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**VICIOUS CAR CRASH SENT ONE VEHICLE INTO A GLASS FACADE OF A CLINIC BEFORE REVERSING INTO THE SIDE OF ANOTHER CLINIC**

P4

**PJ ARRESTS MAN ON ALLEGATIONS OF SPREADING RUMORS**

P4

**FOREIGN ID DISCREPANCIES, TECHNICAL ERRORS ARE CAUSES OF SOME 7,000 ABSENT TEST RESULTS, SAYS SSM**

P2



**Japanese** police said they arrested a man who stabbed 10 passengers on a commuter train in Tokyo, in what Japanese media reported to be a random burst of violence unrelated to the ongoing Olympic Games. The 36-year-old man told police he wanted to kill women who appeared happy, and chose his targets at random, public broadcaster NHK said. The initial victim, a woman in her 20s, was in serious condition.



**Indonesia's** most volatile volcano erupted yesterday on the densely populated island of Java, spewing smoke and ash high into the air and sending streams of lava and gasses down its slopes. No casualties were reported. Mount Merapi unleashed clouds of hot ash at least seven times since Sunday morning, as well as a series of fast-moving pyroclastic flows, a mixture of rock, debris, lava and gasses, said Hanik Humaida, who heads the city of Yogyakarta's Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation Center.



**Thailand** riot police fired water cannons, tear gas and rubber bullets to repel a crowd of several hundred young anti-government protesters who marched on an army base where Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha has his residence to demand his resignation. The demonstrators threw rocks, bottles, fireworks and fired slingshots during the hourslong confrontation in the Din Daeng area of Bangkok, which was obscured by swirling smoke.

More on backpage

# GAMES OVER

**The United States (39) and China (38) topped gold medal tally by far as Japan achieved its best result ever at home games marred by the pandemic**

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**MASS TESTING**  
**SECOND ROUND**  
**'INEVITABLE'**  
**ONCE POSITIVE**  
**CASE IS FOUND**

P3





COVID-19

# FOREIGN ID DISCREPANCIES CAUSE OF ABSENT TEST RESULTS, SAYS SSM

ANTHONY LAM

**D**ISCREPANCIES between passports and blue cards were the main reason some foreigners, mainly non-resident workers, could not get their mass test results posted on their health code, local health authorities have explained.

The explanation was given yesterday at the regular health press briefing by Dr Tai Wa Hou, coordinator of Vaccination Operation of the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center, as over 7,000 residents have yellow health codes.

After the conclusion of the citywide polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing scheme, some foreigners who participated could not get their results posted on their health code, even after the health authorities announced that all samples

had been processed.

It was explained that the center relied on test-takers' Macau IDs or their passports as proof of identity. However, as the scheme began abruptly last Wednesday, some test-takers managed to register with their non-resident worker IDs (blue cards).

Affected individuals will be required to take the test again at their own cost unless they can resolve the discrepancies between their health code data and the test data.

They may call 6333 7492 or 6333 7593 for enquiries.

## GOV'T TRACES BUS 17 & 18 PASSENGERS

As part of the tracing for close contacts, the government is now in search of bus passengers who were on the same bus rides at two particular times.

Passengers who took bus route No. 17 between 4:36 p.m. and 5:23 p.m. on July 27 from Estrada de Coelho do Amaral to Federal Restaurant in Nam Kwong Building, and those on the same route between 8:26 p.m. and 9:03 p.m. on August 1

from Kiang Wu Hospital to Avenida da Longevidade, are asked to contact the government.

Meanwhile, those who took bus route No. 19 between 10:11 p.m. and 11 p.m. on August 1 from Border Gate to Rua de Dom Belchior Carneiro should also contact the government.

The government will announce a list of Macau Pass numbers that were used to take the aforementioned bus rides.



## ZHENGZHOU CASE CONFIRMED ONLY AFTER EIGHT TESTS

A Covid-19 patient was only diagnosed after eight polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests conducted over eight consecutive days, Li Hui-fang, deputy secretary-general of the Zhengzhou Municipal Government of China said on Saturday.

The patient is a doctor at the Sixth People's Hospital of Zhengzhou. The doctor went under centralized

handling on July 31 and was quarantined centrally on August 6.

Li emphasized the intensity of the Delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 using this case. "This case is a complete proof that the Delta variant is highly contagious and covert, with atypical preliminary symptoms," she said. "It is [harder to manage for] our testing and diagnosis mechanism."

# Vaccination plan resumes following mass testing

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE local Covid-19 vaccination plan resumed yesterday after a four-day suspension due to the mass testing of nucleic acid tests (NAT) for the whole population.

According to information from Dr. Tai Wa Hou, medical director from the Conde de São Januário Hospital Center and coordinator of the Health Bureau's (SSM) Covid-19 Vaccination Operation, people who had vaccination bookings between August 4 and August 7 can proceed to the vaccination points they previously chose and have their

inoculation done from August 8 to 11. If this rescheduling does not suit due to personal circumstances, they can also reschedule their vaccination to a more convenient time and date, Tai said during the health authorities' daily press briefing on Saturday.

As previously stated, the suspension of all vaccination posts was necessary due to the mega operation of NAT that came to an end on Saturday morning.

With the completion of the nucleic acid testing work, the special hotline from the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) dedicated to providing special support

to people in extreme need is also suspended.

Tai added that if residents need psychological counseling or other types of help provided by the IAS, this support will be provided through the standard helplines from the bureau.

During the mass testing operation, the IAS assisted in the collection of NAT samples from 28 nursing homes and facilities for people with disabilities, having collected a total of 2,250 samples. A special team also collected an additional 111 samples directly from people who were unable to leave their homes.

# PANDEMIC SITUATION UNLIKELY TO AFFECT RESTART OF UNIVERSITIES; EXCEPTION FOR UM

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE current Covid-19 pandemic situation in Macau is unlikely to affect the start of the new school year for the large majority of institutions. The only exception seems to be the University of Macau (UM), which has recently announced through their online communication channels that classes starting from August 18 will be run online until August 31.

As for the Macau University of Science and Technology, classes are scheduled to start in person from September 1. For the time being, no changes or adjustments have been announced.

The same applies to the City University of Macau, where classes are due to kick off from August 30.

Starting a week later is the



University of Saint Joseph, which also does not expect any changes to the start of their academic year.

According to the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ), there are currently no plans to adjust the start of the new school year for the primary and secondary schools. Although there are differences in timing among the schools for the start the aca-

demic year, the DSEDJ claims that most are aiming to start normally in the first week of September.

According to the decision by the Chief Executive, nurseries will continue to remain closed, along with other school and education facilities, until August 18, the date which the "immediate prevention status" is expected to be revoked.

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### MASS TESTING

# Second round 'inevitable' once positive case is found

HONEY TSANG

**T**HE decision to perform a second round of citywide mass Covid-19 testing would not be necessary if no one currently quarantined in relation to the four newest patients test positive, Dr. Tai Wa Hou, coordinator of the Health Bureau's Covid-19 Vaccination Operation, said at the media briefing yesterday.

However, once a positive case is found during this round, an "inevitable" second round will kick off immediately after the first, Tai did confirm.

Claims have been made among the population that those who have contracted the coronavirus and are in the early stages may not have been discovered in this round, given the extended incubation period for the Delta variant.

Tai acknowledged this issue and responded that "carrying out the second round of mass

test is certainly more effective in smoking out invisible transmission chain," and the earlier the next round commences, the better and safer for public health.

Nonetheless, Tai said other factors should also be considered when reaching a decision, including the global pandemic situation, the impact of mass testing on the community, and more.

### ALL TESTS NEGATIVE

The government has revealed that, as of August 8 at 2 a.m., all sample results tested have come back negative.

The city's first-of-its-kind mass Covid-19 test scheme processed 614,465 people, together with another 101,786 people who underwent the test on their own outside the citywide testing program since August 3 — totaling 716,251 people.

The scheme "basically" completed its target of sampling the city's entire population of

682,500 last Friday morning, which also marks the third and last day of the scheme.

Some media figures have questioned whether mismanagement and inconsistent messaging were underlying factors in the scheme causing chaos across town, especially on its first day, which saw hordes of locals lining up at some test centers.

At the press conference, Tai said technical glitches in the health code system did cause extended wait times, but he regarded the scheme as an achievement, not a "failure," as the testing was completed earlier than expected. He vowed the government would learn from the experience and, if necessary, carry out a second round more rapidly and efficiently.

### CLOSE CONTACTS

As of 2 p.m. on August 6, the government has ordered 792 residents to undergo medical observation — among them,

76 were close contacts and 531 were secondary close contacts.

There were 287 people undergoing quarantine in the red-code zone. They all tested negative for their second nucleic acid tests (NATs).

Leong Iek Hou, coordinator at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, reconfirmed that all 29 members of Hou Kong Middle School and a Mainland tour guide also tested negative for Covid-19. The other 10 members, who are currently in Guangdong Province, Fujian Province, Hunan Province and Hong Kong, tested negative as well.

### OUTREACH TEST

The government deployed special teams to carry out outreach testing for those with movement difficulties.

In a preliminary estimation, around 3,000 people from 30 care centers and around 100 with limited mobility benefited from the outreach.

### OROPHARYNGEAL SAMPLING MADE AVAILABLE

Given that a large number of people had opted for oropharyngeal sampling, the government announced on August 5, the testing method became available at all testing stations. The exception was the Pac On Ferry Terminal, which was previously the only center to provide the service.

However, some locals complained that they went to other centers and asked for oropharyngeal approaches but were denied.

In response to this, Tai said it required some time for the new mandate to be conveyed to each medical staff at centers, and additional time for them to get set up with the required equipment for oropharyngeal tests. All these factors resulted in a lagged delivery.

After the mass testing, the government may offer oropharyngeal sampling as part of standard operation at some test stations in the future, he added.

### MEDICAL STAFF SHORTAGE

The media questioned whether the city is enduring a lack of medical staff, considering that the government had to ask Guangdong Province for help in conducting the mass testing. A delegation of 300 medical staff from the province came to Macau to offer assistance in the testing last Thursday.

Tai said Macau has 2.7 doctors for every 1,000 residents, which is above average by global standards. In terms of the number of nurses, Macau retains 3.7 per 1,000 residents, which is slightly lower than average.

In general, the city has sufficient medical manpower, but during unprecedented times which requires dealing with the whole population, like the mass testing effort, the personnel numbers are certainly insufficient, Tai said.

### ON THE MEND

The family of four infected with the highly contagious Delta variant are on the mend. Their symptoms have been improving and they have not needed assisted respiration, Tai said.

## DSEDJ HAS PLANS TO INITIATE ONLINE CLASSES

**O**WING to the ongoing pandemic, the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) stated it is already geared up for the worst case scenario and has plans underway to coordinate institutions to conduct online classes.

The above information was delivered by Wong Ka Ki, head of the department of non-tertiary education at the DSEDJ during the media briefing last Friday.

In accordance with the government's anti-pandemic efforts against the newly reported Delta infections, all summer activities organized by the Sports Bureau (ID) and the DSEDJ were called off from August 6. Some tertiary institutions will embark on the

academic year as early as August 18, and hence will deploy online courses at this stage, Wong stated.

For non-tertiary institutions, "I believe the schools, teachers, students and their parents already acquired a particular experience [of online classes] last year," Wong opined. "We already developed an online platform previously [last year]. For the worst scenario, we can carry out online classes," he stated. Wong was asked by the media again whether the DSEDJ should be held accountable for the four confirmed cases in Macau. He reiterated that the DSEDJ had issued a travel advisory to all schools to avoid traveling to medium and high-risk areas in China on June 8.

## COMPLAINTS FROM RED & YELLOW CODE ZONES

**S**OME people currently being quarantined in red code zone have complained that the government's arrangements were confusing and not thoughtful enough.

Apart from the three meals offered every day, some living in red zones said they are being kept in the dark about the arrangement of Covid-19 tests, including when they will be conducted.

They attempted to seek more information through the official phone line but found it was jammed. They also complained that it is not considerate to only allow their relatives and friends to deliver daily necessities or food to them from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., as it is during standard office hours.

Red code zone is now imposed on the Mei Lin Building, home to a family of four, and three adjacent residential buildings — a grocery store where the mother of worked, nearby shops, and one adjacent residential building. Those in the yellow code zone are asked to undergo NAT at Kiang Wu Hospital within 24 hours of the regional lockdown and are required to closely monitor their health for at least 14 days. However, some living in the yellow code zone said that they rarely receive information from the government about movement guidelines. They also think it is contradictory for the government to ask them to self-monitor their health, yet require them to take a NAT at Kiang Wu Hospital which was full of crowds.



# AU KAM SAN SPEECH INTERRUPTED BY PRO-ESTABLISHMENT LAWMAKERS

RENATO MARQUES

A spoken inquiry from lawmaker Au Kam San at the Legislative Assembly (AL), during the period before the agenda, was interrupted by protest from lawmaker Chui Sai Peng, who claimed that the content of the inquiry violated both the Basic Law and the statute of the lawmakers.

In his speech, Au expressed a different opinion from that of the police regarding the organization and purpose of the annual vigil of June 4: an event which provided evidence that the Electoral Affairs Committee (CAEAL) considered in the disqualification of some of the candidates in this year's AL elections.

Chui protested, saying that by now Au should know full well what opinion and what conclusions the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China has formed on this incident, claiming that under national sovereignty, Macau and all lawmakers must respect their decision.

Chui also rejected Au's remarks about the decisions by CAEAL and by the Court of Final Appeal (TUI) on the matter.

RENATO MARQUES



The protest also prompted an intervention from the AL president, Kou Hoi In, who said that he had already spoken to Au about the content of his inquiry and, like Chui, claimed that the June 4 incident in Tiananmen Square, Beijing had already been the subject of a report and a statement from the central government which should not be questioned.

"Your speech violates the decision of the central government of the country. CAEAL disqualified the candidates and the TUI [has] already issued a final ruling on this matter. Of course, you can have a different opinion [and] disagree with this, but in your speech, you criticized the CAEAL and also the decision [by TUI]," Kou told Au.

Lawmaker Vong Hin Fai also intervened in the matter. Vong claimed that Au's speech violated Article 61 of the regimen of the AL and Article 38 of the statute of the lawmakers, which define the duties of the lawmaker. "The intervention of lawmaker Au Kam San does not comply with the Basic Law, namely Article 12," Vong added.

Kou concluded by remarking that Au did not want to accept his advice and insisted on delivering this speech, a reason which justified his decision to stop Au from continuing the inquiry.

Earlier, making similar accusations, another lawmaker, Ip Sio Kai had also interrupted the session after the delivery of another spoken inquiry by lawmaker Sulu Sou.

Ip denounced what he said was an attempt by Sou to devalue the position of the indirectly elected lawmakers.

"Indirectly elected lawmakers assume the same duties and have the same power as appointed ones and the directly elected [ones]," he said, adding, "Lawmaker Sulu Sou looks like he is depreciating the lawmakers [elected] by indirect suffrage," Ip remarked.

Ip also added that Sou's claim that the disqualification of some lists of candidates by CAEAL amounts to a lack of democracy is causing misunderstanding within the population.

During the period before the agenda several other lawmakers, namely Davis Fong, Ma Chi Seng, Chan Wa Keong, Pang Chuan, Iau Teng Pio, and Lao Chi Ngai submitted inquiries supporting the decision of both CAEAL and TUI on the case, reaffirming the need to ensure that "Macau is governed by patriots."

# PJ arrests man on allegations of spreading rumors

RENATO MARQUES

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) has announced the arrest of a local 46-year-old man, suspected of having committed crimes against public security, order, and peace during sudden incidents of a public nature.

According to the PJ report, the man is accused of fabricating and disseminating rumors online about the current Covid-19 pandemic situation in Macau, with the intent to cause panic among the population.

On August 4, the PJ discovered that, on a social media post praising the Macau frontline workers who carried out the anti-epidemic work, there was a comment stating that five of such workers had been diagnosed with Covid-19 during work.

After several inquiries, the PJ found that the content of the comment was false, instilling the idea that there were new confirmed cases. This was, in the current social climate, considered to be "enough to provoke panic or public anxiety, harming the security and public order and affecting the MSAR government's epidemic prevention work," the PJ stated.

The police managed to identify and locate the suspect on the after-



noon of August 5, taking him into questioning.

The suspect then confessed to producing false statements to be spread online in order to attract attention and discussion among internet users and the general public.

According to the PJ, evidence was also found on the suspect's computer proving he produced and published the content online.

He was sent to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) to be accused of the violation of Article 26 (Crime against public security, order, and peace in sudden incidents of a public nature) of Law 11/2020 (Legal regime for civil protection). He is the first person to be charged under

this new law provision, which aims to prevent people from spreading rumors during sensitive times, such as during a severe typhoon event.

The police also said that - during the investigation of this case - the man has plead to other crimes in the past - early this year and in 2016. In both cases, he was accused of property damage.

The PJ also warned members of the public that the "immediate prevention status" enforced by the Chief Executive order from August 3 is still in force and that all messages, posts, and comments containing false or unconfirmed information during this period are subject to criminal liability.

# MINIVAN CRASHES INTO TWO CLINICS

ON Saturday, a minivan crashed into another car and smashed the glass facade of a clinic, before reversing into the side of another clinic, according to videos posted on social media platforms.

The incident took place on Travessa dos Bombeiros, a block or so away from the Accident and Emergency Department of the Kiang Wu Hospital.

Initial videos showed that the vehicle, a Toyota Picnic/Ipsium, did not give way as it crossed the intersection with Rua de Francisco Xavier Pereira, before crashing into a black car, a Toyota Ractis.

The vehicle drifted off from the road and crashed against the decorative glass

wall of a clinic, almost injuring a passer-by. It also broke a roadside metal safety pillar. The car then stopped briefly.

Afterwards, the car began to reverse at a relatively high speed, as shown in another video. It attempted to get away along the Travessa dos Bombeiros but failed to maintain its course.

It gradually pulled to the right, knocking down a set of safety bars on the sidewalk and crashing its rear against the rolling gate of a shop next to another clinic.

The rescue authorities have disclosed that a 70-year-old female passenger in the Toyota Ractis sustained a contusion on her waist and was taken to the Kiang Wu Hospital for treatment. **AL**





GAMING

# Wynn's Q2 earnings driven by 'strong' performance in April-May

LYNZY VALLES

**W**YNN Resorts' Macau operations delivered USD67.6 million in EBITDA in the second quarter (Q2) on USD454.4 million of operating revenue.

In a conference call with analysts, the group's chief financial officer, Craig Billings, acknowledged that the EBITDA was driven by encouraging gaming and non-gaming performance combined with solid cost controls, with a particularly strong showing in April and May.

Gross gaming revenue per day in the second quarter was approximately 31% of Q2 of 2019, led by the premium mass sector.

"Our Q2 results in Macau were positively impacted by higher-than-normal VIP table games hold that increased EBITDA by approximately USD10 million from a normalized level," said Billings.

Operating revenues from



Wynn Palace were USD270.4 million in Q2 of 2021, an increase of USD261.7 million from USD8.7 million over the same period last year; while operating revenues from Wynn Macau were USD84.0 million for Q2, an increase of USD172.1 million from USD11.9 million in the second quarter of last year.

### TABLE GAMES

VIP table games in Wynn Palace win as a percentage of turnover was 3.95%, higher than the property's expected range of 2.7% to 3.0%, while table games win percentage in mass market operations was 23.1%, lower than the 32.5% experienced in Q2 of 2020.

However at Wynn Macau, VIP table games win as a percentage of turnover was 2.64%, lower than the property's expected range of 2.7% to 3.0%. Table games win percentage in mass market operations was 19.2%, higher than the 8.3% experienced in Q2 last year.

### TWO STEPS FORWARD, ONE STEP BACK

Matt Maddox, CEO of Wynn Resorts, recalled that during the Q1 earnings call, the group discussed the strength of its local operations during Golden Week in May, when it achieved USD3 million in EBITDA per day.

"However, after that call, there was a small outbreak in Guangdong that was quickly stamped out within a couple of weeks, but that greatly suppressed the volumes in June," said Maddox.

"We did start to see a slight comeback in the middle of July to where the results were getting close to the April and May results, which really indicates that there's real pent-up demand in the region to go to Macau," he added.

With the new outbreak in the SAR and with the increased travel restrictions, the group hopes that the vaccination rate continues to accelerate and that it will see a "more stabilized and normalized operating environment."

For Maddox, there is confidence that the current small cluster will be under control within a couple of weeks.

Earlier this week, a subsidiary of Wynn Macau Limited received commitments for a new USD1.5 billion senior unsecured revolving credit facility to mature in 2025.

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# AMID LAWSUIT, TENCENT TO REVIEW KIDS' USE OF WECHAT

CHINA'S biggest gaming company, Tencent, said it would review whether it adequately limits children's access to live streaming and other features after the government expanded a regulatory crackdown on tech industries by initiating a lawsuit against the company for failing to do enough to protect young users.

The online gaming industry was shaken this week when an official newspaper criticized their offerings as "spiritual opium" and cited examples of students playing Tencent's wildly popular Honor of Kings game for hours.

The lawsuit filed last week by Beijing prosecutors against a Tencent subsidiary complains the company infringes the "legitimate rights and interests of minors" but didn't explain how. In the notice, prosecutors said that other agencies and organizations which intend to bring lawsuits against the subsidiary should contact prosecutors within 30 days.

Tencent is best known abroad as the operator of the popular WeChat messaging



system. It is one of the world's 10 most valuable tech companies, with a stock market capitalization of about \$560 billion.

In a statement on its social media account, the WeChat team promised to conduct "self-examination of the functions of WeChat Youth Mode" and "sincerely respond to the civil public interest litigation."

"We attach great importance to the healthy growth of young people, and WeChat

will actively assume the social responsibility of protecting and guiding young people," the statement said.

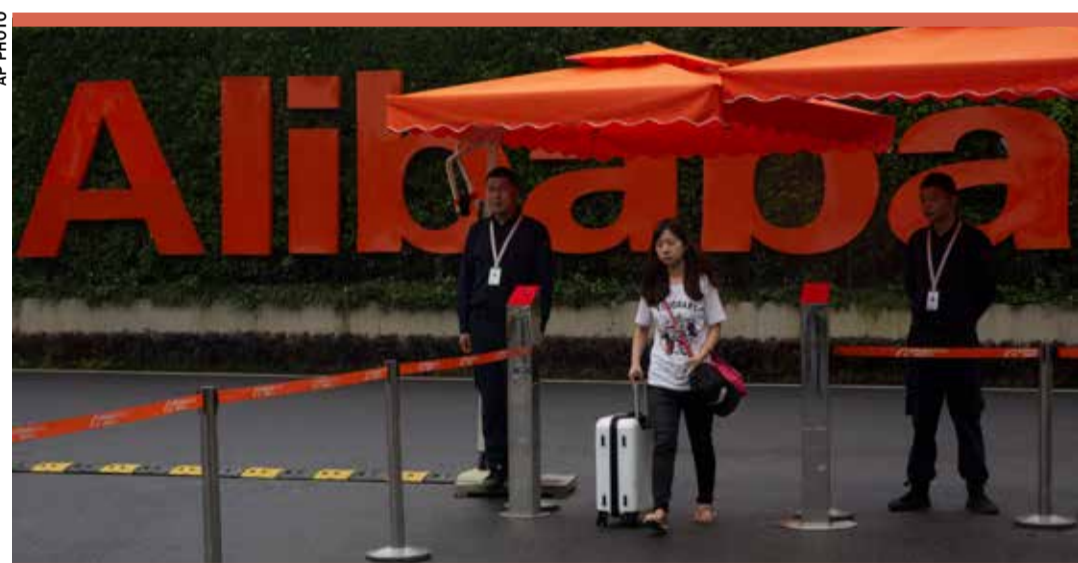
Tencent and other Chinese tech giants including e-commerce platform Alibaba Group have been fined and reprimanded in a series of anti-monopoly, data protection and other enforcement campaigns launched since last year.

The share prices of Tencent, Alibaba, ride-hailing service Didi Global and other

companies have fallen on foreign stock exchanges while investors wait to see how far the crackdown will go.

Regulators say they are taking action to protect consumers, market competition and smaller companies. Foreign commentators also see an effort by the ruling Communist Party to force China's biggest private sector companies to align with Beijing's official industry and economic development plans.

MDT/AP



# Alibaba working with police amid sexual assault allegations

CHINA'S largest e-commerce company, Alibaba, said yesterday it's working with police to investigate an alleged sexual misconduct at the company, after a female employee reported she was sexually assaulted.

Alibaba said in a statement that it has a "zero-tolerance policy against sexual misconduct."

"We have suspended relevant parties suspected of vio-

lating our policies and values, and we have established a special internal task force to investigate the issue and support the ongoing police investigation," the company said.

The investigation comes after an unidentified female employee wrote an internal post alleging her manager sexually assaulted her in a hotel room during a business trip to the city of Jinan in the eastern

Shandong province, according to local media reports.

She detailed the alleged assault by her manager and a client from Jinan Hualian Supermarket, saying she was forced to drink alcohol during a dinner and that she was also molested while her manager turned a blind eye.

The female employee said complaints made to Alibaba's human resources department were ignored.

In an internal post, Alibaba CEO Daniel Zhang said Sunday that he was "shocked, furious and ashamed" after learning about the case, according to the state-owned media outlet Global Times. Zhang vowed to fully investigate the case and make the findings available to all Alibaba employees.

The global #MeToo movement against sexual harassment has in recent years also grown in prominence in China, with accusations made against several academics, a TV anchor and celebrities, although convictions are few and far between.

In a recent case, celebrity Kris Wu was arrested in Beijing on suspicion of rape after a Chinese influencer accused him of forcing girls to drink alcohol and then sexually assaulting them.

Jinan police said in a Weibo post that they were investigating the case that involved a female Alibaba employee.

Jinan Hualian Supermarket said in a post on its WeChat account that it will co-operate with the police investigation, and that the suspect has been suspended from work while being investigated by the police. MDT/AP

## ECONOMY JULY EXPORTS, IMPORTS RISE, BUT GROWTH SLOWS

CHINA'S imports and exports rose by double digits in July but growth slowed as global efforts to control the coronavirus' more contagious delta variant weighed on business and consumer spending.

Exports rose 18.9% over a year earlier to \$282.7 billion, decelerating from June's 32.2%, customs data showed this weekend. Imports rose 28.7% to \$227.1 billion, easing off the previous month's 36.7% expansion.

This year's trade growth has been amplified by comparison with early 2020, when global demand plunged after China and other governments shut factories and shops to fight the pandemic.

Forecasters have warned trade growth would level off as entertainment and other service industries reopened, consumer spending returned to normal and Chinese competitors that were hampered by anti-disease controls returned to global export markets. That has been disrupted as more governments reimpose business closures and other controls to contain the delta variant, extending China's rapid expansion in goods exports.

China's exports to the United States rose 13.4% over a year ago to \$49.6 billion, decelerating from June's 17.8% growth, despite a lingering tariff war with Washington over Beijing's technology ambitions. Imports of American goods rose 25.6% to \$14.2 billion, down from the previous month's 37.6% expansion.

President Joe Biden, who took office in January, has yet to say whether he might roll back penalties imposed on Chinese imports by his predecessor, Donald Trump. Envoys from the two sides have talked by video link but have yet to announce a date for negotiations.

China's global trade surplus narrowed by 8.7% from a year earlier to \$56.6 billion. Its surplus with the U.S. expanded by 8.9% to \$35.4 billion, or more than double the total of Chinese imports of American goods.

China led the global recovery from the pandemic but domestic consumer spending and other activity is weaker than expected. Exporters face disruptions in the global flow of industrial components including processor chips.

China's economic growth slowed to 7.9% over a year earlier in the three months ending in June as a rebound leveled off.

Economic growth in the April-June quarter over the previous three months, the way results are reported for other major economies, was 1.3%, reflecting a return to normal for factory activity and consumer spending as government stimulus and easy credit wind down. That was up from the January-March period's 0.6% expansion over the final three months of 2020 but still among the past decade's weakest quarters.

Consumer activity has lagged the revival of manufacturing. Retail spending rose 12.1% in June, weakening from the previous month's 12.4%.

Chinese exports to the 27-nation European Union declined 16.2% over a year ago to \$43.3 billion, while imports of European goods sank 15.8% to \$25.9 billion. China's trade surplus with the EU contracted by 17.1% to \$17.4 billion. MDT/AP



AFGHANISTAN

# Much of Kunduz city controlled by Taliban: official

RAHIM FAIEZ, KABUL

**T**ALIBAN fighters yesterday took control of much of the capital of northern Afghanistan's Kunduz province, including the governor's office and police headquarters, a provincial council member said.

Ghulam Rabani Rabani said fighting between insurgents and government forces had taken place around the governor's office and police headquarters but that later the Taliban had taken over the two buildings. They also had control of the main prison building in Kunduz, he said.

Rabani said fighting was continuing at the city's airport and other parts of the city. Kunduz is a strategic crossroads with good access to much of northern Afghanistan as well as the capital, Kabul, about 200 miles away.

If Kunduz falls, it would be a significant gain for the Taliban and a test of their ability to take and retain territory. It is one of the country's larger cities with a population of more than 340,000.



A Taliban surge has intensified as U.S. and NATO troops wrap up their withdrawal from the country. With Taliban attacks increasing, Afghan security forces and government troops have retaliated with airstrikes aided by the United States. The fighting has raised growing concerns about ci-

vilian casualties.

On Saturday, Taliban fighters entered the capital of Jawzjan province after sweeping through nine of 10 districts in the province. Several other of the country's 34 provincial capitals are threatened as Taliban fighters sweep through large swaths of Afghanistan at a

surprising speed.

Meanwhile, airstrikes damaged a health clinic and high school in the capital of southern Afghanistan's Helmand province, a provincial council member said Sunday.

A Defense Ministry statement confirmed that airstrikes were carried out in parts of the city of

Lashkar Gah. It said forces targeted Taliban positions, killing 54 fighters and wounding 23 others. It made no mention of a clinic or school being bombed.

Majid Akhund, deputy chairman of the Helmand provincial council, said airstrikes hit a health clinic and a school in the city's 7th police district late Saturday. But he said the area is under Taliban control so any casualties could have been caused by Taliban there.

Dr. Ahmad Khan Weyar, an official from the Helmand public health department, said a nurse was killed when an airstrike hit a health clinic and a guard was wounded.

"American invaders bombed and destroyed another hospital and school in Helmand," the Taliban said in a statement. It said Sa-fyano Hospital and Muhammad Anwar Khan high school were bombed.

The clinic in Lashkar Gah was offering services mostly to nomads who were passing through the area, according to Akhund, but in recent days the area was under Taliban control and Taliban may have been treated there.

Heavy fighting has taken place in and around Lashkar Gah and both U.S. and Afghan government air forces have conducted airstrikes in the city. The Taliban control nine of the city's 10 police districts. **MDT/AP**

PAKISTAN

# Five suspected of abducting politician killed

**P**AKISTANI counterterrorism police said yesterday they killed five people involved in the abduction for ransom and subsequent death of a nationalist political party leader.

The raid took place overnight in the southwestern city of Pishin, according to the Baluchistan province Counter Terrorism Department.

Malik Ubaidullah Kasi, leader of the secular Awami National Party, was abducted for ransom from his native Kuchlak area near the provincial capital, Quetta, in late June. His body was found Thursday near an Afghan refugee camp in Pishin district.

A statement issued by the CTD said investigators arrested a man after Kasi's body was found. The suspect subsequently led investigators to the hideout in Pishin.

Officers killed five men allegedly involved in Kasi's abduction late Saturday night in a gun battle. Machine guns, hand grenades



and hand guns were recovered from the abductors' hideout, police said.

Kidnappings for ransom have been reported frequently in Baluchistan. Criminal gangs have abducted physicians businessmen and others in recent years for sometimes huge

ransoms. Kasi, a prominent political leader, was the first political figure abducted for ransom in the province

Also yesterday, counterterrorism police in eastern Punjab province said they killed three militants in a gun battle during a raid on

their hideout near the eastern city of Lahore.

The raid took place after police received information that the alleged militants belonged to the banned group Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, according to a brief statement issued by Punjab province's Counter Terrorism Department. The banned group is also known as the Pakistani

Taliban.

The three men were hiding in a rented house in the city of Ferozwala, a Lahore suburb, police said.

Lahore is the capital of eastern Punjab province, which has seen several militant attacks in recent years, including one in June near the home of a militant leader that left three people including a

police officer dead.

The CTD statement said the militants killed Sunday were planning attacks on security forces and Shiite mourning processions.

It said there was an exchange of gunfire during the raid in which three militants were killed and officers seized weapons from the hideout including an explosives-filled vest, two assault rifles, three hand grenades and two pistols. The militants were identified as Afghan nationals. **MDT/AP**

AD

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AP PHOTO



CULTURE

# Rice pizza, noodle ices: Food shows Japan's punk rock soul

JOHN LEICESTER

**C**OUNTRIES' foods are also windows on their souls.

Take hamburgers. Hand-held, quick to assemble and wolf down, they embody a quintessentially American idea that founding father Benjamin Franklin put to paper in 1748 and which still powers the ambitious on Wall Street and beyond. "Remember," Franklin wrote, "that time is money."

In China, food is so omnipresent in the national psyche that people greet each other with the phrase "chi fan le ma?" — have you eaten? And French food snobbery prompted the famously omnivorous President Jacques Chirac to once quip unkindly of the British that: "One cannot trust people whose cuisine is so bad."

Which leads us to the Cup Noodles Museum in Yokohama, Japan.

Yes, there is such a place. And, yes, instant noodles have plenty to say about Japanese traits of inventiveness, risk-taking and an openness to adapting and upgrading foreign influen-

ces that helped Japan recover after World War II to become an economic, cultural — and gastronomic — titan.

Some of those same traits have, these past two weeks, also helped Japan pull off the improbable feat — or folly, the jury is out — of hosting the Olympic Games in the midst of the pandemic. Allowing 11,000 athletes to come from around the world, some bringing the coronavirus with them, testified to Japanese resilience, hospitality and flexibility.

Now back to ramen, with — excuse the pun — a potted history.

The Japanese cribbed noodles from neighbor China, where they are called "lamian." Over the years, Japanese chefs elevated ramen into an art, a tastebud-blowing spectrum of flavors, textures and choices.

In short, Japan absorbed a foreign influence and improved on it. The same would later be true with automobiles, gadgetry and — for fans of "Demon Slayer," "One Piece" and other mangas — cartoons, to name just those few.

Back to noodles, thou-

gh. Horrified by food shortages that ravaged post-war Japan, impoverished former credit union worker Momofuku Ando hit upon the idea of turning surplus American wheat into ramen that hungry people could prepare with just hot water and a few minutes.

Ando's eureka moment came while watching his wife deep-fry tempura. That gave birth to the idea of flash-frying noodles to dehydrate them. Ando's first instant noodles were launched in 1958.

Cup Noodles followed in 1971. The brainchild for that idea came on a fact-finding trip that Ando made to the United States in 1966, when he saw consumers of his instant noodles rehydrate and eat them from paper cups. This according to Nissin Foods, the company Ando founded. Worldwide cumulative sales of Cup Noodles surpassed the 40-billion mark in 2016.

Ando died in 2007, at age 96. But his inventive spirit lives in what must rank as one of the world's most unique flavor experiences: the Cup Noodle ice cream.

Served only at the Cup

Noodles Museum, in its fourth floor cafeteria, it's made with the same powdered soup and freeze-dried toppings — onion, shrimp, chunks of egg and meat — used in actual Cup Noodles.

Museum visitor Noriyuki Sato, who tried it, described it as "salty-sweet," neither here nor there. "I'm not sure if that word makes sense to foreigners," he said. "It's not sweet and it's not salty, either."

But it is a monument to thinking out of the box and to a Japanese knack for fusing together seemingly incompatible things to make wholly new ones. It's hard to imagine an Italian gelato maker veering so audaciously off the beaten track.

Nissin Foods spokesperson Kahara Suzuki says the ice cream — having tasted it, one hesitates to call it a dessert — embodies "what I would call a punk rock spirit that many Japanese people have."

"Who would ever come up with an idea like this? I mean it's very unique," Suzuki said. "You can see that punk rock spirit in every aspect of Japanese life."

Certainly on Japanese plates. A few other examples include fruit sandwiches sold in corner stores and popular rice burgers. Since May, they and their likes have been joined by rice pizzas — developed by Sachie Oyama, an innovation chef and manager of the Menu Innovation Department at Domino's Pizza Japan Inc.

The Domino's Deluxe version is, in effect, a pizza built on a base layer of compressed, pre-cooked Japanese-cultivated white rice, instead of a usual base of pizza dough. The rice base is then smothered with rich tomato sauce and topped with traditional pizza ingredients: mozzarella cheese, onions, peppers, pepperoni and Italian sausage. Domino's sells the product line only in Japan. Oyama calls it "a pizza you can eat by yourself," rather than sharing slices.

"Japanese people are good at rearranging things," she said. "A combination with pizza and rice is not a weird thing at all."

Perhaps not. But foods like that do help explain why Japan seems to never stand still. After all, there are always new tastes to invent. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1969 FILM STAR STABBED IN 'RITUALISTIC' KILLINGS



Actress Sharon Tate has been found brutally murdered in her Los Angeles home, along with three high-society friends and a fifth, as yet un-named, victim.

All five died from shooting and multiple stab wounds. Sharon Tate, 26, was the wife of film director Roman Polanski and was eight months pregnant.

In what police said appeared to be a "ritualistic" murder, she was found tied together with her former fiancé, hair stylist Jay Sebring.

Police said both had nylon nooses around their necks, and Mr Sebring's head was covered with a black hood.

They said both probably died of stab wounds.

The bodies of Abigail Folger, 25, a member of a wealthy coffee-manufacturing family, and her boyfriend Voyteck Frykowski, 32, were found sprawled on the lawn outside. Both had been shot.

The fifth victim, a man, was found slumped over the wheel of a car with multiple gunshot wounds.

Police described a horrific scene at the hilltop house in the wealthy Bel Air district of the city.

Some of the bodies had been mutilated, with blood smeared everywhere and the word "Pig" scrawled on the front door in blood. Police said the phone and electricity lines had been cut.

It's believed that Miss Folger and Mr Frykowski, as well as Mr Sebring, had come from San Francisco to spend the weekend at the house.

The bungalow-style property, in an isolated area between Beverly Hills and the San Fernando Valley, is owned by Terry Melcher, son of film star Doris Day.

It was being rented by Roman Polanski and Sharon Tate who had recently returned there to have her baby after working in London.

Mr Polanski was still in Europe directing his latest film, but left immediately for Los Angeles on hearing the news.

Immediately after the discovery of the bodies, police arrested a houseboy, William Garretson, 19, who was living in a guest house behind the house. After five hours of questioning, he was charged with five counts of murder.

Sharon Tate began her acting career in the television series, Beverly Hillbillies. She also had parts in the films Valley of the Dolls, the Americanisation of Emily, and The Sandpiper.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The fifth victim was later identified as Steven Parent, 18, a local boy who had been visiting William Garretson.

The bodies of another wealthy couple were found 36 hours later not far from the scene of the Tate murders.

Leno LaBianca and his wife Rosemary had also been brutally murdered in their own home. The crime scene bore striking similarities to the Tate murders.

William Garretson was released without charge on the same day. The LAPD were reluctant to link the Tate murders and the LaBianca killings, until mid-October when another similar murder led the police to a hippie group calling itself the Manson family.

In January 1971, Charles Manson and three of his followers — Susan Atkins, 22, Patricia Krenwinkel, 23 and Leslie Van Houten, 21 — were convicted of the Tate-LaBianca murders, after the longest murder trial in US history.

They were all sentenced to death, but this was commuted to life imprisonment after California abolished the death penalty in 1972.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**



**ARIES**

**Mar. 21-Apr. 19**

This is a great day to mingle with people you would like to impress. You can bet that you'll draw attention to yourself. Talk to someone you trust if you need advice about broaching the subject.



**TAURUS**

**Apr. 20-May. 20**

You may find yourself in an opportune position if you are willing to take a bit of a risk. You'll be an emotional basket case today. Don't take any comments too seriously.



**GEMINI**

**May. 21-Jun. 21**

It might be best to spend time fixing up your premises and making changes that will be appreciated. Communication will be your strong point.



**CANCER**

**Jun. 22-Jul. 22**

You may have a hidden adversary who would love to prove you wrong. Consider the source before you believe what you hear. Today will be hectic.



**LEO**

**Jul. 23-Aug. 22**

You may experience financial loss if you don't use good judgment. Look into projects that you feel would contribute something to your appearance.



**VIRGO**

**Aug. 23-Sep. 22**

You will find that money could slip through your fingers. Don't be too quick to judge your loved ones. Romance will unfold if you take trips or get together with friends.



**LIBRA**

**Sep. 23-Oct. 22**

Do something that will be stimulating and creative. Be on your best behavior. Home improvement projects will go well if you delegate work to all your family members.



**SCORPIO**

**Oct. 23-Nov. 21**

Join humanitarian groups and your leadership ability take over. You can make a big difference to children if you are understanding of the difficulties they are experiencing.



**SAGITTARIUS**

**Nov. 22-Dec. 21**

Don't trust a deal that looks too good, or a lover who appears to have it all. Make any necessary changes to your insurance policy. You can learn valuable information if you listen and observe what others are doing.



**Dec. 22-Jan. 19**

You need to keep busy doing things that you both enjoy. Trying to deal with your mate will be unproductive and possibly hurtful. Balance is required if you want stability.



**AQUARIUS**

**Jan. 20-Feb. 18**

Be prepared to have relatives or close friends introduce you to new and exciting individuals. Opportunities to go out with clients or colleagues will be in your best interest.



**PISCES**

**Feb. 19-Mar. 20**

You could expand your circle of friends if you get involved in unusual activities. You are best to keep your money tied up in a safe and secure place. It's a good time for long awaited relationships to begin.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

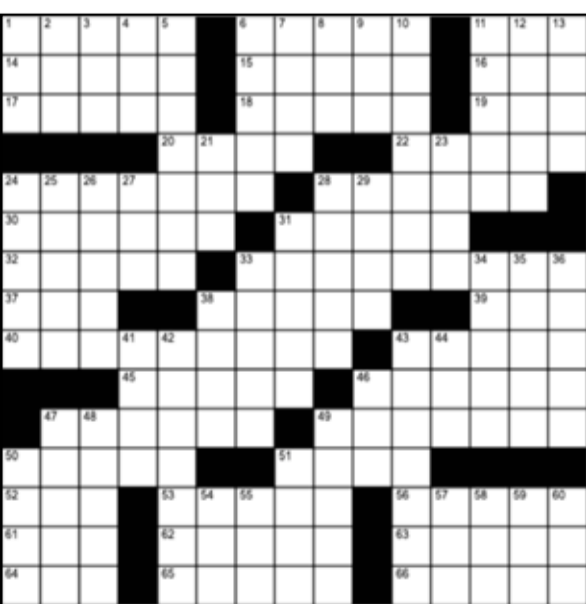
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	17	30	fine
Harbin	10	19	thunderstorms
Tianjin	18	26	cloudy
Urumqi	16	29	cloudy
Xi'an	18	30	cloudy
Lhasa	16	24	fine
Chengdu	22	32	rain
Chongqing	24	28	rain
Kunming	19	29	cloudy
Nanjing	15	24	cloudy
Shanghai	28	36	thunderstorms
Wuhan	20	26	cloudy
Hangzhou	9	18	thunderstorms
Taipei	16	28	cloudy
Guangzhou	12	26	fine
Hong Kong	18	31	fine
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	17	31	clear
Frankfurt	8	14	rain
Paris	8	15	rain
London	7	16	cloudy
New York	14	24	cloudy

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Duck with soft down; 6- Camera setting; 11- \_\_\_ polloi; 14- Sesame plant; 15- \_\_\_ of thousands; 16- Calendar abbr.; 17- Copper and zinc alloy; 18- Like a subway; 19- By way of; 20- Agreement; 22- In unison; 24- Compactness; 28- Played at a fast tempo; 30- Damage; 31- Rate; 32- Sun-dried brick; 33- An urban shade tree; 37- Hide-hair connector; 38- In conflict with, with "of"; 39- Mich. neighbor; 40- Calcium-iron garnet; 43- Physical power; 45- Software buyers; 46- Dishevel; 47- Starvation; 49- Snack bar; 50- Long lock of hair; 51- Cattle group; 52- Center Ming; 53- Flummoxed; 56- Wonderland girl; 61- Slender metal fastener; 62- Little bits; 63- \_\_\_ Ark; 64- Golfer Ernie; 65- Hang with cloth; 66- Shades;

DOWN 1- Subside; 2- Occupational suffix; 3- It's in the genes; 4- Nav. officer; 5- Breathe; 6- Imagination; 7- Nae sayer?; 8- Skater Babilonia; 9- CIA forerunner; 10- Saliva enzyme; 11- Ruin; 12- Suppose; 13- Dies \_\_\_; 21- Chowed down; 23- Chimney residue; 24- Roman goddess of the moon; 25- Finish with; 26- Norse god of winds; 27- Stand in; 28- Worth; 29- Bibliography abbr.; 31- Mob scenes; 33- Flaming; 34- Stallion, e.g.; 35- Quitter's cry; 36- Dutch painter Jan; 38- Yemeni port; 41- Jamaican exports; 42- To reiterate...; 43- Thick; 44- Not at home; 46- Sailor; 47- Easily broken; 48- Ages; 49- \_\_\_ and desist; 50- Class; 51- Jalopy; 54- Rocky peak; 55- RR stop; 57- Canterbury can; 58- Singer Janis; 59- Friend of Fidel; 60- Lion tail?;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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



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Taipa Village **HKD 3,780,000**  
650 ft<sup>2</sup> 1 1/2 1/2

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One Central **HKD 16,500/mth**  
Ref: 2106 1001 1,292 ft<sup>2</sup> 2 1/2 2 1/2

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Property of the Week



**FOR SALE**

**Studio, Old Taipa**  
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SCAN ME  
Ref: 2007 6001

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Property Hotlist



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**Heng Tai**  
**HKD 3,980,000**

950 ft<sup>2</sup>

1   
1



SCAN ME  
Ref: 2107 6002



**FOR RENT**

**REDUCED**

**One Central**  
**HKD 16,500/mth**

1,292 ft<sup>2</sup>

2   
2



SCAN ME  
Ref: 2106 1001



**FOR RENT**

**NEW**

**Buckingham**  
**HKD 16,500/mth**

1,439 ft<sup>2</sup>

2   
2



SCAN ME  
Ref: 1904 5004

More Listings

For Sale

- [Macau] Macau, ZAPE 2 1 720 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 7,450,000** Ref: 2101 6002
- [Coloane] Hellene Gardens 1 2 2 1,707 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 10,880,000** Ref: 2107 6005
- [Macau] Lakeview Tower 3 2 1,344 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 11,000,000** Ref: 1912 6001
- [Taipa] Chun U Villa 4 3 1,979 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 12,880,000** Ref: 2104 6001
- [Taipa] Manhattan 4 2 2,305 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 15,980,000** Ref: 2005 6001

For Rent

- [Macau] Tai Nin 1 1 720 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 8,600/mth** Ref: 1909 1002
- [Taipa] Soi Cheung 1 1 650 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 9,900/mth** Ref: 2107 1002
- [Taipa] Taipa Village 1 1 740 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 10,900/mth** Ref: 1910 1006
- [Coloane] One Oasis 2 2 1,112 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 15,500/mth** Ref: 2102 1004
- [Taipa] Manhattan 3 2 1,626 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 17,500/mth** Ref: 2003 1001

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



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788 ft<sup>2</sup>

2   
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SCAN ME  
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TOKYO 2020

# Mixed bag: Erratic Pandemic Olympics wind to a nuanced end

TED ANTHONY, TOKYO

**I**T began with a virus and a yearlong pause. It ends with a typhoon and, still, a virus. In between: just about everything.

The Tokyo Olympics, christened with "2020" but held in mid-2021 after being interrupted for a year by the coronavirus, glided to their end yesterday night as an often surreal mixed bag for Japan and for the world.

Held in the middle of a resurging pandemic, rejected by many Japanese and plagued by months of administrative problems, these Games presented logistical and medical obstacles like no other, offered up serious conversations about mental health — and, when it came to sport, delivered both triumphs and a few surprising shortfalls.

From the outset, expectations were middling at best, apocalyptic at worst. Even Thomas Bach, president of the International Olympic Committee, said he'd worried that these could "become the Olympic Games without a soul." But, he said Friday, "what we have seen here is totally different."

"You could experience and feel and see and hear how much they enjoyed to be together here again," Bach said.

At these Games, even the word "together" was fraught. Spectators were kept at bay. A patchwork of rules kept athletes masked and apart for much of medal ceremonies, yet saw them swapping bodily fluids in some venues.



That was less about being remiss than about being real: Risks that could be mitigated were, but at the same time events had to go on.

Athletes' perseverance became a central story. Mental health claimed bandwidth as never before, and athletes revealed their stories and struggles in vulnerable, sometimes excruciating fashion.

Japan's fourth Olympics, held 57 years after the fabled 1964 Games effectively reintroduced it to the world after its World War II defeat, represented a world trying to come together at a historical moment when disease and circumstance and politics had splintered it apart. But even against those formidable backdrops, athletic excellence burst through.

Among the highlights: Allyson Felix taking a U.S.-record 11th medal in track, then stepping away from the Olympic stage. American quintuple gold medalist Caeleb Dressel's

astounding performance in the pool. The emergence of surfing, skateboarding and sport climbing as popular, and viable, Olympic sports even as an earlier typhoon whipped up the waves for surfers during the Games' first week. Host country Japan's medal haul — 58, its most ever.

"Let's not let this be a temporary glory," deputy delegation head Mitsugi Ogata said yesterday.

Any Olympics is a microcosm of the world it reflects, and this was was nothing if not that. Its runup, and the two weeks of the Games themselves, featured tens of thousands of spit-in-a-vial COVID tests for athletes, staff, journalists and visitors. That produced barely more than 400 positives, a far cry from the rest of non-Olympic bubble Japan, where surges in positive cases provoked the government to declare increasingly widespread states of emergency.

And, of course, there was that other microcosm of human life that the Games revealed — the reckoning with mental and emotional health, and the pressure put on Earth's top-tier athletes to compete hard and succeed at almost any cost. The interruption of that pressurized narrative, led by the struggles of gymnast Simone Biles and tennis player Naomi Osaka in particular, permeated these Games and lit the

spark of an athlete-driven conversation everyone expects to continue.

"At the end of the day, we're not just entertainment. We're human, and there are things going on behind the scenes that we're also trying to juggle

with," Biles said after withdrawing from the team competition in gymnastics.

While Tokyo is handing off the Summer Games baton to Paris for 2024, the delay has effectively crammed two Olympics together. The next Winter Games convenes in just six months in another major Asian metropolis — Beijing, Japan's rival in East Asia and home to a much more authoritarian government that is expected to administer its Games in a more draconian and restrictive way, virus or no virus.

In recent weeks, lots of people — officials, athletes, journalists — have been chewing over how these Games will be remembered. That's up to history, of course, but there are hints. The runup was ugly and messy and

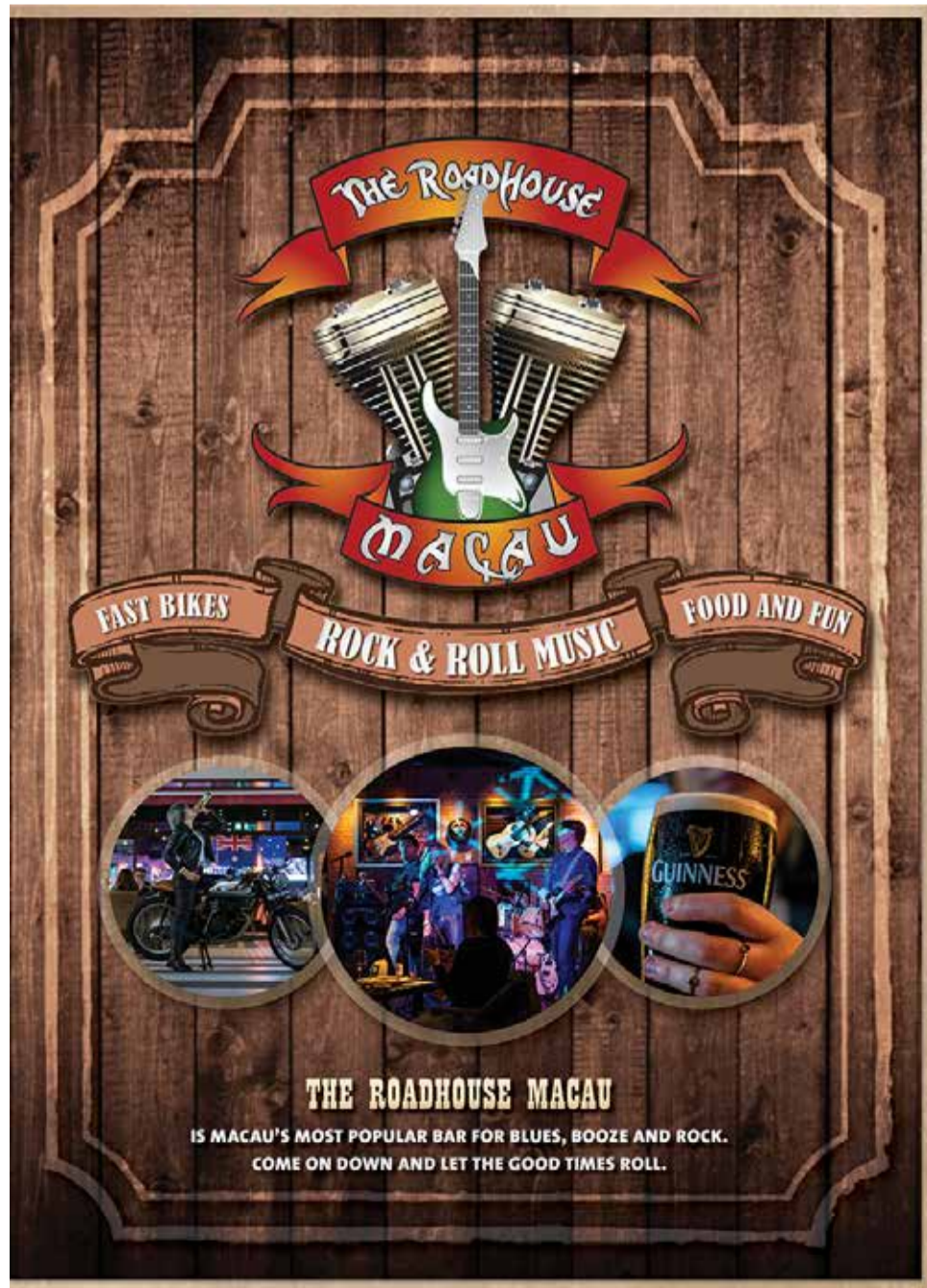
disputed. The days of competition were fraught but, in general, without incident other than sporting milestones. The expenses — upwards of \$15 billion — were colossal and will echo in Tokyo long after athletes are gone and venues go dark.

What are the Olympic Games supposed to be? A politics-free sporting event, as the IOC says? A bonanza for sponsors and broadcasters? One small step toward world peace? Despite all the yarn-spinning around the Games, their identity remains up in the air and that fundamental question remains.

But as the cauldron goes dark yesterday after the Pandemic Olympics conclude, it's easy to argue that Tokyo can take its place as a Games that didn't fail — as one that overcame a lot to even happen at all. And as vaccines roll out and are taken or resisted, as variants emerge and lockdowns re-emerge around the planet, another city and another government — Beijing, the Chinese capital — now must grapple with same very same question. **MDT/AP**

## TOP 10 MEDAL WINNERS

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
<b>United States</b>	39	41	33	113
<b>China</b>	38	32	18	88
<b>Japan</b>	27	14	17	58
<b>Great Britain</b>	22	21	22	65
<b>ROC</b>	20	28	23	71
<b>Australia</b>	17	7	22	46
<b>Netherlands</b>	10	12	14	36
<b>France</b>	10	12	11	33
<b>Germany</b>	10	11	16	37
<b>Italy</b>	10	10	20	40



AD



OPINION

China Daily  
Editorial, China Daily

IMPERATIVE THAT  
SOCIALIZING AND  
TRIPS BE CUT

China announced 62 new COVID-19 cases on Wednesday, raising the total number of existing domestic infections to 1,285 nationwide. With the tracing of close contacts of the confirmed cases to continue, more domestic infections are certain to be identified in the days to come.

It is of the utmost urgency to cut off the transmission channels for the virus as soon as possible. The resurgence of the novel coronavirus in most parts of the world has shown that even with the vaccination drive gathering speed, there must be strict adherence to the prevention and control protocols and people need to take the necessary preventive measures to try and avoid being infected.

In a teleconference held by the joint prevention and control mechanism of the State Council in Beijing, Vice-Premier Sun Chunlan, who is also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, underlined the need for stringent implementation of anti-epidemic measures to curb the resurgence of the virus.

Having just returned from a fact-finding trip to Nanjing, capital of East China's Jiangsu province, from where the latest outbreak seems to have spread to other provinces, Sun stressed that all relevant departments should be immediately mobilized and take action. She called on all localities to make epidemic prevention and control their top priority — focusing on "prevention" if they have no infections and responding "quickly" if any are detected. She also stressed the importance of ensuring that the command system operate smoothly, receiving timely updates of any new infections 24 hours a day.

With the virus having already spread to many places from Nanjing, the epidemic situation is clearly grave, which explains why all local governments are requiring their residents not to leave the place where they reside unless absolutely necessary.

China would not have succeeded in largely bringing the virus under control in 2020 without the cooperation and contribution of the public, who not only strictly abided by the prevention and control measures but also did what they could to help ensure the measures were implemented to the letter.

Yet with almost all parts of the country free from the virus for more than a year, and sporadic outbreaks of local infections being brought under control in a short period of time, many people are no longer as prudent as they were and some have even assumed that the virus will always be far removed from them.

Slackened prevention and control measures and some people's lack of vigilance have been the prime causes of the latest outbreak in Nanjing. Some people may feel bad about having to cancel the summer holiday trips they had planned. Scenic spots may lament the likely reduction in their holiday revenues as the number of visitors will drop by a large margin. However, their cooperation, and that of everyone, will be essential for the country to bring this wave of the virus under control as early as possible.

Refraining from socializing and canceling trips today is a small price to pay for a tomorrow free of the virus.

When Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg donated \$400 million to help fund election offices as they scrambled to deal with the coronavirus pandemic late last summer, he said he hoped he would never have to do it again.

Republican legislatures are granting him that wish.

At least eight GOP-controlled states have passed bans on donations to election offices this year as Republicans try to block outside funding of voting operations. The legislation often comes as part of Republican packages that also put new limits on how voters can cast ballots and impose new requirements on county

or city-based election officials.

The response is spurred by anger and suspicion on the right that Zuckerberg's money benefited Democrats in 2020. Conservatives have long accused the tech mogul's social media platform of censoring right-wing voices as part of its campaign against misinformation.

Zuckerberg's money was largely distributed through a nonpartisan foundation that had liberal roots. Conservative groups cite analyses that the money went disproportionately to Democratic-leaning counties in key states such as Florida and Pennsylvania.

AP PHOTO



FIRE DEVOURS GREEK  
ISLAND FORESTS AS  
RESIDENTS URGED TO FLEE

PILLARS of billowing smoke and ash blocked out the sun above Greece's second-largest island and turned the sky orange as a days-old wildfire devoured pristine forests and triggered more evacuation alerts yesterday, while residents appealed for additional fire-fighting help.

The fire on Evia, an island of forested mountains and canyons laced with small coves of crystalline water, began Aug. 3 and cut across the popular summer destination from coast to coast, burning out of control for five days. Scores of homes and businesses have been destroyed, and thousands of residents and vacationers have been evacuated.

The blaze currently is the most severe of dozens that broke out in Greece in the wake of the country's most protracted and intense heat wave in three decades, which sent temperatures soaring to 45 degrees Celsius (113 F) and created bone-dry conditions.

The Greek coast guard said three patrol boats, four navy vessels, one ferry, two tourist boats and numerous fishing and private boats were on standby to carry out more potential evacuations from the seaside village of Pefki, on Evia's northern tip.

Around 350 people already boarded the ferry, the coast guard said, while towering flames cut off many escape routes by roads. Evacuation orders were issued for four villages, including Pefki, but some residents refused to

leave, hoping to save their properties.

Planes and helicopters dropped water on the flames from above.

"It's already too late, the area has been destroyed," lamented Giannis Kontzias, mayor of the north Evia municipality of Istiaia, on Greece's Open TV. Residents of nearby villages had been urged to head to Istiaia, a town of 7,000 in northern Evia that firefighters battled to save overnight.

Villagers and people in north Evia's main harbor, Aidipsos, were urged to shut windows, doors and chimneys to prevent burning embers from entering houses.

Civil Protection chief Nikos Hardalias said the conditions on Evia were particularly tough for the water-dropping planes and helicopters. Their pilots faced "great danger" with limited visibility, air turbulence and wind currents from the fire., he said.

"We have before us one more difficult afternoon, one more difficult night," Hardalias said. "All the forces that have been fighting a difficult battle all these days will continue operating with unabated intensity, with the same self-sacrifice."

Overnight, the coast guard and ferries evacuated 83 people from beaches in northern Evia. On Friday night, ferries evacuated more than 1,000 people from beaches and a seaside village in apocalyptic scenes as flames raged on the hillsides behind them.

Local officials and residents in north Evia called in to television news programs on Saturday, appealing for more firefighters and water-dropping planes.

The fire department said 575 firefighters with 35 ground teams and 89 vehicles were battling the Evia wildfire, including 112 Romanian and 100 Ukrainian firefighters sent to Greece as reinforcements. Four helicopters and three planes, including a massive Beriev-200 plane leased from Russia, provided air support.

Three more major fires were also burning in Greece's southern Peloponnese region, while a massive fire that ravaged forests, homes and businesses on the northern fringes of the Greek capital appeared to be on the wane. That fire burnt through large tracts of a national park on Mount Parnitha, the largest forested area remaining near Athens that still bore deep scars from a fire in 2007.

On Friday, one volunteer firefighter died after suffering head injuries from a falling electricity pole north of Athens, while at least 20 people have been treated for fire-related injuries, including two firefighters who were hospitalized in intensive care.

The causes of the fires are under investigation. Three people were arrested Friday — in the greater Athens area, central and southern Greece — on suspicion of starting blazes, in two cases intentionally. MDT/AP

Pakistani authorities briefly detained two prominent journalists in the eastern city of Lahore, drawing condemnation from human rights activists, political leaders, and the country's media. A senior official from Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency, the FIA, said Amir Mir and Imran Shafqat were detained after posting "scandalous content" on social media, prompting a complaint from the government's minister. He did not say whether the two had been charged with any crime.

AP PHOTO



Russia A court in Moscow convicted a prominent U.S. investor on charges of embezzlement and handed him a suspended sentence on Friday, a verdict he deplored as "deeply unfair." Michael Calvey was accused of embezzlement from the Russian bank Vostochry, in which his investment firm Baring Vostok had a controlling stake. He denied any wrongdoing.

AP PHOTO



Germany About 2,500 people in western Germany demonstrated Saturday for a quick halt to coal mining in the region, where a village could be bulldozed to make way for a mine. Participants in the protest formed a 4-kilometer human chain between the threatened village of Luetzerath and nearby Keyenberg. Luetzerath stands a few hundred meters away from a vast pit where German utility giant RWE is extracting lignite coal to burn in nearby power plants.

AP PHOTO



France Thousands of people marched in Paris and other French cities Saturday for a fourth consecutive week of protests against the Covid-19 health passes that everyone in the country will need shortly to enter cafes, trains and other venues. The demonstrations came two days after France's Constitutional Council upheld most provisions of a new law that expands the locations where health passes are needed to enter.