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AP PHOTO



Vietnam yesterday started to vaccinate children as part of an effort to reopen schools after more than half a year of closures due to COVID-19. About 1,500 teenagers between 16 and 17 years old in Ho Chi Minh City in southern Vietnam were among the first to receive jabs before the inoculation program is rolled out nationwide in November, the health ministry said on its website. During the first phase, Vietnam has only approved the Pfizer vaccine for children.

AP PHOTO



Afghanistan NATO's security operation in Afghanistan became a victim of "mission creep" as the military organization allowed itself to be dragged into helping rebuild the impoverished, conflict-torn country, the official leading a process of drawing lessons from the mission said. Assistant Secretary-General for Operations John Manza and NATO's 30 deputy national envoys are compiling a report on almost two decades of work in Afghanistan. They were tasked with the job after the Afghan president fled and the NATO-trained Afghan army collapsed when President Joe Biden announced that he was pulling U.S. troops out.

AP PHOTO



US asked Britain's High Court yesterday to overturn a judge's decision that Julian Assange should not be sent to the United States to face espionage charges, promising that the WikiLeaks founder would be able to serve any prison sentence he receives in his native Australia. In January, a lower court judge refused an American request to extradite Assange on spying charges over WikiLeaks' publication of secret military documents a decade ago.

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AP PHOTO



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## THE CONVERSATION

# A QUICK GUIDE TO CLIMATE CHANGE JARGON

WÄNDI BRUINE DE BRUIN  
USC DORNSIFE COLLEGE OF  
LETTERS, ARTS AND SCIENCES

As a major U.N. climate conference gets underway on Oct. 31, 2021, you'll be hearing a lot of technical terms tossed around: mitigation, carbon neutral, sustainable development. The language can feel overwhelming.

"It sounds like you're talking over people," one person said of the terminology during a recent study colleagues and I conducted through the USC Dornsife Public Exchange.

Climate reports are often written at a scientific level. So we thought it would be helpful to clarify some of the most common terms.

To do that, we interviewed 20 people about common terms used by climate scientists and climate journalists. We then used their feedback to explain those terms in everyday language. With the help of the United Nations Foundation, we chose eight terms from reports written by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Here's a guide that may help you to follow the news about climate change. The explanation of each term starts with the technical definition from the IPCC. The text that follows puts it into plain language.

### 1. MITIGATION

IPCC definition: Mitigation (of climate change): a human intervention to reduce emissions or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases.

Translation: Stopping climate change from getting worse.

When people talk about "mitigation" they often focus on fossil fuels – coal, oil and natural gas – used to make electricity and run cars, buses and planes. Fossil fuels produce greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide. When these gases are released, they linger in the atmosphere. They then trap heat and warm the planet.

Some ways to mitigate climate change include using solar and wind power instead of coal-fired power plants; making buildings, appliances and vehicles more energy efficient so they use less electricity and fuel; and de-



signing cities so people have to drive less. Protecting forests and planting trees also help because trees absorb greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and lock them away.

### 2. ADAPTATION

IPCC definition: In human systems, the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In natural systems, the process of adjustment to actual climate and its effects; human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects.

Translation: Making changes to live with the impacts of climate change.

Climate change is already happening. Heat waves, wildfires and floods are getting worse. People will have to find ways to live with these threats. Los Angeles, for example, is planting trees to help people stay cooler. Coastal cities like Miami may need sea walls to protect against floods. More "adaptation" actions will be needed as climate change gets worse.

### 3. CARBON DIOXIDE REMOVAL

IPCC definition: Carbon dioxide removal methods refer to processes that remove CO2 from the

atmosphere by either increasing biological sinks of CO2 or using chemical processes to directly bind CO2. CDR is classified as a special type of mitigation.

Translation: Taking carbon dioxide out of the air.

The amount of carbon dioxide in the air has been increasing for many years. In 2019, there was 1.5 times more of it than in the late 1700s. Planting trees and restoring grasslands can remove carbon dioxide from the air. There are also carbon dioxide removal technologies that store it underground or in concrete, but these are new and not widely used.

### 4. CARBON NEUTRAL

IPCC definition: Carbon neutrality is achieved when anthropogenic CO2 emissions are balanced globally by anthropogenic carbon dioxide removals over a specified period. Carbon neutrality is also referred to as net-zero carbon dioxide emission.

Translation: Adding no net carbon dioxide into the air. This does not have to mean that you can't add any carbon dioxide. It means that if you do add carbon dioxide into the air you take out the same amount.

The IPCC warns that the world needs to be carbon neutral by 2050 to avoid a serious climate crisis. This means using

both "mitigation" to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide added to the air and "carbon dioxide removal" to take carbon dioxide out of the air.

### 5. TIPPING POINT

IPCC definition: A level of change in system properties beyond which a system reorganizes, often abruptly, and does not return to the initial state even if the drivers of the change are abated. For the climate system, it refers to a critical threshold when global or regional climate changes from one stable state to another stable state.

Translation: When it is too late to stop effects of climate change.

One of the most talked-about tipping points involves the collapse of the West Antarctic ice sheet. Some research suggests it may have already started happening. West Antarctica alone holds enough ice to raise sea levels worldwide by about 11 feet (3.3 meters). If all glaciers and ice caps melt, sea levels will end up rising about 230 feet (70 meters).

### 6. UNPRECEDENTED TRANSITION

IPCC definition for "transition": The process of changing from one state or condition to another in a given period of time. Transition can be in individuals,

firms, cities, regions and nations and can be based on incremental or transformative change.

Translation: Making big changes together to stop climate change – in a way that has not been seen before.

In 2015, countries around the world agreed to try to keep the planet from warming more than 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 F). Among the biggest sources of global warming are coal-fired power plants. Quickly shifting the world to renewable energy, such as wind and solar power, would be an unprecedented transition. Without big changes, climate change could make the world unlivable.

### 7. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

IPCC definition: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and balances social, economic and environmental concerns.

Translation: Living in a way that is good for people alive today and for people in the future.

The United Nations has shared "sustainable development goals." These goals aim to help countries grow in ways that are healthy for both people and the environment. Producing more carbon dioxide than the planet can manage is an example of unsustainable development that's causing climate change.

### 8. ABRUPT CHANGE

IPCC definition: Abrupt climate change refers to a large-scale change in the climate system that takes place over a few decades or less, persists (or is anticipated to persist) for at least a few decades and causes substantial disruptions in human and natural systems.

Translation: A change in climate that happens much faster than it normally would.

Our world is changing quickly as a result of climate change. Wildfires are raging in parts of the Western U.S. that were once too wet to burn. Coral reefs are dying as the ocean is getting warmer. These changes would not have happened so quickly – or at all – were it not for climate change. **MDT/AP**

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A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

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For subscription and general issues:

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# Islands Hospital to diversify services aiming at medical tourism

RENATO MARQUES

**E**XPECTED to commence operations in 2023, the Islands District Medical Complex, also known as the Islands Hospital, will aim to provide dual services. It will function as a public hospital while simultaneously offering private medical services for tourists, said Wong Cheng Po, a member of the working group preparing for the launch of the Islands Hospital, yesterday at a press conference organized by the group to unveil the institution that will manage the facility.

The dual operating model means the medical facility will be the first of its kind designed to provide medical tourism services, Wong added.

In response to an inquiry from the Times on the topic, Lei Chin Ion, coordinator of the same working group, explained that the hospital will operate under two different systems, the second being tourist-oriented.

"The main principle is to serve the population and provide a quality medical service to all people in Macau but, besides that, we want

RENATO MARQUES



to extend that service and be included in the regional cooperation projects such as the Greater Bay Area (GBA) and be able to attract patients from both the GBA as well as from abroad, namely from other Southeast Asian countries," Lei said.

He added, "of course, in this case, the medical services provided to these tourists need to be paid for. This will benefit the hospital a lot, as well as the development of

the health industry in Macau [as a location for medical tourism]," he concluded, adding that, at the start of operations (in 2023), the hospital will focus first on providing services to people in Macau and will only expand into medical tourism after those services are established.

Wong had also said previously that the idea of providing public and private medical services simultaneously would also provide "citizens with more options for

medical treatment, as well as contribute to financing public medical expenses."

The same official also noted that one purpose of having the new hospital managed by Peking Union Medical College Hospital is so that Macau can make use of such "branding" to attract tourists, namely those from the GBA who are familiar with the reputation of the long-standing Beijing medical institution.

## HOSPITAL TO REDUCE THE NEED FOR OUTSOURCING

Wong also noted that the Islands Hospital is also seen as a solution for the current situation where there is a lack of certain medical specialties within Macau's health system.

The official said that once the hospital is in full operation it will promote major advances in the development of the local medical industry, improving the level of specialized health care and "reducing the inconvenience of [local patients] having to travel abroad for medical treatment."

This applies also to those who seek medical care abroad through the special "patient forwarding system" administered by the Health Bureau, used in cases where the local system cannot provide an effective response to the medical needs of a patient.

Another contribution expected from the new hospital is that it will provide training opportunities for Macau's health professionals both locally and in the main Beijing branch, offering experienced teachers and training facilities.

# Peking Union Medical College to take the helm of Islands Hospital

RENATO MARQUES

**A**S expected, the Peking Union Medical College Hospital has been announced as the entity that will partner with the government to manage the Islands District Medical Complex (also known as the Islands Hospital).

The official announcement was made yesterday during a press conference held by the working group for the preparation of the Islands Hospital.

The appointment of the Beijing entity came as no surprise. In mid-September, the same working group had already foreshadowed a high probability of the choice.

At the time, the director of the Health Bureau (SSM), Alvis Lo, refused to release the names of the entities being considered as negotiations were still ongoing.

Yesterday, after the an-

nouncement, the coordinator of the working group and former SSM director, Lei Chin Ion, also refused to divulge the names of other institutions that the government claimed had been considered in the process.

The working group members continued to claim that the decision was made only after the results of a study ordered from the Faculty of Medicine at Hong Kong University (HKUMed) which said that the best operating model for the Islands Hospital would be a public-private partnership. However, the name of the Beijing institution had been aired on several occasions before the results of this study were known, suggesting that the appointment had been made at an earlier stage.

There were other hints of this during the press conference yesterday, such as Lei's remark that local

authorities had decided on the Beijing entity following the "recommendation from the National Health Commission (NHC)."

At the same press conference, Lei remarked that the Beijing medical institution has over 100 years of history and is a large medical institution with both the capacity and knowledge to "fulfill the duty assigned to them by the NHC in a great manner."

Doing a presentation of the Peking Union Medical College Hospital, Wong Cheng Po, a member of the same working group, highlighted the institution's experience, awards, and national and international recognition, noting the reasons that make it the right candidate to run the Islands Hospital.

Questioned by the media, Lei said that initially the government had planned to manage the hospital on

its own but, "after a report from HKUMed, we decided to cooperate with Peking Union Medical College Hospital. We realized that this would be more beneficial for Macau."

The coordinator of the working group also remarked that the partnership does not involve commercial cooperation, so there is no compensation to be paid by the government to the managing partner.

"We do not pay them anything as this is not a service outsourcing [arrangement], and we also do not charge them any tax for the services they provide as this is not a private hospital. They will also not share any part of the potential profits that will be invested in the development of the hospital," Lei said, adding that the hospital will be managed as a non-profit organization.

"What we will do is pay

RENATO MARQUES



the salaries of the staff that will be sent to Macau from the Beijing entity," the coordinator remarked.

Another member of the working group, Chou Kuok Hei, added that there will be no contradiction between the service provided by the Islands Hospital and the Public Hospital (Conde de São Januário Hospital Center) as the main difference is that the staff will not be considered civil servants.

Details about how the hospital will operate and which government entity will supervise it, as well as further details of salaries and other benefits, were

left for laws and regulations relating to the facility which have not yet been produced.

The only information of this nature made public today was that the hospital management committee will comprise an equal number of members from Macau and the Beijing entity.

Chou also added that people should not be concerned about the arrangement as the service prices and special benefits currently granted by the public health system will continue to apply in the new hospital.

## UM, PEKING UNIVERSITY HOLD ACCOUNTING CONFERENCE

The University of Macau (UM) and Peking University's Guanghua School of Management jointly held an online conference on auditing and public policy in China. The event was held in preparation for a special issue of the Journal of Accounting and Public Policy (JAPP) to be published in the future, according to a statement published by UM. During the conference, over 200 experts and scholars from around the world exchanged ideas on opportunities and challenges in auditing research in China. Papers presented at the conference had been through a selection process aimed at ensuring high quality and a better chance of being published in the upcoming special issue of JAPP, an international accounting journal.

## DSI LAUNCHES ONLINE OVERSEAS ASSISTANCE SERVICE

The Identification Services Bureau (DSI) officially launched the online overseas assistance service yesterday, which will provide a "prompt response" to Macau residents who lose their SAR travel documents while overseas. Residents who are aged 18 or above and have lost their SAR travel documents in other countries can use the "Overseas Assistance - Lost Travel Documents in Journey" service through the "Common Access to Public Services of the Macao SAR" mobile application. The applicant can also request help on behalf of accompanying family members including spouses, children who were at least 5 years old when their resident identity card was last issued, parents and parents-in-law.

## FSS EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER CONTRIBUTION

The payment deadline for the Social Security System for this month has been extended to November 5. The Social Security Fund reminds the public that service points are expected to be busy when the deadline is approaching. Employers are urged to make their payments as soon as possible and make use of electronic payment options. If residents need to visit a service point in person, they are advised to use the appointment service.

# EXCo: OVER 500 TUITION FACILITIES TO BE SUPERVISED UNDER NEW LAW

ANTHONY LAM

**M**ORE than 500 extracurricular tuition facilities will be placed under the supervision of a future law which is currently on its way to the parliament, André Cheong, spokesperson of the Executive Council (ExCo), announced yesterday at a press conference.

The ExCo has just concluded its reading of the bill.

It was revealed by Kong Chi Meng, deputy director of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEDJ), yesterday that the city has over 400 tuition centers and around 100 private daycare centers.

All of these facilities will be under the supervision of the new law once it is passed, and should operate in legally approved settings. Many such facilities are operating in residential buildings, which will not be acceptable in future.

However, the bill proposes a two-year transitional period that will allow these facilities to relocate to permitted venues. The suitability of venues will be determined jointly by the Fire Services Bureau, the Health Bureau, the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau, as well as the DSEDJ.

Kong explained that this is to ensure the safety of service recipients.



Facilities with fewer than four service recipients will be exempt from this requirement, although the DSEDJ will still have supervision over them. The exemption was proposed in consideration of, for example, family provisions.

A review process is also proposed in the bill so that the government can pre-screen workers in tuition facilities. If an individual has been found guilty of certain crimes, they will be banned from working in tuition facilities.

It was also proposed that the educational background of tutors be regulated. Kong said that, under the proposed bill, tutors' edu-

cation level must be higher than their service recipients.

The government proposes a one-stop licensing procedure, meaning that operators will not need to submit applications to different bureaus for a single establishment.

## MOP106B OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE

The city's public expenditure will amount to nearly MOP106 billion this year after the budget adjustment announced yesterday at the ExCo press conference.

Despite the adjustment's announcement, the budget must

still go through the parliament for legislation before it can be enacted. The adjustment concerns extra expenditure of MOP2.3 billion, which will be used for the eight previously announced financial support measures for small and medium sized enterprises.

Including this addition, the anticipated amount used from the financial reserves this year will be MOP38 billion.

In mid-April this year, the government budgeted MOP9.11 billion of the financial reserves to support the extra expenditure at the time.

## CRIME

# Health voucher fraud suspected in collusion between clinic and traditional pharmacy

STAFF REPORTER

**A** medical clinic and traditional Chinese pharmacy in Areia Preta were suspected of fraudulently using government health vouchers amounting to MOP8.5 million between 2019 and June 2021, the Judiciary Police (PJ) announced yesterday in a special press conference.

There are a total of 10 suspects in the investigation, five of whom were detained on October 25. All suspects are residents of Macau.

Three of those detained are doctors at the clinic. The first is the owner of the clinic and was first to be suspected, but he has not been in Macau for some time. While he was out of town, the second detainee was in charge at the clinic.



The owner of the shop and his son were also detained, with his wife also a suspect in the case.

Four of the suspects were citizens who had cashed in their vouchers at the clinic. They are alleged to have used their health

vouchers at the clinic despite not having any health issues.

They then would head to the pharmacy per the doctors' instructions, where they picked up valuable goods or cash.

Over 5,200 citizens used

their health vouchers at the clinic in exchange for goods or cash. Vouchers were used over 16,000 times amounting to a value of MOP8.5 million.

According to the PJ, many clients were observed going into the clinic and leaving one to two minutes later. The police became suspicious as a doctor's appointment is unlikely to take so little time.

The Health Bureau said that this clinic has always had health vouchers logged in their system, and that the bank accounts used at the clinic belonged to the doctors.

According to the three doctors' statements, they convinced the pharmacy to participate in this scheme. The three suspects from the pharmacy did not cooperate with the PJ.

The first doctor said that he did not play any part in the scheme, as the second doctor was in charge of the clinic at the time. The clinic owner said he was only responsible for handling administration at the clinic and was not involved with the operations of the clinic.

The second doctor paid the owner of the shop around MOP200,000. The shop owner never received any health vouchers from clients.

The collusion between the clinic and the shop is evidence toward them committing fraud via health vouchers. Suspects one to six are from the clinic and shop, while suspects seven to 10 are people who used their vouchers.

The case is still under investigation.

# Sands China head optimistic on Grand Prix tourism

ANTHONY LAM

**S**ANDS China Ltd. (SCL) is confident on tourism during the upcoming Grand Prix period in November, Wilfred Wong, president of the casino concessionaire, said yesterday on the sidelines of a company event.

This year's Grand Prix features Chinese drivers only. Foreign racers have been discouraged from participating by the Sports Bureau.

The SCL president conceded that the lack of foreign racers may make the three-day event less attractive, but a full lineup of Chinese drivers will attract more Chinese tourists, who have been the main target clientele of casino operators in the past two decades.

He believes that as long as Covid-19 conditions remain stable in Macau, the tourism industry will gradually recover. He also revealed that SCL has seen an increase in tourist arrivals after the validity of cross-border nucleic acid tests (NAT) was extended to 48 hours.

According to the executive, the company has already started receiving inquiries and room bookings for the Grand Prix, Christmas and New Year periods.

Speaking about Friday's end to the public consultation period on the gambling law amendment, he stressed that supervision is needed and the industry welcomes the move. Meanwhile, the public consultation will help



the "healthy development" of the industry. SCL is compiling a report which will be submitted to the government by the deadline.

## IP SIO KAI: BAD DEBTS MAY EVENTUATE

Speaking at the same event was Ip Sio Kai, president of The

Macau Association of Banks, who found that bad debts were not on the rise despite the extent of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The reason for this outcome, he says, being that companies and individuals are mindful of their positive credit record. Most have made advance arrangements with their bankers to make use of government incentive schemes, such as extending the validity of their loan or repaying interest only.

However, he sees that a rising number of bad debts may eventuate as the Covid-19 pandemic lingers. Government measures are buying businesses and individuals time to deal with challenges.

Last year, the scheme that allows borrowers to repay only interest on loans mainly served individuals and companies with mortgaged properties. More than 8,000 such applications were received, involving a fund of more than MOP10 billion.

This year's scheme has seen crucial adjustment whereby the scheme's coverage has been extended to non-mortgage loans, such as business development loans and young entrepreneurship incubation loans.

Once an application is approved, the loan's validity will be extended for three years at most.

## BOC, SANDS ISSUE AFFILIATED CREDIT CARD

**T**HE Bank of China, Macau branch and SCL announced the issuance of a new set of co-branded UnionPay credit cards at a press conference yesterday.

The duo of cards are aimed at two different tiers of customers. The "Diamond" card targets regular customers, while the "Black Diamond" card is for higher-end clients such as the bank's private banking customers.

Decorated with the outline of SCL's properties on Cotai, the cards will of-

fer privileges such as a welcome offer, where card holders can earn MOP300 in rewards dollars and even a complimentary stay at The Parisian Macao, access up to 20% discount on SCL's various products and services, as well as other perks. The card can also be used with Apple Pay.

Applications can be submitted via the bank's mobile app.

The card is named after SCL's membership program, the Sands Rewards program.



# JP Morgan: Gaming concessions may be extended up to 12 months

LYNZY VALLES

**I**T will not come as a surprise if the government chooses to extend casino licenses by between six to 12 months after their expiration in June next year, according to brokerage firm JP Morgan.

This expectation follows the conclusion of the 45-day public consultation period on amendments to the gaming law.

The government has not yet provided guarantees that existing concessions will be renewed following their impending June 2022

expiration, despite various sectors calling on the government to extend validity of the concessions due to the adverse effects of the pandemic on the industry.

Analysts DS Kim, Amanda Cheng and Livy Lyu believe that issuing new concessions by June 26, 2022 will be a "very tight schedule," adding that "we wouldn't be surprised if the government extends the current term by six to 12 months."

"The next milestone will be the summary report on public consultation, which the government is requi-

red to publish before mid-March (180 days after the public consultation)," the analysts said in a note that was quoted in an Inside Asia Gaming report.

They anticipate the next steps will be "submission of the final draft of the revised gaming law which, once approved by the Legislative Assembly, will set the basis for concession re-tendering. A public bidding process should then follow, from which the government will pick the next concessionaires."

The vice-president and chief executive officer of

SJM Holdings Ltd, Ambrose So, has previously called for the SAR government to consider extending the six current gaming concessions for at least one year, and to hold off seeking license tenders until the global pandemic and economy have stabilized. These moves can "buy Macau's government more time," to collect more data relevant in putting together new tender standards and requirements, he explained.

Recently, Las Vegas Sands expressed its confidence in the gaming con-

cession renewal process, boasting of its track record, development, and investment in the city, and noting that it is "prepared for it" despite the current global pandemic crisis.

At a gaming public con-

sultation session, scholar and former lawmaker Davis Fong expressed a view that the validity of casino licenses in Macau should be changed to 10+5 years from the current 20+5.

## GOV'T'S GAMING TAX REVENUE IN SEPT. DOWN 46% MONTH-ON-MONTH

**T**HE government's gaming tax revenue was just MOP1.77 billion during the month of September, a significant drop of 45.9% from the MOP3.27 billion collected in August. Macau's gross gaming revenue (GGR) recorded an increase of 32.4% in September, reaching MOP5.88 billion following the steep revenue downturn in August caused

by the Delta variant cases and resulting border restrictions. September's figure is the second-lowest GGR the city has recorded this year. Considering last month's revenue from gaming, it is now clearly impossible for the city to reach this year's goal of MOP50.01 billion from gaming tax as September's revenue was only 54.5% of the month's goal.

DIPLOMACY

CHINESE,  
GREEK FOREIGN  
MINISTERS  
DISCUSS  
ECONOMIC TIES

**C**HINESE Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with Greek officials yesterday during a visit to Athens expected to focus on furthering Chinese investments in Greece.

Greece recently emerged from a brutal decade-long financial crisis that wiped out a quarter of its economy and has been eager to attract international investments.

China, which is constructing ports, railways and other infrastructure in dozens of countries around the world under its Belt and Road Initiative, is already heavily involved in Greece. The Chinese company Cosco Shipping now owns 67% of Greece's Piraeus Port Authority, one of the largest ports in Europe, after Greek lawmakers ratified the sale of a 16% stake in the company on top of the 51% Cosco already held.

Wang met Wednesday with Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and then with Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias. Mitsotakis' office said the meeting examined "the prospects of further developing the Greek-Chinese economic and investment plans" following the ratification of the Piraeus stake sale.

As part of the sale, Greece granted a five-year extension to the investments Cosco had undertaken as part of its original purchase of a majority stake in Piraeus.

"We look forward to new investment projects in the largest port of the Mediterranean, one of the largest in the world," Dendias said after his meeting with Wang.

"We have repeatedly said Greece can be a gateway from Asia into Europe, an energy hub," Dendias said.

Wang described China's involvement in Piraeus as an "emblematic" project as part of the Belt and Road Initiative and a model for mutually beneficial cooperation.

Labor unions, however, have criticized the working conditions at the shipping terminal, saying profits are put above safety, jeopardizing employees' welfare. A worker died this week in an accident at the Cosco-run container terminal in Piraeus. **MDT/AP**



Greece's Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias (left) and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Athens yesterday

AP PHOTO



WAR OF WORDS

US, China  
sparring  
over Taiwan  
heats up anew

Legend-class U.S. Coast Guard National Security Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) transits the Taiwan Strait during a routine transit with Arleigh Burke-class destroyers.

**MATTHEW LEE,  
WASHINGTON**

**T**HE United States and China are stepping up their war of words over Taiwan in a long-simmering dispute that has significant implications for the power dynamic in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

Amid a surge in Chinese military activity near the island that China regards as a renegade province and has vowed to reclaim by force if necessary, Washington and Beijing have launched new campaigns for global support for their respective positions, each using the stern and lofty language of sovereignty and international precedent. And neither is backing down.

While the disagreement over Taiwan isn't new and has long vexed relations between the countries, recent developments suggest the two are coming closer to confrontation. Last week, President Joe Biden set off alarm bells in Beijing by saying the U.S. has a firm commitment to help Taiwan defend itself in the event of a Chinese attack.

China protested and the Biden administration sought to play down the comments.

White House, State Department and Pentagon officials all said the president did not mean to imply any changes in the U.S. "one-China policy," which recognizes Beijing but allows informal relations and defense ties with Taipei.

The officials took pains to say that America's commitment to Taiwan remains steadfast but continues to be guided by a policy of "strategic ambiguity" over military-related specifics that falls short of a treaty-enshrined mutual

defense pact. Since then, however, the administration has upped the ante on the diplomatic front.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Tuesday publicly urged other members of the United Nations to reject China's assertion of absolute sovereignty over Taiwan and

join the U.S. in supporting Taipei's independent participation in international organizations related to transportation, health, climate change, culture and education.

"As the international community faces an unprecedented number of complex and global issues, it is critical for all stakeholders to help address these problems," Blinken said in a statement. "This includes the 24 million people who live in Taiwan. Taiwan's meaningful participation in the UN system is not a political issue, but a pragmatic one."

He noted that Taiwan has been prevented from participating in meetings of the International Civil Aviation Organization despite being a major transit hub and the World Health Organization despite having fielded an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Taiwan's exclusion undermines the important work of the UN and its related bodies,

all of which stand to benefit greatly from its contributions," Blinken said. "That is why we encourage all UN Member States to join us in supporting Taiwan's robust, meaningful participation throughout the UN system and in the international community."

State Department spokesman Ned Price declined to elaborate on what the administration would define as "meaningful participation."

Blinken's statement came just five days after Biden's remarks about Taiwan's defense and only two days after the State Department announced that senior U.S. and Taiwanese officials met virtually to discuss expanding Taiwan's participation in UN and other international groupings.

In that Oct. 22 meeting, administration officials "reiterated the U.S. commitment to Taiwan's meaningful participation at the World Health Organization and UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and discussed ways to highlight Taiwan's ability to contribute to efforts on a wide range of issues," the State Department said.

Apart from complaining about Biden's initial comments, China reacted angrily

**While the  
disagreement over  
Taiwan isn't new, recent  
developments suggest  
the two superpowers  
are coming closer to  
confrontation**



Arke class guided-missile destroyer USS Kidd (DDG 100) earlier this year

## Beijing confirms strict 'closed loop' for Winter Olympics

**C**HINESE organizers have confirmed participants in next year's Winter Olympics will be strictly isolated from the general population and could face expulsion for violating COVID-19 restrictions.

Vice mayor and Beijing 2022 organizing committee official Zhang Jiandong told reporters yesterday that those taking part in the games beginning Feb. 4 must remain in a "closed loop" for training, competing, transport, dining and accommodation.

A strict Olympic bubble has long been on the books, but Beijing has now made it official in keeping with its zero tolerance approach to the pandemic. Athletes and other participants will also be tested regularly for the coronavirus before and during the Games. Family, spectators and sponsors from outside the country will not be allowed to attend.

"All participants of the Games and our Chinese staff and volunteers will implement the same policy," Zhang said. "They will be strictly separated from the external society."

"Those who do not comply with the epidemic prevention regulations may face severe consequences such as warning, temporary or permanent cancellation of registration, temporary or permanent disqualification or expulsion from the competition, and other punishment."

All participants must have been fully vaccinated at least 14 days prior to their departure for China.

China has enforced strict rules on mask wearing, quarantines and contact tracing



that have largely succeeded in eliminating the local transmission of COVID-19, but imported cases and domestic infections continue to appear in daily reports.

"Indeed, epidemic prevention and control is the biggest challenge for us to host the Winter Olympic Games," Zhang told a news conference.

Wednesday marked 100 days until the Beijing Games. Organizers have held test events featuring international athletes at Olympic venues under strict conditions.

Japan imposed restrictive rules and an Olympic bubble during the July 23-Aug. 8 Summer Games in Tokyo, which had been postponed by 12 months because of the pandemic. MDT/AP

to that discussion, slamming the administration for making "irresponsible statements" that encourage Taiwanese independence and demanding a halt to U.S. "official contacts" with the island's government.

"Taiwan's participation in activities of the international organizations must be handled in accordance with the one-China principle," foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said. "Taiwan's attempts to expand its so-called 'international space' with foreign support are in nature seeking to expand the space for 'Taiwan independence' and secession. It will surely end in failure."

The back-and-forth is playing out against a backdrop of increasing belligerence by both sides toward the other, even as they profess to have common interests on issues ranging from trade to climate to North Korea. Relations have plunged to

new lows since nosediving under the Trump administration, which adopted a confrontational approach on trade, visas, diplomatic representation and educational exchanges.

While both former President Donald Trump and President Joe Biden have been firm in their opposition to Chinese activities in Tibet, Hong Kong, China's western Xinjiang region and the South China Sea, the Taiwan issue pre-dates most of those irritants.

China has recently upped its threat to bring Taiwan under its control by force if necessary by flying warplanes near the island and rehearsing beach landings.

China and Taiwan split during a civil war in 1949. The U.S. cut formal diplomatic relations with Taipei in 1979 in order to recognize Beijing. The U.S. does not openly contest China's claim to Taiwan, but is com-

mitted by law to ensure the island can defend itself and to treat all threats toward it as matters of grave concern.

Under President Xi Jinping, who is also Communist Party leader and head of the armed forces, China has been stepping up military, diplomatic and economic pressure on Taiwan. Over its National Day weekend at the beginning of the month, China sent a record 149 military aircraft southwest of Taiwan in strike group formations, prompting Taiwan to scramble aircraft and activate its air defense missile systems.

China has also recently held beach landing exercises on its side of the roughly 160-kilometer-wide Taiwan Strait, which, like the aircraft incursions, it described as a warning to Tsai Ing-wen's administration.

The U.S. has reinforced its support for Taiwan with military sales. MDT/AP

## Washington orders Chinese phone carrier out of US market

**U**.S. regulators are expelling a unit of China Telecom Ltd., one of the country's three major state-owned carriers, from the American market as a national security threat amid rising tension with Beijing.

China Telecom (Americas) Corp. is required to stop providing domestic interstate and international service in the United States within 60 days, under an order approved yesterday [Macau time] by the Federal Communications Commission. The FCC cited the danger that Beijing might use the company to eavesdrop or disrupt U.S. communications and "engage in espionage and other harmful activities against the United States."

The Biden administration has extended efforts begun under then-President Donald Trump to limit access to U.S. technology and markets for state-owned Chinese companies due to concern they were security risks or helping with military development. China Telecom is among companies that were expelled from U.S. stock exchanges under an order by Trump barring Americans from investing in them.

The FCC said in 2019 that due to security concerns it planned to revoke licenses granted two decades earlier to China Telecom and another state-owned carrier, China Unicom Ltd. It rejected a license application by the third carrier, China Mobile Ltd.

"China Telecom Americas' ownership and

control by the Chinese government raise significant national security and law enforcement risks," said an FCC announcement.

The company's conduct and communications to U.S. government agencies "demonstrate a lack of candor, trustworthiness and reliability," the FCC said, without giving details.

The Chinese government has said it would take steps to protect its companies but has yet to announce any retaliation over their status in the U.S. market.

The telecom companies are on a U.S. government blacklist of entities deemed by the Pentagon to be involved in military development. Others include state-owned oil companies, suppliers of processor chips and video technology and construction, aerospace, rocketry, shipbuilding and nuclear power equipment companies. MDT/AP





Chinese Premier Li Keqiang speaks in a virtual meeting of the ASEAN-Plus Three Summit on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit

ASEAN

# US, China, Russia join Asia summit amid regional disputes

EILEEN NG AND NINIEK KARMINI, KUALA LUMPUR

**P**RESIDENT Joe Biden and China's Premier Li Keqiang join an annual summit of 18 Asia-Pacific nations by video in a region where the world powers have dued over trade, Taiwan, democracy, human rights and Beijing's increasingly assertive actions in disputed territories.

Russian President Vladimir Putin will also speak at the East Asia Summit, a wide-ranging forum on political, security and economic issues organized by the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The World Health Organization is expected to brief the leaders on the pandemic, which has set back the economies of the 18 countries representing more than half of the world's population and accounting for over 60% of global GDP.

A White House statement yesterday said Biden will reaffirm U.S. support for the ASEAN-led regional architecture and discuss his vision for working together with allies and partners to address issues facing the Indo-Pacific region. It was the first time since 2017 that a U.S. president is attending the

summit, part of three-day high-level meetings hosted by Brunei, ASEAN's chair this year

During a separate meeting with ASEAN leaders earlier, Biden announced a \$100 million initiative to beef up U.S. engagement with the region in the face of China's growth as a national security and economic adversary. Biden called the U.S. relationship with the bloc "essential." The funding will cover health spending, a new climate initiative, education and programs to bolster economic recovery.

"I want you all to hear directly from me the importance the United States places on its relationship with ASEAN," Biden said. "You can expect to see me showing up and reaching out to you."

Relations between Washington and Beijing have plunged to new lows since nosediving under former President Donald Trump's administration, which adopted a confrontational approach on trade, visas, diplomatic representation and educational exchanges.

A long-simmering dispute over Taiwan flared up recently after Biden said the U.S. has a firm commitment to help the self-ruled island, which China claims as part of its territory, defend itself in

the event of an attack.

The U.S. nuclear submarine deal with Australia and the U.K. has also angered China, which claims most of the disputed South China Sea and warned the pact would threaten regional stability.

The issue may be raised during a separate meeting between Australia's leader and ASEAN. Some ASEAN nations such as Indonesia and Malaysia also fear the pact could escalate tensions in hot spots such as the South China Sea and spark an arms race.

The three-day ASEAN meetings have been clouded by a diplomatic standoff after military-ruled Myanmar skipped the summit in protest of ASEAN's move to bar Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, whose forces seized power in February, from attending.

ASEAN's censure of Myanmar was its boldest after the bloc's envoy was prevented from meeting ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other political detainees as part of a proposed dialogue to ease the crisis that has left more than 1,100 mostly anti-military protesters killed.

During the ASEAN leaders' talks with Australia yesterday, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong expressed concern over the detention

in Myanmar of Australian academic Sean Tunnell, who served as an economic adviser to Suu Kyi's government. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison thanked Lee for the concern, a Southeast Asian diplomat, who took part in the meeting, told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to discuss the discussions publicly.

Myanmar has refused to send a junior representative to the summit Tuesday and Wednesday, and slammed ASEAN's move as going against the bloc's principles of non-interference in each other's affairs and decision-making by consensus.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen said Myanmar's decision to snub the summit was "regrettable" and hinted he may also consider not inviting the military-led nation's top general to a summit of more than 50 Asian and European countries Cambodia will host next month, the diplomat said.

There have been concerns that European leaders may skip the summit, to be held by video, and just send lower-ranking representatives if the Myanmar general will be allowed to join the meeting, according to the diplomat.

Biden yesterday [Macau time] denounced the military in Myanmar for its use of "horrific violence" against protesters and pledged U.S. support for the nation's return to democracy.

In a chairman's statement released after the summit Tuesday, the bloc's leaders urged Myanmar to give its envoy, Brunei Second Foreign Minister Eryan Yusof, full access to all parties and release political detainees.

While respecting ASEAN's principle of non-interference, the bloc said it must also strike a balance in terms of rule of law, good governance, democracy and constitutional government in Myanmar's situation.

"We reiterated that Myanmar remains a member of the ASEAN family and recognized that Myanmar needs both time and political space to deal with its many and complex challenges," the group said. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1962 WORLD RELIEF AS CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS ENDS



The world has breathed a collective sigh of relief after the superpowers reached an agreement ending the immediate threat of nuclear war.

Russian leader Nikita Khrushchev has agreed to dismantle all Russian missiles based in Cuba and ship them back to the Soviet Union.

The announcement was made in a public message to President John F. Kennedy broadcast on Moscow Radio.

In response, President Kennedy said the decision to remove the Cuban missiles was an "important contribution to peace".

He has also promised the US will not invade Cuba and will eventually lift the US naval blockade imposed on the island.

The blockade will continue until effective UN inspection ensures that the missiles in Cuba have been dismantled.

The crisis began on 14 October after a U-2 reconnaissance plane revealed the existence of several nuclear missiles based in on the Caribbean island capable of reaching the US.

Then, a week ago, President Kennedy made a TV address to the nation denouncing the Soviets' actions. He declared a naval blockade on Cuba and threatened the USSR itself with attack if any Cuban missile were launched against the USA.

Since then the world has been on tenterhooks wondering which superpower would back down first, desperately hoping this was not the beginning of a nuclear World War III.

Four days ago, faced with a huge US fleet including eight aircraft carriers that had formed an arc 500 miles (800km) from the eastern tip of Cuba, Soviet vessels approaching the island turned back.

The British Foreign Secretary the Earl of Home welcomed Khrushchev's decision to dismantle the weapons in Cuba and praised President Kennedy's diplomatic skills.

China has expressed anger at the Soviet climb-down and said it will support Cuba "through thick and thin".

As part of the settlement Cuba's president Fidel Castro, angered that he was not consulted on the agreement, has ordered all Americans off the American base at Guantanamo used by US military for 60 years.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

In the summer of 1962 Nikita Khrushchev gave the go-ahead for nuclear missiles to be installed on Cuba to protect it from US invasion and also to counterbalance US superiority in long- and medium-range nuclear weapons based in Europe. After a US spy plane spotted the missile bases, the news was announced by President Kennedy and for a week the world hovered on the brink of all-out nuclear war. It was the Soviets who eventually backed down after Khrushchev insisted Kennedy promise not to invade Cuba. He also demanded the withdrawal of Jupiter missiles in Turkey. Kennedy publicly agreed to the first request and secretly agreed to the second. The US ended its blockade on 20 November 1962, the Soviets removed their nuclear weapons by the end of the year and US missiles in Turkey were withdrawn in 1963. A hot line between the USA and USSR was set up to prevent such a crisis happening again.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

### YOUR STARS

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
You're here to cultivate a sense of courage in your own independence. This time of the year redirects your energy away from life as a solo journey and sees you deepening the art of intimate connection.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20  
Today's skies offer a welcome pick me up to any recent heavy moods, Taurus. Your ruling planet, other-oriented Venus, locks into an uplifting connection with optimistic Jupiter.

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21  
Single or taken, it's an ideal day to sweeten up existing or potential connections. Meanwhile, the third quarter moon in Leo suggests changes waiting to be embraced around your communication style.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Luna's tense opposition with truth-revealing Pluto helps you sweep important truths out from under the rug. Aim to clear the air rather than keep tensions bottled up.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
Fortunately, assistance is offered by the sweet meeting of Venus and Jupiter. This beneficial pairing brings opportunities for creative expansion and a boost to romantic connections.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
Be gentle with yourself under Thursday's skies, Virgo. You're moving through a highly sensitive headspace as the third quarter moon emerges in self-focused Leo.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
Thursday's skies arrive with relief and encouragement, Libra. Your ruling planet, bond-building Venus, reaches out for support from growth-giving Jupiter today.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
Your finances also receive a welcome boost through this contact. Elsewhere, the third quarter moon in Leo illuminates changes to be made on the career front that impact your sense of independence.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
You naturally radiate a warm and magical energy outward into the world. That natural glow has had trouble getting through lately, but fortunately, Thursday's skies work to remedy that.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
Bond-building Venus aligns with faith-instilling Jupiter, offering a steady supply of sweetness and growth. Lean into the story taking place in your love life and embrace a vulnerable approach.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
The third quarter moon in romance-hungry Leo emerges today, illuminating changes to be made between career demands and partnership needs.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
Your ruling planet, expansion-seeking Jupiter, receives a warm visit from bond-building Venus today. This altruistic pairing offers expansion for growth on the career front, while keeping moods lift and optimistic.

### The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



### SUDOKU

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

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

### WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	6	16	cloudy
Harbin	0	14	fine
Tianjin	15	23	cloudy
Urumqi	13	16	overcast
Xi'an	16	18	rain
Lhasa	11	17	fine
Chengdu	19	29	cloudy
Chongqing	19	25	cloudy
Kunming	10	13	cloudy
Nanjing	22	25	rain
Shanghai	14	20	rain
Wuhan	-1	11	cloudy
Hangzhou	12	21	fine
Taipei	1	14	cloudy
Guangzhou	19	23	cloudy
Hong Kong	24	27	overcast
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	3	11	rain
Frankfurt	3	14	overcast
Paris	11	19	sunny
London	14	16	overcast
New York	11	17	overcast

### CROSSWORDS

**ACROSS 1-** Rebuff; 5- Pier; 10- Lay an egg; 14- Actress Skye; 15- Conger catcher; 16- Autobahn auto; 17- Tailless amphibian; 18- A-one; 19- Futile; 20- Implant deeply; 22- Nobleman; 24- Take exception; 25- Infernal; 26- Dies \_\_\_\_; 28- Burton of "Roots"; 32- King of comedy; 35- B-way hit sign; 37- Methuselah's claim to fame; 38- Used car locale; 39- More bizarre; 41- Sportscaster Berman; 42- Import or export duty; 45- Paris's Pont \_\_\_\_ Arts; 46- Start from scratch; 47- Muscat native; 48- Deep affection; 50- Stupidity; 54- Gut course; 58- Serrate; 61- One engraving; 62- Et \_\_\_\_ (and other men); 63- Eye drops; 65- Sharpen; 66- Vincent Lopez's theme song; 67- Upbeat, in music; 68- Tolkien tree creatures; 69- Aquatic bird; 70- Surround; 71- Chair;

**DOWN 1-** Located; 2- Peter of Herman's Hermits; 3- Render weaponless; 4- Wanderer; 5- Cried; 6- The Beatles' "And I Love \_\_\_\_"; 7- Not dead yet; 8- Pardon; 9- High-school freshman; 10- Privileged; 11- Hawaiian outdoor feast; 12- Thor's father; 13- Pub quantity; 21- Bruins great Bobby; 23- Type of phone; 25- Square; 27- Starting on; 29- Low-lying area; 30- Ripened; 31- "All The Way To \_\_\_\_", song by REM; 32- Singing voice; 33- Rich soil; 34- Gillette brand; 36- Out of the ordinary; 37- About; 40- Hard to hold; 43- First; 44- Rover's pal; 46- Attains; 49- Spot checker?; 51- Little bits; 52- Cheri of "Saturday Night Live"; 53- Pursue; 55- Excelled; 56- Gossipmonger; 57- Give it \_\_\_\_!; 58- Squealed; 59- Baseball family name; 60- Volition; 61- "\_\_\_\_ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 64- Semi;


**Yesterday's solution**

L	A	I	S	D	E	C	O	Y	A	R	B	E
A	L	O	E	T	R	O	D	E	F	I	A	M
M	A	Y	A	L	E	A	D	S	T	O	R	M
P	R	O	S	P	E	C	T	L	O	B	B	Y
C	A	S	T	F	E	A	R					
S	O	L	A	R	S	L	A	P	D	A	S	H
A	D	A	P	T	T	W	E	R	P	N	I	A
I	D	B	E	A	R	I	E	L	T	I	N	N
D	E	D	E	V	E	N	S	P	R	O	U	D
A	R	R	I	V	I	N	G	T	A	N	S	Y
H	O	N	O	R	E	D	I	M	A	C		
E	L	A	N	A	S	T	I	N	U	L	E	E
A	L	L	I	C	L	E	A	N	R	A	T	E
T	A	L	C		H	O	N	D	A		E	Y

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

**Emergency calls** 999  
**Fire department** 28 572 222  
**PJ (Open line)** 993  
**PJ (Picket)** 28 557 775  
**PSP** 28 573 333  
**Customs** 28 559 944  
**S. J. Hospital** 28 313 731  
**Kiang Wu Hospital** 28 371 333  
**Commission Against Corruption (CCAC)** 28326 300  
**IAM** 28 387 333  
**Tourism** 28 333 000  
**Airport** 59 888 88

**Taxi** 28 939 939 / 2828 3283  
**Water Supply - Report** 2822 0088  
**Telephone - Report** 1000  
**Electricity - Report** 28 339 922  
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**FOR RENT**  
One Central  
Ref: 2005 1002  
**HKD 16,500/mth**  
1,269 ft<sup>2</sup> 2 2 2

**Rain Dance Property**  
"We dance until it's SOLD!"  
**NEW**  
Hellene Gardens  
Ref: 2109 6001  
**HKD 7,980,000**  
1,663 ft<sup>2</sup> 3 2 1

XINHUA ECONOMIC WATCH

# 'FIRST-STORE ECONOMY' DRIVES RETAIL CONSUMPTION IN CHINA

**EYEING** for the wide consumer market and the increasing demand for quality life in China, more and more international and domestic brands have set up their first stores in the country or in a major Chinese city, injecting new impetus into the country's retail sales.

Since its opening in the China World Mall in Beijing in June, the store Choo Noble, the first on the Chinese mainland, has received an increasing number of customers. A brand of the Hong Kong-based company China Nobleness, the store sells color pencils and crayons from Switzerland, as well as wine, coffee and beer from Europe.

"Many companies have come to place orders for pencils, wine and coffee from Switzerland," said Amy Cao, manager of the brand.

Cao said the sound business environment and orderly organization in Beijing made the company determined to open its first store on the mainland here. "The favorable operation conditions have given us confidence, and we have planned to open more stores in the domestic market," she said.

In July, China approved Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, Tianjin and Chongqing to take the lead in building international consumption center cities.

In an implementation



plan for this goal, issued by the Beijing Municipal Commerce Bureau, Beijing said over 3,000 first, innovation and flagship stores of brands from both at home and abroad are expected to open by 2025 in the city.

Third-party statistics show that a total of 696 first stores, including flagship stores, had been set up in Beijing in the first three quarters, and the figure in Shanghai was 513 during the first half of this year.

Japanese fashion store Studios has included more than 80 Japanese brands of clothes and accessories in the 860-square-meter outlet that opened in April in Beijing, the first store in the city.

"Among the outlets in China, the one in Beijing is the largest in terms of the number of Japanese brands. The next step, we are going to open another one in Guangzhou," said Zhang Tianhao, head of the Studios Beijing outlet.

In the shopping mall "The New" in downtown Xidan, where the Studios

store is located, nearly half of the stores are first stores or flagship stores in Beijing, some even in China. The mall opening in April receives some 50,000 customers every day.

Yan Ligang, head of the Beijing Municipal Commerce Bureau, said that the city will further strengthen the ability to gather talent in international retailing and consumption, as well as to innovate, enhance the business operation models to continuously introduce first stores of major brands to the city.

China's retail sales of consumer goods went up 16.4% year on year to around 31.8 trillion yuan (about \$4.9 trillion) in the first three quarters of this year, data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed.

In Shanghai, the new shopping mall Taikoo Li Qiantan that opened in late September in the Pudong New Area received more than 100,000 people daily during the National Day holiday from Oct. 1 to 7. Among the 200-plus stores

that cover high-end retail, dining and beverage, as well as culture and arts in the mall, more than 50 are the first of their brands in Shanghai.

"Even window shopping in these novel stores is interesting," said Zhang Qi, a local resident visiting the mall.

The Pudong New Area has unveiled a plan to attract world consumer brands, aiming to become home to over 100 headquarters and over 1,000 first stores of consumer brands.

Gu Jun, director of the Shanghai Municipal Commission of Commerce, said the city will better make use of the major platform of China International Import Expo to optimize customs clearance and other procedures related to imported exhibits and commodities, and promote international brands to debut their products, shows and exhibitions more smoothly in Shanghai, so as to turn the city into a highland for new launches and first stores in the world. XINHUA

TECH

# MICROSOFT PROFIT UP 24% IN QUARTER, DRIVEN BY CLOUD GROWTH

**GROWTH** in Microsoft's cloud computing business helped push its profit up 24% in the July-September quarter over the same time last year.

The Redmond, Washington-based tech company reported quarterly profit of \$17.2 billion, or \$2.27 per share, beating Wall Street expectations of \$2.08 per share.

Microsoft profits have soared throughout the pandemic thanks to ongoing demand for its software and cloud computing services for remote work and study.

Microsoft posted revenue of \$45.3 billion in its fiscal first quarter, up 22% from last year. Analysts had been looking for revenue of \$44 billion, according to FactSet Research. Microsoft's stock rose almost 2% in after-hours trading.

Sales from what Microsoft calls its "intelligent cloud" segment, which includes server products and its Azure cloud computing platform, were \$17 billion, up 31% from a year ago. The company has been fiercely competing with Amazon, Google and other cloud providers for big business and government contracts.

There was relatively slower growth in Microsoft's personal computing business segment, which includes Windows software licenses for new computers. Sales in the segment grew

by 12% to \$13.3 billion.

Microsoft has been unveiling the next generation of its Windows software, called Windows 11, its first major update in six years. But the PC market has also been hit by supply chain problems.

Revenue from Microsoft's LinkedIn jobs networking service increased 42% from the same time last year. The company earlier this month announced it will be halting its localized version of LinkedIn in mainland China, citing tightening government restrictions affecting the only major Western social networking platform still operating in the country.

LinkedIn doesn't disclose how much of its revenue comes from China, but it reports having more than 54 million members in the country, its third-largest user base after the U.S. and India.

Microsoft also reported a short-term tax benefit of \$3.3 billion from its transfer of certain intangible property from its Puerto Rico subsidiary. The company had come under the scrutiny of the Internal Revenue Service over how it structured a Puerto Rico facility starting in 2005, leading a federal judge last year to say Microsoft was likely trying to avoid or evade paying U.S. taxes through its cost-sharing arrangement with the affiliate. MDT/AP

## CORPORATE BITS

### Sands China hosts seminar on 14th Five-Year Plan



A group of Sands China team members got an overview of the nation's 14th Five-Year Plan Tuesday at the Parisian Macao, at a seminar delivered by Kevin Ho King Lun, local deputy to the Na-

tional People's Congress (NPC) and president of the Industry and Commerce Association of Macau.

Entitled the 'Sands China Distinguished Speaker Forum Series - A Deeper

Understanding of the Development of China and the Future of Macao', the latest instalment in the seminar series is part of the company's ongoing effort to build professionalism and deepen understanding of national development. Around 250 Sands China team members attended, according to the gaming operator.

"It is important for our team members to obtain an understanding of the nation's development, so that they can gain a big-picture perspective of the business environment in both Macau and in the mainland," said Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd.

### Grand Lisboa Palace extends operation hours of Mesa



Grand Lisboa Palace Resort Macau announced that Mesa, a contemporary Portuguese restaurant, has extended its service for lunch hours with

exquisite dishes, and has launched night time promotions to.

The two- or three-course lunch set menu changes

weekly to ensure the freshest and most seasonal ingredients will be used, the gaming operator said.

New a la carte options include Canned Mussel Escabeche, using unique cans where the mussels are served with a modern look; Guincho Seafood Rice, an upscale marine feast made with blue lobster, Mozambique prawns and pink shrimps; and Fatias Douradas, a classic Portuguese Christmas dessert.

Ladies Night, every Wednesday, offers a complimentary welcome drink to all ladies upon seating, and a complimentary bottle of wine for a group of four ladies with minimum purchases.

TENNIS

# Trading shots: Lawmakers differ on Aussie Open vaccinations

JOHN PYE, BRISBANE

**T**HE back-and-forth debate over unvaccinated tennis players being allowed to contest the Australian Open in January heightened yesterday with the prime minister and a state political leader trading shots on points of difference.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison indicated in television interviews that unvaccinated tennis players would be allowed to get exemptions to enter the country provided they undergo two weeks in hotel quarantine.

Victoria state's Premier Daniel Andrews hit back, telling reporters in Melbourne he wouldn't be applying for exemptions for unvaccinated players.

Victoria hosts the Australian Open at Melbourne Park and has a mandatory vaccination policy for athletes competing in domestic leagues. The Andrews government has imposed months of lockdowns on the people



of Victoria and is only starting to re-open after the public reached high targets for the COVID-19 vaccine.

Morrison's move Wednesday to clarify his federal government's stance on the international border came a week after Immigration Minister Alex Hawke suggested there'd be a no-jab, no-visa policy for players at the Jan. 17-30 Grand Slam event.

Morrison said there are exemptions to the long-term in-

ternational border protection rules for some who qualify under skilled worker or economic benefit criteria.

"If there is a special exemption that is warranted for an economic reason, well, that can happen," he told Australia's Nine Network. "But you've got to follow the health rules in that state — and two weeks' quarantine for unvaccinated people, well, that's sensible."

Morrison said the ultimate decision on the Australian Open

regulations was for the state of Victoria, which has a cap on unvaccinated people arriving.

Andrews put the point beyond doubt.

"What I want to make very clear is that the state of Victoria will not be applying for any exemptions for unvaccinated players ... Therefore the issue is basically resolved," Andrews said, according to the Australian Associated Press. "I am not going to ask and require people sitting in the grandstand, people working at the event to be vaccinated while players aren't."

He also returned serve on the federal government over the apparent backflip within a week.

"I was perfectly supportive of Minister Hawke's view, which I took to be the view of the federal government and it appears that is not the case," Andrews said. "The federal government has done a complete 180."

Australia is preparing to re-open its international borders next month for the first time since early 2020, but it'll be a gradual,

state-by-state process. Fully vaccinated people will face fewer restrictions across the country than those who are not.

Tennis stars who are fully vaccinated for COVID-19 are set to be allowed to travel to Australia from Dec. 1 and, after testing negative to the coronavirus, will not have to quarantine.

Under Morrison's stance, unvaccinated players would face similar restrictions to those in place for the 2021 Australian Open, which included a 14-day hotel quarantine for all players, coaches and officials who arrived from overseas.

The exchange between Morrison and Andrews followed a leaked email earlier this week from the WTA to its Players' Council which suggested unvaccinated players would likely be granted a visa but must do two weeks in isolation.

The email said Tennis Australia was still working with the government on the details but because Victoria state was expected to hit a vaccination target of 90% of the adult population by next month, "it has been confirmed that conditions for the players at the Australian Open will improve significantly."

Tennis Australia then said it was "optimistic that we can hold the Australian Open as close to pre-pandemic conditions as possible." **MDT/AP**

AD

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OPINION

China Daily

Yi Jiandong, In China Daily

IN GAMES 'TOGETHER FOR A SHARED FUTURE'

The 100-day countdown to the 2022 Winter Olympic Games has begun. And while the clock of preparation ticks, the Olympic flame, ignited for the Beijing 2022 Winter Games in Ancient Olympia in Greece, has arrived in the Chinese capital.

The welcoming ceremony for the Olympic torch was held on Oct 20 at the Olympic Tower, an iconic landmark of the 2008 Beijing Summer Games, where Cai Qi, secretary of the Communist Party of China Beijing municipal committee and president of the Beijing 2022 Organizing Committee, took over the flame and lit the cauldron.

The ceremony acquired added importance because Beijing is the first city to host both the Summer and Winter Olympic Games.

The Beijing Winter Games, to be held six months after Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics that was deferred for more than a year due to the pandemic, will strengthen the international community's determination to combat the global health crisis, and carry forward the Olympic spirit.

China has taken many measures since the 2010s to promote winter sports including the Ice and Snow Sports Development Program (2016-25) and associated infrastructure investment, supported by plans to boost the nascent winter sports industry including the national fitness plan (2016-20), and the ice and snow facilities (2016-22) and ice and snow tourism (2021-23) programs. The targets are ambitious, though: increasing people's participation in winter sports to 300 million and raising the winter sports industry value to about \$155 billion.

The goals also include improving the well-being and health of the people, by encouraging more people to play sports, and bettering the transportation system and the environment. The results of these measures have been encouraging for example, a decade ago, there were only about 200 ski resorts in China, but by the end of 2019, the number had increased to 770.

Besides, the government's winter sports development road map, which includes developing more skating rinks and ski resorts, has laid the foundation for a winter sports industry's boom. And as a result of China deepening cooperation with several leading winter sports countries, some European countries have hosted Chinese athletes for training, and foreign coaches are working to boost the performance of the Chinese winter sports team.

Despite the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, the construction of the ice and snow sports venues, including ski jumping, freestyle skiing and cross-country skiing sites, is on track, as is the building of the Olympic Village in Zhangjiakou, Hebei province, and the Beijing-Zhangjiakou intercity railway.

Competitions and training programs for domestic and overseas athletes will be held to test the suitability and safety of some of the sites, as well as to check the other arrangements.

The growth of ice and snow sports and the winter sports industry in China should be welcome news for stakeholders across the world, including athletes and winter sports powerhouses, because they can use the scores of new venues China has developed for winter sports in preparation for the Winter Games.

But keeping in mind the pandemic situation across the world and to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, China has decided to restrict the sale of tickets for the Winter Games to only fully vaccinated Chinese mainland residents.

Beijing successfully bid to host the 2022 Winter Olympics more than six years ago and immediately started preparing for it.

The Olympic spirit symbolizes human resilience, and the international community's determination to contain the novel coronavirus. And along with the Olympic spirit, the Beijing 2022 Games' motto, "Together for a Shared Future", is a call to people to march together under the Olympic flag, and convey the common aspiration of all the countries to build a better future.

Hopefully, the organizers, and athletes and other participants will spare no efforts to uphold the Olympic spirit, create a safe atmosphere for everyone at the Winter Games, and make it a grand success.

[Abridged]

Portugal's parliament was poised to reject early today [Macau time] the minority Socialist government's proposed state budget for 2022, a move that would likely trigger a snap election and put a brake on the country's post-pandemic recovery plans.

The moderate Socialists were deserted by their hard-left allies from the Communist Party and the Left Bloc who have helped shore up the government's power over the past six years by voting for its policies or abstaining.

Prime Minister António Costa said he wouldn't quit even if he was defeated.

"The government's duty, my duty, is not to walk away when things become difficult," Costa told lawmakers. "We have to

face up to difficulties."

Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, who has no executive powers but oversees the running of the country, has warned he would call an early election if parliament does not approve next year's government spending plan.

A vote on the budget was expected today [Macau time]. Barring an eleventh-hour deal, the government's proposal appeared doomed.

Due to constitutional requirements that must be met before an election can be held, and taking into account the Christmas vacation period, early polls would probably take place only in January.

That means a new 2022 spending program probably wouldn't go before parliament before April.

AP PHOTO



UN CHIEF: 'LEADERSHIP GAP' UNDERMINES GLOBAL CLIMATE EFFORTS

THE head of the United Nations says a "leadership gap" is undermining the world's efforts to curb global warming, days before presidents and prime ministers from around the globe gather for a climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters yesterday [Macau time] that time is running out to cut greenhouse gas emissions and meet the goals of the 2015 Paris accord to avert global warming that he said could become "an existential threat to humanity."

"The clock is ticking," he said in New York at the presentation of a U.N. report highlighting the difference between what scientists say is needed and what countries are doing to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas being pumped into the atmosphere. "This is a moment of truth."

"The emissions gap is the result of a leadership gap," Guterres said. "But leaders can still make this a turning point to a greener future instead of a tipping point to climate catastrophe."

The new report by the U.N. Environment Programme found fresh pledges by governments to cut emissions are raising hopes but aren't strict enough to keep global warming from

exceeding 1.5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century.

It concluded that recent announcements by dozens of countries to aim for "net-zero" emissions by 2050 could, if fully implemented, limit a global temperature rise to 2.2 degrees Celsius. That's closer but still above the less stringent target agreed upon in the Paris climate accord of capping global warming at 2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial times.

"Every ton of carbon dioxide emissions adds to global warming," French climate scientist Valerie Masson-Delmotte, who co-chaired an August U.N. climate science report, told the United Nations on Tuesday. "The climate we experience in the future depends on our decisions now."

The European Union, the United States and dozens of other countries have set net-zero emissions targets. However, the UNEP report said the net-zero goals that many governments announced ahead of a U.N. climate summit in Glasgow next week remain vague, with much of the heavy lifting on emissions cuts pushed beyond 2030.

Guterres said scientists were clear on the facts of climate change, adding that "now, leaders need to

be just as clear in their actions."

"They need to come to Glasgow with bold, time-bound, front-loaded plans to reach net zero," he said.

Guterres made a direct plea to China, the top carbon polluter, to make carbon-cutting efforts go faster than previously proposed because "that would have an influence on several other countries." China hasn't updated its required emissions cut pledge.

The report came out as the U.N. General Assembly focused on climate change in a marathon session of speeches Tuesday. The presidents of vulnerable island nations Palau and the Maldives used the opportunity to plea for the world to do more because their countries are at risk of being wiped out.

"Our homes, our blue economy, our health and our overall well-being have been ravaged by the climate crisis," Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr. told the General Assembly. "We must take radical action now."

"The fate of small islands today is the fate of the world tomorrow," Maldives President Ibrahim Solih said.

Australia became the latest country to announce a net-zero target on Tuesday, but experts swiftly pointed out that it doesn't stack up. MDT/AP

European Union's top court has ordered Poland to pay 1 million euros a day over the country's longstanding dispute with the bloc over judicial independence. The ruling by the Court of Justice came after the EU's executive commission asked for "financial penalties" to ensure compliance with a ruling from July. The court said that the penalty was "necessary in order to avoid serious and irreparable harm to the legal order of the European Union and to the values on which that Union is founded, in particular that of the rule of law."

AP PHOTO



UK Pharmaceutical company Merck agreed to allow other drug makers worldwide to produce its COVID-19 pill, in a move aimed at helping millions of people in poorer countries get access to the potentially life-saving drug. The Medicines Patent Pool said in a statement that it had signed a voluntary licensing agreement for molnupiravir with Merck and its partner Ridgeback Biotherapeutics. The agreement will allow the Medicines Patent Pool to grant further licenses to qualified companies who are approved to make the drug. Neither drug maker will receive royalties.

AP PHOTO



UK Climate protesters sought to block two major roads into London yesterday, despite court injunctions banning them from disrupting traffic. Activists from the group Insulate Britain, which wants the government to better insulate homes in the country to cut carbon emissions, targeted two busy roads leading into the capital during the morning rush hour.

Sudanese security forces detained three prominent pro-democracy figures overnight, their relatives and other activists said yesterday, as internal and international pressure mounted on the country's military to walk back its coup. The arrests came as protests denouncing Monday's takeover continued in the capital of Khartoum and elsewhere, and many businesses shut in response to calls for strikes. Security forces kept up their heavy-handed response, chasing demonstrators in several neighborhoods.