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IF COVID-19 INFECTIONS REMAIN STABLE IN MACAU AND MAINLAND, THE CITY SHOULD BE REVITALIZED AND THE PROSPERITY INDEX WILL RISE: INDUSTRY LEADER P2

COVID-19: HEALTH BUREAU EXTENDS BOOSTER JABS TO MORE GROUPS P2

THE PHILIPPINE CONSULATE IN MACAU REMINDED THE COMMUNITY TO ‘STRICTLY’ FOLLOW LAWS AND REGULATIONS OF THE SAR GOV’T P4

USA A Chinese businesswoman convicted of trespassing at Donald Trump’s Mar-a-Lago club and lying to Secret Service agents was deported over the weekend, federal authorities said, more than two years after serving her sentence. Yujing Zhang was turned over to immigration officials in December 2019 after serving her eight-month sentence. But she was held for three times as long her as prison term mainly because of deportation delays during the pandemic.



AP PHOTO

Japan U.S. and Japanese officials agreed to launch talks aimed at settling a dispute over American tariffs on imports of Japanese steel and aluminum. The agreement came in a meeting between visiting U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo (pictured) and Japan’s minister of economy, trade and industry, Koichi Hagiuda. Japan hopes to convince Washington to lift tariffs imposed during Trump’s administration.



AP PHOTO

Cambodia reopened its borders to fully vaccinated travelers yesterday, two weeks earlier than originally planned, as it emerges from a lengthy lockdown bolstered by one of the world’s highest rates of immunization against COVID-19. The program allows visitors to skip quarantine measures if they are fully vaccinated, test negative 72 hours before they enter the country and test negative upon their arrival.

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STUDIO 2.0

Melco tops Phase 2 of Studio City, confident in region’s long-term development amid downturn P3



AP PHOTO

CHINA-US
XI MEETS BIDEN WITH TAIWAN IN THE MIDDLE

COVID-19

BOOSTER JABS EXTENDED TO MORE GROUPS

RENATO MARQUES

FROM yesterday, local health authorities extended the eligibility criteria for the third dose of the Covid-19 vaccine to more groups of people, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre announced.

As of yesterday, all people aged 18 years or above who have had two doses of the Sinopharm inactivated virus vaccine administered at least six months ago are now eligible to receive the booster jab.

Those who have received two doses of the BioNTech mRNA vaccine at least six months ago, may also be eligible for a third dose if they are aged 60 years or above, aged 18 to 59 years old with a compromised immune system, or are susceptible to greater exposure risk, the authorities also noted.

According to the centre, it is recommended that, for the



third dose, people continue to choose to be vaccinated with the same type of vaccine which they initially received, although it is also noted that "they can also choose among other vaccines according to their personal preference."

The health authorities clarified those considered as having a "weaker immune system," are people who have had any form of cancer, cerebrovascular diseases (e.g. a stroke), obesity, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease,

diabetes (type 1 and type 2), heart disease (e.g. heart failure, coronary artery disease or cardiomyopathy) or chronic kidney diseases, as well as current or former smokers.

Those "susceptible to greater exposure risk" include people working at medical or social services facilities, educational and correctional institutions, or medical observation (quarantine) venues.

Also included in this last group are people who have frequent contact with patients, the elderly, or people with disabilities, as well as those who have, for work-related reasons, frequent contact with persons from overseas or a large number of members of the public.

Those living in collective residential units and border checkpoints or logistics personnel are also considered people with a higher exposure risk.

The advice to get a third

dose of the vaccine is also extended to those planning to travel to places with a high incidence of Covid-19.

IMMUNOCOMPROMISED SHOULD NOT WAIT

In the same statement, health authorities recommend that those with a moderately or severely immunocompromised system, such as individuals receiving active oncological treatments including chemotherapy or radiotherapy for cancers, have received an organ transplant and are taking immunosuppressants, or are in an advanced stage of untreated HIV infection, should not wait for six months before getting the third dose. Instead, these individuals are encouraged to have a third jab as part of regular plan; 28 days after their second dose of vaccine.

Other situations should be handled with assistance from a physician.

Economic prosperity to improve in November, December: Association

ANTHONY LAM

IF Covid-19 infections remain stable in Macau and the mainland, the city should be revitalized and thus the Prosperity Index will rise in November and December, the Macau Economic Association forecast in a statement.

The association expects the Prosperity Index for November to return to above 3.0, a benchmark level to identify the vitality of the economy, with 3.1 points. The prediction for the Index in December is even higher, at 3.2 points.

The association stressed that the two months are traditionally high season for Macau, with series of events, such as the Grand Prix, the Food Festival, the

Shopping Festival, in addition to two newer events this year: the Macau Lights Festival and the Drone Performance Gala.

On the basis of these events, the association expects a gradual rise in visitor arrivals, further strengthening the city's economy.

In addition, the city's gross gambling revenue in the first week of November was MOP1.65 billion, which equated to a daily average of MOP236 million. Although the income was only about 40% of the average across the previous five years, the trajectory of the income, as well as tourist arrivals, is still upwards.

Despite the resurgence in the number of Covid-19 cases on the Mainland,

most cases were recorded in Northern China. The association pointed out that the main source of visitor is Guangdong, so it thinks the impact on Macau from the mainland cases will not be significant.

Referring to previous studies, the association noted that if disease conditions in both Macau and Guangdong are stable, visitor arrivals can reach 25% to 28% of the average across 2015 to 2019. It expects the monthly tourist arrivals in November to be between 700,000 to 800,000 counts of crossings.

The Prosperity Indices for both September and October were below 3.0, recoding only 2.8 and 2.7 respectively.

AO IEONG: 27 AGREEMENTS SIGNED TO COMBAT POVERTY IN CONGJIANG

PUBLIC services, associations, and companies in the Macau SAR led the signing of a total of 27 poverty reduction agreements to fight poverty in Congjiang of Guizhou Province.

This comes after the Macau government, the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macau SAR and the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) participated in the central government's work of eradicating poverty in the province in 2018.

In yesterday's opening event of an online exhibition "Congjiang Fight against Poverty,"

Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong U stated that those 27 agreements, 12 of which were backed by the Macau SAR Government, garnered "remarkable results."

With concerted efforts, Guizhou, the country's poo-

rest province, has become the province with the greatest poverty reduction, with 66 poor districts across the province, including Congjiang, being lifted out of poverty.

"It is with immense honor that Macau's compatriots can participate in the efforts to fight poverty, thus demonstrating their love for their homeland," said Ao Ieong.

According to the official, with regards to poverty reduction in the sector, Macau's advantages as an exhibition platform to promote the "internationalization of Guizhou goods were leveraged, at the same time taking advantage of the scientific and technological potential of Macau's traditional Chinese medicine, creating a base for growing 'Yao Herbs'."

The online exhibition features "story of Macau's success in supporting the fight against poverty of Cong-



jiang of Guizhou Province," with an aim to gain a better understanding of the work of the local government.

Back in 2017, Chinese President Xi Jinping said that the country should form a poverty relief mechanism with long-lasting effects and contain formalism in poverty reduction, adding that it is the country's solemn pledge to help all impoverished rural population out of poverty under the current standard and delist all poor counties by 2020. LV

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ANTHONY LAM

AT a company event, Clarence Chung, board director of Melco Resorts and Entertainment, reiterated the company's confidence in Macau, despite the recent negative economic atmosphere amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Chung stressed that the company supports the government's move in amending the gambling law, because the current version of the law was enacted back in 2001, and the environment has changed significantly since then.

Echoing an earlier statement by Lawrence Ho, chairman & CEO of Melco, Chung noted, "we are very confident in mid to long-term development." Discussing the renewal of the concession, the executive did not offer any specifics, but stressed that the company is more than happy to continue investing in Macau.

"In the past years, we have invested more than MOP100 billion in Macau," Chung said. "Looking into the future, we will continue our investments as a representation of our confidence in the city in the mid to long-term."

On the proposal by the government to place representatives in each gambling concessionaire, Chung noted the company's support of the proposal and stressed that "this is not new in a Macau context." He took utility companies as examples to justify this point, additionally citing the vice director of the Gaming Supervision and Coordination Bureau as making a similar comment.

Discussing non-gambling offerings, David Sisk, chief operating officer of Macau Resorts,



Melco confident in city's long-term development amid downturn

Melco, revealed that the company will introduce new retail brands that Macau has not previously seen. The company had previously announced that Hong Kong artistes such as Aaron Kwok and Joey Yung had agreed to do de-facto resident shows at the Studio City in Macau.

With regards to the theme park project in Zhongshan, Chung revealed that the company is conducting the preliminary master plan. "We have instilled quite a number of thoughts into the project," he said, adding, "We are trying to [apply] our experience gained in Macau to en-

rich elements in our Zhongshan project."

He said that more details will be released when they become available. He reiterated that although the company will soon extend its footprint to other parts of the Greater Bay Area, it will retain its role in Macau.

When questioned about the company's withdrawal from the Tokyo bidding, Chung said that the business environment has seen a lot of changes in the past two years. "In our perspective, considering all facets in Japan, we have suspended our intention to invest in Japan," he said.

MELCO REACHES NEARLY 95% VACCINATION RATE

MELCO RESORTS & ENTERTAINMENT has reached close to 95% vaccination rate for its Macau colleagues. The effort is part of Melco's "Get the Jab" program, in which the company earmarked HKD16 million in incentives towards the goal of increasing immunity. The second "Get the Jab" HKD3 million lucky draw was hosted yesterday, with three fully

vaccinated colleagues each winning HKD1 million. "We look forward to further travel integration between mainland China and Macau once Macau achieves an acceptable vaccination rate. We remain fully committed to doing our part for the betterment of the community," said Lawrence Ho, chairman & CEO of Melco Resorts & Entertainment.

Studio City Phase 2 to open in December 2022

MELCO Resorts & Entertainment held a ceremony to celebrate the topping-out of the second phase of its Studio City development.

Designed by Zaha Hadid Architects, the project measures 250,000 square meters in gross floor area. It is comprised of two luxury hotel towers with 900 rooms and suites, a retail complex of over 21,000 square meters and gaming space of over 2,300 square meters.

One of the hotels

has been rumored to be home to Macau's first W Hotel. However, a spokesperson of the company has previously declined to comment on the matter in a reply to the Times.

The USD1.3 billion development features a modern interpretation of the rich detailing, bold geometries and craftsmanship of the Art Deco period. It will have Asia's largest indoor and outdoor water parks, a six-screen Cineplex comprising two regular houses and four VIP suites, as well as a

state-of-the-art MICE space.

Melco executives stressed that the project, considering its proximity to a natural reserve, has employed the highest environmental standards in both construction and presentation.

It has been named winner of the 'Regional Award, Asia' at BREEAM Awards 2021 in recognition of its incorporation of sustainable building design, development and management.

It is expected to open before December 27, 2022.



CE TO PRESENT POLICY ADDRESS TODAY

Today, the Chief Executive (CE), Ho Iat Seng, will deliver the Policy Address for the Fiscal Year 2022 at the Legislative Assembly (AL). The session will be held at 3 p.m., followed by a press conference at the Government Headquarters at 5 p.m. when Ho will answer questions from the press. Tomorrow, Ho will attend a plenary meeting of the AL to explain the government's policy programme and take questions from lawmakers. The policy secretaries and their subordinates will present their 2022 policy guidelines to the AL from November 24 to December 3.

GUANGDONG, MACAU PRODUCTS FAIR TO BE HELD FROM NOV 26

The "2021 Guangdong & Macao Branded Products Fair" (2021GMBPF) will be held at The Venetian Macao from November 26 to 28. The three-day 2021GMBPF will continue to integrate trade, cultural exchanges, shopping, leisure, and entertainment, and will enhance business matching to provide a business and trade exchange and co-operation platform for trade visitors. From yesterday, the online business matching services started the provision of service for exhibitors and buyers to establish business contacts online. This service will be offered for 14 days in total.

IC TO CONDUCT MONITORING WORKS OF RUINS OF ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) will conduct monitoring works of the Ruins of St. Paul's College (former Mater Dei Church) on November 16 from early morning until 8 a.m. From then, until November 20, it will conduct the works from 6 p.m. to 8 a.m. In conjunction with the monitoring works, vehicles which serve as a working platform will be temporarily parked. Barricades will be placed in the forecourt and staircase, separating the intervention area from the public.

CONSULATE REMINDS COMMUNITY TO 'STRICTLY' COMPLY WITH NEW MIGRATION LAW

LYNZY VALLES

THE Philippine Consulate General in Macau reminded its community that the migration law had taken effect yesterday, reiterating the community to "strictly" follow the laws and the regulations of the local government.

Back in August, SAR Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng signed Law No. 16/2021 on the Legal Framework for the Control of Migration and Permits to Stay and Reside in Macau SAR, which officially took effect yesterday.

The law represents an update to Macau's legal framework relating to immigration, stay and residence in Macau.

Article 21 of the law states that non-residents must declare their intended purpose and stay in the region, noting that the entry permits granted upon arrival are exclusively for tourism purposes.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, under the labor law for non-resident workers which was passed in October last year, many migrant workers sought jobs while holding tourist visas.

With the updated labor law, foreign workers seeking jobs in Macau face additional difficulties in accessing the documents that allow such work as it requires unqualified and domestic workers



from overseas to have an entry permit on arrival to Macau in their possession.

This also applies to the non-resident workers already working in Macau, should they need or want to change employer.

With the border closures, foreign employees have taken the chance to change employers as it is now particularly challenging for local families to hire domestic workers.

Those looking to change employers were required to take the

inactivated vaccine to be able to cross the border and return to Macau with a work permit to comply with the labor law.

The Macau Overseas Worker Employment Agency Association previously stated that some migrant domestic helpers are using the mainland-Macau U-turn convenience to change jobs, even requesting to be dismissed by their employers to find a better job. The association described the job market as messy, despite

the fact that the policy has helped ease the city's demand for non-resident domestic helpers. Another article of the law stated that stay permits issued to non-residents may be revoked when the person performs unauthorized work. Also, anyone who knowingly provides shelter or accommodation to an illegal immigrant can face imprisonment of two to eight years.

Therefore, the Philippine Consulate in Macau "reiterates its standing reminder to the Filipino Community in Macau to strictly follow the laws, rules and regulations of the Macau SAR Government."

According to the consulate, the law "introduces critical changes in the law that all residents and non-residents in Macau must observe."

Recently, the consulate called on the the Filipino community to refrain from organizing public gatherings without obtaining prior permits from the relevant Macau authorities.

This comes after the one-day detention of over a dozen of Filipinos who took part in a gathering to show support for a political party running for presidency in the Philippines' 2022 elections due to failure to show the necessary permit from local authorities.

MUST holds forum on FinTech

THE Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) recently held a forum to discuss development of FinTech in Macau.

Titled "Research and Policy Forum on FinTech in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area", the event saw participations by local and foreign academics, policymakers and financial industry practitioners. It was held in an online-offline hybrid format.

At the event, Prof. Jacky So Yuk-chow, vice president of the MUST, stressed that the Greater Bay Area is key to the development of Macau's financial industry. Bei-



jing has paved ways for Macau to develop industry so that the city can better integrate within the national master plan.

He called on the public to take chances and better develop the industry in both Macau and the mainland.

Keynote speakers shared their views on the status quo and trajectory of FinTech in the Greater Bay Area, as well as its opportu-

nities and challenges. Some of them also discussed their research results to allow the audience to understand the field in a global perspective.

The event was co-hosted by the Macau Institute of FinTech Innovation and the Economic and Political Studies, a journal published by the Renmin University of China. AL

HALFTONE TO ISSUE FIRST EDITION TO PROMOTE 'PHOTOGRAPHIC EXPRESSION'

STAFF REPORTER

A photography association, Halftone, will launch its first magazine issue tomorrow at 6:30 p.m. at the Portuguese Bookshop, aiming to promote photographic expression in Macau.

According to one of the founding members, Gonçalo Lobo Pinheiro, the photos were selected by the editorial team, noting, "we know what we want" for the upcoming issue, named "number one."

The magazine includes both stories and photos, and aims to "become a symbol of the quality and diversity of photography [undertaken in] Macau and the Greater Bay Area, at large."

The association also hopes to "to create visibility for hidden or latent talent, [and provide] opportunities for photographers to showcase their art, particularly those that have never pub-

lished before," as stated in Halftone's first editorial.

The association's magazine intends to publish portfolios from Halftone's members, and serve as an open forum for photography enthusiasts of artistic or documentary approaches.

The first issue of the magazine includes portfolios from Bella Tam, Ricardo Santos Meireles, João Palla Martins, António Sotero, Tang Kuok Hou and João M. Rato, with design by Catarina Cachulo and Nuno Tristão.

The magazine will be on sale from November 17 for under 100 patacas at the Portuguese Bookshop and online on Halftone's website.

The photography association celebrated its inception earlier in May this year with an exhibition at the Portuguese Bookshop. Its 18 Portuguese founding members aim to include photographers of different ages, ethnicities and nationalities.

The Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Review of the MSAR Government's Work in 2021

1. Continuous improvement in pandemic preventive measures

- Macao maintained anti-pandemic policies that were consistent with the nation through close cooperation, joint pandemic prevention and control, and continued reviewing and improving its anti-pandemic work;
- Regarding implementation of region-specific and multi-level disease prevention and control: successfully carried out three rounds of community-wide nucleic acid tests, with the regular test capacity increased from 500 persons per day to **34,000** persons per day, and up to a maximum of **340,000** persons for emergency situations; and
- Strived to build herd immunity: by the end of October 2021, **459,152** people had received COVID-19 vaccinations, of whom, **103,700** had received only the first shot, and **355,452** had received the second shot. The overall vaccination rate was **67.2 percent** while the vaccination rate of 12 years old and above stood at **75.7 percent**.



2. Uncertainty in economic recovery

- Continued launching a series of welfare measures;
- Regarding safeguarding prioritised employment for local citizens: by the end of October 2021, about **6,400** people had participated in the subsidised training scheme, about **4,600** of whom participated in the employment-oriented subsidised training scheme, and more than **1,000** participants got employed;
- Regarding investing in public projects in an orderly manner: by the end of September 2021, **304** public projects of various sizes had been launched, creating about **3,000** jobs;
- Regarding support for sustainable operation of SMEs: the Government launched the "Electronic Consumption Benefits Plan", and from 1 June to 31 October 2021, this injected **4.573 billion** patacas into Macao's consumer market;
- Promoted recovery of tourism: the Government launched the "Stay, Dine and See Macao" programme, and held "Macao Week" events in various mainland China cities. From January to September 2021, about **5.77 million** tourists visited Macao, representing a year-on-year increase of **43.7 percent**; and
- Regarding expediting promotion of adequate economic diversification: achieved new progress by the traditional Chinese medicine industry; finished establishing the first stage of the "Fast Payment System" (FPS); followed up regarding the legislation of "Trust Law" and other laws; and the law on "Tax Benefits Scheme for Companies Operating Scientific and Technological Innovation Businesses" has come into effect, to encourage and facilitate development of the technological innovation industry.



5. Steady progress in public administration reform and governance

- Regarding ongoing public administration reform: planned to set up the Pharmaceutical Supervision and Administration Bureau, optimised the functions of the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau and other government departments, and reorganised **eight** public funds, including the Science and Technology Development Fund;
- Regarding deepening the development of e-governance: by the end of September 2021, more than **230,000** users had opened their **One-stop Public Services** electronic accounts;
- Regarding enhancements to legislative work: by the end of September 2021, the Government had formulated **16** laws and promulgated **34** by-laws; and
- Implemented all anti-corruption and auditing projects in an orderly manner.



6. Orderly commencement of urban planning projects

- The summary report of the public consultation on Macao's Urban Development Master Plan was announced in April 2021, after which follow up work commenced;
- As at 15 October 2021, land grants involving a total land area of **718,000** square metres were annulled in accordance with the law. A total of **51** plots of land were successfully recovered, involving a total area of **484,000** square metres;
- Commenced several important public infrastructure projects, including the public housing project in New Urban Zone Area A, and the fourth Macao-Taipa cross-harbour route;
- Regarding improving public transport: continued expediting walkway development, while the new bus services contracts came into effect;
- Completed formulating the **Environmental Protection Planning of Macao (2021-2025)**; and
- Regarding expanding open space for the public: the Leisure Area of Kun Iam Statue Waterfront opened to the public in the first half of 2021.



3. Continuous optimisation of people's livelihoods

- Regarding implementing the housing ladder policy: construction of Mong Tak Building of the Mong Ha public housing project was completed, providing **768** public housing units; Tamagnini Barbosa and Venceslau de Moraes public housing projects are under construction and will provide **2,100** public housing units upon completion. As at the end of October 2021, more than **4,000** regular applications for public housing were received; as of the end of the third quarter, **804** families were allocated public housing units. The first round of applications for Home-Ownership Scheme (HOS) housing commenced, in accordance with the newly amended **Home-Ownership Scheme Housing Law**. The HOS housing project that became available for application in 2021, in New Urban Zone Area A, will provide a total of **5,254** units, and demonstration flats were opened to the public. During the year, the summary report of the public consultation on the "Sandwich Class Housing Plan" was announced, and the follow up work commenced. The Government also made progress on housing for senior citizens, and completed setting up the senior citizen housing demonstration units for public visits;
- Actively promoting the Non-mandatory Central Provident Fund: by the end of September 2021, **264** employers had joined the scheme, with participation by about **24,000** employees, while **73,400** residents had set up voluntary personal Central Provident Fund accounts; and
- Implemented more than **200** convenient electronic medical services and management measures, and commenced the construction of the Islands District Medical Complex and its pre-operational preparation work.



4. Firm implementation of measures to safeguard national security and safety of Macao

- Regarding perfecting the MSAR's legal framework on safeguarding national security: amended the "Law on Use and Protection of the National Flag, National Emblem and National Anthem" and its related regulations; and promulgated the "Legal System on Immigration Control, Authorisation to Stay and Residence Permits in the Macao Special Administrative Region";
- Full operation of designated units for safeguarding national security – the designated departments strengthened their work on safeguarding national security and cyber security, as well as preventing and suppressing crimes of terrorism;
- Jointly organised a large-scale photo exhibition for celebrating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, and organised the "National Security Education Exhibition";
- Comprehensively amended and updated the "Civil Protection Master Plan"; and
- Public order remained stable and peaceful.



7. Continuous cultivation of talented people in culture and education

- Enhanced cultural heritage conservation, and completed the third phase of procedures for classification of immovable heritage;
- Basically completed integration of all tertiary scholarship schemes;
- Prioritised the improvement of teaching and learning environments of schools that originally operated on podium floors of buildings;
- Facilitated market-oriented development of tertiary education, and gradually reduced the proportion of allocation of Government funding;
- Regarding ongoing enhancements to patriotic education: stipulated that History is now a compulsory and independent subject for secondary school curricula, and published primary and secondary school supplementary teaching materials on the **Constitution** and the **Basic Law of the MSAR**; and
- Prioritised industrial development and formulated scientific policies to attract talented people.



8. New breakthroughs in regional cooperation

- The **Working Committee for Intergating into National Development** was formed, to strengthen top-down design and coordination;
- On 17 September 2021, the plaque of the administrative body of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin was officially unveiled, and an administrative committee and an executive committee were formed;
- Forged ahead with the construction of "Macao New Neighbourhood" project;
- Construction of the LRT Hengqin Line project commenced on 18 March 2021. The total quota for Macao motor vehicles entering Hengqin increased to **10,000**, while the requirements for applications were relaxed;
- Coordinated the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and implemented work to facilitate Macao's participation in the establishment of the Greater Bay Area;
- Leveraged Macao's unique advantages, and actively participated in and supported the development of the "Belt and Road" initiative;
- Pragmatically deepened and optimised cooperation with sister provinces and cities in mainland China; and
- The new **Guangdong-Macao border crossing checkpoint (Qingmao Checkpoint)** commenced operation on 8 September 2021.



Review of the MSAR Government's Work in 2021

Scan here to read



COVID-19

DALIAN OUTBREAK PROMPTS AUTHORITIES TO LOCK DOWN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

CHINA has confined nearly 1,500 university students to their dormitories and hotels following an outbreak of COVID-19 in the northeastern city of Dalian.

The order was issued Sunday after several dozen cases were reported at Zhuanghe University City and hundreds of students were transferred to hotels for observation.

Students were attending class remotely and having their meals delivered to their rooms.

The lockdown is the latest example of China's zero-tolerance approach to the outbreak, which has brought considerable disruption to people's lives and livelihoods.

Quarantines, obligatory



testing and travel restrictions have become the new normal for those even remotely caught up in outbreaks. The country's vaccination rate is among the

world's highest and authorities have begun administering booster shots as winter descends.

While those measures have

met little open resistance, the recent killing of a quarantined person's pet dog by health workers brought a wave of complaints online. The incident in the central city of Shangrao prompted local authorities to issue a statement saying the pet owner and health workers had "reached an understanding."

Following the incident, the China Small Animal Protection Association called for a quarantine system to care for pets caught in such situations.

"Pets are people's spiritual partners and should not be harmed under the pretext of fighting the pandemic," it said in a statement. "If you bring the hand of doom down on an innocent life without the slight-

test ability to defend itself, then how can you even talk about humanitarianism?"

Among other new measures, Beijing starting Wednesday will require all people arriving from other parts of the country by plane, train, bus or car to produce a negative virus test taken over the previous 48 hours.

Despite isolated cases in various parts of the country, China has been able to suppress major outbreaks over the past year, with its total number of reported cases standing at 98,315 with 4,636 deaths.

Yesterday, the National Health Commission announced 32 new cases of local transmission over the previous 24 hours, 25 of them in Dalian. MDT/AP

ECONOMY

Stock exchange for entrepreneurs launches in Beijing

JOE MCDONALD,
BEIJING

A stock exchange set up in the Chinese capital to serve entrepreneurs opened trading yesterday with 81 companies amid a crackdown on tech giants that has wiped more than \$1 trillion off their market value abroad.

The Beijing Stock Exchange joins other mainland Chinese exchanges in Shanghai and the southern city of Shenzhen. They are mostly off-limits to foreign investors, but some companies have shares traded in Hong Kong, an autonomous Chinese territory that is open to global capital.

The ruling Communist Party has promised more support for entrepreneurs who generate wealth and jobs but is tightening control over tech companies. They are under pressure to invest their own money in Beijing's industry plans.

President Xi Jinping said in September the Beijing exchange would "create a service-innovation-oriented main position for small and medium-size enterprises," the ruling party's term for private companies.

Chinese stock exchanges were set up to raise mo-



ney for state-owned companies, which prompted entrepreneurs to go abroad for capital.

Investors are uneasy about the status of China's entrepreneurs after the ruling party tightened control on tech companies by launching data-security and other crackdowns last year. Investors have knocked more than \$1 trillion off the value of Tencent Holding and other tech giants on Wall Street and the Hong Kong exchange.

The Beijing exchange will accept smaller companies and wider price swings than Shanghai or Shenzhen, according to official media.

After their first day, prices will be allowed to fluctuate by a daily limit of 30% before trading is suspended. The Shanghai and

Shenzhen exchanges are 10% one way or the other for the main bourse and 20% for their high-tech and small company boards.

Yesterday, a maker of industrial parts, Henan Tongxin Transmission Co., soared by just over 500% in its market debut. Most other companies, many of which moved from other exchanges, rose or fell by single digit margins.

The Beijing Stock Exchange has yet to announce an index to track the overall market's movement. The name is a potential challenge: BSE already is used for India's main exchange and indexes.

Shenzhen added a separate trading board in 2004 for private enterprises. Shanghai added a board for technology companies in 2019. MDT/AP

#METOO

WTA CEO CALLS FOR INVESTIGATION OF CHINA ASSAULT ALLEGATION

THE head of the women's professional tennis tour called for a full investigation of sexual assault allegations made by a two-time Grand Slam doubles champion from China against a former top government official in the country.

Earlier this month, Peng Shuai, a former No. 1-ranked doubles player, wrote in a lengthy social media post that Zhang Gaoli, a former vice premier and member of the ruling Communist Party's all-powerful Politburo Standing Committee, had forced her to have sex despite repeated refusals following a round of tennis three years ago.

Her post — which was removed from her verified account on Weibo, a leading Chinese social media platform — also said they had sex once seven years ago and she had feelings for him after that.

"Peng Shuai, and all women, deserve to be heard, not censored. Her accusation about the conduct of a former Chinese leader involving a sexual assault must be treated with the utmost seriousness. In all societies, the behavior she alleges that took



Peng Shuai

place needs to be investigated, not condoned or ignored. We commend Peng Shuai for her remarkable courage and strength in coming forward. Women around the world are finding their voices so injustices can be corrected," WTA Chairman and CEO Steve Simon said in a statement released by the tour yesterday [Macau time].

"We expect this issue to be handled properly, meaning the allegations must be investigated fully, fairly, transparently and without censorship," Simon said.

Peng has won 23 tour-level doubles titles, including at Wimbledon in 2013 and the French Open in 2014. She was a semifinalist in singles at the U.S. Open in 2014.

Her accusation was the first against a prominent government official since the #MeToo movement took hold in China in 2018 before being largely tamped down by authorities the same year.

In the post, Peng, 35, wrote that Zhang, now 75, and his wife arranged to play tennis in Beijing about three years ago and that he later brought her into a room at his home where the assault occurred.

"I was so frightened that afternoon, never thinking that this thing could happen," the post said.

Zhang retired in 2018 and has largely disappeared from public life, as is usual with former Chinese officials. MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



INDIA Smog chokes Delhi as air pollution levels soar

SHEIKH SAALIQ, NEW DELHI

SKY obscured by thick, gray smog. Monuments and high-rise buildings swallowed by a blanket of haze. People struggling to breathe.

In the Indian capital, it is that time of the year again.

The city's air quality index fell into the "very poor" category on Sunday, according to SAFAR, India's main environmental monitoring agency, and in many areas levels of the deadly particulate matter reached around six times

the global safety threshold.

NASA satellite imagery also showed most of India's northern plains covered by thick haze.

Among the many Indian cities gasping for breath, New Delhi tops the list every year. The crisis deepens particularly in the winter when the burning of crop residues in neighboring states coincides with cooler temperatures that trap deadly smoke. That smoke travels to New Delhi, leading to a surge in pollution in the city of more than 20 million people and exacerbating what is already a public health crisis.

The New Delhi government on Saturday ordered the closing of schools for a week and construction sites for four days beginning yesterday. Government offices were also told to shift to work from home for a week to reduce the number of vehicles on the road.

The capital's top elected leader, Arvind Kejriwal, said a complete lockdown of the city was likely but the decision would be taken after consultation with the federal government.

India's pollution problems are not limited to the capital.

Emissions from industries with no pollution control technology and coal, which helps produce most of the country's electricity, have been linked to the bad air quality in other urban areas.

India's energy needs are expected to grow faster in the coming decades than in any other country. A part of that demand is expected to be met by dirty coal power, a key source of carbon emissions that pollute the air.

That's why on Saturday, India asked for a last-minute change to the final agreement at crucial cli-

mate talks in Glasgow, Scotland, calling for the "phase down" not the "phase out" of coal power.

Indian Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav argued against a provision on phasing out coal, saying that developing countries were "entitled to the responsible use of fossil fuels."

Many experts criticized this move. They worry it has weakened the final agreement and could also hamper India's fight against climate change and worsening air quality.

"It is not at all desirable," said Samrat Sengupta, the program director for climate change and energy at the Centre for Science and Environment think tank. But he also said India needed enough "carbon space" in the atmosphere for its developmental needs to coexist with the global ambition of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times.

"Phasing out coal is technically impossible at the moment. None of the scenarios can project India will be having zero dependencies on coal by 2050," Sengupta said.

Last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the country would aim to stop adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere by 2070 — two decades after the U.S., and at least 10 years later than China.

India's coal reserves have a high ash content that burns inefficiently and results in increased air pollution. But millions of Indians depend on coal to earn their livelihoods.

"In our country, this is the only means of livelihood for many. If the foreign countries say we should stop using coal, then what will we eat," said Hari Ram, a coal trader. **MDT/AP**

MYANMAR

US journalist freed from jail with ex-diplomat's aid

AMERICAN journalist Danny Fenster, sentenced only days ago to 11 years hard labor in Myanmar, has been freed and is on his way home, former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Bill Richardson said yesterday.

Richardson said in a statement that Fenster had been handed over to him in Myanmar and would return to the U.S. via Qatar over the next day and a half.

"This is the day that you hope will come when you do this work," Richardson said in a statement emailed from his office. "We are so grateful that Danny will finally be able to reconnect with his loved ones, who have been advocating for

him all this time, against immense odds."

Richardson said he negotiated Fenster's release during a recent visit to Myanmar when he held face-to-face meetings with Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, Myanmar's military ruler.

Fenster, the managing editor of the online magazine Frontier Myanmar, was convicted Friday of spreading false or inflammatory information, contacting illegal organizations and violating visa regulations.

Fenster's sentence was the harshest punishment yet among the seven journalists known to have been convicted since Myanmar's military ousted the elected government of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi in February.

U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price condemned the decision, saying in a statement that it was "an unjust conviction of an innocent person."

Frontier Myanmar Editor-in-Chief Thomas Kean welcomed the news of Fenster's release, while calling for the country's military rulers to release all journalists still behind bars.

"Danny is one of many journalists in Myanmar who have been unjustly arrested simply for doing their job since the February coup," he said.

According to the United Nations, at least 126 jour-



US journalist Danny Fenster works out of his van that he made into a home/office in Detroit (2018)

nalists, media officials or publishers have been detained by the military since February and 47 remain in detention, including 20 charged with crimes.

Of the seven journalists

known to have been convicted, six are Myanmar nationals and four were released in a mass amnesty on Oct. 21.

Richardson, who also served as governor of New

Mexico and secretary of energy in the Clinton administration, has a record of acting as a sort of freelance diplomat.

He is best known for traveling to nations with which Washington has poor, if any relations — such as North Korea — to obtain the freedom of detained Americans.

Recently he has been involved in seeking freedom for U.S. citizens detained in Venezuela, another country with which Washington has strained ties.

Richardson has a long history of involvement with Myanmar, starting in 1994 when as a member of U.S. Congress he met Suu Kyi at her home, where she had been under house arrest since 1989 under a previous military government. **MDT/AP**



Back in the day: Xi Jinping and Joe Biden, then both vice-presidents, hold T-shirts students gave them at the International Studies Learning Center in South Gate, California, in 2012

CHINA-US

Xi and Biden prepare for virtual meeting: It's complicated

AAMER MADHANI,
WASHINGTON

JOE Biden and China's Xi Jinping have slurped noodles together in Beijing. They've shared deep thoughts about the meaning of America during an exchange on the Tibetan plateau. They've gushed to U.S. business leaders about developing a sincere respect for each other.

The American president has held up his relationship with Xi as evidence of his heartfelt belief that good foreign policy starts with building strong personal relationships.

But as the two leaders prepare to hold their first presidential meeting this morning [Macau time], the troubled U.S.-China relationship is demonstrating that the power of one of Biden's greatest professed strengths as a politician — the ability to connect — has its limits.

"When it comes to U.S.-China relations, the gaps are so big and the trend lines are so problematic that the personal touch can only go so far," said Matthew Goodman, who served as an Asia adviser on the National Security Council in the Barack Obama and George W. Bush administrations.

White House officials have set low expectations for today's virtual meeting: No major announcements are expected and there's no plan for the customary joint statement by the two countries at the end, according to administration officials.

The public warmth — Xi referred to Biden as his "old

friend" when Biden visited China in 2013 while the then-U.S. vice president spoke of their "friendship" — has cooled now that both men are heads of state. Biden bristled in June when asked by a reporter if he would press his old friend to cooperate with a World Health Organization investigation into the coronavirus origins.

"Let's get something straight: We know each other well; we're not old friends," Biden said. "It's just pure business."

Biden nonetheless believes a face-to-face meeting — even a virtual one like the two leaders will hold today — has its value.

"He feels that the history of their relationship, having spent time with him, allows him to be quite candid as he has been in the past and he will continue to be," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said in previewing the encounter.

Biden and Xi, ages 78 and 68 respectively, first got to know each other on travels across the U.S. and China when both were vice presidents, interactions that both leaders say left a lasting impression.

Of late, there have been signs that there could be at least a partial thawing after the first nine months of the Biden administration were marked by the two sides trading recriminations and by unproductive exchanges between the presidents' top advisers.

Last week, for example, the U.S. and China pledged at U.N. climate talks in Glasgow, Scotland, to increase their coo-

peration and speed up action to rein in climate-damaging emissions.

This meeting — the two leaders' third engagement since Biden became president — comes amid mounting tensions in the U.S.-China relationship. The two held long phone calls in February and September where they discussed human rights, trade, the pandemic and other issues.

Biden has made clear that he sees China as the United States' greatest national security and economic competitor and has tried to reframe American foreign policy to reflect that belief.

His administration has taken Beijing to task over committing human rights abuses against ethnic minorities in northwest China, squelching pro-democracy efforts in Hong Kong and resisting global pressure to cooperate fully with investigations into the origins of the coronavirus pandemic.

Tensions have also risen as the Chinese military has flown increasing numbers of sorties near the self-ruled island of Taiwan, which Beijing considers part of its territory.

Chinese officials have signaled that Taiwan will be a top issue for the talks. Biden has made clear that his administration will abide by the long-standing U.S. "One China" policy, which recognizes Beijing but allows informal relations and defense ties with Taipei. Chinese military forces held exercises last week near Taiwan in response to a visit by a U.S.

congressional delegation to the island.

Other U.S. presidents have held that bonding with a geopolitical adversary can be a good foreign policy strategy. George W. Bush faced ridicule after his first meeting with Russia's Vladimir Putin when he claimed that he had "looked the man in the eye" and "was able to get a sense of his soul."

Donald Trump went from disparaging North Korea's Kim Jong Un as "rocket man" to declaring the two "fell in love" in an exchange of letters as the U.S. president unsuccessfully attempted to persuade Kim to give up the regime's nuclear weapons program.

Biden's personal approach to foreign policy is in part informed by the fact that he's been on the international scene for much of the last half-century, author Evan Osnos noted in the biography "Joe Biden: The Life, the Run, and What Matters Now."

"You can drop him into Kazakhstan or Bahrain, it doesn't matter — he's gonna find some Joe Blow that he met 30 years ago who's now running the place," Julianne Smith, a Biden adviser, told Osnos.

Some top Biden administration officials speculate that with Beijing planning to host the Winter Olympics in February and Xi preparing to be approved by Communist Party leaders to serve a third five-year term as president next October — unprecedented in recent Chinese history — that there's plenty of reason for the Chinese leader to look to stabilize the relationship in the near term, according to a person familiar with administration thinking. The individual insisted on anonymity to discuss private deliberations.

Slowing economic growth and a brewing housing crisis also loom large for Beijing. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in a CBS' "Face the Nation" interview aired Sunday warned the deepening of Beijing's problems could "have global consequences."

At the same time, Biden, who has seen his polling numbers diminish at home amid concerns about the lingering coronavirus pandemic, inflation and supply chain problems, is looking to find a measure of equilibrium on the most consequential foreign policy matter he faces.

Biden would have preferred to hold an in-person meeting with Xi, but Xi has not left China since before the start of the coronavirus pandemic. The virtual meeting was proposed after Biden mentioned during a September phone call with the Chinese leader that he would like to be able to see Xi again. **MDT/AP**

this day in history



1960 TV STAR FAMED FOR RUDENESS DIES

British TV personality Gilbert Harding, who achieved fame through his outspoken and often rude behaviour, has died of a heart attack.

He collapsed as he was leaving the BBC's Broadcasting House in London after a recording session. His chauffeur waiting to collect him saw him slump to the ground with a hand to his head.

Driver David Watkins tried unsuccessfully to revive him with oxygen, which was always carried in the car because Mr Harding suffered from asthma.

Mr Harding, who was 53, spoke of his death in a TV interview two months ago when he said: "I'm afraid of dying. I should be very glad to be dead but I don't look forward to the actual process of dying."

A Cambridge graduate, Mr Harding followed a variety of careers including policeman, schoolmaster and Times correspondent in Cyprus, before he stumbled across his true vocation as a personality on radio and television.

The radio programme *We Beg to Differ*, which ran from 1950-51 made him a household name. In it he established himself as a man of strong opinions who liked to express them bluntly.

The TV panel game *What's my Line?* confirmed him as Britain's best-loved and best-hated man.

TV host Eamonn Andrews would invite a member of the public on stage and the panel had to guess their often unusual occupation after being shown a short mime.

Viewers began tuning into the show at 2030 on a Sunday evening to watch Mr Harding quarrel with *What's my Line?* challengers and argue with chairman Mr Andrews.

His mildest critics called him grumpy and ill-tempered - but those who disliked him called him offensive and rude.

BBC TV Controller Kenneth Adam said: "In an age which puts a high value on conformity he was bound to quarrel."

"Gilbert did not like people - he loved or hated them. And they loved or hated back."

In 1950 Mr Harding was suspended by the BBC from the chairmanship of *Twenty Questions* for angrily and audibly grumbling about the lengthy introductions at the start of the programme.

Five months later he was back in the chair, but the rudeness and unpredictability continued.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

On 9 December a memorial service was held at Westminster Cathedral attended by some 2,000 people including other well-known stars of TV and radio as well as members of the public.

Gilbert Harding also wrote a column for *The People* newspaper, which set up a memorial fund to raise money for charity after his death. A tribute programme on television included the last few seconds of the *What's my Line?* programme which had been recorded the previous week but not aired.

Producer of *What's my Line?* John Warrington insisted the programme would continue without Mr Harding. In fact, it ran until 1962 and was revived briefly in the 1970s. ITV's *Thames Television* later took over the show which continued until the mid 1990s.

Mr Harding was also a regular contestant on Radio 4's *Round Britain Quiz*, which is still running.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Tuesday's skies hone in on this story, as both the energy-giving sun and soul-sensitive moon reach out to Pluto. Acknowledge your frustrations and create a game plan for change.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
 Turn your attention towards your close relationships. What's stirring down below and needs to be said? Messenger Mercury finds itself making contact with both emotionally-honest Pluto and growth-giving Jupiter.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
 The path-guiding sun and sensitive moon both connect with regeneration-seeking Pluto today, helping you embrace a new outlook around what's wounded your heart.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Truths get swept out from under the rug with this aspect, so aim to approach all relationship matters with a direct and honest desire for change.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 As a Leo, you take your place in this world very seriously. As of late, your experience of your work/life balance has had you questioning your current job environment.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 What's taking place in your heart of hearts? The cosmos has steadily been helping you unlock your heart in a new capacity as you explore a fresh approach to intimate connections and creative activity.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 What story is stirring around your sense of self-confidence right now, Libra? Today's cosmic landscape has you tapping back into that story as you re-examine your relationship to your own talents and abilities.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Today's skies highlight this story, as the illuminating sun and sensitive moon reach out to transformation-seeking Pluto. Aim to speak your truth, clear the air, and acknowledge where change can be embraced.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 What's been brewing around your sense of potential, Sagittarius? The universe has been forcing you to take a good, hard look at the ancient wounds around your self-confidence that have stymied your growth.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 The universe is always pushing you to be your best self. In recent years, renewal-bringing Pluto has been camping out in your sign, forcing you to re-evaluate your relationship to your body, image, and health.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 This potent pairing offers you the chance to embrace a new approach to stagnant emotional issues, making it an ideal day for therapy and other healing modalities.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Tuesday's skies touch on this narrative, as the illuminating sun and soul-sensitive moon connect with healer Pluto. This pairing offers you the chance to embrace change in a fearless, direct fashion.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

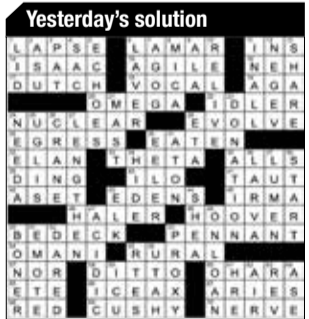
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	0	12	fine
Harbin	-8	1	fine
Tianjin	3	13	fine
Urumqi	-3	7	fine
Xi'an	3	13	overcast
Lhasa	-1	15	fine
Chengdu	10	13	cloudy
Chongqing	10	12	rain
Kunming	11	18	cloudy
Nanjing	11	22	cloudy
Shanghai	12	18	cloudy
Wuhan	11	18	fine
Hangzhou	9	17	overcast
Taipei	21	24	cloudy
Guangzhou	16	26	cloudy
Hong Kong	21	26	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-1	11	rain
Frankfurt	5	7	cloudy
Paris	5	9	overcast
London	13	21	cloudy
New York	9	21	rain

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Woody's boy; 5- Phnom ___; 9- Biblical verb; 14- Unskilled laborer; 15- Omnium-gatherum; 16- Native American tent; 17- As to; 18- Holds up; 19- Kitchen come-on; 20- Without interruption; 22- Cherish; 24- Test choice; 25- Foreigners; 26- Concurs; 29- Devoured; 31- Paces; 32- Suffix with exist; 33- Hole-boring tool; 36- Pet name; 37- Sleep; 40- Falsehood; 41- End for Siam; 42- Son of Zeus; 43- Mall frequenters; 45- Hue; 47- Weights; 48- Branched; 51- Finishes; 52- Hyundai model; 54- Go in again; 58- Nick of "Cape Fear"; 59- Gator's kin; 61- Sacramento's ___ Arena; 62- ___ alia; 63- Designer Schiaparelli; 64- Classic autos; 65- Approaches; 66- North Sea feeder; 67- Slippery;

DOWN: 1- Neat as ___; 2- "All The Way To ___", song by REM; 3- Forsaken; 4- Ragtime dance; 5- Permeable; 6- Run away with a lover; 7- Pen point; 8- Flexible tube; 9- Horse's home; 10- Scag; 11- Strike ___; 12- Yellowish citrus fruit; 13- Crews; 21- Head lock; 23- British buddy; 26- Tennis great Arthur; 27- Old Pontiacs; 28- Lacoste of tennis; 29- Go into; 30- Breezes through; 32- Monetary unit of Greece; 33- One of the Baldwins; 34- Fermented grape juice; 35- Not so much; 38- More healthy; 39- Piece of music written for a solo instrument; 44- Catch; 45- Easy gallop; 46- Furry swimmers; 47- Kind of garage; 48- Kidney enzyme; 49- Home ___; Culkin movie; 50- Mediterranean island; 51- Uneven; 53- ___-deucey; 55- Family portrait?; 56- Earth Day subj.; 57- Cheerful; 60- Literary monogram;



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Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222	Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944	
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731	
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333	
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MARKETS

WORLD SHARES HIGHER AHEAD OF TALKS BETWEEN XI, BIDEN

SHARES advanced yesterday in Europe and Asia ahead of virtual talks between President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The encounter, due to take place this morning, could add some clarity about the status of fraught trade relations between the world's two largest economies.

It comes fresh off a pledge by the U.S. and China to at U.N. climate talks to step up cooperation on reining in climate-damaging emissions. But it follows months of unproductive exchanges between the two presidents' top advisers.

"So far, the relations between Washington and Beijing are still sitting at their lowest level, and traders are hoping that this meeting will give them a reason to feel a little more comfortable when it comes to geopolitics," Naeem Aslam of Avatrade said in a commentary.

The futures for the S&P 500 and for the Dow industrials both were 0.1% higher.

Japan reported that its economy contracted in the July-September quarter amid tighter pan-

AP PHOTO



demographic restrictions that hit consumer spending.

In annual terms, the economy shrank at a 0.3% rate. It contracted 0.8% from the previous quarter.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is due to present a major stimulus package this week, with spending of up to 40 trillion yen (\$350 billion).

A recent sharp decline in new coronavirus cases has enabled the country to relax restrictions on business and other activities, and

that coupled with the government spending is expected to fuel a solid rebound for the last quarter of the year.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index gained 0.6% to 29,776.80, while the Kospi in South Korea surged 1% to 2,999.52. In Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 added 0.3% to 7,470.10.

China's latest data update was a mixed bag, with stronger retail sales and factory output but weaker housing prices and investments in fixed assets.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index picked up 0.3% to 25,390.91, while the Shanghai Composite index slipped 0.2% to 3,533.30.

In Beijing, a new stock exchange set up to serve entrepreneurs opened trading Monday with 81 companies amid a crackdown on tech giants that has wiped more than \$1 trillion off their market value abroad.

It joins others in Shanghai and the southern city of Shenzhen. Mainland exchanges are mostly

off-limits to foreign investors and were set up mainly to raise funds for state-owned companies. President Xi Jinping said in September the Beijing exchange would "create a service-innovation-oriented main position for small and medium-size enterprises," the ruling party's term for private companies.

On Friday, stocks closed higher on Wall Street but the market still ended the week lower.

The S&P 500 index added 0.7% but ended the week down 0.3% in its first weekly loss in six weeks.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.5% and the Nasdaq composite closed up 1%. The Dow lost 0.6% for the week and the Nasdaq lost 0.7%.

The recent winning streak for stocks, which produced a series of record highs for the major indexes, appears to have faded as investors shift their focus from corporate earnings to rising inflation.

Yesterday, U.S. benchmark crude oil shed 61 cents to \$80.18 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It lost 80 cents to \$80.79 per barrel on Friday.

Brent crude oil, the basis for international pricing, lost 72 cents to \$81.45 per barrel.

The dollar slipped to 113.89 Japanese yen from 113.97 yen. The euro rose to \$1.1454 from \$1.1447.

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JAMES ELLINGWORTH

SPAIN, Serbia and Croatia are heading to next year's World Cup. Sweden, Portugal and Russia aren't — not yet, anyway.

Aleksandar Mitrovic's 90th-minute header left Cristiano Ronaldo and Portugal stunned in a 2-1 win for Serbia in Lisbon, which gave Serbia an automatic qualifying spot at the World Cup in Qatar. Portugal still has a chance to qualify, but it must navigate a four-team bracket in the playoffs in March.

All of the teams which booked a World Cup place in Europe yesterday [Macau time] did so with dramatic late goals.

Spain only needed a draw in its last game against Sweden to qualify, but Álvaro Morata made sure in the 86th minute with the only goal in a 1-0 win to leave veteran Sweden star Zlatan Ibrahimovic's hopes of another World Cup appearance depending on the playoffs.

Croatia laid siege to Russia's goal on a waterlogged field quickly turning into a swamp, and was finally rewarded when a Russian defender scored an 81st-minute own-goal, enough for a 1-0 win.

Russia, too, heads to the playoffs, which start March 24 and will sort 12 teams — 10 group runners-up and two with strong records from the Nations League — into three brackets of four teams. Each bracket has one World Cup place. The draw takes place Nov. 26 in Zurich.

GROUP A

Portugal was in a strong position when Renato Sanches scored the opening goal after just two minutes against Serbia, but Dusan Tadic kept Serbia in the game with an equalizer in the 33rd. Mitrovic's late header silenced the crowd and shocked Portugal's players, including Ronaldo, who sat on the field at the final whistle.

"It was an amazing game, fully deserved," Mitrovic said. "I think we deserved to win the game and to be in Qatar."

Beating Portugal for the first time marks a turnaround after Serbia failed to qualify for the European Championship.

There's one positive for Portugal. Its comparatively strong record in the group means it will be

AP PHOTO



FOOTBALL

Serbia shocks Portugal to join Spain, Croatia at World Cup

one of the seeded teams for the playoffs in March and will get a home draw for the single-leg bracket semifinal game. Portugal last missed a World Cup in 1998.

Ireland won 3-0 at Luxembourg in the other Group A game.

GROUP B

Substitute Morata scored the winner for Spain after Dani Olmo's long-range shot bounced off the post to send Spain to its 12th consecutive World Cup.

At the age of 40, Zlatan Ibrahimovic was bidding to reach his first World Cup since 2006 with Sweden — he didn't make the squad in 2018 — but couldn't change the game after coming off the bench in the 74th.

That ended a campaign which seemed to be under control for Sweden before a shock 2-0 loss to Georgia on Thursday.

In Athens, already eliminated Greece and Kosovo drew 1-1.

GROUP H

The runners-up from the 2018 World Cup, Croatia, had to brave 2018 host team Russia and the weather to book its place at next year's tournament.

In driving rain on a waterlogged pitch which forced Croatia to switch its

game plan to long shots and crosses, an own-goal from Russian defender Fedor Kudryashov handed Croatia a win and a place in Qatar as group winner.

Croatia dominated the game against a Russian team for which a draw would have been enough to finish first, but poor shooting and some solid saves from goalkeeper Matvey Safonov made for a tense finish. Russia will be seeded in the playoffs.

Third-place Slovakia eased to a 6-0 win over Malta with a hat trick from attacking midfielder Ondrej Duda. Slovenia beat Cyprus 2-1.

GROUP J

On a night of drama for other big European teams, Germany stayed calm in a straightforward win. Germany qualified last month and has spent this week burnishing its already impressive goal difference to +32, the best in European qualifying at the moment.


Except for Hansi Flick's winning record as Germany coach, there wasn't much riding on the 4-1 win over Armenia, a team which had only the slimmest mathematical chance of qualifying for the playoffs. Two goals from Ilkay Gundogan helped Flick earn his seventh win from seven games in charge.

North Macedonia remains in contention to reach a World Cup for the first time after beating Ice-

land 3-1 to secure a spot in the playoffs. Eljif Elmas scored twice for his team, which will be unseeded.

Romania beat Liechtenstein 2-0 but missed the playoffs because of North Macedonia's win. **MDT/AP**

AD



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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, Global Times

**SUPPRESSING 'TAIWAN
 SECESSION' TOGETHER
 KEY FOR CHINA, US TO
 MANAGE COMPETITION**

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Saturday spoke with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on the phone as both sides prepare for a virtual meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and US President Joe Biden scheduled for November 16 Beijing Time. The announcements of the foreign ministers' talks issued by China and the US both highlighted the Taiwan question, but there is a huge gap between their views. It is expected that the virtual meeting between the two heads of state will also give an important place to the Taiwan question which will be one of the biggest difficulties of the meeting.

The US noted in recent days that their expectation for the China-US video summit is to "responsibly manage the competition between the United States and the PRC." However, in order to "manage the competition between the US and China", the most critical and urgent is to defuse the explosive question concerning Taiwan, because the Taiwan Straits is the most likely flashpoint to trigger the confrontation between China and the US.

[...] To stabilize the cross-Straits situation, the only way is to ease confrontation politically and rebuild the political foundation for peaceful coexistence and discussion of the future between the two sides. The US should play a constructive role in changing the extreme path of the DPP authority. Without the minimum level of political mutual trust, can China and the US make it clear by arguing over what should be done across the Taiwan Straits and who bears a larger responsibility? Is there any meaning in such a discussion?

The US has pursued the Indo-Pacific Strategy with the main purpose of containing China, and played the "Taiwan card" against China. The Taiwan authorities have completely inclined to the US, openly claiming that they serve as "the front line of democracy against authoritarianism". The US wants the Chinese mainland to tolerate such authorities on the island. What moral authority do they think they have to persuade China to do so?

The Taiwan question is the ultimate red line of China. In order to reduce the risk of a strategic collision between China and the US, the latter must take a step back from the Taiwan question and show its restraint. The US is targeting China's core interests, causing fundamental tensions in bilateral relations.

[...] The US has recently begun to hype the issue of Taiwan's "participation" in the United Nations. It has openly done some salami slicing that could be seen as the US to "restore its military presence in Taiwan." As news about military cooperation between Washington and the island continues to emerge, how come this is only a "competition?" We cannot understand what the US side is doing while at the same time it is preaching about preventing the China-US competition from escalating into conflict. We increasingly feel that trying to figure out Washington's logic is a waste of time, and that force seems to work better than reasoning with the US side.

China is willing to work with the US to reduce the risks in the situation in the Taiwan Straits, but history tells us that the only thing the US really cares about is talks through strength. China will have to fight and have a dialogue with the US at the same time. We hope that the US side will participate in the video summit with some sincerity and it will promote the solution to the problems to ease the highly tense China-US relations, instead of putting the priority on getting tough on China to satisfy such a need in the US society. The whole world is now worried about the further deterioration of China-US relations, and the key to turning the situation around is to change the US' belligerent policy toward China.

[Abridged]

The European Union yesterday ratcheted up pressure on Belarus by agreeing to slap sanctions on airlines accused of helping President Alexander Lukashenko to wage a "hybrid attack" against the bloc using migrants, as tensions mounted on the Polish and Lithuanian borders.

Up to 4,000 migrants are stuck in makeshift camps in freezing weather after Poland reinforced its border with Belarus with 15,000 soldiers, in addition to border guards and police. At least nine migrants have died. Many of them want to

head further west, often to Germany.

Polish authorities said that Belarusian services had led a large group to a border crossing with Poland and made them believe they would be transported by bus to Germany. Polish police say they are broadcasting messages across the border telling the migrants that "they have been deceived."

Meanwhile, Lithuanian officials said it was seeing a rising number of attempts by migrants to cross its border from Belarus, but the situation on the border was under control.



AP PHOTO

**BLAST OUTSIDE
 LIVERPOOL HOSPITAL
 WAS TERRORIST
 INCIDENT: UK POLICE**

JILL LAWLESS, LONDON

A blast in a taxi outside a hospital in England that killed a man was caused by an improvised explosive device and is being treated as a terrorist incident, but the motive remains unclear, police said yesterday.

Russ Jackson, the head of Counterterrorism Policing in northwest England, said Sunday's explosion at Liverpool Women's Hospital was caused by "the ignition of an explosive device" that was brought into the vehicle by a passenger.

The male passenger died in the explosion and fire that followed, and the taxi driver was injured.

Jackson said "enquiries will now continue to seek to understand how the device was built, the motivation for the incident and to understand if anyone else was involved in it."

Three men in their 20s were arrested elsewhere in the city under the Terrorism Act on Sunday, and a fourth was detained on Monday. All are believed to be "associates" of the dead passenger, police said.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was due to

chair a meeting of the government's COBRA crisis committee yesterday in response to the blast.

Suspicious about a motive for the explosion have been aroused by the timing — just before 11 a.m. on Remembrance Sunday, the moment people across Britain hold services in memory of those killed in wars.

Jackson said investigators had not found a link to remembrance events, "but it is a line of inquiry we are pursuing."

"Although the motivation for this incident is yet to be understood, given all the circumstances, it has been declared a terrorist incident," he said at a press briefing.

He said the passenger had been picked up by the cab a 10-minute drive away and asked to be taken to the hospital, where the explosion occurred. The driver, named locally as David Perry, managed to escape from the car. He was treated in hospital and released.

Police said officers had searched two addresses in the city linked to the passenger, and found "significant items" at one of them,

Liverpool Mayor Joanne Anderson said the taxi

driver locked the doors of his cab so the passenger couldn't leave. Police did not confirm that account.

"The taxi driver, in his heroic efforts, has managed to divert what could have been an absolutely awful disaster at the hospital," Anderson told the BBC.

The prime minister also said the driver appeared to have behaved "with incredible presence of mind and bravery."

Nick Aldworth, a former senior terrorism investigator in Britain, said the taxi appeared to have sustained "a lot of fire damage with very little blast damage."

He said that "whatever was in that vehicle was either a low yield or didn't work properly, or possibly an incendiary. So I think it's very much open to debate at the moment about what has happened."

Britain's official threat level from terrorism stands at "substantial," the middle rung on a five-point scale, meaning an attack is likely. The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre sets the threat level based on intelligence about international terrorism at home and overseas. MDT/AP



AP PHOTO

India began allowing fully vaccinated foreign tourists to enter the country on regular commercial flights yesterday, in the latest easing of coronavirus restrictions as infections fall and vaccinations rise. Tourists entering India must be fully vaccinated, follow all COVID-19 protocols and test negative for the virus within 72 hours of their flight, according to the health ministry.



AP PHOTO

Austria took what its leader called the "dramatic" step yesterday of implementing a nationwide lockdown for unvaccinated people, perhaps the most drastic of a string of measures being taken by European governments to get a massive regional resurgence of the coronavirus under control. The move prohibits people 12 years old and older who haven't been vaccinated or recently recovered from leaving their homes except for basic activities — or getting vaccinated.



AP PHOTO

Bulgaria A newly founded anti-corruption party held a narrow lead in the preliminary vote count from Bulgaria's parliamentary elections Sunday. A parallel count conducted by Gallup International gave the centrist We Continue the Change party of Kiril Petkov (pictured), 26.3% of the votes, leading the center-right opposition GERB party of former Prime Minister Boyko Borissov by just over three percentage points.



AP PHOTO

USA President Joe Biden's top economic adviser expressed confidence that the White House's \$1.85 trillion domestic policy package will quickly pass the House this week and said approval couldn't come at a more urgent time as prices of consumer goods spike. "Inflation is high right now. And it is affecting consumers in their pocketbook and also in their outlook for the economy," said Brian Deese, director of the National Economic Council. "It will get a vote, it will pass."