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**MACAU AND SHANGHAI SIGNED FIVE AGREEMENTS TO BOOST COOPERATION IN FIELDS SUCH AS FINANCIAL SERVICES AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION** P2

**SUNCITY GROUP OFFERS VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION SCHEME TO 'RESHAPE' LIFE PLANS** P3

**A GOVERNMENT REPORT SHOWS THAT THE USE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND CLEAN ENERGY SHOULD BE FURTHER PROMOTED** P4

**China** A deadly knife attack in eastern China killed at least five people and left 15 injured, according to local police. Authorities in the city of Anqing in Anhui province received a report that a man had stabbed pedestrians on the street with a knife. The attacker was arrested and the injured were taken to the hospital for treatment, police said.



**Sri Lanka** The death toll from floods and mudslides following heavy rains in Sri Lanka rose to 14 with another two missing, officials said yesterday. Ten districts on the Indian Ocean island have been under heavy rainfall since last week, including the capital Colombo and suburbs where many houses, paddy fields and roads have been inundated.

**Afghanistan** A minivan carrying civilian passengers in northwest Afghanistan was hit by a roadside bomb, leaving at least 11 passengers dead, including three children. The minivan fell into a valley with the shock of the explosion. Rescuers were still searching for bodies in the valley.



**Israeli** police arrested a Palestinian protest leader in the contested Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem yesterday, a day after forcefully detaining a prominent Al Jazeera journalist covering the campaign by Jewish settlers to evict dozens of Palestinian families from the area. The arrest of Muna al-Kurd, confirmed by phone by her father, Nabil, was the latest move by Israeli police to quell several days of tension.

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# UNLUCKY 13

BLOOMBERG



**The 13 Hotel is facing insolvency as a major creditor is requiring the developer to repay its debt of HKD3.28b within three weeks** P3

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**COVID-19 GOV'T TIGHTENS ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH-RISK COUNTRIES** P4

**M**ACAU and Shanghai signed five agreements during a conference attended by Chief Executive (CE) Ho Iat Seng, who had led a delegation to the city for four days.

The agreements were signed between the CE and Gong Zheng, the mayor of Shanghai, at the first Shanghai-Macau Cooperation Conference

The signed agreements included: a framework agreement regarding strengthening the exchange and cooperation on key areas of the online new economy, smart city matters, and small and medium-sized enterprises; a letter of intent on initiating Shanghai and Macau exchange and cooperation on cultural affairs and tourism; and an agreement on sports cooperation.

The two officials also signed a letter of intent on cooperation in meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) business; and a framework agreement between the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies and the University of Macau, on academic exchange and cooperation.

The CE stated that Macau and Shanghai enjoyed "good prospects for wide cooperation in fields such as financial services, traditional Chinese medicine, and scientific and technological innovation."

He also talked about Macau aiming to develop modern financial services.

These included fostering training for financial professionals; promoting a presence in Macau of Shanghai financial institutions; encouraging Shanghai enterprises to issue bonds in Macau; and bol-

# MACAU, SHANGHAI SIGN AGREEMENTS OF EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION



tering exchanges between financial-service providers in the two cities.

The CE suggested that Macau and Shanghai could step up efforts to promote high-quality development of traditional Chinese medicine. Macau's position as a "bridgehead" would help introduce quality Chinese medicine products from the Mainland to Portuguese-speaking countries, and the European Union, as well as countries and regions covered by the "Belt and Road" initiative, he said.

Ho, who led the Macau delegation, arrived in Shanghai on June 3. LV

## HO VISITS FUDAN UNIVERSITY TO BOOST TALENT CULTIVATION EFFORT

**C**HIEF Executive (CE) Ho Iat Seng exchanged views with the president of Fudan University, Xu Ningsheng, on how to step up Macau's talent cultivation effort, and bolster exchange between tertiary education institutions in Macau and Shanghai.

The meeting was held in Shanghai during the CE's four-day visit to the metropolitan city.

As cited in a statement, Fudan University has seen a growing number of Macau student registrations, with around 140 this year, said Xu.

Noting the number of Macau students currently studying at Fudan University, Ho said he hoped the university would continue to support Macau in nur-

turing a greater number of talented individuals for the purposes of Macau's economic development.

The president of Fudan University said during the meeting that Macau played a significant role in national development - in terms of being positioned as a key city within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area initiative, and as a platform in the "dual-circulation" development pattern for the country's economy.

As a conclusion of the meeting, Fudan University and the Macau SAR Government would strengthen cooperation in healthcare, socio-economic development, and cultural exchange, he added. LV

# Transport Bureau discusses safety with bus companies

**F**OLLOWING an accident on a Iao Hon zebra crossing last week, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) has met with the two bus companies to ensure drivers practice safe driving.

The meeting comes after a public bus operated by concessionaire TCM hit two school children last week.

The bus company has currently suspended the driver.

According to information released by the DSAT, at the meeting, the bureau revealed five requirements to the two companies, namely the establishment of mid to long-

term improvement schemes so as to effectively prevent car accidents, as well as in-depth investigation for each accident and incident so as to analyze and review the cause.

As for drivers, the regulator orders the bus operators to "handle with rigor" drivers who violate road safety, to offer education and hands-on trainings to the whole team of drivers. It made particular reference to a mentorship-resembling manner of training, in which experienced drivers help with training and with clearing operational safety matters.

Facilities should be added to assist drivers to clarify their external environment, so that they can drive more safely. Moreover, extra employees should be sent to traffic black spots for supervision.

The DSAT has also disclosed that the two bus companies have arranged trainings for the entire team of drivers. The bureau will, in association with the two companies and industry groups, co-host courses in the hopes of improving the quality of public bus drivers. It is hoped that the courses will help make changes to

attitudes, sense of safety and service quality of bus drivers.

As the accident happened at a zebra crossing, the DSAT has also promised to improve road-crossing facilities. It revealed that as of May this year since 2019, 40 zebra crossings have been improved.

The DSAT added that between June 8 and July 18, the bureau will reform three zebra crossings in Iao Hon District. It stressed that during the renovation, certain parking spaces will be suspended to make way for the construction work. AL



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# Suncity offers voluntary resignation scheme

ANTHONY LAM

**L**OCAL junket operator Suncity Group has announced that it is offering a voluntary resignation scheme to encourage its employees to “reshape” their life plans.

The scheme, officially known as “Personal Career Reshaping Plan,” was announced by the group’s chief operating officer and director, Alvin Chau, as a “letter to team members.”

In the letter, Chau stressed that the Covid-19 pandemic has brought tough challenges worldwide, with significant impacts seen in all walks of life. Chau acknowledged that “the company is not excluded, facing severe effects on its revenue and performance.”

“In order to achieve sustainable development, existing strategies must be changed, organizational structure improved and



core business retained, as moves to cope with transformation of market environment,” the group CEO wrote.

He explained that those were

the grounds on which the voluntary resignation scheme was built.

The content of the scheme runs in several directions, with

“plan-exclusive rewards and benefits.” Some of them target employees aged 60 years or above. If these employees sign up for the plan, they may enjoy extra subsidies, a full amount of employer investment of provident funds received and medical insurance validity extended.

Catering to all employees, there is career planning support service, among other parts.

The executive stressed that participation in the plan is completely voluntary but he hoped that employees will “actively consider signing up.” He noted that the scheme can help employees to make good use of their time amid the pandemic to enrich their body and mind as well as to reform their career plans.

Gambling concessionaire Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) has also offered its employees a similar voluntary resignation program in response to, according to the group, the economic downturn brought along by the Covid-19 pandemic.

GEG employees had the choice between internal transfer or voluntary resignation with a one-off ex-gratia payment of MOP380,000.

## NON-RESIDENT DEPOSITS ROSE TO MOP361B

Non-resident deposits rose 1.9% to MOP361.2 billion, while resident deposits decreased 0.2% from the preceding month to MOP679.1 billion, according to recent data provided by the Monetary Authority of Macao. The public sector deposits with the banking sector edged down by 0.1% to MOP263.9 billion. As a result, total deposits in the banking sector increased 0.4% from a month earlier to MOP1,304.2 billion. The shares of MOP, HKD, RMB and USD in total deposits were 19.1%, 51.1%, 5.7% and 21.2% respectively.

## LAWMAKER MAK SOI KUN TO LEAVE AL

Lawmaker Mak Soi Kun is expected to not run in the upcoming Legislative Assembly (AL) elections on September 12, leaving his current seat. According to Portuguese newspaper Tribuna de Macau, Zheng Anting and Lo Choi In should head the candidacy list of the Macau-Guangdong Union. On Thursday, the association submitted a total of 500 signatures for the constitution of its candidacy list commission. The submission was not attended by Mak. Mak was elected in the direct election constituency for the first time in 2009, and has been a lawmaker since.

## THE 13 NEAR BANKRUPTCY AFTER CREDITOR DEMANDS HKD3.28B PAYMENT

LYNZY VALLES

**T**HE troubled The 13 Macau is a step closer towards bankruptcy as one of its creditors issued a demand for the parent company to repay the debt within three weeks. “If the company fails to repay the debt within three weeks from the date of service of the Statutory Demand, the creditor may present a winding up petition against the company,” the South Shore indicated in a Hong Kong Exchange filing.

“The company is considering taking legal advice in this regard. As the board has only recently received the Statutory Demand, it will take some time for the Board to assess the situation,” it added.

The USD1.6 billion fiscal disaster has remained closed since the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak.

The developer and promoter of The 13 Hotel said that the creditor is asking for a repayment of the HKD3.28 billion. Although it did not specify the cre-



ditor, it is suspected to be Wise Park Business Limited which granted South Shore a large loan in 2018, according to reports.

Last year in April, South Shore requested a standstill from its bank to avoid the enforcement of security and liquidation of the company, after the bank required the firm to make an immediate payment of HKD2.48 billion. The amount includes the entire principal amount with interest and follows the amount of HKD470 million, which was supposed to be paid to the bank on March 31.

Touted as the “world’s most luxurious hotel,”

the hotel partially opened in August 2018, when 200 duplex suites and villas became available. The hotel complex had already been a huge strain on South Shore Holdings. The company previously announced that in the six months prior to their September 30, 2018, filing, a loss USD55.38 million. This loss was 18 times more than their loss in 2017.

According to reports, due to The 13’s performance and closing since early 2020, shares of South Shore have become nearly worthless. The stock is worth USD0.007 - it was worth USD13 back in 2014 at the height of its valuation.

## BROKERAGE OPENING ESTIMATE OF GRAND LISBOA PALACE EXTENDED TO Q3

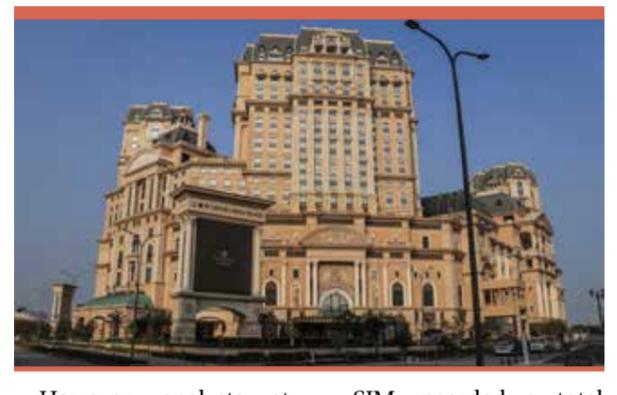
LYNZY VALLES

**B**ROKERAGE Morgan Stanley has estimated that the opening of the awaited Grand Lisboa Palace will be further delayed to the third quarter (Q3) of this year, according to its recent note.

Initially, the HKD39 billion integrated resort was announced to open in the first half of 2021.

Macao Government Tourism Office’s (MGTO) Director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes recently said that the property is in the final stages of licensing. The company’s vice chairman, CEO, and executive director Ambrose So mentioned in the SJM’s annual report in April that it has passed final government inspections and is expected to receive its operating licensing soon.

Gaming operator SJM Holdings previously affirmed that the Grand Lisboa Palace has been completed and that the project is undergoing final inspections by local government authorities.



However, analysts at Morgan Stanley stated that it could take four to eight weeks for the property to get its MGTO and Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) Occupancy Permit (OP) and approval/licenses.

In the report, the brokerage stated that the resort currently has 3,500 staff onboard, with SJM planning to open with 260 mass tables first while the remaining 44 VIP tables may open later in 2022 when the Versace hotel opens.

Back in February, the Labour Affairs Bureau co-organized a recruitment event with the gaming operator for the Grand Lisboa Palace.

SJM recorded a total loss of HKD647 million in the first quarter which increased from last year’s loss of HKD409 million. According to the gaming operator’s unaudited report, the total net revenue, gross gaming revenue and net gaming revenue of the group decreased in the first quarter of this year by 28.8%, 32.7% and 29.2%, respectively, from Q1 of 2020.

Recently, So called on the SAR government to consider prolonging the six current gaming concessions for at least one year, and hold off seeking license tender until the global pandemic and economy have stabilized.

# GOV'T REPORT RECOMMENDS ELECTRIC VEHICLES

**T**HE Macau Environmental Condition Report 2020 noted that, with a tighter air quality standard to be implemented this year, the use of electric vehicles and clean energy should be further promoted.

In recent years, Macau has levied a series of air pollution control measures, such as elevating the standards of monitoring vehicle exhaust and those on major static sources of air pollutants.

For example, the measures have made "certain" improvements in the emission of air pollutants related to SO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Furthermore, the government will implement controls on other sources of pollutants.

It also noted that last year, although both the number and density of vehicles in the city has grown in comparison to year 2019, atmospheric pollutants and greenhouse gas emitted by transport-related activities significant dropped due to the fall in the amount of energy consumed.

Discussing that, the report



revealed that the terminal consumption of energy last year has fallen by more than 30%. Atmospheric pollutants and greenhouse gas emission from local power production have also fallen.

In addition, air quality has improved last year as part of the side effects from the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the report, three air quality monitoring stations located in a high-

density residential district, Macau Peninsula roadside and in Taipa high density residential district have not recorded any unsatisfactory data.

The other three stations located at open-air areas have recorded unsatisfactory data for 10 to 16 days, mainly due to the ozone level crossing the acceptable threshold. The station in Ká-Hó has recorded an index of 144, which was

the poorest air quality level recorded last year.

Considering the air quality last year, Macau saw better quality in June and July, and worse quality in October and November. In normal circumstances, in the summer, Macau tends to have sea breezes from the south.

Regarding the deteriorating ozone problem in Macau, the report recommends that the city cooperate with other governments within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area.

On the other hand, supervision at energy refilling stations on collection of fuel exhaust should continue. Supervision and analyses on ozone level should also be encouraged. Moreover, reduction on pollutant emission, with particular emphasis on electricity production and transport, should be actualized. Developmental strategies must be made to lower carbon emission. Individuals are also encouraged to change their lifestyle and lead a greener life. **AL**

## COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRANTS FROM FIVE HIGH-RISK COUNTRIES TIGHTENED

**H**EALTH measures on entrants who have been to five countries considered high risk by the Macau government in the 28 preceding days have been further tightened, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center announced.

The five countries are Brazil, India, Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines.

Entrants from these five countries, or those who have been in these five countries in the 28 preceding days, should bear certain valid documentations prior to boarding their departure flight to Macau. They are required to hold three SARS-CoV-2 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) negative test results. These three results must be obtained within three days, while each of them must be at least 24 hours apart.

Most importantly, the last PCR negative test result must be issued within 72 hours from the departure time of the flight.

Furthermore, the traveler must also bear a serum negative test result of IgM antibody of the virus. Otherwise, they must hold proof of their completed Covid-19 vaccination.

All these documentations, the Novel Coronavirus Center stressed, must be issued by a testing entity recognized by the Chinese consulates or embassies in those countries. **AL**

AD



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COVID-19

## AGE CEILING FOR BIONTECH JAB TO BE REDUCED FROM 16 TO 12 YEARS

RENATO MARQUES

**A**DOLESCENTS aged 12 years and above will soon be included in the group of people eligible to be inoculated with the Covid-19 vaccine in Macau, health authorities announced in a statement.

The measure reduces the previous eligible age for inoculation with the BioNTech jab, from 16 to 12 years old.

The decision came after several studies were conducted regarding the vaccine which proved it is safe to be given to adolescents between ages 12 and 15 years, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre noted. The centre cited findings by the European Medicines Agency, as well as U.K.'s Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the American Food and Drug Administration.

In the statement, the local authorities added that since there is enough



data to prove the vaccine's safety and effectiveness, the Health Bureau (SSM) will revise its age range target, allowing people in Macau, from aged 12 years onwards to register to get the BioNTech mRNA jabs.

As for the Sinopharm Inactivated virus jabs, they will continue to be administered to those aged 18 or over.

According to the studies conducted by major health agencies, children have

a lower risk of suffering a serious condition or dying from Covid-19 but, while infected, they can infect numerous adults - hence why their vaccination must be considered.

It is not yet clear when this age group will be able to start scheduling vaccination in Macau, with the SSM saying that it will soon promote the necessary changes on the system to allow the inclusion of this age group.

RENATO MARQUES



Carlos Marreiros



## URBAN MASTER PLAN

# Experts express contradictory opinions on how it safeguards local heritage

RENATO MARQUES

**C**ONFLICTING opinions on how the new Urban Master Plan safeguards Macau's heritage and identity became the basis of a debate held during an event organized by the France Macau Chamber of Commerce with the guest-speaker and local architect Carlos Marreiros.

The event, which took place last Thursday evening, was organized to hear the contradictory opinions, namely of Marreiros, on the Urban Master Plan which the government expects to be approved and published by the end of this year.

During the presentation, the architect expressed to be generally in favor of the plan, which he mentioned to have been structured in a "very acceptable" manner.

Elaborating on his opinion, Marreiros noted two aspects which he considered fundamental for his positive evaluation of the plan.

"The Urban Master Plan guarantees that the heritage [buildings and sites] will continue to be protected and safeguarded, and also because it is a plan that focuses on the turning the city back to the water [fronts]," said Marreiros. He noted that historically, the creation and development of Macau was always related with the waterfronts, the sea, the rivers and the canals that surround the region.

Addressing the chart which establishes the different shares of the land usage from 2020 to 2040,

Marreiros noted that the "percentages are quite well balanced," remarking, for instance, that the plan sets 23% of the land to be dedicated to public infrastructures as the larger portion, followed by 22% dedicated for residential areas. The architect also noted that the balance can be seen in the percentages allocated for ecological areas (18%) and green and public outdoor spaces (8%).

"If we put these two items together [ecological areas and green and public outdoor spaces], we have a total of 26% of areas that are considered ecological, green, and outdoor leisure areas. Which becomes, in this way, the largest portion of the whole chart," he remarked.

Marreiros also noted that the idea of the eight categories of land usage comes directly from the old "Urban Intervention Plans" used during the Portuguese administration of Macau which were "very well-designed tools."

A very different opinion on the plan, or at least on the part that it safeguards local identity and heritage, was expressed by Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Associate Dean-Full Professor at the City University of Macau.

During the Q&A session that followed the presentation of Marreiros, Carneiro de Sousa disagreed with the idea expressed that the Urban Master Plan protects

Macau's heritage stating, "The way I see it, this is not a Master Plan, this is just an expansion plan for Macau for the upcoming 20 years." He noted that while the protected buildings and sites are important, when "isolated they have very little value. The value comes from the clusters created by them and that includes not only the main building or a church but the branching that was created around those centers and the interconnection and communication of these places with the others of the same kind all over the city."

**Although the Urban Master Plan might lack consensus approval, [...] it is better to finally have this plan approved than to continue without any guidelines for the city's development for a longer period**

According to Carneiro de Sousa, who had issued a 100-page opinion on the plan during the public consultation period, the plan lacks depth and does not include expert opinions in different fields, such as Sociology, Anthropology, History, among others.

The historian, trained in Cultu-

ral and Religious History, has a wide range of research work published on the History of Macau, East Timor, and the Portuguese presence in Southeast Asia. He remarked that in order to preserve the identity of Macau, it is necessary to preserve its history and original functions of the many clusters around the city and not just keep the main immovable property.

### BETTER THIS PLAN THAN NO PLAN

Although the Urban Master Plan might lack consensus approval, the idea that endures from the

debate is that it is better to finally have this Master Plan approved than to continue without any guidelines for the city's development for a longer period.

"This plan is necessary and urgent," said Marreiros during his introduction to the topic, "We need to have a document that provides clear rules from everyone," he remarked, noting that the lack of a general plan for Macau has been impeding a lot of

work and development of infrastructures that are crucial for the city, as well as driving away potential investments.

"When an investor comes to Macau, interested in a certain land plot, and asks what can be done in it, we need to be able to provide one, single, and assertive

answer and not a rough idea that can be more or less accurate or more or less flexible," Marreiros said, noting that the Urban Master Plan's major importance is to establish such rules and turn them public and transparent for everyone to know.

### GREATER IMPORTANCE ON DETAILED PLANS

Addressing the concerns expressed by Carneiro de Sousa on the lack of depth and detail of the plan, as well as no references to crisis situations, Marreiros also acknowledged that the work on this matter is still very far from being complete.

"You are right when you mention the lack of detail and solutions to crisis. This is why the detailed plans [that will follow after the approval of the general plan] are even more important than the Master Plan itself," Marreiros remarked. "We need to be very careful when doing the detailed plans to guarantee that general ideas of the Master Plan can be incorporated in the best way possible on the actual land plot[s]," he added.

The detailed plans are the most specific part of the urban planning, where experts should clearly define in detail what will be the purpose of each land plot in Macau, as well as what density of the construction there will be, and how will these buildings and constructions relate to each other and in connection with the roads, transports and other public services and facilities.

COVID-19

# US SENATORS PROMISE VACCINES FOR TAIWAN AMID CHINA ROW

TAIJING WU & ZEN SOO, TAIPEI

U.S. will give Taiwan 750,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine, part of President Joe Biden's move to share tens of millions of jabs globally, three American senators said yesterday, after the self-ruled island complained that China is hindering its efforts to secure vaccines as it battles an outbreak.

Democratic Sen. Tammy Duckworth of Illinois, who made a three-hour stop in Taiwan with fellow Democrat Christopher Coons of Delaware and Republican Dan Sullivan of Alaska, said their visit underscores bipartisan U.S. support for the democratic island that Beijing claims as its own renegade territory. Taiwan faces a severe vaccine shortage and has geopolitical significance as a flashpoint in U.S.-China relations.

"I'm here to tell you that the United States will not let you stand alone," Duckworth said at the airport after landing on a U.S. military transport plane. "We will be by your side to make sure the people of Taiwan have what they need to get to the other side of the pandemic and beyond."

Taiwan was included on a long list of places announced last week that would receive 25 million doses from the United States in what the Biden administration says is the first tranche of at least 80 million doses to be distributed globally. Most of the first tranche, including Taiwan's, will be sent through COVAX, a U.N.-backed program to distribute vaccines to low and middle-income countries.



Taiwan's Foreign Minister Joseph Wu (second right) gestures as he welcomes U.S. senators

The island of 24 million people, which lies 160 kilometers off China's east coast, is desperate for vaccines after a sudden outbreak that started in late April caught authorities by surprise. Japan shipped 1.2 million doses to Taiwan on Friday, opting to skip the COVAX process in the interest of speed. It was unclear when the 750,000 American doses would arrive.

Taiwan has accused China of blocking its efforts to reach a deal with BioNTech to import the vaccine co-developed by the German company and Pfizer. Beijing has said it is willing to supply vaccines

to Taiwan, including BioNTech, through Chinese partner Fosun, and that the island's government is to blame for putting politics above the lives of its people. Taiwanese law bans the import of Chinese-made medicines.

Foreign Minister Joseph Wu, welcoming the senators at the airport, said that Taiwan is fortunate to have like-minded countries showing support, which he said is about sustaining freedom and democracy in the face of autocracy.

"Taiwan is facing unique challenges in combating the virus," he said. "While we are doing our best to import vaccines, we

must overcome obstacles to ensure that these life-saving medicine are delivered free from troubles of Beijing."

He said China is trying to block Taiwan's international assistance and prevent it from participating in the World Health Organization. "We are no strangers to that kind of obstructionism," he said.

Taiwan and China split amid civil war in 1949, and most Taiwanese favor maintaining the current state of de facto independence while engaging in robust economic exchanges with the mainland.

China's ruling Communist Party says Taiwan must come un-

der its control, and has in recent months increased pressure on the island, including flying warplanes near Taiwan. The increasing activity and vast improvements in China's military capabilities have raised concern in the U.S., which is bound by its own laws to ensure Taiwan is capable of defending itself and to regard all threats to the island's security as matters of "grave concern."

Taiwan, which had weathered the pandemic virtually unscathed until the recent outbreak, is now facing its most serious flare-up with more than 10,000 new cases since late April.

President Tsai Ing-wen, meeting with the senators, expressed gratitude to the Biden administration for including Taiwan in the first group to receive vaccines and said the doses will arrive at a critical time for the island.

"I hope that through cooperation with the United States, Japan and other countries, Taiwan will be able to overcome the immediate challenges and ... and move towards recovery," she said.

Both Duckworth, who was born in Thailand, and Sullivan said the American donation also reflects gratitude for Taiwan's support for the U.S., as Taiwan donated millions of masks and other supplies to the U.S. in the early days of the pandemic.

"This is love from America in return," Sullivan said, wearing a mask that he noted had "Love from Taiwan" written on it.

The three senators arrived at 7:30 a.m. from South Korea, where they met senior officials including the foreign and defense ministers on Friday and Saturday to discuss COVID-19 cooperation, the U.S.-South Korea military alliance and North Korea. They departed Taiwan at 10.30 a.m. the same morning, according to Taiwan's foreign ministry. **MDT/AP**

JUNE 4

# Microsoft says 'tank man' image blocking due to human error

ZEN SOO & FRANK BAJAK,  
HONG KONG

MICROSOFT Corp. blamed "accidental human error" for its Bing search engine briefly not showing image results for the search term "tank man" on the anniversary of the bloody military crackdown in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Users in different parts of the world, including the U.S., said Friday that no image results were returned when they searched for the term "tank man."

"Tank man" refers to the iconic image of a standoff between an unidentified ci-

vilian and a line of military tanks leaving Beijing's Tiananmen Square after a brutal crackdown on pro-democracy protesters. The photo has become a symbol of defiance around the world.

After being alerted by reporters, Microsoft said in a statement that the issue was "due to an accidental human error and has been resolved." Hours later, images of "tank man" photographs were returned by the search engine.

The company did not elaborate on what the human error was or how it had happened. Nor did it say how much of its Bing development team is China-ba-

sed. The company's largest research and development center outside the United States is in China, and it posted a job in January for a China-based senior software engineer to lead a team that develops the technology powering Bing image search.

Chinese authorities require search engines, websites and social media platforms operating within the country to censor keywords and results deemed politically sensitive or critical of the Chinese government.

References to the Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989 are blocked in China, as are images relating

to the event, such as "tank man."

Microsoft's Bing is one of the few international search engines that operate in China, where it abides by local censorship laws and competes with larger Chinese search engines such as Baidu and Sogou.

Bing has a 2.5% market share in China, according to data site Statcounter.

Rival Google exited the Chinese market in 2010 after four years of operation, following disputes over censorship and a major hacking attack that Google believes originated in China. **MDT/AP**



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

AP PHOTO



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi hosts the 4th China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue via video conference from Guiyang

DIPLOMACY

# China urges closer Afghanistan ties as US withdrawal looms

CHINA is urging closer security and economic cooperation with Afghanistan in an apparent effort to bolster its influence in the region as the U.S. and its allies prepare to withdraw their forces from the country.

The official Xinhua News Agency reported that foreign ministers from China, Afghanistan and Pakistan met via video conference on Thursday and agreed that the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan should be carried out in a responsible and orderly manner to prevent the deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan and the return of "terrorist forces."

It quoted Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi as saying the three countries "needed to to strengthen communication and cooperation" for the sake of Afghanistan's interests and those of neighboring countries.

"The security and stability of Afghanistan and the region are facing new challenges, with foreign troops' withdrawal from Afghanistan accelerated, the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan impacted, and armed conflicts and terrorist activities becoming more frequent," Wang was quoted as saying.

China has long resented the

presence of U.S. and allied forces in Afghanistan, but is equally wary of the country becoming a haven for insurgents that could threaten security in its Xinjiang region that shares a narrow border with Afghanistan.

Xinhua said Wang, Afghan Foreign Minister Mohammad Haneef Atmar and Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi "stressed the need to [...] forbid any terrorist organizations or individuals from using their territories to engage in criminal activities against other countries."

China has sought to invest in Afghan resources, particularly copper, but constant fighting between the government, the Taliban and other groups has largely held back such projects. China has also sought to boost already close ties with Pakistan through its Belt and Road initiative, but the country's economic weakness and security problems have blunted the success of that drive.

The United States is preparing to wrap up its longest war by withdrawing the last of its 2,500-3,500 troops along with 7,000 allied NATO forces by Sept. 11 at the latest, generating fears of increased chaos in a country already deeply insecure. **MDT/AP**

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## MGM Launches Vaccination Drives to Safeguard the Health and Safety of Staff, Guests and the Community

### Organizing Seminar on COVID-19 Vaccine for Team Members

In support of the government's vaccination program to achieve herd immunity, MGM recently held the "Post-pandemic Era: The Road to COVID-19 Vaccine" seminar. It took place at the Grand Ballroom of MGM COTAI and attracted about 200 team members.



The Company was pleased to have Dr. Tai Wa Hou, representative of the Health Bureau, President of Macau Physician Association of Public Hospital and Clinical Director of the Public Conde S. Januário Hospital Center, to explain every detail of COVID-19 vaccines to the participants. He introduced the two types of COVID-19 vaccines available in Macau, with a focus on their efficacy and things to note before vaccination. He threw light on the vaccines' defense against coronavirus variants, how long it takes for antibodies to develop, how long the antibodies last, who should not be given the vaccines, and whether pregnant women

can get the shots. Participating team members agreed that Dr. Tai's remarks on those frequently asked questions reduced their doubts and anxiety, helping them to choose a vaccine that best suits their needs.

### First Integrated Resort Setting Up Outreach Vaccination Point for Staff

To answer the government's call for a community-wide vaccination in an orderly manner, MGM took the lead to invite medical staff of the Health Bureau to set up a two-day outreach vaccination point at MGM COTAI to administer vaccines to staff and their family members in late May. The Company also provided vaccination leave to the team members, allowing them to have sufficient rest on or after the vaccination day.



Kenneth Feng, President, Chief Strategic & Financial Officer of MGM, said, "A total of 1200 team members made reservations for the job during the outreach program. Together with other team members who have been vaccinated previously, the Company has achieved a 40% inoculation rate. We will continue encouraging our team members to get vaccinated and work together towards the government's 70% vaccination coverage goal to produce herd immunity."

### Sharecare Health Security VERIFIED™ with Forbes Travel Guide

In addition, MGM MACAU, and both Skylofts and Emerald Tower of MGM COTAI have become Sharecare Health Security VERIFIED™ with Forbes Travel Guide. The comprehensive facility verification covers more than 360 standards across health and hygiene protocols to ensure that the properties have appropriate health safety procedures in place. It is based on a hotel's compliance with expert-validated best practices that minimize the risk and impact of COVID-19 and potential future public health events.

Ensuring the well-being and health of guests and staff have always been at the forefront of MGM. The Company will continue to ensure a safe environment for staff, guests and the community.

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NORTH KOREA

# Leader calls for meeting to review battered economy

KIM TONG-HYUNG

**N**ORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un has presided over a meeting of his ruling party in his first public appearance in about a month, and called for a larger political conference to discuss efforts to salvage a decaying economy.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency said Saturday that Kim expressed appreciation that a lot of works were being sped up thanks to the "ideological enthusiasm and fighting spirit of self-reliance" demonstrated by the party and his people.

But he also said there was a need to correct "defective matters" and called for a plenary meeting of the Workers' Party's Central Committee to review overall state affairs for the first half of 2021. The party announced that the plenary meeting was set for early June.

Kim's appearance at Friday's Politburo meeting was the first time he showed himself in public since May 6, when he held a photo session with families of North Korean soldiers.

North Korea's battered economy has deteriorated



further amid pandemic border closures, which significantly reduced trade with China, its major ally and economic lifeline.

The Workers' Party last held a plenary meeting of Central Committee members in February, when Kim ripped into state economic agencies for their "passive and self-protecting tendencies" in setting their annual goals.

While Kim said Friday that North Korea was continuing to face challenges brought by "unfavorable subjective and objective conditions and environment," the KCNA report did not mention any comments he made toward the

United States or South Korea.

North Korea has so far ignored the allies' calls to resume nuclear negotiations that have stalled since the collapse of the second summit between Kim and former President Donald Trump in February 2019. The Americans then rejected North Koreans' demands for lifting sanctions in exchange for a piecemeal deal toward partially surrendering their nuclear capabilities.

Following a meeting last month in Washington, President Joe Biden and South Korean President Moon Jae-in said in a joint statement that Washington would take

a "calibrated and practical approach that is open to and will explore diplomacy" with Pyongyang.

But North Korea has questioned the sincerity of the proposals and claimed that Biden's agreement to end Washington's decades-long range restrictions that capped South Korea's missile development, which was announced after his meeting with Moon, demonstrated continuing U.S. hostility toward the North.

U.S. officials have suggested Biden would adopt a middle ground policy between his predecessors — Trump's direct dealings with Kim and Barack Obama's "strategic patience." But some experts say Washington won't likely provide the North with meaningful sanctions relief unless it takes concrete denuclearization steps first. Kim has vowed to strengthen his nuclear weapons program in recent political speeches, while saying that the fate of bilateral relations depends on whether Washington discards what he perceives as hostile policies.

During a rare ruling party congress in January, Kim urged his people to be resilient in the struggle for economic self-reliance. He called for reasserting greater state control over the economy, boosting agricultural production and prioritizing the development of chemicals and metal industries.

Experts say such sectors are crucial to North Korean hopes to revitalize industrial production that has been decimated by sanctions and halted imports of factory materials amid the pandemic. **MDT/AP**

The fire has destroyed most of the ship's cargo, which included 25 tons of nitric acid and other chemicals. But there are fears that remaining chemicals as well as hundreds of tons of oil from the fuel tanks could leak into the sea.

Such a disaster could devastate marine life and further pollute the island nation's famed beaches. The disaster has already caused debris — including several tons of plastic pellets used to make plastic bags — to wash ashore.

The government has banned fishing along about 80 kilometers of coastline.

Officials say there had been about 300 tons of oil on board and that experts believe it could have burned off in the fire. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1942 JAPANESE BEATEN IN BATTLE OF MIDWAY



The United States has routed the Japanese Navy in a major three-day battle over a remote US naval air base at Midway Island in the Pacific Ocean.

The victory has dealt a severe blow to Japan's ambitions to advance right across the Pacific towards the US coast.

The tiny island, 1,000 miles north-west of Hawaii, was targeted as a potential launching pad for the Japanese advance.

The Japanese attacked in the early hours of 4 June with heavy air raids on the military base.

The US responded with a decisive counter-attack, using the US Pacific Fleet, army bombers and the marines. The Japanese were clearly taken by surprise by the scale of the American defence.

The battle was fought almost exclusively from aircraft carriers - only the second time this kind of fighting has been attempted.

The first was just a month ago, in the Battle of the Coral Sea, when the United States thwarted Japanese plans to invade Australia.

In that battle, the victory was not so decisive, and the United States lost one of its aircraft carriers, the USS Lexington.

Reporting on the end of the battle for Midway Island, the Commander-in-Chief of the US Pacific Fleet, Admiral Chester Nimitz, said at least two enemy aircraft carriers had been completely destroyed, with all their aircraft, and at least two more seriously damaged.

Ten Japanese warships were also sunk or damaged.

By contrast, on the American side losses were relatively small. One American carrier was hit and some aeroplanes were lost.

Fighting is still continuing in the area, but although Admiral Nimitz stopped short of claiming the Japanese were defeated, he said, "a momentous victory is in the making."

He went on, "Pearl Harbor has now been partially avenged. Vengeance will not be complete until Japanese sea-power has been reduced to impotence. We have made substantial progress in that direction."

Meanwhile, fighting is continuing around the US naval base of Dutch Harbor, in Alaska. The Japanese are known to have landed on some of the westernmost Aleutian Islands, and bombed the harbour on 3 June.

No news has been received from the area since then.

Courtesy BBC News

## DATA RECOVERED AS SHIP WITH CHEMICALS SINKING OFF SRI LANKA

BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, COLOMBO

**E**xperts recovered the data recorder of a fire-ravaged ship carrying chemicals that is slowly sinking off Sri Lanka's capital, as salvage crews stood by to head off a possible environmental disaster, officials said Sunday.

The Singapore-flagged MV X-Press Pearl started sinking Wednesday, a day after authorities extinguished a fire that raged on the vessel for 12 days. Efforts to tow the ship into deeper waters away from the port in Colombo

had failed after the ship's stern became submerged and rested on the seabed.

Sri Lanka Ports Authority said experts together with the navy on Saturday recovered the ship's voyage data recorder, or VDR, commonly known as the black box.

The authority said on its website said that the VDR, which contains vital information related to the operation of the vessel, would be handed over to local law enforcement agencies investigating the fire.

Both the authority and the ship's operator said the vessel's aft portion remains

on the seabed at a depth of about 21 meters, and the forward section continues to settle down slowly.

Operator X-Press Feeders said salvors remain on the scene to deal with any possible spills. It has apologized for the disaster.

The port authority and the operator said there were no signs of oil or chemical spills. They said that Sri Lanka's navy, Indian coast guard, salvage crews and local authorities were capable of responding to any signs of oil pollution or debris, and were monitoring the situation around the clock.

## IN CONTEXT

The Japanese had invaded two Aleutian islands, Attu and Kiska, and attacked Dutch Harbor as a diversionary ploy to draw US forces away from the key battle at Midway. But the US had broken Japanese military codes, and knew about the secret strategy - thus denying Japan an easy victory at Midway.

The loss of four aircraft carriers was more than the Japanese Navy could endure, and the battle proved a turning point in the Pacific War.

Six months to the day since the Japanese bombed the US Naval base at Pearl Harbor, they were placed on the defensive for the first time.

Slowly, the Americans drove them back, and eventually US forces occupied the major Japanese-held islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

The Japanese were finally forced to surrender on 15 August 1945 after the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Japan remained under US occupation for seven years, and there is a large and controversial US military base on Okinawa to this day.





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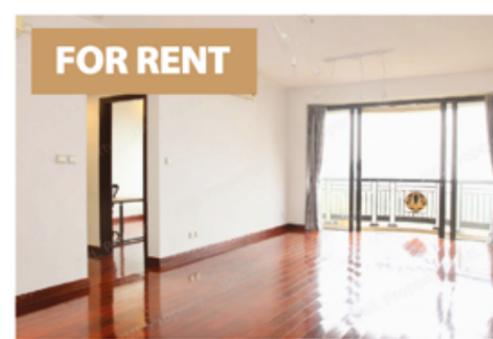
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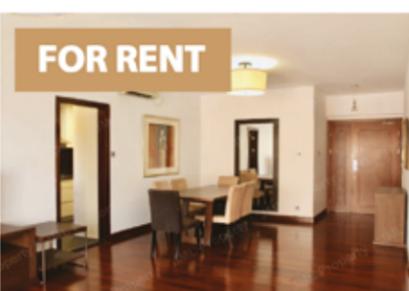
For Sale

- [Taipa] Old Taipa studio 1 1 650 ft<sup>2</sup> HKD 3,780,000 Ref: 2007 6001
- [Taipa] Hoi Wan Garden 2 2 950 ft<sup>2</sup> HKD 4,950,000 Ref: 2105 6001
- [Taipa] Chun Fok 2 1 640 ft<sup>2</sup> HKD 5,890,000 Ref: 2103 1001
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CRICKET

# New Zealand remains in control despite Burns ton for England

**R**ORY Burns compiled his third century for England but a New Zealand side inspired by paceman Tim Southee remained in control after the fourth day of the first cricket test at Lord's on Saturday.

Left-handed opener Burns hit 16 fours and one six before he was last man out, caught behind off Southee for 132, as the home team was bowled out for 275.

New Zealand then lost first-innings double centurion Devon Conway for 23 and captain Kane Williamson for one as the visitors reached the close of play on 62-2, a 165-run lead over England.

The Kiwis will struggle to work their way into a winning position, however, with only one day's play remaining.

After the third day was washed out by rain, England resumed on 111-2 and quickly lost skipper Joe Root for 42.

Ollie Pope then fell for 22 while Dan Lawrence and debutant James Bracey were both removed



England's Ollie Robinson celebrates taking the wicket of New Zealand's Kane Williamson during the fourth day of the Test match at Lord's cricket ground in London, Saturday

without scoring. Ollie Robinson, also making his first test appearance, struck 42 as he added 63 for

the seventh wicket with Burns.

Mark Wood fell for a duck and Stuart Broad was dismissed for 10

before James Anderson (8 not out) helped put on 52 valuable runs for the final England wicket with cen-

turion Burns.

Southee finished with figures of 6-43 from his 25.1 overs while fellow paceman Kyle Jamieson chipped in with 3-85.

Burns was especially pleased to do well with his wife and baby daughter among the crowd. "It was pretty special to get a hundred in front of them, not that my daughter will remember it," he said. "But I will, so that's a nice thing."

"I think New Zealand are probably slightly ahead in the game. The third innings is always a tricky one to try to pace, to try to push a positive result, and they're obviously running out of a little bit of time."

Robinson, who took four wickets in New Zealand's first innings, followed up by removing Conway and Williamson cheaply before the close of play. Tom Latham was 30 not out, with nightwatchman Neil Wagner undefeated on 2.

"If we would have turned up at the start of the day and been told we were going to walk off with the position we are in now, we would have been pretty happy," Southee said.

"It's always great to turn up on day five of a test match with all three results still possible. Who knows what may happen? But it's great to be in a position where we can push on." **MDT/AP**

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## OPINION

### China Daily

Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, China Daily

## THE UAE AND CHINA: PARTNERS IN INNOVATION FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

In a world that is evolving at an unprecedented pace, driven by new technologies that continually disrupt the way we live and work, developing a culture that fosters innovation is no longer optional. It is essential for countries, if they are to reach their economic potential in a modern, highly competitive world.

The United Arab Emirates and the People's Republic of China are keenly aware of this new reality and have chosen to collaborate in order to innovate. In so doing, China-UAE relations are fueling progress in both our countries, and globally.

Take for example our recent partnership in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Vaccines developed in record time in China were deployed at scale across the UAE to achieve the most comprehensive vaccination drive in the world. This partnership led to the creation of a COVID vaccine production facility in the UAE - the first such manufacturing plant in the Arab world that will soon export life-saving vaccines to other countries. In short, our two countries rapid response to a crisis has led to opportunity, enhancing the healthcare and life science sectors of both nations and delivering benefits far beyond our borders.

We are leveraging this same spirit of collaborative innovation to help solve other pressing global challenges, like climate change. In 2017, China and the UAE came together to create the world's largest single site solar power plant, Noor Abu Dhabi. With 3.2 million solar panels installed across 8 square kilometers, Noor Abu Dhabi came on line two years ago and will ultimately produce 1.2 gigawatts of clean electricity. Building on this achievement, our two countries will soon set a new benchmark in the renewable energy space, with the Al Dhafra Solar Project, which will be almost twice the size of Noor Abu Dhabi, and will set a record low tariff of \$1.35 cents per kilowatt hour.

What we are seeing is this: regardless of whether it's developing biotechnologies, renewable energy solutions or other sectors enabled by advanced technologies, when our countries collaborate to innovate, costs come down, economic opportunities go up and society benefits. And when you collaborate on the scale that China and the UAE are, the benefits can extend to all corners of the globe.

In the UAE, we have learned that innovation doesn't happen in a vacuum. Innovation thrives when the best minds come together to work on a single problem. This is why we encourage cross-border cooperation, because together we are smarter, more agile, and more resilient. This new era will not be without its fair share of challenges. Pushing the boundaries of innovation requires courage, boldness, and a readiness to fail on the road to success. This can-do spirit, which sees challenges as opportunities, has transformed the UAE's former hydrocarbon economy into a center of excellence for renewable and new forms of energy. The same spirit turned our fishing and pearling villages into world-class logistical hubs and allowed the UAE to send the first probe from the Middle East to Mars.

As we look to the future, the UAE is refocusing its entire industrial strategy around innovation, leveraging the power and potential of breakthrough technologies. We are doing this to reinforce the resilience of our core industries and to expand into knowledge-intensive sectors. With this new direction, there are numerous opportunities for our countries to continue to collaborate and innovate across traditional and emerging industries in creative and commercially viable ways.

In the energy sector, we should explore the potential of zero carbon hydrogen, by matching our know-how with China's growing demand for more energy with less carbon emissions. In pharmaceutical, biotech and healthcare, we should build on our experience with COVID-19 to create new medicines and cutting-edge treatments that can save lives and create valuable biotech businesses. In agri-tech, we should share knowledge to develop seeds that can survive arid conditions and sustainable farming methods that can feed a growing global population while minimizing environmental impacts.

[Abridged]

## HUNGARY: PLAN TO BUILD CHINESE UNIVERSITY BRANCH PROTESTED

THE  
BUZZ

Several thousand people rallied in Hungary's capital Saturday against plans by Prime Minister Viktor Orban to host a Chinese university in Budapest.

A strategic agreement that Hungary signed with Shanghai-based Fudan University envisages opening a branch in the city's 9th district. Plans call for the Budapest campus to be completed by 2024. It would enroll international students and represent the school's only foreign outpost, as well as the first Chinese university campus in the 27-nation European Union.

The protesters marched from Heroes' Square toward the Hun-

garian parliament building, defying a pandemic ban on gatherings of more than 500 people. The crowd carried banners reading 'No Fudan,' flags and posters.

Budapest authorities have opposed the university branch idea. They argue the \$1.9 billion project would place a huge burden on taxpayers and send the wrong political message because of the alleged human rights abuses in China.

Orban, a right-wing populist, has fostered closer ties with Russia and China as he faces European Union criticism for his authoritarian ways and staunch anti-immigration stand.

## NORMANDY COMMEMORATES D-DAY WITH SMALL CROWDS, BUT BIG HEART

SYLVIE CORBET,  
COLLEVILLE-SUR-MER

WHEN the sun rises over Omaha Beach, revealing vast stretches of wet sand extending toward distant cliffs, one starts to grasp the immensity of the task faced by Allied soldiers on June 6, 1944, landing on the Nazi-occupied Normandy shore.

Several ceremonies are scheduled Sunday to commemorate the 77th anniversary of the decisive assault that led to the liberation of France and western Europe from Nazi control, and honor those who fell.

On D-Day, more than 150,000 Allied troops landed on the beaches code-named Omaha, Utah, Juno, Sword and Gold, carried by 7,000 boats. This year on June 6, the beaches stood vast and empty as the sun rose, exactly 77 years since the dawn invasion.

For the second year in a row, anniversary commemorations are marked by virus travel restrictions that have prevented veterans or families of fallen soldiers from the U.S.,



Britain, Canada and other Allied countries making the trip to France. Only a few officials were allowed exceptions.

Most public events have been canceled, and the official ceremonies are limited to a small number of selected guests and dignitaries.

Denis van den Brink, a WWII expert working for the town of Carentan, site of a strategic battle near Utah Beach, acknowl-

ged the "big loss, the big absence is all the veterans who couldn't travel."

"That really hurts us very much because they are all around 95, 100 years old, and we hope they're going to last forever. But, you know..." he said.

"At least we remain in a certain spirit of commemoration, which is the most important," he told The Associated Press. MDT/AP



Germany Authorities issued severe weather warnings for parts of western Germany, a day after a man was killed and a 12-year-old girl was seriously injured in separate storm-related incidents. Firefighters across western Germany were called to thousands of incidents, including several landslides. The national weather service DWD said further storms were expected across central Germany, with heavy rain and hail possible.

Italy A migrant rescue ship operated by a German charity has been detained in Sicily by the Italian Coast Guard, which found the vessel in alleged violation of safety rules and environmental regulations. A Coast Guard statement said inspectors identified 23 "irregularities," including some serious enough to warrant the the Sea-Eye 4's detention in Palermo's port until the cited problems are corrected.

El Salvador President Nayib Bukele announced in a recorded message played at a Bitcoin conference in Miami that next week he will send proposed legislation to the country's congress that would make the cryptocurrency legal tender in the Central American nation. The 39-year-old president, characterized it as an idea that could help El Salvador move forward.

Mexico An accident at a small-scale coal mine project in a northern Mexico border state left seven miners trapped, officials said. The Coahuila Labor Department said the mine was apparently hit by some sort of collapse and flooding. The mine, located in Muzquiz township, appears to be a type of deep, narrow, open coal pit with steep earth walls.

Burkina Faso Gunmen killed at least 100 people in a northern village, the government said, in what was the country's deadliest attack in years. The attack took place in Solhan village, in the Sahel's Yagha province, government spokesman Ousseni Tamboura said in a statement blaming jihadists. The local market and several homes were also burned down in the area toward the border of Niger, he said.

## THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Kin Cheung



Police officers blow out candles lit by people marking the anniversary of the military crackdown on a pro-democracy student movement in Beijing, outside Victoria Park in Hong Kong, Friday, June 4