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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'



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102 LOCAL ATHLETES ARE COMPETING AT THE 14TH EDITION OF THE NATIONAL GAMES CURRENTLY BEING HELD IN SHAANXI PROVINCE

A 47-YEAR-OLD MAN WITH HISTORY OF DRUG TRAFFICKING WAS ARRESTED AGAIN

THREE ASTRONAUTS WHO LIVED FOR 90 DAYS ON CHINA'S SPACE STATION DEPARTED YESTERDAY IN PREPARATION FOR RETURNING TO EARTH

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Indonesia An Indonesian court ruled yesterday that President Joko Widodo and six other top officials have neglected citizens' rights to clean air and ordered them to improve the poor air quality in the capital. A three-judge panel at the Central Jakarta District Court notched a victory for a healthy living environment, siding with 32 residents who filed a lawsuit two years ago against Widodo and the ministers for environment, health and home affairs, as well as the provincial governors of Jakarta, Banten and West Java.



Thailand Taxi fleets are giving new meaning to the term "rooftop garden," as they utilize the roofs of cabs idled by the coronavirus crisis to serve as small vegetable plots. Workers from two taxi cooperatives assembled the miniature gardens this week using black plastic garbage bags stretched across bamboo frames. On top, they added soil in which a variety of crops, including tomatoes, cucumbers and string beans, were planted.



Sri Lanka Environmentalists are challenging a court order issued earlier this month that would allow the return of 14 illegally captured wild elephants to people accused of buying them from traffickers. Rights groups and lawyers say the Sept. 6 court order is based on a government decree that violates Sri Lankan environmental laws. They fear the order could encourage a resurgence of trafficking of wild elephants, putting them at risk.



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GOV'T DEFENDS ERADICATION OF COBBLESTONE PATHS

ANTHONY LAM

IN response to public confusion regarding the eradication of Portuguese cobblestones on two streets in the St Lazarus District, the government defended its decision with safety and historical record as justification.

Officials from the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), which is responsible for the roadwork, and the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), responsible for monitoring cultural heritage in the city, discussed the matter on the sidelines of a recent Urban Planning Committee Plenary.

On September 1, the Times sent an inquiry on the matter to the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM). No response has been received.

When questioned by the press, Lo Chi Kin, vice president of the IAM's Administration Committee on Municipal Affairs, emphasized safety as the reason for the work, adding that sufficient communication has been

RENATO MARQUES



conducted with the IC.

Lo revealed that the two slopes, Rua de Eduardo Marques and Rua de São Miguel, have so far recorded about a dozen accidents involving drivers and pedestrians

slipping and falling. Some of those involved, according to Lo, filed for compensation from the government.

He added that the IAM had tried to look for a safer material

be paved with reinforced concrete. Lo stressed that both bureaus are mindful of conservation and aesthetics.

In the same interview, Deland Leong Wai Man, vice-president of the IC, explained the bureau's main concern is whether the cobblestone is "the most original element historically."

She said that the materials and patterns used on the two slopes were only decided upon later by the municipal body. Thus the eradication of the most recent design had not led to "our sacrificing certain historical authenticity."

Leong stressed that safety was not the primary factors taken into account. Instead, it began with the cultural preservation perspective. "This is an aesthetic issue," she said. "Perhaps some consider reinforced concrete a relatively ordinary material, but our concern still falls within preservation."

In an earlier interview with Chinese newspaper Exmoo, urban planner Lam Iek Chit attributed the debate to the lack of urban design guidelines. He explained that such guidelines could help the government make designs that harmonized architecture and façades with nearby roads and lamposts.

102 LOCAL ATHLETES COMPETE IN NATIONAL GAMES

ELSIE Ao Ieong, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture and leader of the Macau delegation to the National Games 2021, attended the Games' opening ceremony on Wednesday.

The Macau delegation to the games consists of 102 athletes competing in 17 events, including athletics, water sports (swimming, artistic swimming, diving), cycling (road and track), triathlon, beach volleyball, table tennis, badminton, tennis, karate-do, judo, taekwondo, fencing, boxing, wushu (taolu and sanda), shooting, canoeing (speed) and sailing (RS-X, Laser).

Following the opening ceremony, the judo competition commenced yesterday.

This year's National Games is being held in Shaanxi Province and will be comprised of 35 sports.

As the People's Republic



of China's largest and highest-standard integrated sporting event, the National Games is held every four years. The 14th edition was officially opened by President Xi Jinping.

The Macau government stressed that rigorous closed-loop pandemic management measures would be implemented. According to the government, all mem-

bers of the delegation completed Covid-19 vaccination prior to arriving in Shaanxi, and were tested for SARS-CoV-2 48 hours before, and 7 and 14 days after arrival. While in Shaanxi, they will be tested for the virus regularly as part of the Games' requirements.

After returning to Macau, they will also take further tests for the coronavirus. AL

MUST OPENS ART MACAO EXHIBITION

THE Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) opened the "Light of MUST" exhibition on Wednesday, as part of this year's Art Macao.

Art Macao: Macao International Art Biennale 2021 is an artistic initiative held under the patronage of the Secretariats of Social Affairs and Culture, as well as of Economy and Finance.

The biennale aims to transform Macau into "a base for exchange and cooperation with Chinese

culture as the mainstream and the coexistence of different cultures," contributing to the development of a cultured Bay Area.

The MUST exhibition is divided into two exhibition areas. Exhibition area A is mainly focused on the outstanding work of teachers and students from the Fine Arts Program of the university. The works include installations, multimedia art, video, oil painting, Chinese painting, comprehensive materials,

cultural and creative design, landscape design, and more.

Exhibition area B collects excellent "anti-epidemic poster" works from across the Two-Shores-and-Four-Region and worldwide, reflecting the joint resistance to the pandemic via design.

The university notes that the exhibition is a key part of the 2021 Ministry of Culture and Tourism Mainland-SARs Exchange Program.

The exhibition is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day until October 13, located from the third to the sixth floors of Building R of the university. AL



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New EU-China strategy includes Macau, gov't expresses opposition

LYNZY VALLES

CHINA slammed the European Parliament's adoption of a new EU-China strategy, which comments on China's political, economic, social and foreign policies, and makes accusations against China on issues related to Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Taiwan.

This follows a landmark report yesterday in which the European Parliament urged the European Union to adopt a new China strategy, focusing on the Chinese government's alleged human rights intrusions.

According to the spokesperson of the Chinese Mission to the EU, the comments were "based on prejudice and lies."

In the document, it was mentioned that Macau was prohibited to hold "ceremonies to mark the anniversary of the Tiananmen massacre and media organizations [were pressured] to adopt a pro-China editorial line. This summer, the Chinese authorities excluded 21 candi-



dates, most of whom members of pro-democracy movements, from participating in the next legislative [election]."

The amendment to the EU's strategy also calls on China to respect the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration and the Basic Law of Macau which will be in force until 2049, "stopping any interference in the electoral processes and the functioning of the media."

The document has now also included mention of Macau in its

call to protect human rights and support for the public. Prior to this amendment, Macau was not included.

The new EU-China strategy report recognizes that China is a "co-operation and negotiating partner" for the EU. However, it highlights differences in ideologies and values, and highlights that China and the EU are systemic rivals.

"This is certainly not the right way to improve and develop China-EU relations. We disagree with this

view," the Chinese Mission spokesperson commented.

"This constitutes a gross interference in China's internal affairs and a violation of basic norms in international relations as well as the EU's commitments on relevant issues. China is firmly opposed to it," the spokesperson added.

The official hopes that the EU

side will "pay attention to these rational voices, take a comprehensive and objective view of China's development and do more to promote the development of bilateral relations."

In a report adopted yesterday — by 570 votes in favor, 61 against with 40 abstentions — the European Parliament outlines six pillars on which the EU should build a new strategy to engage with China: cooperation on global challenges; engagement on international norms and human rights; identifying risks and vulnerabilities; building partnerships with like-minded partners; fostering strategic autonomy; and defending European interests and values.

MACAU GOV'T SAYS ELECTIONS FOR THE AL 'ARE INTERNAL AFFAIRS'

THE Macau SAR government late last night expressed its "resolute opposition," saying it "deeply regrets the content concerning Macau" of the report on a New EU-China strategy approved by the European Parliament.

"Elections for the VII Legislative Assembly (AL) were held in an orderly manner and in compliance with the Basic Law of the Macau Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. The note sent to the newsrooms

added. The statement considered that the elections for the AL "are internal affairs of the Macau SAR, and therefore no foreign institution, including the European Parliament, has the right to intervene."

The SAR government "continues, as always, to guarantee the freedom of the press and the fundamental rights of Macau residents, in accordance with the Law," said the local authorities.

AD

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



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Facilitate Investment and Trade:

- A high-level market access facilitation system.
- Relax the restrictions on investment and trade in the Cooperation Zone.



Master Plan (full version)



Corresponding Contents

SECTOR GUIDELINES FOR COVID-19 EXPECTED IN COMING DAYS

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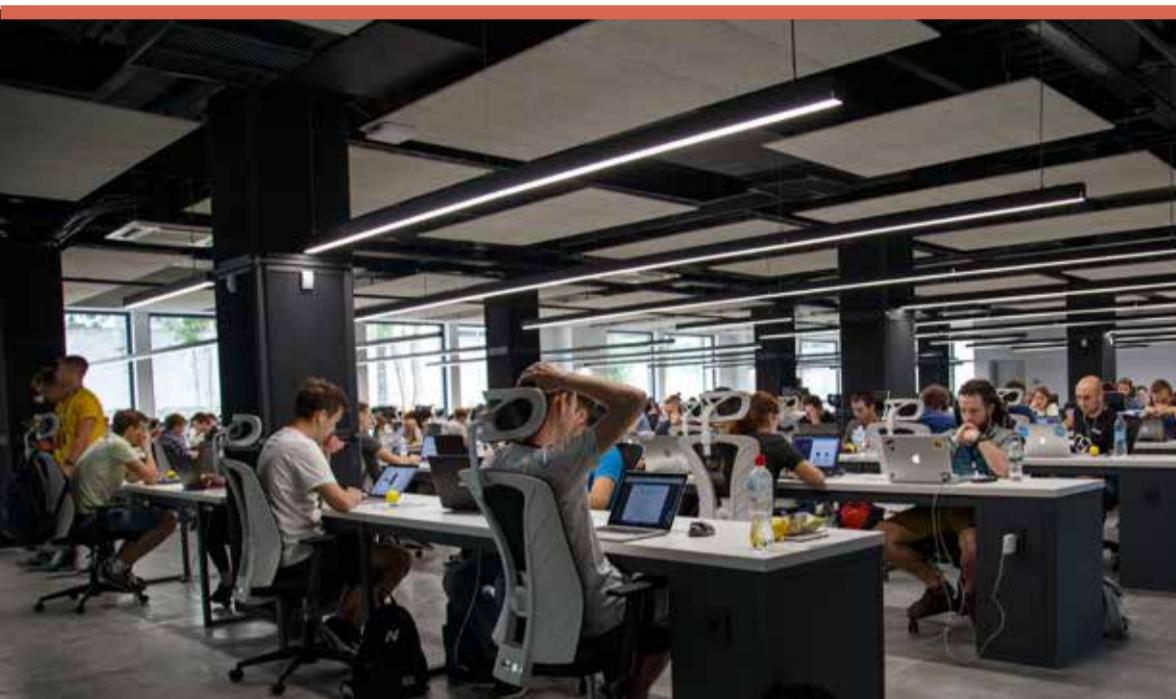
LOCAL organizations should expect to receive more specific Covid-19 guidelines for each activity sector or profession from the relevant government entities in coming days, Dr. Leong Iek Hou, coordinator of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said during yesterday's briefing from local health authorities.

Leong was addressing the many questions from the media brought up earlier this week when the authorities announced that they would implement a new infection prevention measure requiring workers to either be vaccinated against Covid-19 or undergo frequent nucleic acid tests (NAT).

Leong clarified yesterday that individual entities should not create their own rules on the matter. Instead, the supervising government entity or department would issue guidelines appropriate for each case, she said.

"For example, for schools, the supervisory entity is the Edu-

ALEX KOTLIARSKYI



cation and Youth Development Bureau and, according to our [Health Bureau's] general guidelines, the bureau will adjust them [for] schools," Leong stated, noting that the same would occur in most cases.

"Most private entities also have supervisory entities, and they are studying the details to

issue guidelines to each company. In the upcoming days, I believe that many public services and supervisory entities will issue their guidelines according to the sector," Leong remarked.

She explained that this measure is aimed at all workers who have direct contact with the public and who work in closed in-

door spaces. She reaffirmed the main principle that "they need to be inoculated, but they can choose not to by replacing the vaccine requirement with a NAT every seven days," she said, referring to the guidelines issued by the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP), which apply to civil servants.

EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE PROCESS

Questioned on how people might obtain proof that they cannot be vaccinated and therefore access NATs free of charge, Leong explained that people need to book an appointment for vaccination and attend as scheduled. At the appointment they will be subject to initial evaluation by a physician, who is the only authority able to decide that someone is not able to get the vaccine. In this situation, a certificate would be issued to certify that decision, she said, noting that this process is common in other situations.

Things are slightly different in the case of pregnant women. If they are civil servants this task will be facilitated without the need for their involvement. The SAFP will create a list of all pregnant staff members and issue their certificates automatically.

Those working in the private sector will need to request it during their periodic health appointments related to their pregnancy.

For mothers who are breastfeeding, Leong said there is no such problem. Data available states that breastfeeding mothers can receive an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech) and continue to breastfeed without any risk.

COVID-19

Demand for vaccines increased since 'jab or job' announced

RENATO MARQUES

HEALTH authorities said yesterday that demand for vaccines has increased significantly since the government announced a measure known as "jab or job" earlier this week, with the intention to vaccinate more of Macau's working class.

During the health authorities' regular Covid-19 briefing, Dr. Leong Iek Hou, coordinator of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said that the demand for vaccines has increased significantly. It has risen from an average of 2,000 bookings per day last week to 3,000 to 4,000 inoculation bookings each day this week, Leong said.

Leong admitted that the initiative was a response to less-than-positive remarks regarding the vaccination rate made by the Chinese National Health Commission during a recent visit

to Macau that focused on Covid-19 prevention and control. The measure aims to quickly boost the vaccination rate.

She said it is imperative that people in Macau — especially those suffering from chronic medical conditions and the elderly — understand that they are both the main beneficiaries of vaccination and the reason for the push from the government.

While some people are afraid of the vaccine due to fear of adverse effects, many erroneously believe they are not suitable for vaccination, Leong said.

"Some people have hypertension or diabetes and so they think they cannot have the vaccine [...] but those are not limiting factors. This is the main group that should get the vaccine, as they have a higher risk of complications in case of infection," she explained.



HIGH VACCINATION RATE WON'T EASE BORDERS

When questioned about opening borders and easing border restrictions to countries or regions with a high vaccination rate, Leong noted that this is out of the question as "it does not matter how high their vaccination rate is, what matters is ours."

Leong explained that, as vaccination is not 100% effective in preventing infection, the transmission of the virus by vaccinated individuals is still possible.

"If we ease the restrictions,

we are putting at risk the people [in Macau] with chronic diseases and the elderly. This can cause severe problems and even death. So this has nothing to do with other countries' vaccination rates, but with our vaccination rate," she said.

"If there is a [local outbreak] it might cause the collapse of our health system and this is a very important matter that carries severe risks," she concluded, noting that the current focus is vaccinating the whole population of Macau.

MACAU NOT SUSPENDING SECOND MRNA DOSE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

LOCAL health authorities have no plans to suspend administration of the second dose of the mRNA (Pfizer-BioNTech) vaccine to younger people, Dr. Leong Iek Hou confirmed yesterday.

When asked on the topic, Leong said: "This has to do with mRNA vaccines and related cases of myocarditis. We have had an interdepartmental meeting to reach a consensus on this matter and we think there is not enough reason

to justify the suspension of the second dose, so we will continue to recommend the second dose of an mRNA vaccine." She added that local authorities are considering cases of myocarditis worldwide and not just locally or regionally. The question came after the decision made yesterday by the Hong Kong health authorities to suspend second doses, based on the potential of cases of the inflammatory heart condition.

CRIME

Manager accused of stealing MOP240,000 from restaurant

RENATO MARQUES

A 38-year-old woman, who is from the mainland and holds a non-resident work permit, has been accused of stealing approximately MOP240,000 from a restaurant's cash register over a period of almost two years. She was accused by the owner of the restaurant where she has been working for the past 12 years, the Judiciary Police (PJ) recently reported.

According to the PJ, the alleged theft was brought to the attention of police on September 3, when the restaurant owner brought the woman (who was working as manager of the restaurant) to the PJ to file a complaint against her.

In his testimony, the owner said that he had been aware that she had been stealing money from the cash register since January 2020, and estimated that she had stolen MOP240,000.

Further investigation revealed

BRIAN LUNDQUIST



that, while operating the cash register, the woman would take advantage of cash sales by putting the money into her handbag, which she had placed under the Point of Sale (POS) system.

At the same time, instead of settling the account in the POS system, she would simply delete

the order from that table so that it would not appear on the daily or monthly reports.

The investigation also revealed that she would only steal MOP500 and MOP1,000 bills, while placing other denominations in the cash register as usual.

Questioned by the PJ, the wo-

man admitted to the crime. She said she used the money for her daily expenses, as well as to repay a loan she had contracted, but did not explain any further.

She was referred to the Public Prosecutions Office to be charged for aggravated theft and computer fraud.

CRIME

DRUG DEALER ARRESTED AGAIN

A 47-year-old Nigerian man with a history of drug trafficking has been arrested by the police on suspicion of drug trafficking, following his release from prison last year.

The Judiciary Police (PJ) recently received intelligence that someone was selling drugs in Toi San nightclubs. A police officer located and intercepted the target. He was found to have six packets of ketamine and one packet of cocaine hidden in socks at his home, with a black-market value of around MOP10,000.

A total of about MOP220,000 in cash was also found in the residence. He denied drug abuse and drug trafficking. The police said that his urine test was negative but he could not explain the source of the drugs and money.

According to the PJ, the man was imprisoned for drug trafficking in September 2001 but, because of assaults committed in prison, was not released until August last year. MDT

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INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL TO OPEN BOX OFFICE NEXT WEEK

The Cultural Affairs Bureau is bringing back the Macao International Music Festival in October, with the theme "Music October." With widespread immigration restrictions still in place, this year's music festival will focus on mainland Chinese musicians and performers. A show commemorating the 110th anniversary of Gustav Mahler's death will be held, featuring classical pieces such as Lieder und Gesänge aus der Jugendzeit. Ticket sales will start September 25, but enthusiasts can use a new online pre-booking system from 10 a.m. September 23. Bookings must be made prior to in-person box office sales on the first day.

TOURISM OFFICE TO PROMOTE CITY IN SICHUAN

The Macao Week in Sichuan will unfold a mega roadshow at Jiaozi Plaza in Chengdu from September 23 to 27 to promote Macau's diverse elements of "tourism +" and showcase Macau as a healthy, safe and quality destination. The mega roadshow will showcase the SAR's tourism, trade and commerce, culture, sports, entertainment and more dimensions through an array of booths themed. The event seeks to attract mainland visitors for travel and spending in Macau in the upcoming National Day Golden Week to spur tourism and economic revival.

YOUTH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DISCUSSES NATIONAL SYMBOLS LAW

RENATO MARQUES

THE third plenary meeting of the Youth Affairs Committee took place earlier this week at the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ).

One of the main topics was the law amendments promoted by the government related to the use and protection of National symbols, and the national anthem, which were presented to members of the committee.

During the meeting, the Head of the Department for the Study of the Legal System and Legislative Coordination from the Legal Affairs Bureau (DSAJ), Arnaldo Chan Chi Leong, presented the essential aspects of the new law, drawing attention to the changes from the previous law.

Also discussed were the Regulatory Guidelines for the implementation of the law which establish the specific details regarding the use of national and regional flags and emblems, as well as the guidelines on the instrumental and vocal



performance of the National Anthem to ensure compliance with the rules established by the central government.

In the second agenda item, the Chief of the Department on Non-Higher Education from DSEDJ, Wong Ka Ki, outlined the status of the work on Parental Education, a project started by the DSEDJ with the aim of promoting core family values.

Wong remarked that at the beginning of this year, DSEDJ created the Parental Education Center, which developed a series of community works and carried out several activities related to matrimonial relations and methodologies for child-rearing. These activities were aimed at young parents to ease the stresses of child-rearing.

Wong also noted that the work of this Center will now cooperate directly with companies to expand the scope of parental education.

Trainers from DSEDJ will be sent to companies to run pa-

rental education activities that can be integrated into staff training activities.

MAINLAND INTERNSHIPS FOR LOCAL YOUTH

The Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) said it is seeking solutions for the employment of local youth who have experienced recent difficulties in entering the labor market.

Finding internship opportunities in the mainland is one of the tasks that DSAL is putting effort into, Lei Wa Iok, a technician from DSAL said during the meeting of the Youth Affairs Committee.

According to Lei, as part of the government's efforts to cope with the evolution of the employment market, to promote the professional development of young people, the DSAL is "launching or adjusting, in due course, several support measures, namely internships at work posts in companies in the mainland, where young people can experience the operating model of the new national economy and new businesses."

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DIPLOMACY

Nuclear submarine deal will reshape Indo-Pacific relations; angers Beijing

PRESIDENT Joe Biden announced yesterday [Macau time] that the United States is forming a new Indo-Pacific security alliance with Britain and Australia that will allow for greater sharing of defense capabilities — including helping equip Australia with nuclear-powered submarines. It's a move that could deepen a growing chasm in U.S.-China relations.

Biden made the announcement alongside British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who joined him by video to unveil the new alliance, which will be called AUKUS. The three announced they would quickly turn their attention to developing nuclear-powered submarines for Australia.

"We all recognize the imperative of ensuring peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific over the long term," said Biden, who said the new alliance reflects a broader trend of key European partners playing a role in the Indo-Pacific. "We need to be able to address both the current strategic environment in the region and how it may evolve."

None of the leaders mentioned China in their remarks. But the new security alliance is seen



as a provocative move by Beijing, which has repeatedly lashed out at Biden as he's sought to refocus U.S. foreign policy on the Pacific in the early going of his presidency.

China said the alliance would severely damage regional peace and stability, and jeopardize efforts to halt nuclear weapon proliferation. It said it was "highly irresponsible" for the U.S. and Britain to export the nuclear technology, and that Australia was

to blame for a breakdown in bilateral relations.

"The most urgent task is for Australia to correctly recognize the reasons for the setbacks in the relations between the two countries, and think carefully whether to treat China as a partner or a threat," said Zhao Lijian, a spokesperson of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Beijing has been unhappy with the Biden administration calling it out over human rights abuses

in the Xianjing region, the crackdown on democracy activists in Hong Kong, and cybersecurity breaches. Biden spoke by phone with China's President Xi Jinping last week. After the call, the official Xinhua News Agency reported that Xi expressed concerns that U.S. government policy toward China has caused "serious difficulties" in relations.

Before the announcement, a senior administration official sought to play down the idea that

the alliance was meant to serve as a deterrent against China in the region. The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to preview the announcement, said the alliance's creation was not aimed at any one country, and is about a larger effort to sustain engagement and deterrence in the Indo-Pacific by the three nations.

Johnson said the alliance would allow the three English-speaking maritime democracies to strengthen their bonds and sharpen their focus on an increasingly complicated part of the world.

"We will have a new opportunity to reinforce Britain's place at the leading edge of science and technology, strengthening our national expertise, and perhaps most significant, the U.K., Australia and the U.S. will be joined even more closely together," Johnson said.

The three countries have agreed to share information in areas including artificial intelligence, cyber and underwater defense capabilities.

But plans to support Australia acquiring nuclear-powered submarines are certain to catch Beijing's attention. To date, the only country that the United States has shared nuclear propulsion technology with is Britain. MDT/AP

SPACE

Three crew leave China's station for Earth after 90 days

SAM MCNEIL, BEIJING

THREE astronauts who lived for 90 days on China's space station departed yesterday in preparation for returning to Earth.

The national space agency said Nie Haisheng, Liu Boming and Tang Hongbo boarded the Shenzhou-12 spacecraft and undocked from the space station at 8:56 a.m. Thursday (0056 GMT).

State broadcaster CCTV aired footage of the astronauts securing packages inside their spacecraft, which is due to parachute to a location in the Gobi Desert near the Jiuquan launch center today.

The astronauts have already set China's record for the most time spent in space. After launching on June 17, mission command-



A TV screen at a mall in Beijing showing CCTV broadcasting news of Chinese astronauts sitting inside the Shenzhou-12 manned spacecraft preparing to return to earth

der Nie and astronauts Liu and Tang went on two spacewalks, deployed a 10-meter mechanical arm, and had a video call with Communist Party leader Xi Jinping.

Before the undocking,

the astronauts downloaded data from their experiments and ensured the station would continue operating without a crew, CCTV reported.

The journey home is expected to take at least

30 hours, CCTV said. Before departing, Nie and his colleagues expressed their thanks for the "round-the-clock support and devotion from all the staff."

Four drills have been conducted on the ground at the Dongfeng landing site in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region to ensure the safe return of the crew.

While few details have been made public by China's military, which runs the space program, astronaut trios are expected to be brought on 90-day missions to the station over the next two years to make it fully functional.

The government has not announced the names of the next set of astronauts nor the launch date of Shenzhou-13.

China has sent 14 astro-

nauts into space since 2003, when it became only the third country after the former Soviet Union and the United States to do so on its own.

When completed with the addition of two more modules, the station will weigh in at about 66 tons, a fraction of the size of the International Space Station, which launched its first module in 1998 and will weigh around 450 tons when completed.

In preparation for the permanent station, China launched two experimental modules over the past decade. Tiangong-1 was abandoned before it burned up during an uncontrolled loss of orbit. Its successor, the Tiangong-2, was brought out of orbit in 2018 under full control.

China launched its bid

to build such facilities in the early 1990s following successes in earlier missions and its exclusion from the International Space Station, largely due to U.S. objections over the Chinese program's secretive nature and close military ties.

U.S. law requires congressional approval for contact between the American and Chinese space programs, but China is cooperating with space experts from other countries, including France, Sweden, Russia and Italy.

China has also pushed ahead with uncrewed missions, particularly in lunar exploration. It has placed a rover on the little-explored far side of the Moon and in December, the Chang'e 5 probe returned lunar rocks to Earth for the first time since the 1970s. MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley

USA

Milley defends calls to Chinese as effort to avoid conflict

JONATHAN LEMIRE
& ROBERT BURNS,
WASHINGTON

THE top U.S. military officer [Macau time] defended the phone calls he made to his Chinese counterpart in the turbulent final months of Donald Trump's presidency, saying the conversations were intended to convey "reassurance" to the Chinese military and were in line with his responsibilities as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Some in Congress accused Gen. Mark Milley of having overstepped his authority and urged President Joe Biden to fire him, but Biden indicated Wednesday he stands behind Milley.

"I have great confidence in Gen. Milley," Biden said when asked by a reporter whether Milley had done the right thing.

In a written statement, Milley's spokesman, Col. Dave Butler, said Milley acted within his authority as the most senior uniformed adviser to the president and to the secretary of defense.

"His calls with the Chinese and others in October and January were in keeping with these duties and responsibilities conveying reassurance in order to maintain strategic stability," Butler said. "All calls from the chairman to

his counterparts, including those reported, are staffed, coordinated and communicated with the Department of Defense and the interagency."

The Milley phone calls were described in excerpts from the forthcoming book "Peril" by Washington Post journalists Bob Woodward and Robert Costa. The book says Milley told Gen. Li Zuocheng of the People's Liberation Army that he would warn his counterpart in the event of a U.S. attack.

Milley was appointed chairman of the Joint Chiefs in 2019 by Trump and kept on by Biden. In that position Milley does not command any troops but rather is an adviser to the president and to the secretary of defense.

In his statement, Milley's spokesman did not directly address this aspect of the call but said Milley regularly communicates with his counterparts across the globe, including in China and Russia, to reduce tensions, provide clarity and avoid "unintended consequences or conflict."

"If we're going to attack, I'm going to call you ahead of time. It's not going to be a surprise," Milley reportedly said.

The second call was meant to placate Chinese fears about the events of Jan. 6. But the book reports that Li wasn't as easily assuaged, even after Milley promised him: "We are 100 percent steady. Everything's fine. But democracy can be sloppy sometimes."

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days after the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol by supporters of Trump.

The Associated Press obtained a copy of the book. Details from the book, which is set to be released next week, were first reported by The Washington Post on Tuesday.

"General Li, I want to assure you that the American government is stable and everything is going to be okay," Milley told him in the first call, according to the book. "We are not going to attack or conduct any kinetic operations against you."

In his statement, Milley's spokesman did not directly address this aspect of the call but said Milley regularly communicates with his counterparts across the globe, including in China and Russia, to reduce tensions, provide clarity and avoid "unintended consequences or conflict."

The second call was meant to placate Chinese fears about the events of Jan. 6. But the book reports that Li wasn't as easily assuaged, even after Milley promised him: "We are 100 percent steady. Everything's fine. But democracy can be sloppy sometimes."

On Tuesday, Trump said Milley should be tried for treason if it was true that he had promised Li that he would warn him in the event of a U.S. attack. In a follow-up statement yesterday, Trump called Milley "a complete nutjob" and said he "never told me about calls being made to China."

"He put our Country in a very dangerous position but President Xi knows better, and would've called me," Trump added.

Milley believed the president suffered a mental decline after the election, agreeing with a view shared by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in a phone call they had Jan. 8, according to officials. Milley also asked senior officers to swear an "oath" that Milley had to be involved if Trump gave an order to launch nuclear weapons, according to the book.

In the statement Wednesday, Milley's spokesman said Milley had conferred with the senior officers about nuclear weapons protocols "to remind uniformed leaders in the Pentagon of the long-established and robust procedures in light of media reporting on the subject." Butler, the spokesman, appeared to be referring to news reports of the Jan. 8 Milley-Pelosi phone call. Butler did not address whether Milley had insisted he be part of the nuclear weapons procedures.

Pelosi had previously said she spoke to Milley that day about "available precautions" to prevent Trump from initiating military action or ordering a nuclear launch, and she told colleagues she was given unspecified assurances that there were longstanding safeguards in place.

Milley, according to the book, called the admiral overseeing the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the military unit responsible for Asia and the Pacific region, and recommended postponing upcoming military exercises.

It's not clear what, if any, military exercises were actually postponed.

In response to the book, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., sent Biden a letter urging him to fire Milley, saying the general worked to "actively undermine the sitting Commander in Chief."

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, called the report "deeply concerning," telling reporters at the Capitol, "I think the first step is for General Milley to answer the question as to what exactly he said." MDT/AP

this day in history

2001 WORKERS RETURN TO WALL STREET



New Yorkers have been returning to work six days after the terror attacks which devastated the heart of their city.

Thousands are believed dead after hijackers deliberately flew three passenger planes into buildings in New York and Washington.

Workers from New York's financial district - many of them draped in the American flag - have said they want to show life can go on.

The air was still thick with dust and smoke from the collapsed towers of the World Trade Center and dozens of those going back to work wore face masks to protect themselves.

The devastation and the troops lining Wall Street made the city look more like a war zone than a business district, but the people who work here were determined to prove their defiance.

"They expect us to be down on the floor - if it lifts everyone's spirits then I've done something good today," one man told the BBC.

Jim Textor, a lawyer forced to flee the carnage on 11 September, said Americans wanted to imitate the British way of dealing with years of attacks by the IRA.

"It's important you demonstrate that you can't be beat and that you have to go back to work," he said.

But there was also grief in a city which has lost so many.

As the search for survivors in the wreckage of the towers becomes a hunt for bodies, American Red Cross workers mingled with the crowds to offer counselling.

"It doesn't matter if you're rich or poor, young or old, you still have those same feelings of trauma," said Pam Jennings.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

It took almost nine months to clear the millions of tons of rubble at "Ground Zero" where the World Trade Center had stood.

The stock markets returned to their pre-attack levels in about one month, but the recession which financial analysts had been predicting long before 11 September took hold at the end of November 2001.

The world's airline industries particularly felt the impact, and many announced sweeping job cuts in the months after the atrocity.

But many experts said companies whose profits were already declining had decided to 'blame it on Bin Laden' and use him as a scapegoat for all losses.

YOUR STARS**ARIES**

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Friday's skies prioritize friendship and community over all else, Aries. The moon glides through socially-savvy Aquarius, forming a smooth alignment with expressive Mercury on her path.

**TAURUS**

Apr. 20-May. 20

Reach for the stars today, Taurus. You're primed to make productive career moves that push you forward towards your goals as the moon meanders through solution-seeking Aquarius.

**GEMINI**

May. 21-Jun. 21

Gemini people require fresh knowledge to keep their curious minds content. Today's skies encourage you to embrace educational efforts and seek adventure as the moon cruises through problem-solving Aquarius.

**CANCER**

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

It's an ideal day for therapy, tarot, or journaling - all of which help your messier feelings get some air. Elsewhere, Luna's tiff with innovative Uranus initiates changes to long-term goals or friend groups.

**LEO**

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

The moon's presence in your opposite sign of logic-first Aquarius intensifies your need for intimacy, connection, and to feel heard in your one-on-one's.

**VIRGO**

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Things run smoothly beneath Friday's skies, Virgo. Embrace the easy-going flow as the solution-seeking Aquarius moon directs your attention towards incomplete chores and errands.

**SCORPIO**

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Tuck yourself away from the harsh realities of the world today. You're in the mood to cozy up in the comfort of your home and keep things low-key as the moon wades through thought-provoking Aquarius.

**SAGITTARIUS**

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

It's an ideal day to devote energy towards writing projects, important conversations, or anything requiring mental stamina. Luna's squabble with Uranus highlights changes to be embraced on the job front.

**AQUARIUS**

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Luna's link with messenger Mercury makes it an ideal day to get on stage and share your story. At the same time, her square with Uranus can bring surprising conversations to the intimacy front.

**CAPRICORN**

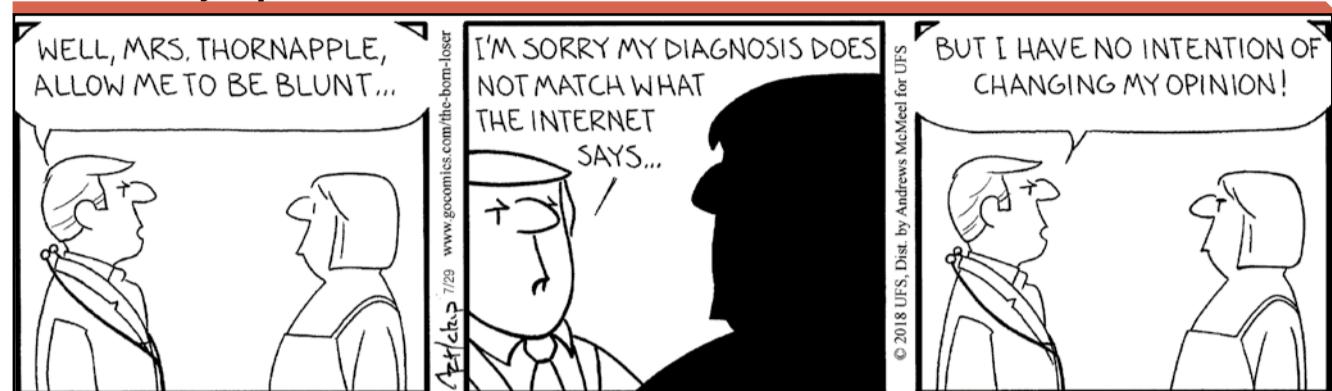
Dec. 22-Jan. 19

The moon's presence in solution-seeking Aquarius acts as the driving force to get things done, and her sweet union with quick-thinking Mercury makes it easy to stay mentally agile.

**PISCES**

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Slink off into a world of your own today. You're in desperate need of a quiet and restful recharge where other people can't drain your energy as the moon meanders through solitude-seeking Aquarius.

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

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EASY+

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CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Din; 5- Moderately cold; 9- Bear up there; 13- Church instrument; 15- Spy name; 16- Get better; 17- Grammarian's concern; 18- Single, individual unit; 19- Arthur Ashe's alma mater; 20- Rocky peak; 21- Wrigley varieties; 23- Add fizz; 25- Bring down; 26- Reside in; 27- Inflammation of the colon; 30- Russian space station; 31- Saying; 32- Having ringlike segments; 37- 20th letter of the Hebrew alphabet; 38- Jackie's predecessor; 40- Corrida cries; 41- Deli meat; 43- Tops; 44- Unit of resistance; 45- All together; 47- Playground retort; 50- Pill bottle; 51- Intro; 52- Milk source; 53- Music style performed by Dr Dre and Eminem; 56- 1972 Kentucky Derby winner; 57- impasse; 59- Peace goddess; 61- I'd hate to break up; 62- Hotbed; 63- Glisten; 64- Nothing more than; 65- Tibetan oxen; 66- Scent;

DOWN: 1- Defeat decisively; 2- Estimator's phrase; 3- Food thickener; 4- Piece of cloth, tabloid newspaper; 5- Ring bells; 6- Cereal grain; 7- Metal-bearing mineral; 8- Sluglike; 9- Swahili for "freedom"; 10- Summarize; 11- Saline; 12- Wings; 14- Nullify; 22- Israeli gun; 24- Beige cousin; 25- Bingo; 26- Bygone Dodge; 27- Bellyache; 28- Ancient theaters; 29- Miss; 32- Parisian pal; 33- Express alternative; 34- Donations to the poor; 35- Driving aids; 36- Being to Brutus; 38- Furniture wood; 39- Rifle adjunct; 42- Rooter; 43- Fine fiddles; 45- Happenings; 46- Vardalos of "My Big Fat Greek Wedding"; 47- Emerge; 48- Wanderer; 49- Overjoy; 51- London stroller; 52- Piece of work; 53- Nevada senator Harry; 54- Domini; 55- Jury member; 58- Leaves in a bag; 60- The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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Water Supply – Report 2822 0088

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PJ (Picket) 28 557 775

Electricity – Report 28 339 922

PSP 28 573 333

Macau Daily Times 28 716 081

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JAKE COYLE,
MDT/AP FILM WRITER

EVERYBODY'S Talking About Jamie," a predictable and glossy "Billy Elliot"-like musical of British working-class aspiration that's nevertheless a joy, is the kind of movie that might have once been made about the trials of coming out as a young gay man.

But such hurdles are already well past Jamie New (newcomer Max Harwood), a confident, proudly out 16-year-old who lives in Sheffield, England. It's not that he doesn't have some scars from his childhood. Jamie has a supportive, adoring mother (Sarah Lancashire) but his homophobic, remarried father (Ralph Ineson) is mostly absent. And at school, there is a boilerplate bully (Samuel Bottomley) who harasses him.

But Jamie, and Harwood's winning performance, belong to a different, more modern era. Jamie doesn't just want to be himself. His dreams are larger. While his school class discusses career options, he daydreams a song-and-dance number with "The Jamie Show" in lights, singing "Cause baby I'm a hit." Specifically, he wants to be a drag queen. Jamie's journey isn't so much about self-realization as it is about self-empowerment.

DRIVE IN

DRAG QUEEN DREAMS IN 'TALKING ABOUT JAMIE'

AP PHOTO



A scene from "Everybody's Talking About Jamie"

"Everybody's Talking About Me," which begins streaming today on Amazon Prime Video, is an adaptation of a popular West End musical, which itself came from a television documentary: Jenny Popplewell's "Jamie: Drag Queen at 16." As bedazzled as "Everybody's Talking About Jamie" is, it's based on a true story.

What's most disappointing about the film, considering its

origins, is just how distant anything like real life feels.

"Everybody's Talking About Jamie" — made by much of the stage show's creative team, including director Jonathan Buttlell in his feature film directorial debut — is more of a straightforward celebration, a victory lap for the progress made in the ongoing fight for LGBTQ rights. The movie's most moving section

comes after Jamie meets Hugo Battersby (Richard E. Grant, in fine form), a former drag queen known as Loco Chanelle. He mentors Jamie, discouraging him from using the name "Sandra Banana" and passionately extolling the nature of the role. "A drag queen is someone to be feared," he says.

But what makes their encounter moving is the sense of time

between Hugo and Jamie. In a historical montage, the two visit moments from the last 50 years of the gay rights movement, including the AIDS crisis and the death of Freddie Mercury, while Hugo sings "This Was Me."

There are other standout supporting performances. Lancashire, the terrific "Happy Valley" actor, is a well of authenticity, including in her solo, "He's My Boy." Lauren Patel, as Jamie's Muslim best friend (and fellow outcast), is also very good. But the movie, naturally, belongs to Harwood. The young actor seems to share his character's confidence in his own destiny; he's best in the well-choreographed songs.

As the movie steers its way to a familiar finale it's tempting to think the production, in its preference for spectacle and studio-polished singing, is most suited to the stage. But it's equally tempting to think having an inspiration explosion like "Everybody's Talking About Jamie" streamed directly into 100 million homes isn't a bad idea, either.

"Everybody's Talking About Jamie" an Amazon Studios release, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America for thematic elements, strong language, and suggestive material. Running time: 115 minutes. ★★★★

AD

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FOUNDED in 1957 in a small warehouse in Toronto, Canada, Canada Goose is a lifestyle brand and a leading manufacturer of performance luxury apparel. Every collection is informed by the rugged demands of the Arctic, ensuring a legacy of functionality is embedded in every product from parkas and rainwear to apparel and accessories. Following the success of its Pop-Up store in October 2020, Canada Goose is opening its first-ever store at Galaxy Macau.

The store will offer a wide range of its core products, such as parkas, lightweight down, rainwear, windwear, knitwear, and accessories, along with its collection for children and babies. It will also carry Fusion Fit sizing of its most popu-

lar outerwear, specifically designed for smaller body types. Fusion Fit was developed using measurements from over 16,000 individual body types, complementing the brand's other fit offerings of slim, regular and relaxed. New product categories will also be available including the brand's apparel – hoodies and sweatpants.

The location will weave together the brand's authentic 60-year heritage with modern design in an Arctic-inspired environment. The store design presents an intricate combination of Black Porcelain Tile, White Oak Chevron Tile, and Terrazzo Tile to depict an outdoor experience and highlight the eye-catching display of outerwear, apparel and accessories.



TASTE OF EDESIA

Gourmet and glamour

IRENE SAM, MDT

THE RITZ-CARLTON CAFÉ has teamed up with artisanal jewelry brand Les Néréides to present an exclusive seafood promotion that pairs perfectly with their latest collection, "Out At Sea," a collaboration evoking the glittering glamour of the French seaside as well as fresh gourmet gems of the ocean.

To savor an authentic taste of the French seaside, one can try the French Oyster Platter, which includes a dozen French oysters, ranging from the classic Gillardeau to David Herve Speciale Royale served with various condiments, such as cocktail sauce, Thai spicy sauce and Mignonette sauce. For hot plate, the BBQ Seafood Platter has a robust selection; Grilled Boston Lobster and Tiger Prawns, Scallop Gratin, Oysters done in Kilpatrick and Mornay styles, Canadian Black Mussels cooked in Chardonnay, and favourites like Fried Calamari and Beer Batter Sole. Last but not least, the Chilled Seafood Platter offers a mouthwatering display, with Boston Lobster, Alaskan King Crab Legs, Tiger Prawns, Scallops on the half shell, Canadian Black Mussels, and Razor Clams, as well as four freshly shucked Oysters Fine de Claire.

OPINION

China Daily

Editorial, China Daily

WASHINGTON FORMS ANOTHER GANG TO IMPOSE MOB RULE IN UNRULY GAME

For all his political discord with his predecessor Donald Trump over a variety of domestic and international issues, US President Joe Biden has displayed a stronger willingness than Trump to push an anti-China policy and form a united front against China with the United States' buddies. Wednesday's announcement that the US is forming an Indo-Pacific alliance with the United Kingdom and Australia is the latest example of this ill trend.

With a shiny new acronym, AUKUS is apparently intended to be a new Indo-Pacific security alliance under the US alliance system which will allow for greater sharing of defense capabilities. And, it seems, helping Australia to acquire nuclear-powered submarines is one of the top priorities.

Unsurprisingly, China's rising influence in the region was, again, said to be the reason behind the formation of the new group. With the US presumably thinking it can display a more confident swagger by beefing up Australia's military strength, which is the weakest among the trio.

Clearly realizing that his country's participation in AUKUS will have an adverse impact on its already frosty relations with China, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Thursday extended an "open invitation" for talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

But this olive branch, extended right after the forming of AUKUS and Morrison's announcement of the acquisition of US nuclear-powered submarines and cruise missiles, cannot hide Canberra's enthusiasm in jumping on the US bandwagon to contain China's rise and development, which will only push its bilateral ties with China from bad to worse.

Apart from AUKUS, the Asia-Pacific, or the Indo-Pacific as the US likes to refer to the region now in a bid to deny its Asian identity and the commonality of Asian values, is no stranger to US-led cliques. Others include the so-called Quad countries, a loose strategic partnership among the US, India, Japan and Australia, and the Five Eyes, an intelligence-sharing arrangement comprising the US, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK.

The Biden administration, for all its claims to be different from its predecessor, seems to have copied one unpleasant mannerism at least and that is how to behave in the region like a street gang boss, amplifying differences and stoking confrontation in a bid to start turf wars.

It is no exaggeration to say that the US penchant for forming gangs and playing zero-sum games pose a serious threat to the rules-based international order and run counter to the international aspiration for peace, development and stability.

To see the consequences of its unruly games, one does not need to look beyond the plight of Afghanistan, a country that was first invaded and then abandoned by the US and its Western allies, including the UK and Australia.

What would most benefit the US and its allies, and thereby benefit all, would be for them to discard their ideological bias and Cold War mentality and return to multilateralism to resolve their differences with other countries through dialogue, rather than ganging up on other countries in a futile attempt to intimidate them.

PHILIPPINES' DUTERTE WILL 'DIE FIRST' BEFORE FACING INTERNATIONAL COURT

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte would rather "die first" before facing an international tribunal, his spokesman said yesterday, the day after the International Criminal Court announced it would investigate allegations of crimes against humanity during his bloody war on drugs.

Duterte's spokesman, Harry Roque, said the president was unfazed when he'd informed him late Wednesday of the court's decision.

"The president didn't have any reaction, because from the get go, he has said that he'll die first before he faces any international courts," Roque told reporters.

"If there are any complaints, they should file it here in the Philippines."

The court on Wednesday said it had authorized an investigation requested by former prosecutor Fatou Bensouda into Duterte's anti-drugs campaign, saying it could not "be seen as a legitimate law enforcement operation."

More than 6,000 mostly poor drug suspects have been killed during the campaign, according to the government, but human rights groups say the death toll is considerably higher and should include many unsolved killings by motorcycle-riding gunmen who may have been deployed by police.

SICHUAN

EARTHQUAKE COLLAPSES HOMES, KILLS AT LEAST THREE

AN earthquake destroyed houses, killed at least three people and injured dozens yesterday in southwest Sichuan province.

Rescue work was underway following the magnitude-6.0 earthquake.

It struck at 4:33 a.m. at a depth of 10 kilometers in Luxian, a county in the city of Luzhou, the official Xinhua News Agency said. State broadcaster CCTV said 88 people were injured, three seriously, and that 35 houses had collapsed.

The epicenter was about 200 kilometers southeast of Chengdu, the provincial capital.

Xinhua reported that collapsed walls and houses could be seen on the way to the epicenter, and that electricity had been suspended in much of Jiaming town. Residents could be seen cleaning up.

Rescue workers were going door-to-door in heavy rain searching for people in damaged homes in Fuji town to move them to temporary shelters, Xinhua said. Workers distributed mooncakes,



a traditional treat for the next week's Mid-Autumn Festival, and other food at one shelter.

Lai Jianrong, a Fuji resident, told Xinhua that she felt a mild tremor around 4 a.m. and ran out barefoot in her nightgown when the tremors became intense. "Some bricks fell off the wall and I didn't dare to go in again," the agency

quoted her as saying.

More than 3,200 people have been moved to 79 shelters, CCTV said.

Western China is regularly hit by earthquakes. A magnitude-7.9 quake in May 2008 left nearly 90,000 people dead in Sichuan, many of them in collapsed schools and other poorly constructed buildings. MDT/AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Photo by Liu Yilin/Xinhua



A visitor selects paper lanterns during the 31st Mid-Autumn Festival fair in Chinatown in San Francisco, the United States. The two-day event is held to hail the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival, which will fall on Sept. 21 this year.

Australia Voluntary euthanasia became legal in a fifth Australian state yesterday, more than 20 years after the country repealed the world's first mercy killing law for the terminally ill. Queensland's Parliament passed the law with 61 of the state's 93 lawmakers voting in favor. New South Wales, the nation's most populous state, is now the only state that doesn't allow assisted suicide.



Lebanon A convoy of tanker trucks carrying Iranian diesel crossed the border from Syria into Lebanon early yesterday, a delivery organized by the militant Hezbollah group to ease crippling fuel shortages in the crisis-hit country. The delivery violates U.S. sanctions imposed on Tehran after former President Donald Trump pulled America out of a nuclear deal between Iran and world powers three years ago.



Russian President Vladimir Putin says dozens of his staff have been infected with the coronavirus and that he will continue his self-isolation because of the outbreak. The Kremlin announced earlier this week that he would self-isolate after someone in his inner circle was infected although Putin had tested negative for the virus and he's fully vaccinated with Russia's Sputnik V. But Putin said yesterday the infections were extensive.



Germany 16-year-old boy and three other people were detained yesterday in connection with a suspected plan for an Islamic extremist attack on a synagogue in the city of Hagen, authorities said. The detentions took place on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in Judaism, and two years after a deadly attack in another German city on the Yom Kippur holiday.