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**THE FOUR RECENT CASES OF COVID-19 IN MACAU AND THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS TOOK UP A SIGNIFICANT PERIOD OF AL'S PLENARY SESSION** P4

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AP PHOTO



**Japan** Tokyo reported 5,042 new daily coronavirus cases yesterday, hitting a record since the pandemic began as the infections surge in the Japanese capital hosting the Olympics. The additional cases brought the total for Tokyo to 236,138, about a quarter of the national total. Japan reported more than 14,000 cases on Wednesday for a total of 970,000.

AP PHOTO



**India** Government forces patrolled much of Indian-controlled Kashmir and ordered shops and businesses to remain open yesterday to foil a planned strike by separatists on the second anniversary of India's revocation of the disputed region's semi-autonomy. Government forces placed steel barricades and razor wire across many roads, bridges and intersections and set up additional checkpoints in anticipation of anti-India protests.

AP PHOTO



**Afghanistan** The air force carried out more airstrikes against Taliban positions in southern Afghanistan yesterday, as the insurgent force made additional gains in the country's north. A defense ministry statement said air strikes were carried out across the country, including in the southern Helmand province, where the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah is being fiercely contested. The Taliban control of nine of the city's 10 police districts.

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# MISSION IN SIGHT

Nearly 400,000 Covid tests were conducted in the city in less than 48 hours with a 'little help' from Guangdong P2



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**PERFECT 10s: CHINA'S QUAN DOMINATES FOR OLYMPIC DIVING GOLD** P10



COVID-19

# PUBLIC EFFORTS MAY COMPLETE MASS TEST EARLIER THAN EXPECTED: ALVIS LO

HONEY TSANG

**D**ESPITE the city currently facing “extremely huge challenges” from the Delta variant, locals’ swift registration rate of city-wide mass Covid-19 testing may help wrap up the large-scale scheme earlier than expected, director of the Health Bureau (SSM) Alvis Lo confirmed at yesterday’s media briefing.

As of 4 p.m. yesterday, a total of 376,000 people were sampled for the nucleic acid test (NAT) in Macau, 115,000 of whom tested negative for Covid-19, whilst the result for the remaining samples will be released soon.

The large number of people undergoing tests helped drive the operation’s target completion rate to 55% within 31 hours after its launch. In other words, only 45% remain to complete the test in the coming 41 hours.

Lo regarded the progress as very satisfactory, projecting that the city-wide test may even be concluded in less than the scheduled 72 hours. The government also did not rule out the possibility of conducting a second citywide nucleic acid testing.

## 42 TEST STATIONS; VACCINATION SUSPENDED

The government yesterday designated Mong-Ha Sports Centre as another mass testing station, bringing the total number of test centers across Macau from 41 to 42. The move, however, will see the city’s vaccination service come to a full halt from August 5 to 6.

Before service began at the ve-



nue, people were already lining up at the entrance in the hope of carrying out the NAT as soon as possible.

Lo said the new addition is intended to provide greater convenience for residents so that they have one more options to choose from.

When asked by the media about the impact of the full suspension of inoculation service, the SSM director emphasized that the current anti-pandemic priority must be given to the mass test, which is designed to “identify and thus break the invisible transmission chain as early as possible.”

Since yesterday, the government has offered real-time hourly updates on booking volumes at each of the 42 testing stations to facilitate progress.

## HELP FROM MAINLAND

A total of 300 medical staff from the Guangdong province,

deployed by the mainland governments to help accelerate Macau’s massive test, arrived at the city yesterday. They will soon engage in sampling efforts at each station.

The city’s police force also deployed around 1,500 personnel to maintain order at testing centers.

All centers have special lanes in place, established for the exclusive use of people with special needs, so that they might enjoy a fast-tracked NAT service. Prioritized groups include infants aged under 2, elderly aged 80 or above and people with disabilities, among others.

## DELAY ON RESULT DISPLAY

Due to a great backlog in sample numbers, it will take around two days for each result to be uploaded on the health code system, Lo said.

The city used to see a daily average number of 10,000 to 15,000 NATs conducted on week-

days, or up to 20,000 to 30,000 on weekends. These tallies are in dramatic contrast to the daily number of 200,000 to 300,000 since the mass test commenced, he added.

Lo also confirmed no particular penalty would be imposed on those who fail to conduct tests before due time. This is because there is no legal framework to penalize such individuals and the government has no wish to penalize them.

He calls on the public to conduct the tests within the scheduled period, but said that those failing to do so would see their health codes changed from green to yellow, which will be a hindrance to them in their daily activities, and thus encourage them to get tested.

## RED-CODE ZONE

A total of 244 people live in the red-code zone: an area that has been isolated to contain the transmission of the virus, accor-

ding to Leong Iek Hou, coordinator at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

These residents are required to conduct several NATs, with the first round completed on August 3. The second round was timed to conduct yesterday night.

Meanwhile, the government traced a further 702 people deemed to be “Close Contacts” and “Secondary Close Contacts” to the confirmed cases. These individuals are currently under medical observation for seven to 14 days and must conduct at least three NATs. Additional serology tests will be arranged for Close Contacts as well, Leong added.

The government contacted the staff at Ah Ga Restaurant, an eatery where the family dined during the past week. Authorities are also scouting out the diners who crossed paths at the restaurant with the family.

## FAMILY STATUS-QUO

According to Tai Wa Hou, coordinator of the Health Bureau’s Covid-19 Vaccination Operation, the current conditions of the 12-year-old girl and her brother are “very stable”: in both cases the only symptom presenting is a lowered sense of smell.

The parents are suffering from pneumonia, while the father also has a low fever.

Meanwhile, two Covid-19 patients were discharged from isolation wards yesterday. These are a 28-year-old female, the city’s 57th case, and her eight-year-old boy, the 58th case. Both received two negative test-results and were permitted to be discharged from the hospital. They are now quarantined for the duration of their rehabilitation period at a clinic at Coloane and will return to society on September 1, if not before.

COVID-19

# Red Zone residents unhappy but acquiesced



Food provided at the Red Zone

**A**N eatery owner now being quarantined in the Red Zone near the private Kiang Wu Hospital said he was not pleased but nevertheless accepted the situation.

The government’s recent announcement of four new cases of Covid-19 activated for the first time

the Precise Epidemic Control Scheme, locking down certain parts of the city.

The Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center has identified three buildings and a small area as a Red Zone. Mr. Lao, who runs an eatery in the zone, told local broadcaster TDM that he was

notified of the lockdown suddenly on Tuesday. He immediately closed his doors and relocated to the storage of the eatery, which is one floor above the shop, for temporary safekeeping.

He pointed out that over the past couple of days meals were delivered two

times a day. Similar to hotel quarantine, the meals were put on a small chair outside each apartment, cutting off any potential contact between the residents and the food delivery team. Rubbish was collected once a day.

Another resident under lockdown in San Kio District was shocked at being suddenly quarantined.

Both residents found the streets cleaner than usual after sanitization. AL

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

# Hou Kong principal apologizes for citywide havoc

HONEY TSANG

**T**HE principal of Hou Kong Middle School (Hou Kong) Iao Tun leong has made a public apology for the city-wide havoc indirectly caused by the school, but appealed to the public to desist from making accusations against the 12-year-old girl who was infected. The school had organized an exchange trip to Xi'an in late July which resulted in the female pupil and her entire family becoming infected with Delta variant, which led to a string of rigorous border measures and mass testing.

"This incident has caused inconvenience, uneasiness, disturbance and worries to our residents. We apologize to the general public," Iao acknowledged in an interview with TDM.

However, the principal emphasized that teachers had made an evaluation on safety issues before deciding to set off an outbound trip, which saw 30 members of Hou Kong's dance



group went to Xi'an on July 19.

According to the travel advice from the National Health Commission at the time, all regions of mainland China (with the exception of Ruili) were classified as low-risk areas and travel to these regions was permitted, he added.

"At the time, Xi'an was classified as a low-risk area. So, after a thorough evaluation, we deci-

ded to allow our children to take part in the patriotic education," he explained.

He also took the opportunity to call on the public not to condemn the girl since she has been a "victim" of the outbreak as well.

The Health Bureau previously stated that the 12-year-old pupil is very likely to be the source of the four confirmed

cases in the city so far. Nevertheless, Iao reminded the public that not only has the girl fallen ill with coronavirus, but that she is also an innocent victim in the affair.

"We should tend to [her] and care for her, and not let her get hurt again," he added.

Hou Kong formed a special team to consider how to support the 12-year-old patient through her illness, including arranging counseling for her.

Iao vowed that the school will conform strictly to travel guidelines promulgated by the National Health Commission, and make a more comprehensive review of the pandemic situation in China when planning travel in the future. In addition, the school will not organize journeys to high-risk areas and will minimize external travel.

The school also formulated more stringent anti-pandemic protocols to ensure the safety of all of its teaching staff and students after they return to campus in September.

## CAEAL OPENS CHANNELS FOR POLLING STATION ENQUIRIES

Yesterday the Legislative Assembly Electoral Affairs Commission (CAEAL) opened multiple channels for voters to confirm the polling station at which they will cast their vote. Voters can now obtain relevant information at government self-service kiosks across the city, the Government Service App, the CAEAL hotline (28 912 912) or the Public Administration Building. Besides the aforementioned channels, the CAEAL will also mail out voting notifications to voters. The CAEAL reiterated that the polling station assignment was conducted according to the address provided by voters prior to May 31 this year.

## GOV'T APPEALS FOR PARTICIPATION IN ONLINE POPULATION CENSUS

The Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) has changed the data collection arrangements for the 2021 Population Census and will fully implement an online data collection in light of the new Covid-19 outbreak. The DSEC appeals to the public to either provide information online or via telephone to reduce face-to-face contact. The decennial Population Census will launch tomorrow, covering all households in Macau.

AD



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RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE four recent cases of Covid-19 registered in Macau and the upcoming elections took up a significant period of yesterday's plenary session with an agenda dedicated to the final approval of two new laws.

In the period before the agenda, several lawmakers mentioned the current pandemic situation as well as its causes, also expressing fears that these new cases, and the fact that there is still a fear of a potential outbreak in the community, might drastically impact the local companies and residents that are still trying to survive the long period of Covid-19 restrictions.

Several lawmakers voiced their concerns to the government on the potential effects of the measures now enforced, which force businesses to close their doors for an indefinite period and endure another expected drastic drop in the number of visitors.

Lawmakers also fear that the measures taken by the government to contain the Covid-19 outbreak might also overturn the efforts to try to tackle unemployment among residents who have not been yet stabilized.

The absence in yesterday's plenary of the lawmaker Chan Hong was also noted. Chan is current vice-principal and former principal of the Hou Kong Middle School. The school is under attack from many sectors of the population, including several lawmakers, who accuse the institution of being irresponsible in sending a group of students to an exchange activity in Xi'an at a time when the pandemic was resurgent in many provinces of the mainland.

Chan was absent from the session, and so did not hear the criticisms among her peers.



## COVID-19, ELECTIONS, CAMPAIGN PITCHES IN AL PLENARY

Also before the agenda, several incumbent lawmakers, including Wong Kit Cheng and Ella Lei, took the opportunity to do some campaigning. These members used the time for spoken inquiries to publicize the work that they have done at AL over the past term and asked for the public to continue to support them by voting for their lists in the September elections.

### FIRE SAFETY AND IMMIGRATION LAWS APPROVED

During yesterday's session, the AL plenary finally approved the last two laws that still needed approval before the end of the legislative term.

The Fire Safety law was quickly approved without any questions being raised. However, during the

discussion of the Immigration law, several topics were raised which had already been addressed during the first reading of the law and in the scrutiny by the Standing Committee.

One of the matters that prompted debate was the collection of retinal information as personal data in addition to finger and palm prints and facial features.

The measure, seen by many lawmakers as a significant advance, was defended by the Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak. Wong pointed out that while other personal and biometric characteristics may be artificially modified, the retinal and iris data is unique, unchangeable, and thus the most accurate method of biometrical identification.

The pro-democratic bloc also continued to raise questions about the definition of "habitual residence" in Macau.

Au Kam San claimed that the government is trying, through the new immigration law, to amend several rulings by the Court of Final Appeal (TUI) on the matter.

In the reply, Wong refuted the idea that the government is trying to reverse any decision of TUI.

"We are not correcting any judicial decision from TUI. We do not want to touch on the definition of habitual residence. This is to clarify the concept of residence taking into account the real situation of Macau and while fulfilling all the principles," Wong said, adding, that the Civil Code already has a clear definition of habitual residence.

Responding to other questions on the matter, the Secretary also clarified that this new law does not apply to foreign students and non-resident workers, adding that these are "excluded from this matter as this only applies to those that have an authorization of permanence in Macau [i.e. a local identification card]."

"We are not trying to introduce new policies. What we are trying to do is just to clarify the definition in this new [law] and not excluding by default all those that do not stay overnight in Macau but might have a justification for that," he remarked.

The explanations did not convince the democrats, who requested a separate vote on the Article. This did not impede the approval of the new law.

### COVID-19

## Gov't lockdown guidelines unclear, says resident

**A** resident living close to the Yellow Zone near the Kiang Wu Hospital said that she was unsure how to get home after the lockdown came into effect on Tuesday, the Times was told.

The government's recent announcement of four new Covid-19 cases also activated the Precise Epidemic Control Scheme for the first time: providing for the cordoning off of the building inhabited by the infected family.

Actually, the news that the area was being sanitized, if not put under lockdown, went viral on social media early Tuesday afternoon. The rumor started

when the police deployed cage and other types of vehicles to the area.

Later on Tuesday, the police cordoned off an area covering the part of the Rua de Coelho do Amaral between the Future Bright Amusement Park and the Kiang Wu Hospital, as well as an overlapping section between Rua does Curtidores and Rua de Heng Long.

The Times reader, who asked to be identified as Lin, said that she expected there would be a lockdown that night, so she had dinner prior to returning home.

Although she does not live within either the Yellow or the Red Zone, she expe-

rienced a degree of inconvenience in approaching her home.

At first, she approached the cordoned area from one side, where she was told by police officers that once she was admitted, she would not be allowed to leave the area until the end of the lockdown.

Because the side is not immediately adjacent to her home, she took a detour and tried to return home via the other side of the lockdown area. She eventually managed to reach home by passing through the lockdown area.

She was confused because when she first asked a police officer whether her

building fell within the lockdown area, she was told that it did. However, her building was in reality outside the prescribed area.

Meanwhile, she expressed her concerns that there was a lack of notification. She said she received no notification about the suspension of certain bus stops in the vicinity. Only when she used the bus service app did she learn of the suspension.

In addition to that area, the workplaces of two of the patients, namely a vegetable shop in the San Kio District and the Coloane Health Station at Seac Pai Van, were also put under lockdown. **AL**



LYNZY VALLES



Long queues outside the Tap Seac Pavilion

## COVID-19

# Confusion on first day of citywide PCR test

**Q**UEUES have only lengthened at most sample collection stations for the citywide polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test on Wednesday. Lawmakers, commentators and members of the public expressed their confusion in several ways.

Local residents taking the test are confused about the long queues at sample collection stations when officials at the Health Bureau had reaffirmed its "readiness" and its planning for "contingencies."

Many people have waited hours before they could have their secretion samples collected. It was said on social media that test-takers were required to line up for as much as eight hours for the test at the new Ilha Verde Economic Housing station.

Incumbent lawmaker Agnes Lam revealed on her social media page that several of her friends spent more than five hours waiting for the sample collection.

There was intermittent rain on Wednesday, with intervals

of sunshine and at times high temperatures.

After nightfall the queues at many stations did not shorten. At about 1 a.m. on Thursday a picture was posted by a social media user that showed the queue at the Pui Ching Middle School trailing three-quarters of the distance around the block. The block consists of the school, the Lou Lim Ieoc Garden, as well as some residential buildings.

Videos posted at 3 a.m. on Thursday by several media outlets also showed queues

equaling the length of those in the daytime at several stations, such as the Tap Seac Multi-support Pavilion, the Kiang Peng Secondary School and even the Academy for Security Forces in Coloane.

Commentator Ron Lam also visited several stations at the early hours of yesterday. He questioned the absence of officials and the government's apparent lack of contingency plans for a rainy night.

The long queues were explicable. Some workers were ordered by their employers to get a negative Covid-19 result from the citywide polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test before they could go to work, the Times was told.

The individuals did not say whether they would be considered absent from work if they failed to do so.

Guidelines were not clear either. At some stations, in early hours of the citywide test, officers told the queue that the elderly, the pregnant, the disabled and children would not receive priority. However, at some stations, the priority arrangement was implemented.

In spite of the arrangement, the threshold for being considered "senior" varied from station to station. The Times was told by readers that some stations followed the legal threshold of 65 years of age, meaning that test-takers of or above this age would have priority arrangement. Some readers also reported that some stations drastically raised the bar to 80 years of age. **AL**

## REGISTERED CAPITAL IN NEW COMPANIES RISES SLIGHTLY TO MOP231M

STAFF REPORTER

**A** total of 1,441 new companies were incorporated in the second quarter of 2021, an increase of 49 year-on-year. Of the new corporations, 467 were in Wholesale & Retail Trade and 388 were in Business Services.

The Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) said that the total value of registered capital in the new companies increased by 10% year-on-year to MOP231 million.

There were 201 insolvent corporations in the second quarter, the value of registered capital in these companies amounting to MOP75 million, according to the DSEC data.

Concerning the origin of capital, mainland China contributed MOP126 million of investment in the newly incorporated companies, or about half of the total capital, with the largest share coming from Shanghai, at around MOP40 million.

Capital from the mainland cities in the Greater Bay Area totaled MOP29 million, of which Guangzhou and Zhuhai accounted for 39.0% and 33.0% respectively.

Finally, capital from Macau and Hong Kong amounted to MOP84 million and MOP16 million respectively.

The announcement indicated that the majority of the new companies had less than MOP50,000 in registered capital, accounting for 71.3% of the total.

## GAMING

# MGM sees revenue nearly double in 1H

LYNZY VALLES

**M**GM China saw a 45% rise in its market-wide gross gaming revenue (GGR) for the first half (1H) of 2021, recording a total revenue of approximately HKD4.7 billion, nearly double the HKD2.4 billion recorded for the same period a year ago.

In a statement, the gaming operator acknowledged that the market began to stabilize in March, picked up momentum in April, and saw a solid Golden Week in May backed by a recovery in the premium mass market.

The group recorded adjusted EBITDA of approximately HKD200.4 million, compared to negative adjusted EBITDA of approximately HKD1.0 billion previously.

The market-wide GGR in



the second-quarter improved sequentially by 7% from the first quarter. For the three-month period, MGM China posted revenue of HKD2.4 billion, up by 5% sequentially.

In a statement, the gaming operator stated that it has outperformed the market due to its "strength in premium mass business."

The GGR in second

quarter was 42% of levels in the fourth quarter of 2019, compared to market of 36%, maintaining its market share of approximately 11.2% in the second quarter.

"The group maintained

a healthy financial position. As of June 30, 2021, the group had total liquidity of approximately HKD13.7 billion, comprised of cash and cash equivalent and undrawn revolver," MGM stated.

Meanwhile, the group's overall occupancy rate was 61.5%, up from 19.8% in the same period of 2020.

MGM considers the opening of Macau-Hong Kong another important variable in Macau's recovery, adding that July was off to a better start when it saw visitation and business volumes pick up again. In July, market daily GGR grew 25% month-on-month to HKD264 million: approximately 35% of levels in the fourth quarter of 2019.

"We believe the rate of Macau's recovery will continue to hinge on broader

sentiment as well as the pace of vaccination rollouts throughout the region, which will ultimately lead to sustainable easing of travel restrictions," said the group in the statement.

MGM remains confident in the city's longer-term growth prospects, pledging to enlarge its footprint in the SAR.

Hubert Wang, president & CEO of MGM China, remarked, "We have finalized the construction and fittings of the Emerald Tower Suites at MGM Cotai that we believe the product will be well received by our premium customers."

The group will officially open the 28 luxury suites, with floor areas of 128 square meters to 371 square meters.

"We believe our investments in premium product position us well for the broader recovery. At the same time, we will continue our efforts and strategy in diversification," said Hubert Wang.

ANALYSIS

# DELTA VARIANT CHALLENGES CHINA'S COSTLY LOCKDOWN STRATEGY

JOE MCDONALD  
& HUIZHONG WU, BEIJING

**T**HE delta variant is challenging China's costly strategy of isolating cities, prompting warnings that Chinese leaders who were confident they could keep the coronavirus out of the country need a less disruptive approach.

As the highly contagious variant pushes leaders in the United States, Australia and elsewhere to renew restrictions, President Xi Jinping's government is fighting the most serious outbreak since last year's peak in Wuhan. The ruling Communist Party is reviving tactics that shut down China: Access to a city of 1.5 million people has been cut off, flights canceled and mass testing ordered in some areas.

That "zero tolerance" strategy of quarantining every case and trying to block new infections from abroad helped to contain last year's outbreak and has kept China largely virus-free. But its impact on work and life for millions of people is prompting warnings that China needs to learn to control the virus without repeatedly shutting down the economy and society.

Zhang Wenhong, a Shanghai doctor who became prominent during the Wuhan outbreak, suggested in a social media post that China's strategy could change. "We will definitely learn more" from the ongoing outbreak, he said, calling it a stress test for the nation.

"The world needs to learn how to coexist with this virus," wrote Zhang, who has 3 million followers on the widely used Sina Weibo platform.

China's controls will be tested when thousands of athletes, reporters and others arrive for the Winter Olympics in Beijing in February. And the ruling party faces a politically sensitive change of leadership in late 2022, for which leaders want upbeat economic conditions.

Last year, China shut down much of the world's second-biggest economy and cut off almost all access to cities with a total of 60 million people — tactics imitated on a smaller scale by governments from Asia to the Americas. That caused China's most painful economic contraction in five decades, but Beijing was able to allow business and domestic travel to resume in March 2020.

The new infections, many in people who have already been vaccinated, have jolted global financial markets, which worry Beijing's response might disrupt manufacturing and supply chains.



The main stock indexes in Shanghai, Tokyo and Hong Kong sank Tuesday but were rising again yesterday.

China needs to shift to creating barriers to infection within communities by stepping up vaccinations and quickly treating infected people while allowing business and travel to go ahead, said Xi Chen, a health economist at the Yale School of Public Health. He said country needs access to the full range of vaccines, including allowing in the shot developed by Germany's BioNTech.

"I don't think 'zero tolerance' can be sustained," said Chen. "Even if you can lock down all the regions in China, people might still die, and more might die due to hunger or loss of jobs."

But Beijing has shown no sign of abandoning its tactics.

Disease controls must "be even faster, more firm, stricter, more expansive and ready," He Qinghua, an official of the National Health Commission's Disease Control Bureau, said at a news conference Saturday.

The year's biggest outbreak has tentatively been traced to airport employees who cleaned a Russian airliner on July 10 in Nanjing, northwest of Shanghai in Jiangsu province, according to health officials.

Some travelers flew through

Nanjing to Zhangjiajie, a popular tourist spot southwest of Shanghai in Hunan province, turning that city into a center for the virus's spread. The disease was carried to Beijing and other cities in more than 10 provinces.

On Tuesday, the government of Zhangjiajie announced no one was allowed to leave the city, imitating controls imposed on Wuhan, where the first virus cases were identified, and other cities last year.

## China needs to shift to creating barriers to infection within communities by stepping up vaccinations, experts say

Flights to Nanjing and Yangzhou, a nearby city with 94 cases, were suspended. Trains from those cities and 21 others to Beijing were canceled. Jiangsu province set up highway checkpoints to test drivers. The government called on people in Beijing and the southern province of Guangzhou not to leave those areas if possible.

In Yangzhou, children at two tutoring centers were quarantined after a classmate tested positive, according to Zhou Xiaoxiao, a

university student there. She said some parts of the city were sealed.

Eggs and some other food was scarce after shoppers cleared out supermarkets in anticipation of a lockdown, Zhou said. She said the government was delivering rice to households.

"The price of vegetables has risen. That's nothing to me. But to the kind of family whose life isn't very good and who have no income, it's very troublesome," said Zhou, 20.

The 1,142 infections reported since mid-July, many linked to Nanjing, are modest compared with tens of thousands of new daily infections in India or the United States. But they jolted leaders in China, which hasn't recorded a fatality since early February.

The outbreak poses "serious challenges to the country's hard-won victory in the epidemic battle," said the newspaper The Global Times, which is published by the ruling party's People's Daily.

China has reported 4,636 deaths out of about 93,000 confirmed cases.

So far, most of the people infected in Nanjing had been vaccinated, and few cases are severe, the head of the critical care unit at the hospital of the city's Southeastern University, Yang Yi, told the Shanghai news outlet The Paper.

She said that means "vaccines

are protective" — though concerns remain that Chinese-made vaccines offer less protection than some others.

Authorities have blamed Nanjing airport managers and local officials for failing to enforce safety rules and to detect infections for 10 days until July 20, after the virus spread.

A 64-year-old woman who is believed to have carried the virus from Nanjing to Yangzhou was arrested Tuesday on charges of hindering disease prevention, police announced.

Cleaning staff at Nanjing's new international terminal mingled with co-workers in the domestic wing, when they should have been separated, according to news reports. The Russian flight was diverted due to bad weather from Shanghai, where airports are better equipped to handle foreign travelers.

Still, the city of 9.3 million people is the second-biggest in eastern China after Shanghai and has more resources than many smaller cities.

China needs to learn how to "allow the virus to exist" in areas with high vaccination rates and stronger health care, said Chen, the economist. He noted some areas have vaccinated at least 80% of adults.

"I don't think they are blind to this," said Chen. "They should already be thinking about it." **MDT/AP**

ZEN SOO & MATTHEW  
CHENG, HONG KONG

HONG KONG

# Corruption charges dropped for singer, activist

**P**ROSECUTORS in Hong Kong yesterday dropped corruption charges against a prominent singer and pro-democracy activist, after initially accusing him of providing entertainment to sway voters in a legislative by-election.

Anthony Wong, a Cantonese pop singer, as well as former lawmaker Au Nok-hin were both asked to pay a guarantee in the sum of 2,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$257) each, and were given a binding over order of 18 months during which they must be on good behavior.

Wong and Au were both arrested earlier this week by Hong Kong's corruption watchdog over accusations that a performance Wong gave at a political rally held by Au in 2018 violated the elections ordinance.

Wong, 59, had performed two songs at the 2018 rally and urged attendees to vote for pro-democracy candidate Au Nok-hin in a legislative by-election. Au, who won the election, was also charged in part for publicizing the rally on social media and saying that Wong would be performing.

The watchdog said that providing others with refresh-

AP PHOTO



Hong Kong singer and pro-democracy activist Anthony Wong arrives at a court yesterday

ments and entertainment at an election event is "a corrupt conduct and a serious offence"

and is against the elections ordinance.

Au, a pro-democracy acti-

vist, has been behind bars since March, and is one of 47 activists arrested earlier this year

under the national security law over an unofficial primary held last year that authorities say was a subversive plot to paralyze the government.

Wong rose to fame in the 1980s as the vocalist for pop duo Tat Ming Pair and later embarked on a solo career.

He became an outspoken supporter of the city's democracy movement, backing the 2019 protests as well as the so-called Umbrella Revolution rallies in 2014. His support for the 2014 protests led to a ban on performing in mainland China and saw his music removed from streaming sites.

Their arrests came as the government cracks down on dissent in Hong Kong following 2019 anti-government protests, leading to concern that the former British colony was losing the freedoms it was promised when it was handed over to Chinese control in 1997.

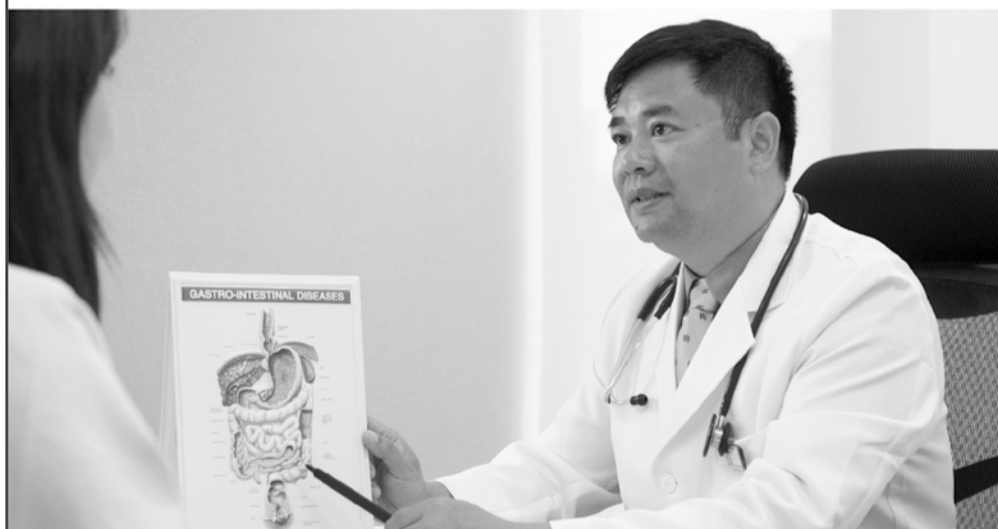
Beijing last year imposed the sweeping national security law that has been used to arrest more than 100 pro-democracy figures. Changes have also been made to Hong Kong's election laws to reduce the number of directly elected lawmakers and give a largely pro-Beijing committee the leeway to nominate lawmakers aligned with Beijing. **MDT/AP**

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INDIA

# Suspected rape and killing of girl triggers protests

SHEIKH SAALIQA  
NEW DELHI

**A**NGRY villagers in the Indian capital held a protest yesterday outside a crematorium where they say a 9-year-old girl was raped and killed earlier this week.

The protesters, sitting on a makeshift stage, held placards demanding justice for the girl, who lived nearby. The case has revived outrage over the number of gruesome sexual crimes against women in India as well the treatment of those on the lowest rung of the country's rigid caste system, from which the girl hailed.

Four men suspected in the crime, all of them workers at the crematorium, have been arrested but have yet to be charged, said police officer Ingit Pratap Singh.

Police said the girl told her mother on Sunday that she was going to get water at a tap at the crematorium in southwest New Delhi. About 30 minutes later, police said, the crematorium's priest called the mother, who was told that her daughter had been electrocuted.

The mother was shown her daughter's body, which the suspects then cremated without calling authorities, police said.

The mother said she saw her daughter's body on the



Tina Verma, a social activist, holds a placard which reads, "Hang the killers of 9-year old child"

floor of the crematorium with bruises all over. She said the priest and three other men at the crematorium told her not to call the police and threatened her.

The mother cannot be named due to Indian law that prohibits releasing information that could identify the victims of sexual crimes.

Villagers said some of the girl's remains were saved from the crematorium.

Singh said the extent of the cremation meant a post-mortem examination was unable to establish whether the girl was raped or how she was killed.

"The cause of death is inconclusive," he said.

Police said forensic experts were testing her clothing for bodily fluids or other evidence.

The suspects are in police custody but under Indian law can't be formally charged until the police investigation is complete.

Rape and sexual violence have been under the spotlight in India since the 2012 gang rape and killing of a 23-year-old student on a New Delhi bus. The attack sparked massive protests and inspired lawmakers to order the creation of fast-track

courts dedicated to rape cases and stiffen penalties for those convicted of the crime.

Four men sentenced to death for the 2012 attack were later hanged.

Nevertheless such crimes persist, and according to government data a woman is raped every 15 minutes in India.

Rights organizations say that woman who are on the lowest level of India's unforgiving Hindu caste hierarchy — known as Dalits — are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence and other attacks.

They say men from dominant castes often use sexual violence as a weapon to reinforce repressive hierarchies. They say police frequently fail to investigate such crimes and survivors and the families of victims struggle to get justice.

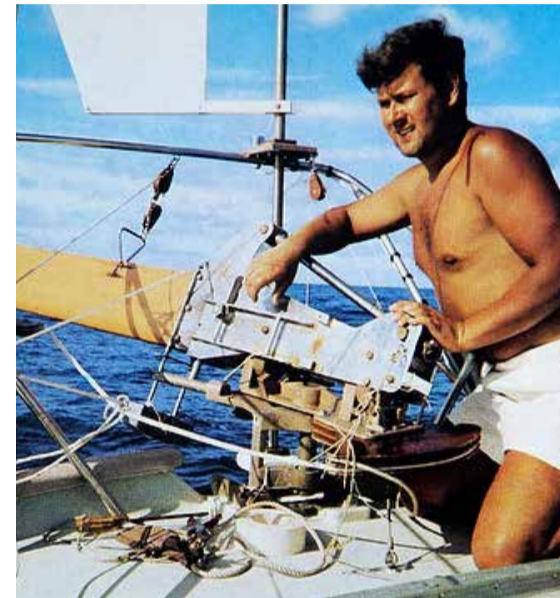
Tina Verma, an activist who was among the 200 protesters gathered yesterday outside the crematorium, said she frequently used to see the girl begging outside a Sufi Muslim shrine just across from the cremation ground.

"I shudder at the thought of what was done to her," said Verma, who has been on a hunger strike for two days to demand justice for the girl. "This is a barbaric crime and must be dealt with swiftly." MDT/AP

## this day in history



### 1971 SAILOR'S RECORD 'WRONG WAY' VOYAGE



A British man has become the first to sail the world non-stop in the "wrong" direction - east to west - against the prevailing winds and currents.

Chay Blyth, 31, set out on his 30,000-mile voyage from Hamble in Hampshire last October aboard a specially designed yacht, British Steel.

Today as the former paratrooper docked back at Hamble, he was met by a flotilla of 200 boats.

The welcoming party of 6,000 people included the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales, Princess Anne and Prime Minister Edward Heath.

The prime minister, who is also a keen sailor, praised Mr Blyth's achievement.

"We admire you for the skill and determination you have shown in this personal endeavour," he said.

"We are proud of the British boat, British built with British material which has carried you so successfully."

The 292-day voyage is the fastest non-stop world crossing on record.

Mr Blyth said it had been a long trip but he had thoroughly enjoyed it.

"I think I had the best of it - the people back home were doing all the worrying really, mainly my wife," he said.

This is not Mr Blyth's first long-distance sea expedition.

In 1966 he rowed the Atlantic in 92 days with fellow paratrooper John Ridgway.

In 1968-69 after leaving the army he took part in the Golden Globe race around the world - but it ended in near disaster after his vessel overturned.

Courtesy BBC News

AFGHANISTAN

## AIRSTRIKES PUMMEL TALIBAN IN SOUTH; INSURGENTS GAIN IN NORTH

**T**HE Afghan air force carried out more airstrikes against Taliban positions in southern Afghanistan yesterday, as the insurgent force made additional gains in the country's north.

The European Union, United Nations and Human Rights Watch urged both sides to avoid causing civilian casualties as the fighting rages on. The Taliban has been on the offensive in recent months, as U.S. and NATO forces complete their pullout from the war-torn country. They have taken vast swaths of land and have now turned

their guns on larger urban centers.

A defense ministry statement said air strikes were carried out across the country, including in the southern Helmand province, where the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah is being fiercely contested. The Taliban control of nine of the city's 10 police districts.

Residents in Lashkar Gah reported heavy bombing near the government radio and television station, which is under Taliban control. Several wedding halls and a guesthouse of the provincial

governor are located near the radio and television station.

The fighting has driven thousands of people from Kandahar and Helmand provinces in the south to seek refuge in Kandahar city, which is under siege by the Taliban. Government forces control only three of Kandahar province's 17 districts.

The battle for the city remains at stalemate despite days of ground and air operations. Most of the markets are closed, and people in the four displacement camps lack proper access to water under a scorching sun.

In northern Afghanistan, the Taliban have taken control of most of the provincial capital of Sar-e-Pul, the head of its council, Mohammad Noor Rahmani said. In recent months, the group has gained control of dozens of districts across several provinces in the north.

Meanwhile, Jawzjan province in the north remains under a three-month Taliban attack. The stronghold of Marshal Rashid Dostum, an Uzbek warlord, it has lost eight out of ten districts to the insurgents, who continue to advance on the capital, Shibirghan city.

The Taliban onslaught seems to have intensified with the start of the final withdrawal of U.S. and NATO troops in late April. MDT/AP

## IN CONTEXT

Chay Blyth's successful round-the-world-voyage followed on from similar trips made by Sir Francis Chichester in 1967 and Robin Knox-Johnston in 1969 - winner of the Golden Globe.

A national hero after his accomplishment, Mr Blyth later supervised the building of 77-foot ocean racer and trained a team of paratroopers for the Whitbread round-the-world race.

He set up the first "wrong way" round the world yacht race which first took place in 1992 and is now held every four years.

In 1995 Chay Blyth founded a rowing challenge in which teams of two row nearly 3,000 miles across the Atlantic ocean.

He received a knighthood for services to yachting in 1997.



## YOUR STARS



### ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Low-key is the way to be under Saturday's skies, Aries. The moon is deep in its waning phase, encouraging you to focus on wrapping up projects embarked upon the prior weeks.



### TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Today's skies highlight exactly what needs changing between your perception of the past and the potential of your future, as the illuminating sun butts heads with authenticity-demanding Uranus.



### GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Leo season has you exploring the nature of your communication style and mental health in new ways. Today's skies work to bring your attention to what needs changing on an internal level.



### CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

The universe has been pushing you to be clear about your goals, Cancer. Have you been answering that call or are you still slipping by without clarity?



### LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

The universe is sending you a jolt of electric energy to take advantage of today, Leo. Your ruling planet, the life-giving sun, locks into an unsettling square with rebellious Uranus.



### VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Important changes are underway, Virgo. You're in the midst of letting go and embracing renewal in the outgrown elements of your life, which is far from a comfortable process.



### LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

It's no surprise to you that your intimate life is changing, Libra. The universe has actively been working to help you break out of old emotional ruts and heal old relationship wounds.



### SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

There's no denying that your relationships have been in a state of deep transformation, Scorpio. The universe is pushing you to embrace changes in that arena.



### SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

This pairing shines a light onto what needs releasing in your current job atmosphere in order for you to move into new terrain. Work to embrace minor alterations that offer you more freedom.



### CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Lean into the electric energy in the air today, Capricorn. Change is the name of the game, as the life-giving sun clashes with authenticity-demanding Uranus.



### AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

The illuminating sun's square with change-demanding Uranus today sheds some light on what needs letting go of around within family dynamics and your living environment.



### PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

You're ready to tell your story, Pisces. Though you're prone to hold your tongue or drift off into another world, something deep within is prompting you to speak up without fear.

## The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



## SUDOKU

### EASY

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

### EASY+

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

### MEDIUM

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

### HARD

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| 4 |   |   |   |   |   |   |  | 1 |
|   |   | 3 | 5 |   |   |   |  |   |
| 6 |   | 2 |   |   |   |   |  |   |
|   |   |   |   | 8 | 6 | 7 |  |   |
| 3 | 5 |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |
| 7 |   |   |   | 2 | 5 |   |  |   |
|   |   |   | 3 | 1 | 4 |   |  |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |   |

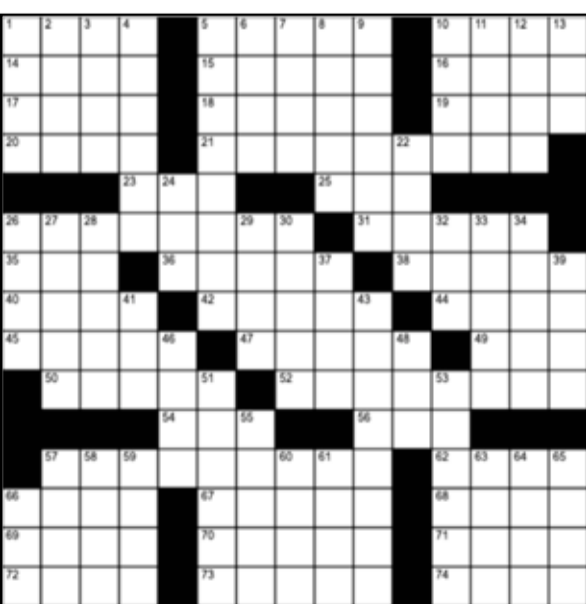
## WEATHER

|              | MIN | MAX | CONDITION     |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------------|
| <b>CHINA</b> |     |     |               |
| Beijing      | 23  | 32  | thunderstorms |
| Harbin       | 20  | 28  | thunderstorms |
| Tianjin      | 28  | 35  | rain          |
| Urumqi       | 22  | 31  | overcast      |
| Xi'an        | 28  | 38  | cloudy        |
| Lhasa        | 22  | 29  | thunderstorms |
| Chengdu      | 26  | 29  | rain          |
| Chongqing    | 26  | 32  | rain          |
| Kunming      | 28  | 36  | showers       |
| Nanjing      | 21  | 33  | cloudy        |
| Shanghai     | 28  | 35  | cloudy        |
| Wuhan        | 25  | 32  | rain          |
| Hangzhou     | 20  | 27  | thunderstorms |
| Taipei       | 25  | 33  | thunderstorms |
| Guangzhou    | 16  | 30  | fine          |
| Hong Kong    | 24  | 32  | cloudy        |
| <b>WORLD</b> |     |     |               |
| Moscow       | 16  | 22  | rain          |
| Frankfurt    | 15  | 24  | rain          |
| Paris        | 16  | 24  | overcast      |
| London       | 16  | 21  | rain          |
| New York     | 21  | 27  | overcast      |

## CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Pop; 5- Skedaddles; 10- Novelist Waugh; 14- Foreign dignitary; 15- Woody vine; 16- Stead; 17- Atomizer output; 18- First name in photography; 19- Hide; 20- Hankering; 21- Marriage; 23- Israeli submachine gun; 25- Half and half?; 26- Money; 31- Clipped conjunction; 35- Country bordered by Canada and Mexico; 36- Everglades bird; 38- Singes; 40- Lacoste of tennis; 42- Desert havens; 44- Farm structure; 45- Muse with a lyre; 47- Confronts; 49- Unit of weight; 50- Maze word; 52- Wonderful; 54- Feather scarf; 56- Hwy.; 57- Animal having a pouch; 62- Some DVD players; 66- Emilia's husband; 67- Old Finnish money; 68- Bottle part; 69- Dry and waterless; 70- \_\_\_ the side of caution; 71- Concerning; 72- Sgts., e.g.; 73- Checking out; 74- To \_\_\_ (perfectly);

DOWN: 1- Big rig; 2- Fail to include; 3- Round object, often used to store computer data; 4- Legendary king of Britain; 5- Wading bird; 6- Director Wertmuller; 7- 3:00; 8- Diciembre follower; 9- Saltworks; 10- Rival rival; 11- Legal claim; 12- Slippery; 13- Sever; 22- "Alice" diner; 24- Mark of Zorro; 26- Preserve with salt; 27- Software buyers; 28- Charged; 29- Pull an all-nighter; 30- Go-aheads; 32- French possessive; 33- Part of Hispaniola; 34- Synthetic fabric; 37- Overflow; 39- Album unit; 41- 7th letter of the Greek alphabet; 43- Black bird; 46- Globes; 48- Concorde, e.g.; 51- Man's wig; 53- Rupture; 55- Mimicry; 57- Painter Chagall; 58- Currency exchange fee; 59- Fishing gear; 60- Cross inscription; 61- Bartlett's abbr.; 63- Small change; 64- Farm measure; 65- \_\_\_-Ball; 66- Fleming who created Bond;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IAM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
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TOKYO 2020

# PERFECT 10S: CHINA'S QUAN DOMINATES FOR OLYMPIC DIVING GOLD

ANDREW DAMPF

IT could have been confused for a lesson in computer coding on the scoreboard: 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10.

And in some ways, it was. China's divers are programmed from an early age to strive for perfection. The 14-year-old Quan Hongchan delivered it with two of her five dives in a dominant performance to claim the gold medal in women's 10-meter platform at the Tokyo Olympics yesterday.

All seven judges gave Quan perfect 10s for her second and fourth dives in the five-round competition.

Quan dedicated her victory to her mother, who is ill.

"I want to make enough money to support her," Quan said through an interpreter. "I listen to my coach very carefully and follow his instructions very carefully."

Perfection was first achieved by Quan with an inward 3½ somersaults tuck, then more "oohs" and "aahs" followed for a backward armstand with 2 somersaults and 1½ twists. For her final dive, a backward pike with 2½ somersaults and 1½ twists, Quan received six more 10s.

With IOC President Thomas Bach watching at the Tokyo Aquatics Center, Quan ended with 466.20 points to win by a massive margin. Her Chinese teammate Chen Yuxi claimed the



Quan Hongchan of China

silver medal with 425.40 points.

The 15-year-old Chen won the 10-meter platform title at the 2019 world championships and also took gold at these Games in the 10-meter synchro with teammate Zhang Jiaqi. But Quan — the youngest member of China's Olympic team in Tokyo — is performing at another level.

Chen acknowledged that

Quan already is ahead of where she was when she was Quan's age.

"We don't really have a lot of great training techniques," Chen said. "It's more a matter of dive after dive and practice makes perfect."

It marked the fourth consecutive Olympics in which China has won every single women's diving event.

Quan became the second-youngest Chinese gold medalist in the event at the Olympics after Fu Mingxia won it in 1992 at age 13.

Perfectly serious during the event, Quan was full of giggles afterward while talking to reporters. Barely tall enough to be seen behind a microphone, Quan said she'd celebrate by eating latiao, a spicy Chinese snack.

Asked what she likes doing besides diving, Chen said she enjoys math.

"At the moment we don't have regular schools to go to," Chen said. "We have classes by various tutors."

Melissa Wu of Australia won the bronze with 371.40 points for the second medal of her Olympic career.

The 29-year-old Wu, who was competing at her fourth Olympics, won a silver in 10-meter synchro at the 2008 Beijing Games with Briony Cole.

Wu, who describes herself as "half-Chinese," started crying when she began talking about her Chinese grandmother, who died recently.

"I wanted her to see me win this medal," Wu said.

Wu contemplated quitting when her sister died in 2014.

"That was a huge challenge for me to overcome," she said. "Diving kind of saved me and gave me something to focus on after that."

Gabriela Garcia Agundez of Mexico finished fourth and Delaney Schnell of the United States finished fifth.

The only diving event that China has not won at the Tokyo Olympics came in the men's 10-meter synchro, which was won by Tom Daley and Matty Lee of Britain.

The men's 10-meter platform will conclude the diving program Friday and Saturday. **MDT/AP**

TRIPLE JUMP

# Cuban-born Pichardo wins first gold for Portugal

PORTUGAL has waited 13 years to see one of its own climb atop the podium at the Olympics. Yesterday, that wait came to an end.

Pedro Pichardo of Portugal won the men's triple jump gold medal.

The Cuban-born Pichardo recorded 17.98 meters on his third attempt to clinch his first Olympic title. He previously won silver medals at the 2013 and 2015 world championships while representing Cuba.

It's the first gold medal of any kind for Portugal since 2008, and



Pedro Pichardo, of Portugal, celebrates after winning the final of the men's triple jump

the fifth for the country all-time. The win gives Portugal four medals in these Games, the most in a single Olympics ever.

China's Zhu Yaming took silver at Tokyo's

Olympic Stadium with 17.57.

Burkina Faso's Hugues Fabrice Zango claimed the bronze with 17.47, the first Olympic medal ever for his West African country. **MDT/AGENCIES**

THE Olympic women's soccer gold-medal match between Canada and Sweden has been moved from Friday morning in Tokyo to the evening in Yokohama.

There were concerns about playing in the heat with an 11 a.m. kickoff in the National Stadium, and the final couldn't be played there later in the day due to the venue being used for track and field.

So the match has been moved about an hour outside Tokyo to Yokohama, which is also staging the men's final Saturday night.

The announcement was made yesterday at Sweden's pre-match news conference. The game as scheduled would have occurred during primetime in the United States, which lost in the semifinals.

Megan Rapinoe and Carli Lloyd each scored a pair of goals and the United States won the bronze medal in women's soccer at the Tokyo



WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

## GOLD MEDAL MATCH MOVED TO FRIDAY NIGHT

Olympics with a 4-3 victory over Australia.

It was arguably the best the Americans had looked during the course of a rocky tournament that opened with an uncharacteristic 3-0 loss to Sweden. Rapinoe set the tone early with a goal scored directly from a corner kick.

The loss spoiled the Australians' first-ever trip to the medal round at the Olym-

pics. No Australian soccer team, men or women, has ever won a medal.

The Matildas were the underdogs against the United States, the top-ranked team in the world and the defending World Cup champions who came to Japan hoping for a fifth gold medal. But the Americans struggled at times during the tournament, including a 1-0 loss to Canada in the semifinals. **MDT/AP**



TASTE OF EDESIA

# Londonesque escape

IRENE SAM, MDT

**S**HERATON GRAND MACAO launched its new venue, **The Conservatory**, last month, an eclectic food and beverage venue containing three distinct experiences - a Cantonese restaurant and tea room, a candy and confectionery store and a British pub and restaurant.

Drawing inspiration from London's classical architecture and contemporary urban lifestyle, with food and beverages available at any time during the day, The Tea Room offers grab-and-go from breakfast till late, connecting Three Bottles, a Londonesque pub and restaurant to Chaan, a nostalgic Cantonese kitchen serving noodles and dumplings. **The Sweet Shop** is a sugar lover's paradise with traditional British-inspired sweets, cakes and lollies, perfect for occasions and gift giving.

The menus have been designed to create a harmonious connection

between the three experiences, enabling guests to satisfy their cravings whether for traditional Cantonese fare, western classics, sweet confections or a crafted cocktail. The shared space with cuisines from the East and West is ideal for intimate gatherings amongst family and friends.

A contemporary take on this cornerstone of British tradition, The Conservatory also serves an Afternoon Tea set daily. Savoury delights include the house smoked salmon and tuna tartare, poached chicken and seared foie gras puff followed with the classic British summer sweets such as Summer Berry Pudding and Strawberry Charlotte Royale, a wickedly rich dessert of genoise sponge cake, strawberry bavarois and jelly. Guests can also indulge in different "Cream Tea" sets featuring a selection of English scones and delectable cakes for the perfect accompaniment to their coffee or tea selections.

## Macau Racing Tips

By Davy Chiu, MDT



### THE RUA CINCO OUTUBRO 1600 METRES SAND 2021-08-06 | Fri | 21:25

**P**EARL LUCKY can run a big race for his connection today. His highest rating in MJC reached 75 rating points and now he is at rating point 39. Pearl Lucky is racing in a Class 5 & 6 weak race despite carrying a big weight. But looking at his previous two races in 1800 and 1500 turf he didn't run badly, it looks he was training under racing condition to get his racing fitness back. Pearl Lucky also draw a nice barrier in gate four, this should give his jockey a strategic run in getting a nice galloping position. He should be able to fire at the straight to cross the line in fine style. He is my Nap this week and hopefully the first winner for our readers in August.

**Race 5 Horse no. 1 PEARL LUCKY Win & Place bets.**



OPINION

China Daily

Editorial, China Daily

VACCINATION  
DRIVE NEEDS A  
SHOT IN THE ARM

Another 71 locally transmitted COVID-19 infections were reported on Tuesday, showing the worrying speed of the virus' spread.

Meanwhile, an investigation into the earlier infections in Jiangsu province has found that some victims fell sick as early as July 13, a week before infections were detected at the local airport, which means the scope of local transmission may be much greater than previously thought.

With the central city of Wuhan, once the epicenter of the novel coronavirus outbreak in China, mandating a fresh round of citywide nucleic acid testing upon the detection of new cases of local transmission, there is growing unease that the country may be returning to the dark days at the beginning of last year. As of Wednesday afternoon, the national public health authorities had designated 144 high-risk, and medium-risk areas in 17 provinces. And the rapid spread of the virus has triggered substantially upgraded pandemic prevention and control responses nationwide.

Considering the country's tried-and-tested approach to pandemic containment, featuring rigid mobility control, fears of an unstoppable wave will hopefully prove to be unfounded. The country's nationwide mobilization capacity has proved its worth before. But how well the country can perform in containing the latest wave of infections, which are mostly of the Delta variant, will probably depend, at least in part, on how well the domestic mass vaccination campaign proceeds. Over 1.7 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered so far.

The daunting momentum of the current Delta variant does not allow for the ambivalence to vaccination to continue. People must get their jabs, which calls for redoubled efforts to improve public awareness of the necessity of getting inoculated against the disease.

The Delta variant of the novel coronavirus has proved to be easily transmissible. In a recent report, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that the Delta strain of the virus appears to be as contagious as chickenpox and more dangerous than other COVID-19 variants.

Ironically, even as the latest Delta infections have prompted more people to consider vaccination, the fact that many vaccinated people have been infected both abroad and at home has fueled suspicions that vaccination doesn't provide protection.

While social media is full of speculative questions about the effectiveness of various vaccines, the medical professionals' voices asserting the vaccines do work and do help mitigate the severity of infections are weak. Should this continue to be the case, it will be difficult to get more people vaccinated.

Clinical trials and real-world evidence in countries where Delta infections are rife show that having two shots of a COVID-19 vaccine is highly effective in reducing the severity of the disease. Greater efforts need to be made to convince people that not only are the vaccines safe, but it is in their own and others' interests to get their jabs.

President Xi Jinping said yesterday that China will provide a total of two billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines to the world within the year, in the country's latest effort to honor its commitment of making vaccines a global public good by ensuring their accessibility and affordability.

He also said China will donate \$100 million to the COVAX global vaccine program for the distribution of vaccines in developing countries.

Xi made the announcements in a written speech delivered to

the first meeting of the International Forum on COVID-19 Vaccine Cooperation.

As one of the five measures announced by the Chinese president to further support global solidarity against COVID-19 at the Global Health Summit in May, the forum was founded to provide a platform for vaccine-developing and producing countries, companies and other stakeholders to explore ways of promoting fair and equitable distribution of vaccines around the world.

AP PHOTO



Prime Minister Scott Morrison delivers his statement on the Closing the Gap Implementation Report at Parliament House in Canberra, yesterday

AUSTRALIA TO SPEND  
USD813M TO ADDRESS  
INDIGENOUS DISADVANTAGE

ROD MCGUIRK,  
CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA'S government yesterday pledged 1.1 billion Australian dollars (\$813 million) to address Indigenous disadvantage, including compensation to thousands of mixed-race children who were taken from their families over decades.

The AU\$378.6 million (\$279.7 million) to be used to compensate the so-called Stolen Generations by 2026 is the most expensive component of the package aimed at boosting Indigenous living standards in Australia.

The compensation of up to AU\$75,000 (\$55,400) in a lump sum plus up to \$AU7,000 (\$5,200) for expenses such as psychological counselling will only be available to mixed-race children who had been under direct federal government control in the Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory and Jervis Bay Territory.

Most members of the Stolen Generations had been under state government control when they were separated from their Indigenous mothers under decades of assimilation policies that ended as recently as the 1970s.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the compensation was a recognition of the harm caused by forced removal of children from families.

"This is a long-called-

-for step recognizing the bond between healing, dignity, and the health and well-being of members of the Stolen Generations, their families and their communities," Morrison told Parliament.

"To say formally not just that we're deeply sorry for what happened, but that we will take responsibility for it," Morrison added.

Pat Turner, the Northern Territory-based Indigenous chief executive officer of the National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation, welcomed the compensation, which was recommended in 1997 by a government inquiry into the Stolen Generations.

"Many of our people have passed, including my mother, so it's a sad day for those who have passed, but it's a good day for those who have survived," Turner said. Turner's mother Emma Turner had been taken from her own mother in the 1920s and they didn't reunite until the 1970s.

"It will never replace growing up with family, you can never replace that," she added. "I hope this will give some relief to the survivors of the Stolen Generations."

Australian states have legislated their own compensation plans for Stolen Generations survivors between 2008 and last year.

But Queensland and Western Australia, states with some of the country's

largest proportions of Indigenous people within their populations, do not have specific Indigenous compensation plans. Anyone who experienced neglect or abuse while in a Queensland or Western Australia state institution is entitled to compensation.

Turner said it was time Queensland and Western Australia also acknowledged the Stolen Generations' human rights.

"I'm quite happy to say to the W.A. government and the Queensland government: time's up for redress of the Stolen Generations. You have to follow the other jurisdictions throughout Australia," Turner said.

Minister for Indigenous Australians Ken Wyatt, the first Indigenous person appointed to the job, said his own mother Mona Abdullah was separated from her siblings in Western Australia from infancy until they were in their 20s.

"You can't undo the emotional impact that that has," Wyatt said.

Among the Stolen Generations members who won't receive federal compensation is Lorna Cubillo.

In 2000, Cubillo lost a landmark Federal Court case against the Australian government seeking compensation for the abuse and neglect she suffered in a home for Indigenous children in the Northern Territory city of Darwin. She died in Darwin last year at age 81. MDT/AP

Israel yesterday escalated its response to rocket attacks this week by launching rare airstrikes on Lebanon, the army and Lebanese officials said. The Israeli army said in a statement that jets struck the launch sites from which rockets had been fired over the previous day, as well as an additional target used to attack Israel in the past.

AP PHOTO



Belarus The president yesterday ordered the country's security forces to tighten control over the border with Lithuania, which earlier this week started turning away immigrants attempting to cross in from Belarus. Lithuania, a member of the European Union, has faced a surge of mostly Iraqi migrants in the past few months. It says that's due to retaliation by Belarus' authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko after the EU put sanctions on his country.

AP PHOTO



Poland A Belarusian Olympic sprinter who feared reprisals at home after criticizing her coaches at the Tokyo Games has reached safety in Poland following a dramatic standoff. Krystsina Tsimanouskaya, in a blue sweater and jeans, walked off a plane in Warsaw on Wednesday night, days after she accused team officials of trying to force her to fly back to Belarus, where an authoritarian government has relentlessly pursued its critics.

AP PHOTO



Greece One of the major forest fires burning in Greece amid a protracted heat wave threatened the archaeological site at the birthplace of the modern Olympics as the Greek military prepared yesterday to increase its involvement in preventing new blazes from raging out of control. Firefighters waged "an all-night battle" to protect the archaeological site from the fire in the southern Greek region of the Peloponnese near ancient Olympia.