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**LIAISON OFFICE: THE MASTER PLAN FOR BUILDING THE GUANGDONG-MACAU COOPERATION ZONE WILL ENRICH PRACTICE OF ‘ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS’**

P5

**APPLICATIONS FOR CARITAS FOOD PROGRAM REMAIN STEADY**

P2

**TUI CONFIRMED THE PENALTY OF DISMISSAL FROM THE FORCE APPLIED TO AN OFFICER FROM THE CUSTOMS SERVICE THAT ABUSED THREE PSP OFFICERS**

P4



**Germany's** new ambassador to China, who was previously a senior adviser to Chancellor Angela Merkel, has died at age 54, the German government said yesterday. The Foreign Ministry announced the “sudden death” of Jan Hecker (pictured, left) in a short statement in the early hours of yesterday. It didn't give details of when or where Hecker died, or specify a cause of death.



**China-US** U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that “people are not bargaining chips,” adding the U.S. stands with Canada in calling for the release of two Canadians detained in China for 1,000 days. Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor were detained in China in what many countries label “hostage politics” after Canada arrested an executive of Chinese tech giant Huawei in 2018 on a U.S. extradition request.



**US** A man wearing full body armor fatally shot four people, including a mother and the 3-month-old baby she was cradling, and engaged in a massive gunfight with police and deputies before he was wounded and surrendered in Lakeland, Florida, a sheriff said Sunday. An 11-year-old girl who was shot seven times survived. More on p8

More on backpage

# CROSS-BOUNDARY CRACKDOWN

The annual mega crime crackdown of Macau, Guangdong and Hong Kong held a total of 746 operations, deploying over 9,700 officers

P2



**COVID-19**

## SPECIFIC GROUPS MAY TAKE PCR TEST EVERY DAY

P6



**GBA**

## CHINA ISSUES PLAN FOR FURTHER DEVELOPING SHENZHEN-HONG KONG COOPERATION ZONE

P4



# 700 NON-RESIDENTS DEPORTED ON CRIMINAL GROUNDS

ANTHONY LAM

**T**HE Unitary Police Service (SPU) announced yesterday at a special press conference that 704 non-residents have been deported after being found guilty of criminal offenses across a three-month period.

The occasion was held to reveal the impact of the "Thunderbolt 2021," a tripartite joint operation between the Macau, Guangdong and Hong Kong police authorities. It was disclosed that the operation took place in two phases, with the first phase held between June 6 and July 11, and the second between August 16 and 30.

Local police authorities, including the Macao Customs (SA), the Public Security Police Force (PSP) and the Judiciary Police (PJ), together held a total of 746 operations, with a focus on cross-boundary organized crimes, illicit substances, illegal gambling, and illegal currency exchange, among others.

During the two phases of the operations, the authorities arrested 704 non-residents who were deported under the order of a court of law. According to the authorities, they have committed one or more instances of criminal offenses, overstay offenses, illegal immigration, illegal currency

RENATO MARQUES



exchange or otherwise conducted activities that were not permitted by the law applicable to non-residents.

Meanwhile, 516 local residents have been put before a court of law due to allegedly committing criminal offenses. Of these, 271 have been subjected to mandatory measures, such as facing custody or surrendering travel documents.

The authorities have also intercepted 13 individuals under court orders. They were either on custody or interception orders. Among them, two have been delivered to prison to serve their sentences immediately.

Apart from conducting sudden inspections on casinos, entertainment venues and the surrounding neighborhoods, the operations also sought to tighten interception and monitoring on streets, border checkpoints, and coastal and territorial waters.

In all 746 operations, the local authorities deployed a total of 9,721 officers, investigated 31,086 people and taken 2,172 of them to stations. The operations concerned 443 cases.

Wrapping up, the SPU said that the joint operation had achieved the expected outcomes. It added that the pandemic

had added greater uncertainties to society, which led to changes in criminal trajectory

ries and characteristics.

"Before 2019, crimes mainly involved non-residents, especially residents of Hong Kong," Vong Chi Hong, assistant to the Commander-General of the SPU, said. He added that crimes have changed forms since the pandemic swept through the world. "For example, more people started using mailing services to deliver illicit addictive substances."

He explained that the new mode of criminal offense has posed new challenges for the police authorities.

As Macau residents have also picked up online shopping, the massive number of incoming parcels has meant extra efforts for the police authorities sorting out suspicious pieces.

Local police authorities stated that the tripartite partnerships will continue. The three jurisdictions will step up in the exchange of intelligence to collaboratively safeguard the region's security.

## HK SEIZES HKD3.6B IN BETTING RECORDS

**HONG** Kong's chief superintendent Ryan Wong Wai of the Organised Crime and Triad Bureau (OCTB) said officers from the bureau smashed two triad-controlled bookmaking operations during the crackdown, arresting 40 people and seizing HKD3.6 billion in betting records on football matches and horse racing. The official said that it was possible that illegal gambling activities

were on the rise because of border closures amid the pandemic. According to the South China Morning Post, 2,320 people aged between 11 and 84 were arrested in Hong Kong for drug trafficking, deception, bookmaking, money laundering and similar offences. During the operation "Thunderbolt," over 5,500 people were rounded up in Macau, Hong Kong and Guangdong.

LYNZY VALLES

CARITAS

**T**HE number of people queuing up for Caritas' food charity program remains at "the same level" as during the peak of the pandemic, when several hundred non-residents were laid off or had their contracts not renewed.

According to Secretary-General Paul Pun, the non-governmental organization postponed its large-scale programs in August following the discovery of four Delta cases in the region.

However, its food charity program, attracting up to 200 people

per distribution, remained in place.

"There are still many [queuing up], because there are more people unemployed than there are leaving Macau," Pun told the Times.

"The numbers are at the same level because only a few can leave Macau," he added.

On September 2, the Philippine Consulate General in Macau organized its 22nd repatriation flight, departing at 9 a.m. The plane landed

in Subic, northwest of Manila, as passenger arrivals at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport are limited to 1,500 passengers per day.

The move was designed to limit crowds at the airport and deter the spread of Covid-19.

Previously, non-resident workers registered on Caritas' list hailed from the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Nepal and Myanmar.

The NGO has maintained a low profile

about its outreach activities for migrant workers as, Pun explained, this might lead to a misapprehension among the public that the NGO favours migrant workers over locals.

At the end of June 2021, the city recorded a total of 172,261 non-resident workers – 3,517 fewer than in January.

Prior to the peak of the pandemic, Macau had over 191,300 blue card holders.

JOEL MUNIZ



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## Master Plan of the Development of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin

Mutual Discussion, Joint Construction, Joint Administration and Shared Benefits



Master Plan

### I. Scope of the Cooperation Zone

- The scope of the Cooperation Zone covers the customs supervision territory between the "first-tier" and "second-tier" subzones on Hengqin island, occupying a total area of 106 square kilometres.
- The area that lies between Hengqin and Macao is regarded as the "first-tier", while the area that lies between Hengqin and other mainland territory is regarded as the "second-tier".
- The Cooperation Zone will adopt an electronic wire fence monitoring and control system and a directory list, to implement a special policy on eligible market entities.

### II. Strategic Positioning

- A new platform for promoting Macao's adequate economic diversification
- A new home for Macao residents to live and work
- A new paradigm to enrich the practice of implementation of "One country, two systems"
- A new high ground for promoting development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

### III. Development Goal

- By 2024, the mechanism of mutual discussion, joint construction, joint administration and shared benefits between Guangdong and Macao will run smoothly in the Cooperation Zone, the Hengqin-Macao integrated development layout will initially be created, and the supportive functions for promoting Macao's adequate economic diversification will initially be seen.
- By 2029, the Cooperation Zone will highly synergise with Macao's economy, the system for in-depth cohesion of regulations will be comprehensively established, distinctive industries will be well developed, the Hengqin-Macao integrated development will be optimised, and the results in promoting Macao's adequate economic diversification will be obviously achieved.
- By 2035, the strong vitality and advantages of "One country, two systems" will be fully demonstrated, the economic strength and technological competitiveness of the Cooperation Zone will be greatly enhanced, the Hengqin-Macao integrated development will be perfected, and the goal of promoting Macao's adequate economic diversification will basically be realised.

### IV. Development of Nascent Industries to Promote Macao's Adequate Economic Diversification

#### (1) Development of scientific and technological research and high-end manufacturing industries

- Establish high standard industry-academia-research demonstration bases and a technological innovation and transformation centre in Macao.
- Make great efforts in fostering integrated circuit, electronic component, new material, new energy, big data, artificial intelligence, Internet of Things (IoT), and biomedicine industries.
- Develop the artificial intelligence integrated innovative environment.

#### (2) Development of Macao branded industries, such as traditional Chinese medicine

- Permit the use of "production supervised by Macao", "produced by Macao" or "design by Macao" signs on traditional Chinese medicine products, food products and health products approved and registered in Macao and produced in the Cooperation Zone.
- Study the ways to simplify the approval process of patent external-application traditional Chinese medicine made in Macao for sale in mainland China markets in the Greater Bay Area.
- Explore the possibility for Macao branded traditional Chinese medicine approved for sale in mainland China to be manufactured in the mainland territory of the Greater Bay Area.
- Prioritise the assessment and approval of new medicine products made in Macao which conform to the relevant stipulations.
- Develop rough diamond processing industry.

#### (3) Development of cultural tourism, convention and exhibition, and commercial and trade industries

- Make great efforts to establish tourism related industries, such as leisure and vacation, convention and exhibition, sports event tourism, as well as healthcare related industries, such as leisure and nourishment, rehabilitation, and medical treatment.
- Develop and enhance the use of tourism resources on peripheral islands.
- Provide convenience to cross-border convention and exhibition working staff and exhibitors for multiple border-crossing travel between the Cooperation Zone and Macao via Hengqin Port.
- Establish an international trading centre serving China and Portuguese-speaking countries and an international hub port for digital trade.

#### (4) Development of modern financial industry

- Establish a financial services platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.
- Develop cross-border Renminbi settlement.
- Support Macao to develop modern financial services businesses, such as wealth management, bond market, and financial leasing in the Cooperation Zone.
- Lower the market access threshold for Macao-invested financial institutions to set up banking and insurance institutions in the Cooperation Zone.

#### (5) Tax incentive policy

- Eligible industries and enterprises in the Cooperation Zone are subject to a reduced tax rate of 15% on business income tax.
- Exempt the tax amount that exceeds 15% of the personal income of the high-end talents and talented people in shortage.
- Macao residents working in the Cooperation Zone will be exempted from paying the personal income tax amount that exceeds their tax payable in Macao.

#### (6) Facilitate aggregation of domestic and foreign talented people

- Make great efforts in attracting high-end talents and talented people in shortage, and provide high-end talented people with a high level of convenience to travel to and from the Cooperation Zone.



### V. Building of a New Home for Macao Residents that is Favourable for Living and Work

#### (1) Attract Macao residents to work or set up businesses

- Allow financial, architectural, planning and design professionals holding qualification for practice in Macao and other places abroad to provide services in the Cooperation Zone when complying with the requirements and conditions under the regulation of the respective sectors and are duly registered according to the law.
- Encourage the medical and healthcare professionals holding qualification for practice in Macao and other places abroad to obtain their qualification for practice in the Cooperation Zone.
- Establish high standard makerspace, incubation centres, and scientific research and innovation carriers.



#### (2) Enhance collaboration with Macao on social and livelihood issues

- Dock with Macao's education, medical and healthcare, social services and other livelihood related public services, as well as the social security system.
- Expedite the development of the Macao New Neighbourhood.
- Facilitate free flow of Macao-licensed motor vehicles to travel to and from the Cooperation Zone.
- Allow specified medical and healthcare services institutions to use Macao-registered drugs with urgent clinical use and formula food products for special medical purposes, as well as to use medical devices being used in Macao public hospitals with urgent clinical purpose and advanced clinical applications (except for large-scale medical equipment).
- Significantly reduce and gradually waive the long-distance call and roaming charges for mobile phone communication between the Cooperation Zone and Macao.

#### (3) Facilitate infrastructural interconnectivity

- Support Macao's Light Rail Transit System to extend into the Cooperation Zone and connect with Zhuhai's Urban Rail Transit Network, thus integrate into the rail transit network of mainland China.
- Implement the Guangzhou-Zhuhai (Macao) high speed rail and Nansha-Zhuhai (Zhongshan) intercity rail projects in an orderly manner.



### VI. Construct a New High-standard and Open System that Integrates with Macao

#### (1) Goods movements under the "first-tier" relaxing administration and the "second-tier" strict customs control

- In "first-tier", consider adjusting the policy on goods entering the Cooperation Zone exempted from tax (not bonded), so that except for those clearly stipulated by state laws and administrative regulations as goods and articles not exempted from tax (not bonded), all other goods and articles can enter "first-tier" free from tax.
- In "second-tier", all tax exempted (bonded) goods moving from the Cooperation Zone through "second-tier" into the mainland territory are subject to tariff and import duties.
- As for goods produced by enterprises in the Cooperation Zone and do not contain imported material or components, or goods containing imported material or components being processed in the Cooperation Zone to achieve an added value up to or more than 30% of the original value, tax will be exempted for moving into the mainland territory through "second-tier".
- Goods moving from mainland territory into the Cooperation Zone through "second-tier" will be treated as export.

#### (2) Facilitate convenient inbound and outbound travel for persons

- Adopt the "Joint Inspection and One-Time Release" customs clearance mechanism.
- Expedite construction of the exclusive passage between the Hengqin campus of the University of Macau and the Hengqin Port.

- Explore the possibility of establishing a new smart border crossing checkpoint between the Hengqin campus of the University of Macau and the Cooperation Zone for the convenience of teachers and students of the University of Macau to travel to and from the Cooperation Zone.

#### (3) Innovative cross-border monetary control

- Explore the possibility of allowing free flows of cross-border capitals to and from the Cooperation Zone and facilitating conversion of capital accounts.
- Explore facilitating cross-border investment and financing management.

#### (4) Establish a high-level market access facilitation system

- Implement the system of allowing market access with prior commitment, and strictly implement the principle of "entry unless prohibited".
- Continue relaxing the restrictions on qualification, shareholding ratio and industry access.
- Establish a supervision standard and a regulatory system that match with those of Macao and around the world.

#### (5) Promote safe and orderly cross-border flows of worldwide Internet data

- Consider establishing a green channel to connect fixed network with the worldwide Internet.
- Support tertiary education and research institutions in Zhuhai and Macao to realise cross-border interconnection and sharing of scientific research data under the premise of ensuring the security of personal information and important data.

### VII. Perfect the New System for Mutual Discussion, Joint Construction, Joint Administration, and Shared Benefits between Guangdong and Macao

- Guangdong and Macao will jointly form an administrative committee of the Cooperation Zone as a development and management body to coordinate and make decisions on major issues, and the administrative committee is run under a dual director system, jointly led by the Governor of Guangdong Province and the Chief Executive of the Macao Special Administrative Region.
- An executive committee will be set up under the administrative committee to be responsible for construction, development and people's livelihood of the Cooperative Zone, with the person-in-charge appointed by the MSAR Government, and members appointed by Guangdong Province and Zhuhai Municipality.
- The Cooperation Zone will be integrated into the administration of Guangdong Province, and will set up field offices of the CPC Guangdong Provincial Committee and the Guangdong Provincial Government respectively, to support the above-mentioned administrative and executive bodies on construction and development of the Cooperation Zone.
- Establish a proceeds sharing mechanism for the Cooperation Zone, so that all proceeds from investment prior to 2024 will be reserved and allocated by the administrative committee for the development of the Cooperation Zone. The Central Treasury will provide subsidy to the Cooperation Zone.
- Establish a permanent assessment mechanism; and consider formulating an index system for the Cooperation Zone's facilitation of Macao's adequate economic diversification.

### VIII. Safeguard Measures

- Strengthen the rule of law; establish step by step a civil and commercial affairs regulatory system that matches with those of Macao and the globe; and consider formulating laws and regulations for the Cooperation Zone.
- Enhance empowerment; support application for empowerment by batch on the list; and deepen reform and expand opening up in economic management, business environment, market supervision and other major areas.
- Establish a robust risk management mechanism.

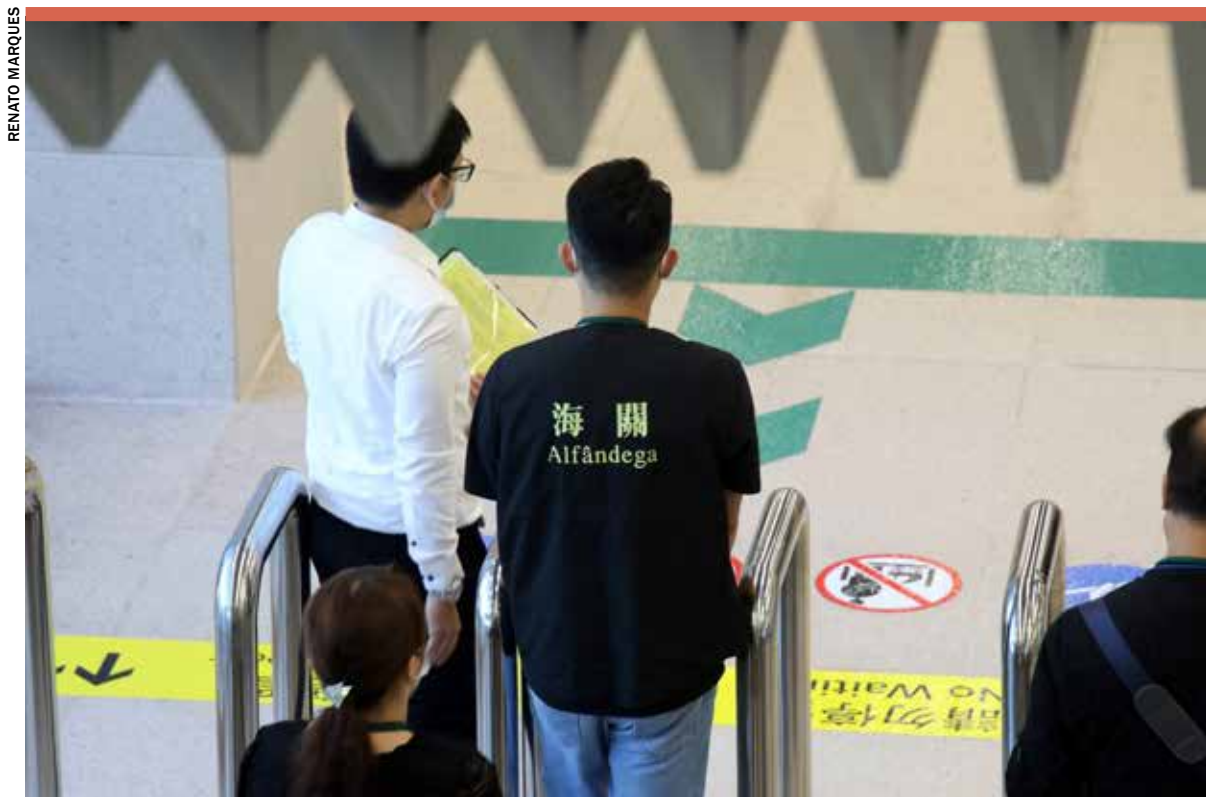


# TUI CONFIRMS PENALTY OF DISMISSAL TO CUSTOMS OFFICER

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE Court of Final Appeal (TUI) has confirmed the penalty of dismissal from the force applied to an officer from the Customs Service that abused three police officers from the Public Security Police Force (PSP) in a street of Macau, the Office of the president of the TUI informed.

The case, that dates back from April 2015, had already been judged by the Court of Second Instance. The Court of Second Instance had also upheld the penalty imposed by the Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak. In December 2018, the Secretary dismissed the officer on the grounds that the officer's behavior was in severe violation of the Regulation of Militarized Personnel of the Macau Security Forces, when such personnel "should always serve as an example of respect for the legal system and act in a way that reinforces the society's confidence in the



institution that it serves."

In the appeal to the TUI, the officer claimed that his behavior was justified as he was drunk and had lost the capaci-

ty to make a proper judgment of the situation and his behavior.

The TUI judges did not accept this justification. They

noted that his state of incapacity had never been proven and that on the contrary, an assessment as to his capacity may have resulted in the con-

clusion that he was perfectly conscious and capable of acting on free will if he was not able to form a completely logical judgment.

The judges also noted in the ruling that the officer's behavior shows that he is unfit for the post and that he has also lost the institution's trust and that of his peers to perform his duties.

At the time of the events, the PSP officers approached the customs officer in the early hours of the day in a street in Macau as he was shouting.

The PSP requested his identification documents and asked him to leave. However, the customs officer challenged them several times by standing in the zebra crossing and on the road pavement and littering with a cigarette on the ground.

An argument broke out, with the customs officer insulting and making several accusations against the PSP officers.

He was detained and taken to the superior officer, during which time he continued to make accusations and disrespectful remarks, leading to the disciplinary procedures that resulted in his dismissal from the force.

## CRIME

# Man caught in scam involving Covid-19 gov't support to SMEs

RENATO MARQUES

**A** 41-year-old male resident of Macau is being accused of a series of crimes by his business partner, the Judiciary Police (PJ) reported yesterday during the regular joint press conference of the police forces.

According to the PJ, the investigation started after the suspect's partner made a complaint directly to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP), which the MP redirected to PJ for investigation.

The suspect and the victim have a joint partnership in a restaurant and bar business located at the Areia Preta District.

The victim claims that between September 2020 and March 2021, while he was absent from Macau, the suspect took around 200,000 patacas from the business account and abused his position to make an application in the company's name to the Economic Bureau (DSE) for a Covid-19 government support measure which he then used for an unlawful purpose.



According to the victim, after he found that around 200,000 patacas were missing from the company account, he also discovered that later in April, 399,000 patacas had been transferred into and then immediately out of the same account.

He said that he confronted the suspect who allegedly replied that it was his money and not company money.

A deeper search into the company documents revealed that the money was a loan from the DSE obtained as part of the pandemic relief measures to small and medium-sized enterprises

(SMEs) that would need to be repaid. In addition, use of the loan was strictly confined to the payment of staff salaries and the acquisition of goods and equipment related to Covid-19 pandemic prevention and control measures.

On September 2, the PJ requested that the suspect respond to the case, but he refused to respond to any questions from the investigators.

However, the PJ says that it has enough evidence of the suspect's wrongdoing and has forwarded the case back to MP for to accuse the suspect of fraud and abuse of trust.



GBA

## CHINA ISSUES PLAN FOR FURTHER DEVELOPING SHENZHEN-HONG KONG COOPERATION ZONE

**C**HINA'S central authorities have issued a new plan for further developing a cooperation zone for the southern metropolis of Shenzhen and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

According to the plan, the reform and opening up of the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone will be comprehensively deepened.

The plan, issued by the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council, was

made public yesterday.

The general plan to establish the cooperation zone was approved by the State Council in 2010.

A total of 11,500 Hong Kong-invested companies have been registered in the zone, with registered capital reaching 1.28 trillion yuan, according to official data released in late August.

The total area of the cooperation zone will be expanded to 120.56 square km from 14.92 square km, said the new development plan.

The new blueprint

was formulated to help Qianhai better play an exemplary and leading role in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area, said the plan.

By 2035, Qianhai will boast world class business environment, and will become an engine for high-quality development with strong capability in global resource allocation, breeding innovation and leading coordinated development, according to goals laid out in the new development plan. **MDT/XINHUA**



GUANGDONG-MACAU

# Liaison Office: Master plan to enrich practice of 'One country, two systems'

**T**HE Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macau Special Administrative Region (SAR) hailed the master plan for building the Guangdong-Macau in-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin.

Issued by the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council, the plan is a major move by the central authorities to support Macau's development and was made public on Sunday.

The project aims to "inject new impetus into the steady and sustained implementation of 'One country, two systems' with Macau characteristics," said a spokesperson for the office.

Building the in-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin will promote Macau's economic diversification, enrich the practice of "One country, two systems," and promote the quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau



Greater Bay Area, the spokesperson said.

The plan prioritizes the integration of policies and measures. The spokesperson said it demonstrates the central authorities' "full recognition of the successful implementation of One country, two systems" in Macau and their resolve to support Macau in in-

tegrating into the overall national development and promote the long-term prosperity and stability of Macau."

Under the plan, mechanisms of mutual discussion, joint construction, administration and shared benefits between Guangdong and Macau will run smoothly by 2024.

According to the plan, Guangdong and Macau will jointly form the administrative committee of the cooperation zone which will run under a "dual director" system led by the two regions.

The master plan also defines the Cooperation Zone in Hengqin as a new space for Macau residents to live and work within. The

Cooperation Zone will be developed to align with Macau's public services and social security system, for the convenience of Macau residents—especially younger residents—allowing them to study, work, set up businesses and live in the zone.

The Cooperation Zone will also explore the potential of the Greater Bay Area in systems innovation, technological development, and the flow of capital, information and talent.

The Greater Bay Area is a national initiative that President Xi Jinping has planned and promoted in person.

President Xi has highlighted that the original intention behind developing the new area in Hengqin was to create a "favourable environment for Macau's industrial diversification."

A press conference will be held on Friday by the SAR government to announce further details on the plan. LV/XINHUA

AD

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COVID-19

# GOV'T TO STEP UP PCR FREQUENCY FOR FOUR GROUPS OF INDIVIDUALS

ANTHONY LAM

**C**ertain individuals will be institutionally required to take the Covid-19 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test as often as once per day, Dr Tai Wa Hou, medical director of the public Conde de São Januário Hospital (CHCSJ), announced at the regular press briefing yesterday.

Tai said that these key groups will include medical staff who are in contact with Covid-19 patients, border and commercial airline crew members, quarantine hotel workers and handlers of frozen food cargoes.

These groups of individuals are required to take at least one PCR test every seven days. Their employers, workplace attendants or guards must check the validity of their health codes every day that they go in to work.

Certain individuals within these groups who face higher occupational risks will be subjected to more frequent testing, according to Tai. These individuals include commercial airliner janitors and "other workers who have direct



contact with international visitors," Tai said, noting that they will be required to take the PCR test every day.

According to Tai, the stricter measures are required to defend against imported new cases and new outbreaks, and are in accordance with the suggestions of the National Health Commission's (NHC) expert team. He added

that the two recent asymptomatic cases in Guangzhou also posed intensifying risks to the city.

At the same series of press conferences last week, Tai made it clear that the NHC experts are not happy with the city's vaccination rate. He disclosed that the government was evaluating ways to encourage a higher vaccination rate within Macau.

The health authority is eyeing certain "specific groups of individuals," which include civil servants, other medical staff, social work institution staff, teaching and campus staffs, public transport drivers, as well as "other groups exposed to high risks" who may be subject to "strengthening measures," according to Tai.

Tai disclosed that the authority

is considering updating the vaccination and PCR testing measures on these groups. He hinted that the measures should be unveiled soon.

Tai said that for the time being, the PCR test will be free-of-charge for these workers.

There is somewhat of a loophole, however, because Tai explained that the PCR test results will be shown on the health code, which means that the test takers can use the results to visit mainland China.

"This is not our goal, of course, but we'll explore technically how we can change this [loophole]," the medical doctor said. The use of PCR testing for the purposes of visiting mainland China is out of the reasonable scope of fund allocations.

## SON IN FAMILY OF FOUR RECOVERED

The 15-year-old son in the family of four diagnosed with Covid-19 in early August left hospital yesterday and is now in recovery quarantine in the Public Health Clinical Center in Coloane.

He will be released from quarantine on October 3 if he does not relapse.

Tai revealed that the teenager was in a stable condition during the entire hospitalization period. He only experienced a slight loss of the senses of smell and taste.

AD

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白秀蘭 Susana Batalha  
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斐彥德 Gonçalo Figueiredo  
潘卡莉 Candice Pun  
陳子健 Kimi Chan  
伍福賢 Domingos Ng



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# Weibo bans BTS fan account for illegal fundraising

**C**HINESE social media platform Weibo banned a fan club of popular South Korean K-pop band BTS from posting for 60 days, saying it had raised funds illegally, days after photographs of a customized airplane funded by the fan club were posted online.

The fan club account, which had over 1.1 million followers on Weibo, was centered around BTS member Jimin. The restrictions imposed on the account came amid China's campaign to clean up the entertainment industry and clamp down on "irrational behavior" exhibited by fans.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has called for a "national rejuvenation" with tighter Communist Party control of business, education, culture and religion.

The party has since reduced children's access to online games and is trying to discourage what it sees as unhealthy attention toward celebrities. Last week, the government banned effeminate men on TV and banned idol development shows for their "low moral values" that



Members of South Korean K-pop band BTS

could be a bad influence on the youth.

The BTS fan account was banned from posting on Weibo after images circulated online last week of a customized airplane from Jeju Air with images of Jimin on it. The customized airplane was part of the club's plans to celebrate his 26th birthday in October.

The stunt drew swift criticism online for its excess. Following the backlash, the account issued a statement last week on its feed urging fans to be "rational" when chasing celebrities for a "harmonious and

healthy internet environment."

Weibo said in a statement Sunday that the group has been banned from posting for 60 days after it was found to have raised funds illegally.

"Weibo firmly opposes such irrational star-chasing behavior and will deal with it seriously," the statement said.

The fan club began raising money in April to prepare for the birthday celebrations, according to state-owned media Global Times, with over 1 million yuan (\$150,000) raised in the first three minutes

of the fundraising activity and 2.3 million yuan (\$360,000) in the first hour.

The club also planned to run advertisements celebrating Jimin's birthday in newspapers like The New York Times.

Weibo also said in a separate statement on Sunday that it banned 21 other fan accounts for 30 days for posting "irrational star-chasing" content. The banned fan accounts were mostly centered around K-pop celebrities, such as members of South Korean boy bands NCT and EXO, and girl group Blackpink. **MDT/AP**

# Chinese star cuts ties with Swiss watch brand over Taiwan

**C**HINESE singer and actor Lu Han, a former member of popular K-pop boy band EXO, said last weekend he would cut ties with Swiss luxury watch brand Audemars Piguet after its CEO referred to Taiwan as a country in an interview.

China, which claims Taiwan as its territory, objects to any reference to the self-governing island as a country. Under the one-country policy, other countries have diplomatic relations with either China or Taiwan, but not both.

In a video circulating online, the watch brand's CEO François-Henry Bannamias referred to

Taiwan as an "ultra-modern, high-tech country" in an interview.

Lu has been an ambassador for Audemars Piguet since 2018. A statement posted by Lu's studio said he and his team urged the watch brand to apologize in both Chinese and English but failed to reach an agreement with the company, leading Lu to cut ties.

"National interests are above all else, Lu Han and Lu Han's studio will defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity," the statement read.

It wasn't immediately clear what the source of their disagreement was. Audemars Piguet on Sa-

turday had posted a Chinese statement on Weibo apologizing for its error.

"We apologize for the recent incorrect statement. Audemars Piguet has always adhered to the one-China position and firmly safeguarded China's national sovereignty and territorial integrity," the statement read.

Celebrities in China are often pressured to conform to values espoused by the Chinese government or face repercussions.

Celebrities such as Fan Bingbing and Zheng Shuang have been fined heavily for evading taxes, and popular actress Zhao Wei last week had her name removed from cre-

dits of films and TV shows she had starred in without explanation.

In March, over 30 Chinese celebrities cut ties with brands such as Nike, H&M and Adidas after state media criticized the brands for expressing concerns over the use of Xinjiang cotton following complaints of abuse and discrimination against ethnic minorities in the region.

More than 1 million members of the Uyghur and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities have been confined to detention camps in Xinjiang, according to foreign governments and researchers. **MDT/AP**

## ADVERTORIAL

# GREAT TIMES

MGM 'Virtual Exhibition' – Chole Ho

**L**ET'S take a deep dive into the art discourse of MGM Chairman's Collection at "Awakening" Special Exhibition of "Art Macao 2021".



Artist of the Session – Chole Ho, b.1987

Belonging to a new generation of talented artists from Hong Kong, Ho is well versed in applying oriental mediums like Chinese ink, spray paint, blue ink, and acrylics in her works. As Ho maintains an eye for the unexpected yet aesthetically familiar, her multicultural background also ensures a seamless blend of East and West elements that help make a bold, yet personal statement.



One of her art pieces in the MGM Chairman's Collection titled "Blue Mountain" is emblematic of Ho's artistic propositions. Her unique brush technique creates a special texture of the ink. The main body of the mountains is composed by ink block and varied in shades, creating different mountainous scenes with the help of a little imagination. A touch of brown appears on the right side of the piece, adding a sense of uncertainty to the overall composition. Seen from another perspective, the piece brings us a pastoral landscape through the lens of a misty glass window, seemingly making the statement that "beauty is not afar no matter what obstacles stand in the way".



"Mountain Rising"

Painters usually emphasize the grandness of mountains with rigid lines, but Ho attempted to use a mellow brush stroke to outline the mounts border, applying different patterns to reinterpret the traditional Chinese landscape. A soft brown color from coffee endows the picture mobility, if have something is breaking through the soil. Ho's spiritual expression towards the nature allows beholder to have further association to appreciate her works.

MGM "Awakening" Special Exhibition at MGM COTAI is opened 24 hours for the public. Visit to explore the masterpieces of the renowned artists and immerse in the artistic atmosphere all day and night!

Visit the official website for more details:  
<https://awakeninglion.mgm.mo/en/>



AP PHOTO



This booking photo provided by the Polk County, Florida Sheriff's Office shows Bryan Riley who was arrested Sunday

USA

# Florida gunman killed four, including mom still holding baby

KELLI KENNEDY

A man wearing full body armor fatally shot four people, including a mother and the 3-month-old baby she was cradling, and engaged in a massive gunfight with police and deputies before he was wounded and surrendered, a Florida sheriff said yesterday [Macau time]. An 11-year-old girl who was shot seven times survived.

Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd said during a press conference that even after 33-year-old Bryan Riley was arrested Sunday morning, he was so aggressive that he tried to wrestle a gun from police as he lay on his hospital gurney.

Judd said Riley, a former Marine who served as a sharpshooter in both Iraq and Afghanistan, seemed to have targeted his victims at random and appeared to be suffering from mental health issues. Judd said Riley's girlfriend told authorities Riley had been slowly unraveling for weeks and repeatedly told her that he could commu-

nicate directly with God.

"They begged for their lives and I killed them anyway," Judd said Riley told them during an interrogation.

Investigators said preliminary evidence shows 40-year-old Justice Gleason just happened to be an unlucky stranger out mowing his lawn Saturday night when Riley drove by his home in Lakeland, about 30 miles east of Tampa, saying God told him to stop because Gleason's daughter was going to commit suicide.

A second, unidentified person also confronted Riley, telling him that story wasn't true and warned they'd call police if he didn't leave, Judd said. He referred to the person as a victim but declined to clarify which one.

Authorities responded to the scene but never found Riley.

About nine hours later, around 4:30 a.m., Riley returned to the home, laying out glowsticks to create a path leading to the house to draw officers "into an ambush," Judd said.

Randomly, a lieutenant

far in the distance heard popping noises and immediately put the agency on active-shooter mode, bringing all state and local law enforcement in the area to the scene.

Following the sounds of gunfire, authorities arrived at the home and found Riley's white truck ablaze and an unarmed Riley outside, dressed in camouflage.

Riley immediately ran inside, where authorities heard another round of gunfire, "a woman scream and a baby whimper," Judd said.

Officers tried to enter the front of the house, but it was barricaded. When they circled to the back, they encountered Riley, who appeared to have put on full body armor including head and knee coverings and a bulletproof vest.

Authorities exchanged heavy gunfire, with dozens "if not hundreds of rounds" fired, before Riley retreated back into the home, according to the sheriff.

Everything fell silent, Judd said, until a helicopter unit alerted authorities on the ground that Riley was coming out. He had been

shot once and was ready to surrender.

Meanwhile, officers heard cries for help inside the home, but were unsure whether there were additional shooters and feared the home was booby-trapped. A brave sergeant rushed in and grabbed the 11-year-old girl who had been shot at least seven times.

She told deputies there were three dead people inside, Judd said, adding that she was rushed into surgery and was expected to survive.

Deputies sent robots into the home to check for explosives and other traps. When it was clear, they found the bodies of Gleason; the 33-year-old mother; the baby; and the baby's 62-year-old grandmother, who was in a separate home nearby. Authorities released only Gleason's name, and did not say if or how he was related to the other victims.

Authorities declined to say how many times the victims had been shot or where they were in the home, but said they were all hiding and huddling in fear. The family dog also was shot to death.

Authorities said Riley's girlfriend of four years, whom he lived with, had been cooperative and was shocked, saying he was never violent but suffered from PTSD and had become increasingly erratic.

She said he'd spent the previous week on what he called a mission from God, stockpiling supplies that he said were for Hurricane Ida victims, including \$1,000 worth of cigars.

"Prior to this morning, this guy was a war hero. He fought for his country in Afghanistan and Iraq," said Judd. "And this morning he's a cold-blooded killer."

Riley, who had no criminal history, also told authorities he was on methamphetamines. His vehicle had also been stocked with supplies for a gunfight, authorities said, including bleeding control kits.

While being treated at the hospital, Riley jumped up and tried to grab an officer's gun.

"They had to fight with him again in the emergency room," Judd said, adding that Riley was ultimately tied down and medicated.

He is expected to recover and will be transferred to jail to face charges.

"The big question that all of us has is, 'Why?'" State Attorney Brian Haas said. "We will not know today or maybe ever." MDT/AP

## this day in history

### 1984: EPIDEMIC 'SPREADS TO SECOND HOSPITAL'



Three more people have died in the food poisoning epidemic at hospitals in Yorkshire bringing the total number of deaths to 22.

The outbreak began at Stanley Royd Psychiatric hospital in Wakefield on 26 August.

One of the latest victims comes from a nearby hospital and there are fears the infection may be spreading.

Local health officials have denied this but have still been unable to trace the source of the problem.

Administrators at the hospital have strongly denied allegations of a cover-up and the Chairman of the Wakefield Health Authority, Sir Jack Smart, said they were happy to give all the information they had available.

The investigating team are said to be baffled by conflicting evidence of the infection's source, but it hopes to have better information by the beginning of next week.

The man heading the biological investigation, Dr Geoffrey Ireland, said the investigation had not been easy.

"We were dealing with sick, elderly people - and trying to find out exactly what they eat... proved to be a very difficult situation", he told the BBC.

Doctors working on samples of the bacterium in Leeds have admitted there is only a 50% chance of ever tracing the source of the outbreak.

But with 22 dead and 34 still sick, public health officials in Yorkshire are hoping for answers soon.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The actual number of deaths caused by the salmonella outbreak was 19, with over 400 people infected.

There were calls for a prosecution over the epidemic, but these were hampered by the "crown immunity" of hospitals, which makes such action impossible.

An Institute of Environmental Health report cited 97 similar cases, and the scale of this outbreak forced a change in the law.

On 7 November 1986 crown immunity was removed from NHS kitchens - and the health inspectors moved in.



**YOUR STARS****ARIES****Mar. 21-Apr. 19**

Tuesday's skies make it easy to push ahead, Aries. The detail-oriented Virgo moon pushes you to focus on honing your skills, tackling your workload, and immersing yourself in your craft.

**TAURUS****Apr. 20-May. 20**

The sensual Virgo moon rouses your need for play and romance, making it an ideal day to devote energy towards re-invigorating your love life and mindlessly unwinding.

**GEMINI****May. 21-Jun. 21**

Send your focus towards your roots today, Gemini. Your home and family life need a little attention, and the practical Virgo moon pushes you to do something about it.

**CANCER****Jun. 22-Jul. 22**

Luna's presence here encourages you to immerse yourself in your local neighborhood, wrap up loose ends in ongoing conversations, or commit yourself to writing projects.

**LEO****Jul. 23-Aug. 22**

You're in the mood to get productive beneath today's cosmic landscape. The busybody Virgo moon points your focus towards incomplete projects and the talents in your repertoire that await activation.

**VIRGO****Aug. 23-Sep. 22**

As a Virgo, your relationship with your body is of utmost importance. It's easy to run yourself ragged with nervous energy and hyperactive thinking.

**LIBRA****Sep. 23-Oct. 22**

Let yourself slip behind the scenes today, Libra. You're running low on social fuel and in desperate need of a recharge as the moon marches through ritualistic Virgo.

**SCORPIO****Oct. 23-Nov. 21**

Today's skies work to invigorate you through your sense of community. The moon's presence in capable Virgo sends your focus towards your social network and the long-term aspirations on your list.

**SAGITTARIUS****Nov. 22-Dec. 21**

Carve a path forward with your ambitions, Sagittarius. Tuesday's skies find the moon plowing through achievement-hungry Virgo, helping you devote energy towards getting ahead on a larger scale.

**CAPRICORN****Dec. 22-Jan. 19**

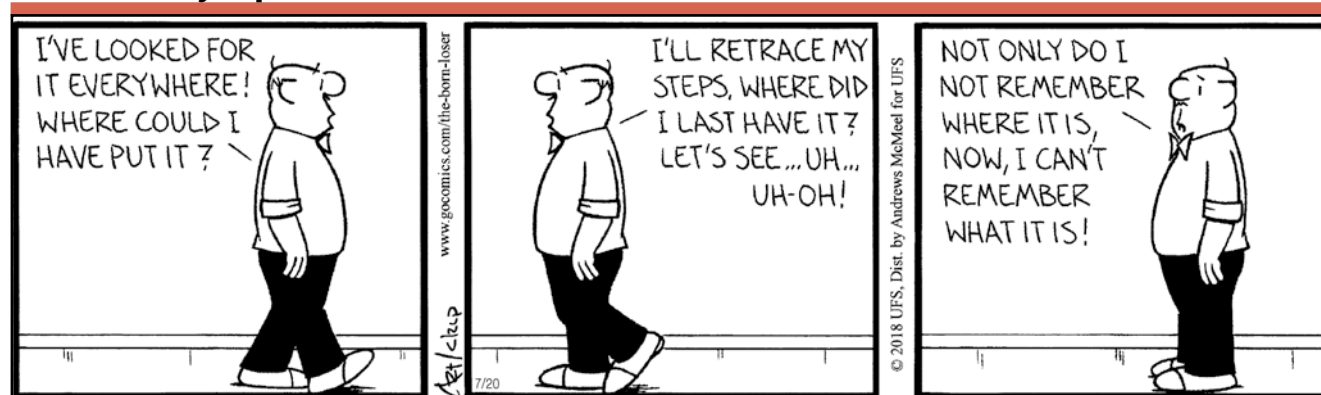
Don't let yourself submit to the same old routine today, Capricorn. You're hungry for fresh horizons and in need of a stimulating sense of adventure as the moon meanders through capable Virgo.

**AQUARIUS****Jan. 20-Feb. 18**

Luna's meet-up with motivated Mars and healing Pluto pushes you to take direct action and speak your truth in these close collaborative bonds - just be mindful that emotional reactions may run hotter than usual.

**PISCES****Feb. 19-Mar. 20**

Luna's union with action-taking Mars and truth-telling Pluto lends a directness and intensity to the day that can help clear the air and move plans forward but may also raise tempers and voices.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom****SUDOKU****EASY**

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

**EASY+**

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

**MEDIUM**

9			1			4		
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5							1	
4			5					3
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**HARD**

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

**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	20	25	cloudy
Harbin	15	27	thunderstorms
Tianjin	20	23	fine
Urumqi	17	30	fine
Xi'an	18	24	overcast
Lhasa	10	20	cloudy
Chengdu	20	26	cloudy
Chongqing	23	27	cloudy
Kunming	17	25	cloudy
Nanjing	25	34	cloudy
Shanghai	27	32	cloudy
Wuhan	22	29	cloudy
Hangzhou	25	32	rain
Taipei	26	32	cloudy
Guangzhou	26	34	thunderstorms
Hong Kong	27	31	cloudy

**WORLD**

Moscow	13	9	rain
Frankfurt	28	14	bright
Paris	29	17	fine
London	29	20	fine
New York	25	18	fine

**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS** 1- Somewhat; 5- Bit of kindling; 9- Acute; 14- Centrepiece of the human face; 15- Screen; 16- Law of Moses; 17- Capital of the Ukraine; 18- Quantity of paper; 19- Low life?; 20- Intoxicating liquor; 22- Steinbeck's birthplace; 24- Watch over; 25- Narrate; 26- Tranquil; 29- Small pulpy fruit; 31- More remote; 32- \_\_\_\_\_ contendere; 33- First name in horror films; 36- Flyers' org.; 37- Put into a list or an inventory; 40- Greek nickname; 41- Fair-hiring abbr.; 42- Exile isle; 43- Melody; 45- Viscounts' superiors; 47- Go back on one's word; 48- Perfumes; 51- Lab fluids; 52- Windpipe; 54- Out of control; 58- Pave over; 59- Christmas song; 61- "So be it"; 62- Buddy; 63- Like some orders; 64- Wife of a rajah; 65- Brightest star in Cygnus; 66- Full of unresolved questions; 67- Looked at;

**DOWN:** 1- "Puppy Love" singer; 2- Labor; 3- Wait \_\_\_\_\_; 4- Follower; 5- Seat occupied by a sovereign; 6- Brandish; 7- Highest mountain in Crete; 8- Precious stones; 9- Less fresh; 10- Sermon; 11- Sports area; 12- Capital of Morocco; 13- Facet; 21- Artist Rousseau; 23- \_\_\_\_\_ con pollo; 26- Coscant's reciprocal; 27- Reflected sound; 28- Stir up; 29- Explosive weapons; 30- Charles Lamb's nom de plume; 32- Dudley Do-Right's love; 33- Emit coherent light; 34- Not a dup.; 35- Pleasing; 38- Pithy; 39- Very hard mineral; 44- Unconscious; 45- Coop up; 46- Pulsating; 47- For sure?; 48- Fine fiddle; 49- \_\_\_\_\_ de menthe; 50- Kind of kitchen; 51- Ledge; 53- Against; 55- If \_\_\_\_\_ be so bold...; 56- Actress Russo; 57- Geraint's lady; 60- Bumbler;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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Ref: 2103 6001 788 ft² 2 1 1



AP PHOTO



Tony Leung (left) and Fala Chen in a scene from "Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings"

## ENTERTAINMENT

# 'SHANG-CHI' BLASTS LABOR DAY RECORDS WITH USD71.4M DEBUT

JAKE COYLE, NEW YORK

ON what's traditionally one of the sleepest weekends at the movies, the Marvel film "Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings" smashed the record for Labor Day openings with an estimated \$71.4 million in ticket sales, giving a box office reeling from the recent coronavirus surge a huge lift heading into the fall season.

The Friday-to-Sunday gross for "Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings," Marvel's first film led by an Asian superhero, ranks as one of the best debuts of the pandemic, trailing only the previous Marvel film, "Black Widow" (\$80.3 million in July). Overseas, it pulled in \$56.2 million for a global three-day haul of \$127.6 million. Disney anticipates "Shang Chi," made for about \$150 million, will add \$12.1 million domestically on Monday.

The Walt Disney Co. opted

to release "Shang-Chi" only in theaters where it will have an exclusive 45-day run. Some of the studio's releases this year, including "Black Widow," have premiered day-and-date in theaters and on Disney+ for \$30.

The strong opening of "Shang-Chi" — forecasts had been closer to \$50 million — was a major relief for Hollywood, which had seen jittery releases the last few weeks during rising COVID-19 cases driven by the delta variant. Several upcoming films have recently postponed out of the fall, including Paramount Pictures' "Top Gun: Maverick," "Jackass Forever" and "Clifford the Big Red Dog." Disney's weekend, though, should lend confidence to upcoming big-budget releases such as the James Bond film "No Time to Die" from MGM and United Artists Releasing, and Sony Pictures' "Venom: Let There Be Carnage."

"Shang-Chi" is the ultima-

te confidence-builder for the theatrical movie industry," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for data firm Comscore. "This was a very important film. This was the first Marvel movie that's opened exclusively theatrically since 'Spider-Man: Far From Home' in July 2019. 'Shang-Chi' is a real testament of the power of a theatrical-first strategy to drive huge numbers of moviegoers to the multiplex."

Perhaps nobody was celebrating Sunday more than theater owners. Exhibitors have argued day-and-date releases significantly cannibalize ticket sales. Warner Bros., which is putting all of its 2021 releases simultaneously on HBO Max, has vowed to end the practice next year.

Adding to that argument is the continuing strong performance of "Free Guy," from Disney's 20th Century Studios. "Free Guy," contractually obligated to be released only in theaters, has grossed \$239.2

million globally. Without an in-home option, the Ryan Reynolds film has held especially strongly; it added \$8.7 million in North America over the weekend, good for third place. In China, "Free Guy" has made \$57 million in less than two weeks. ("Shang-Chi" doesn't yet have a China release date.)

Last week's top film, the Universal horror remake "Candyman," slid to second place with \$10.5 million. After the holiday weekend, Universal pegs its two-week total at \$41.9 million.

Still, you could also read a case for streaming in Disney's figures Sunday. "Shang-Chi," the studio noted, premiered roughly similarly to "Black Widow," which debuted with about \$160 million globally, but took in an additional \$60 million on Disney+ Premier Access. "Black Widow," a much more well-known property, launched before the delta variant was widespread in North America. Its release prompted

a lawsuit from star Scarlett Johansson, who argued the day-and-date approach breached her contract and deprived her of potential earnings. Disney has said the release complied with Johansson's contract and called the suit without merit.

Disney has so far declined to telegraph its future theatrical intentions, including for its next Marvel movie, "Eternals" (due out Nov. 5). Bob Chapek, Disney's chief executive, earlier called the theatrical release of "Shang-Chi" "an interesting experiment" — a label that Canadian actor Simu Liu, who plays Shang-Chi took exception with. "We are not an experiment," Liu wrote on Twitter. "We are the underdog; the underestimated. We are the ceiling-breakers. We are the celebration of culture and joy that will persevere after an embattled year."

At the recent exhibitor convention CinemaCon, where some studios pledged faith in the big screen, Disney didn't make a presentation and instead simply screened "Shang-Chi." Directed by Destin Daniel Cretton, the film is based on a relatively little-known comic and features a largely Asian or Asian American cast, including Tony Leung, Awkwafina and Michelle Yeoh. Audiences and critics have heartily endorsed it. It has a 92% fresh score on Rotten Tomatoes and an "A" CinemaScore from moviegoers.

The success of "Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings" came on a typically quiet weekend for Hollywood — one that would never normally feature the premiere of a new Marvel movie. The previous record over Labor Day weekend was \$30.6 million for 2007's "Halloween." But the pandemic has upended once-orderly release schedules. "Shang-Chi" drove moviegoing overall not to just radically higher levels than the pandemic-marred Labor Day weekend last year, but far above attendance in 2019. **MDT/AP**

## MEDIA

# Apple Daily parent company board resigns, plans to liquidate

HUIZHONG WU, TAIPEI

THE parent company of a defunct pro-democracy paper in Hong Kong, Apple Daily, is liquidating its assets and the board is stepping down, according to a stock exchange filing last weekend.

Next Digital, a publicly traded company, said in an announcement that

all members of its board would resign, and that they hoped to liquidate their assets in an effort to pay staff.

The company's shares had been stopped from trading since June and its bank accounts had been frozen. Its most well-known product, Apple Daily, was forced to shut down that month by authorities

after five of its editors and executives were arrested as part of a national security investigation.

"This meant the Company could no longer legally pay Apple Daily's staff, including reporters, and the Company was also banned from paying costs of doing business such as buying ink and keeping the electricity on," the board

said in its statement Sunday.

They added that they hoped liquidators will be allowed by the Hong Kong government to "authorize payments that directors were banned from approving, including for creditors and for former staff."

The four board members who will resign are: Chairman Ip Yut Kin, Mark

Lambert Clifford, Louis Gordon Crovitz and Lam Chung Yan. Their resignations will be effective by 11:59 p.m. local time Sunday, according to the announcement.

Next Digital was founded by tycoon and pro-democracy activist Jimmy Lai. The company publishes a magazine as well as an Apple Daily in Taiwan.

Hong Kong's Apple Daily was the company's main paper, growing into an outspoken voice for defending the financial capital's freedoms that were not found in mainland China. On its last day, the paper sold all one million copies.

Lai was arrested by Hong Kong police last year and is currently serving a sentence of 20 months. **MDT/AP**



JOHN DUERDEN, SEOUL

FOOTBALL | WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

# Pressure grows on South Korea's Son, Japan's Furuhashi

**J**APAN'S shocking loss to Oman and South Korea's scoreless draw with Iraq to open the third round of Asian World Cup qualifying has increased the pressure on the likes of Kyogo Furuhashi and Son Heung-min to replicate their excellent European club form in the international arena.

Japan, Asia's highest-ranked team at No. 24 in the world, lost 1-0 at home to 79th-ranked Oman last Thursday to end a streak of eight consecutive wins in World Cup qualifying games.

South Korea, aiming for a 10th successive World Cup appearance, needs to rebound from its laborious draw against Iraq when it meets Lebanon on Tuesday.

Son, who signed a four-year extension to his Tottenham Hotspur contract in July, has rarely reproduced his glittering Premier League form when appearing for the national team.

He struggled under the close attention from the defense-minded Iraqis in Seoul last week.

Son played four days earlier in London, scoring the only goal in Tottenham's 1-0 win over Watford, and the cramped schedule took a toll.

"It is obviously difficult to

AP PHOTO



South Korea's Son Heung-min

play in Korea only a couple of days after flying in from Europe," he said. "I have lacked sleep because of the time zone change, but I'll try to prepare for the next one as well as I can."

South Korea coach Paulo Bento said while Asian defenders may focus on Son, it was important that his team didn't

depend entirely on their star forward.

"Concentrating on one player isn't the best way for our team," Bento said. "We need to find the collective solution. We should watch the game and check what we didn't do so well, instead of analyzing just one player."

Elsewhere in the group, Iraq

and Syria, which lost 1-0 to Iran, have to play their home games on foreign soil because of security concerns. Iraq will face Iran in Doha, Qatar and Syria will host the United Arab Emirates in Amman, Jordan.

In Group B, Japan has plenty to work on against China following a deserved loss to Oman.

Celtic winger Furuhashi went on as a substitute against Oman but Japan still couldn't find the net before conceding late.

"There are many aspects we need to address, but we must first redeem ourselves from this loss," Japan coach Hajime Moriyasu said. "While reflecting on the match, we hope to build a positive vibe heading into our next match against China."

The game will take place in Qatar because of travel restrictions and mandatory quarantine for entry into China, which lost its opening game 3-0 to Australia.

Australia coach Graham Ar-

nold said his team was confident as it headed to Hanoi to face Vietnam, which opened with a 3-1 loss to Saudi Arabia.

"I was very proud of the performance of the players considering we only had 1 1/2 training sessions from when we got together but I can just see so much improvement in our team," Arnold said. "I do believe we will get better and better as we play more and more games together."

Arnold's squad is having to play its scheduled home games on the road because of strict quarantine rules for anyone entering Australia. That was also the case for most of the second round of Asian qualifying, but didn't stop the Australians finishing atop their group.

Among the other games today the Oman squad, which returned from Japan to a rapturous welcome at Muscat International Airport, will take on Saudi Arabia. **MDT/AP**



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OPINION

**China Daily**  
Editorial, China Daily

**CHINA SETS GOOD  
EXAMPLE SHARING  
VACCINES**

Even as wealthy countries are considering rolling out vaccine booster shots for their citizens this month, billions of people in the developing world are yet to receive even their first vaccine dose.

In the United States and European Union countries, more than half of the population has already been fully vaccinated, while the figure is less than 2 percent in Africa, according to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

This “vaccine injustice is a shame on all humanity”, as World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said.

As well as being shameful, the large inoculation gap that exists between the rich and poor countries is also harmful to the global anti-pandemic efforts, given the virus is still rampaging across the world and how quickly the virus is mutating.

In contrast to those developed countries that are reluctant to share their vaccines or are even hoarding vaccines, despite the urgent needs of the developing world — whether because of “vaccine nationalism” or political shortsightedness — China has been doing all it can to help other developing countries in their anti-pandemic fight, by providing them with Chinese-made vaccines or helping them produce the lifesaving antigens themselves.

In the latest example, the raw materials necessary for the production of the Chinese Sinopharm vaccine arrived in Belgrade on Saturday, making it possible for Serbia to become the first country in Europe to produce the China-developed vaccine. A plan is in place to produce around 6 million doses by the end of the year.

China has so far provided more than 990 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to other countries, the largest number in the world, according to Deng Boqing, deputy head of the China International Development Cooperation Agency.

“China has provided and is providing vaccines for 105 countries and four international organizations, and exporting vaccines to over 60 countries,” he said at the weekend. It has also provided epidemic prevention supplies to 150 countries and 13 international organizations, and sent 37 medical teams to 34 countries.

What China has done reflects its vision of a community with a shared future for humankind. For it knows that no country is safe until all are safe, and that for countries to reach the target set by the WHO to have 10 percent of their most vulnerable population vaccinated by the end of September, it is morally obliged to extend a helping hand.

With more than 2.1 billion doses of vaccines already administered to its own population and the spread of the virus basically contained within the country, China is setting a good example of taking care of its own people while also helping others in need. The wealthy countries can learn from the example that China is setting.

**TALIBAN SAY THEY TOOK PANJSHIR,  
LAST HOLDOUT AFGHAN PROVINCE**

The Taliban yesterday said they have taken control of Panjshir province north of Kabul, the last holdout of anti-Taliban forces in the country and the only province the Taliban had not seized during their blitz across Afghanistan last month.

Thousands of Taliban fighters overran eight districts of Panjshir overnight, according to witnesses from the area who spoke on condition of anonymity, fearing for their safety. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid issued a sta-

tement, saying Panjshir was now under control of Taliban fighters.

“We tried our best to solve the problem through negotiations, and they rejected talks and then we had to send our forces to fight,” Mujahid told a press conference in Kabul.

The anti-Taliban forces had been led by the former vice president, Amrullah Saleh, and also the son of the iconic anti-Taliban fighter Ahmad Shah Massoud who was killed just days before the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States.

AP PHOTO



**US CATTLE PRODUCERS  
HAVE A BEEF WITH 35-YEAR  
MARKETING CAMPAIGN**

**ROXANA HEGEMAN,  
BELLE PLAINE**

CATTLE producers for 35 years have been bankrolling one of the nation’s most iconic marketing campaigns, but now many want to end the program that created the “Beef. It’s What’s for Dinner” slogan.

What’s the ranchers’ beef? It’s that their mandatory fee of \$1 per head of cattle sold is not specifically promoting American beef at a time when imports are flooding the market and plant-based, “fake meat” products are proliferating in grocery stores.

“The American consumer is deceived at the meat counter and our checkoff funds do not do anything to help create clarity or answer the question of where was that sirloin born, raised and harvested,” said Karina Jones, a Nebraska cattle rancher and field director for the R-CALF USA trade group that is seeking to end the checkoff.

Opponents of the beef checkoff program, which was established by federal law in 1986, are urging cattle producers to sign a petition calling for a referendum vote on terminating the program.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack last month granted an extension until Oct. 3 for them to collect the required signatures due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Petition supporters argue the beef checkoff is a

government-mandated assessment to fund government speech. Beef checkoff funds by law cannot be used to advertise against other meats such as pork or chicken, nor can they be used for lobbying. But they complain much of the money nonetheless props up lobbying groups such as the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association that oppose mandatory country-of-origin labels.

They also point out that today’s U.S. cattle industry is radically different than it was when the checkoff program was put into place, with more imported beef and greater meatpacker concentration.

“Now we are paying the advertising bill for four major meatpacking plants that are able to import beef and source it from cheaper countries and fool our consumers,” Jones said.

The petition has created a schism in the livestock industry between those who support the checkoff and those who don’t.

But consumers have a stake in the fight as well.

One way to look at this is that consumers probably should not like the checkoff program because it raises their beef prices, and some consumer groups are opposed to it for that reason, said Harry Kaiser, director of Cornell University’s Commodity Promotion Research Program. Another way to look at it is that the checkoff also funds research into

beef safety and the development of new beef products, he said.

“Consumers pay a few pennies more, but it is a safer product, a better quality product,” Kaiser said.

Kaiser, who conducts research for the U.S. Agriculture Department on commodity advertising and promotion programs, wrote in an economic analysis that domestic beef demand between 2014 and 2018 would have been 14.3% lower without the consumer advertising and other promotional activities of the Cattlemen’s Beef Promotion and Research Board. In 2019, the board had a budget of \$40.5 million to spend on activities that aim to increase beef demand.

Kaiser also noted in a phone interview that the checkoff-funded marketing research found that one reason consumers have been reluctant to purchase beef is because they felt it takes too long to prepare after coming home from work. That led to development of more easy-to-prepare beef products that consumers can buy at the supermarket and just pop into the microwave to cook.

But cattle producers say it’s been two decades since checkoff-funded beef innovations like the flat iron steak, a high-value cut that came out of a low-value area of the carcass that previously had just been made into chuck roast. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



**Israeli** forces launched a massive manhunt in northern Israel and the occupied West Bank after six Palestinian prisoners escaped overnight from a high-security facility in an extremely rare breakout. They have erected roadblocks and are conducting patrols in the area. Israel’s Army Radio also said 400 prisoners are being moved as a protective measure against any additional escape attempts. The radio said the prisoners escaped through a tunnel from the Gilboa prison.

AP PHOTO



**Guinea** Mutinous soldiers in the West African nation of Guinea detained President Alpha Conde (pictured) today [Macau time] after hours of heavy gunfire rang out near the presidential palace in the capital, then announced on state television that the government had been dissolved in an apparent coup d’etat. The country’s borders were closed and its constitution was declared invalid.

AP PHOTO



**UK** Singer Sarah Harding (pictured) of the British pop group Girls Aloud has died after a battle with breast cancer, her mother said yesterday [Macau time]. She was 39. The singer said last August that she had been diagnosed with breast cancer and it had spread to other parts of her body. Her mother Marie said on Instagram: “It’s with deep heartbreak that today I’m sharing the news that my beautiful daughter Sarah has sadly passed away.”

**Italy** Border police at Rome’s main airport yesterday [Macau time] prevented a Naples tobacco shop owner suspected of running off with a customer’s winning game ticket from boarding a flight to the Canary Islands, Italian news reports said. The man didn’t have the fished card worth 500,000 euros (\$580,000) on himself, but he did have a plane ticket for Fuerteventura, one of the Spain’s Canary Islands. The man, who hasn’t been identified, was wanted for investigation of suspected theft.