoming competition for the city's \$410 billion local currency time-deposit business.

"This is more of a gimmick, which shouldn't become a norm," said Terry Siu, treasurer at CMB Wing Lung Bank Ltd., which pays 3.8% to new savers for two-month Hong Kong dollar deposits.

"But competition for funds is indeed getting higher as eight more banks are coming out."

ZA began a pilot last month for the city's first digital-only bank. It's offering the 6% rate for three-month Hong Kong dollar deposits capped at HKD200,000 (\$25,000), according to a person with knowledge of the matter. The accounts are set at a 2% rate, but offer a top up of as much as 4% to select clients, the person said. Standard Chartered, HSBC and BOC Hong Kong Holdings Ltd. pay 1.9% to 2.3% for the maturity.

Groups of companies including Chinese giants Ant Financial and Tencent Holdings Ltd. were granted licenses to operate virtual banks last year by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority. The launch is now approaching at a time when tensions stoked by pro-democracy protests in the former

British colony show few signs of abating.

Deposit rates could stay elevated as the unrest persists amid concerns over money outflows. So far there haven't been any signs cash is fleeing the city though banks have said some clients are inquiring about opening accounts elsewhere as a precaution. The Monetary Authority - the de facto central bank - steers the economy and maintains stability by pegging the city's dollar to its U.S. counterpart.

The rates stand in stark contrast to parts of the developed world, where central banks have slashed key rates below zero, forcing banks in some cases to pass negative rates onto retail customers. In Denmark, where rates have been negative the longest, a bevy of banks now charge depositors.

Deposit rates are also lower among other Internet banks globally. Monzo in the U.K. offers deposits of about 1.3%, while Australia's uniquely named 86400 pays 2.25% on some deposits. In the U.S., Ally boasts of accounts with a 1.6% rate and three-month CDs at 0.75%, while Goldman Sachs Group Inc.'s Marcus venture offers a savings account with a 1.7% rate.

A spokeswoman for ZA, a unit of ZhongAn Technologies International Group Ltd., declined to comment on the rate, but said that it will roll out new offerings in stages. ZA has said it will provide users with a "full suite of services 24/7," allowing customers to open an account in five minutes with just a Hong Kong identity card.

An HKMA spokeswoman said in a comment to Bloomberg on

Friday that it "notes" that some banks may offer "promotional" rates to some customers, while emphasizing that banking products are commercial decisions.

"While the Monetary Authority will not interfere with the commercial decisions of individual institutions, it would be a concern if a virtual bank planned to aggressively build market share at the expense of recording substantial losses in the initial years of operation without any credible plan for profitability in the medium term," she said.

Virtual banks are similar to traditional retail banking services in that they will be able to accept deposits and give out loans. But they aren't expected to set up physical branches, which will keep costs down.

Bloomberg Intelligence anticipates the new banks will find it difficult to make inroads into the city's loan market, grabbing just a 1.5% share by 2025, since they will be held back by challenges in attracting deposits and high costs for interbank funding.

Hong Kong's "citizens are less inclined to adopt new fintech offerings, as they are accustomed to comprehensive services offered by global banks such as HSBC and Citibank," said Bloomberg Intelligence senior analyst Francis Chan. "Online lenders may find it difficult to tap new customers, partly due to the dominance of credit cards and Octopus cards."

Alan Yip, a senior foreign-exchange strategist at Bank of East Asia Ltd., is also skeptical about the fat rate being offered by ZA becoming a trend.

"Traditional banks are only taking a wait-and-see approach now as the virtual banking business has yet to make a splash," he said. "The market impact shouldn't be very significant yet as they will need time to develop, therefore, the higher rate may not become a trend soon."

Nevertheless, competition is heating up for a rich vein of the financial hub's banking industry. Goldman Sachs estimated in 2018 that \$15 billion, or 30% of the city's total banking revenue, is up for grabs. **BLOOMBERG**

HSBC kicks off sale process for French retail business

JAN-HENRIK FÖRSTER
& MYRIAM BALEZOU

HSBC Holdings Plc has kicked off the sale of its French retail operations, part of a push by interim Chief Executive Officer Noel Quinn to cut costs at Europe's largest lender by assets, people with knowledge of the matter said.

The bank has sent out an overview of the business to potential buyers, the people said, asking not to be identified as the information is private. HSBC is gauging interest from possible suitors including rival French lenders La Banque Postale SA, Credit Agricole SA, Credit Mutuel, Milleis Banque SA and

BNP Paribas SA, the people said.

It has also reached out to potential private-equity buyers including Apollo Global Management Inc. and Cerberus Capital Management LP, according to the people. HSBC is working with Lazard Ltd. on the sale, the people said.

Any buyer would gain HSBC's deposit base in France as well as about 230 retail branches. The move follows an exit by competitor Barclays Plc, which sold its French retail and wealth management business in 2017 to private-equity firm AnaCap Financial Partners.

The process is at an early stage, and there's no

certainty on who will proceed to submit bids for the business, the people said. Representatives for Apollo, Banque Postale, BNP, Cerberus, Credit Agricole, HSBC and Milleis Banque declined to comment. Credit Mutuel and Lazard didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

HSBC's planned sale

of the French retail bank could take 4,000 to 8,000 workers off its payroll, a person with knowledge of the matter said in October. The lender is also planning to partially exit stock trading in other Western markets including Germany, U.S. and the U.K., Bloomberg News had reported. **BLOOMBERG**

Taiwan's leader reelected as voters back tough

ELAINE KURTENBACH
& JOHNSON LAI, TAIPEI

TSAI Ing-wen was reelected as Taiwan's president by a landslide Saturday in a victory that signaled strong support for her tough stance against China among voters determined to defend their democratic way of life.

Tsai, from the Democratic Progressive Party, soundly defeated Nationalist Party candidate Han Kuo-yu, receiving 57.2% of the vote to Han's 38.6%, with virtually all of the votes counted. She wasted no time in warning communist-ruled China, which views Taiwan as a renegade province, not to try to use threats of force against the self-governed island.

"Today I want to once again remind the Beijing authorities that peace, parity, democracy and dialogue are the keys to stability," Tsai said in her victory speech. "I want the Beijing authorities to know that democratic Taiwan and our democratically elected government will never concede to threats."

"I hope that Beijing will show its goodwill," she said. Taiwan's voters have "shown that when our sovereignty and democracy are threatened, the Taiwan people will shout our determination even more loudly."

Taiwan has developed its own identity since separating from China during civil war in 1949, but has never declared formal independence. Beijing still claims sovereignty over the island of 23 million people and threatens to use force to seize control if necessary.

Ma Xiaoguang, a spokesman for China's Taiwan Affairs Office, said that China would firmly protect its territorial integrity and opposes any separatist schemes and Taiwan independence, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

AP PHOTO



China is willing to work with the Taiwanese people to advance the "peaceful reunification of the country," he said.

In a setback for Beijing, Tsai managed to win in areas that traditionally have gone to the China-friendly Nationalists in central and southern Taiwan. Her party also retained its majority in the 113-seat Legislative Yuan, though the vote was closer there.

She said the results of the election, with turnout estimated at 74%, proved that Taiwanese are committed to defending their democracy and way of life.

Given China's efforts to isolate Taiwan during Tsai's first term,

her victory will likely bring on still more deadlock and pressure from Beijing, she acknowledged.

At around the same time Tsai was giving her victory speech, Xinhua issued a brief report saying she had won reelection as "leader of the Taiwan region." That language was in keeping with the government's refusal to recognize Taiwan as an independent political entity and its leader as a head of state.

Barring a surprise breakthrough, the Chinese leadership is likely to persist in ramping up pressure on Taiwan. In the past two years, it has cut off all formal ties with her government, restricted visits by Chinese tourists, excluded Taiwan's

representatives from international gatherings and lured away more of the island's dwindling diplomatic allies, leaving it with just 15.

In recent months, Beijing has held military exercises across the Taiwan Strait, sailed both of its aircraft carriers through the waterway dividing Taiwan from the mainland and flown air patrols around the island.

An editorial issued by the Communist Party's Global Times newspaper after the election accused Tsai and her party of tricks and "fear mongering."

"The reelection of Tsai will increase the uncertainty across the Taiwan Straits," it said. "Yet no ma-

tter how much uncertainty there is across the straits, the fact that the Chinese mainland is getting increasingly stronger and the Taiwan island is getting weaker is an inevitable reality."

Tsai's overwhelming victory shows a public increasingly unified in the face of China's pressure and threats, something her challenger Han appeared to acknowledge after the results were in.

"No matter what, the most important thing is that we unite as one Taiwan," Han told supporters at a rally after conceding the loss.

Months of anti-government protests in Hong Kong, a semi-autonomous Chinese territory, have

MAINLAND DEMOCRACY ACTIVISTS CHEERED BY ELECTION RESULTS

CHINESE pro-democracy activists who traveled to Taiwan to observe the island's presidential election said yesterday that the reelection of independence-leaning President Tsai Ing-wen gave them cause for hope despite Beijing's quashing of dissent on the mainland.

More than a dozen dissidents, many exiled from communist-ruled mainland China, said at a forum in Taipei that Saturday's landslide win for Tsai and

her Democratic Progressive Party has important implications for relations among China, the U.S. and Taiwan, and for Chinese everywhere.

At a time when the government of Chinese leader Xi Jinping has tightened surveillance and controls to the extent that dissent appears to be utterly wiped out, underground groups and protests persist, the dissidents said.

Taiwan's election results are the clearest indication

that there is still hope for democracy in China, said Wang Min, leader of the U.S. branch of the outlawed China Democracy Party.

Taiwan's democracy "shows the mainland Chinese a path for the future," Wang said. "The light is always shining before us."

Shao Jiang, a former student leader in the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy movement that ended with a violent military crackdown that killed hundreds, possibly thou-

sands, of demonstrators, said the strong backing for Tsai, who has adopted a tough stance toward Beijing, shows great confidence by the Taiwanese in their democracy.

"This is a very clear message to the Chinese authorities, which is that the Taiwanese people want their own right to decide," Shao said.

Many attending the seminar concurred with Tsai's stance that Taiwan's democracy should serve as

a model for communist-ruled China and Hong Kong, where months of anti-government protests have reinforced doubts over Beijing's "one country, two systems" approach for governing the former British colony, let alone Taiwan.

"Xi Jinping has decided to use the 'one country, two systems' model," but the events of 2019 have shown it doesn't work, said Ren Songlin, a leader of the Chinese Alliance for Democracy, an overseas opposition

group. "Tsai Ing-wen has her own model," he said.

Ren said he expected that Beijing might find a way to resume dialogue with Tsai's government within the next year.

Looking from a longer perspective, there's hope that the democratic values that have taken hold in Taiwan could be shared further in Asia, said Teng Biao, a Chinese legal scholar and human rights activist who now lives in the U.S. AP

China stance



driven home to many in Taiwan the contrast between their democratically governed island and authoritarian mainland China.

While Han and the Nationalist Party have said Taiwan should be more open to negotiations with China, Tsai and her Democratic Progressive Party insisted that the protests showed that the “one country, two systems” approach Beijing has championed for governing both Hong Kong and Taiwan is unworkable.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has sought to compel Tsai's government to endorse Beijing's insistence that Taiwan is a part of China. Tsai has refused to do so,

maintaining that Beijing has no claim over Taiwan while calling for a reopening of talks between the sides without preconditions.

At the same time, Tsai is unlikely to adopt a more militant stance in favor of outright independence, said Shelley Rigger, a visiting researcher with National Taiwan University's College of Social Sciences, adding that Tsai also is not likely to soften toward Beijing.

“I think Tsai Ing-wen has been moderate because she's committed to a course of action that maximizes both Taiwan's security and flexibility,” she said.

Since its transition to full de-

mocracy beginning in the 1980s, Taiwan has increasingly asserted its independent identity from China even though it is not recognized by the United Nations or any major nation. Saturday's election was its seventh presidential vote since the island began a transition from martial law under the Nationalists to democracy.

The island exercises all the roles of a sovereign nation, issuing its own passports, maintaining its own military and legal system and serving as a crucial hub in the global high-tech supply chain.

In her victory speech late Saturday, Tsai urged the rest of the world to respect Taiwan's commitment to democracy and consider the island a “partner, not an issue.”

Tsai, who holds a doctorate in law from the London School of Economics, has emphasized strong relations with the United States to help counter China's attempts to isolate Taiwan diplomatically. The U.S. does not recognize Taiwan as a country, but it is its main supplier of military equipment.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo congratulated Tsai on Saturday, saying in a statement, “The United States thanks President Tsai for her leadership in developing a strong partnership with the United States and applauds her commitment to maintaining cross-strait stability in the face of unrelenting pressure.”

On the domestic front, Tsai faces challenges in trying to reform the government and economy, reduce inequality, create jobs and raise wages.

“We will work even harder to build on our achievements of the past four years,” Tsai said in her speech. “We will constantly remind ourselves our administration must be clean, confident and efficient.”

She added, “Of course we will work to keep our country safe and defend our sovereignty.” AP

BEIJING SAYS WORLD SHOULD STICK TO ‘ONE CHINA’ PRINCIPLE

CHINA said Sunday that the world should abide by the idea that there is only one China, ruled by the Communist Party, after Taiwan reelected its democratic leader.

“We hope and believe that the international community will continue adhering to the One China principle, understand and support the

just cause of Chinese people to oppose the secessionist activities for ‘Taiwan independence’ and realize national reunification,” said a statement from Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang.

Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen of the Democratic Progressive Party won in a landslide Saturday against pro-China

Nationalist Party candidate Han Kuo-yu. Her victory speech warned China not to threaten force against the self-governed island.

Taiwan's voters “have shown that when our sovereignty and democracy are threatened, the Taiwan people will shout out determination even more loudly,” Tsai said.

Taiwan has developed its own identity since separating from China during civil war in 1949, but has never declared formal independence.

“No matter how the situation changes on Taiwan island, the basic facts — that there is only one China in the world and that Taiwan is part of China — will not change,” Geng said. AP

ANALYSIS

Taiwan vote signals growing divide with China

KEN MORITSUGU

THE landslide reelection of Taiwan's leader underscores the population's embrace of an identity distinct from China — a shift that the communist leaders of China refuse to accept.

It's a contradiction that will keep the island of 23 million people at odds with its much larger neighbor for the foreseeable future and put increasing strains on the one-China principle, which holds that Taiwan and China are part of one country.

The question for the next four years is whether the governments on both sides of the 160-kilometer-wide Taiwan Strait will stay the course or escalate their battle of wills.

China may step up its campaign to try to isolate Taiwan both diplomatically and economically, though it may also be rethinking that approach after efforts to do so during Tsai Ing-wen's first term only seemed to build support for her at home.

Her big win could embolden some in her Democratic Progressive Party to look for ways to nudge Taiwan toward formal independence from China, the party's official goal. But even symbolic steps would anger China and could invite retaliation, and Tsai herself has shown no signs of going down that path.

Modern Taiwan is an outgrowth of a civil war between the Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong's Communists for control of China after World War II. The communists triumphed in 1949, and Chiang retreated to Taiwan, where he set up a rival government that he ran with an iron fist while harboring hopes of taking back the entire country from the communists.

That is no longer a realistic goal, and with each passing decade, Chiang's dream has been replaced by a growing sense that Taiwan is not a part of China, particularly among the younger generations. They see their home as a separate entity with its own democratic ideals and don't want to be subsumed by China and its ruling Communist Party.

The long-running and violent pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong that started last June reinforced that sentiment.

Early in 2019, Chinese leader Xi Jinping proposed talks with Taiwan on joining China under a “one-country, two-systems” fra-

mework similar to the one that governs Hong Kong, the former British colony returned to China in 1997.

Most Taiwanese oppose the idea, and Tsai capitalized politically on the Hong Kong protests, saying they illustrate why one-country, two-systems doesn't work.

Taiwan largely functions as an independent nation, with its own laws, military and foreign minister, though technically it and mainland China belong to one country with rival governments, the People's Republic of China in Beijing and the Republic of China in Taipei, the Taiwanese capital.

Tsai, though, has refused to endorse that one-China policy and sought to build unofficial ties with the United States, which does not recognize Taiwan but is its main supplier of military equipment to defend itself against China. Signals of support from the Trump administration have given voters confidence in Tsai's approach of pushing back against China's threats.

Lin Fei-fan, the Democratic Progressive Party's deputy secretary general, said last month that discussion on constitutional change could start in a second Tsai term, such as changing the flag or the definition of the Republic of China's territory to include just Taiwan, rather than both the island and the mainland.

China, though, has threatened to use military force if needed against what it calls any “secessionist” moves toward independence.

The official Xinhua News Agency said in a commentary on the election that China has a full policy toolbox to curb Taiwan independence activities and benefit Taiwanese compatriots.

Tsai, in line with public opinion, focused in her campaign on preserving Taiwan's democracy rather than any fundamental change to the island's political status. That approach pleases Dong Yu-hsin, a 23-year-old nonprofit worker.

“Although we can say in hard terms Taiwan is Taiwan and China is China [...] of course we don't want a war or anything worse than now,” he said. “I hope Tsai Ing-wen can keep her perspective on autonomy and uphold today's status quo.”

Like many Taiwanese, he likes things the way they are and doesn't want to rock the boat with China. AP

AP PHOTO



AUSTRALIA TURNS FROM DEFENSE TO OFFENSE IN WILDFIRE BATTLE

NICK PERRY, BODALLA

CREWS battling Australia's wildfires said yesterday that they have been able to turn from defense to offense for the first time in weeks thanks to a break in the weather.

Dale McLean, who is helping manage the response to a fire near the town of Bodalla in New South Wales state, was part of team that was bulldozing down small trees and burning scrub ahead of the fire's projected path to try to stop it from reaching a major highway by starving it of fuel.

"This fire took a major run

about seven or eight days ago, and with the weather changing now, the weather settling down, the fire has settled down," he said. "The fire behavior has changed. So we're able to get in front of the fire now, get on the offensive."

Other workers echoed McLean's comments, saying cooler temperatures and mild winds have finally offered them a chance to make progress. The weather is expected to remain benign for the next week, although any deterioration in conditions after that could see the wildfires flare up again.

The progress came after a firefighter was killed by a falling

tree. Bill Slade — one of the few professionals among mainly volunteer brigades battling blazes across southeast Australia — died on Saturday near Omeo in eastern Victoria state, Forest Fire Management Victoria Executive Director Chris Hardman said.

The 60-year-old married father of two was commended in November for 40 years of service with the forestry agency.

"Although we do have enormous experience in identifying hazardous trees, sometimes these tree failures can't be predicted," Hardman said. "Working on the fire ground in a forest environment is a dynamic, high-risk

environment and it carries with it significant risk."

The tragedy brings the death toll to at least 27 in a crisis that has destroyed more than 2,000 homes and scorched an area larger than the U.S. state of Indiana since September. Four of the casualties have been firefighters.

The crisis has brought accusations that Prime Minister Scott Morrison's conservative government needs to take more action to counter climate change, which experts say has worsened the blazes. Thousands of protesters rallied Friday in Sydney and Melbourne, calling for Morrison to be fired and for Australia to take

tougher action on global warming.

The prime minister said Sunday that his government was building resilience to the fire danger posed by climate change.

He said the government was developing a national disaster risk reduction framework within the Department of Home Affairs that will deal with wildfires, cyclones, floods and drought.

"This is a longer-term risk framework model which deals with one of the big issues in response to the climate changing," Morrison said.

He said his government accepted that climate change was leading to longer, hotter and drier summers, despite junior government lawmaker George Christensen posting on social media over the weekend that the cause of the latest fires was arson rather than man-made climate change. Another junior lawmaker, Craig Kelly, has also publicly denied any link between climate change and fire crisis.

State authorities have said a minority of fires are deliberately lit.

"The government's policy is set by the Cabinet. Our party room has a broad range of views," Morrison said of those within government ranks who reject mainstream climate science.

Morrison also announced that 76 million Australian dollars (\$52 million) would be spent on providing psychological counseling for firefighters and fire-affected communities as part of a previously announced AUD2 billion (\$1.4 billion) recovery fund.

"There has been a deep scar in the landscape that has been left right across our country," Morrison said. "But I am also very mindful, as is the government, of the very real scars that will be there for quite a period of time to come for those who've been exposed to the trauma of these bushfires."

While the fire threat is most acute in rural communities, wildfire smoke that has choked some of Australia's largest cities is a reminder to many urban Australians of the unfolding disaster. **AP**

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PHILIPPINES

Tiny volcano erupts near Manila, causing villagers to flee

A tiny volcano near the Philippine capital that draws many tourists for its picturesque setting in a lake belched steam, ash and rocks in a huge plume yesterday, prompting thousands of residents to flee and officials to temporarily suspend flights.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said Taal Volcano in Batangas province south of Manila blasted steam and ash up to 1 kilometer into the sky in a dramatic escalation of its growing restiveness, which began last year.

There were no immediate reports of injuries or damage but authorities scrambled to evacuate more than 6,000 villagers from an island in the middle of a lake, where the volcano lies, officials said.

"We have asked people in high-risk areas, including the volcano island, to evacuate now ahead of a possible hazardous eruption," Renato Solidum, who heads the institute, said by phone.

AP PHOTO



Renelyn Bautista, a 38-year-old housewife from Batangas province's Laurel town, said she immediately fled from her home with her two children, including a 4-month-old baby, after Taal erupted and the ground shook mildly twice.

"We hurriedly evacuated when the air turned muddy because of the ashfall and it started to smell

like gunpowder," Bautista said.

Dozens of international and domestic flights were put on hold for at least four hours yesterday night at Manila's international airport "due to volcanic ash in the vicinity of the airport" and nearby air routes, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines said.

The volcanology institute raised the danger level around Taal

two notches to level 3, indicating "magmatic intrusion that is likely driving the current activity." Level 5, the highest, indicates an on-going eruption.

The institute reminded the public that the small island where the volcano lies is a "permanent danger zone," although fishing villages have existed there for years. It asked nearby coastal

communities "to take precautionary measures and be vigilant of possible lake water disturbances related to the ongoing unrest."

Villagers in several villages and towns around the lake were also asked by officials to evacuate to safer areas.

Heavy to light ashfall was reported in towns and cities several kilometers from the volcano, and officials advised residents to stay indoors and don masks. Motorists were hampered by poor visibility, which was worsened by rainy weather.

Hotels, shopping malls and restaurants line an upland road along a ridge overlooking the lake and the volcano in Tagaytay city, a key tourism area that could be affected by a major eruption.

Authorities recorded a swarm of earthquakes, some of them felt with rumbling sounds, and a slight inflation of portions of the volcano ahead of yesterday's steam-driven explosion, officials said.

One of the world's smallest volcanoes, Taal is among two dozen active volcanoes in the Philippines, which lies along the so-called Pacific "Ring of Fire," a seismically active region that is prone to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

About 20 typhoons and storms each year also lash the Philippines, which lies between the Pacific and the South China Sea, making it one of the world's most disaster-prone countries. AP


AD





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Russian President Vladimir Putin (right), Syrian President Bashar Assad (left) and Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu (center) visit the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus

RUSSIA SCORES VICTORY FOR ALLY SYRIA IN UN VOTE CUTTING AID

EDITH M. LEDERER,
UNITED NATIONS

Russia scored a victory for its close ally Syria on Friday, using its veto threat to force the U.N. Security Council to adopt a resolution significantly reducing the delivery of cross-border humanitarian aid and cutting off critical medical assistance to over one million Syrians in the northeast.

Britain's U.N. Ambassador Karen Pierce accused Russia of playing politics with humanitarian aid for the first time in the nearly nine-year Syrian conflict, and "playing dice with the lives of Syrian people in the northeast."

U.S. Ambassador Kelly Craft accused Russia of "triumphantly" supporting Syrian President Bashar Assad's government "to starve its opposition." And she warned: "Syrians will suffer needlessly ... [and] Syrians will die as a result of this resolution."

The resolution adopted by the U.N.'s most powerful body reduces the number of crossing points for aid deliveries from four to just two, from Turkey to the mainly rebel-held northwest as Russia demanded. It also cuts in half the year-long mandate that has been in place since cross-border deliveries began in 2014 to six months, as Moscow insisted.

The vote capped months of contentious negotiations and

came on the day the current mandate for cross-border aid deliveries to Syria expires. It also reflected the deep divisions that have prevented the Security Council, which is charged with maintaining international peace and security, from taking any significant action to end the Syrian conflict.

The resolution that was finally voted on by the 15-member council, received 11 "yes" votes and 4 abstentions from Russia, China, the United States and United Kingdom.

Indonesia's deputy U.N. ambassador Muhsin Syihab, who voted in favor of the resolution, said afterward he believed all council members were "equally unhappy."

Germany, Belgium and Kuwait, backed by the U.S., Britain, France and other council nations, initially wanted to add a fifth crossing point and extend the mandate for a year. But to meet Russia's demands and avoid a total cutoff of cross-border aid they watered-down their resolution to two points for six months.

Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vasiliy Nebenzia said last month that cross-border aid was meant to be a temporary response to the Syrian conflict and the situation on the ground has changed. He said the Jordan crossing point hasn't been used "for a lengthy period of time" and the volume through the Iraqi

crossing "is insignificant ... and could be done from Syria" so only the Turkish crossing points are needed — points he reiterated on Friday.

By contrast, the U.N. humanitarian office said it has been supporting 4 million Syrians through cross-border aid deliveries — 2.7 million in the northwest and 1.3 million in the northeast.

According to the U.N., 40 percent of all medical, surgical and health supplies to the northeast, along with water and sanitation supplies, are delivered through the Al Yarubiyah crossing point in Iraq.

U.N. humanitarian chief Mark Lowcock told the Security Council in November that the U.N. provided 1.1 million people with food through cross-border deliveries in October, double the number in January.

"There is no alternative to the cross-border operation," he stressed. "There is no Plan B."

Many countries that voted for the resolution expressed disappointment that more crossing points weren't included, but said they did so to save lives in Idlib province and other opposition areas in the northwest.

Germany's U.N. Ambassador Christoph Heusgen, who co-sponsored the resolution, stressed "the heavy price" it came with. He appealed to Russia to get more than eight trucks with medical aid

waiting at the now-closed Iraqi border crossing at Al Yarubiyah into northeast Syria.

Craft, the U.S. ambassador, said all U.N. officials agree that the humanitarian situation in Syria is worsening, and she called the watered-down resolution demanded by Russia "shocking, comprehensive indifference to human suffering." She said: "In abstaining, we are lending a voice to four million Syrians entering the heart of winter."

Pierce, the British ambassador, said: "We won't vote to stop vital aid from reaching Syria, but neither will we vote in favor of a resolution that reduces aid provision to vulnerable populations and puts lives at risk."

Nebenzia said he abstained even though Russia got just two crossing points from Turkey — Bab al-Salam and Bab al-Hawa — and a six-month extension because Moscow didn't agree with everything in the German and Belgium sponsored resolution.

China's U.N. Ambassador Zhang Jun said Beijing has always had "reservations" about cross-border humanitarian deliveries to Syria. He called for "the will of its government" to be respected in such deliveries, a point Nebenzia also stressed.

But Pierce said cross-border deliveries do not require consent from the Syrian government.

Nebenzia said aid is getting into

the northeast, where Syrian Kurds established an autonomous zone in 2012 and were U.S. partners on the ground in fighting the Islamic State extremist group. A Turkish offensive in October against Syrian Kurdish militants led the U.S. to abandon its Kurdish allies, both countries drawing strong criticism.

Nebenzia said Russia supported a provision in the resolution requesting Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to report to the Security Council by the end of February "on the feasibility of using alternative modalities for the (Iraqi) border crossing of Al Yarubiyah in order to ensure that humanitarian assistance, including medical and surgical supplies, reaches people in need throughout Syria through the most direct routes."

The resolution also calls on U.N. humanitarian agencies "to improve monitoring of the delivery and distribution of United Nations relief consignments and their delivery inside Syria."

Syria's U.N. Ambassador Bashar Ja'afari told the council that since the beginning of the conflict, the government "has made efforts to deliver aid without any discrimination" and its priority is to improve the humanitarian situation in the country.

Pierce responded saying Britain will be pursuing Syria's aid deliveries to its own people in the future, "and we will be holding what he said to account." She said she will also take Ja'afari's words "as a commitment" to allow humanitarian organizations access to Syria to distribute humanitarian assistance to people most in need. AP

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Ghosn's lawyer said questioning averaged 7 hours a day

YURI KAGEYAMA, TOKYO

A lawyer for former Nissan Chairman Carlos Ghosn, who fled to Lebanon while awaiting trial in Japan, said his client was questioned an average of seven hours a day without a lawyer present.

Takashi Takano said on his blog post Saturday the questioning continued through weekends, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Takano has said he told Ghosn he couldn't expect a fair trial in Japan, but his chances of winning were good because the evidence against him was so weak.

Japan's judicial system has come under fire over Ghosn's case. Critics have for years said the prolonged detentions tend to coerce false confessions. Suspects can be detained even without any charges.



Former Nissan Chairman Carlos Ghosn

without any charges.

Japanese prosecutors and Justice Minister Masako Mori have repeatedly defended the nation's system as upholding human rights, noting Japan boasts a low crime rate. Mori said the system follows appropriate procedures under Japanese law, stressing that every cul-

ture is different.

Takano said he recently looked at prosecutors' data and Ghosn's notes to tally the hours of questioning for 70 of the days Ghosn was detained. On three days, Ghosn had been questioned for some 11 hours, according to Takano's tally.

Ghosn was detained un-

der two separate arrests for 130 days. He has been charged with underreporting his future compensation and of breach of trust in diverting Nissan Motor Co. money for alleged personal gain.

In a news conference in Beirut lasting more than two hours, Ghosn reasserted his innocence, and accused Nissan and Japanese government officials of plotting his removal.

Ghosn, who led Nissan for two decades, has said the compensation was never decided, and the payments were for legitimate business.

Much of his news conference was devoted to criticizing Japanese justice as rigged and harsh. He said he had been grilled without a lawyer present while held in solitary confinement. He advised all foreigners to leave. AP

WORLD LEADERS TRAVEL TO OMAN TO MEET ITS NEW SULTAN

WORLD leaders traveled yesterday to Oman to meet the country's new sultan, named just a day earlier after the death of the nation's longtime ruler Sultan Qaboos bin Said.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Prince Charles were among those who arrived in Muscat to meet Oman's new ruler, Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said. Oman was once a British protectorate.

Other leaders included Kuwait's ruling emir, Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, as well as Qatar's ruling emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Abu Dhabi's powerful Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the president of Yemen's internationally recognized government, Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, also visited.

Sultan Haitham was Oman's culture minister before being named as the successor to Sultan Qaboos, the Middle East's longest-ruling monarch whose death was announced Saturday. He died at the age of 79 after years of an undisclosed illness.

Sultan Haitham, 66, has pledged to follow Sultan Qaboos' example of promoting peace and dialogue in the Mideast. Oman has served as an interlocutor between Iran and the U.S., which are facing a level of unprecedented tensions. Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif traveled to Muscat on Sunday as well to meet Sultan Haitham.

Oman sits on the eastern edge of the Arabian Peninsula. AP

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what's ON



RED DECEMBER – EXHIBITION OF CARLOS MARREIROS

TIME: 10am-9pm

UNTIL: February 13, 2020

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

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

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

UNTIL: March 1, 2020

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

ADMISSION: Free

KONG SENG TICKETING SERVICE: 8988 4000

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

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

UNTIL: February 23, 2020

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

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

EXHIBITION BY LIO MAN CHEONG

TIME: 3pm-8pm (Mondays)

12pm-8pm (Tuesdays to Sundays)

UNTIL: February 9, 2020

VENUE: A2 Gallery, Albergue SCM, No.8, Calçada da Igreja de São Lázaro

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2550

"TASTE OF CELEBRATION" EXHIBITION

TIME: 10AM-10PM

UNTIL: February 9, 2020

Venue: Macau Tower

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2893 3339

ROOSTER, TIGER, SHEEP BY SNAKE

TIME: 11am-8pm

UNTIL: February 9, 2019

VENUE: Shop 100 and 107, Emerald Lobby, MGM Cotai

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8806 8888

Offbeat

MAN BREAKS INTO TACO BELL, PREPARES FOOD, TAKES NAP

Taco Bell wasn't open on Christmas Day but a burglar in Georgia decided he wanted a festive feast anyway — and to take a nap while he was at it.

Police have asked for the public's help in identifying the man who broke into the restaurant, prepared food and fell asleep early Christmas morning.

At around 12:15 a.m. on Dec. 25, a man approached a Taco Bell in unincorporated Lawrenceville and entered through the drive-thru window. Surveillance video showed him using the fryers to make himself a meal. After eating, he proceeded to take a nap on the restaurant floor. Prior to leaving about three hours later, the suspect stole a laptop and tablet, investigators said.

The suspect was described as a black male wearing black sweatpants, a black hooded sweatshirt, and black sneakers.

TV canal macau



13:00 TDM News (Repetição)

13:30 Telejornal RTPi (Diferido)

15:00 Água de Mar

15:30 BING

15:45 Os Ursos Boonie na Neve

16:15 As Novas Viagens Filosóficas

16:45 Portugueses Pelo Mundo Sr.1

17:30 LiteratAqui

18:00 Império (Repetição)

18:55 Semana Internacional (Repetição)

19:30 Ouro Verde Sr.1

20:30 Telejornal

21:15 TDM Talk Show

21:50 Livros com João Guedes

21:55 Viagens Gastronómicas

22:20 Império

23:15 TDM News

23:50 Xutos & Pontapés Acústico

01:40 Telejornal (Repetição)

02:25 RTPi Directo

cinema



CINETEATRO

09 - 15 Jan



UNDERWATER

ROOM 1

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

Director: William Eubank

Starring: Kristen Stewart, T.J. Miller, Jessica Henwick

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 95min



1917

ROOM 2

2:30, 4:45, 7:15

Director: Sam Mendes

Starring: Dean-Charles Chapman, George MacKay, Daniel Mays

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 119min



ASHFALL

ROOM 2

9:30pm

Director: Byung-seo Kim, Hae-jun Lee

Language: Korean (English & Chinese)

Duration: 130min



LITTLE WOMEN

ROOM 3

2:44, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45pm

Director: Greta Gerwig

Starring: Saoirse Ronan, Emma Watson, Florence Pugh

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 135min

this day in history



1993: ALLIES BOMB IRAQ

American, British and French fighter jets have carried out a series of bombing raids over southern Iraq.

The Iraqis have repeatedly breached the "no-fly zone" set up after the Gulf War - which began almost two years ago - and made a number of military raids over the border into Kuwait.

The Gulf War Allies targeted missile sites and aircraft command and control bases.

The air raids took place early this evening, (1700 GMT) led by American stealth fighter bombers, based in Saudi Arabia.

Planes were also deployed from a US aircraft carrier in the Gulf, and British tornado bombers and French mirage jets joined the attack.

Initial reports suggest the mission was successful and there were no allied casualties.

The Iraqi ambassador to the UN, Nizar Hamdoon, has said the raids into Kuwait will stop.

White House spokesman, Marlin Fitzwater, said: "The government of Iraq should understand that continued defiance of UN security council resolutions will not be tolerated."

He said if the cross-border raids continued, there would further attacks without warning.

The UK Prime Minister, John Major, called the action "limited and proportionate".

He said it would mean British planes could once again operate in safety in the no-fly zone.

The BBC's correspondent in Baghdad, Michael Macmillan, says the air raids are likely to strengthen support for Saddam Hussein.

Sanctions imposed since the Gulf War are biting hard and the Iraqi people support his defiance against the West.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The air raids against Iraq were not repeated.

However, relations between the two sides remained tense.

In June, US forces launched a cruise missile attack on Iraqi intelligence headquarters in Al-Mansur district, Baghdad, in retaliation for the attempted assassination of US President, George Bush, in April.

In November 1994, Iraq formally accepted the demarcation of the border with Kuwait as laid down by the UN Security Council. In March 2003 George Bush's son, George W, launched an attack on Iraq in spite of worldwide opposition to war.

Within a month, President Bush was claiming victory but there was no sign of the weapons of mass destruction he claimed he was trying to eliminate.

Saddam Hussein was captured in 2003 after several months in hiding, stood trial in an Iraqi court, was sentenced to death and was executed in December 2006.

Power was officially handed back to Iraq by the US on 28 June 2004.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Here's a news flash: Romance is supposed to be fun, not work. If you're working at getting closer to someone right now, stop doing it. If all it adds to your life is stress, it might not be worth it.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 Every time something ends, there is a beginning, too, a potential new direction. Just because you said goodbye to something doesn't mean it still can't inspire or affect your future.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 A lot can be communicated with an arched eyebrow, nod of the head, or clap of the hands, and often what they say has a lot more impact than anything you could think to say verbally.

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Let your outrageous impulses go wild today. Don't rein in any instincts. Kick up your heels and get a little bit crazy. And if anyone is watching, they won't laugh at you.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Share your free time with different people today. If you talk to enough people, you increase your chances of inspiring someone and creating some really positive changes in the world around you.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 For special insight into your latest quandary, turn to your co-workers or classmates today. You need to consult someone who is either in the same situation as you or has been before.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 It is time you really challenged yourself! For too long you've been enjoying easy success and the comfort that can only come when you know exactly what you are doing and how to do it.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 There will be a strong connectedness around nearly every element of your life today. You'll see some new associations between your personal life, closest family, and work world.

SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Don't let anything go out the door today without double-checking it first. Little mistakes must be caught, and you're in the perfect frame of mind to catch them.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Someone who is usually a source of brightness and sunshine in your life is feeling a bit depressed right now, and you hold the key to lifting their spirits.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 It's true that you're a unique person, but you aren't the only person to have ever felt the way you're feeling right now. Reach out to someone close and tell them what's on your mind.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 The only trouble about working so hard at climbing that mountainous goal is that once you get to the top, where do you go from there? After completing a big step, you may still be struggling with that question.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Hollowed pumpkin; 6- Albanian coin; 9- Chairs; 14- Different; 15- Bump off; 16- Radial neighbors; 17- Written history of a person's life; 19- Rapture; 20- The Racer's Edge; 21- Wall St. debuts; 22- Reposes; 23- Member of the Conservative Party; 25- Bee stuff; 26- Assent; 29- Gorillas, chimpanzees and orangutans; 31- Inclined; 32- Extraordinary occurrence; 36- Yorkshire river; 37- Lose firmness; 38- Bern's river; 40- Kitchen gadgets; 43- To meet the expense of; 45- How sweet ___; 46- Stylish; 47- Puccini classic; 50- Tolstoy and Gorcey; 51- Jeweler's glass; 52- Use scissors; 54- Genetic letters; 57- Composer Bruckner; 58- Canis Minor; 61- Company emblems; 62- Rhine wine; 63- Emulate Cicero; 64- Preceding, poetically; 65- Itsy-bitsy; 66- Check recipient;

DOWN: 1- Tasks; 2- Busy; 3- Hew; 4- Small cask; 5- Bobby of hockey; 6- Impudent (slang); 7- Bounce back; 8- Lock openers; 9- Secretly; 10- Actress Barkin; 11- Licorice flavor; 12- Delicious; 13- Cong. meeting; 18- Ventilated; 23- Native American tent; 24- Lyric poem; 25- The Beatles' "And I Love ___"; 26- Simile center; 27- A good one gets you there in a hurry; 28- Heart; 29- Collect; 30- Hog; 33- Sidewalk eateries; 34- Neighbor of Cambodia; 35- Slips up; 37- Hindu title; 39- Dreyer's partner in ice cream; 41- Official permit; 42- Basque separatist organization; 43- Masterful; 44- Not to; 47- Like a ___ bricks; 48- Money spent; 49- Trail of a wild animal; 50- Supple; 51- In ___ land; 52- Deli side; 53- Pleasing; 54- WWII turning point; 55- Brief letter, paper money; 56- "A Death in the Family" author James; 59- Chop off; 60- Bullpen stat;

Friday's solution

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

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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	
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<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>Large 3/4 Bedroom Apartment, Coloane HK\$13,800,000 2,530 ft² 4 1/2 3 1/2 1 1/2</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>Manhattan High Floor, Taipa \$26,800/mth 2,305 ft² 4 1/2 2 1/2</p>	<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>[Cotal] One Grantal 4 1/2 2 1/2 2,556 ft² \$25,600,000 (ref: 19096001)</p> <p>[Taipa] Jade Garden 4 1/2 3 1/2 3,180 ft² \$18,000,000 (ref: 19126002)</p> <p>[Taipa] Manhattan Luxury 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,720 ft² \$12,980,000 (ref: 19096006)</p> <p>[Macau] Lakeview Tower 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,344 ft² \$11,000,000 (ref: 19126001)</p>	<p>FOR RENT</p> <p>[Taipa] Nam Long 2 1/2 1 1/2 645 ft² \$11,800/mth (ref: 19111001)</p> <p>[Macau] Furnished Apartment 2 1/2 1 1/2 n/a \$12,500/mth (ref: 19101007)</p> <p>[Taipa] Nova Grand 2 1/2 1 1/2 935 ft² \$17,800/mth (ref: 19091005)</p> <p>[Taipa] Manhattan Luxury 3 1/2 2 1/2 1,720 ft² \$23,800/mth (ref: 19091006)</p>
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MILAN DESIGNERS EMBRACE SUSTAINABILITY AND GEN-Z'S INFLUENCE

COLLEEN BARRY, MILAN

THE growing influence of Generation Z was clear on the second day of Milan Fashion Week: Emporio Armani unveiled an "upcycled" capsule collection, Dolce&Gabbana filled their front row with teenage champions of the TikTok social media platform. Tailoring was mindful of youthful preferences.

The younger generation is increasingly driving trends and the growth of menswear sales, according to Italian National Fashion Chamber President Carlo Capasa.

Fall/Winter 2020/21 is shaping up to be "the year of the new tailoring," Capasa said, with clear streetwear influences in more formal dressing. Cuts are looser and patterns are a bit bolder. Also on runways: chunky knitwear and cross-body purses are new menswear protagonists.

EMPORIO ARMANI-RECYCLED

Emporio Armani unveiled a capsule collection of 18 upcycled garments, which designer Giorgio Armani said was only "the start of the discussion."

Milan fashion houses are making more public their efforts to create sustainable collections, especially as consumers indicate that environmental consciousness as a key purchasing criterion. It is fitting that Armani launched the initiative with his Emporio Armani line for youthful dressers.

All of the garments - puffer coats, cargo pants, jumpsuits, ribbed cardigans, among them - were in black and white, easy to mix and match. Many carried bold writing - "I Am Saying Yes to Recycling" - and a new R-EA logo.

Armani said his aim was not to promote his name, but "the Earth."

"Also in the main collection, I think we should make more recyclable fabrics. This is the beginning of the discussion," Armani pledged.

YOUTHFUL TAILORING

Giorgio Armani took traditional menswear textiles -- Prince of Wales plaid, chevrons and checks-- and glammed them up for to suit the younger Emporio Armani man.

That included enlarging the patterns, as if through a magnifying glass, "to create something new," the designer said, or adding a smattering of crystal studs and beads to traditionally cut suits.

"This is the dilemma, to use this medium, that we make available especially for young people, in a way that it does not

AP PHOTO



become either grotesque or too feminine," Armani said. "But at a certain point, I say, we need some courage, to get beyond tradition a little bit."

Armani dubbed the looks "Classic Pro," pro for progressive. Key accessories included cross-body purses and puffy shoulder cozies that can prove functional on top of an overcoat or under a jacket. The color palette was mostly neutrals with streak of black and red combos -- two colors that Armani said hold their own together.

INFLUENCERS MEET TRADITION

Designers Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana put their fashion house's artisans on full display during the Dolce&Gabbana runway show for Fall/Winter 2020/21. Knitwear specialists sat in the showroom foyer, knitting together four strands of yarn, to create the

sort of chunky sweaters with Lurex detailing that would later fill the runway. A watchmaker tinkered with dials nearby, and a goldsmith assembled jewelry.

The artisans' presence highlighted the brand's DNA, but also the shared heritage that has made Italy the largest producer of luxury goods in the world.

The Dolce&Gabbana collection was softer than usual, with models enveloped in generous knitwear, from big-stitch sweaters, to jumpsuits or long-johns, to full-on cable-knit double-breasted suits.

A model wearing a Jon Snow-style woolly black coat carried an actual living lamb down the runway, as the designers sought link the finished product with its source.

There were a few sartorial notes, like a double-breasted suit worn with a small cross-body bag cinched with a watch chain. But the mood was more cozy

than business or evening sleek, featuring rich velvet and corduroy, knitwear knapsacks, distressed work boots and earthy tones.

The designers invited top U.S., British and Italian influencers from the video platform TikTok to the front row. Seventeen-year-old Loren Gray was in from Los Angeles, wearing a gold puffer jacket and virtually accompanied by her 37.2 million TikTok followers.

FORMAL DRESSING AT NO. 21

At No. 21, Alessandro Dell'Acqua has been wrestling with how to create formal attire for a younger generation, bent on comfort and having come of age in a street wear-era.

"Young people want to have something formal, but they don't want it to be too classic," Dell'Acqua said backstage before the show. "We need to give them something with a more in-

teresting attitude."

His reply: looser fits, interesting elements like trailing belts, soft cashmere and mohair sweaters with erotic cut-outs, baring the back or the abs.

PSYCHEDELIC CLASSICS

DJ-turned-designer Marcelo Burlon tapped his clubbing background for a menswear collection that aims to distort.

The looks are utilitarian, from puffer coats, to bombers to shorts and easy-fitting trousers, but imprinted with a psychedelic version of classic houndstooth that morphs later into a colorful amoeba pattern. For a night at the clubs, Burlon encrusted jackets with bedazzling Swarovski crystals.

"Elegance for me in a man could be the attitude more than the clothes," he said before the show. "You can wear really bad combinations, but you have such an amazing attitude that the clothes are not that important."

A BRITISH FASHION INVASION

Young British designers have set up camp within the confines of Milan Fashion Week as part of a new collaboration with the British Fashion Council meant to strengthen bonds of solidarity.

British Fashion Council President Caroline Rush said the invitation couldn't have come at a better time, with Brexit looming.

"This shines a spotlight on how important our European partners are to the British fashion industry," she said. Many of the young designers present source their textiles in Italy, for example, which produces 41% of the global luxury goods. And the exposure during Milan Fashion Week gives them fresh commercial possibilities.

While the fashion industry opposed Brexit, Rush said she hoped that British politicians "will be listening to the fashion industry as they're negotiating trade deals, obviously not just with the EU but also with all the other markets."

The president of the Italian National Fashion Chamber Carlo Capasa said the collaboration aims to send also the political world a message that the fashion world is for inclusivity, and against divisions. He noted that Italian exports to Japan rose by 14% last year, following a free trade agreement between the two countries.

"That means everything works better in the world when we don't put walls, much less borders, when we allow people and merchandise to circulate," he said. **AP**

TENNIS

Nadal urges tennis organizers to compromise on one World Cup

JOHN PYE

RAFAEL Nadal won a revamped Davis Cup in November and he reached yesterday's final of the ATP Cup, the new international team competition.

He thinks it's too much. After walking off following another hardcourt loss to Novak Djokovic, allowing Serbia to level the final after Roberto Bautista Agut won the opening singles for Spain, Nadal urged the men's tour and the sport's international governing body to form one major team tournament.

"I think is a great competition, but at the same time is - I can't change my mind that two World Cups (within two months) is not real. So is not possible," the top-ranked Nadal said. "We need to find a way to fix it and we need to find a way to make a big deal with ITF and ATP to create a big World Team Cup competition, not two World Cups in one month.

"I think that's a confusion for the spectators, and we need to be clear in our sport. And for the



Rafael Nadal

health of our sport and for the benefit of our sport is, in my opinion, mandatory that we fix it."

Nadal played six singles matches — winning four — and two doubles in the 10-day ATP Cup tournament, and played the group stage in Perth on Australia's

west coast before flying across the continent for the playoff stages.

The Australian Open, the season-opening major, starts in Melbourne a week from Monday.

"When I'm playing here, I'm not thinking about Melbourne, or when I'm playing in Monte Car-

lo I'm not thinking about Roland Garros," Nadal said, rejecting the suggestion the tournament was too close to a Grand Slam event. "I think it's a great competition. Excited to be part of it. Excited to represent my country.

"I enjoyed a lot to share all the

se weeks or week and a half with my friends on the team. The organization have been fantastic, honestly. Just my mind is that we need to create one special thing, not two."

Other players, including second-ranked Djokovic, have urged the tennis hierarchy to come up with one big championship.

Djokovic said at the Davis Cup in Madrid and at the start of the ATP Cup in Australia that men's tennis needs "one super World Cup event, whatever you want to call it."

"That's not going to happen next year as well. But if the two sides, the ITF, the Davis Cup, and the ATP get together very quickly, it can happen possibly for 2022," he said ahead of the tournament. "I hope it will happen because it's kind of hard to get top players to commit to play both events, the Davis Cup and the ATP Cup. And it's six weeks apart, so they're not really helping each other in terms of marketing, in terms of the value of the event, and so forth. And one is very early in the season. One is the last one in the season."

The 33-year-old Nadal, a 19-time major winner, wouldn't be drawn on where in the schedule a single World Cup-style competition should fit.

"I can't tell you my real opinion, because will not make sense today," Nadal said. "And it's not that easy. Is a little bit longer conversation." AP

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fim/finishes: 23/03/2020

língua/language: Português e Inglês/Portuguese and English **

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OPINION

World Views

Bobby Ghosh, Bloomberg

**IRAN'S REASONING ON
 THE TEHRAN PLANE
 CRASH LOOKS ABSURD**

The culture of reflexive conspiracy-theorizing that pervades the Islamic Republic can sometimes catch out its own officials. Responding to reports that the Ukrainian International Airlines Flight 752 was shot down by an Iranian missile, the head of Iran's civil aviation organization protested that this was out of question, because his country's air-defense systems were too sophisticated to make such a mistake.

This is exactly the kind of absurd reasoning that attended the Iranian regime's narrative of its most famous civil aviation tragedy before this week: the 1988 downing of Iran Air Flight 655 by an American warship, the USS Vincennes, which mistook the airliner for an Iranian F-14 fighter jet. All 290 lives on board were lost. Viewed through the paranoid lens of the Islamic Republic, the worst accident in the history of the U.S. Navy was not an accident at all — because, surely, the American radar systems were too sophisticated to make such an error.

Just a few days ago, in the aftermath of the U.S. drone strike that killed Qassem Soleimani, President Hassan Rouhani darkly invoked the Flight 655 tragedy while responding to President Donald Trump's claim that, in the event of an Iranian attack, the U.S. had 52 targets against which to retaliate.

"Those who refer to the number 52 should also remember the number 290," the Iranian leader tweeted, along with the hashtag #IR655. Rouhani went on to add: "Never threaten the Iranian nation."

That tweet has not aged well.

Alas, it might be too much to expect the Iranian regime to acknowledge that hideous tragedies can and do occur in the fog of war, much less to try and clear the miasma, mostly of its own making, that envelops much of the Middle East.

The tragedy of Flight 655 was one of the reasons Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini decided, a few months after it happened, to accept that Iran was in a hopeless position in its war with Iraq, and agree to end the eight-year conflict. Iran was already taking a pounding from Saddam Hussein's forces and Khomeini worried that the U.S. would either get involved directly or equip Iraq with even more sophisticated weapons.

Under his successor as Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, the Islamic Republic continues to threaten "harsher revenge" for Soleimani. Tehran's tame terrorists and militias across the region claim to be planning their own retaliation. This is calculated to thicken the fog, never mind that it might lead to more tragedy.

Simultaneously, the regime is determined to obfuscate the facts around Flight 752's tragic end. While claiming to welcome international assistance in investigations, it appears to be engaged in a frantic cover-up. A CBS crew that visited the site this morning found the debris had for the most part been removed, and scavengers were picking through anything that remained. There was no security, no effort to cordon off the scene, and no sign of any Iranian investigators.

This makes the regime's claims about the plane's flight recorders look highly suspect. After initially refusing to hand the "black box" over to Boeing Co., the aircraft's manufacturer, Tehran is now saying that it was damaged in the crash — but that it intends to download the recordings.

That Iranian officials are unable to keep their stories straight allows little optimism that they will allow the facts of Flight 752's final minutes to come to light. One official has suggested that the investigation would take a year, possibly two. That would give the regime plenty of time to cook up more elaborate conspiracy theories.

Thousands of people had to evacuate Sunday in the western Germany city of Dortmund as experts prepared to defuse as many as four bombs from World War II.

Authorities already had evacuated two hospitals Saturday and opened schools for residents who had to leave their homes.

Some 14,000 people were asked to leave the areas where the bombs are thought to be buried. The city's train station was shut

down and, starting at noon yesterday, all trains would be rerouted.

By noon yesterday, authorities hoped to begin with the defusing operations.

Almost 75 years after the end of the war, unexploded bombs are frequently found in Germany. Disposing of them sometimes entails large-scale evacuations as a precaution.



AP PHOTO

**QUEEN ATTENDS CHURCH
 ON EVE OF MEETING OVER
 HARRY AND MEGHAN**

JILL LAWLESS

QUEEN Elizabeth II attended church at her Sandringham estate yesterday ahead of a crisis meeting to work out a future for Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, after their shocking decision to walk away from royal roles.

Royal officials said the queen had summoned her grandson Harry, his elder brother, Prince William, and their father, Prince Charles, to the rural retreat 100 miles (160 kilometers) north of London, for a meeting today.

The summit reflects the queen's desire to contain the fallout from Harry and Meghan's decision to "step back" as senior royals, work to become financially independent and split their time between Britain and North America. The couple, also known as the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, made the announcement last week without telling the queen or other senior royals first.

William is expected to travel to Sandringham from London and Harry from his home in Windsor, west of the British capital. Charles will fly back from the Gulf nation of Oman, where he was attending a condolence ceremony yesterday

following the death of Sultan Qaboos bin Said.

Meghan, who is in Canada with the couple's baby son, Archie, is likely to join the meeting by phone.

Buckingham Palace said "a range of possibilities" would be discussed, but the queen was determined to resolve the situation within "days not weeks." The palace said the goal was to agree on next steps at the gathering, which follows several days of talks among royal courtiers, though "any decision will take time to be implemented."

Among the details that need to be worked out are who will pay for the couple's currently taxpayer-funded security, what money-making activities they can undertake and what the tax consequences would be of moving to Canada or the United States.

Harry, who is sixth in line to the throne, married American actress Meghan Markle at Windsor Castle in 2018, and their son was born in May 2019.

While many praised the couple for injecting youth and glamour into the royal family, last week's announcement marked an explosive turn in the growing rift between them and the rest

of the clan. Harry said in an October interview that he and William -- destined one day to be king -- were on "different paths."

It also came amid the couple's growing unhappiness about their treatment by the media. Harry, who blames the press for the death of his mother, Princess Diana, in a Paris car crash in 1997, has long chafed at the intense scrutiny he receives. The couple have sued several newspapers over allegedly intrusive coverage, and Harry has accused the media of targeting the biracial Meghan with abuse, some of it with "racial undertones."

The couple's decision to distance themselves from the royal family has drawn a mixed reaction. Many Britons expressed sympathy for Meghan and Harry but said they should not receive taxpayer-funded security if they do not perform public duties.

There was near-universal sympathy, however, for the 93-year-old queen.

"I feel desperately sorry for her," said 70-year-old Jean Acton, who gathered with other local people to watch the monarch arrive at church. "It must be horrible -- for any parent, let alone if you're a royal or not." AP



AP PHOTO

Puerto Rico A magnitude 5.9 quake shook Puerto Rico on Saturday, causing millions of dollars of damage along the island's southern coast, where previous recent quakes have toppled homes and schools. The U.S. Geological Survey said the 8:54 a.m. (1254 GMT) quake hit 8 miles (13 kilometers) southeast of Guanica at a shallow depth of 3 miles (5 kilometers). It was followed by several aftershocks, including a magnitude 5.2 temblor less than two minutes later.

Canada The province of Ontario sent an alert yesterday reporting an unspecified "incident" at a nuclear plant — only to later report the message was sent in error. The initial message said the incident had occurred at the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station, though it added there had been no abnormal release of radioactivity from the station.



AP PHOTO

Philippines A small volcano south of the Philippine capital that draws many tourists for its picturesque setting in a lake erupted with a massive plume of ash and steam yesterday, prompting thousands of people to flee and officials to shut Manila's international airport.

More on p13



AP PHOTO

Vatican Pope Francis has baptized 32 babies, including two sets of twins, in the splendor of the Sistine Chapel. Francis marveled that the babies were very quiet, with barely a peep as they waited their turn to be baptized yesterday morning under the Michelangelo-frescoed ceiling.