



THE BUS OPERATORS' '4-4 SHIFT' HAS RAISED CONCERNS AMONG NETIZENS FOLLOWING THE DEMISE OF A BUS DRIVER, A SHIFT THAT A RETIREE DESCRIBED AS 'DIFFICULT INCOME'

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PANSY HO'S REMAINING SHARES IN MGM RESORTS IS NOW 0.82%, FOLLOWING USD9 MILLION SALE

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AP PHOTO



Japan A member of Uganda's Olympic team has tested positive for the coronavirus and was barred entry into Japan, in the first detected infection among arriving athletes for the Tokyo Games opening in five weeks. The eight other members of the team left early yesterday by chartered bus for host town Osaka, central Japan, where Covid-19 cases are still being reported.

AP PHOTO



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un "solemnly swore" to navigate his country out of deepening economic troubles as he concluded a major ruling party meeting, acknowledging food shortages and urging officials to prepare for both dialogue and confrontation with the U.S. North Korea's state media released Kim's comments shortly before President Joe Biden's special representative for North Korea, Sung Kim, arrived in South Korea on Saturday for talks over stalled nuclear diplomacy with the North.

AP PHOTO



Sri Lanka The U.N. representative in Sri Lanka said the sinking of a container ship that caught fire while transporting chemicals off the capital Colombo has caused "a significant damage to the planet" by releasing hazardous substances into the ecosystem. The Singapore-flagged X-Press Pearl sank off last week a month after catching fire, raising concerns about a possible environmental disaster.

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HIDING IN THE GRAY

Broadcaster MASTV has been getting away with not paying long-overdue salaries to its staff due to a loophole in the city's labor law, lawmaker Ella Lei laments

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HEALTH AUTHORITIES DISREGARD EU TRAVEL 'WHITE LIST'

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866,000 TOURISTS MAY ARRIVALS UP 9% MONTH-ON-MONTH

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24-HOUR COVID-19 TEST RESULT NEEDED FOR ENTRANTS FROM TAIWAN

From today, all entrants from Taiwan or those who have been to Taiwan in the 21 preceding days are required to hold negative Covid-19 polymerase chain reaction test results issued within 24 hours prior to flight times. Meanwhile, non-Macau residents entering from Taiwan will be quarantined at the Grand Coloane Resort "for better management," the Macao Government Tourism Office announced. Affected non-locals were instructed to make responding arrangements themselves.

SECOND PHASE OF 'STAY, DINE AND SEE MACAO' SEES POPULARITY

The first two days of the registration period of the second phase of the "Stay, Dine and See Macao" local tour initiative saw more than 3,700 registrations. The Macao Government Tourism Office sees it as "heated feedback." The regulator also noted that the number of applications is also satisfactory for the Macao Highlight Tours, launched by Macau's travel trade for visitor markets. Operating in small-sized groups, the Macao Highlight Tours allows visitors to enjoy private tours along tailor-made itineraries.

UM SEES OVER 1,500 GRADUATES

More than 1,500 students of bachelor's degree programmes recently graduated at the University of Macau. Among these students, 117 have completed the Honours Programme offered by the Honours College. Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U, representing the Chief Executive and UM chancellor at this year's ceremony, expressed hope that the university would continue to produce "outstanding research results and nurture talent who love China and Macau to facilitate moderate economic diversification of the SAR."

MASTV EXPLOITS LEGAL LOOPHOLE TO DELAY STIPEND

HONEY TSANG

A loophole in Macau's labor law has given the disreputable Macau Asia Satellite Television Company (MASTV) free rein to continue to not paying long-overdue stipends to their staff, lawmaker Ella Lei said last Friday during a press conference.

An employee surnamed Chan, almost 60 years of age, was one of over 100 affected employees at MASTV, and a victim of the broadcaster's shady dealing since 2019.

Chan had been a photojournalist at MASTV for over 11 years. He had sporadically experienced delayed wages for months — but had not suffered anything like the nine month period without income until recently.

"Receiving no income for nine months has dealt a huge blow to my finances. And it's very difficult for me, [at] almost 60 years old, to find a job during this pandemic in Macau. The situation is a complete deadlock," he said.

On June 18, alongside lawmaker Lei, Chan and a number of other affected staff from MASTV convened a press conference to raise public awareness about the predicament they have been facing over the past two years.

During an exclusive exchange with Times, Lei stressed that the current regulations in the Labour Relations Law contain some holes — including one in which a firm will not be fined even if it is uncooperative and defers stipend payment deliberately before the case goes to the court.



MASTV has been cashing in on this legal loophole to get away with being in arrears of wage payments.

In contrast with Macau, China and Hong Kong have enacted more rigorous legislation to deter ill-intentioned employers from not paying employee salaries on time for a prolonged period.

"In Hong Kong, there were some cases that the employers, who maliciously deferred stipend payment, were put behind bars. But has it ever happened in Macau? No!" Lei told the Times.

Macau allows these malevolent employers to dodge their liabilities for years, she said. The lawmaker calls on the government to review current regulations and suggests that it tightens the law by setting a shorter statutory period. She proposed a model in which employers are given 15 days to dispense the wages to staff or they would risk being fined.

When asked if the city's labor laws favor employers over employees, Lei said the current legal framework is not intended to disfavor workers. This is demonstrated by the enshrinement of benefits mandated for employees, such as leave and compensation for dismissal.

Nonetheless, she admitted that more has to be done to safeguard the employment rights of the city's workers.

Chan disclosed the daily operation of MASTV is predominantly sustained by its branches in Zhuhai and Hong Kong. There

are just one or two employees in Macau still working for the media outlet.

He, along with many other colleagues, tolerated their previous unpleasant experiences as they formed a strong emotional attachment to their journalistic roles which they had been serving for many years.

However, they had no choice but to demand their labor rights as they have not been paid for three quarters.

In April this year, Chief Executive (CE) Ho Iat Seng addressed the media on the sidelines of an event and urged MASTV to pay the overdue salary to their staff.

When asked as to whether the government would retract the Satellite TV Broadcasting Service License from MASTV, Ho said that government cannot suspend its operation as there are still employees serving the company and its license has not yet expired.

At present, it seems that MASTV remains unwilling to dispense the owed salary to the staff even following CE's appeal.

In January 2016, the city's first credit guarantee fund came into force, designed to pay an advance payment of a maximum of six months of overdue salary to affected staff through litigation. However, it necessitates the claimants go endure red tape and a lengthy litigation of at least 18 months before they can get back their salary.

MASTV's broadcasting license was renewed in 2019, with its validity period lasting for another 15 years until 2034.

GAMING

Pansy Ho further reduces participation in MGM International

PANSY Ho, co-chairperson and executive director of the gaming operator MGM China Holdings Ltd (MGM), continues to reduce MGM's participation in the Macau gaming operator's parent company

MGM Resorts International.

According to a filing to the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong where MGM is listed, this time, Ho sold some 204,459 shares in just a single day.

The transaction gran-

ted Ho a total of USD9 million (MOP72 million).

Prior to this sale on June 9, Ho had cut her stake in MGM Resorts several times this year, following the reduction in the participation process which started in No-

vember 2019.

This is the fourth time this year that Ho has reduced her participation in MGM Resorts International, pocketing as much as MOP1.47 billion.

Before the first tran-

saction, in November 2019, Ho had just over 8.2 million shares.

After her latest sale, her stakes are now reduced to about 4.5 million shares, representing a 45.1% cut in her participation in the company.

As the Times has reported, the reduction of Ho's progressive participation in MGM Resorts hints to her likely abandoning the company in favor of her family-owned concessionaire SJM Holdings Ltd in the future. **RM**

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COVID-19

Health authorities disregard EU travel 'white list'

RENATO MARQUES

LOCAL health authorities are not taking into account the inclusion of Macau on European Union's (EU) list of countries and regions, which are safe for travel and border restrictions are being eased.

The list, commonly referred to as travel "white list," will not be taken as a reference for any changes to the border restrictions imposed by Macau, the medical director from the Conde de São Januário Hospital Center and coordinator of the Health Bureau's (SSM) Covid-19 Vaccination Operation, Dr. Tai Wa Hou said on Friday.

Speaking at the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center press briefing, Tai emphasized that the current entry policy into Macau, except for the low-risk regions of mainland China, has not been changed. He reaffirmed that all countries, including those in the EU, are still considered high-risk areas, from which the entry of foreigners is still not allowed.

Tai also remarked that, at this point, "there are no conditions to negotiate with other countries



regarding the partial exemption from entry restrictions measures," namely after the vaccination against Covid-19, noting that such possibility is not even being considered.

On a different topic, the same official announced that the new batch of mRNA jabs with 10,000 doses arrived on Friday morning, and that another batch of the same BioNTech vaccines is expected to arrive next week.

Tai said that he is not as yet certain of the number of vaccine doses in the next batch and the exact day that it will arrive, as the health authorities are currently negotiating the final details with the supplier.

These new vaccine doses, as well as the ones still in stock, will also be part of the new large-size community vaccination post which will, from today, start operations at the new Mong-Há Sports Center together with the support of Kiang Wu Hospital.

Vaccination bookings at this new facility started from Saturday.

According to the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center, on the first day of reducing the minimum age for the mRNA vaccine to residents aged 12 and up, there were 617 people aged 18

or below who received the jab.

Replying to media questions on the possibility of lowering the minimum age for inoculation with the Sinopharm jab, Tai said that, after clinical testing, the vaccine has proven to be safe and effective on people aged between 3 and 17 years old. Nevertheless, according to the national health authorities' recommendation, vaccination of people in this age group should be done only in emergency cases.

ANOTHER BELL'S PALSYP CASE AFTER VACCINATION

A 46-year-old male is the most recent case diagnosed with Bell's palsy following his inoculation of the Covid-19 vaccine, becoming the third case of its kind in Macau.

According to information from the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center, the case was reported last Saturday, exactly a week after he received the first dose of the Sinopharm vaccine at a public healthcare center.

The case has been reported to the special workgroup in charge of analyzing adverse events following immunization (AEFI).

As in the previous cases, the condition affects one of the sides of the face, causing asymmetry, difficulty in closing the eyelid and lip as well as numbness on the affected side of the face.

According to the health authorities, the causes of the conditions are not yet completely known, noting that patients usually start to recover from the symptoms after two weeks, and gradually up to six to seven months after the event.

Easing border restrictions with Hong Kong to be a progressive system

RENATO MARQUES

AS the neighboring region Hong Kong reaches 14 consecutive days without new Covid-19 cases in the community, questions arise about how the government will ease the restrictions previously imposed, as it has said many times that the relaxation of restrictions is tied to this goal.

For those hoping for a swift, complete reopening of the borders under the same conditions enforced upon the mainland, the news from the local health authorities seems to be that it may not be the case.

Questioned on the topic during the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center press briefing last week, the coordinator of



the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Leong Iek Hou, said, "It is not possible to change [the current] measures all at once. Maybe we can alleviate the restrictions for vaccinated people in both regions; [for instance] by shortening the quarantine period. But this [possibility] will be depending on further negotiations between the authorities of both sides."

Reaffirming the infor-

mation shared previously by both health authorities and the Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng, Leong added, "Once Hong Kong manages to achieve [the goal] of 14 consecutive days without local cases, we can negotiate whether there is a possibility to adjust border restrictions measures." He remarked that the 14-days without cases is the precondition for the negotiations to kick-off.

On the same topic, several media outlets in Hong Kong have also reported that its government is preparing to ease the quarantine measures of visitors that have been fully vaccinated as long as they present a valid negative test for Covid-19.

In the same reports, the quarantine period for people arriving in Hong Kong under such conditions was said to be seven-days or less.

COVID-19

HEALTH BUREAU 'REGRETS' LATEST COVID-19 CASE'S HIDING OF TRAVEL HISTORY

THE Health Bureau (SSM) has expressed regret about the latest Covid-19 patient's non-disclosure of travel history to India. The patient arrived in the city from Taiwan on June 17.

As of press time, the patient has been tested for SARS-CoV-2 and antibodies against the Covid-19 virus. A low level of virus was registered from the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test. He was weak positive on IgG antibody and negative on IgM.

The Health Bureau (SSM) has considers this a relapse case.

After DNA analysis was conducted, it was confirmed that the patient had contracted the Delta mutation type of Covid-19. The Delta type was first found in India.

Initially the patient only declared to the health au-

thorities that he had worked in Vietnam from October 2020 to January 2021. Considering the existence of the Delta mutation in Vietnam prior to the period, the bureau believed that the patient contracted the virus in Vietnam.

Later, "by further investigation," as SSM noted in a statement, it was found that the patient worked in India between February and May this year. During this period, he had mild respiratory symptoms such as runny nose.

He returned to Taiwan in May.

The bureau stressed that failure to make accurate disclosure of travel history under similar circumstances can constitute to a criminal offence according to local laws. **AL**

RETIRED BUS DRIVER DESCRIBES SPECIAL SHIFT AS 'DIFFICULT INCOME'

A retired bus driver has stressed that the special "4-4 shift" is indeed a whole day's work and he "would not want to do it again even if there was a chance."

The special shift, officially known as the "4-4 shift", exists for both local bus operators. Nominally speaking, the shift covers an eight-hour work schedule plus four hours of break within, with the shift starting at 6 a.m. and ending at 8 p.m.

Last week, news unfolded on social media platforms about a Transmac bus driver's demise while sleeping at home. It was said that the driver worked in the special shift for an extended period of time.

Social media users started connecting the incident to the physical and mental burden from the special shift.

The retired driver told local Macao Daily News



that the workday for the "4-4 shift" starts at 5 a.m. as the driver needs to set off to pick up the bus at that hour. An hour is needed because prior to departing from the bus depot, a brief check of the bus is mandatory.

At the end of the schedule, the bus will be driven back to the depot for refueling and another check is conducted, during which the driver needs to be present. It means that, according to the retired driver,

a work day is actually 13 hours.

Most importantly, the work hours cover the busiest peak hours of a day. He added that the break time in between a day's work is insufficient for a good rest.

Social media users are concerned with the continuation of this shift because when the driver does not have enough good rest safety will be at risk.

In response to the public discussion, the bus

company issued a statement, emphasizing that the late driver has enjoyed five days of regular holidays and one statutory holiday in May. He had a day off prior to his passing.

The bus company stressed that the late driver has worked on the special shift for 11 months and "has got accustomed to the working schedule".

However, director of the Transport Bureau Lam Hin San, speaking with the media on Friday, said that the regulator was still waiting for the post-mortem report. He pledged that the regulator will continue its follow-up on the matter.

He also defended the special shift, saying that "it has existed for more than three decades," and he believes that "drivers are guaranteed of their rest time." He also disclosed that the regulator has not received any complaints on the schedule so far. AL

TAISHAN PLANT

ENVIRONMENTALIST CALLS FOR REVIEW OF NUCLEAR INCIDENT COMMUNICATION MECHANISM

STAFF REPORTER

In response to recent public concerns about the safety of the Taishan Nuclear Power Station, environmental group Green Future Macau has argued that the current nuclear incident communication mechanism of the SAR government is inadequate.

Joe Chan, vice president of Green Future Macau, said that although the safety issue that occurred this time was a low-level incident and there is no need for the public to panic, the safety of nuclear power plants and the related emergency response processes should still be of concern to the community.

Chan said that the current communication protocol between the Macau government and

Guangdong Province places the former in a passive position. The local authorities can only wait for news from Guangdong Province.

He stressed that the emergency response mechanism needs to be reviewed and improved to cope with emergencies, and stated that it is also necessary for the government to raise public awareness so that harm can be minimized in the event of a nuclear incident.

The advocate called on the government to take a proactive role in the communication system, such as sending staff to participate in the regular meetings of nuclear power stations, and conducting nuclear accident drills to teach the public how to evacuate in the event of a nuclear accident.

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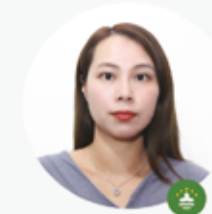
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Property of the Week



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Property Hotlist



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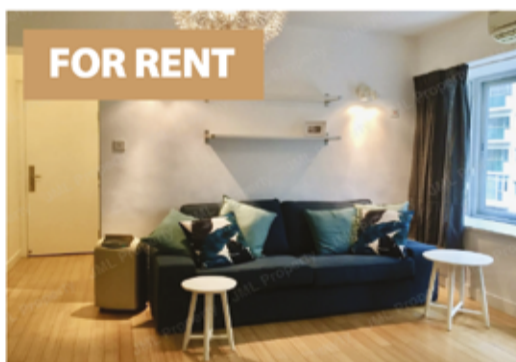
FOR RENT

One Central
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 2



Ref: 2106 1001



FOR RENT

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HKD 11,200/mth

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 2
 2



Ref: 2106 1003

More Listings

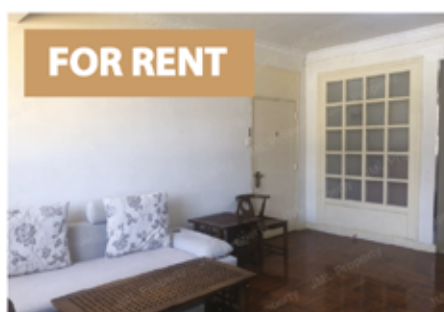
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- [Macau] Jardim do Dragao 2 1 840 ft² **HKD 6,830,000** Ref: 2106 6001
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RENATO MARQUES



MAY TOURIST ARRIVALS UP 9% MONTH-ON-MONTH

MAY saw a 9% increase in tourist arrivals than April, the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) has announced.

The government's statistic body pointed out that in May, the city has received a total of 866,000 tourist arrivals. Not only was it 9% more than the figures in April, the number was an astonishing 53-fold upsurge from May last year.

It must be stressed, however, that no tourism endorsement was issued by mainland China

in May last year. In addition, foreigners were also banned from entering Macau.

Overnight visitors and same-day visitors amounted to about 474,000 and 392,000 respectively.

The average length of stay of visitors shortened by 3.7 days year-on-year to 1.6 days, with that of overnight visitors (2.9 days) and same-day visitors (0.1 day) dropping by 11.8 days and 0.1 day respectively.

The local tourism regulator,

besides other governmental bodies, has stressed that many residents in further away regions of the mainland were not aware that they did not need to be quarantined when they visited Macau. This may justify the massive drop of nights stayed by visitors.

Visitors from closer regions, such as Guangdong Province, normally choose not to stay in local hotels.

In terms of the source of visitors, the number of mainland

visitors rocketed by 5,300% year-on-year to nearly 800,000, with about 336,000 travelling under the Individual Visit Scheme.

Visitors from the nine Pearl River Delta cities in the Greater Bay Area totaled to about 430,000, of which 47% came from Zhuhai. Meanwhile, there were 64,000 visitors from Hong Kong and 6,363 from Taiwan.

Analysed by the checkpoint, the number of visitor arrivals by land in May shot up by 4,660% year-on-year to 764,547, and 618,370 (80.9%) arrived through the Border Gate. Visitor arrivals by air and by sea totaled to 75,244 and 26,272 respectively. **AL**

DICJ to ramp up manpower

HONEY TSANG

THE Executive Council (ExCo) has completed draft administrative regulations concerning the structure and operation of the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ), with a bid to strengthen the government's supervision of the gaming industry.

To that end, the ExCo amended the Administrative Regulation No. 34/2003, which was promulgated in the early stages solely as the city's gaming license commenced.

Considering the increase in Macau's gaming venues, the ExCo will be ramping up the number of DICJ's supervisory employees from the current 192 to 459. The hiring will be conducted progressively



in phases.

In addition, the ExCo has decided to enlist another deputy director to strengthen the bureau's planning and coordination capabilities. The DICJ will carry out restructuring across its departments, with some departments

merging and the addition of new departments.

These administrative regulations took effect on June 19.

Meanwhile, the ExCo also announced that aspiring civil servants will soon be required to pay around MOP300 to sign

up for the civil service entry exam. The final amount will be decided by the Chief Executive, ExCo announced.

Secretary for Administration and Justice and spokesperson of the ExCo Cheong Weng Chon emphasized that this move is designed to

reduce the waste of public resources, as there have been some applicants who registered for the exam and did not show up.

Those who face financial hardship may be exempted from this payment. The exam fee will also be refunded to the applicants if the exam is cancelled.

The ExCo stated that the government would implement a set of facilitation measures to shorten the civil servant recruitment period, including hosting special exams to fill up specific vacancies and extending the validity period of the exam results to five years from the current three years.

On the same day, the ExCo also announced two other regulations to improve the operation of the Unitary Police Service and incorporate 10 new substances into the current Anti-Drug Law.

YOUTH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CONFIRMS YEARLY ACCOLADES RECIPIENTS

THE Youth Affairs Committee has decided to grant awards to celebrate events held by two subsidiaries of one of its member organizations, the committee announced late last week at a press conference.

The press conference was held after the Youth Affairs Committee's second plenary this year.

At the press conference, it was revealed that the Youth Activity Award will be given to the Hou Kong Junior Chamber in recognition of its organization of an event aimed at developing business possibilities and contingencies during the Covid-19 pandemic last year.

It was also announced that the Civil Education Award will be given to the Pan Mac Junior Chamber for organizing the "Plastic Off Protect On" event, and to the Hou Kong Junior Chamber for the "Forgo for Happiness" event.

The two bodies operate under a larger organization, the Junior Chamber International Macao, China, which is member organization of the committee.

Two other organizations – the Macao Heritage Ambassadors Association and the Macao Youth Media Association – were also accredited with the Youth Activity Award.

The former won the award with the 13th Macao Cultural Heritage Ambassador Training Campaign and the latter with an antique photography event.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES ANNOUNCED

Officials from the Education and Youth Development Bureau have also introduced figures to the press conference relating to this year's Summer Activities campaign.

This year, 78.4% or 32,545 registrants successfully secured a place to sign up for their preferred activities. In addition, 93% of the activities have been fully subscribed.

The officials stressed that measures will be implemented to cope with the lingering Covid-19 pandemic. For example, the bureau has decided to cancel an event which included planned tours of the Greater Bay Area.

Meanwhile, workshops, such as make-up and cookery classes, will be conducted at larger venues with extra space so as to allow for social distancing. **AL**

RENATO MARQUES



Gov't pledges harsh penalties ahead of party anniversary

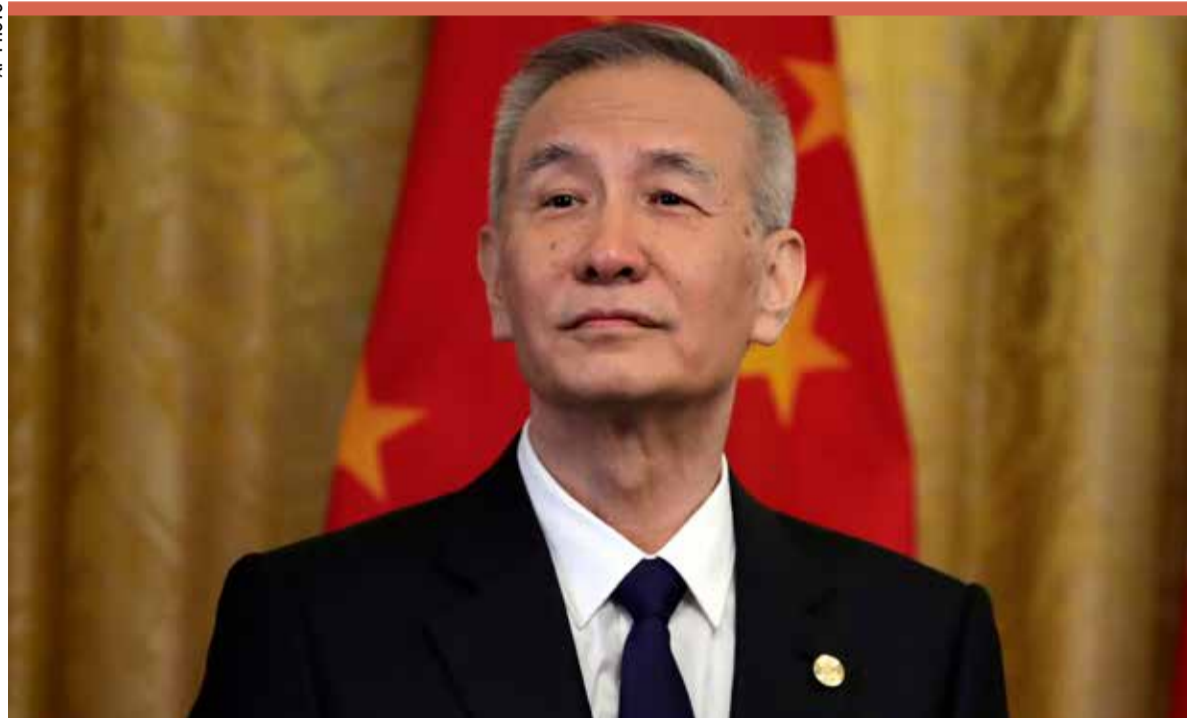
CHINA is pledging to harshly punish anyone responsible for major industrial accidents or outbreaks of violence in coming days as the ruling Communist Party prepares lavish celebrations for its centenary on July 1.

At a meeting Thursday, Vice Premier Liu He ordered safety checks be carried out to forestall such incidents.

"Resolutely contain the frequent occurrence of various types of accidents and create a safe and stable environment for celebrating the centenary of the founding of the party," an official statement released after the meeting said.

The meeting follows the deaths of at least 25 people in a gas explosion Sunday at a market in the central city of Shiyuan and of 13 people in a flood in an iron mine in the northern province of Shanxi on June 10. Authorities have detained 13 people in the

AP PHOTO



Chinese Vice Premier Liu He

mine flood while an investigation into the market blast is ongoing.

"Strictly enforce the law of

production safety, severely crack down on various violations of laws and regulations, and strictly

investigate accidents and hold those responsible to account in accordance with laws and regula-

tions," the statement said.

President Xi Jinping, who is also head of the party, is determined to ensure the anniversary celebrations are not marred by any incidents at a time when China is under fire from the international community over human rights violations in Xinjiang, Tibet and Inner Mongolia, the roll-back of democracy in Hong Kong, military threats against Taiwan, and its aggressive assertions of territorial claims in the South China Sea.

At home, the economy has bounced back from the coronavirus pandemic but has yet to recover its previous vitality, with well-paying jobs for new college graduates scarce and the government forced to inject huge sums into the economy.

Despite repeated safety crack-downs, China continues to face frequent deadly industrial accidents.

A chemical leak killed 78 people at a plant in eastern China in 2019, while a massive 2015 explosion at a chemical warehouse in the port city of Tianjin killed 173 people, most of them firefighters and police officers. The blast was blamed on illegal construction and unsafe storage of volatile materials. MDT/AP

US sending Taiwan 2.5 million vaccine doses, tripling pledge

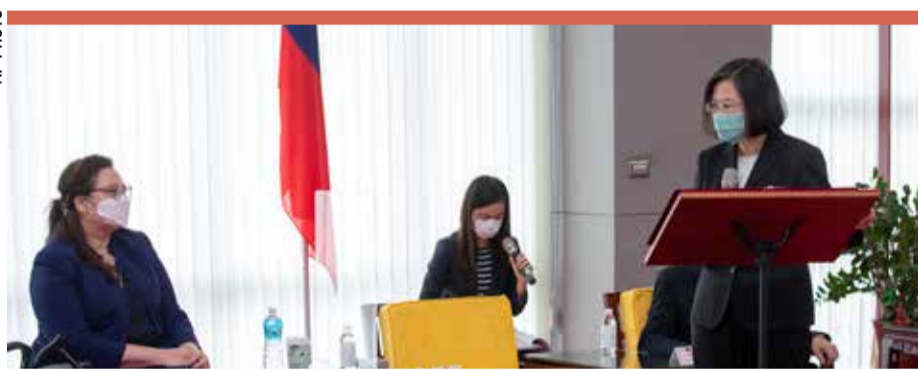
THE U.S. is sending 2.5 million doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to Taiwan, tripling an earlier pledge in a donation with both public health and geopolitical meaning.

The shipment was due to arrive by plane later Sunday, the de facto U.S. embassy said. "The donation reflects our commitment to Taiwan as a trusted friend, and a member of the international family of democracies," the American Institute in Taiwan wrote on its Facebook page.

Taiwan, which had been relatively unscathed by the virus, has been caught off-guard by a surge in new cases since May and is now scrambling to get COVID-19 vaccines. It has ordered 5.05 million doses directly from Moderna but so far received only 390,000, including a second shipment that arrived Friday.

The U.S. donation also signals its support for Taiwan in the face of growing pressure from China, which claims the

AP PHOTO



President Tsai Ing-wen (right) speaks near U.S. Democratic Sen. Tammy Duckworth, left, of Illinois in Taipei, Taiwan

self-governing island off its east coast as its territory. The U.S. does not have formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan under what is known as the one-China policy, but is legally bound by its own laws to ensure that Taiwan can defend itself.

The U.S. promised 750,000 vaccine doses for Taiwan earlier this month, sending Sen. Tammy Duckworth and two of her Senate colleagues to the island aboard a military transport plane to make the announcement. Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen said the U.S. had decided to increase the

donation through efforts on both sides over the past two weeks.

In a Facebook post, Tsai joined the U.S. in drawing attention to their shared democratic systems. China, which has been ruled single handedly by the Communist Party since 1949, says Taiwan must eventually come under its control and reserves the right to use force if necessary.

"Whether it is for regional peace and stability or the virus that is a common human adversary, we will continue to uphold common ideas and work together," Tsai wrote in Chinese.

She has accused China of blocking Taiwan from getting the Pfizer vaccine through BioNTech, the German co-developer. Chinese officials have repeatedly denied the charge, and say China is willing to provide vaccines to Taiwan. Taiwanese law, however, bans the import of Chinese-made medicine.

The U.S. donation follows Japan's shipment of 1.24 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine in early June. Taiwan has ordered 10 million doses from AstraZeneca but has yet to receive most of them. MDT/AP

EDITOR, CEO DENIED BAIL IN APPLE DAILY CASE IN HONG KONG

AHong Kong court ordered the top editor of pro-democracy newspaper Apple Daily and the head of its parent company held without bail Saturday in the first hearing since their arrest two days ago under the city's national security law.

Ryan Law, the chief editor, and Cheung Kim-hung, the CEO of Next Digital, have been charged with collusion with a foreign country to endanger national security in a case widely seen as an attack on press freedom in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

Chief Magistrate Victor So said there was not sufficient grounds to believe they would not violate the security law again, and ordered them held at the Lai Chi Kok detention center. He set the

next hearing for Aug. 13.

Law and Cheung arrived at the court in an unmarked white van with covered windows. A handful of activists held up a banner and copies of the Apple Daily outside before the hearing began.

Three others also arrested Thursday — two Apple Daily senior editors and another executive — have not been charged yet and were released on bail late Friday pending further investigation.

One of them, Associate Publisher Chan Pui-man, said after attending the bail hearing, "I think that all media workers in Hong Kong are worried. But for now, for us, tomorrow, we will still come out with our newspaper, and we'll do our best to continue our work." MDT/AP

AP PHOTO





As Brazil tops 500,000 deaths, protests against president

MARCELO SILVA DE SOUSA, RIO DE JANEIRO

ANTI-GOVERNMENT protesters took to the streets in more than a score of cities across Brazil on Saturday as the nation's confirmed death toll from COVID-19 soared past half a million — a tragedy many critics blame on President Jair Bolsonaro's attempt to minimize the disease.

Thousands gathered in downtown Rio de Janeiro waving flags with slogans such as "Get out Bolsonaro.

Government of hunger and unemployment."

"Brazil is experiencing a great setback. The country was an exemplary country for vaccination in the world. We have widely recognized institutions, but today we are in a sad situation", said Isabela Gouljor, a 20-year-old student who joined the protest in Rio.

Other marchers hoisted posters reading: "500 thousand deaths. It's his fault," alluding to Bolsonaro.

Similar marches took place in at least 22 or Brazil's 26 states, as well as in the Federal District, Brasilia. They were promoted by left-wing opposition parties who have been heartened by Bolsonaro's declining poll ratings with next year's presidential race looming.

"Get out Bolsonaro, genocidal," yelled Rio demonstrators, some of them wearing t-shirts or masks with the image of former leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva — who leads Bolsonaro in some polls.

In São Paulo, protesters dropped red balloons as a tribute to the victims of the virus.

Bolsonaro's supporters have taken more often to the streets over the past month, in large part because many agree with his dismissal of restrictions meant to stifle the coronavirus and anger that lockdown measures have hurt businesses.

Critics say such messages, as well as Bolsonaro's promotion of disproven treatments such as hydroxychloroquine, have contributed to the soaring death toll and a sluggish vaccine campaign that has fully inoculated less than 12% of the population. The country of some 213 million people is registering nearly 100,000 new infections and 2,000 deaths a day.

"For the leftists, putting their followers in the streets is a way of wearing Bolsonaro down for the election," said Leandro Consentino, a political science professor at Insper, a university in Sao Paulo. "But at the same time they are contradicting themselves and losing the discourse of maintaining health care, because they are causing the same agglomerations as Bolsonaro."

Saturday's marches came a week after Bolsonaro led a massive motorcycle parade of supporters in Sao Paulo, though his allies and foes differ dramatically on the size of that event.

"Bolsonaro needs to show that he maintains significant support to give a message of strength to those who are investigating the actions of his government in Congress", Consentino said. **MDT/AP**

this day in history



1983 FILIPINO OPPOSITION LEADER SHOT DEAD



The Philippines opposition leader, Benigno Aquino, has been assassinated just minutes after returning home from exile.

Mr Aquino, 50, had spent the last three years in the US but was returning home to contest next year's expected elections.

Speaking aboard the plane returning him to Manila, Mr Aquino told reporters he was well aware of the risk he was taking.

"I suppose there's a physical danger because you know assassination's part of public service," he said.

"My feeling is we all have to die sometime and if it's my fate to die by an assassin's bullet, so be it."

When his plane landed at Manila airport Mr Aquino was taken into custody by soldiers and escorted off the plane.

Shortly afterwards witnesses on the plane said a volley of shots rang out and they saw him lying in a pool of blood on the runway tarmac.

The body of the man said to have been the assassin was nearby.

Mr Aquino's long-time rival, Philippines dictator Ferdinand Marcos, has said the assassin was a "professional killer".

But his claim that Mr Aquino was the victim of a lone gunman has not convinced many in the Philippines or the wider world.

The opposition parties in the Philippines are in disarray after nearly 20 years of rule under Ferdinand Marcos.

But it was widely expected that Mr Aquino would be able to unite them and mount a challenge to President Marcos in next year's elections.

Before his self-imposed exile he looked set for presidency after becoming the country's youngest member of parliament at the age of 35.

But after the imposition of martial law in 1972 he was labelled a Communist by President Marcos and imprisoned for seven years.

Three years after being sentenced to death for subversion in 1977 he was offered the chance to leave the country for heart surgery in the US.

After his treatment he did not return and became a focal point for dissidents in the US.

Courtesy BBC News

US Appeals court upholds FCC subsidy ban for Huawei purchases

Afederal appeals court refused Friday to hear Chinese tech giant Huawei's request to throw out a rule used to bar rural phone carriers on national security grounds from using government funds to purchase its equipment.

The 5th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Federal Communications Commission was fully within its power and competence to issue the rule barring "Universal Service Fund" subsidies recipients from buying equipment or services from companies deemed national security risks.

The three-judge panel also dismissed a claim by Huawei Technologies Ltd that the FCC lacked the expertise to designate the company's equipment as a security risk to U.S. telecommunications infrastructure.

"Assessing security risks to telecom networks falls in the FCC's wheelhouse," the judges wrote in a 60-page opinion, rejecting any suggestion it was some sort of "junior-varsity" agency on national security matters.

Huawei did not immediately offer a response to the ruling.

The Trump adminis-

tration imposed a series of sanctions on Huawei, claiming it could not be trusted not to spy for Beijing because Chinese law so compels it. Huawei says it is employee- not government-owned and denies it might facilitate Chinese spying.

Huawei sued the FCC in late 2019 after the agency voted to bar rural carriers from using government subsidies to buy equipment from Huawei or its Chinese rival, ZTE Corp. At the time, the company called the decision "based on politics, not security." It claimed the FCC was exceeding its au-

thority by making national security judgments.

Friday's decision was in line with a longstanding tradition of U.S. courts not to second-guess government judgments about national security.

Huawei's U.S. sales plunged after a congressional panel warned in 2012 the company and ZTE were security risks and told carriers to avoid them. In May of 2019, the Trump administration tightened the noose by blocking access to U.S. technology and components, including semiconductors and Google's popular mobile services. **MDT/AP**

IN CONTEXT

Millions of Filipinos rallied at Benigno Aquino's funeral in what was the start of a mass challenge to President Marcos.

Three years later the opposition parties united behind Mr Aquino's widow, Corazon, in her challenge for the presidency.

In spite of evidence to the contrary, Ferdinand Marcos was declared the winner.

But a popular revolt forced him and his wife, Imelda, to flee the country.

He died in exile in 1993.

Corazon Aquino was president of the Philippines for six years.

In September 1990 a special court convicted 16 Filipino military personnel of murdering Mr Aquino and his "assassin" Ronaldo Galman.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

<p>ARIES Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Your relationship is undergoing some changes. Be careful not to come on too strongly. Empty promises will cause confusion. Talk to employers in order to promote your career objectives.</p>	<p>TAURUS Apr. 20-May. 20 It might be best not to spend your money on luxuries today. Try to concentrate on research and acquiring information that will be of value in your chosen field.</p>
<p>GEMINI May. 21-Jun. 21 Don't let children hold you back from doing things you enjoy. New romantic ties can be made; however, you must make sure that your motives are not selfish before you make your move.</p>	<p>CANCER Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You will take on too much if you aren't careful. Stick to basics. Your lover will cost you dearly if you let them. The danger of minor accidents will increase with the turmoil.</p>
<p>LEO Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Your emotions may be hard to control if your mate is forcing you to undergo drastic alterations in your relationship. Try to stay calm, and whatever you do, don't nag. Take your time.</p>	<p>VIRGO Aug. 23-Sep. 22 Do not make rash decisions about your personal life. Your interest in religion and philosophy may lead you to specific destinations. Minor accidents could occur if you don't take precautions.</p>
<p>LIBRA Sep. 23-Oct. 22 Avoid conflicts with in-laws or other family members. Try to keep a low profile. If you can put some work into home improvements, you should.</p>	<p>SCORPIO Oct. 23-Nov. 21 Don't let your emotions get out of hand. Changes in your home environment may cause friction. You may have difficulties with someone who lives with you.</p>
<p>SAGITTARIUS Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You can expect to have some problems with skin, bones, or teeth if you haven't taken proper care of them. Control your anger. Be discreet about your feelings.</p>	<p>CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Situations in your personal life are moving a little fast lately. You can change your living arrangements. You have done all you can to sort things out a personal level.</p>
<p>AQUARIUS Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You're in the mood to spend money. Problems with in-laws or relatives may be more damaging than you realize. You should get into some of those creative hobbies that you always said you wanted to do.</p>	<p>PISCES Feb. 19-Mar. 20 Don't overreact if your partner has a poor attitude. Don't push your luck with authority figures. Enjoy the company of relatives today. Restrictions may be difficult for you to live with.</p>

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

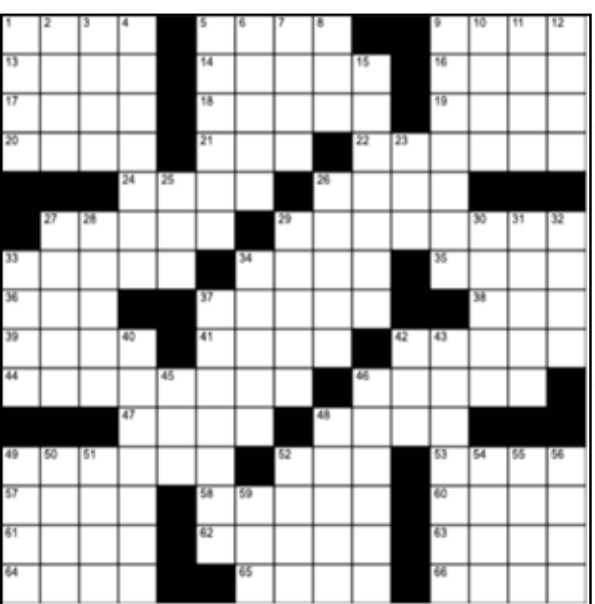
	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	21	35	cloudy
Harbin	15	23	thunderstorms
Tianjin	21	30	cloudy
Urumqi	21	31	cloudy
Xi'an	23	30	cloudy
Lhasa	18	27	fine
Chengdu	26	30	rain
Chongqing	28	34	thunderstorms
Kunming	27	31	rain
Nanjing	19	25	overcast
Shanghai	28	37	cloudy
Wuhan	20	27	fine
Hangzhou	14	24	fine
Taipei	19	30	cloudy
Guangzhou	18	29	cloudy
Hong Kong	25	35	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	13	24	cloudy
Frankfurt	18	32	cloudy
Paris	21	31	sunny
London	18	29	rain
New York	14	27	sunny

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Get as a result; 5- Apians; 9- Low in pitch; 13- Wheel holder; 14- Give consent; 16- Mormon state of western USA; 17- Eye drop; 18- Sketches; 19- Baltic capital; 20- Light brown; 21- Pick up; 22- Habitual practice; 24- Editorial notation; 26- Parting word; 27- Flight segment; 29- Person of extraordinary powers; 33- Unit of magnetic induction; 34- Remedy; 35- It's used to walk the dog; 36- One million; 37- Salt water; 38- Conducted; 39- Standard; 41- Cereal grain; 42- Approaches; 44- Certain salt; 46- Ogle; 47- Steak order; 48- Bryn College; 49- Joined by treaty; 52- Brit. lexicon; 53- Now me down...; 57- Just right; 58- Backing for an exhibit; 60- Gutter site; 61- Comics canine; 62- Worker's reward; 63- Scrutinize; 64- Repair; 65- Not new; 66- Dick Tracy's love;

Friday's solution

MAAM	PHIS	RAMP			
EXPO	ELELER	ERIE			
NERO	RIATA	TURS			
	NOISY	CORNET			
MAILLOT	ACME				
AGREED	CROSSBAR				
SEETO	NOLO	HOLE			
CNN	WOMEN	RON			
ODIE	ROANT	THEFT			
TACTLES	SEVENTS				
	TEASE	NASA			
THIRST	SIS	ROMA			
AEDON	LANCE	SNAG			
LANA	ELIHU	ACTA			
ETAL	STEP	YEAR			



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

GERMANY CLICKS AT EURO 2020 WITH 4-2 WIN OVER PORTUGAL

GERMANY finally clicked into gear at the European Championship, with a little help from defending champion Portugal.

The Portuguese became the first team to score two own-goals in one game at the continental tournament, giving the Germans a 4-2 victory on Saturday and ending fears of another group-stage exit.

Cristiano Ronaldo put Portugal in the lead in the 15th minute against the run of play. It was his first goal against Germany and his third at Euro 2020. It also extended his all-time tournament record to 12 goals.

But defenders Rúben Dias and Raphaël Guerreiro gave Germany the lead before halftime by scoring into their own net.

Kai Havertz and Robin Gosens then got two more for Germany early in the second half — becoming the first players within the squad to score at a European Championship.

Diogo Jota got one back for Portugal in the 67th after Ronaldo acrobatically saved a free kick from going out.

“When you have such good attacking scenes, the kettle boils,” said Thomas Müller, who has yet to score in 13 games at the tournament. “Now we have the three points that we absolutely needed.

AP PHOTO



We shouldn't get carried away. You can feel a little bit of euphoria, but we also have to remain objective.”

The 2014 World Cup champions had been looking for a good showing at Euro 2020 to make up for their first-round exit at the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

Both Portugal and Germany now have three points in Group F, one behind current World Cup champion France, which was surprisingly held to a 1-1 draw by Hungary in Budapest.

Hungary has one point and will next play Germany on Wednesday in Munich. France will play Portugal

in Budapest.

“It was important for us that we didn't throw everything overboard after the lost game against France, but stuck to our plan,” Havertz said. “We trust the coach, we trust the system.”

Germany had the ball in the net early against Portugal when Gosens volleyed in a cross from Joshua Kimmich, but the goal was ruled out on video review for one of a number of possible infringements. Serge Gnabry was offside and Thomas Müller handled the ball.

Ronaldo was the first to strike

for real — after a German corner.

Bernardo Silva sent a ball over Havertz for Jota, who took the ball on his chest and crossed for Ro-

naldo's easy tap in.

Clearly shaken, a more cautious Germany resumed where it left off, albeit a little more carefully than before.

Havertz forced the equalizer in the 35th minute when he went for Gosens' cross alongside Dias, who deflected it inside the far post.

Germany then took the lead through another own-goal soon after. Havertz failed to connect with a cross from Müller but Kimmich sent the ball back in and it rebounded into the net off the unfortunate Guerreiro.

Havertz finally got his goal early in the second half when Gosens set him up for an easy finish. Gosens then headed in the fourth at the back post from Kimmich's cross.

“It's my responsibility. I wanted to play like that,” Portugal coach Fernando Santos said. “We were on top in midfield, but the Germans managed to break free from difficult situations again and again. By and large, my players tried everything. But playing against Germany is just difficult.”

MDT/AP

LATEST RESULTS

Denmark	1	2	Belgium
Netherlands	2	0	Austria
Sweden	1	0	Slovakia
Croatia	1	1	Czech Republic
England	0	0	Scotland
Hungary	1	1	France
Portugal	2	4	Germany
Spain	1	1	Poland

GROUP STANDINGS

Group A	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Italy	2	2	0	0	6 - 0	6
Wales	2	1	1	0	3 - 1	4
Switzerland	2	0	1	1	1 - 4	1
Turkey	2	0	0	2	0 - 5	0
Group B	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Belgium	2	2	0	0	5 - 1	6
Russia	2	1	0	1	1 - 3	3
Finland	2	1	0	1	1 - 1	3
Denmark	2	0	0	2	1 - 3	0
Group C	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Netherlands	2	2	0	0	5 - 2	6
Ukraine	2	1	0	1	4 - 4	3
Austria	2	1	0	1	3 - 3	3
North Macedonia	2	0	0	2	2 - 5	0
Group D	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Czech Republic	2	1	1	0	3 - 1	4
England	2	1	1	0	1 - 0	4
Croatia	2	0	1	1	1 - 2	1
Scotland	2	0	1	1	0 - 2	1
Group E	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
Sweden	2	1	1	0	1 - 0	4
Slovakia	2	1	0	1	2 - 2	3
Spain	2	0	2	0	1 - 1	2
Poland	2	0	1	1	2 - 3	1
Group F	PL	W	DRAW	L	GF - GA	PNT
France	2	1	1	0	2 - 1	4
Germany	2	1	0	1	4 - 3	3
Portugal	2	1	0	1	5 - 4	3
Hungary	2	0	1	1	1 - 4	1

Euro 2020 format causes qualification confusion for England

ENGLAND'S draw with Scotland showed just how confusing the European Championship format can be for the teams and even the organizers.

UEFA's official website stated ahead of Friday's game that a draw would secure England a spot in the round of 16 with a game to spare.

Once England had underwhelmingly clinched that point after being held to a 0-0 draw by Scotland, qualification seemed likely but not guaranteed.

England coach Gareth Southgate certainly wasn't celebrating advancing, and his team analysts were left crunching the data.

By Saturday morning, UEFA had determined that England had yet to be sure of at least going through among the four best third-place teams from the six groups.

AP PHOTO



As it stands, England is in second place in Group D behind the Czech Republic on goal difference. The two teams will play each other on Tuesday at Wembley Stadium. Scotland and Croatia have one point each and will meet in Glasgow at the same time.

Four points was enough for third-place teams to advance at Euro 2016 when the tournament first

expanded from 16 to 24 teams. Even three points was enough for Northern Ireland and eventual champion Portugal to move into the knockout phase, but not enough for Albania and Turkey.

Teams level on points are separated first by their head-to-head record and then by goal difference, followed by goals scored.

Teams can end up han-

ging around waiting to discover if they make it. Albania had to wait three days in 2016 before finally being eliminated.

The English are less likely to experience that fate and a victory over the Czech Republic will ensure first place in the group, with no calculations or tie-breakers needed. Then the last-16 match at Wembley would be against the second-place team in Group F, which could be France, Germany or Portugal.

So finishing second could be more appealing for England, since the opponent would be the Group E runner-up, which is currently Slovakia. But the game would be in Copenhagen rather than on home soil in England.

If the third-place team in Group D advances, the opposition would be a group winner. MDT/AP



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

PREVIEW

Ukraine and Austria close in on round of 16 at Euro 2020

A draw might be enough for both, while a win would be a guarantee for either.

Ukraine and Austria each have one victory and one loss so far at the European Championship, and they will face each other today both looking to advance from the group stage at the tournament for the first time.

For both teams, the forwards have provided the story at Euro 2020.

Andriy Yarmolenko and Roman Yaremchuk scored a goal each for Ukraine in the team's opening match, and then scored a goal each in the second as well. Those games are now in the past.

"The toughest game is ahead of us in the next round of matches," Yarmolenko said.

Despite the goals, Ukraine coach Andriy Shevchenko's concern in the previous match was that his team didn't score more, given the numerous chances his players created.

Ruslan Malinovskyi, for exam-

ple, had an opportunity to put the game against North Macedonia out of reach with an 84th-minute penalty awarded after a handball. But the Atalanta midfielder ran up casually and placed a rising shot that goalkeeper Stole Dimitrievski saved easily.

"If we would have only drawn, I would be very upset," Malinovskyi said of the 2-1 victory.

Austria scored three goals in the opening victory over North Macedonia, but then was shut out against the Netherlands. The team had to play the second match without the suspended Marko Arnautovi, who has scored 27 international goals for Austria.

Arnautovi will be back against Ukraine after serving a one-match ban for insulting a North Macedonian opponent after he scored late in the 3-1 victory.

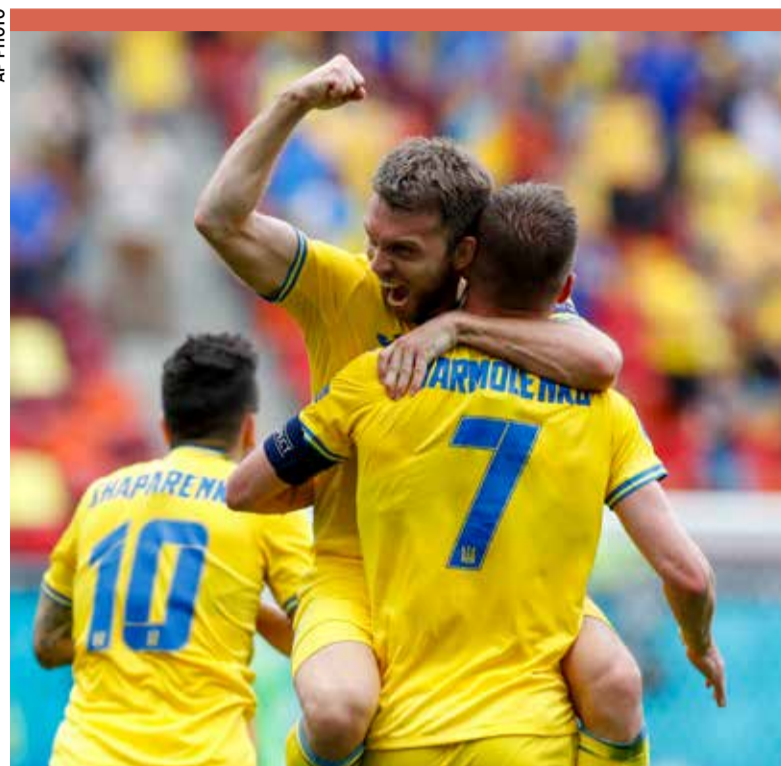
Both teams have played twice before at the European Championship, and both have also served as recent co-hosts. Austria staged Euro 2008 with Switzerland but still went out in the

group stage. Ukraine did similar as co-host with Poland at Euro 2012.

But that was when the continental tournament still had 16 teams, with only the top two teams in each of the four groups advancing to the quarterfinals.

Nowadays, there are 24 teams at the tournament and the four best third-place teams in the six groups advance to the round of 16, meaning twice as many teams make it out of the group stage.

In 2016, when the new 24-team format was introduced, four points were enough for the third-place teams to advance. Eventual champion Portugal and



Ukraine's Andriy Yarmolenko is congratulated by his teammates after scoring his team's first goal during the championship

Northern Ireland even advanced with three points, but Albania and Turkey were eliminated with that same amount.

So while a second victory will guarantee advancement for one of the teams, a draw might just be enough for both. MDT/AP

UPCOMING GAMES

	Date	Time	Home	Away	City	ODDS
Tue	Jun 22	0:00	Ukraine	Austria	Bucharest	H 3.6, D 2.12, A 3.9
Tue	Jun 22	0:00	North Macedonia	Netherlands	Amsterdam	H 12.7, D 5.5, A 1.35
Tue	Jun 22	3:00	Finland	Belgium	St Petersburg	H 12.5, D 5.3, A 1.36
Tue	Jun 22	3:00	Russia	Denmark	Copenhagen	H 5.3, D 4.1, A 1.77

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FMCC champions Breakfast Meetings in town with key speakers sharing their views on current business affairs. Our monthly events take place every last Wednesday of the month at Sofitel Macau at Ponte 16. Open to all!

Achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals through Digital Technologies

Speaker : Dr Serge Stinckwich, Head of Research, United Nations University Institute in Macau

FMCC Breakfast Meeting
Wednesday, 30 June 2021



Introduction:

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development defines 17 interlinked global goals covering topics such as poverty, education and access to clean water, as a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. Digital technologies have great potential to help achieve those goals, but it can also be at the root of exclusion and inequality. Join us and hear from researcher Dr. Serge Stinckwich on how United Nations University Institute in Macau, a UN global think tank on Information and Communication Technologies for Development, conducts UN policy-relevant research and generates solutions of key issues per UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for the benefit of all, including for us in Macau.

Date: **Wednesday, 30 June, 2021**

Time: **9:00a.m. - 10:30a.m.** (Reception: 8:45am)

Venue: **Sofitel Macau at Ponte 16**
Baccara Ballroom, 6th floor

RSVP before 2p.m. on 28 June

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- Guests and non-members @ MOP188*
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OPINION

China Daily

Huo Zhengxin, China Daily

ANTI-SANCTION LAW NECESSARY TO PROTECT SOVEREIGNTY

The law on countering foreign sanctions, which the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, China's top legislature, passed on June 10, has drawn both global and national attention. But despite the NPC Standing Committee stressing that the law is necessary to safeguard the country's sovereignty in the face of blatant foreign interference in its internal affairs, some Western media claim it reflects China's "wolf warrior diplomacy" and has sent "a chill through the business community".

The law on countering foreign sanctions is designed to only counter the sanctions foreign countries have announced rather than being a tool for China to unilaterally launch sanctions on foreign governments, businesses, individuals or organizations.

Over the past years, the United States and some of its allies, such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the European Union, have imposed a number of sanctions on Chinese individuals and organizations over alleged human rights violations in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, Tibet autonomous region and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Needless to say these allegations are fabricated and driven by ideological bias. More important, the issues related to these regions are the internal affairs of China.

The US has also targeted Chinese high-tech companies such as Huawei and ZTE for violating its "secondary sanctions" on Iran, which is an apt example of Washington's "long-arm jurisdiction" and "American legal bullyism". The fact that non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, and respect for their territorial integrity and sovereignty are the most important aspects of modern international law and enshrined in the UN Charter makes the sanctions the US-led West has imposed on China a gross violation of international law.

It is for this reason, the law on countering foreign sanctions declares at the very beginning that China upholds the United Nations-centered world order that is based on international law, and opposes hegemonism and interference in the internal affairs of any country on any pretext. Hence, it is safe to conclude that the sanction-countering law is justified and in line with modern international law.

The new law provides legislative support for any countermeasures China takes against the sanctions of foreign countries, in order to protect the rights and interests of Chinese individuals, businesses and other entities.

Before the promulgation of the new law, Chinese government departments did impose counter-sanctions on a number of individuals and other entities in the US, the EU, the UK and Canada, and the Ministry of Commerce issued the Unreliable Entity List and the Blocking Rules. But those measures were either ad hoc in nature or taken as part of some ministries' regulations. The promulgation of the new law by the NPC Standing Committee therefore fills the legislative lacuna to counter the "one-sided and discriminatory" sanctions of foreign countries. In particular, the law says the State Council, China's Cabinet, and its agencies should prepare lists of countermeasures and decide what countermeasures should be taken against the entities that have been "blacklisted".

As of now, the countermeasures include denying them or invalidating their visa or banning their entry into China, and/or deportation. For those on the "blacklist", their property or assets in China can be frozen or seized, and they can be banned from doing business or carrying out transactions with Chinese individuals and other entities. The law also says the aggrieved Chinese parties could still sue those entities for compensations in Chinese courts.

Thus, the new law builds upon and gives legal "teeth" to the sanctions announced by the Foreign Ministry, and the Unreliable Entity List and the Blocking Rules issued by Ministry of Commerce.

[Abridged]

HARD-LINE JUDICIARY HEAD WINS IRAN PRESIDENCY IN LOW TURNOUT

THE BUZZ

Iran's hard-line judiciary chief won a landslide victory in the country's presidential election, a vote that both propelled the supreme leader's protege into Tehran's highest civilian position and saw the lowest turnout in the Islamic Republic's history.

The election of Ebrahim Raisi, already sanctioned by the U.S. in part over his involvement in the mass execution of thousands of political prisoners in 1988, became more of a coronation after his strongest competition found themselves disqualified from running in Saturday's vote.

That sparked calls for a boycott and many apparently did stay

home — out of over 59 million eligible voters, only 28.9 million voted. Of those voting, some 3.7 million people either accidentally or intentionally voided their ballots, far beyond the amount seen in previous elections and suggesting some wanted none of the four candidates.

Iranian state television immediately blamed challenges of the coronavirus pandemic and U.S. sanctions for the low participation. But the low turnout and voided ballots suggested a wider unhappiness with the tightly controlled election, as activists criticized Raisi's ascension.

AUSTRALIA ACCUSED OF 'EXCESSIVE AND UNNECESSARY' SECRECY

ROD MCGUIRK, CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA'S suppression of information seen as pivotal to a free and open media is at the center of accusations that the country has become one of the world's most secretive democracies.

Last week, a former Australian spy was convicted over his unconfirmed role as a whistleblower who revealed an espionage operation against the government of East Timor.

It's the latest high-profile case in a national system in which secrecy laws, some dating back to the colonial era, are routinely used to suppress information. Police have also threatened to charge journalists who exposed war crime allegations against Australian special forces in Afghanistan, or bureaucrats' plan to allow an intelligence agency to spy on Australian citizens.

Australians don't even know the name of the former spy convicted Friday. The Canberra court registry listed him as "Witness K." His lawyer referred to him more respectfully as "Mr. K" in court.

K spent the two-day hearing in a box constructed from black screens to hide his identity. The public and



AP PHOTO

media were sent out of the courtroom when classified evidence was discussed, which was about half the time.

The only sign that anyone was actually inside the box was when a voice said "guilty" after K was asked how he plead.

The Australian government has refused to comment on allegations that K led an Australian Secret Intelligence Service operation that bugged government offices in the East Timorese capital in 2004, during negotiations on the sharing of oil and gas revenue from the seabed that separates the two countries.

The government cancelled K's passport before he was to testify at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague in 2014 in su-

pport of the East Timorese, who argued the treaty was invalid because Australia failed to negotiate in good faith by engaging in espionage.

There was no evidence heard in open court of a bugging operation, which media reported was conducted under the guise of a foreign aid program.

K was given a three-month suspended sentence. If he'd been sent to prison, there were court orders designed to conceal his former espionage career by restricting what he could tell friends and associates to explain his predicament.

He had faced up to two years in prison. Since his offense, Australia has continued to tighten controls on secrecy, increasing the maximum sentence to 10 years. MDT/AP



AP PHOTO

Israel's government approved yesterday the establishment of an independent state commission of inquiry into a deadly disaster at a Jewish holy site in April that left 45 people dead. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said the commission would investigate major safety shortcomings that led to a deadly stampede at Lag Baomer celebrations on Mount Meron.

Iraq At least one Katyusha rocket fell close to the perimeter of a military base that hosts U.S. troops in northern Iraq yesterday. Iraq's military said. The rocket fell near the sprawling Ain al-Asad air base in western Anbar province but did not explode, the military said in a statement. There was no significant damage, the statement said.



AP PHOTO

Armenians are voted yesterday in a national election after months of tensions over last year's defeat in fighting against Azerbaijan over the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh. The snap parliamentary election was called by Acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan in a bid to resolve public anger over the peace deal he signed in November that triggered months of protests demanding his resignation.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Czarek Sokolowski



Equality Parade. People took part in the largest gay pride parade in central and eastern Europe, in Warsaw, Poland, on Saturday.



AP PHOTO

Russia A warehouse holding a reported 15 metric tons of fireworks in central Moscow caught fire yesterday, sending a huge cloud of smoke and a fusillade of explosions over the area. Three firefighters and a warehouse employee were injured and one firefighter was hospitalized. Three helicopters and a fireboat were dispatched to help put out the blaze at the warehouse.