



**THE PROPOSAL TO INSTALL A WATER TREATMENT PLANT TO RECYCLE WASTEWATER IS BEING RECONSIDERED IN A DIFFERENT FORMAT, SAYS SECRETARY ROSÁRIO**

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**FOUR PARENTS WHO SOUGHT TO BRIBE A LOCAL UNIVERSITY THROUGH A GROUP OF INTERMEDIARIES LOSE MOP1 MILLION**

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**Japan** is set to send another 1.1 million donated AstraZeneca doses to Taiwan this week to help the self-governing island fight its worst COVID-19 outbreak amid a struggle to get vaccines. Taiwan, which had only a handful of deaths before the latest outbreak, has seen its death toll spike to more than 700. The number of daily new cases has eased, with authorities reporting 29 on yesterday and 17 more deaths.



**Thailand** Chemicals at a factory just outside the capital burst back into flames briefly yesterday, sending another cloud of toxic black smoke into the air and highlighting the continuing health danger from an industrial accident that killed one and injured dozens more. It took firefighters more than 24-hours to put the fire out initially after it started with an explosion at about 3 a.m. Monday which could be heard for kilometers and blew the windows and doors out of nearby homes.



**India** The Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama celebrated turning 86 yesterday, thanking his supporters and expressing his appreciation for India, where he has lived since he fled his homeland in 1959. “I want to express my deep appreciation of all my friends who have really shown me love, respect and trust,” the Dalai Lama said in a video message. He reiterated his mission to serving humanity and urged supporters to be compassionate.

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# ART THROUGHOUT THE CITY

The Macao International Art Biennale 2021 created a new brand of cultural tourism as the gov't taps into it to drive the tourist market this summer

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**LOCALS OPTING FOR LESSER-KNOWN DESTINATIONS IN CHINA**

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# GOV'T TO TERMINATE CONTRACT WITH URBAN RENEWAL STUDY COMPANY

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE government will terminate the contract for a study on urban renewal earlier than planned, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário said yesterday on the sidelines of a meeting with the Urban Renewal Committee (CRU).

According to Rosário, the work conducted by the company thus far is already sufficient. The last

phase of the contract included a public consultation, which the government held back in 2019.

"We are going to stop this contract as what is missing is the public consultation. However, we already did that back in 2019," the Secretary said.

Rosário said that the amount the government will have to pay to terminate the contract early has yet to be determined. However, he said, "Certainly, it will be less than

the amount originally established for the whole contract."

Back in September 2018, the government signed a contract with Deloitte Serviços Consultadoria Limitada to conduct the urban renewal study. The government received only two proposals in response to the tender. The winning bid proposed to conduct the work in 120 days for MOP14.5 million, while the second bid from PricewaterhouseCoopers (Macau) Limitada proposed to conduct the work in 220 days for MOP7 million.

The next step is to proceed to the legal production of the Urban Renewal Law, with the Secretariat under the leadership of Rosário having passed on the results of the study as a contribution to the production of that law. The law will be under the responsibility of a different Secretariat.



## CONSTRUCTION OF TEMPORARY AND EXCHANGE HOUSES PROCEEDS SWIFTLY

**ADDRESSING** the second topic on the CRU meeting agenda, the Secretary said that he was pleased with the fact that the construction of temporary and exchange houses on urban re-

newal was proceeding swiftly. "I think the project is good and as far as I know, if the construction work has not yet started, it will do so very soon. So I think the process is moving forward swiftly," he said.

## RECYCLED WATER PLANT PROJECT RECONDITIONED

**T**HE proposal to install a water treatment plant in Macau to recycle wastewater is being reconsidered in a different format, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário told the media. The initial concept was abandoned when Rosário took the post of Secretary for Transport and Public Works.

The announcement comes after a project in an urban conditions plan (PCU) was put forward by the Urban Planning Committee (CPU) for public consultation. Under the plan, the current facility in Coloane is proposed to be refurbished.

The Secretary clarified that the plan is for the facility to be installed in Coloane.

Contrary to the previous project in 2014, which planned to install a water recycling plant with the capability to treat water into drinking water, the new treatment facility will utilize



ze a partial treatment so the recycled water can be used for purposes other than drinking.

"When I took office in December 2014, [one of the first things I addressed] at the start of 2015 was a study to install a recycled water plant in Coloane. At that time, I suspended this project that was about to start construction. I had explained publicly to the Legislative Assembly that I made this decision because I thought the price for the recycled water was too expensive. Since it was too expensive, I thought that we should not continue with

that project," Rosário explained. He added, "What we are going to do now is not the same thing. It is a water treatment facility involving less treatment and, consequently, is cheaper."

The director of the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau, Chan Po Ha, added that the new water treatment plant would be located at the side of the current wastewater treatment plant in the Seac Pai Van area.

There is no timeline yet to kick-off the project, as the PCU has not been discussed or approved in the CPU. **RM**

## HOUSING

### MACAU URBAN RENEWAL SIGNS LOIS FOR LOT C

RENATO MARQUES

**Y**ESTERDAY, the Macau Urban Renewal Limited (MUR) signed letters of intent (LOIs) with building contractors for the construction of Temporary Housing Units in Lot C, which has been divided into two parcels: C1 and C2, the Company announced in a press statement.

The tender for parcel C1, which comprises the construction of two 41-story-high and two 50-story-high residential towers of temporary housing units, has been awarded to a joint venture between Ming Shun Construction and Property Investment Limited and Tat Cheong Engineering & Construction Company Limited, for 1.92 billion patacas.

Concurrently, the tender for parcel C2, which comprises the construction of two 50-story-high residential towers of temporary housing units, has been



awarded to a joint venture between Cheong Kong Construction Company Limited and J&T Construction Company Limited, for a total price of 1.11 billion patacas.

In the statement, the MUR also noted that both tenders include the construction of an underground level that will connect both developments.

The tendering process for the whole development is now concluded after the creation of the first two LOIs, referring to the other

two parcels of the same land plot, which were signed early last month.

The whole project, to be developed on the former Pearl Horizon land, is expected to be completed by the end of 2024 and will create over 3,000 jobs, according to MUR.

The company also stated that the tender conditions included the provision that contractors should give local workers priority in recruitment to support local workers' employment.

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# Gov't taps into Art Macao to drive tourism

HONEY TSANG

**T**HE eclectic line-up for the Art Macao: Macao International Art Biennale 2021 (Art Macao 2021) was unveiled yesterday. The government has resolved to capitalize on the event to encourage visitor arrivals in the following months.

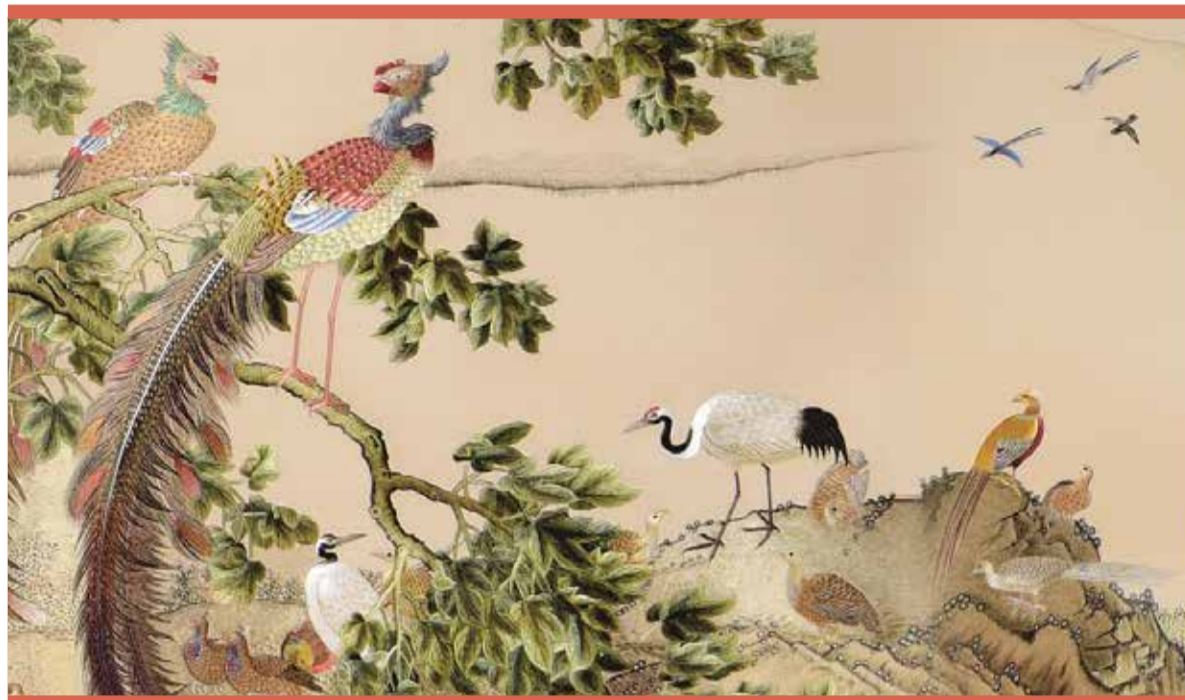
In the media briefing held at the Macao Cultural Centre yesterday, Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), stated in her opening speech that the mega art event is bound to offer a "more in-depth travel experience" to visitors.

Hence, the event is well-positioned to help extend visitors' length of stay and attract more diversified types of holidaymakers to visit Macau.

"[It] is expected to boost the tourist arrivals to Macau during the summer holiday and autumn period, as a catalyst to help [Macao's] tourism and tourism-related industries to revive and stimulate Macau's overall economy," she said.

Art Macao 2021 will transform the entire city into a canvas with installations across it, from July to October this year.

President of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), Mok Ian Ian also delivered a speech yesterday. She emphasized that the biannual art campaign is intended to "create a new brand of cultural tourism with a growing global influence, and enrich Macau's role as a world center of tourism and leisure."



Art Macao 2021 is also proposed to highlight Macau's new positioning as "a base for exchange and cooperation with Chinese culture as the mainstream and the coexistence of different cultures," which is stipulated in the Culture and Tourism Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, promulgated by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT) in January this year.

Art Macao 2021 is themed "To Create for Well-being," paying tribute to one of the sustainable development goals (good health and well-being) defined by the United Nations (UN) between 2016 and 2030.

During these current tumultuous times, Mok hopes that locals and visitors can be rejuvenated, spiritually inspired

and rewarded with improved well-being through the artistic journey in this year's event.

"By gathering the power of contemporary visual arts, it aims to reshape the humanistic spirit in the post-pandemic era, explore new modes and new ideas for the development of Macau's cultural undertakings and cultural industries," she added.

Fernandes added that the Art Macao 2021 is an epitome of the "Tourism+" concept, as it is being put together by collaborative efforts between the government, enterprises, local and international associations, professional artists and art lovers.

The exhibition venues will transcend the traditional art space and be extended to other spots like outdoor plazas, heri-

tage sites, educational institutions and integrated resorts.

This year's event is curated by Qiu Zhijie, one of the most influential contemporary artists in China. He is also the Dean

of the School of Experimental Art of the Central Academy of Fine Arts and has received a series of international art awards.

This year marks the second Art Macao event since its debut in 2019. It features 30 art exhibitions in 25 locations and showcases the Creative City Pavilion for the first time, which will display distinctive cultures of various UNESCO Creative Cities, including Macau, Nanjing, Wuhan and Linz.

During the event, integrated resorts will be part of the exhibitors, displaying their own artworks to enrich the festival. These include Galaxy Entertainment Group, Melco Resorts & Entertainment Limited, MGM, Sands China Limited, Sociedade de Jogos de Macau, S.A. (SJM), and Wynn Macau, among others.

According to the official data, the debut of Art Macao in 2019 attracted upwards of 16 million participants.

## IC: SCRATCHES ON MANDARIN'S HOUSE NOW UNDER INVESTIGATION

**THE** Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) had already begun restoration work on the historical heritage site, the Mandarin's House, when it recently discovered scratches on its exterior. This information was revealed by president of the IC Mok Ian Ian after a press briefing related to the Art Macao 2021. Mok noted that the bureau has reported the case to the police and can therefore not disclose further information at this stage.

When asked about the possibility of putting up a reinforced wall around the historical site, Mok suggested this was not likely to occur, as the added wall may create an additional burden for the narrow lanes surrounding the site. She added that it would also compromise the site's ventilation as well. To safeguard the property, the authorities have already installed surveillance, speed bumps and low-speed road signals to warn drivers.

# Four lose MOP1m in university admissions bribery scam

**FOUR** parents from mainland China sought to bribe a local university through a group of intermediaries in the hopes of purchasing admission for their children, but lost nearly MOP1 million in the process, the Judiciary Police (PJ) announced yesterday.

The police have identified each of the four intermediaries as suspects. The first suspect is surnamed Choi, a local 27-year-old man who reportedly works as a graphic designer. The second suspect is surnamed Cheong, a local 32-year-old woman who reportedly owns an investment company. The third is surnamed Tong, a local 33-year-old woman who reportedly is

a managing director of an investment company. The fourth is surnamed Chan, a 27-year-old local woman who reportedly works as a cashier in the aforementioned investment company.

The case first came to the PJ's attention in 2019. The four parents told the police that their children did not perform well in the central exam in mainland China, causing them to worry that their children might not be admitted to a local university.

During June and July 2019, they asked Cheong to bribe the local university's management and were reportedly charged between MOP200,000 and MOP260,000 each to un-

dertake this bribery.

When the four individuals took their children to register at the local university, they were told that the children had never been admitted.

After conversing with Cheong, who was reluctant to speak, the parents contacted the police.

Cheong, Tong and Chan confessed that they had no means of getting their children through to university. They also revealed that Choi is the mastermind behind the fraudulent admission scheme.

Choi fled Macau on August 4, 2019. Through the Interpol network, the police discovered the whereabouts of the suspect. He



was arrested on Monday in mainland China and was immediately passed to the

Macau authorities.

He admitted that he designed the fraudulent ad-

mission letters that were delivered to the four victims. **AL**

# LOCALS OPT FOR LESSER-KNOWN DESTINATIONS IN CHINA THIS SUMMER

HONEY TSANG

**C**ONSIDERING the international travel restriction still in place in most countries, the city's travel agencies have recently noted a surge in demand for lesser-known mainland destinations among locals in the coming summer holiday.

Before the pandemic hit the globe, Macau holidaymakers used to opt for beach spots in Southeast Asia, including Phuket in Thailand, and Bali in Indonesia, during the summer.

Locals are now switching to some lesser-known mainland destinations like Qingdao Jiuzhaigou, and Yading in Daocheng County, a manager at the EGL Tours (Macau) told TDM.

The travel agency received a 30 to 40% spike in inquiries after the firm launched new



Qingdao city

mainland tours to the aforementioned mainland destinations.

The summer holiday period was a peak travel outbound season for most Macau residents. However, pandemic-related quarantine requirements imposed by the majority of travel destinations has made international impracticable and costly.

At present, the mainland is the only quarantine-free destination for hopeful travelers in Macau.

On July 5, the official asserted that there is no timeframe set for the proposed reopening of borders with Hong Kong. This decision came after Hong Kong recorded a new confirmed case, which was re-

-classified as being related to an imported case on Monday night.

Aside from the mainland and Hong Kong, Phuket is a quarantine-free alternative for fully-vaccinated individuals, since the island relaxed its entry requirements on July 1. However, there is currently no direct flight between Macau and Phuket.

# No timeframe yet for HK-Macau reopening: Carrie Lam

**I**N a press conference yesterday, Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam asserted that the governments of both regions have not determined a specific commencement date for the Hong Kong-Macau travel bubble.

Lam stressed that she already conveyed the locals' request for border reopening between Hong Kong, Macau and the mainland to the central government when she earlier attended the celebration in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party of China in Beijing.

The Hong Kong government is now working on the related reports to be submitted to the central government, she added.

Her remarks echo the Macau government's earlier announcement, which stated that the Macau officials needed more



time to observe Hong Kong's infection numbers before reaching a consensus of when the intercity travel bubble should be reopened.

On Monday, Macau health authorities confirmed that they need "more time" to observe Hong Kong's infection numbers. This decision came after the neighboring city

reported a new confirmed case which is currently classified as a case with unknown source. This means that it will take more time for the Hong Kong-Macau travel bubble to reach its commencement date. On July 1, the Health Bureau unveiled a new requirement for Hong Kong to see no cases with

unknown sources for 14 days, shortened from the previous requirement of 28 days, as an eased precondition to open the Hong Kong-Macau travel bubble

The local government said that it will keep monitoring whether this case has transmission risk in Hong Kong's community. HT



# CHINESE OFFICIALS HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL SECURITY LAW IN HONG KONG

**D**ENG Zhonghua, deputy director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, said that it is "necessary, timely and effective" to formulate and implement the national security law in Hong Kong to deal with the grim situation then in Hong Kong.

The law fully implements the principle and spirit of "One country, two systems," safeguards national sovereign security and development interests, and maintains Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability.

He said, to fully and accurately implement the law, it is necessary to grasp the relationship between the law and local laws in Hong Kong, and enable its interaction with other relevant laws of Hong Kong. Both should be implemented as one.

Deng was speaking during a legal forum on national security law held on Monday, when a number of legal exper-

ts reviewed the process of the implementation of the national security law in Hong Kong and exchanged their views upon it.

The forum, entitled "National Security Law Legal Forum -- Security Brings Prosperity," was organized by the Department of Justice of the Hong Kong government online and offline. It aimed at enhancing people's understanding of the national security law in the city.

Meanwhile, Chen Dong, deputy director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Hong Kong, said that the effective implementation of the law has improved Hong Kong's system for safeguarding national security and stabilized the society. He urged the public to firmly support Hong Kong to enforce the law strictly, defend national security resolutely, and safeguard social stability and interests as anti-China forces have not given up. MDT/XINHUA

# F&B ASSOCIATION TO HELP PRACTITIONERS BE MORE TECH-SAVVY

**T**HE United Association of Food and Beverage Merchants of Macau and the Macau Institute of Management have again teamed up to organize the annual training program for practitioners in the food and beverage (F&B) industry to help them upskill and increase competitiveness across the industry. In response to the growing trend toward smart catering, the training sessions are imbued with a new element focusing on advanced technology, such as smart catering platforms and payment platforms using big data.

Chairman of the United Association of Food and Beverage Merchants of Macau, Kenneth Lei, told the press on the

sidelines of an event that the organizers have listened to the needs and advice of practitioners and designed lessons that most suit them.

Apart from smart technologies, the program also covers courses ranging from language to customer service skills.

The training program targets several roles in the F&B industries, including frontline staff and management.

The organizers have also arranged a field trip to Heng-qin's eateries for participants, intending to help them explore more cross-border business opportunities.

The program has been well-received by Macau's small and medium enterprises, Lei added. HT

# Courier denies occurrence of difficulties delivering shipments to Europe

**A** representative from a local freight company denied claims that container shipments could not be delivered to destinations in Europe due to "problems in Hong Kong."

Earlier this week, several readers informed the Times that their personal belongings, which were shipped in containers from Macau to Europe, did not successfully arrive at their respective destinations, which included Lisbon, Portugal and other European cities.

In contrast to these claims, the Times is aware that at least two, who have recently relocated to Australia, managed to receive their shipments timely and safely.

The Times contacted a local freight company for verification of the matter. A representative from the company, who requested to remain anonymous, denied

IAN TAYLOR



the claim, while stating very clearly that "it had nothing to do with Hong Kong."

Most importantly, he stressed that the freight company has not encountered any problem or difficulty in sending or delivering shipments to Europe.

"More often it's about cargo capacity," he said. By that

he meant free spaces available on a particular cargo ship. "Cargo spaces have been tight for most of the time this year."

The representative explained that with tighter restrictions still in place in most countries around the globe, such as cargo quarantine measures, shipment deliveries have become more diffi-

cult indeed.

However, he sees the unavailability of sufficient cargo space as the greater problem. "Now the capacity has only returned to at max 40% of normal time," the representative pointed out. "Usually shipments to Europe take one to two months, and there can be possible delays." MDT

## CRIME

### THREE ARRESTED FOR DRUG DEALING AND TRAFFICKING

**T**HE Judiciary Police (PJ) announced yesterday that while busting a drug dealing and trafficking case, it apprehended a Vietnamese couple and a local broker.

The law-enforcement entity has also seized 6.5 grams of methamphetamine and 1.2 grams of powdered amphetamine, the estimated cost of which was about MOP20,000.

The three suspects are all in their 30s. The local suspect is reportedly jobless and the couple worked as cleaners in a local hotel.

Previous intelligence informed the PJ about alleged drug dealing activities in entertainment venues in Areia Preta. On Monday, the police conducted an investigation in the district and found the alleged local broker that afternoon.

Inspectors were led to his residence in the district, where the methamphetamine and associated goods were seized.

On Monday evening, the police intercepted the female suspect on Rua de João de Araújo. Inspectors seized more methamphetamine and amphetamine powder in her apartment on the same street. Cash amounting to MOP18,800 and HKD22,000 was also found.

Both the local broker and the Vietnamese man tested positive for narcotics. The police believed that the small group has been in operation for more than a month. **AL**

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# TWITTER RESTRICTS TWEETS OF ACADEMIC WHO MOCKED CHINA LEADER

NICK PERRY, WELLINGTON

A New Zealand academic says Twitter temporarily restricted her account after she mocked Chinese President Xi Jinping.

University of Canterbury Professor Anne-Marie Brady is an expert on China's attempts to exert political influence around the world and has been an outspoken critic of its ruling Communist Party. Last week, she sent tweets poking fun at the party's 100th anniversary celebrations.

She said two of those tweets were temporarily marked "unavailable" by Twitter and her account was temporarily restricted over the weekend, before it was restored on Monday.

Twitter did not say what prompted its actions.

Edward Lucas, a columnist for The Times newspaper in Britain, wrote that it probably resulted from an online campaign of complaints by Communist Party agents which would have triggered an automatic response from



AP PHOTO

Twitter while it investigated.

"After I had stoked a furor on Twitter and sent umpteen complaints, her account was restored," Lucas wrote. "Less prominent victims of Chinese censorship would have scantier chances of redress."

Brady tweeted her thanks to Lucas, saying that she'd been unable to get a reply from Twitter herself.

"Seems like @Twitter may have briefly forgotten they don't work for Xi Jinping," Brady wrote.

In a statement, Twitter said that when it detects unusual activity from an account, it can sometimes add temporary notices until it gets confirmation from the account owner.

"To set the record straight, the assertion that Twitter is in coordi-

nation with any government to suppress speech has no basis in fact whatsoever," Twitter said. "We advocate for a free, global and open internet and remain a staunch defender of freedom of expression."

Brady's tweets made fun of the lack of international validation of the centenary. Russian President Vladimir Putin was among the few leaders who sent

congratulations to China.

In one tweet, Brady suggested an alternative headline for a news article about the celebrations: "Xi: its my Party and I'll cry if I want to," she wrote.

Brady said her account has been restored. "Opening my work laptop this morning I was greeted by a "Welcome back" message on my screen from @Twitter, as if I was the one who left them," she wrote.

She wrote that Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Zoom and other big players in social media appeared to be getting into the habit of silencing Communist Party critics.

In 2017, Brady wrote a groundbreaking paper "Magic Weapons" which detailed what she said were the Communist Party's efforts to exert political influence in New Zealand. Subsequent burglaries and break-ins at her home and office remain unsolved.

The Chinese Embassy in Wellington did not immediately respond to a request for comment. MDT/AP

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ROD MCGUIRK, CANBERRA

# Australia denies interfering in China's Pacific vaccine help

**A**USTRALIA yesterday denied Chinese government and media allegations that it was interfering in the rollout of Chinese vaccine in Papua New Guinea.

The clash over vaccine diplomacy marks another rift in bilateral relations, which plummeted last year when Australia called for an independent investigation into the origins of and responses to COVID-19.

Australia in March became the first country to provide Papua New Guinea with vaccines as infection numbers rose rapidly in the former Australian colony and Australia's nearest neighbor.

Papua New Guinea took delivery of 200,000 doses of the Chinese-made Sinopharm vaccine on June 23. The Papua New Guinea government said the Sinopharm vaccine would initially be provided to Chinese citizens in the country.

Chinese Communist Party English-language newspaper Global Times accused Australia of "planting Australian consultants" in Papua New Guinea to "undermine China's vaccine cooperation with Pacific island countries."

Australian Minister for International Development and the Pacific Zed Seselja denied the accusation during a visit to the



AP PHOTO

South Pacific island nation.

"When it comes to the rollout, what we're focused on is just making sure that we are providing as much assistance as we possibly can. If other countries want to provide assistance, that's wonderful," Seselja told Australian Broadcasting Corp. in an interview televised yesterday.

"We come to these issues in good faith and we will continue to do things that are in the interests of our region and interests of our

friends and neighbors, most particularly Papua New Guinea," Seselja added.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin backed the Global Times' criticism, saying on Monday that China "expresses its serious concern and resolute opposition" to what he described as Australia's "irresponsible behavior."

"Someone in Australia is using the vaccine issue to engage in political manipulation, bullying and

coercion. It is indifferent to the lives and health of the people in Papua New Guinea, contrary to the basic humanitarian spirit, and seriously disrupts the overall situation of the global fight against the epidemic, which is extremely hypocritical and irresponsible," Wang said in mandarin.

"We have no geopolitical purpose and no political strings attached (to our vaccine supply). We urge the Australian side to stop disrupting and undermining China's vaccine cooperation with Pacific island countries, and join China in making practical efforts to safeguard the health and well-being of the island people and promote international cooperation in fighting the epidemic," Wang added.

Papua New Guinea Planning Minister Rainbo Paita had thanked both China and Australia for their help in the pandemic.

Australia has provided Papua New Guinea with almost 30,000 AstraZeneca doses. Papua New Guinea has also received 132,000 doses of AstraZeneca through the

COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access, or COVAX, facility.

Papua New Guinea locals in the capital Port Moresby complained last week that they had been told the Sinopharm vaccine was still only available to Chinese, the Post-Courier newspaper in Port Moresby reported.

There are concerns among receiving countries that China's vaccine diplomacy may come at a cost, which China has denied.

Beijing first promised the vaccines in February, but Papua New Guinea did not approve Sinopharm for emergency use until May.

Australia yesterday promised to share up to 15 million COVID-19 vaccine doses with Pacific island neighbors and East Timor.

Papua New Guinea is a nation of almost 9 million people who mostly live in traditional villages.

It has recorded more than 17,000 infections and 173 deaths since the pandemic began, but the true extent is difficult to gauge because of a lack of testing. **MDT/AP**

AD



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The houses are set in the heart of the World Heritage Site of the Douro Valley and its famous winery landscape where the world's Ports are produced. Both restored relics overlooking the Rio Douro, these eight rooms houses have been blessed with gorgeous wooden floors, plush queen beds and marble baths; the best have dazzling river views. But it is the welcome that makes this place stand out from the crowd.



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IRAN

# Major blackouts prompt rare apology from president

NASSER KARIMI, TEHRAN

IRAN'S outgoing president offered a rare apology yesterday for the country's most severe summer power outages in recent memory, as blackouts cripple businesses and darken homes for hours a day.

In a government meeting broadcast live on state TV, President Hassan Rouhani acknowledged that chronic power outages over the past week have caused Iranians "plenty of pain" and expressed contrition in an unusually personal speech.

"My apologies to dear people who have faced these problems and pain," he said.

In recent days, the regular blackouts have spread chaos and confusion on the streets of the capital, Tehran, and other cities, knocking out traffic lights, shutting factories, disrupting telecommunications and affecting metro systems. Repeaters — devices around cities that enhance mobile phone signals — have failed, along with electronic cash registers.

Some towns in Iran's north reported limited access to water because the power cuts affected the piped supply. Traffic police in the capital have said the sudden power cuts have caught officials completely by surprise.

The rolling outages have given Rouhani, a relative moderate who hands the reins to the hard-line President-elect Ebrahim Raisi in August, one



of the last domestic headaches of his presidency. Footage on social media, shared widely by Farsi-language news channels based outside the country, show popular anger over the blackouts breaking into the open, swelling into scattered protests at local electricity offices and gatherings in paralyzed streets. In some videos, anti-government chants echo from darkened high-rises. The Associated Press could not verify the authenticity of the footage.

Officials have blamed the outages on the country's stifling heat, escalating electricity demand and deepening drought that has threatened to snuff out hydroelectric generation.

Temperatures have soared to more than 41 degrees Celsius (106 degrees Fahrenheit) in Tehran and other major cities. In the country's southern desert, temperatures have hit 50 degrees Celsius (122 de-

grees Fahrenheit). That's driving electricity demand to new heights, as Iranians deploy heavy duty air-conditioners against the heat, overwhelming the power grid. Officials have responded with scheduled blackouts multiple times a day.

Power demand has peaked in recent days at 66,000 megawatts, surpassing the country's practical generating capacity of 65,000 megawatts. Companies can actually provide people with even less electricity, closer to 55,000 megawatts — in large part because the aging, sanctions-hit electrical infrastructure leaves power plants prone to repeated technical failures.

Last month, Iran's sole nuclear power plant underwent an unprecedented emergency shutdown. The facility in the southern port city of Bushehr returned online over the weekend after engineers said

they repaired a broken generator.

Electricity facilities have not been properly maintained, and a lack of spare parts have complicated the construction of new plants to keep up with the country's runaway growth. Over the last two decades, modest apartment blocks and local markets have become high-rises, residential complexes and colossal shopping malls all humming with air-conditioners.

While power cuts during the sweltering summer heat happen sporadically in Iran, the lack of recent rainfall has compounded the country's electrical problems. Rouhani said precipitation had decreased by almost 50% in the last year, leaving dams with dwindling water supplies to fuel the country. Hydroelectric power generation has plummeted to 7,000 megawatts, Rouhani said, down from an estimated average of 12,000 megawatts in recent years.

"When it becomes warm during a drought, we face problems in the time of peak [energy demand]," Rouhani added. "[Power outages] are seriously affecting people, businesses, factories and hospitals."

Officials have suggested that any relief is far off.

"This is not limited to one day," said Mostafa Nakhai, the spokesman of Iran's parliamentary committee of energy. "We will have this situation for at least one month or more." MDT/AP

## this day in history

### 2005 BOMB ATTACKS ON LONDON



A series of bomb attacks on London's transport network has killed more than 30 people and injured about 700 others.

Three explosions on the Underground left 35 dead and two died in a blast on a double-decker bus.

The first three bombs went off at 0850 on underground trains just outside Liverpool Street and Edgware Road stations, and on another travelling between King's Cross and Russell Square.

The final explosion was around an hour later on a number 30 double-decker bus in Tavistock Square, not far from King's Cross.

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said the bombings had "the hallmarks of an al-Qaeda-related attack".

Prime Minister Tony Blair promised the "most intense police and security service action to make sure we bring those responsible to justice".

Mr Blair, who flew back to London from the G8 summit in Gleneagles, condemned the terrorists and paid tribute to the stoicism and resilience of the people of London.

"They are trying to use the slaughter of innocent people to cow us, to frighten us out of doing the things that we want to do," he said in a televised statement from Downing Street.

Courtesy BBC News

## PARTS OF MISSING RUSSIAN PLANE FOUND; 28 ABOARD FEARED DEAD

DARIA LITVINOVA,  
MOSCOW

WRECKAGE from a plane carrying 28 people that went missing yesterday was found a few miles from the airport in Russia's Far East where it was supposed to land, officials said, and everyone aboard was feared dead.

The Antonov An-26 plane was on approach for a landing in bad weather when it missed a scheduled communication and disappeared from radar as it neared the airport in the town of Palana, officials from

the Kamchatka region said.

Russia's state aviation agency, Rosaviatsiya, said that parts of the plane were found about 3 miles from the airport's runway, near the coast line.

Part of the fuselage was found on the side of a mountain, Russia's Pacific Fleet told news agencies, and another part was floating in the Okhotsk Sea.

Sergei Gorb, deputy director of Kamchatka Aviation Enterprise, said that the plane "practically crashed into a sea cliff," which wasn't supposed to be in its landing trajectory.

The aircraft has been in operation since 1982, Russian state news agency Tass reported. The director of Kamchatka Aviation Enterprise, Alexei Khabarov, told the Interfax news agency that the plane was technically sound before taking off from the city of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky.

According to Russian media reports, none of the six crew members or 22 passengers on board have survived. The head of the local government in Palana, Olga Mokhireva, was among them, spokespeople of the Kamcha-

tka government said.

However, no bodies have been found yet and there was no official confirmation of the reports.

A criminal investigation has been opened, as is typical.

A search and rescue mission is underway in the Palana area, but the work is hindered in a complex mountain terrain.

In 2012, an Antonov An-28 plane belonging to Kamchatka Aviation Enterprise crashed into a mountain while flying the same route as yesterday's flight. A total of 14 people were on board and 10 of them were killed. Both pilots, who were among the dead, were found to have alcohol in their blood, Tass reported. MDT/AP

## IN CONTEXT

In total 52 people lost their lives in the London bombings, 700 people were injured.

The attacks were carried out by four suicide bombers.

The presumed ringleader, Mohammed Siddique Khan, had recently visited Pakistan and was later found to have made a video message in which he claimed British foreign policy was oppressing Muslims.

Al-Qaeda issued a videotaped statement in September claiming it was behind the London bombings.

On July 21 there were four more attempted bombings in London. None of the devices exploded.

On 22 July 2005, police shot dead a man, Jean Charles de Menezes, they mistook for one of the bombers.

Five men were later arrested and are due to face trial in September 2006.

A decision is still awaited on whether any charges will be brought over the de Menezes shooting.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Luna's dance with emotionally potent Pluto is likely to intensify power struggles between family and career matters. The mood lightens into a playful, romantic atmosphere later on.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20  
Look at your resources today, Taurus. What skills of yours need dusting off? What needs changing around your approach to finance? These questions are ripe in your mind today.

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21  
Much can be accomplished under today's skies, as Luna forms a harmonious connection with go-getter Mars and your ruling planet, expressive Mercury.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Luna spends the day joining forces with self-motivated Mars and charismatic Mercury, making it easy to put your talents to good use. Aim to prioritize activities that reconnect you with your center.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
Luna's encouraging meet-up with self-motivated Mars and charismatic Mercury makes it an ideal day for sharing plans within a group setting, reconnecting with friends, or pushing ahead with your aspirations.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
Luna's stimulating connection with energetic Mars and ruling planet, quick-thinking Mercury, makes it an ideal day for plowing ahead and claiming your rightful space on the career front.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
Let yourself cultivate a fresh perspective today, Libra. You're craving adventure, space, and freedom from mundane obligations- as the moon parades through playful Gemini.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
As a Scorpio, you're no stranger to introspective states. Pull away from the world today to inhabit this quiet, inner world that needs some tending to.

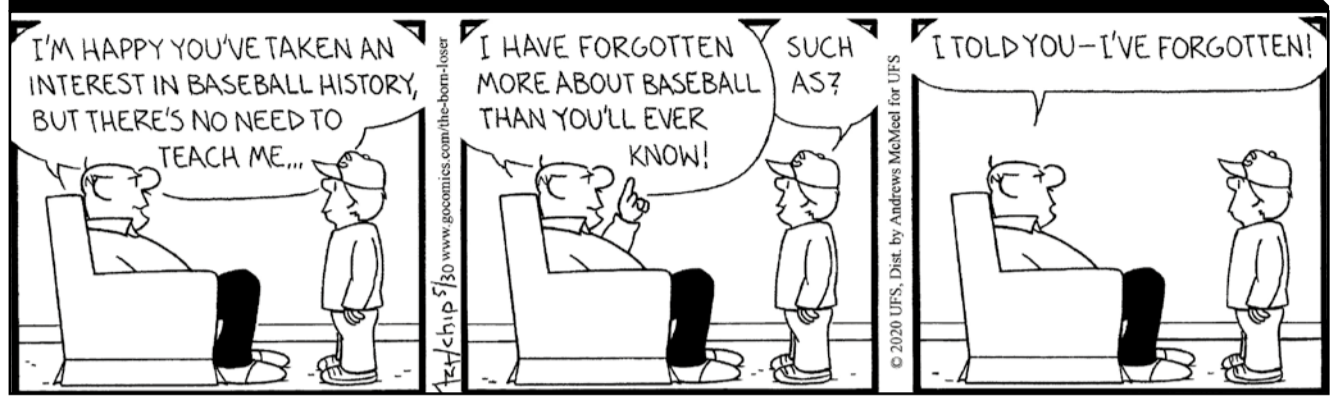
**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
Look to your close relationships to find your purpose today, Sagittarius. Other people have much to teach you about yourself, as the moon floats through your opposite sign of logic-based Gemini.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
Let yourself go into full on productive mode today, Capricorn. The moon's presence in quick-thinking Gemini sends your attention towards your routine and regimens.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
Honor your need for leisure today, Aquarius. You're in no mood for laborious, mundane work - so, try to find a way to cultivate fun and childlike joy into whatever you do.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
As a Pisces, staying grounded in reality is one of your toughest tasks. This time of year encourages you to straighten out your routines and regimens in order to make that process easier.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	22	33	cloudy
Harbin	20	27	thunderstorms
Tianjin	27	37	fine
Urumqi	24	30	showers
Xi'an	25	32	cloudy
Lhasa	21	27	cloudy
Chengdu	27	36	cloudy
Chongqing	25	33	rain
Kunming	27	34	cloudy
Nanjing	21	29	cloudy
Shanghai	26	31	thunderstorms
Wuhan	26	36	fine
Hangzhou	21	25	rain
Taipei	25	30	rain
Guangzhou	16	31	fine
Hong Kong	24	33	thunderstorms
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	16	29	overcast
Frankfurt	14	21	cloudy
Paris	14	22	overcast
London	13	18	rain
New York	23	35	rain

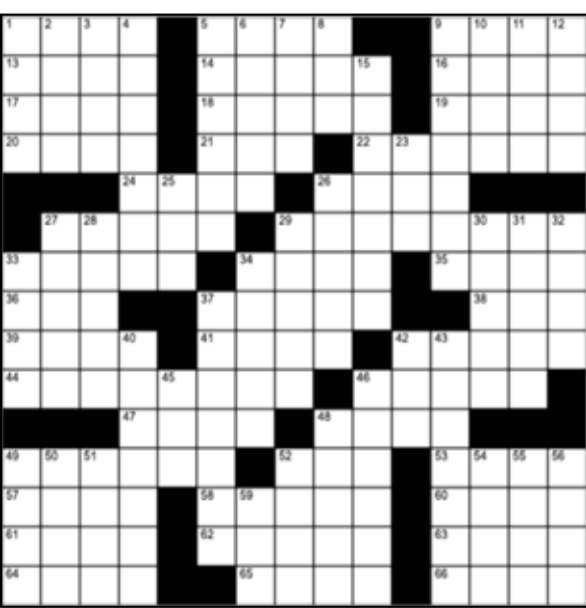
**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Savvy about; 5- Member of a great Peruvian people; 9- Vittles; 13- Boxer Spinks; 14- Heat home; 16- Singer Laine; 17- Animate existence; 18- Fold; 19- Submarine; 20- Homecoming guest; 21- Dusk, to Donne; 22- Evoke; 24- Probability; 26- Among; 27- Rocky debris; 29- Amicable; 33- Seductively beautiful woman; 34- Folk singer Joan; 35- War god; 36- Driving aid; 37- Lobster state; 38- Shoebox letters; 39- Declare; 41- Gillette brand; 42- Fab Four name; 44- Reassign; 46- Antagonist; 47- One with no capacity for veracity; 48- Molecular component; 49- Italian sausage; 52- Mannerism; 53- Name of 12 popes; 57- \_\_\_ the finish; 58- Rustle, as silk; 60- Sicilian volcano; 61- \_\_\_-majesté; 62- Specimen of genus Aquila; 63- Potting need; 64- Due; 65- \_\_\_-do-well; 66- Carry;

DOWN: 1- Leaf with Sanscrit writing?; 2- Singer Sedaka; 3- Meat substitute; 4- Another; 5- Retard in movement; 6- Frasier's brother; 7- Normandy city; 8- Doc bloc; 9- Spiny ant eater; 10- A Baldwin brother; 11- Polo of "Meet the Parents"; 12- Chimney residue; 15- Put into a list or an inventory; 23- Falsehood; 25- Reading room; 26- Sports stadium; 27- Sift; 28- Words to live by; 29- Pixie; 30- Night vision?; 31- Suspicious; 32- North Sea feeder; 33- Toronto paper; 34- Ulan \_\_\_; 37- General bodily weakness; 40- Associated; 42- \_\_\_-Cat; 43- Storm; 45- Milne's "Mr. \_\_\_ Passes By"; 46- One engraving; 48- Brides walk down it; 49- Farm structure; 50- Once more; 51- Erit coherent light; 52- Buster Brown's dog; 54- Langston Hughes poem; 55- Apartment, e.g.; 56- Cut-price retail event; 59- Pallid;

**Yesterday's solution**

BARB	AMAS	WEIR
ALOU	TESTA	ERMA
STAG	TREYS	ADAR
SANA	IRA	SOLAGE
BURY	MEAT	
MOOSE	PARTHEST	
HAVOC	PITT	VAMS
AMI	SALES	SAP
NINA	USES	SPECS
DEPENED	FLASK	
OSLO	JOYS	
NAUSEA	TIER	YBSP
COPT	MATTE	IONS
ANIL	FACTS	MAUI
RENE	AMAT	ERGS



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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- 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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Ref: 2005 1002 1,269 ft<sup>2</sup> 2 2 2

**Rain Dance Property**  
"We dance until it's SOLD!"  
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Ref: 2103 6001 788 ft<sup>2</sup> 2 1 1

AD

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

EXPLAINER

# WHY CHINA IS INVESTIGATING TECH FIRMS LIKE DIDI

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

CHINESE regulators have clamped down on the country's largest ride-hailing app, Didi Global Inc., days after its shares began trading in New York. Authorities told Didi to stop new registrations and ordered its app removed from China's app stores pending a cybersecurity review. The government said it was acting to prevent security risks and protect the public interest. Didi is the latest company to face intensified scrutiny in a crackdown on some of China's biggest technology giants.

WHAT IS DIDI?

China's Didi Global Inc. is one of the world's largest ride-hailing apps. Three-quarters of its 493 million annual active users are in China. Beijing-based Didi operates in 14 other countries including Brazil and Mexico.

Years ago, Didi and Uber competed in China. In 2016, after a two-year price war, Didi bought Uber's China operations.

Didi raised \$4.4 billion in a June 30 initial public offering in New York. The company has a market capitalization of about \$74.5 billion.

WHY DIDI IS IN TROUBLE

China's cyberspace watchdog said it suspects Didi was involved in illegal collection and use of personal data. It did not cite any specific violations.

The state-owned newspaper Global Times said in an



editorial Monday that Didi has the "most detailed personal travel information" of users among all large technology firms. It said the company could conduct big data analysis of users' habits and behavior, posing a potential risk for individuals.

THE WIDER CONTEXT

It's unclear if there are other reasons the Chinese government might be focusing on Didi. Officials have expressed growing concern about use of user data by large technology companies.

China's Cyberspace Administration announced Monday that it was also launching cybersecurity reviews of truck logistics platforms Huoche-

bang and Yunmanman, and online recruitment platform Boss Zhipin. Registrations of new users were halted pending those reviews.

Full Truck Alliance, which operates the Huochebang and Yunmanman platforms, and Kanzhun Ltd., which runs Boss Zhipin, also recently listed shares in the U.S.

A sweeping Data Security Law enacted in June requires companies and individuals to get approval from relevant authorities to transfer any data stored in China to overseas entities, such as law enforcement agencies. The law takes effect Sept. 1.

Violators can be fined between 2 million to 10 million yuan (about \$310,000-\$1.5

million) and could have their business suspended.

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

China's Communist Party leaders are uneasy with the growing influence of big technology firms. Key issues are monopolistic practices and handling of user data.

Until recently, tech firms operated in a regulatory gray zone, with relative freedom to create their business models, demand merchants and vendors sign exclusive contracts with their platforms and collect user data to better understand their customers.

After China introduced health monitoring and quarantine apps during the pandemic, it became clear that

tech companies like e-commerce giant Alibaba and gaming company Tencent controlled huge amounts of data, said Shaun Rein, founder and managing director of China Market Research Group in Shanghai.

"I think it was in the last year and a half that you can start to see just how much power these technology companies have," said Rein.

Alibaba Group Holding recently was fined a record \$2.8 billion over antitrust violations. Other big tech companies have been fined or investigated for alleged anti-competitive behavior and lapses in financial disclosure.

"Two years ago Chinese consumers didn't care, they thought the convenience of apps outweighed any negative benefits," Rein said. "But now Chinese people are quite concerned about data privacy, because Alibaba and Tencent have so much data – even more data than the government."

Rein believes stricter oversight of the technology industry will make it more sustainable, with fairer competition that will benefit consumers.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT ON DIDI?

Didi said in a statement that having its app removed "may have an adverse impact on its revenue in China."

It promised to fix any problems, "protect users' privacy and data security, and continue to provide secure and convenient services to its users."

The app can no longer be downloaded in China, although those who already downloaded and installed the app can still use it, Didi said.

Didi's stock price sank 5.3% on Friday after the cybersecurity review was announced. **MDT/AP**

## CORPORATE BITS

### Melco launches culinary program with DSAL, IFTM



Melco Resorts & Entertainment announces the launch of its Culinary Foundation Acceleration Program (Melco Culinary FAP), Macau's first culinary program of its kind in collaboration with Labour Affairs

Bureau (DSAL) and Macao Institute for Tourism Studies (IFTM).

According to a statement, Melco Culinary FAP is designed to nurture "Macau residents to enhance interaction and commitment to

the local culinary industry."

"This is a culinary development training program dedicated to local talent—providing a variety of learning opportunities for the enhancement of vocational skills and career progression opportunities," it read.

Over 56,000 participants have benefited from the company's Foundation Acceleration Program since it was launched in 2014, 97% of whom were local talent. Also, notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly 8% of all local culinary colleagues received job promotions since 2020, more than 70% of whom were promoted during FAP training.

### 56% of MGM employees vaccinated



As MGM has received positive responses after hosting the first "Outreach Vaccination Program – MGM"

in May, the company once again invited a group of medical staffs from Macau Health Bureau to or-

ganize another program between June 28 and July 2, encouraging team members to receive their shots.

The five-day program administered COVID-19 vaccines for 3,200 team members and their family members. As of now, 56% of the total number of MGM's team members are vaccinated.

Pansy Ho, co-chairperson & executive director of MGM China Holdings Limited, said, "We also thank every team member who has been vaccinated, as this is an act of protection for themselves and their loved ones, while also fulfilling their civil responsibility to safeguard everyone in the city."



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

PREVIEW

# England inspired by expectation, Denmark by resilience

**E**NGLAND is shouldering rising expectations. Denmark is powered by resilience and recovery.

And emotions will be high at Wembley Stadium before their European Championship semi-final match even kicks off tomorrow when there will be a moment to remember the tournament's most harrowing incident and the player who won't be playing for Denmark.

The England squad has signed a No. 10 jersey emblazoned with Christian Eriksen's name that will be handed to Denmark captain Simon Kjaer by England counterpart Harry Kane.

The England players were on a bus traveling to London from their training base to prepare for their opening game of Euro 2020 on June 12 when Eriksen collapsed on the field while playing against Finland. He had to be resuscitated with a defibrillator.

"We saw it on the screens," said England defender Kieran Trippier, a former teammate of Eriksen's at Tottenham. "I was close with Christian. The most important thing is he is getting better."

Perhaps what is most remarkable is that while Eriksen recovers from his cardiac arrest, Denmark has managed to reach the semi-finals for the first time since unexpectedly winning the European

AP PHOTO



Championship in 1992.

"These last four weeks have been the emotions of a lifetime," Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand said. "We've been facing death in a way I never hoped I should."

After losing the opening two games — including the Finland match that resumed that day — the Danes looked on the verge of elimination. But they got used to the formation switch from 4-2-3-1 to 3-4-3 and beat Russia in their final group game to advance before ousting Wales and the Czech Republic to set up the meeting with England.

Kasper Dolberg has scored

three goals, Pierre-Emile Højbjerg has been excellent in midfield and Kasper Schmeichel has provided leadership even beyond his saves in goal.

"With everything that we've been going through from the first game to where we are now is quite remarkable," Denmark midfielder Christian Norgaard said. "We had to pinch ourselves in the arms sometimes to realize what we've

achieved."

That, to some degree, was the sense in the England squad at the 2018 World Cup when the team reached the semifinals despite little being expected of them under coach Gareth Southgate.

Now that they are back in another semifinal — having also lost in the last four of the inaugural UEFA Nations League — there is a sense that England has to deliver in a

way it hasn't since last reaching a final at the 1966 World Cup.

"We've made a real good progression over the years," Trippier said. "I spoke to some of the younger lads before the tournament and said, 'Have no fears. Enjoy it because they are only around every couple of years these tournaments.'"

The foundation of England's progress at Euro 2020 has been in defense with no goals conceded in five games, only one of which has been played away from Wembley — Saturday's 4-0 rout of Ukraine in Rome.

Trippier said moving to Atletico Madrid and being guided by Diego Simeone has helped to improve him as a defender. A career that was waning in the year after the last World Cup is flourishing again with Trippier winning the Spanish title and now hoping for a first England title, too.

"Simeone makes sure you defend first and foremost. If not you will know about it in the dressing room," Trippier said. "I have had to fight for a lot in my career, with so many setbacks. It's about bouncing back and challenging yourself. I have had to overcome so much. I have been left out of England squads. I have had to move countries. People saying it was a mistake to play abroad.

"For me, I'm one of those people who likes to go in the deep end. Doesn't bother me. It was an opportunity and I grabbed it with both hands." MDT/AP

## UPCOMING GAMES

	Date	Time	Home	Away	City	ODDS
Wed	Jul 7	3:00	Italy	Spain	London	H 2.56, D 3.25, A 3.15

ODDSCHECKER.COM

OLYMPICS

# Tokyo event shaping up to be TV-only with few fans

**T**HE pandemic-delayed Tokyo Olympics are shaping up as a TV-only event with few spectators — if any — being allowed when they open in just over two weeks.

Japan's Asahi newspaper, citing multiple unidentified government sources, said yesterday the opening ceremony at the 68,000-seat National Stadium is likely to be limited to only VIP guests. The Olympics open on July 23.

The newspaper said other large venues are likely to have no spectators. Smaller venues are expected to allow some spectators.

Tokyo organizers and the International Olympic Committee are expected to announce the policy after

AP PHOTO



a meeting likely on tomorrow.

The IOC earns almost 75% of its income from TV rights, and will still generate \$3 billion to \$4 billion in income from a television-only event.

Fans from abroad were banned months ago.

Dr. Shigeru Omi, a top government medical advisor,

has said the least risky Olympics would be with no spectators. He also said it was "abnormal" to hold the Olympics during a pandemic.

Asahi said the no-spectators policy could apply to events that take place after 9 p.m. and to larger venues where 50% of capacity exceeds 5,000.

VIPS, sponsors and others dignitaries will be allowed to attend the opening ceremony and other venues, but the newspaper said these numbers could also be reduced. The newspaper said this "special category" was about 10,000 people.

Organizing committee chief executive Toshiro

Muto said two weeks ago that VIPs would be allowed into venues — over and above any spectator cap — and were classified as "organizers" and not spectators.

"There are many stakeholders of the IOC and so forth. People related to key clients. And for those people they are regarded as organizers of the games and they are not spectators," Muto said.

About 11,000 Olympic athletes and 4,400 Paralympians will be entering Tokyo, along with tens of thousands of coaches, administrators, broadcasters, and media.

The decision on spectators could come on the same day, Thursday, that IOC President Thomas

Bach arrives in Tokyo. Bach is to self-isolate for three days in a five-star Tokyo hotel.

The government is also expected this week to extend quasi-state of emergency measures which end on Sunday.

Japan's Kyodo news also reported on Tuesday that the Tokyo government will take the Olympic torch relay off the streets for all legs in the capital. Those legs were to begin on Friday. The exception is events on small islands off the Tokyo mainland.

The relay has repeatedly been rescheduled, rerouted, and sequestered in public parks away from the public since it began in March from northeastern Japan. The event is heavily sponsored by Coca-Cola and Toyota. There were suggestion after the postponement that it be canceled, but those ideas were quickly dismissed. MDT/AP

**OPINION**

**China Daily**  
 Editorial, China Daily

**DISCRIMINATORILY  
 ACCEPTING VACCINES  
 DANGEROUS**

In a substantial move toward reopening, the European Union on Thursday officially inaugurated its COVID-19 passport/certificate for citizens and residents of all member countries, as well as for some travelers from third countries. But such a passport/certificate is only available for those vaccinated with EU-approved vaccines.

Although individual member states reportedly have the flexibility to also accept vaccines that have been authorized at the national level or by the World Health Organization, the EU is keeping its doors closed to all those who have been inoculated with vaccines other than the four EU-approved ones, even those that have been approved by the World Health Organization for emergency use.

COVAX, on Thursday urged all regional, national and local government authorities to fully recognize COVID-19 vaccines "deemed safe and effective by the World Health Organization and/or the 11 Stringent Regulatory Authorities (SRAs) approved for COVID-19 vaccines".

Partial recognition "would effectively create a two-tier system, further widening the global vaccine divide and exacerbating the inequities we have already seen in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines," it said.

There may or may not be a political agenda involved. But if this is indeed intended to slam the door shut on Chinese and Russian vaccines, it also excluded those developed by India and the Republic of Korea.

Politicization of vaccines that leads to the differentiated treatment of the vaccines validated by the WHO Emergency Use Listing (EUL) and/or the 11 SRAs will greatly undermine the endeavors of COVAX, impede global vaccination progress, and in turn slow the global recovery.

As WHO director Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pointed out on Thursday at a news conference, with the highly contagious Delta variant quickly becoming the dominant strain of the novel coronavirus in many countries, "we are in a very dangerous period of the pandemic", and "no country is out of the woods yet".

With Ghebreyesus' warning the Delta variant has been detected in at least 98 countries, WHO experts noticed that, along with Alpha and Beta, Delta is fuelling an aggressive third wave across Africa.

Openly discriminating against those who use vaccines other than those it gives the green light to, is morally problematic. Many of those inoculated with non-EU-approved vaccines simply had no access to those approved by the EU. It is also politically unsound. It will certainlyacerbate the political divide some are trying to create using the pandemic, and do greater damage to global public health in the long term. And the EU practice is professionally unsound as the WHO/SRAs' approvals were based on serious, meticulous scientific scrutiny.

It merits a special mention that, as the Chinese Foreign Ministry said, China has provided vaccines to nearly 100 countries, covering a considerable portion of the global population, and there is no credible proof the vaccines they endorsed are unsafe or ineffective.

**GERMAN WHO RAN THINK TANK  
 ARRESTED FOR SPYING FOR CHINA**

THE  
**BUZZ**

A German man who ran a think tank has been arrested on suspicion of being an informant for Chinese intelligence for years, German prosecutors said yesterday.

Federal prosecutors said the suspect, identified only as Dr. Klaus L. in line with German privacy rules, was arrested on suspicion of espionage Monday following an indictment that they filed at a Munich court in May.

They said he is a political scientist and had run a think tank, which they didn't identify, since 2001. According to prosecu-

tors, employees of a Chinese intelligence service contacted him when he went on a lecture trip to Shanghai in June 2010.

He is accused of regularly passing information to Chinese intelligence ahead of or after state visits or multinational conferences until November 2019. That information, prosecutors said, came primarily from "high-ranking political interlocutors" he was in contact with thanks to the think tank.

They said that his trips to meetings with Chinese intelligence employees were paid for and that he also received a fee.



AP PHOTO

**HONG KONG**

**SIX STUDENTS AMONG  
 NINE ARRESTED IN  
 ALLEGED BOMB PLOT**

**ZEN SOO, HONG KONG**

**N**INE people, including six secondary school students, were arrested in Hong Kong yesterday for allegedly plotting to set off homemade bombs in courts, tunnels and trash cans as political tensions rise in the city where China is tightening its grip.

Police said they were detained on suspicion of engaging in terrorist activity under a harsh national security law that Beijing imposed a year ago as part of a crackdown on dissent in the former British colony that has long enjoyed freedoms not seen on the Chinese mainland.

Hong Kong authorities have used the law, enacted in response to anti-government protests that rocked the city in 2019, to arrest many of the city's prominent activists. Others have fled abroad as a result.

If the allegations are true, the group appears to represent a more radical fringe of the protest movement, which has demanded broader democratic freedoms for Hong Kong

just as its liberties are under threat. Police said the group was attempting to make the explosive triacetone triperoxide, or TATP, which has been widely used in bombings in Europe and elsewhere, in a makeshift laboratory in a hostel.

intendent Li Kwai-wah of the Hong Kong Police National Security Department.

Hong Kong chief executive Carrie Lam said at a weekly news briefing that she hopes the members of the public will "openly condemn threats of violence."

"They should not be wrongly influenced by the idea that ... breaking the law is in order, if you're trying to achieve a certain cause," she said. "They should not be influenced

**The group appears to represent a more radical fringe of the protest movement, which has demanded broader democratic freedoms**

Police accused the group of planning to use the explosive to bomb courts, cross-harbor tunnels, railways and trash cans on the street "to maximize damage caused to the society."

Since the 2019 anti-government protests, Hong Kong police have arrested several people over alleged bomb plots and for making TATP, including 17 detained that year in overnight raids that also seized explosives and chemicals.

Nine people between 15 and 39 years old were arrested yesterday, according to Senior Supe-

into thinking that they can find excuses to inflict violence."

Authorities said they seized equipment and raw materials used to make the TATP, as well as a "trace amount" of the explosive. They said they also found operating manuals and about 80,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$10,300) in cash.

Police froze about 600,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$77,200) in assets that they say may be linked to the plot. Authorities said all nine planned to set off the bombs and then leave Hong Kong for good. **MDT/AP**



AP PHOTO

**Iran** accused Israel yesterday of mounting a sabotage attack on a nuclear facility near Tehran last month, the country's state-run news agency reported as authorities acknowledged for the first time that the mysterious assault had caused structural damage to the site. Authorities announced in late June that they had prevented saboteurs from attacking a site located in Karaj, a city about 40 kilometers northwest of the Iranian capital. They gave no details about what the targeted building belonging to the Iran's Atomic Energy Agency contained, or how it was targeted.

**Russia's** top diplomat expressed his backing for Southeast Asian efforts toward achieving peace in Myanmar on his visit yesterday to Indonesia to demonstrate the region's importance to Moscow. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, on a four-day visit to Southeast Asian countries, arrived in Jakarta on Monday from Brunei, where he met with Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, this year's chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.



AP PHOTO

**Belarus** The Supreme Court yesterday sentenced a former contender in the 2020 presidential race to 14 years in prison on corruption charges in a case that has been widely seen as politically motivated. Viktor Babariko, the former chief executive of a Russia-owned bank, aspired to challenge Belarus' authoritarian president, Alexander Lukashenko, in last year's election. But Babariko was arrested two months before the August 2020 vote.

**Germany** Chancellor Angela Merkel's party yesterday presented a campaign for Germany's September election that portrays would-be successor Armin Laschet as a conciliatory, experienced leader and mixes classic center-right themes with portraying the fight against climate change as an economic opportunity.