



THE CITY HAS REGISTERED A NEW COVID-19 PATIENT, A RETURNEE STUDENT FROM THE UK, RAISING THE OVERALL NUMBER OF CASES TO 54

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USJ ALLEGEDLY FIRED NINE PROFESSORS 'WITHOUT JUSTIFIABLE CAUSE'

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A GROUP OF LAWMAKERS HAS CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ENFORCE MORE MEASURES TO PROTECT THE EMPLOYMENT OF LOCAL RESIDENTS

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Hong Kong A fire engulfed 16 vessels in a typhoon shelter early yesterday, resulting in at least 10 boats sinking and one person sent to a hospital. The fire broke out at about 2:30 a.m. at the Aberdeen South typhoon shelter in Hong Kong, and was extinguished more than six hours later. Firefighters rescued 35 people from vessels during the fire, according to public broadcaster RTHK.



Thailand Faced with a sharp rise in coronavirus cases, the Thai capital yesterday announced a ban on indoor dining and gatherings of more than 20 people, in addition to the closure of construction sites and the sealing off of workers' quarters in Bangkok and nine other provinces. The measures will remain for 30 days.



Sri Lanka Around 175 death row inmates in Sri Lanka continued their hunger strike for a second day, demanding their sentences be commuted to life in prison after the country's president pardoned a former lawmaker who had been condemned for an election-related killing. Prison spokesman Chandana Ekanayake said top officials from the prison ministry had held in-person discussions with the striking inmates at two prisons.

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SAR'S LIAISON OFFICE: ENDING THE ONE-PARTY SYSTEM IN APPROPRIATE IN CHINA

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CE LEADS DELEGATION TO ATTEND CPC CELEBRATION

Chief Executive (CE) Ho Iat Seng will visit Beijing from today until July 1, having been invited to attend celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Members of the SAR Government delegation to the capital will include: the Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak; the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Ao Ieong U; and the Chief-of-Office of the Chief Executive's Office Hoi Lai Fong. During Ho's absence, the Secretary for Administration and Justice, Cheong Weng Chon, will take the role as Acting CE.

RADIO TAXI LOSES MOP5M LAST YEAR

The Macau Radio Taxi recorded a loss of MOP5.17 million last year, despite a total income from operational revenue and other sources of MOP192 million. Despite this financial predicament, company representatives affirmed that reforms are in progress. The management is working to turn losses into profits by the end of the year. The taxi company started operations on April 1, 2017 and now enjoys the license to operate 200 taxis. All vehicles used by the company are seven-seaters of medium to large sizes. It also operates several wheelchair-accessible taxis.

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT RATE STABLE AT 4.1%

HONEY TSANG

THE unemployment rate of local residents stood at 4.1% for the three-month period of March to May this year. This level was the same as the preceding period from February to April, according to fresh data issued last Friday by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC).

But in a year-on-year comparison, the local unemployment statistic still represented an increase of 0.7 percentage points, when compared to 3.4% in the same period last year.

Meanwhile, the general unemployment rate also remained steady from the February to April period at 3.0%.

The total number of unemployed people dropped by 100 to 11,900 from March to May. The majority of those looking for a job were engaged in gaming & junket, and construction sectors.

The percentage of new labor market entrants, most of them



fresh graduates from schools, who are unemployed increased 0.9 percentage points from the previous surveyed period to 6.5% now.

The underemployment rate, an indicator for economic improvement, — declined by 0.6 percentage points to 4.2%. The actual number of the underemployed declined by 2,600 from

the previous period to 16,300. Most have been working in gaming and construction industries.

According to a separate statement released on June 25 by the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL), the authorities reaffirmed that they are doing their utmost to "assist job seekers to secure a position as soon as possible

from different levels of work."

From January to mid-June this year, a total of 6,080 persons were referred by the DSAL to attend a job interview through DSAL's job-matching endeavors. Around 1,439 were employed successfully, with 70% of them engaging in construction, security, cleaning service and retail sectors.

During the first half of 2021, the DSAL organized a total of 18 job-matching events across different industries.

In the second quarter of this year, the DSAL collaborated with the city's six casino operators to jointly mount 13 recruitment fairs, offering more than 1,300 vacancies. Participants included MGM, Galaxy, Wynn, Sands China, Grand Lisboa Palace and so on. In the end, 424 out of 2,675 job seekers referred by the DSAL were employed from the job fairs.

Given the mainland's rapid digitization, the DSAL vows to forge partnerships with several renowned mainland enterprises and co-launch a set of internship programs in the coming third quarter, in a bid to offer opportunities for Macau's youths to better chart their career path.



DECLINE OF DRUG ABUSE IN MACAU

RENATO MARQUES

THE number of people experiencing drug dependency in Macau has been continuously dropping, the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) said in a statement.

According to the official statistics, in 2020, the number of registered people experiencing dependency at the Central Registration System for Drug Abusers of Macao has dropped from 346 in 2019 to 219 in 2020 — a drop

of 36.7% year-on-year.

Likewise, the average age of the local population registered at the center fell from 36.2 years old in 2019 to 34.5 years old in 2020.

The statistics also show that the drug with the highest rate of consumption continues to be methamphetamine (ice), followed by cocaine and cannabis.

In 2020, ice and cocaine registered a drop in consumption, while cannabis consumption has grown

from 6.3% to 11.2% in 2020.

Information provided by the IAS also notes that around 70% of all drug consumption has occurred at home, in local hotels, or at friends' houses. The bureau notes that drug consumption is occurring more in private and hidden environments, a factor that contributes to difficulties of it being spotted and reported.

Authorities are also concerned about the amounts spent per month on drug consumption. Although dropping slightly, 8.3% of the consumers have reported spending 10,000 patacas or more per month.

According to data from the United Nations' World Drug Report 2020, by 2018, there was an estimated 269 million people worldwide who had used drugs at least once.

The same report notes that about 35.6 million people worldwide have experienced drug-related illnesses, and some 480,000 died from drug abuse.

POLICE SEARCHING FOR WITNESS OF AMBULANCE ACCIDENT

A Health Bureau's ambulance reportedly collided with a 63-year-old man last Friday on Avenida Wai Long, injuring the victim.

The Public Security Police Force (PSP) are now calling for eye witnesses or individuals who can provide information on the accident. These individuals may call 2837 4214 to contact the PSP's Traffic Department on the matter.

According to information released by the PSP, the man was crossing the road in front of the Macau University of Science and Technology. The police did not disclose whether the man was crossing the road in a legal manner.

There is a crossing facility in front of the Uni-



versity Hospital, but not at the main entrance of the university.

At about 3:58 p.m. last Friday, the ambulance was moving out from the Rotunda do Aeroporto roundabout, heading towards the Rotunda do Istmo roundabout, when it collided with the man.

The man fell to the ground after the accident, sustaining injuries to his head, with visible bleeding on his forehead, his upper lip and the top of his head. He was conscious and breathing with a pulse when delivered to the Conde de São Januário Hospital. **AL**

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Liaison Office deputy head: Intention to overthrow means subversion

ANTHONY LAM

ENDING the one-party system" is inappropriate in China under its legal framework, Zhang Rongshun, deputy director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR), has emphasized in a recent seminar.

He pointed out that it is stipulated in the Chinese Constitution that the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) is the foundational system of the country. It is, he said, completely different from the system in the Western world.

Zhang said that in Western countries, people can "sweep away" a political party from its governing state through elections. He stressed that adhering to the leadership of the CPC is "the Constitutional System" of the country, which has the "strongest legal bindings."

The intention to overthrow CPC's leadership is the intention to change the Constitutional System of the country, he said, which is thus an act of subversion of a political regime in legal sense.

"Many who have learned from the West think calling for an end to the one-party system or overthrowing the CPC [is acceptable]," Zhang said at the seminar. "It may be so in the West, but under the Constitutional System and framework of China, it is not [the case]."

On this ground, Zhang stressed that the CPC leadership, as a Constitutional System, must be respected, upheld and safe-



guarded across the country, including in the two SARs of Macau and Hong Kong.

He also pointed out that the leadership of the CPC is "inalienable" from the 'One country,

two systems' principle. He said that only by upholding the CPC leadership can the persistence

of the principle be ensured.

He added that the concept of not adhering to the CPC leadership while upholding the 'One country, two systems' Principle is "completely wrong."

He also said that another false perspective is that the CPC leadership has nothing to do with Macau. This is an evasive attitude, he said. As the CPC leadership forms a Constitutional System, everything that has happened on the land called Macau since the establishment of the SAR is inseparable with the CPC leadership.

The Basic Law, he added, was compiled and promulgated under the leadership of the CPC. The stipulations within, Zhang pointed out, clearly state that while becoming an SAR, Macau is completely under the leadership of the Central People's Government and the CPC. It is an essential component of the SAR's constitutional order.

THREE LAWMAKERS PRAISE CENTENARY OF CPC, CALL TO END SUPPORT TO SEPARATISTS

LAWMAKERS Ma Chi Seng, Wu Chou Kit, Land Chan Wa Keong have jointly presented a spoken inquiry to the government calling for the revision of the Macau laws to shield Macau from any possibility of providing support to separatists.

The joint inquiry was delivered by Wu during the period before the agenda of the plenary session last Thursday, conscious of the nearing date of celebration for the centenary of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

According to the lawmakers, the local government must revise the local laws, "to prevent the entry of external forces in the

MSAR and stop, with all efforts, support actions to separatists."

Wu added the need to improve on information disclosure regarding national security laws to "prevent foreign forces [from taking] advantage of the MSAR for activities [that cause harm] against the mainland, stopping those conspiracies right from the start."

In an intervention that calls on ultranationalism and on the pride of being Chinese, he added, "Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, today's China is at the forefront of the world in terms of advanced technology, economic scale, and

the ability to protect people's lives and health. It has managed to free itself from the humiliations of a century ago and fulfill the wishes of the martyrs, of the heroes, and of the ancestors, who sacrificed and selflessly contributed to the revitalization of the Chinese nation."

He added, "We should be proud to be Chinese! We Chinese cannot forget the history of China, which was invaded and intimidated by Western powers."

Although the unusual speech caused visible surprise in the faces of several lawmakers, none of them have made any further comment on the matter. **RM**

ELECTIONS 2021

'MACAU VICTORY' SUBMITS LIST OF CANDIDATES

PARLIAMENTARY election first-timer "Macao Victory" has recently submitted a list of five candidates to the Legislative Assembly Electoral Affairs Commission (CAEAL), in the hopes of "awakening Macau people's consciousness."

The five candidates include Lo Chun Seng, Ng Sio Hong, Ng Chong, Lam Cheng Weng and Lao Tak Wai.

Lo, the first candidate on the list, stressed that the list has no background or

connections with any association. As such, he admitted that they will enjoy fewer resources. They aim at "bringing clean air to the society."

Having succeeded in gathering 500 nominations, Lo believed that the team would be able to obtain sufficient votes to have the deposits refunded.

Lo was previously a journalist before becoming a volunteer at the office of incumbent lawmaker Au Kam San. He said he is concerned with press free-

dom and the benefits of journalists.

Meanwhile, three lists of candidates have also been submitted for three sectors in the Indirect Election constituency. The three sectors are the Trade and Finance, the Professional and the Social Service and Education sectors.

For the time being, incumbent lawmaker Ho Ion Sang is the only new face in the constituency. He will be running in the Social Service and Education sector. **AL**

COVID-19

CITY'S 54TH CASE IS A RETURNEE FROM THE UK

MACAU has registered a new Covid-19 patient, a returnee student from the U.K., raising the overall number of cases to 54.

The returnee student, a local female resident, arrived in Macau on Saturday at the Macau International Airport. She was found to be mild positive via a viral polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test at the local airport.

Current pandemic control measures require all entrants from non-

-Greater China Region be found negative within 72 hours prior to scheduled time of departure of first flight.

The patient tested negative in the U.K. on June 23 prior to her flight.

She boarded her initial flight in the U.K. on June 25. She arrived in Singapore the next day and transferred to the Scoot flight 904 to Macau. She was assigned to seat number 26A.

Upon arrival in Macau, as well as being tes-

ted for viral nucleic acid, she was also tested for viral antibodies. She had mild positive results for IgM and a negative result for IgG antibodies.

She denied ever having been diagnosed with Covid-19 to the health authorities. She also denied being in contact with a Covid-19 patient.

As of press time, the patient was asymptomatic and is being treated at the Public Health Clinical Centre in Coloane. **AL**

LAWMAKERS CALL FOR EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION, BETTER CAREER PATHS

RENATO MARQUES

A group of lawmakers has separately called on the government to enforce more measures to protect the employment of local residents.

Lawmakers Ho Ion Sang, Leong Sun Iok, and Lam Lon Wai put forward inquiries before the agenda of Thursday's Legislative Assembly session. Each one called for protections for the employment of recent graduates, gaming workers, and workers in general.

Lam recalled a recent study organized by the Macau Federation of Trade Unions which notes that the unemployment among residents is higher and is growing faster than the general unemployment rate.

"In other words, there are 12,000 people unemployed [between February and April this year], an increase of 400 people," Lam said, citing the figures from the study.

He added: "These figures show a pessimistic employment situation, that [requires] that the government enforce measures to support the job placement of local workers."



DUSAN KIPIC

Lam called for urgent measures, noting that, beside the unemployment figures, there are also growing concerns about the underemployment rate, workers in layoff situations, and those experiencing wages reductions.

The lawmaker also called on the government to enforce special rules regarding contracts for public works and the like to "safeguard the priority of hiring residents; to avoid the [program] of replacing residents with non-residents; and [to] prevent the abnormal competition between residents and non-residents that offer cheaper manpower."

On the same topic, Leong noted more specifically that gaming sector workers are among those most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The lawmaker wants the government, taking into account the recent tender of a new gaming concessions law, to enforce added guarantees for the workers of this industry.

"For the well-being of workers, I hope that the government will take advantage of this opportunity, of the new public tender for the gaming licenses. [I hope that they will] promote the improvement of the working environment and the career development in the gaming sector, optimizing the work environment and guarantees, encourage concessionaires to implement measures favorable to the family, [and] to increase the capacity to resist [social] risks," Leong said.

He added that the government should think about the

creation of a Gaming Workers' Rights Protection Fund.

Leong also proposed that more careers within the gaming sector should be restricted to local workers only as is done for the post of croupier — to "leave the good jobs to Macau people."

The lawmaker noted that, as the major pillar of the local economy, measures enforced for this sector may also result in good outcomes for other industries linked with it.

Lawmaker Ho expressed concerns primarily about the difficulties of recent graduates trying to land a job under the current economic circumstances.

Ho wants the government to create and disclose information through secondary schools to help the local students choose career paths as early as possible, to help minimize the number deciding on careers that have few prospects in Macau.

The lawmaker thinks that the government should create guidebooks for schools to help students decide on the right career paths, pointing the new generation toward developing talents identified to be in demand by the government.

PJ WARNS PUBLIC OF SCAM MIMICKING DSF WEBSITE

STAFF REPORTER

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) received reports last week of a new online scam sending text messages purporting to come from the Financial Services Bureau (DSF) website. The scam asks citizens to provide their credit card details, according to the PJ's announcement. The DSF has reported to the police and clarified that no such SMS was sent.

"These fake cell phone SMSs are not related to our bureau and have been reported to the police. We hereby remind the public to be vigilant, not to click on the relevant fraudulent links and provide them with your personal information," the DSF's clarification statement read.

The bureau said that this online scam worked by sending SMS in the name of "DSF," asking people to fill out a self-declaration form in order to continue using their credit card services. The statement also pointed out that the scam link used in those SMS is "https://gov.dsfsf.tax."

The PJ warns anyone receiving similar SMS messages should not access any links in the SMS or fill in any personal information in order to not to be stolen from.

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LYNZY VALLES



USJ 'bullying' scandal leaves nine professors fired, three resigning

HONEY TSANG

A group of nine professors were let go "without justifiable cause" by the University of Saint Joseph (USJ) and another three resigned due to "bullying" by superiors, lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho unveiled the unsettling news to the media on June 25.

Coutinho was told by the victims that there has been a long-term problem of abusing power at USJ, in which some managerial staff "cursed" at the lower-ranking colleagues in an "imperious manner" — and sometimes even "tossing apples to them."

Before being dismissed, the nine professors convened a meeting with USJ's rector Stephen Morgan to report on the school's faulty internal management, in the hope of resolving the predicament.

However, all those who attended this meeting were fired by the university afterward, Coutinho said.

Coutinho ruled out the possibility that this was coincidental, asserting that "Firing these nine profes-

sors was completely the [USJ's] management settling a score [with them]."

All of the professors who were dismissed by the USJ are Macau residents. After being informed by the school of their immediate termination, the professors and Coutinho met with USJ's rector, trying to seek a peaceful resolution. The institution held fast to the firings, claiming it was a decision made as part of "institution's restructuring."

On June 25, Coutinho, in the company of seven dismissed USJ professors, held a closed-door meeting with authorities of the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL), urging the DSAL to conduct an in-depth investigation on this allegedly unprincipled event.

"From what we can see, the claimed "restructuring" is in fact filling the vacancies with foreign teachers. [...] The main reason behind this is that the school wants to employ their close acquaintances [from abroad]," Coutinho told the press.

According to Macau's labor law, the school should prioritize hiring local tea-

chers. "They should only employ foreigners provided that no locals are found fit for the vacancies," the lawmaker emphasized.

The DSAL was urged by Coutinho to probe into this case, ensuring that the number of hired foreigners in the USJ does not exceed the limit required by the law. The lawmaker also pressed the DSAL to reconfirm whether the dismissal compensations were distributed to dismissed scholars fully.

Coutinho is planning to turn to other government departments such as the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) to help the three professors who resigned on their own accord, as there is no law in Macau to safeguard the employment rights of those who have already resigned.

A married couple, who have worked for the USJ for five to seven years, was fired during this incident, while their son is still studying in Year 3 at the USJ, the lawmaker said.

"It's especially difficult for these people [professors] to find other placements in May and June,

during the exam period," he told the press. He added that their unemployment has translated to zero income for their family since.

Coutinho appreciated the honesty of Morgan, who in an earlier exchange confessed to unfair conditions imposed by some of his colleagues in managerial positions. However, he hinted that the rector should also be held responsible for shielding the wrongdoings of the management.

"He [the rector] also confirmed that all the dismissed professors did nothing wrong — but they are no longer needed due to the school's restructuring," Coutinho added.

It is alleged that one of the bullies was an alcoholic who binged drinking on and off while at work, but that the individual no longer works at the USJ.

The dismissed professors engaged in a wide variety of academic arenas. All high-level managers are non-locals, according to Coutinho.

On the heels of Coutinho's remarks, Morgan issued a statement Friday night refuting his allegations, which the rector said "misrepresent entirely what he was told by the USJ."

"The proportion of local academic staff has risen from 70%, when I became rector in May 2020, to 76% now. Our admin staff remains 97% local residents," he said, adding: "It is to be regretted that he [Coutinho] has today chosen knowingly to say exactly the opposite."

GOV'T SUSPENDS KAI FONG'S SCHOOL LAND CONCESSION

THE School of the Residents of Macau, operated by the General Union of Neighborhood Associations of Macau (UGAMM), has recently had its land concession suspended by the government.

The land concession was issued for education purposes at no cost in 1994 by the then Portuguese administration to the UGAMM.

Recently, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works announced in the Official Gazette that the land concession has been terminated in accordance with the law. According to the concession agreement, the concession period ended on January 4, 2019.

However, the concession can legally be extended to December 19, 2049.

The law stipulates that unremunerated land lease can only be extended with the approval of the Chief Executive. Application for an extension, however, must be submitted no earlier than nine months and no later than six months prior to the expiry date.

The termination came into effect because the UGAMM did not file for an extension of the concession within the legal period.

The management of the UGAMM admitted to the matter. It has been quoted as saying that the entity has filed for another concession because a renewal cannot be granted as the previous concession has already ended. **AL**

DEFINITION OF 'RESIDENCE' TO FOLLOW FIRE SAFETY LAW

IF the Urban Construction Legal Regime passes the Legislative Assembly, the definition of residential use under this regime will align with the Fire Safety Law, a parliamentary committee confirmed yesterday.

In the bill's original text, the proposed definition of a residence was much wider and included hotel rooms and office units used for residential purposes. In response to underlying concerns, the government updated the text to align with definitions within other laws. In the future, only units legally registered for residential use will be considered residences for the purposes of the regime.

The update is crucial, according to the committee. Pursuant to the bill, in the future, when the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau wants to conduct inspections on a residential unit but is refused entry by the owner or tenant, the bureau will require a court order to enter.

The committee pointed out that this change in definition will allow the authority to promptly inspect units such as rooftop constructions that may jeopardize the general structure of the building.

In contrast to units legally registered as residences, the government will have the authority to enter non-residential units such as office units and hotel rooms for inspections that are deemed necessary by the bureau.

Under normal circumstances, according to the parliamentary committee, the administration will not require a court order to inspect non-residential units. **AL**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Security chief named Hong Kong No. 2 official

CHINA on Friday promoted Hong Kong's top security official to the territory's No. 2 spot as Beijing looks to the government of the Asian financial hub to clamp down on free speech and political opponents to restore stability following anti-government protests.

Chief Executive Carrie Lam said Secretary for Security John Lee would replace Matthew Cheung as the city's chief secretary, while police chief Chris Tang would take over Lee's role. Raymond Siu Chak-ye, Tang's deputy, will be the new head of the police force.

Hong Kong's government has long been lauded for its professionalism and efficiency, but its image has been battered in recent years by its banning and suppression of pro-democracy protests and its hard-line enforcement of Beijing's security policies. The U.S. and other Western democracies have imposed visa bans and other sanctions on Lam, Lee and other members of the administration.

Violent clashes between police and pro-democracy demonstrators in 2019 prompted the central government to adopt a firm line against political concessions, a policy seen through by Lam, Lee,

Tang and Siu, who made restoring public order their top priority.

"They have had distinguished performance in the government over the years and possess proven leadership skills," Lam said of those promoted. "I am confident that they are competent for their new posts and would rise to the challenges in serving the community."

Cheung, the former No. 2, will be retiring from government service.

The leadership changes come a year after Beijing imposed a sweeping national security law on the former British colony and one day after Hong Kong's last remaining pro-democracy newspaper, the Apple Daily, published its final edition.

Police froze \$2.3 million of the newspaper's assets, searched its office and arrested five top editors and executives last week, accusing them of foreign collusion to endanger national security. Its founder, Jimmy Lai, is facing charges under the national security law of foreign collusion and is currently serving a prison sentence for involvement in the 2019 pro-democracy protest movement.

On Thursday, U.S. President

AP PHOTO



Joe Biden said it was a "sad day for media freedom in Hong Kong and around the world," and accused Beijing of having "insisted on wielding its power to suppress independent media and silence dissenting views."

"People in Hong Kong have the right to freedom of the press. Instead, Beijing is denying basic liber-

ties and assaulting Hong Kong's autonomy and democratic institutions and processes, inconsistent with its international obligations," Biden said in a statement on the White House website.

Apple Daily continues to be published online in Taiwan, the self-governing island democracy that China claims as its own territory.

Beijing promised Hong Kong could maintain its civil liberties for 50 years after the former British colony was handed over to Chinese rule in 1997, but has essentially abandoned that commitment to impose total political control and end what it sees as undue foreign influence on the semi-autonomous city's institutions.

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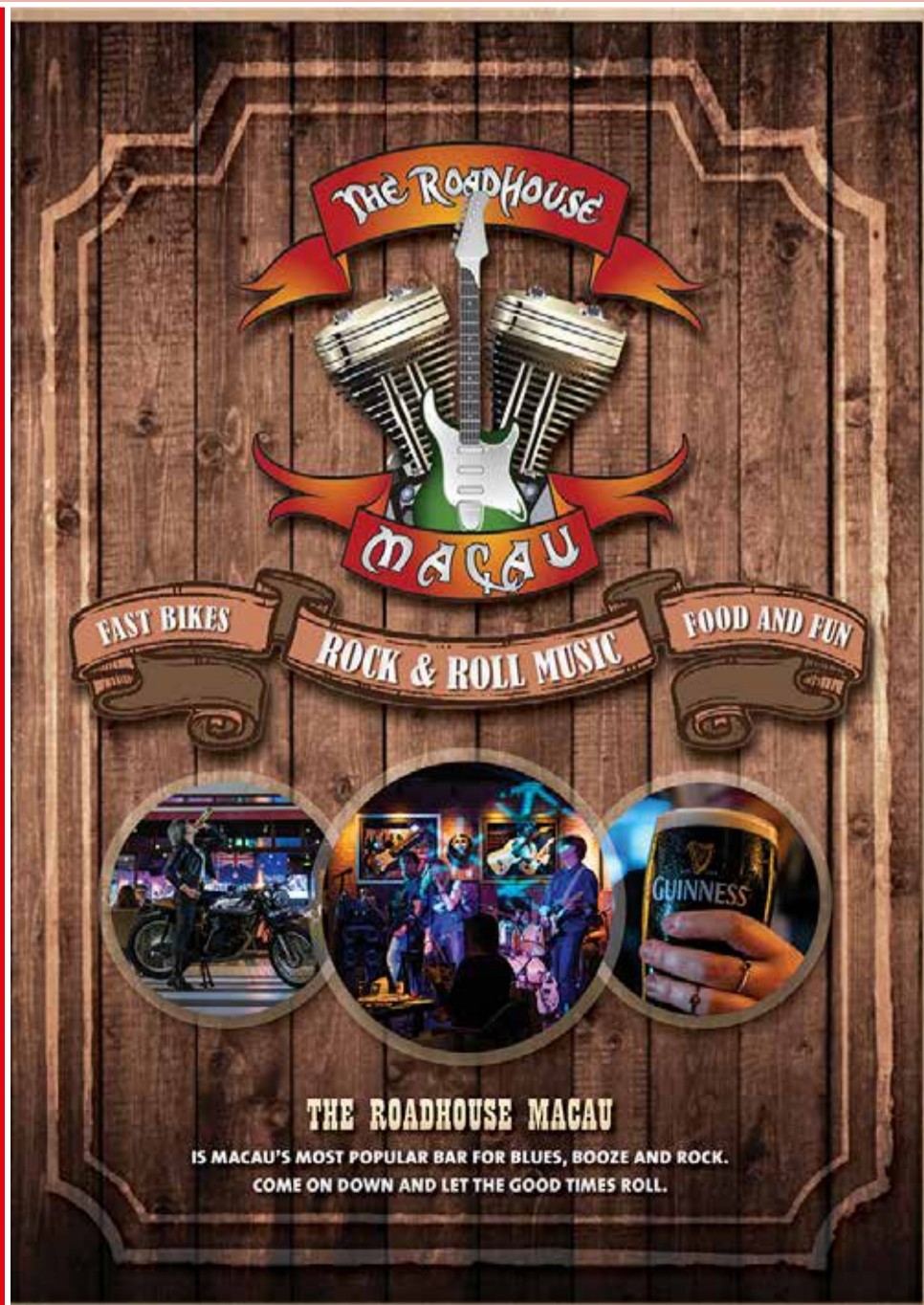
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amid clampdown

China effectively ended multiparty democracy in Hong Kong by having the ceremonial Chinese legislature in Beijing impose the national security law without debate or a vote in the city's Legislative Council. It then moved to pack the Legislative Council with Beijing loyalists while radically reducing the proportion of legislators directly elected by voters.

Opposition legislators earlier resigned as a group after four colleagues were barred on national security grounds.

In recent months, police have arrested most of the city's pro-democracy activists. Most are still in police custody, while others have sought asylum abroad, under threat from Lam's administration for past statements and actions seen as disloyal to China or in violation of Hong Kong law as it now stands.

Despite the overwhelming emphasis on security, Lam told reporters that the role of the chief secretary in helping oversee the city's daily administration, including dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, had not changed.

Yet she appeared to acknowledge Beijing's increasingly assertive role in managing the city's affairs and the central government's demand for absolute loyalty from Hong Kong officials and members of the Legislative Council.

"Now today as chief executive, I am responsible not only to Hong Kong but also to the central government, performing national duties, particularly in safeguarding national

security," Lam told reporters. "So for people with commitment, integrity, leadership and spirit to serve the nation and Hong Kong [...] we will put in our best."

China has dismissed foreign sanctions and criticism as interference in its internal affairs, and Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian on Friday defended the national security law as focused on "cracking down on a small group of anti-China elements in Hong Kong who have seriously endangered national security, and which protects the rights and freedoms enjoyed by the vast majority of Hong Kong residents in accordance with the law, including freedom of the press."

"Since the enforcement of the Hong Kong national security law, Hong Kong society has returned to stability, the rule of law and justice has been upheld, and the legal rights and freedoms of Hong Kong residents and foreign citizens have been better protected in a safer environment," Zhao said at a daily briefing.

"Accusing China of suppressing press freedom just because the organization involved in the case is a news outlet and the individuals punished are working in the field of journalism is an attempt to confuse the public out of ulterior motives," Zhao said.

"The U.S. should respect the facts, stop using excuses of any form to obstruct law enforcement in (Hong Kong), stop shielding suspects and interfering in Hong Kong affairs and China's internal affairs in any way," he said. **MDT/AP**

China says no strings attached to vaccine shipments overseas

CHINA said Saturday that it provides vaccines to other countries with no political conditions attached, responding to a story by The Associated Press saying China pressured Ukraine into withdrawing from a multi-country statement on human rights in China's Xinjiang region by threatening to withhold a COVID-19 vaccine shipment.

A statement from the Chinese Foreign Ministry said it welcomed Ukraine's decision to take its name off the statement at a meeting of the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva, adding "we haven't heard that Ukraine has encountered any difficulty in importing vaccines from China."

The Associated Press, citing diplomats from two Western countries, reported that Ukraine had pulled its name from the statement Thursday after China

warned it would block a planned shipment of at least 500,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines unless it did so. The diplomats spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

China's written response to AP did not directly address the specific charge, but said, "China's provision of vaccines and anti-epidemic materials to other countries is not meant to gain benefits from other countries and there isn't any geopolitical purpose nor any political conditions attached."

Ukraine had briefly joined the statement by over 40 countries presented by Canada at the Human Rights Council on Tuesday. The statement urged China to allow immediate access for independent observers to Xinjiang. **MDT/AP**

ADVERTORIAL

SANDS CHINA NEWS

Sands China Seminar Gives Team Members Macao Tourism Development Overview

Sands China team members got an overview of Macao's tourism development at a seminar at The Parisian Theatre May 25, as part of the company's ongoing effort to build team members' professionalism and deepen their understanding of the development of Macao.

Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of the Macao Government Tourism Office, conducted the seminar, which allowed team members to gain a comprehensive overview of the MGTO and an understanding of Macao's recent tourism profile – providing insights that can help the company target potential tourism markets and enhance team members' overall understanding of Macao's tourism development strategies and policies.

"It is important for our team members to have a good understanding of Macao's tourism development, especially during these times of the pandemic, as part of their professionalism education," said Dr. Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd. "The company thanks Director Fernandes for sharing her knowledge and insights with our team members, so that they can have a deeper understanding of key issues such as Macao's tourism development strategies and regional cooperation between Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao."

The seminar's topics included: an introduction to the MGTO, Macao's recent tourism performance, the city's anti-pandemic measures, and an overview of Macao's tourism development strategies.

A couple hundred team members attended, including Kenry Yip, director of the travel service department, who shared: "I was very pleased to have the opportunity to participate in today's seminar conducted by Director Fernandes. The event helped us better understand the structure and functions of the Macao Government Tourism Office, as well as the important role they play in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, such as by helping Macao residents stranded abroad to navigate travel restrictions to return home. We learned so much from this two-hour seminar."

Sands China has been committed to improving the professionalism of its team members through various initiatives, including professional literacy training courses, Greater Bay Area tours, professional lectures, various professional exchange activities, and through film viewing sessions. Nearly 30 professionalism activities have been held to date, with a participation of over 10,000.



COVID-19

WHO: Delta variant is 'most transmissible' identified so far

MARIA CHENG, LONDON

THE head of the World Health Organization said the COVID-19 delta variant, first seen in India, is "the most transmissible of the variants identified so far," and warned it is now spreading in at least 85 countries.

At a press briefing on Friday, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the lack of vaccines in poor countries was exacerbating the delta variant's transmission. He described a recent meeting he attended of an advisory group established to allocate vaccines.

"They were disappointed because there is no vaccine to allocate," he said, criticizing rich countries for declining to immediately share shots with the developing world. "If there is no vaccine, what do you share?"

Tedros said the global community was failing and risked repeating the mistakes made during the AIDS crisis decades ago and during the 2009 swine flu pandemic —



when vaccines only arrived in poor countries after the outbreak ended.

"It took 10 years (for anti-retrovirals) to reach the low income countries after (HIV) was already rampant in high income countries," he said. "Do we want to repeat the same thing?"

COVAX, the U.N.-backed effort aiming to distribute vaccines to poor countries, has missed several targets to share COVID-19 shots, and its biggest supplier is not expected to export any vaccines until the end of the year. The hundreds of millions of doses promised by countries

including Britain, the U.S. and others are not likely to arrive anytime soon.

"We have through COVAX this month zero doses of AstraZeneca vaccine, zero doses of Pfizer vaccine, zero doses of (Johnson and Johnson) vaccine," acknowledged Dr. Bruce Aylward, a senior adviser to the WHO chief. "Every single one of our suppliers is unable to supply during this period because others are making demands on those products, others who are vaccinating very young populations that are not at risk."

As border restrictions and other public health measures

are loosened across Europe, the U.S. and in other countries with high vaccination rates, WHO officials warned that this could lead to a resurgence of disease.

"The global situation is incredibly fragile," said Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO's technical lead on COVID-19. Van Kerkhove said that while transmission is dropping in Europe, there are numerous events — from large sporting events to backyard barbecues — that all have consequences for disease spread.

"The delta variant, the virus, will continue to evolve," Van Kerkhove said. "Right now our public health and social measures work, our vaccines work, our diagnostics work, our therapeutics work. But there may be a time where this virus evolves and these countermeasures don't."

Earlier this month, British officials announced that they would allow 60,000 fans to attend the semi-finals and finals of the European football championships at London's Wembley stadium — to the dismay of some public health experts.

Lawrence Young, a virologist at the University of Warwick, called it "worrying and confusing," saying there was limited data to prove its safety, especially given the prevalence of the more infectious delta variant. "(The) inevitable opportunities for the virus to spread in enclosed spaces like lavatories is a recipe for disaster." **MDT/AP**

this day in history



2004 US TRANSFERS POWER BACK TO IRAQ



The United States has handed power back to the Iraqi people at a low-key ceremony in Baghdad.

US administrator Paul Bremer transferred sovereignty to an Iraqi judge at a handover brought forward two days in an attempt to prevent the occasion being marked by bloodshed.

Mr Bremer flew out of the country shortly after. His departure ends 15 months of US control in Iraq.

Iraq's interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, who attended the handover in the city's heavily-guarded "Green Zone", said it was an "historic day" for Iraq.

Mr Allawi's cabinet were sworn in at a later ceremony, also held in secret.

The new prime minister made a televised address after formally taking office.

He told Iraqis: "I call on our people to stand united to expel the foreign terrorists who are killing our children and destroying our country."

Although power is back in Iraqi hands, US President George Bush said American troops would remain in the country as long as they were needed.

The president added that US presence would also be at the request of the newly-formed interim government.

Mr Bremer defended his country's reasons for being in Iraq, referring to recently discovered graves where thousands of victims of Saddam Hussein's regime are believed to be buried.

The former Coalition Provisional Authority administrator said: "Anybody who has any doubt about whether Iraq is a better place today than it was 14 months ago should go down and see the mass graves in Hilla.

"Anybody who has seen those things that I have will know that Iraq is a much better place."

The power handover was welcomed by world leaders. The European Union and Nato alliance both pledged their support for Mr Allawi's government.

Mr Bush and Mr Blair were apparently the only leaders at the current Nato summit who knew the transfer of sovereignty would take place early.

The news was revealed by Iraqi foreign minister Hoshiyar Zebari, speaking after talks with the UK prime minister.

Courtesy BBC News

DIPLOMACY

Blinken, Lapid meet in Rome amid reset US-Israel relations

LAURIE KELLMAN,
MATTHEW LEE & ELLEN
KNICKMEYER, ROME

HUSH-HUSH diplomacy. In-person visits. And a very public no-surprises agreement on Iran.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid met in Rome yesterday as their new governments look to turn the page on former President Donald Trump and former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whose close alliance aggravated partisan divisions within both countries.

Now, with Trump sidelined in Florida and Netanyahu leading the oppo-

sition, President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Naftali Bennett are focused on pragmatic diplomacy rather than dramatic initiatives that risk fomenting opposition at home or distracting from other priorities.

That means aiming for smaller achievements, such as shoring up the informal cease-fire that ended last month's war with Gaza's militant Hamas rulers and replenishing Israel's Iron Dome defense system. A major push to revive the long-dormant peace process between Israel and the Palestinians could unsettle the delicate balance.

"Nobody thinks it's a good idea to start charging throu-

gh on a major new peace initiative," said Ilan Goldenberg, a Mideast security expert at the nonprofit Center for a New American Security. "But there are things you can do quietly under the radar, on the ground, to improve the situation."

That approach — of managing the conflict rather than trying to solve it — may succeed in papering over domestic divisions. But it also maintains a status quo that the Palestinians find increasingly oppressive and hopeless, and which has fueled countless cycles of unrest.

The Americans and Israelis will try to work out differences away from the public, as in Biden's "quiet"

diplomacy, when he privately urged Netanyahu to wind down the Israel-Hamas war ahead of a truce that took effect May 21.

"They know you can have a pitched battle, or handle it behind closed doors and try to move the policy," said U.S. Democratic pollster Mark Mellman, who worked as a consultant on Lapid's campaigns.

Both governments will try to preserve Israel's fragile governing coalition, in part by reducing provocations that played a part in sparking the 11-day war that claimed at least 254 Palestinian lives and killed 13 people in Israel.

The new coalition in Israel shares little beyond the conviction that Netanyahu had to go. It's composed of eight parties, each effectively with veto power on decisions. So if even one party bolts, Israel's government would be at serious risk of collapse, with Netanyahu waiting just offstage. **MDT/AP**

IN CONTEXT

Bringing the handover forward and holding it in secret meant the transfer of power was not marked by attacks by insurgents.

But frequent attacks on US and UK forces as well as on Iraqi civilians have continued to take place in the country. Neither the US nor Britain have yet committed to a date when troops will be removed.

Iraq held its first multi-party elections in 50 years in January 2005. An interim democratically elected government was sworn in on 3 May 2005 with Shia Ibrahim Jaafari as prime minister.

But finding an acceptable balance of power in the government between Iraq's national groups has proved difficult. In December 2005 Iraqis voted for the first full-term government since the American-led invasion.

In January 2006 the Shia-led United Iraqi Alliance emerged as winners of the elections but without an absolute majority.

After four months of deadlock, President Talabani asked Shia compromise candidate Jawad al-Maliki to form a new government.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Are you a person of action? Maybe you think you are, but don't be surprised if you feel like mulling things over before jumping into a new situation today.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
 It's important to trust your friends and loved ones when they give you advice about your heart and your feelings, but right now you should not listen to any of their financial advice.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
 Eat up the limelight and savor all the adulation you're getting. You know darn well that you're an asset to any situation, so do not be bashful, and, whatever you do, don't you dare hide your light.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Every once in a while, you have to put it first and give yourself the attention you need. If any part of you dreads mingling with a roomful of people, do yourself a favor and politely opt out.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Give yourself time to get used to them being around, and do not make any attempt to spend more time with them in a planned way. If you see them again, you see them again.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 This is a wonderful quality, and it is part of what makes you an exceptional friend. You won't miss out on the fun too much, and you'll move a relationship to the next level.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 This won't keep you from making choices, but it will definitely keep you from making enemies! Enjoy your objectivity, and try to encourage other people to follow in your footsteps.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 You can be forgiven for getting caught up in the moment today if good news sends you into a silly rant of excitement! Let loose when the good news hits your ears.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 You are coming to realize that friendships come in all shapes, sizes, and power dynamics. You cannot be the leader all the time, and you most certainly cannot be a follower all the time.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Just one little breeze of effort will take this idea and send it soaring to greater heights than you could have ever imagined. Take one step; momentum will take care of the rest.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 The best kind of wisdom comes from people who know you well, so if you are feeling the urge to start a new relationship with one of your old relatives, then you shouldn't wait to get started.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Do they encourage you to be the best you can be or make you doubt your actions? Do they celebrate your successes or try to one-up you all the time? Answer these questions, and you'll know what to do.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

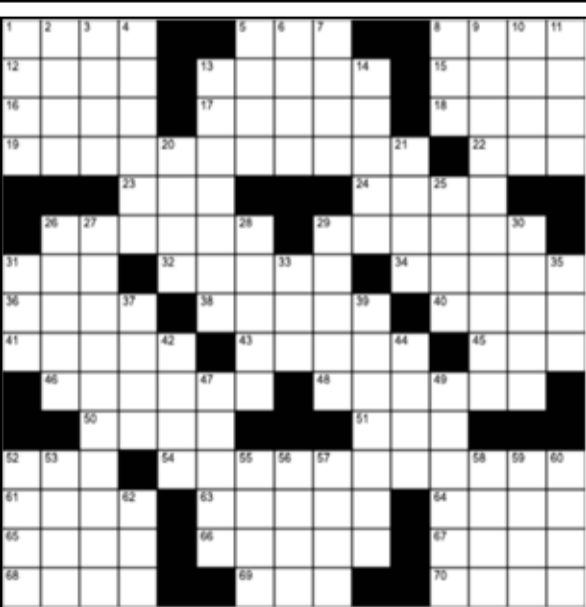
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	26	33	thundershower
Harbin	18	31	cloudy
Tianjin	28	34	thundershower
Urumqi	17	24	moderate rain
Xi'an	19	36	clear
Lhasa	12	22	drizzle
Chengdu	19	31	clear
Chongqing	21	30	cloudy
Kunming	17	25	moderate rain
Nanjing	23	31	cloudy
Shanghai	23	28	drizzle
Wuhan	24	31	shower
Hangzhou	22	27	drizzle
Taipei	26	30	overcast
Guangzhou	26	33	thundershower
Hong Kong	27	32	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	13	18	moderate rain
Frankfurt	16	26	drizzle
Paris	14	21	cloudy
London	12	21	drizzle
New York	21	28	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Helper; Abbr.; 5- Exec's degree; 8- Skilled; 12- Like some excuses; 13- Roman goddess of the moon; 15- Simpleton; 16- Camaro model; 17- Barely beat; 18- Therefore; 19- Stingy; 22- Put on; 23- Proverb ending?; 24- Sheet of stamps; 26- Prison warden; 29- Furry swimmers; 31- Spasm; 32- Rascal; 34- Dazzling display; 36- Weight; 38- Govt. security; 40- Potter's oven; 41- Allow to enter; 43- Departing; 45- Rebellious Turner; 46- House in D.C.; 48- Pursued; 50- City on Norton Sound; 51- High mountain; 52- Center starter; 54- Embody in an outward form; 61- "That smarts!"; 63- Theme; 64- Point after deuce; 65- Final Four org.; 66- Glove material; 67- Web locale; 68- Offer; 69- In medias ____; 70- One who has something coming?;

DOWN 1- Hit the ground; 2- Dress often worn by Hindu women; 3- Kind of alert; 4- Computer expert; 5- Calf-length skirt; 6- Sacks; 7- Work without ____; 8- Actor Vigoda; 9- Marginal; 10- Trademark; 11- Black, in poetry; 13- Turn aside; 14- Masterful; 20- Knocks lightly; 21- Go out with; 25- Bottle part; 26- Varieties; 27- Worldwide; 28- Scope; 29- Pertaining to the eye; 30- Cobb, e.g.; 31- Get thee ____ nunery; 33- Sound of a cow; 35- Big bang cause; 37- ____-Japanese War; 39- Improve; 42- Easy to manage; 44- Big bash; 47- Schoolbooks; 49- Spatter; 52- Seemingly forever; 53- Dark purple; 55- Travel from place to place; 56- Fencing sword; 57- Disencumbers; 58- Romeo's last words; 59- Tubular pasta; 60- Cabinet dept.; 62- Actor Linden;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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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FOR SALE
 Tong Hei Duplex **HKD 4,250,000**
 Ref: 2011 6003 1,100ft² 2 1 1

FOR RENT
 Taipa Village **HKD 11,500/mth**
 Ref: 2012 1001 900ft² 2 1 1

Rain Dance Property
 "We dance until it's SOLD!"
 Traditional apartment **HKD 2,680,000**
 Ref: 2103 6001 788ft² 2 1 1

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Juliet Risdon
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juliet@jmlproperty.com

Property of the Week



Tong Hei Duplex
HKD 4,250,000 1,100 ft² 2 1

This apartment is hidden just behind the Hotel Royal nestled on a street within five minutes of the Guia Hill. Top floor of a walk up this property has been nicely renovated.

Good size living/ dining area with kitchen in separate room adjacent to the living space with a nice shower room on the same floor. At the back of the living space is a staircase leading up to two bedrooms on the top floor of the duplex, also a good size with built in cabinets. Owner occupied this property can be viewed anytime.



Ref: 2011 6003

Viewings by appointment.
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Property Hotlist



Chun Fok
HKD 7,988,000

868 ft²

2
2



Ref: 2106 6002



Taipa Village
HKD 11,500/mth

900 ft²

2
1



Ref: 2012 1001



Old Taipa studio
HKD 7,800/mth

470 ft²

1



Ref: 2106 1004

More Listings

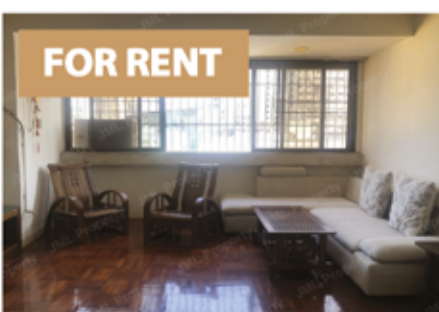
For Sale

- [Taipa] Hoi Wan Garden 2 2 950 ft² **HKD 4,680,000** Ref: 2105 6001
- [Taipa] Chun Fok 2 1 640 ft² **HKD 5,890,000** Ref: 2103 1001
- [Taipa] Nova Taipa 1 3 2 2,105 ft² **HKD 15,000,000** Ref: 2103 6004
- [Taipa] Manhattan 4 2 2,305 ft² **HKD 17,980,000** Ref: 1807 5558
- [Macau] Fountainside Villas 3 4 1 2,973 ft² **POA** Ref: 2005 6002

For Rent

- [Macau] Tai Nin 1 1 720 ft² **HKD 8,600/mth** Ref: 1909 1002
- [Taipa] Nova Park 2 1 958 ft² **HKD 13,800/mth** Ref: 2105 1004
- [Macau] Macau, ZAPE 2 1 720 ft² **HKD 14,000/mth** Ref: 2101 1004
- [Macau] Va Long 2 2 1,508 ft² **HKD 16,500/mth** Ref: 2105 1001
- [Taipa] One Central 3 3 2,332 ft² **HKD 29,800/mth** Ref: 2010 1001

Rain Dance Property "WE DANCE UNTIL IT'S SOLD!"



Traditional, Macau
HKD 2,680,000

788 ft²

2
1



Ref: 2103 6001

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Italy sets record for not conceding, then allows a goal

AFTER 19 hours of flawless defending, Italy broke its own world record for not conceding a goal in international soccer.

The streak ended a mere 25 minutes later.

Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma played the bulk of the record 1,168 minutes, including three clean sheets in the group stage of the European Championship. But Austria pushed the Italians to extra time on Saturday in the round of 16 and finally found the net, despite Italy's 2-1 victory at Wembley Stadium.

Austria forward Sasa Kalajdzic scored the goal with a header in the 114th minute, not long after substitutes Federico Chiesa and Matteo Pessina had put Italy in the lead.

"We knew it wouldn't be easy," Donnarumma said. "We were good not to give anything up, not even an inch, and we eventually found the two goals in extra time ... but these games can help us improve for the next ones."

The previous record for scoreless minutes also belonged to



Italy, set between 1972 and 1974 when Dino Zoff was the goalkeeper. That record lasted 1,143 minutes, and every second was played by Zoff.

Donnarumma played for 987 minutes of the current record, while Salvatore Sirigu played for 91 minutes, Alessio Cragno for 63

and Alex Meret for 27.

Italy nearly came up a few minutes short on Saturday. Austria forward Marko Arnautovi headed the ball into the net in the 65th minute but the goal was disallowed after a video review showed he was offside.

"I didn't realize anything on

the field," Donnarumma said. "Then they told me they were checking with the VAR and then

when it was offside it was a burst of joy."

Zoff had been preparing for the record to be broken. In a recent interview with Gazzetta dello Sport, he praised Donnarumma and the Italy team.

"He is an extraordinary goalkeeper who at age 22 has already had several seasons as first choice player at AC Milan," said Zoff, who won the European Championship in 1968 and the World Cup in 1982.

"The extraordinary numbers are what impresses me about this national team. Numbers are everything in sport. It is a young team which surely has a future and that must start now to make a name for itself."

Italy also set a team record of 31 straight matches unbeaten as well as a record 12 straight victories.

"We've always defended well, but never as tonight," said Italy defender Leonardo Spinazzola, who was named man of the match by UEFA. "Austria are physically strong and it was hard to win aerial duels. We played as a team and that's important."

Italy will next play either defending champion Portugal or Belgium in the quarterfinals in Munich on Friday. **MDT/AP**

LATEST RESULTS

Wales	0	4	Denmark
Italy	2	1	Austria

PREVIEW

France looks to forwards, Swiss aim to end knockout drought

WINNING the toughest group at the European Championship wasn't really a big surprise for the World Cup champions. Winning only one match in that group was, though.

Regardless, it was still enough for France to finish first in Group F and set up a match against Switzerland today in the round of 16.

"A new competition is starting," France coach Didier Deschamps said.

With Kylian Mbappé, Antoine Griezmann and Karim Benzema, Deschamps has enough attacking power to deliver back-to-back major titles, something that would match the country's achievement in 1998 and 2000.

Benzema and Mbappé swap quick passes and switch positions high up the field, with the quick-thinking and skilful Griezmann operating behind them. But none of them

were able to score in the opening 1-0 win over Germany, a match decided by Mats Hummels' own-goal.

Griezmann did get on the scoreboard in the 1-1 draw against Hungary, while Benzema scored both in the 2-2 draw against Portugal after rejoining the national squad following an exile of almost six years.

"We know we need to improve," said midfielder Paul Pogba, another of France's key players.

Benzema is coming off a season in which he had 30 goals for Real Madrid, and one of his previous best performances for France came in a 5-2 win over the Swiss at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. He scored one, set up another and had yet another disallowed because it crossed the line just after the final whistle.

The 22-year-old Mbappé, who scored a career-high 42 goals for Paris Saint-Germain this season,

excelled at the 2018 World Cup in Russia, scoring four goals on the way to helping France win its second title at the tournament. He netted one of those goals in the 4-2 victory over Croatia in the final.

Switzerland has its own battle with history to deal with.

The Swiss are hoping to end a run of three consecutive exits in the round of 16 at major tournaments. Overall, they have not won a match in a knockout stage at any major tournament in 67 years.

Switzerland finished third in Group A with four points, advancing as one of the four best third-place teams. After a 1-1 draw with Wales and a 3-0 loss

to Italy, Switzerland coach Vladimir Petkovic was under fire for what critics saw as negative tactics and a lack of creativity.

The team turned things around in the final group game, a 3-1 victory over Turkey. Xherdan Shaqiri scored two goals and Haris Seferovi added the other. Winger Steven Zuber assisted on all three Switzerland goals.

Switzerland has never beaten France in a competitive game. In their previous encounter at Euro 2016, the Swiss held host France to a 0-0 draw in a group match.

"The pressure will be on them," Switzerland defender Loris Benito said. "We'll remain positive." **MDT/AP**



France's Karim Benzema

UPCOMING GAMES

	Date	Time	Home	Away	City	ODDS
Tue	Jun 29	0:00	Croatia	Spain	Copenhagen	H 7.2, D 3.95, A 1.64
Tue	Jun 29	3:00	France	Switzerland	Bucharest	H 1.61, D 3.95, A 7.8

OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

WHITE PAPER BRINGS TO THE FORE MULTIPARTY SYSTEM ADVANTAGES

The white paper, China's Political Party System: Cooperation and Consultation, the State Council Information Office published on Friday demonstrates, at least in political terms, the way in which China has progressed from a backward agricultural country to the world's second-largest economy in a matter of just four decades.

It explains in detail not only the structure of the country's multiparty cooperation mechanism, and the nature and dimension of the political consultations under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, which constitute the foundation of the People's Republic's political framework, but also how it works.

Based on the principle of mutual trust and oversight, the CPC and the other eight political parties have established the multiparty cooperation system in which the CPC is the ruling party and the others participate in the government decision-making process under its leadership.

This unique political system is best suited to China's national conditions, and has helped the Party protect the interests of the people and make achievements in many fields including economic and social development since the founding of New China in 1949.

The other political parties, whose members comprise professional elites from all walks of life and represent the interests of different sections of society, not only provide the CPC with professional advice on policymaking, but also supervise the operations of the CPC. That's why China is free of the divisive and costly partisan politics, a hallmark of the Western political structure, and can focus on improving the lives and livelihoods of the people.

That some developed, and so-called democratic countries, have been fooled by the United States into joining it to curb China's peaceful rise and smear the CPC can be attributed to their lack of understanding of China's unique political system, or their blind belief in the superiority of their own political system.

So when the so-called champions of democracy call for diversity in politics, they actually want political uniformity, that is, they expect all countries to follow the Western "democratic" system of having a ruling and an opposition party.

Despite the triumphant claim of the West three decades ago, history has not ended nor has the superiority of the Western political system been established as a universal truth.

China's achievements and the contributions it has made to global peace and development, by reducing poverty and fighting climate change, would not have been possible had it followed the Western model of democracy. Which shows the effectiveness and efficiency of its multiparty cooperation mechanism.

The US is desperate to isolate China from the international community and check its rise because it fears losing its global hegemony, and claim over democracy.

But whether the US likes it or not, China will continue to learn from other countries and draw lessons from its past to improve its political system and better serve people both at home and the rest of the world by adapting to changes.

Sensitive defense documents containing details about the British military have been found at a bus stop in England, the BBC reported yesterday.

The papers included plans for a possible U.K. military presence in Afghanistan, as well as discussion about the potential Russian reaction to the British warship HMS Defender's travel through waters off the Crimean coast last week, the BBC said.

The broadcaster said a member of the public who wanted

to remain unnamed contacted it when they found the pile of documents - about 50 pages in all - in a soggy heap Tuesday behind a bus stop in Kent, southeast of London.

The Ministry of Defense said an employee had reported the loss of the documents last week.

"The department takes the security of information extremely seriously and an investigation has been launched," it said in a statement. "It would be inappropriate to comment further."



AP PHOTO

DEATH TOLL IN FLORIDA COLLAPSE RISES TO FOUR; 159 STILL MISSING

TERRY SPENCE & ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON, SURFSIDE

WITH nearly 160 people unaccounted for and at least four dead after a seaside condominium tower collapsed into a smoldering heap of twisted metal and concrete, rescuers used both heavy equipment and their own hands to comb through the wreckage on Friday in an increasingly desperate search for survivors.

As scores of firefighters in Surfside, just north of Miami, toiled to locate and reach anyone still alive in the remains of the 12-story Champlain Towers South, hopes rested on how quickly crews using dogs and microphones could complete their grim, yet delicate task.

"Any time that we hear a sound, we concentrate in that area," Miami-Dade Assistant Fire Chief Raide Jadallah said. "It could be just steel twisting, it could be debris raining down, but not specifically sounds of tapping or sounds of a human voice."

Buffeted by gusty winds and pelted by intermittent rain showers, two heavy cranes began

removing debris from the pile using large claws in the morning, creating a din of crashing glass and metal as they picked up material and dumped it to the side. A smoky haze rose from the site.

Once the machines paused, firefighters wearing protective masks and carrying red buckets climbed atop the pile to remove smaller pieces by hand in hope of finding spots where people might be trapped. In a parking garage, rescuers in knee-deep water used power tools to cut into the building from below.

Rescuers used both heavy equipment and their own hands to comb through the wreckage

Surfside Mayor Charles Burkett said crews were doing everything possible to save as many people as they could.

"We do not have a resource problem, we have a luck problem," he said.

The White House said President Joe Biden, who spoke with Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis after the collapse, was receiving updates from Homeland Security.

Officials said they still don't know exactly how many residents or visitors were in the building when it fell, but they were trying to locate 159 people who were considered unaccounted for and may or may not have been there.

Flowers left in tribute decorated a fence near the tower, and people awaiting news about the search watched from a distance, hands clasped and hugging. Congregants prayed at a nearby synagogue where some members were among the missing.

On the beach near the collapsed structure, visitor Faydah Bushnaq of Sterling, Virginia, knelt and scratched "Pray for their souls" in the sand.

"We were supposed to be on vacation, but I have no motivation to have fun," Bushnaq said. "It is the perfect time to say a prayer for them."

Three more bodies were removed overnight, and Miami-Dade Police Director Freddy Ramirez said authorities were working with the medical examiner's office to identify the victims. Eleven injuries were reported, with four people treated at hospitals. **MDT/AP**

Pakistan's counterterrorism police made more arrests Saturday in connection with a car bombing earlier in the week that killed three people and wounded 25. The attack in Lahore was near the residence of a convicted militant leader linked to the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks. Investigating officer Ahmed Wakeel said police arrested a man from the Mandi Bahauddin district of Punjab province who sold the car used in the Wednesday blast.

Iraq Thousands of members of the umbrella of mostly Shiite militias known as Popular Mobilization Forces marched in a parade Saturday, the largest show of strength since the founding of the controversial paramilitary group. Russian-made tanks, boats, rocket launchers and ammunition were on display in the parade in Diyala province, north of Baghdad, held to mark the seventh anniversary of the formation of the PMF.



AP PHOTO

Lebanese troops deployed in the northern city of Tripoli yesterday taking positions around major state institutions after a night of protests and riots against worsening living conditions left several protesters and 10 soldiers injured. Sporadic protests were reported throughout Lebanon as the country's 20-month economic crisis worsened.

Egypt An apartment building collapsed in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, killing at least five women, Egyptian state-run media reported. The report by the daily Al-Ahram said that along with the five deaths, a 70-year-old woman was injured when the five-story building in the city's Attarin neighborhood collapsed on Friday.



AP PHOTO

Russian military on Friday launched sweeping maneuvers in the Mediterranean Sea featuring warplanes armed with state-of-the-art hypersonic missiles, a show of force amid a surge in tensions following an incident with a British destroyer in the Black Sea. Moscow said one of its warships fired warning shots and a warplane dropped bombs in the path of British destroyer Defender on Wednesday to force her out of an area near Crimea.