

14
Y·E·A·R·S
A·C·H·A·N·G·I·N·'
Double Down!
ADVERTISE WITH US
+853 287 160 81

www.rcr-macau.com
RCR
electronics

FOUNDER & PUBLISHER Kowie Geldenhuys

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

N.º 3915 **WEDNESDAY** T. 10°/16° Air Quality Bad
15 Dec 2021

“THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’”

MOP 8.00
HKD 10.00 2305 4271

THE GOVERNMENT MAY REVIEW THE RETIREMENT INCOME MAKING THE SUM OF PENSION AND SUBSIDY NOT LOWER THAN MINIMUM SUBSISTENCE INDEX

P2

AMBROSE SO SHOWS CONFIDENCE IN TOURISM REVIVAL IF HK NORMALIZES BORDER

P3

FRIDAY MARKS 10 YEARS SINCE KIM JONG UN, THE THIRD GENERATION OF HIS FAMILY TO RULE NORTH KOREA, TOOK POWER AFTER HIS FATHER'S SUDDEN HEART ATTACK

P8



AP PHOTO

China has detected its second case of the omicron variant in a 67-year-old man who tested positive after more than two weeks of quarantine, official media reported yesterday. State broadcaster CCTV said the man returned from overseas on Nov. 27 and underwent two weeks of isolation, during which he repeatedly tested negative for the virus.



AP PHOTO

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte yesterday withdrew his senatorial candidacy in next year's elections in his latest change of mind over what he plans to do after his turbulent term ends, when critics say he would likely face an array of lawsuits for an anti-drugs crackdown that has left thousands of mostly petty suspects killed. Accompanied by his executive secretary and security escorts, the 76-year-old Duterte went to the Commission on Elections in Manila and withdrew as a senatorial candidate. [More on p7](#)



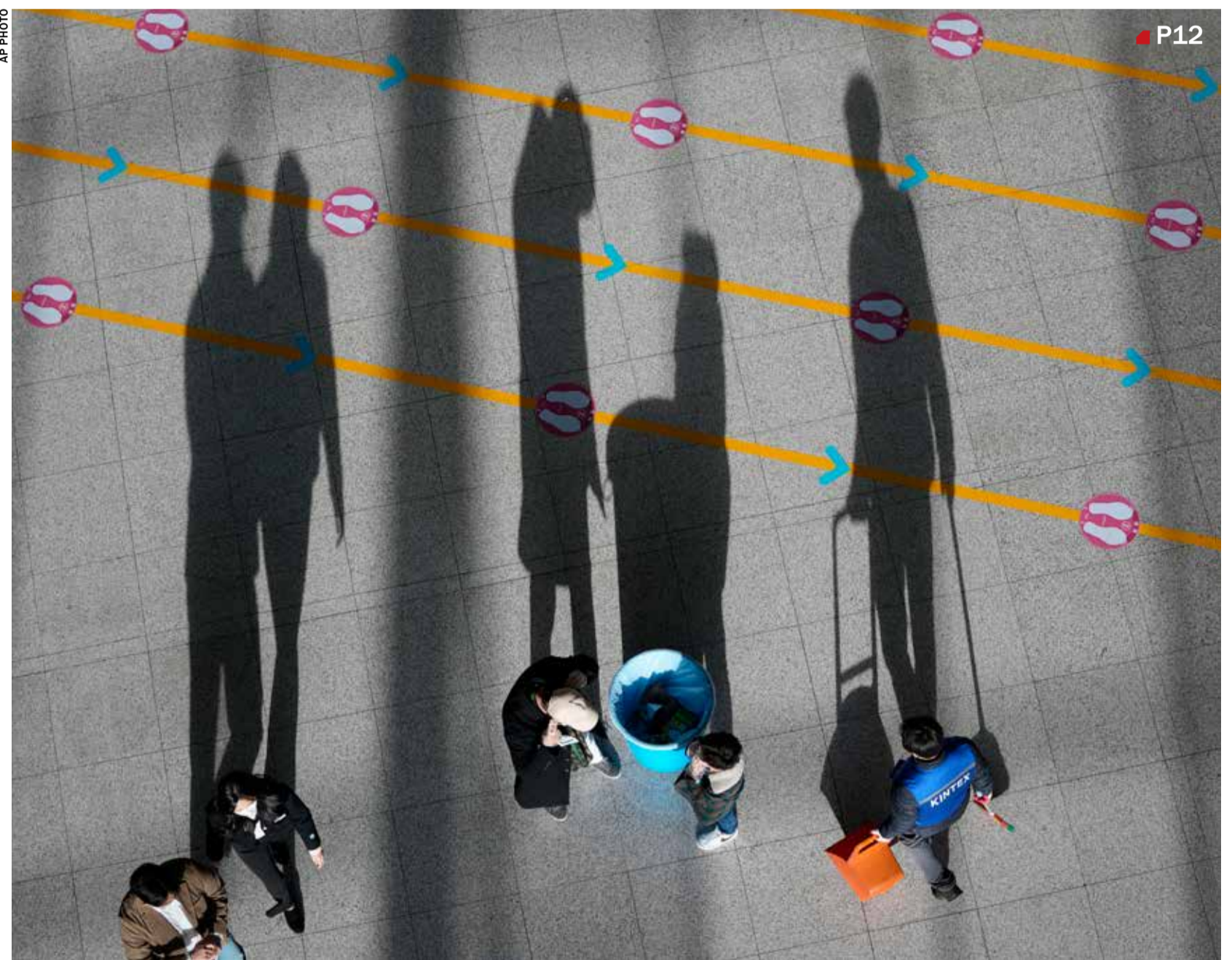
AP PHOTO

South Korea yesterday marked its deadliest day of the pandemic as an unrelenting, delta-driven spread stretched thin hospitals and left people dying while waiting for beds. Health experts warn that the country's medical system is quickly approaching its limits and that fatalities could worsen if the government continues to be slow and hesitant in tightening social distancing.

More on backpage

THIS IS THE END?

PFIZER CONFIRMS ITS COVID PILL'S RESULTS, POTENCY VERSUS OMICRON



AP PHOTO

P12

GAMING
MORGAN STANLEY FORECAST CUT REFLECTS 'TIGHTENED CRACKDOWN'

P3



THE END OF AN ERA
ALBANO IS LEAVING TONIGHT!

P2



ALBANO MARTINS LEAVES MACAU AFTER DECADES OF CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY

LYNZY VALLES

LOCAL economist and animal rights activist, Albano Martins, is leaving Macau for good today, after over 40 years of residency in the SAR.

Continuing with his advocacy of animal rights protection, Martins is set to establish a global animal shelter catering to strayed animals on his property in Alentejo, Portugal, which he leased for free to the project.

Martins has long fought for the closure of the Canidrome, which housed greyhounds that are used for betting.

Martins' role in unearthing the treatment of the greyhounds over the last few years has associated Anima with the Canidrome closure controversy.

The organization came to prominence in the international animal welfare community after years of protesting what it said was routine animal cruelty at the dog-racing facility. Its role in organizing international demonstrations, blocking the importation of new dogs and encouraging airlines to boycott their transportation, placed it firmly at the heart of the anti-Canidrome coalition.

Martins has been an economic adviser and consultant and was responsible for several feasibility studies for banking reports. He was also a training adviser responsible for the establishment of the 1999 training program for the Macao Monetary Authority. He was also a financial manager of the Nam Van Development Company, aside from several other hats he wore while in the region.

CONSTANT ADJUSTMENT MECHANISM CONSIDERED FOR WELFARE GIVE-OUT

ANTHONY LAM

A constant adjustment mechanism may be introduced next year to evaluate the amount of social security funds paid to each beneficiary, the Permanent Committee for Social Coordination announced at a recent plenary meeting.

All members of the committee came to an agreement about the introduction of the mechanism. The new mechanism was the fruit of research previously conducted by the University of Macau, under the commission of the Social Security Fund (FSS).

The research investigated the viability of an adjustment mechanism based on indexation for several types of hand-outs, with particular emphasis on the elderly pension. Under the proposed mechanism, the hand-out amount will be evaluated while taking into account the inflation rate, the change of the FSS's average income in the five preceding years, and the change in life expectancy per capita.

Specifically, the FSS will start to consider the benefit adjustment if the accumulated inflation rate since the last adjustment reaches or exceeds 3%. After weighing the overall financial position of the FSS over the past five



years and the average rate of change in life expectancy, the FSS will calculate the adjustable range of the benefit amount. If the accumulated inflation rate since the last adjustment is less than 3%, the payment amount will theoretically remain unchanged.

However, in the above two cases, the SAR government will eventually review the basic old-age security level and, if necessary, make an adjustment through macroeconomic policies in order to ensure the policy direction – the sum of elderly pension and subsidy for senior citi-

zens not being lower than the minimum subsistence index – can be implemented.

The committee also discussed compensation for occupational accidents and diseases. A member urged the government to develop an industry-focused mechanism regarding such compensations, recommending the latter to start with the construction industry.

SENIOR'S PENSION LEVEL RETAINED

In reply to lawmaker Zheng Anting's inquiry, the FSS's president, Iong Kong Io, announced that the cei-

ling of the elderly pension hand-out will remain at MOP3,740 per month next year, as the city is still seeing negative changes in the Composite Consumer Price Index (CCPI).

Iong recalled that the ceiling was raised in January 2020. With an outlook of a negative CCPI change for this year, the FSS has decided to retain the ceiling at the aforementioned level.

He assured the lawmaker that the government will adjust the ceiling accordingly to the impacts from the current pandemic so as to help residents meet challenges.

GOV'T TO TERMINATE DOMESTIC WORKER'S VISA FOLLOWING ALLEGED ASSAULT

A court has demanded the termination of a domestic helper's working permit for the alleged physical assault of the child at the family home in which she works, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) disclosed yesterday.

The suspect is in the process of deportation.

The case was first unearthed by a video that went viral on social media networks.

In the domestic surveillance camera video, an individual can be seen grabbing a younger individual at the door of an apartment. As the video was accompanied by audio, at this moment in the video, a loud bang can be heard.

Afterwards, the door of the apartment was closed. The loud crying of an individual, believed to be the victim of

the assault, may be heard.

On Monday night, the PSP said in a statement that the parents of the younger individual had been contacted. The authority confirmed that the suspect is a domestic helper from Indonesia, who was yesterday reportedly under investigation by the Public Prosecutions Office (MP).

The suspect is aged about 30 years and faces the alle-

gation of ordinary physical assault.

Also commenting on the case, the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) noted in a statement that it has contacted the police and the child's school for follow-up. Counselling has also been arranged for the student and parents. Any psychological impact on the victim will be closely monitored, the bureau added.

The DSEDJ reiterated that it will stand against any type of child violence and condemned such acts. **AL**

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

REACHING OUT!

+21,000

Like us on facebook.com/mdtimes



MacauDaily 澳門每日時報
Times

DIRECTOR & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR Lynzy Valles
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Anthony Lam, Emilie Tran, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Juliet Risdon, Linda Kennedy, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Viviana Segui
DESIGNERS Eva Bucho, Miguel Bandeira | **ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS** JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | **NEWS AGENCIES** Associated Press, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua
SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

SEND NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION AND PRESS RELEASES TO: NEWSROOM@MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM WEBSITE: WWW.MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM.MO

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C.

MACAU SAR Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com

For subscription and general issues:

general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

GAMING

Morgan Stanley forecast cut reflects 'tightened crackdown'

LYNZY VALLES

INVESTMENT banking firm Morgan Stanley is forecasting a total of MOP121.4 billion in gross gaming revenue for 2022, numbers that are 6.6% shy of the government's forecast of MOP130 billion for this year.

The figure is 42% of pre-pandemic levels, yet also represents a 41% increase compared to its initial expectation of MOP85.9 billion this year.

Analysts of the firm said that the downward revision is to "reflect China's tightened crackdown on illegal capital outflows, as well as potentially slower travel recovery amidst the Covid-zero policy and new Covid variant," as cited in a report issued by GGRAsia.

"For 2023, the lower [forecast] GGR is due to lower VIP revenue at MOP16 billion or 14% of 2019 from 54% of 2019s level," analysts advanced.

Forecasting the total estimates of expected Annual Property EBITDA for all six gaming concessionaires, analysts expect USD6.7 billion this year, after a negative



PHOTO ARCHIVE

MOP9.6 billion amount last year. With property, they expect results to recover to USD31.2 billion.

Analysts raised three remaining crucial events for the industry: publication of the gaming law public consultation results; a new gaming law draft, and the law draft being passed at the Legislative Assembly.

"Each of these events will provide clarity, even if the Macau Chief Executive temporarily extends the licenses beyond June 2022, which we expect could be announced by in Q122," the brokerage said.

Back in July, as global investors became edgy about the extended scope of mandates implemented by the central government on

several industries, Morgan Stanley Asia assuaged concerns in a memo, confirming the impact of these restrictions on the gaming industry would be limited. The group stated in a release that these tightened controls are "less relevant" to the casino industry.

Recently, Fitch Ratings issued a note stating its belief that the Macau gaming and tourism industries will begin recovering from more than two years of economic hardship at some point next year.

However, it warned investors that they should be cautious when it comes to buying shares in the casinos that operate in the city.

Fitch analysts Andrew Fennell and George Xu trust that, as vaccination rates improve, Macau will be more open to cross-border travel with the mainland, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

The analysts also forecast that Individual Visit Scheme (IVS) would be fully restored around the midpoint of 2022. Fitch Ratings this week unveiled rating watch negative (RWN) alarms for Las Vegas Sands, MGM Resorts, and SJM Resorts.

GROUP STOMACH FLU RECORDED; CAUSE BY FOOD CONTAMINATION RULED OUT

A case of group gastroenteritis has been reported by the Health Bureau, involving a group of 10 Kindergarten 2 students – four males and six females aged between four and five. Symptoms began to show on December 9. The patients all sought medical support and did not require hospitalization. Following investigations of dietary conditions, food contamination has been ruled out as the cause of the stomach flu. The bureau believed it to be likely caused by viral infection. Symptoms of such infections usually include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea with watery stools, abdominal pain and mild fever.

FLORA SCHOOL GROUNDS TO HOST INCLUSIVE LEARNING SCHOOL

As part of a plan to restructure some kindergartens and primary schools in the territory, the Portuguese and bilingual sections of Escola Primária Lusó-Chinesa da Flora will be integrated into Escola Secundária Lusó-Chinesa de Luís Gonzaga Gomes, as cited in a report issued by Ponto Final. The Chinese section of Flora will be moved to Escola Primária Oficial Lusó-Chinesa Sir Robert Ho Tung. While the school programs move areas, the current Flora grounds will be remodeled and readjusted into an inclusive school for special education. In addition to providing more resources and convenience, DSEDJ aims to solve the lack of classrooms by means of the plan.

GBA YOUTH CREDIT CARD TO ROLL OUT IN 2022

A Greater Bay Area (GBA) youth credit card is being launched next year as part of a series of projects assisting Macau youth to set up businesses in the GBA. The card is a collaboration between the Macau Youth Federation and the local branch of Bank of China (BOC). The card is expected to be available in the first quarter of 2022. Deputy general manager Chan Hio Peng of the local branch of Bank of China says the aim of the project is to provide the youth of Macau with a comprehensive service bank card that supports living in the GBA.

Ambrose So expresses confidence in tourism revival if HK normalizes border

ANTHONY LAM

THE border normalization between Hong Kong and Macau will be "naturally implemented" if the former normalizes borders with the mainland, Ambrose So, honorary chairman of the Macau European Chamber of Commerce (MECC) and CEO of SJM Holdings Limited, said yesterday.

On the sidelines of the chamber's anniversary party, he said that if Hong Kong manages to normalize border crossings with Shenzhen, border normalization with Macau will follow naturally. In addition, he sees that this as beneficial to Macau's tourism industry revival.

Meanwhile, he thinks Macau is not too sensitive about the country's diplomatic relations and conflicts. With regards to



ANTHONY LAM

Ambrose So and Henry Brockman (center)

the boycott of the Winter Olympics, which will be held in February, So thinks the Olympic constitution should be complied and that politics should be left out of the sporting arena.

Furthermore, he finds it sometimes "difficult to read [the] minds of [foreign diplomats] and see what they really want," but thinks the powers

around the world should maintain constant dialogue.

CHINA AS KEY TRADING PARTNER

Henry Brockman, chairman of the MECC, stressed on the sidelines that statistically the business sector is not overly concerned about the recent disputes between

Europe and China.

Admitting that geopolitical issues are on and off in nature, he thinks that the business sector will focus on doing business, while leaving politics to the politicians.

He foresees that China would still be a key trading partner for all European countries. "Hengqin will be a new point of contact between China and European countries," he said, adding that existing channels, such as the stock markets in Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hong Kong would still have strong connections between the Asian and European countries.

However, with tight border restrictions still in place, European investors may not easily establish new businesses in this part of the world. Based on this, speaking about future prospects of the city

business interactions with Europe, Brockman thinks it is a common practice that, when entrepreneurs venture into a new market, they start working with local partners.

His suggestion to local entrepreneurs is that they should start diversifying their businesses rather than focusing on existing products or services, "because there are new opportunities coming."

Both Paulo Cunha Alves, consul-general of Portugal in Macau and Hong Kong, and Thomas Gnocchi, head of European Union Office to Hong Kong and Macao, addressed attendees of the event, with the latter presenting via video.

They both hope the relationship between China and Europe will strengthen in the coming year, by means of the MECC's work.

ILLEGAL ACCOMMODATION BILL

90 DAYS OF AUTHORIZATION TO STAY IS 'DECISIVE'

RENATO MARQUES

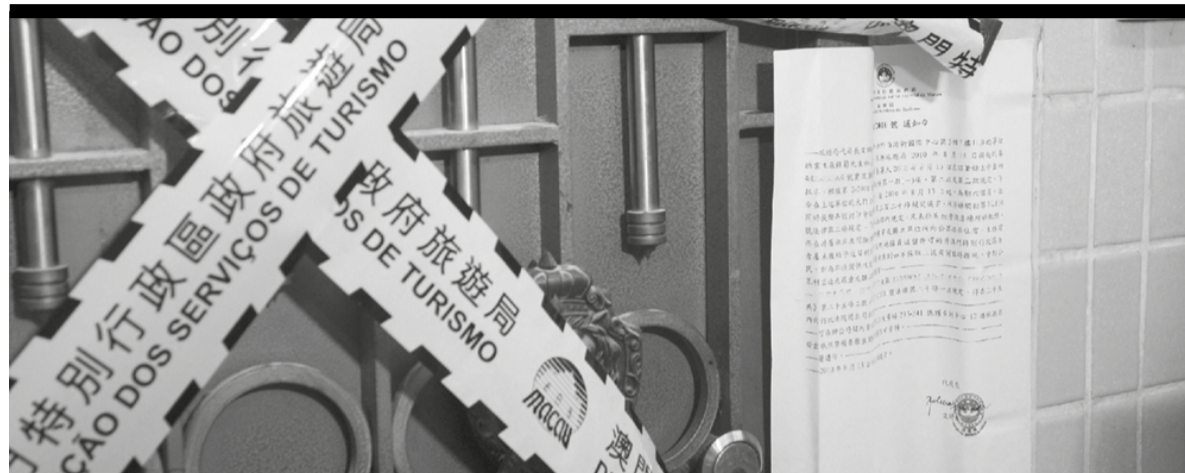
THE number of days that people are authorized to stay in Macau is the decisive criteria chosen by the government to decide whether people lodging outside hotel units can be considered illegal accommodation, the president of the First Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL), Ella Lei, informed yesterday in a media briefing following a meeting between the committee members and government representatives.

According to lawmaker Lei, the government has justified the choice of the 90 days permit rather than the type of visa that people hold at the entry in Macau based on the experience collected over the years and taking into account registered infractions.

Acknowledging that not all committee members agree with this criterion and have questioned the government on the matter, the president added that the criterion also follows the provisions of the new immigration law that entered into force this year.

"According to government's reply [to the questions of the committee members], [the adoption of the 90 days criteria] comes from the immigration law, which creates the possibility of several special visas (that did not exist before) and also allows the permanence in Macau of non-resident workers (TNR) in different situations," Lei said, adding, "This is also coming from the experience collected, which pointed [to the fact] that the majority of the offenders were people holding visas below 90 days."

The lawmaker also repeated that there are people from Hong Kong and some countries to whom permanence in Macau can be granted for up to one year, stating, "what we are trying to do it to restrict the possibility for people



on short stays to engage in house rental systems that constitute illegal hostel lodging."

As noted by the committee president, when the new law enters into force, landlords or other entities, including real estate agencies, will be legally barred from renting housing units or parts of housing units to anyone holding a permit to stay in Macau for 90 days or less.

"These people will need to stay in licensed hotels or hostels units or, in case they come to visit fa-

mily members or friends, they are allowed to do so as long as they can stay in their friends' or family's houses," Lei remarked.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS' LOOPHOLE

The possibility of people still being able to be lodged in their family and friends' houses was another of the concerns expressed by several lawmakers, who criticized the fact as a potential loophole in the law, allowing people to continue to provide lodging illegally.

On this topic, the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) responded that, although there is always a possibility of people breaching the law or finding ways to go around it, the main goal of the MGTO is to tackle the large majority of issues.

The office also said that while it was investigating potential illegal accommodation cases, the 42 inspectors from the MGTO will question those involved to ensure that they have a real family or friendship relationship with the people

with whom they are staying.

In these cases, the people lodged at family homes cannot be paying the owners or tenants any fees for their lodging, otherwise it will be considered illegal hosteling.

LACK OF LEGAL CONTRACT ON RENTING CAN BE TARGETED

Another of the provisions of the new law that aims to stop illegal accommodation is related to housing rental contracts. According to Lei, this is one of the few exceptions to the 90 days permit: cases in which people, although holding a longer than 90 days authorization to stay in Macau, are renting a housing unit without a tenancy contract legally registered and without property tax paid to the Financial Services Bureau. In this case, the unit owners can still be targeted under the provisions of illegal accommodation, the president of the committee said, noting that other exceptions are conceded only to the lodging of guests made by tertiary education providers and religious institutions.

OVER 90% OF FINES ISSUED OVER ILLEGAL ACCOMMODATION REMAIN UNPAID

OVER the past 11 years of law enforcement related to illegal accommodation, the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) has issued a total of 2,309 fines to offenders. Of these, a staggering 91.5% remain unpaid, the president of the First Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL), Ella Lei, informed yesterday in a media briefing following a meeting from the committee members with government representatives.

According to Lei, these figures come from a report made by the government to the committee members yesterday, at which they summarized the works done and results achieved under the current law which is being amended by the government now.

Citing these figures, Lei noted that only 195 out of over 2,300 fines issued, related to 2,916 processes, had been settled by the offenders.

In response to the questions of lawmakers, the MGTO explained that, in many of the cases, the offenders were found to be people with no residency in Macau or any assets that MGTO could target to pursue the payment of the fines.

Over the 11 years, the MGTO had performed a total of 13,362 inspections of suspicious housing units and sealed 1,808 due to the fact that they were found to be providing illegal accommodation. Lei also noted that, according to information of the MGTO, some of these units have been targeted with ins-

pections more than once, resulting in sealing actions also on more than one occasion.

Statistics collected also show that 80.1% of the offenders in all the cases were non-residents and the large majority were people from the mainland who rented or sub-letted housing units in Macau for such purposes.

According to the MGTO, a mechanism has been also established among several government departments that notify the MGTO of any suspicious use of housing units as illegal hostels in cases related to other inspections by these departments of these units.

Such a mechanism, which includes the Public Security Police Force as well as the Fire Services Bureau, "has proven to be very effective," Lei said, citing MGTO conclusions. **RM**

CRIME

Man detained for car burglaries claims they were done for survival

RENATO MARQUES

A local resident in his thirties has been arrested by the Public Security Police Force (PSP) for allegedly burgling from motor vehicles in a parking lot located in the building where the suspect lives, the PSP informed during yes-

terday's regular joint press conference of the local police forces.

The case came after four car owners made separate reports of theft and damage to their vehicles in the car park facility on December 11 and 12.

Following the complaints, the PSP reviewed foot-

age from the parking lot surveillance cameras and found the same suspect present on at least two occasions. First, in the early hours of December 9, the police spotted him in the footage carrying two shoe boxes. On December 11, he was spotted carrying a semi-transparent bag con-

taining a hammer.

On December 12, around 3:30 p.m., the PSP arrested him at his apartment located in the building.

While being questioned, the man admitted that between December 8 and 12 he had tried to enter several vehicles parked in the parking lot to take whatever

he could that was worth money.

He said he had done so during a state of inebriation, meaning he was unable to remember some of the details or even from where he took some of the items found in his possession.

He justified the act due to a situation of long-term unemployment, saying that he was desperate to find a way to support himself.

In his possession, in addition to the materials used to break the glass of several vehicles, the police found about 300 patacas in

coins, which he admitted to having taken from several vehicles, as well as two pairs of leather shoes valued at around 5,000 patacas that he took from another vehicle, along with some sunglasses.

He was also in the possession of a red wristwatch of which he says he does not remember the origin.

The case has been forwarded to the Public Prosecutions Office for the charging of the man on December 13. The PSP continues to investigate the case, as there are suspicions that more cars were involved.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



Local procurement on the rise as company strengthens support

AS a key developer of large-scale integrated resorts in the city, Sands China Ltd. must source world-class products and services that have appropriate quality levels, competitive pricing, and are delivered on time.

In doing that, Sands China is strongly dedicated to strengthening the community by purchasing from local suppliers – heeding to the government's call for supporting local firms.

Meanwhile, Sands China's parent company, Las Vegas Sands Corp., continues to be mindful of the cultural and regulatory requirements at each of its properties while establishing its global presence and procurement strategies.

In line with those goals, Sands China has been launching a series of programs for Macau's local SMEs over the last several years, in a bid to support local suppliers and to help them uphold the same high service and production standards that Sands China implements in its own operations.

In support of Macau's development into a world-class destination, Sands China was the first gaming operator to launch an SME supplier support program with the Macao Chamber of Commerce in 2015.

As part of that program, Sands China launched the Sands Procurement Academy in 2017, which it co-organised with the

Macao Chamber of Commerce and the Macau Productivity and Technology Centre (CP-TTM). The academy is the first-of-its-kind industry training, focused on delivering practical knowledge to local SMEs, and is an initiative under the Training and Development pillar of the company's E.I.T. Program, whose other two SME support pillars are Financial Support and Invitational Matching.

The business knowledge and skills that the academy shares with local SME suppliers helps promote the development of their businesses, specifically targeting four types of local suppliers: SMEs, micro-enterprises, Macau young entrepreneurs, and "Made-in-Macau" enterprises.

Since the programme's launch, more than 6,300 training hours have been delivered. Nearly 370 suppliers have enrolled to date and over 330 have already graduated.

Through the program, the company seeks to continually increase and strengthen procurement between Sands China and local SME suppliers by enhancing their capabilities.

Just last month, Sands China welcomed the 10th cohort of local SME suppliers into the Sands Procurement Academy.

BUYING LOCAL

Sands China has long aligned itself with the Macau government's initiative to "buy local"

and has demonstrated its commitment to supporting local enterprises as part of the company's corporate social responsibility efforts. Sands China's supplier relationship management strategy guides the company's long-standing effort to support local suppliers, whom it views as its strategic partners.

As a result, the company's local procurement ratio stands at 89% as of 2020.

As a further support to local suppliers, Sands China held 24 local supplier roadshows from 2019 to 2021 at the back-of-house team member areas of the company's integrated resorts. A total of 79 local suppliers were able to offer their products and services to Sands China team members, earning them MOP 20 million in sales.

HONORING LOCAL SUPPLIERS

The company has always expressed its appreciation to its suppliers. Since 2013, Sands China has been annually hosting the Sands Supplier Excellence Awards to recognise the outstanding cooperation and services of its suppliers.

The awards are a global initiative of Las Vegas Sands, with winners in Macau selected by a judging committee comprised of Sands China executive management. The awards recognize suppliers in seven categories: small- and medium-sized

enterprise (SME), corporate culture and sustainability, cost management, service excellence, project management, total quality management, and innovation.

EXPEDITED PAYMENT PROGRAMME FOR STRUGGLING SMES

The pandemic crisis has brought forth significant economic downturn resulting in revenue losses for businesses. Sands China upheld its business philosophy of supporting the growth of local SMEs amid the pandemic by proactively contacting all its SME partners by phone at the onset of the pandemic, to better understand their financial and operational challenges and needs.

This year, Sands China launched the 2021 SME Expedited Payment Programme to help the company's local SME suppliers navigate the challenging business environment arising from the Covid-19 pandemic by easing their cash flow pressures amidst operational challenges.

Between Nov. 1, 2021 and Jan. 31, 2022, Sands China's SME partners can apply to have their payment terms shortened from the current 30 days to seven days – in similar fashion to Sands China's first expedited payment program in 2017 that followed the destruction of Typhoon Hato.

FREE BUSINESS PLATFORM THROUGH SHOPPING CARNIVAL

For the second straight year, this past July's Sands Shopping Carnival provided a free business platform for local SMEs and Sands retailers amid the pandemic period to showcase and sell their products and services to residents and tourists.

As the largest sale event in Macau, the free-admission carnival features over 500 booths and supports the Macau SAR government's Consume for the Economy initiative and consumption e-voucher scheme. The 2020 and 2021 carnivals attracted a combined total of more than 210,000 visits with three days of weekend shopping, activities and entertainment.

Among the carnival's 518 booths in 2020 and 560 booths in 2021, SMEs comprised around half of the booths, at 257 booths in 2020 and 268 in 2021.

SANDS CHINA PROCUREMENT BY THE NUMBERS

BETWEEN 2016-2020

- Total procurement spend: MOP 70.4 billion
- Procurement from local enterprises: MOP 57.3 billion
- Procurement from local SMEs: MOP 12.5 billion
- Total spend on the three types of local enterprises: MOP 6.9 billion
- Average number of suppliers in cooperation each year: 2,393

HONG KONG OFFICIALS DISTANCE THEMSELVES FROM NANKING FOOTAGE

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

HONG Kong officials distanced themselves from the screening of a 1937 Nanking massacre video in a primary school that left some children in tears, saying schools are not required to screen such graphic footage.

The clip, which came from a documentary of the Nanking massacre, depicted Japanese soldiers killing civilians in the former Chinese capital. China on Monday marked the 80th anniversary of the killings that left hundreds of civilians and disarmed soldiers dead.

"While learning history is of paramount importance, how to learn is something that we will defer to the education sector, because we have very well-trained teachers, we have well-run schools," Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam said during a press conference yesterday.



A memorial ceremony at the Memorial Hall of the Victims of the Nanking Massacre by Japanese Invaders in Nanjing, Monday

The screening of the brutal and violent footage caused some students to cry and sparked complaints from parents, according to local media reports.

The school involved — Po Leung Kuk Hong Kong Taoist Association Yuen Yuen primary school — said that it would carefully consider children's feelings and adjust teaching materials accordingly.

The school did not immediately respond to an email from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Yesterday, Lam confirmed that the video screened in the school had been included in a teaching materials checklist and that the education department had a duty to inform schools of the materials that are available in the public domain, but that there was no man-

date that such footage had to be shown while teaching students about the Nanking massacre.

The massacre lasted from December 1937 to January 1938, with Japanese soldiers engaged in the mass killings and rape in Nanking.

Hong Kong authorities have included Chinese history as a compulsory subject and indicated that students will also learn about national security, following the implementation of a national security law in the city last year in response to massive anti-government protests.

Lam has also called for the strengthening of so-called patriotic education in schools, amid Beijing's tightening grip on the city.

Nanking, an ancient Chinese capital 320 kilometers west of Shanghai, is now commonly known as Nanjing. **MDT/AP**

WINTER OLYMPICS

AUSTRIAN LEADER WON'T GO TO BEIJING GAMES, BUT NO PROTEST

AUSTRIA'S leader says no high-ranking politicians from his country will attend the Beijing Winter Olympics, but he says that is entirely because of coronavirus restrictions in China and is not a diplomatic protest.

Chancellor Karl Nehammer's comments to yesterday's edition of German daily Die Welt came after foreign ministers from Austria and several other European Union nations made clear that they have little appetite to join the U.S. initiative for a diplomatic boycott of the games because of concerns over China's human rights record.

"We are against a politicization of the games and are coordinating in the EU," Nehammer was quoted as saying.

"No high-ranking politicians from Austria will visit the Olympic Games

in China," he said. "However, that is not a diplomatic protest or boycott, but due only to the fact that the COVID requirements in China are rightly very high."

"Because of the COVID pandemic, politicians can't meet personally in China with their country's athletes," he added. "So there is no use in politicians or diplomats from Austria traveling to China to speak by videoconference with our athletes there — then I prefer to meet our athletes personally in Vienna."

China has vowed to respond to the U.S. with "firm countermeasures" over the boycott, but has given no details on how it plans to retaliate. Beijing has dismissed the decision by Canada and the United Kingdom to join Washington's diplomatic boycott as a "farce." **MDT/AP**

AD

仁德 CENTRO MEDICO PEDDER
◆ 仁德醫療中心 ◆

We bring high quality of medical service to Macau

General Surgery : Dr. Fok Manson, Dr. Lai Cheuck Seen Edward, Dr. Lau Wing Kee Peter, Dr. Kwong Man, Dr. Nie Fu Zhong, Dr. U Chong San, Dr. Lei Chin Chong

Breast Surgery : Dr. Leong Iat Lun

Urology : Dr. Lo Kwong Yin Richard, Dr. Zhao Yun Qiao

Paediatric Surgery : Dr. Yeung Chung Kwong

Paediatrics : Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

Obstetrics & Gynaecology : Dr. Fong Kuan Io

Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery : Dr. Lam U Lin

Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

ENT : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

Cardiology : Dr. Wong Kwok Yiu Chris, Dr. Jin Chun, Dr. Leong Man Kin

General Medicine : Dr. Ng Kam Hong, Dr. Lam Weng Chio

Dietitian : Chan Lai U Joey

Avenida da Praia Grande No 599, Edifício Comercial Rodrigues 14 e 15 Andar, em Macau
T. 2832 2298 / 2832 2229 Website: www.peddermacau.com
Opening Hours: Mon - Fri 10:00 - 19:00 Sat 10:00 - 14:00 Sun & PH closed

KTRANZ
TRANSLATIONS LIMITED

ACCURATE, TIMELY & COMPETITIVE TRANSLATIONS

Languages:
ENGLISH, CHINESE,
PORTUGUESE, JAPANESE,
KOREAN, SPANISH,
FRENCH, ARABIC,
RUSSIAN

Services
TRANSLATIONS,
PROOFREADING, COPYWRITING,
DATA INPUT, NEWS MONITORING

We translate +10,000 words a day

Contact: Ms. Amy Yang
Email: amy@ktranz.com.mo
Tel: +853 2871 6081/2 Fax: +853 2871 6084

Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

INDONESIA

Blinken vows more US military might in Indo-Pacific

MATTHEW LEE, JAKARTA

THE United States will expand its military and economic relationships with partners in Asia to push back against China's increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said yesterday.

Blinken said the Biden administration is committed to maintaining peace and prosperity in the region and will do that by boosting U.S. alliances, forging new relationships and ensuring that the U.S. military maintains "its competitive edge."

"Threats are evolving, our security approach has to evolve with them. To do that, we will lean on our greatest strength: our alliances and partnerships," Blinken said in a speech in Indonesia, outlining the administration's Indo-Pacific plans.

"We'll adopt a strategy that more closely weaves together all our instruments of national power — diplomacy, military, intelligence — with those of our allies and partners," he said. That will include linking U.S. and Asian defense industries, integrating supply chains and cooperating on technological innovation, he said.

Later he signed a series of three agreements with Indonesia's foreign minister, including one that extends until 2026 an existing maritime cooperation pact that



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken (left) and Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi signing a Memorandum of Understanding at the Pancasila Building in Jakarta, yesterday

among other issues calls for enhanced joint U.S.-Indonesian naval exercises.

"It's about reinforcing our strengths so we can keep the peace, as we have done in the region for decades," he said. He did not elaborate further but the administration made waves earlier this year by agreeing to a pact that will see Australia produce nuclear-powered submarines.

Blinken insisted that the U.S. is not trying to force countries to choose between the United States and China, or seeking conflict with China. But he laid out a litany of complaints about "Beijing's aggressive actions" from "Northeast Asia to Southeast Asia and from the Mekong River to the Pacific Islands."

At a daily briefing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said Blinken's latest comments showed the U.S. was contradicting itself by "playing up the so-called China threat on the one hand while claiming that it has no intention to seek conflict with China on the other."

Wang criticized the U.S. for "frequently sending ships and aircraft to the area to flex muscles and stir up trouble."

Blinken is in Indonesia on the first leg of a week-long, three-nation tour of Southeast Asia that will also take him to Malaysia and Thailand.

"We are determined to ensure freedom of navigation in the South China Sea," he said. "It is also why we have an abiding interest in

peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait."

Blinken said the U.S. "will forge stronger connections" with its five treaty allies in the region — Australia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea and Thailand — boost ties between them and cultivate a stronger partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, many of whose members feel threatened by China.

"A strong and independent ASEAN has long been central to tackle urgent crises and long-term challenges," Blinken said, in particular calling out the military rulers of Myanmar, also known as Burma, for their February takeover and subsequent crackdown on protesters.

"We will continue to work with

our allies and partners to press the regime to cease its indiscriminate violence, release all of those unjustly detained, allow unhindered access, and restore Burma's path to inclusive democracy," he said.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang countered by accusing Washington of policies that "sow discord, undermine solidarity and disrupt cooperation."

"If the U.S. really wants to play a constructive role for the peaceful development of the Asia-Pacific region as it claims, it should earnestly respect the ASEAN-centered regional cooperation structure," Wang told reporters in Beijing.

China-U.S. relations have hit a new low over a range of issues, including Beijing's increasingly assertive claim to virtually the entire South China Sea that includes the construction of manmade islands topped with military infrastructure. That claim overlaps with those of four ASEAN members.

Many Southeast Asian countries are economically dependent on China but see the U.S. as a counterweight to Beijing.

Blinken confined his remarks to the Indo-Pacific and China although he began his current overseas journey in Britain at a Group of Seven foreign ministers meeting that delivered a stern warning to Russia over Ukraine.

On arriving in Indonesia on Monday, Blinken found that a top aide to Russian President Vladimir Putin, national security adviser Nikolay Patrushev, was already in Jakarta for security talks. Asked why he had not sought out Patrushev to expand on Sunday's G7 warning, Blinken replied that the administration's top diplomat for Europe, Karen Donfried, who is currently in Ukraine, would be traveling to Moscow in the coming days to deliver that message. **MDT/AP**

PHILIPPINES

Duterte quits from Senate race in latest flip-flop

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

PHILIPPINE President Rodrigo Duterte yesterday withdrew his senatorial candidacy in next year's elections in his latest change of mind over what he plans to do after his turbulent term ends, when critics say he would likely face an array of lawsuits for an anti-drugs crackdown that has left thousands of mostly petty suspects killed.

Accompanied by his executive secretary and security escorts, the 76-year-old Duterte went to the Commission on Elections in Manila and withdrew as a senatorial candidate. His former aide, Sen. Bong Go,



separately appeared at the elections commission earlier yesterday to withdraw his presidential candidacy, which he said his family opposed.

Duterte did not give any reason for the move but his spokesman, Karlo Nograles, said it would allow the president to better focus on managing the pandemic in

the country and ensuring that the May elections would be peaceful and orderly.

Known for his extra-tough approach to criminality, Duterte launched a police-enforced campaign against illegal drugs when he took office in June 2016. The crackdown has left more than 6,000 mostly petty suspects dead based on police figures.

Manila-based analyst Richard Heydarian, however, said Duterte's latest move showed how the president, who faces potential criminal suits after his presidency for his deadly anti-drugs campaign, seemed to have lost his political footing after his plan to ensure a

friendly succession next year caved in.

"Duterte is really scrambling for any kind of leverage in next year's elections," Heydarian said. "His initial plan to engineer a succession for one of his anointed successors is now totally out of the window."

Duterte initially wanted his daughter, Mayor Sara Duterte of southern Davao city, to succeed him but she refused to run for the presidency amid unspecified differences with her father. She later decided on her own to run as the vice-presidential running mate of Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the son of the late Philippine dictator.

The president later en-

couraged Go, his former longtime aide who is now a senator, to run for president. But Go eventually backed out, saying he did not aspire to be president and that his family opposed his presidential candidacy.

Duterte originally considered running for the vice presidency but later dropped the plan, saying he planned to retire when his term ends and added that surveys showed most Filipinos did not support such a move.

Philippine presidents are constitutionally limited to a single, six-year term and Duterte's initial plan to seek the vice presidency sparked a debate about the legality of such a move, which could have seen him catapulted back to the top position if the next president dies or becomes incapacitated for any reason. **MDT/AP**



Kim Jong Un flanked by Kim Yong Nam, president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly and the ceremonial head of state (right) and Ri Yong Ho, a vice marshal of the Korean People's Army (December 2011)

NORTH KOREA

Kim Jong Un's decade of rule: Purges, nukes, Trump diplomacy

HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL

FRIDAY marks 10 years since Kim Jong Un, the third generation of his family to rule North Korea, took power after his father's sudden heart attack.

Initially considered inexperienced, Kim quickly showed his ruthless willingness to consolidate his rule by having his powerful uncle and other potential rivals executed or purged. His torrid run of nuclear and missile tests in recent years caused many to fear a second Korean War.

Kim switched gears again and staged landmark nuclear disarmament summits with then-U.S. President Donald Trump, but their diplomacy collapsed because of disputes over U.S.-led sanctions. Now, with the pandemic and sanctions causing deepening problems, Kim has sealed off his country's borders and tried to fix its struggling economy.

As Kim enters his second decade in power, here's a look at key moments in his rule.

HEIR APPARENT

Jan. 8, 1984: Kim Jong Un is born, the third and youngest of Kim Jong Il's sons.

September 2010: State media say Kim Jong Un has been made a four-star general in the first public mention of his name.

October 2010: Kim Jong Un makes his public debut at a military parade,

standing next to his gaunt-looking father on a balcony. He smiles, claps and waves as goose-stepping soldiers, tanks and missiles move past.

GREAT SUCCESSOR

Dec. 17, 2011: Kim Jong Il dies at the age of 69, but the news of his death is not made public for two days.

Dec. 19, 2011: Kim Jong Il's death is announced in a special noon broadcast on state television. Kim Jong Un's name appears first on the list of the National Funeral Committee, and he is called "great successor" by state media.

Dec. 30, 2011: Kim Jong Un is named supreme commander of the North's 1.2 million-strong military, the first top job he's given after his father's death. In the following months, he takes up leadership posts at other key organizations such as the ruling Workers' Party and the National Defense Commission.

PURGES

July 2012: North Korean military chief Ri Yong Ho is dismissed from all high-level posts in what's seen as Kim Jong Un's first major purge.

December 2013: Kim's powerful uncle and former mentor, Jang Song Thaek, is executed for alleged treason, corruption and other charges in what remains the highest-profile such move of Kim's rule.

May 2015: South Korea's

spy agency says Kim Jong Un ordered his armed forces minister, Hyon Yong Chol, executed with an anti-aircraft gun the month before for complaining about him and sleeping during a meeting Kim presided over.

February 2017: Kim Jong Nam, the estranged half-brother of Kim Jong Un, is killed at a Malaysian airport after VX nerve agent is smeared on his face. Two Asian women are arrested, but South Korea's spy service accuses North Korea of being behind the attack. The North denies involvement.

NUCLEAR AMBITIONS

December 2012: North Korea says it has put a satellite into orbit in what outsiders call the North's first successful long-range rocket launch. The U.N. views such a launch by North Korea as a banned test of missile technology.

February 2013: North Korea conducts its third nuclear test, the first atomic bomb explosion under Kim's rule.

2016: North Korea carries out two more nuclear tests and its second successful satellite launch.

July 4, 2017: North Korea conducts its first flight test of an intercontinental ballistic missile, which Kim calls the North's "package of gifts" for U.S. Independence Day. North Korea stages two more ICBM launches in 2017.

August 2017: Trump warns that North Korea could

"be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen." North Korea later responds by threatening to launch a salvo of missiles toward the U.S. territory of Guam.

September 2017: North Korea performs its sixth and most powerful nuclear test to date, saying it is a hydrogen bomb designed to top an ICBM.

DIPLOMACY

April 2018: Kim Jong Un holds a meeting with South Korean President Moon Jae-in in the third summit between the rival countries since their 1945 division. The two leaders hold two more summit talks.

June 2018: Kim Jong Un and Trump meet in Singapore for the first summit between the leaders of the United States and North Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War. Kim vows to work toward achieving complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula without presenting a detailed timetable or roadmap for disarmament.

February 2019: Kim Jong Un meets with Trump in Hanoi, Vietnam, for their second summit. The meeting collapses because of disputes over U.S.-led sanctions on North Korea.

June 2019: Kim Jong Un meets Trump at the tense Korean border, but their impromptu third meeting produces no major breakthrough.

STRUGGLES

June 2020: North Korea destroys an empty inter-Korean liaison office in its territory in a display of anger over a South Korean civilian leafleting campaign. It's North Korea's most provocative act since it began nuclear diplomacy with Washington and Seoul in 2018.

January 2021: Kim Jong Un admits his economic development plans have failed during the North's first Workers' Party congress in five years. But he also threatens to expand his nuclear arsenal and develop more sophisticated weapons in protest of what he calls U.S. hostility.

April 2021: Kim Jong Un says his country faces its "worst-ever situation" because of the pandemic, persistent sanctions and natural disasters.

October 2021: Kim Jong Un vows to build an "invincible" military during a rare weapons exhibition that includes long-range missiles capable of reaching the U.S. homeland. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1993 ANGLO-IRISH PACT PAVES WAY FOR PEACE



The British and Irish prime ministers have signed The Joint Declaration of Peace which they hope will end 25 years of bombing and murder in Northern Ireland.

After nearly two years' negotiation the two leaders, John Major and Albert Reynolds, today stood united on the steps of 10 Downing Street.

The nine-point document gives the IRA and Loyalist paramilitaries the opportunity to take part in negotiations for peace if they first agree to observe a three-month ceasefire.

Reaction has been mixed even though this is the furthest the British Government has ever moved towards the possibility of a united Ireland.

The declaration states that Britain would not prevent Northern Ireland leaving the United Kingdom and joining the Irish Republic, but that the ultimate decision would lie with the people of Northern Ireland.

John Major gave reassurances in the declaration that Britain had "no selfish, strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland".

But he warned the terrorists that if they lost this opportunity, it might never come their way again.

The two premiers made it clear that if the declaration was not successful in bringing peace to the province the two governments would work together to combat terrorism in whatever ways were necessary.

Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing, said its initial response was one of "disappointment". The party's Northern Ireland chairman Mitchel McLaughlin said the declaration did not go far enough in meeting the aspirations of the nationalists.

And James Molyneux, leader of the official Ulster Unionists, spoke of "deep unease" among his Loyalist supporters.

The Democratic Unionist leader, the Rev Ian Paisley, called it "a dark hour of treachery".

Later, in a rare prime-time television broadcast the Prime Minister, Mr Major, called on Ulster "to put the poison of history behind us.

"We cannot go on spilling blood in the name of the past. We must all have the courage to look to the future.

"The time to choose peace is long overdue. But only the men of violence can decide whether they will talk instead of bomb, discuss instead of murder."

The leader of the Labour Party, John Smith, welcomed the declaration saying it was "an important first step towards a new political settlement".

The declaration also won the full backing of US President Bill Clinton. He said: "No side which claims a legitimate stake in the future of Northern Ireland can justify continued violence on any grounds."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The IRA declared a ceasefire at the end of August 1994 and the Loyalists announced a ceasefire on 13 October that year. On 9 December British officials met Sinn Fein representatives for their first formal talks in 22 years.

But the peace initiative did not last. The IRA ceasefire ended on 9 February 1996 when a huge bomb was planted in London's Docklands.

A new ceasefire was announced in July 1997 and the Good Friday Agreement was signed in April 1998. It included plans for a new Northern Ireland assembly with some devolved powers from London.

But the Assembly has been suspended several times, the last in October 2002 after allegations that the IRA had been spying within the Northern Ireland Office.

Direct rule finally ended in May 2007 when the Northern Ireland Assembly was restored with DUP leader Ian Paisley as first minister and Sinn Fein's Martin McGuinness as his deputy.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Do your best to remain patient with where you are at the moment. You're at an impasse right now, as you learn to outgrow your past while embracing the mystery of the unknown.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Even if you're not super forthcoming with your words, those around you will have a sense of what your emotional disposition is. Try not to run from your feelings, and, instead, let them flow through you.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
If you come to the conclusion that you've put certain hobbies, goals, or even friendships to the side in the name of love, it might be time to recess and make some changes.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Tonight, the moon shares a helpful connection with dreamy Neptune, asking you to connect with your spiritual self. Use these vibes as an excuse to unplug, so you can float away on these comforting vibes.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
While work isn't typically your favorite way to pass the hours, you'll find a strange sense of satisfaction within your professional life today as the Taurus moon illuminates your tenth house.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Take some time to immerse yourself in nature by going for a walk or sitting in a park, embracing the elements as they surround you. As the day comes to a close, be sure to connect with your gratitude...

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
What your gut tells you might vary greatly from what your logical mind thinks, putting you in a bit of a predicament. Do yourself a favor and put off making any important decisions for a few days.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
You might want to take a look at your monthly bank statements to see if there are any subscription services that you no longer use, chipping away at your account every 30 days.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Accountability will go far in smoothing over any rifts within your relationship, though it'll be equally as important that you're paired with a compassionate and forgiving partner.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You're one of the most resilient signs in the zodiac, dear Capricorn, but today you might want to check in with your mind, body, and soul to make sure you're not running yourself into the ground.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Putting yourself in an environment when you're not feeling up to it won't benefit you or your friendships as Mars faces off with the north node. Just avoid lying to get out of an engagement you already committed to.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
While your professional goals will take up much of your energy in the coming weeks, it'll be important that you're not cheating yourself out of the rest and relaxation that you so deserve at the end of a hard day's work.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

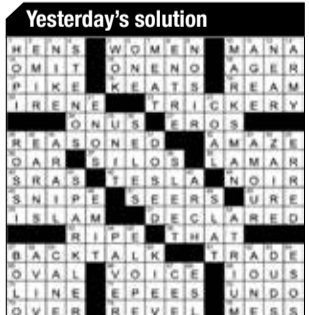
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-5	6	cloudy
Harbin	-12	-3	cloudy
Tianjin	11	17	cloudy
Urumqi	9	10	rain
Xi'an	11	13	rain
Lhasa	1	6	fine
Chengdu	14	22	cloudy
Chongqing	11	19	cloudy
Kunming	7	11	rain
Nanjing	19	22	cloudy
Shanghai	7	14	overcast
Wuhan	-14	-7	cloudy
Hangzhou	2	15	overcast
Taipei	-13	1	fine
Guangzhou	15	24	cloudy
Hong Kong	19	21	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-3	-3	snow
Frankfurt	4	7	fog
Paris	7	8	cloudy
London	8	12	cloudy
New York	11	12	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1-Flip out; 6- Cumberbund; 10- Tirade; 14- Stormed; 15- Duration; 16- Banned apple spray; 17- Maker of Pong; 18- Doozy; 19- Sup; 20- Open mesh fabric; 21- Ornamental table feature; 24- Table support; 26- Decreased?; 27- Literary monogram; 28- Ways to the pins; 30- Bit; 33- Journey; 35- Jockey Turcotte; 38- Burning; 40- Bobby of hockey; 41- Wanting; 43- Mil. officers; 44- Naysayer; 47- Wine choice; 48- Son of Abraham; 49- Euripides drama; 51- Meditate; 54- Supposed; 58- Petty; 61- From ___ Z; 62- Actress Heche; 63- Second hand, took advantage of; 64- Relative by marriage; 66- Yarn spinner; 67- Sense; 68- Chairs; 69- Aggregate; 70- Celebration; 71- "Siddhartha" author;

DOWN: 1- Give; 2- Western; 3- Playing marble; 4- RPM part; 5- Decrees; 6- Rock; 7- "Is so!" rebuttal; 8- "Peter Pan" pirate; 9- Food fish; 10- Wirelenses; 11- Extra-terrestrial being; 12- John ___ Garner; 13- Cornered; 22- Hgt.; 23- Primp; 25- Celestial body; 28- Song part; 29- Swiss river; 30- Proverb ending?; 31- Frequently, in verse; 32- ___ the season...; 34- The last Mrs. Chaplin; 35- Stutz contemporary; 36- Takes too much; 37- Comic Louis; 39- Ford flop; 42- Sea eagle; 45- Cold weather head protector; 46- Make angry; 48- Loafers; 50- Somewhat aged; 51- Sacred song; 52- ___ vincit amor; 53- Grannies; 54- Confuse; 55- Balls; 56- Les ___-Unis; 57- Use a divining rod; 59- Uh-huh; 60- Nair rival; 65- Maiden name indicator;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



SELL INVEST RENT
CALL US (853) 2835 2699

jml property
卓雅物業
hello@jmlproperty.com
www.jmlproperty.com
jmlmacau jmlproperty

FOR SALE
Manhattan
Ref: 2005 6001
HKD 15,750,000
2,305 ft² 3 1/2 2 1/2

FOR SALE
Wa Bao
Ref: 2106 6003
HKD 7,888,000
1,131 ft² 2 1/2 2 1/2

Rain Dance Property
"We dance until it's SOLD!"
Hellene Gardens
Ref: 2109 6001
HKD 7,980,000
1,663 ft² 3 1/2 2 1/2 1 1/2

AD

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



(\$13.2 billion) announced earlier this year.

When including other green technologies, like hybrids, Toyota is investing 8 trillion yen (\$70 billion) by 2030, the company said.

Earlier this month, Toyota announced plans to build a \$1.3 billion electric vehicle battery plant near Greensboro, North Carolina, that will employ at least 1,750 people and start production in 2025.

Toyota's fully electric sport utility vehicle called "bZ4X" is set to go on sale next year globally.

Toyota is building a futuristic city near Mount Fuji, designed to try out and showcase automated driving, sustainable energy and robotics for housing.

David Leggett, automotive editor at GlobalData, said Toyota was trying to prepare for the dramatic technological and societal changes that are coming.

"Businesses have to think about how demand will look in 10, 20, 30 years' time, and the pathways that come back to their business plans over a foreseeable time horizon," Leggett told The Associated Press.

Toyoda, an avid racing driver and the grandson of the company's founder, acknowledged he had not been that interested in EVs in the past, viewing them as "commodities." But he said he's excited about the vehicles Toyota is developing.

"They are safer, faster and more fun to drive. I can say that as a driver," he said. **MDT/AP**

WHOLESALE INFLATION JUMPS RECORD 9.6% OVER PAST 12 MONTHS

PRICES at the wholesale level surged by a record 9.6% in November from a year earlier, an indication of on-going inflation pressures

The Labor Department said yesterday that its producer price index, which measures inflation before it reaches consumers, rose 0.8% in November after a 0.6% monthly gain in October. It was the highest monthly reading in four months.

Food prices, which had fallen 0.3% in October, jumped 1.2% in November. Energy prices rose 2.6% after a 5.3% percent rise October.

The 12-month increase in wholesale inflation set a new record, surpassing the old records for 12-month increases of 8.6% set in both September and October. The records on wholesale prices go back to 2010.

Core inflation at the wholesale level, which excludes volatile food and energy, rose 0.8% in November with core prices were up 9.5% over the past 12 months.

The increase in wholesale prices was widespread, led by a 1.2% increase in the cost of goods and a 0.7% rise in the price of services.

In the goods category, the price of iron and steel scrap rose 10.7% while the price for gasoline, jet fuel and industrial chemicals all moved higher. In the food category, the price of fresh fruits and vegetables rose while the price of chickens fell.

The surge in wholesale prices followed news Friday that consumer prices shot up 6.8% for the 12 months ending in November, the biggest increase in 39 years, as the price of energy, food and many other items shot up.

The Federal Reserve, holding its last meeting of the year this week, is expected to announce Wednesday that it will accelerate the pace at which it reduces its monthly bond purchases, preparing the way to begin raising its key benchmark interest rate, possibly by mid-2022 as it seeks to demonstrate its resolve to bring inflation under control. **MDT/AP**



AUTOMAKER

TOYOTA PROMISES MORE ELECTRIC MODELS, INVESTMENT

YURI KAGEYAMA, TOKYO

JAPANESE automaker Toyota is beefing up its electric vehicle lineup, offering 30 new fully electric models by 2030, its president, Akio Toyoda, said yesterday.

Toyota Motor Corp. plans to sell 3.5 million electric vehicles globally in 2030, he said, up from its earlier plan to sell 2 million zero emission hydrogen and battery electric vehicles a year worldwide by 2030. Toyota now sells about 10 million vehicles globally a year.

Toyoda promised a full lineup of electric models called the "bz se-

ries," short for "beyond zero," coming in the years ahead, including sport-utility vehicles of all sizes, pickup trucks and sports-cars.

"We can leave a beautiful planet and bring about many smiles for the future generation," Toyoda told reporters at a Tokyo showroom, standing on stage with more than a dozen EV models promised for the future.

His comments underscore the company's determination to reverse its reputation as a laggard in the industry's shift toward electric vehicles.

Toyota prides itself on its role as a pioneer in hybrid technology and

more recently in hydrogen fuel cells for vehicles.

The maker of the Prius hybrid, Lexus luxury models and Mirai fuel cell car wants to offer various options, Toyoda said.

He stressed Toyota must respond to global fears about climate change and carbon emissions.

The company's Lexus luxury brand will become fully electric by 2035 globally, Toyoda said. It aims to achieve that by 2030 for the U.S., European and Chinese markets.

Also yesterday, the company raised to 2 trillion yen (\$17.6 billion) its investment in battery research and development from the 1.5 trillion yen

CORPORATE BITS

Sands China hosts Trip.com summit



Macau has successfully hosted the 2021 Global Partner Summit by Trip.com Group, with the support of Sand China Ltd.

Trip.com Group chose Macau to host the event as it

is one of the very few overseas destinations open to Chinese travelers, and because it is considered the safest travel destination during the pandemic. The summit drew over 1,700

travel industry professionals, representing every sector of the industry, who reviewed the development of the global travel industry over the past year and shared insightful discussions on future trends and new opportunities. Sands China Ltd. won several notable awards, including "The Best Strategic Partner", at the Trip.com Group Global Partner Summit - Awards Ceremony.

James Liang, chairman and co-founder of Trip.com, offered his view on the progression of the international travel recovery and reinforced their continuous efforts to foster industry cooperation aimed at recovery.

Melco organizes sustainability competition for students



The 2021 Guangdong Hong Kong Macau Greater Bay Area Integrated Resort Sustainability Business Case Study Competition - 'Start Young' Hospitality Management Professional Challenge has taken place, co-orga-

nized by Melco Resorts & Entertainment and the University of Macau as part of Melco's efforts to reinforce the value of sustainability for youth. The closing ceremony was successfully held at the City of Dreams casino

resort on December 12.

'Start Young' is Macau's first integrated resorts business case study competition exploring the theme of sustainability and showcasing Melco's award-winning 'Above and Beyond' sustainability strategy to students. The program comprised 22 rounds of onsite visits and two rounds of virtual sustainability seminars and green tours, aiming to help students better understand on-the-ground business operations and identify sustainable optimization solutions through field visits.

More than 330 students from 25 high schools and universities in the GBA participated in the competition.

FOOTBALL

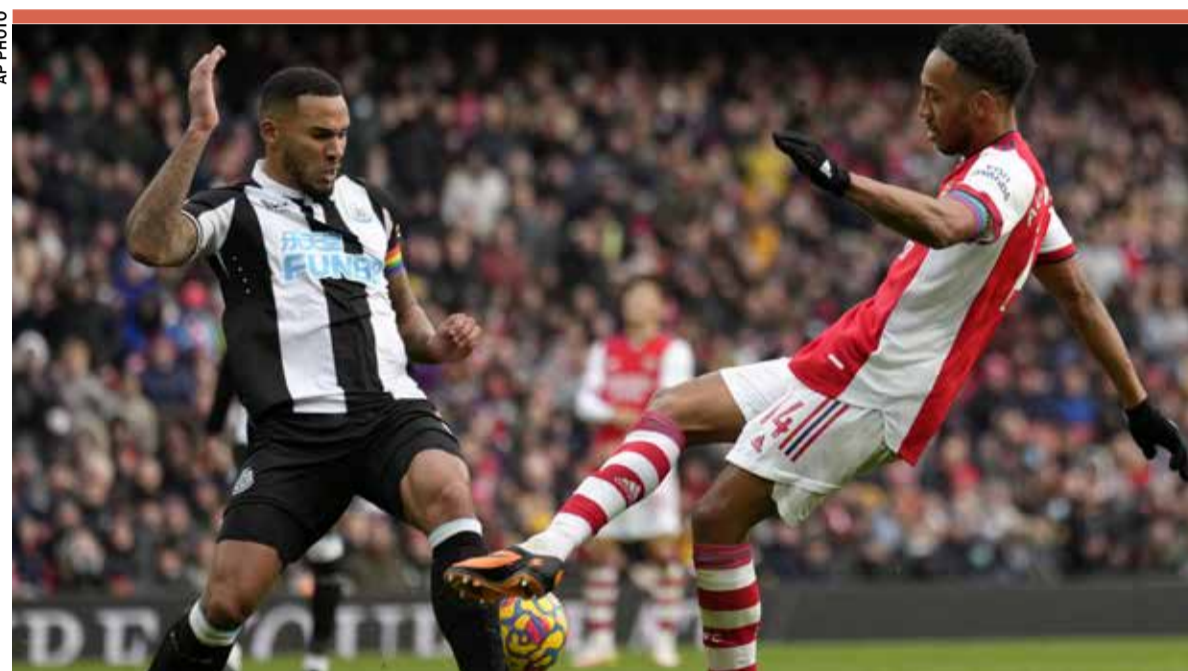
Aubameyang stripped of Arsenal captaincy, dropped for game

ARSENAL stripped Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang of the captaincy yesterday after another disciplinary breach, saying the striker hadn't worked "to the rules and standards" set by the club.

Aubameyang, the club's highest-paid player, was also told he would not be considered for selection for the English Premier League game against West Ham today.

The Gabon striker was left out for the game against Southampton on Saturday because of what manager Mikel Arteta described as a "disciplinary breach." Aubameyang reportedly was allowed by the club to travel to France for a family matter last week, after the 2-1 loss at Everton on Dec. 6 which he started as a substitute, but returned a day later than agreed.

"We expect all our players, particularly our captain, to work to the rules and standards we



Arsenal's Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang (right)

have all set and agreed," Arsenal said in a short statement.

"We are fully focused on tomorrow's match."

Aubameyang was left out of the team for the north London derby

against Tottenham in March because of a "disciplinary issue," according to Arteta at the time.

A few months earlier, he was granted time away to visit his mother because she had health

issues and missed games in the Premier League and FA Cup.

Aubameyang has just four goals in 14 Premier League games this season after signing a three-year contract extension last year

that made him the team's highest-paid player.

He was made captain by Arteta's predecessor, Unai Emery, after Granit Xhaka was stripped of the honor in November 2019 following his angry reaction to being booed by Arsenal fans after being substituted in a league game.

Aubameyang joined Arsenal from Borussia Dortmund in January 2018 and his latest contract runs to the summer of 2023.

He said he wanted to become "an Arsenal legend" when using a live video recording on Twitter to announce his lucrative new deal in September last year. That was a reward at the end of his first two full seasons at Arsenal where he shared the Golden Boot — the trophy given to the Premier League's leading scorer — in the 2018-19 season and was only one goal short of the award in the 2019-20 season.

He also scored twice in the FA Cup final in August 2020 to give Arsenal a 2-1 win over Chelsea and the club's first trophy under Arteta.

Aubameyang's performance levels have dipped since then and he scored 10 league goals last season.

Arsenal is in sixth place, two points behind fourth-placed West Ham going into the game at Emirates Stadium. **MDT/AP**

AD



BOOK NOW!

info@lugardasletras.com
Mobile: +351 917921 320
Praça de Gouvães, apartado 20,
5085-242 Gouvães do Douro, Sabrosa
CASA DE GOUVÃES - DOURO - PORTUGAL
TURISMO NO ESPAÇO RURAL

HOLIDAY RENTAL HOUSES

Lugar das Letras

Casa de Gouvães

Casa de Gouvães

BOOK NOW!

info@casadegouvaes.com
Mobile: +351 917921 320
Praça de Gouvães, apartado 20,
5085-242 Gouvães do Douro, Sabrosa
CASA DE GOUVÃES - DOURO - PORTUGAL
TURISMO NO ESPAÇO RURAL



The houses are set in the heart of the World Heritage Site of the Douro Valley and its famous winery landscape where the world's Ports are produced. Both restored relics overlooking the Rio Douro, these eight rooms houses have been blessed with gorgeous wooden floors, plush queen beds and marble baths; the best have dazzling river views. But it is the welcome that makes this place stand out from the crowd.



visit us at www.lugardasletras.com

visit us at www.casadegouvaes.com

OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

WEST TRYING TO STAND TOGETHER IN BID TO MAINTAIN ITS POSITION OF PRIVILEGE

Hosting the G7 foreign ministers' meeting in Liverpool over the weekend, United Kingdom foreign secretary Liz Truss proved she is no slouch when it comes to toeing the United States' line in foreign affairs.

Eager to prove that as an echo of Washington's message she does not pale in comparison with her predecessor, in her opening speech, Truss called on "the world's leading democracies and economies" to "come together strongly to stand up to aggressors, who are seeking to limit the bounds of freedom and democracy".

Reportedly, were it not for the US' rising concerns over the Ukrainian situation, the gathering would have been dedicated solely to targeting China, as an encore for the so-called Summit for Democracy gabfest that US President Joe Biden hosted two days before the G7 meeting.

Like that earlier summit, the meet-and-greet in Liverpool tried to raise the time-eaten flag of values diplomacy — a Cold War legacy that the Joe Biden administration is trying to revive — with the foreign ministers of Australia, India and the Republic of Korea invited to attend in person, and the foreign ministers of the 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations participating via video links.

Truss appealed to the countries to have a unified voice and together stand up to "aggressors who are seeking to limit the bounds of freedom and democracy".

That she went to such great lengths in calling for "unity" shows what a hard sell it is trying to convince countries that China and Russia are "hostile actors". Especially, as it is the US and its cozy club of Western allies that are the ones displaying belligerence.

The Liverpool meeting further underlined that some Western politicians take it for granted that they have the privilege to tell other countries whether they are a democracy or not and the people in those countries whether they enjoy human rights or not. It is this mentality that prompts them to try and intervene in other countries' internal affairs and to embark on "democratic" crusades with a sense of righteousness and devoutness, and military force if it is deemed necessary, to bring "enlightenment" to the ignorant. It is that mentality that is the root cause of much of the unrest and trouble in the world.

The West having tried to make the world more "democratic and free" for so long has instead only made it more polarized and risk-ridden, and more unfair to the less-developed countries.

The desperation with which the US and its lackeys try to contain China's rise — US Secretary Antony Blinken visits Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand this week in another effort to drive a wedge between them and China — is just a continuation of their efforts to maintain their dictatorship over the world.

To that end, Truss played her role to a tee.

NEWCASTLE CAN NOW SIGN SAUDI SPONSORS WITH EPL

Newcastle's Saudi ownership can start signing up sponsors from the kingdom after new English Premier League rules were introduced to end the brief ban on clubs bringing in such deals to potentially inflate income.

After the Saudi state's sovereign wealth fund took control of Newcastle, a freeze on any clubs signing commercial deals with companies linked to their investors was rushed through temporarily by rivals in October to prevent them being used unfairly to comply with financial regulations.

But Premier League clubs agreed at a meeting yesterday to in-

troduce regulations that mean sponsorships from companies associated with a club's owners can resume but will have to be approved by the competition's board.

The Premier League will assess if deals such as jersey sponsorships and stadium naming rights have been negotiated at a fair value that other clubs could expect to generate from similar contracts rather than being inflated.

The northeast club, whose jerseys are sponsored by a Chinese gambling firm, is fighting relegation and can't sign any players until the January transfer window.

THE BUZZ

AP PHOTO



PFIZER CONFIRMS COVID PILL'S RESULTS, POTENCY VERSUS OMICRON

MATTHEW PERRONE, WASHINGTON

PFIZER said yesterday that its experimental pill to treat COVID-19 appears effective against the omicron variant.

The company also said full results of its 2,250-person study confirmed the pill's promising early results against the virus: The drug reduced combined hospitalizations and deaths by about 89% among high-risk adults when taken shortly after initial COVID-19 symptoms.

Separate laboratory testing shows the drug retains its potency against the omicron variant, the company announced, as many experts had predicted. Pfizer tested the antiviral drug against a man-made version of a key protein that omicron uses to reproduce itself.

The updates come as COVID-19 cases, deaths and hospitalization are all rising again and the U.S. hovers around 800,000 pandemic deaths. The latest surge, driven by the delta variant, is accelerating due to colder weather and more indoor gatherings, even as health officials brace for the impact of the emerging omicron mutant.

The Food and Drug Administration is expected to soon rule on whether to authorize Pfizer's pill and a competing pill from Merck, which was submi-

tted to regulators several weeks earlier. If granted, the pills would be the first COVID-19 treatments that Americans could pickup at a pharmacy and take at home.

Pfizer's data could help reassure regulators of its drug's benefit after Merck disclosed smaller-than-expected benefits for its drug in final testing. Late last month, Merck said that its pill reduced hospitalizations and deaths by 30% in high-risk adults.

Both companies initially studied their drugs in unvaccinated adults who face the gravest risks from COVID-19, due to older age or health problems, such as asthma or obesity.

Pfizer is also studying its pill in lower-risk adults — including a subset who are vaccinated — but reported mixed data for that group.

In interim results, Pfizer said its drug failed to meet its main study goal: sustained relief from COVID-19 for four days during or after treatment, as reported by patients. But the drug did achieve a second goal by reducing hospitalizations by about 70% among that group, which included otherwise healthy unvaccinated adults and vaccinated adults with one or more health issues. Less than 1% of patients who got the drug were hospitalized, compared with 2.4% of patients who got a dummy pill.

An independent board of medical experts reviewed the data and recommended Pfizer continue the study to get the full results before proceeding further with regulators.

Across both of Pfizer's studies, adults taking the company's drug had a 10-fold decrease in virus levels compared with those on placebo.

The prospect of new pills to fight COVID-19 can't come soon enough for communities in the Northeast and Midwest, where many hospitals are once again being overloaded by incoming virus cases.

Both the Merck and Pfizer pills are expected to perform well against omicron because they don't target the coronavirus' spike protein, which contains most of the new variant's mutations.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Rochelle Walensky, appearing on NBC's "Today" yesterday, said the best way for people to protect themselves against COVID-19 is to get vaccinated and get a booster shot. She said the Pfizer pill, if authorized by the FDA, "will be another great tool, but we need to diagnose people early."

The U.S. government has agreed to purchase enough of Pfizer's drug to treat 10 million people and enough of Merck's to treat 3 million, pending FDA authorization. **MDT/AP**

Indonesia lifted a tsunami alert yesterday following a magnitude 7.3 undersea earthquake that struck off Flores Island, triggering panic in a region prone to fatal quakes but apparently causing no major damage or casualties. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the quake hit at a depth of 18.5 kilometers under the sea, and was located 112 kilometers north of the town of Maumere.

AP PHOTO



Australia's government said yesterday it plans to start making mRNA vaccines at home with a new plant that could produce up to 100 million doses each year. The announcement came as coronavirus cases in Sydney and surrounding areas jumped, driven in part by the omicron variant. The new factory would be built in Victoria state in a partnership between vaccine manufacturer Moderna and the federal and state governments. It is expected to open by 2024.

AP PHOTO



Afghanistan's new Taliban rulers are committed in principle to education and jobs for girls and women, a marked departure from their previous time in power, and they seek the world's "mercy and compassion" to help millions of Afghans in desperate need, a top Taliban leader said in a rare interview. Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi also told The Associated Press that the Taliban government wants good relations with all countries and has no issue with the United States.

US The United States will expand its military and economic relationships with partners in Asia to push back against China's increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said yesterday. Blinken said the Biden administration is committed to maintaining peace and prosperity in the region and will do that by boosting U.S. alliances, forging new relationships and ensuring that the U.S. military maintains "its competitive edge." **More on p7**