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**39,000 STUDENTS REGISTERED IN HIGHER EDUCATION DURING THE PAST ACADEMIC YEAR, AN INCREASE OF 8.3% COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR**

P6

**MSAR ANNIVERSARY: GOV'T TO AWARD 22 OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUALS, ENTITIES**

P6

**HONG KONG VOTES FOR LEGISLATURE WITH ONLY LOYALISTS APPROVED**

P10



AP PHOTO



**Indonesian** authorities raised the alert level for the highest volcano on Java island, saying Mount Semeru could blow up again after a sudden eruption earlier this month left 48 people dead and 36 missing in villages that were buried in layers of mud. Indonesia's geological agency said it picked up increasing activity that could trigger an avalanche of lava and searing gas.

AP PHOTO



**Japanese** police yesterday identified a 61-year-old man as a prime suspect behind a fire that engulfed a mental health clinic in an eight-story building where he was a patient, killing 24 people who were trapped inside. The government also announced plans to inspect tens of thousands of similar buildings nationwide. Authorities believe the massive death toll at the downtown Osaka building on Friday was largely because the fire made its only emergency stairway unusable.

**Australia** Four people including two children died yesterday after a light aircraft crashed into the sea near the coast of Australia's Queensland state. Divers recovered the bodies of two adults, including the 69-year-old male pilot, and two children from the upturned wreckage close to the shoreline, police Inspector Craig White told reporters.

**Iraq** Two rockets struck Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone, home to the U.S. embassy, causing property damage but no casualties, Iraq's military said yesterday. One rocket was destroyed by the embassy's C-RAM defense system. Another fell near a national monument, causing damage to two civilian vehicles, the statement said. An investigation was launched by Iraqi security forces.

More on backpage

# OLYMPIC TOUR

A 68-strong delegation of top Chinese athletes arrived in Macau for a three-day visit



P2

TNR

**LAWMAKER MA ADVOCATES A STRICTER REGIME FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS**

P4

**HALTED APPLICATIONS FOR RESIDENCY AT IPIM REMAIN A CONCERN**

P6





**DEPUTY HEAD OF LIAISON OFFICE REMOVED FROM POST**

Yao Jian, deputy head of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Macau, has been removed from his post. Xinhua stated in a report that announced the appointment and removal of officials. The report did not include the reasons for his removal. The 59-year-old official was one of the Liaison Office's deputy directors, taking the role at the Office in 2014. He was previously the director of the Ministry of Commerce's communications office.

**TROPICAL CYCLONE RAI 'CLOSER THAN EXPECTED'**

Tropical cyclone Rai is expected to gradually turn northward, entering the 800 kilometers alert zone of Macau today, and the Tropical cyclone signal No.1 will be issued as appropriate. Rai is expected to weaken this afternoon. As the track of the cyclone is closer to Macau than expected, its associated rain and cloud band will affect Macau until tomorrow, the weather bureau has forecasted. Due to the overlapping effect of the astronomically high tide and a certain level of storm surge caused by Rai, flooding is expected in the Inner Harbor tonight. The maximum flooding level is expected to be below 0.5 meter. A Blue Storm Surge warning was issued last night.

**MAINLAND, MACAU TO DEEPEN JUDICIAL EXCHANGES**

China's Supreme People's Court (SPC) on Friday signed a document with the Macau government promoting judicial and legal exchange and cooperation. The cooperation agreement, signed in Zhuhai, Guangdong, will help promote the coordination of rules, regulations, and mechanisms between both sides. It will also establish a comprehensive business dispute resolution mechanism, and boost integrated development of information technology and legal system, the SPC said on Saturday. The SPC also expressed the hope that the SAR will serve as a bridge to Portuguese-speaking countries and regions.

# Beijing Olympics team on tour in Macau

**A** 68-strong delegation has arrived in Macau for a three-day visit along with some of the elite athletes from the Chinese team who competed in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

They are drawn from a range of disciplines, including: table tennis, swimming, diving, weightlifting, artistic gymnastics, badminton, rowing, canoeing, track cycling, fencing, and athletics.

The visit from December 19 to 21 coincides with Macau's handover anniversary on December 20. That date is seen as politically relevant and characterised by an increase patriotic fervour, and could be seen as the



ideal moment for the easing of border restrictions proffered by the Olympic medallists considered to be "national heroes."

While in Macau, the government has said the athletes will take part in various activities

and will share their success stories of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games with locals.

Today, the delegation will attend the flag-raising ceremony commemorating the 22nd anniversary of the establishment of

the MSAR. The delegation will then tour sites within the UNESCO-listed Historic Centre of the region.

The delegation of elite Olympians will also share their experiences and stories of achievement with local young people, including Macau athletes. In the evening, the guests will attend a variety show at the Macao East Asian Games Dome.

The government has said that tomorrow the delegation "will visit Macau neighbourhoods and meet local people."

Earlier this month, the delegation of olympians also went on a three-day visit to Hong Kong.

The delegation was comprised of 29 athletes and three coaches from 12 sporting events. Delegation members included sprint icon Su Bingtian, table tennis winner Ma Long, and Sun Yiwu, who won China's first Olympic gold medal in women's individual fencing. **LV**

# Underage students harassed by nurse during vaccination

STAFF REPORTER

**A**UTHORITIES have arrested a 33-year-old male suspect for allegedly sexually harassing a group of female students while administering their Covid-19 shots.

According to the Judiciary Police (PJ), a group

of secondary students were accompanied by their school nurse to receive inoculations at a vaccination station in the NAPE area. Seven female students aged between 13 and 16 told the school nurse that they endured verbal and physical sexual harassment from the male

nurse who administered their vaccines.

PJ spokesperson Ho Chan Nam said that when the students were at the vaccination booth, the suspect would purposefully touch the victims' chest area through their shirts and clamp their thighs with both legs. After

the authority received the school's incident report, they investigated and intercepted the 33-year-old local nurse, who refused to cooperate with the police. However, with the statements provided by the students, the authorities believe that the suspect committed sexual

assault and harassment of children. The case has been transferred to the public prosecutions office.

The Health Bureau stressed that while this is an isolated case, it will be followed up diligently and will not be tolerated. The health authorities are also working with the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) to provide psychological counselling to the affected students and parents.

## COVID-19

# POST-VACCINATION COMPLICATIONS IN 14-YEAR-OLD PATIENT

STAFF REPORTER

**A**N adverse case was reported after complications arose from a 14-year-old's vaccination on Saturday, December 18, according to the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre.

The patient devel-

oped chest pains, palpitations and a fever on the afternoon of December 17, and sought medical treatment at the emergency room of the Conde São Januário Hospital (CHCSJ) the same day. The electrocardiogram showed sinus tachycardia, and the patient signed hospital discharge

papers. The next morning, the patient returned to the hospital for medical treatment, and blood results indicated a myocardial injury. The patient was diagnosed with acute myocarditis and was referred to cardiology for further medical treatment. Yesterday, the patient had a slight

attenuation of chest pain after treatment, and their clinical condition is currently stable.

As the patient had been vaccinated with the second dose of the BioNTech mRNA vaccine on the evening of December 16, the case was referred to a research and analysis group of adverse cases

post-vaccination.

The occurrence of adverse events after vaccination are not considered to be the same as side effects of the vaccine. Experts are still conducting research to determine the causal relationship between these events and the vaccine. Since the introduction of the vaccine, a monitoring system has been created for observation purposes, for which the World Health Organization has rigorous procedures and criteria.

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# Congratulations

on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of  
the Establishment of Macau SAR

# 22



*永利* 永利



# Lawmaker wants domestic workers out of TNRs regime

RENATO MARQUES

**LAWMAKER** Ma Io Fong wants a new regime to regulate all domestic workers separately from other non-resident workers (TNRs).

Ma expressed this wish in a spoken inquiry to the government during last week's plenary session at the Legislative Assembly (AL).

In the period before the agenda, the lawmaker reiterated the problems experienced by the population regarding the hiring of TNRs during the Covid-19 pandemic, specifically those related to domestic work.

As other lawmakers have on occasion, Ma accused domestic workers of threatening their employers and forcing them to raise their salaries to figures not seen before, due to the difficulties created by the border restrictions and the new law for the hiring of TNRs.

The lawmaker recalled the recent case of a foreign domestic worker suspected of abusing and mistreating a child as part of a call on the government

to establish a special regime, separating domestic workers from other professions.

"Domestic workers are the [people] who take responsibility for caring for the elderly and children. Therefore, residents expect that they can be regulated by strict and specific laws and regimes to ensure the safety of families and property. Chaotic situations and crimes involving non-resident domestic workers are frequent," Ma said.

The lawmaker went on to propose four amendments to the current regulations, including: improving policy on changing jobs to avoid dishonest resignation; open special channels for the import of foreign domestic workers; increasing supply to prevent "chaotic situations"; establishing a specific "law on domestic workers" to protect the rights and interests of domestic workers and their employers; and regulating the conditions of entry for domestic workers and creating a database of them.

With these changes, the lawmaker intends for the government to have more infor-



## BORDER CONTROL POLICIES MUST CHANGE FOR RECOVERY

**LAWMAKER** Lo Choi In called on the government to change current border control policies.

According to the lawmaker, the zero-cases policy adopted so far "has had several impacts on the economy and the lives of the population of Macau." She added that the end of the year allows for some new opportunities – specifically with the arrival of Chinese New Year – which the government should not squander.

"In addition to keeping border crossing stable between Macau and mainland China, it is also necessary to actively fight [alongside] Hong Kong for the easing of the border crossing measures [between the cities]. [The government must aim] for the resumption of

normal exchanges between residents of Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macau to be restored as much as possible, allowing local companies to take advantage of the golden period. [It would also allow for the] reintegration by some unemployed people into the labor market, and for family reunions [for] members who have been separated for a long time."

Lo also called for the easing of restrictions on the importation of foreign domestic workers, urging the government to consider authorizing their re-entry into Macau by making use of vaccination and quarantine resources. This would, according to Lo, alleviate the pressure in family care and the economic burden on residents by bolstering the labor force. **RM**

mation on domestic workers before they are hired by local families, along with a regime in which employers reestablish the "upper hand" that he claims has been lost in the last two years.

Ma noted that the current situation has allowed the salaries of some workers to "have almost doubled in the last two years." He also claimed that other situations – such as "lack of care in the work" and provoking conflict with the purpose of "trying to be fired" – have been occurring often as a method to increase their pay or force contract terminations so as to allow the worker to "change the type of work." Ma believes this situation has let "employers become a vulnerable group".

# Lei Chan U wants to boost Mandarin language for national identity

RENATO MARQUES

**I**N a spoken inquiry to the government, lawmaker Lei Chan U called on the authorities to redouble the use of the Mandarin language in Macau to increase the general sense of national identity.

Speaking at the Legislative Assembly (AL) during the period before the agenda of a plenary session, Lei cited the conclusions of a report recently issued by the State Council of the People's Republic of China. The report stated that it is necessary to strengthen language-related services in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), and provide support to Hong Kong and Macau to promote the learning and broader use of Mandarin.

The lawmaker noted that, with its plans for the



development of the GBA, Macau "is taking the express lane [towards] its integration [with] the global development of the country," and as such the recommendations should prompt swift action from the government.

"The report recommends that Macau should, in the context of social education and teaching

in schools, emphasize the strengthening of Chinese writing skills and the regulation of written expression, so that their improvement can in turn drive the continuous improvement of the Chinese language – namely on Mandarin oral expression," Lei said. He went on to say that, "In [his] opinion, promoting the learning

of Mandarin is not only a necessity to promote Macau's integration into national development, but also an important link to reinforce the national identity of the residents. Mandarin is the country's common language and its in-depth command contributes not only to increasing the individual competitiveness of residents but also to the creation of great development opportunities."

For the lawmaker, the current level of local students' command of the language is "not bad." However, "to maintain a good development trend, it is suggested that the government continue to consolidate the capacity of Mandarin teachers, increasing the level of teaching of these teachers and the level of application of students in Mandarin."

## RESTAURANT AND RETAIL PERFORMANCE FALLS SHORT IN OCTOBER

STAFF REPORTER

**HOSPITALITY** venue and retail trade slackened in October 2021, attributable to the import-related Covid-19 cases reported between late September and early October, information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) indicates.

Approximately 76% of the interviewed restaurants and similar establishments showed a year-on-year decline in receipts in October, up from 33% in 2020. Interviewed retailers recording a year-on-year decline in receipts increased by 53 percentage points to 78%. The Business Performance Index (BPI) ratings – which reflects trends in year-on-year changes in business receipts – for hospitality (17.4) and retail (19.4) were both lower than 50, implying that the business performance of these two industries in October was less satisfactory compared to October 2020.

Regarding business expectations for November, the proportion of interviewed restaurants and similar establishments expecting an increase in their receipts on the previous month was 51%, a significant rise from the just 2% at the end of September. This reflects the gradual easing of the pandemic in late October. Meanwhile, 55% of the interviewed retailers forecasted a sales increase in November, a growth of 36 percentage points from the preceding month. The Business Outlook Index (BOI) – which reflects the trend of month-on-month changes in receipts anticipated by interviewed establishments – was higher than 50 for both restaurants and similar establishments (68.1) and retail trade (71.2), indicating that respondents from both industries predicted a better business outlook in November than in October.

# CONGRATULATIONS ON

## THE 22<sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF

## THE MACAO SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION





RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE high number of requests and applications for the renewal of residency permits currently pending processing at the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) came to the fore of the Legislative Assembly (AL), headed by lawmaker Wong Kit Cheng.

In an inquiry to the government, the lawmaker recalled that there remains a very large number of requests that are pending, causing chaos in the lives of those involved. This is the case despite the recent processing of a few applications under the residency application scheme for investors, managerial personnel, and professionals with special qualifications.

"According to the information [I received], some professionals have served in different economic sectors, but due to the cases [of illegalities reported in 2018], the process of their applications for residence establishment is slow or has been stopped and, in some cases, the permit to stay was even canceled," Wong noted.

The lawmaker referenced professionals working in higher education and research, along with highly qualified professionals in the fields of science and technology, medicine, and finance. Wong said that these people, "who have been working in Macau for many years and have professional qualifications

# Halted applications for residency at IPIM remain a concern



and knowledge," were facing the prospect of "their non-permanent resident identity cards not [being] renewed without a clear justification for this, or they have been pending for a long time, therefore, with expired documents."

"Life for the whole family became difficult, as they can only

stay in Macau through the use of a 'permit to stay,' like people waiting for repatriation and stranded domestic workers," Wong added. "They cannot work, their children cannot go to school or go to the doctor, and [they] even have difficulties of getting in and out of Macau. With no alternatives, they [have] ended up suing

the authorities. The activities of the companies or entities they work for were severely affected."

The lawmaker argued that this situation is not only taking a lot of time and resources from the government, applicants, and the companies or entities – it has also shaken the confidence of highly qualified professionals that want

to come to Macau. This problem is particularly important, as the government is launching a new talent program calling on these professionals to apply.

According to Wong, the government must solve the problem of the IPIM cases as soon as possible to avoid losing talent for their program.



## 39,000 enrolled in higher education

**M**ACAU has recorded approximately 39,000 students in higher education during the past academic year (2019-2020), an increase of 8.3% compared to the previous year. Of these, 26,850 were undertaking Bachelor's degrees.

Data from the Education

and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) shows that 12,982 students completing Bachelor's degrees are studying Business and Law. The next most popular fields are Humanities and Arts with 6,226 students, and 5,815 from the Services.

Sciences recorded the

fewest, with just 1,268 students.

According to the bureau, the data shows that 8,449 people are completing Master's degrees – a significant increase from a decade ago, when there were only 3,387 Master's students recorded.

The ratio of local to non-locals in Bachelor's programs for the previous academic year is 1:1.

The Covid-19 crisis drove border closures, which led to stricter travel and entry measures imposed by diffe-

rent governments.

In Hong Kong, a survey from the Lingnan University shows that interest among mainland Chinese students in studying abroad will return to pre-pandemic levels when the health crisis subsides.

The survey – a follow up to 2020's study "Understanding Hong Kong and Mainland university students' intentions to study overseas after the COVID-19 crisis" – found that 22% of respondents would consider studying abroad after the pandemic, compared to 21% who were interested in studying abroad before the pandemic began. However, Interest in foreign study has dropped to just 8% while the pandemic continues.

Mainland students accounted for 57% of Macau's overall students during the previous academic year.

This year, after applying for permission to recruit Mainland students, Macau's University of Saint Joseph was permitted to recruit students from mainland China on an "experimental basis" and only for four graduate programs. LV

### DECORATIONS 2021

## GOV'T ANNOUNCES OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUALS, ENTITIES

**Y**ESTERDAY, the government announced it would award the Decoration of Honour – Golden Lotus to Kiang Wu Hospital and Chui Sai Cheong.

A statement was released to accompany the announcement of the Decorations, Medals and Certificates of Merit awarded for 2021 by the MSAR. In it were 22 names put forward on the recommendations from the Committee of Nomination of Medals and Honorary Titles.

The Medal of Merit – Professions was awarded to State Key Laboratory of Quality Research in Chinese Medicine (University of Macau) and State Key Laboratory of Quality Research in Chinese Medicines (Macau

University of Science and Technology). The Medal of Merit – Education was awarded to Rui Paulo da Silva Martins, who has been the University of Macau's vice-rector since September 1997.

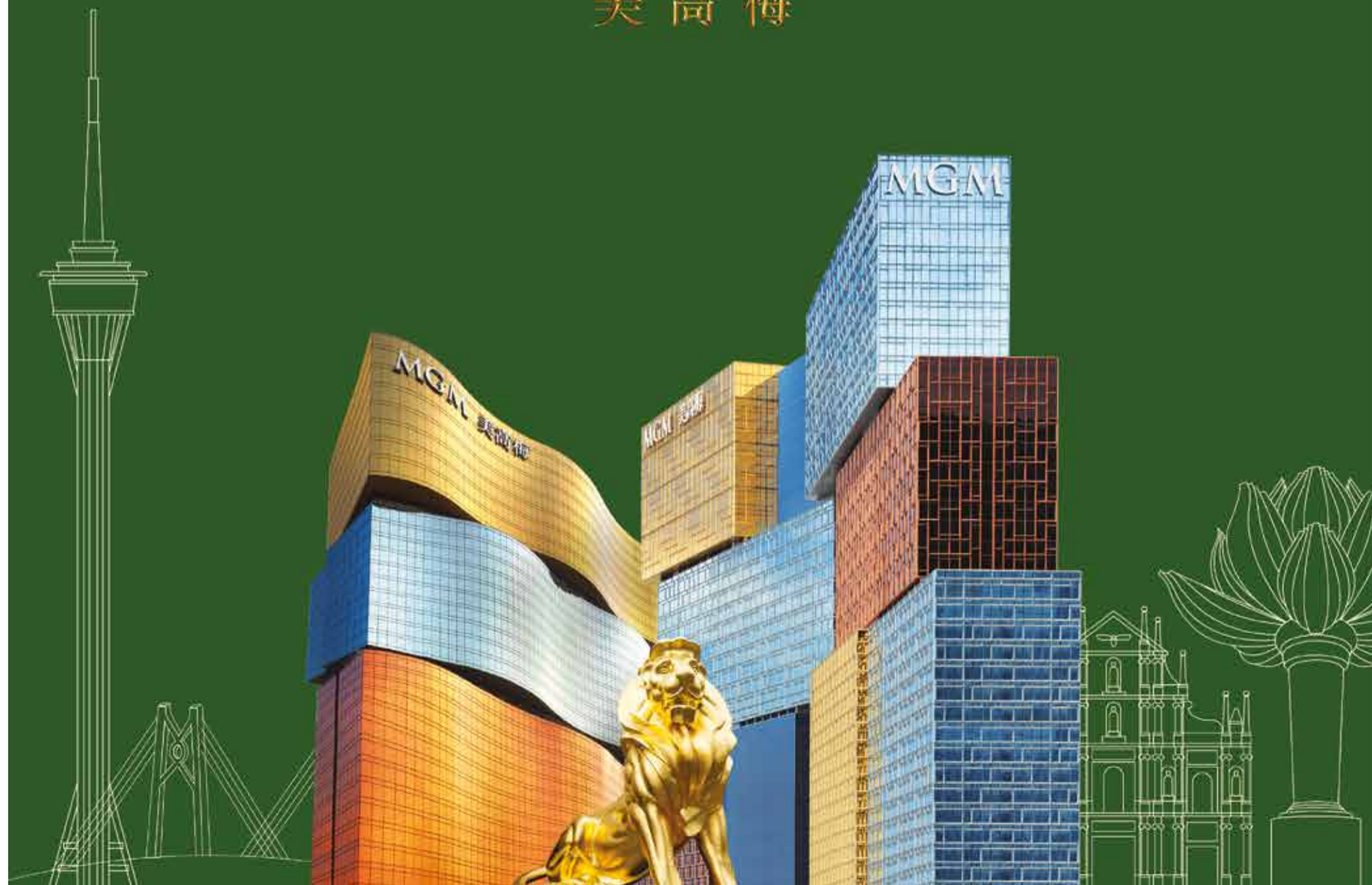
The Medal of Merit – Sports was awarded to Jugo Kuok Kin Hang, who won the first bronze medal for Macau at the People's Republic of China's 14th National Games.

The Medal for Distinguished Service – Medal for Community Service will be awarded to the Macau Association of Mutual Help of Myanmar Overseas Chinese.

The award ceremony for the Decorations, Medals and Certificates of Merit will be held in late January 2022. LV



# CONGRATULATIONS ON THE 22<sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MACAU SAR





GAMING

# New Year's fireworks returning to Vegas after 2020 hiatus

KEN RITTER, LAS VEGAS

**N**EW Year's Eve fireworks that were called off last year on the Las Vegas Strip due to the coronavirus pandemic are returning with hopes for big crowds, even as the emerging omicron variant spreads in more states.

Tourism and elected officials, most wearing masks, stood last week on an indoor stage with sparkling pyrotechnics and a background emblazoned with "2022" to announce the Deuces Wild-themed event and the addition of an eighth hotel-top fireworks launching spot.

"Aside from last year, 'America's Party' has been the culminating event of the entire year for more than 20 years," said Pat Christenson, president of Las Vegas Events, a nonprofit agency created to produce and support big events.

Thousands of revelers still con-



AP PHOTO

gregated on casino-lined Las Vegas Boulevard to ring in 2021 despite the canceled fireworks. There was no mention during last week's event of the possible effect of the emergence and spread in recent weeks of the omicron variant of COVID-19.

Reported cases of COVID-19 have generally declined in Nevada in recent weeks, including in and around Las Vegas. But health of-

icials reported the first identified case of a person with the omicron variant in the state this week in the Las Vegas area.

Nationwide, at least 36 states have detected the variant as the delta virus continues surging in many places. Experts said Tuesday that an omicron surge is probably already underway in the United States, outpacing the nation's ability to track it.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said this week that omicron accounted for about 3% of genetically-sequenced coronaviruses nationally. Percentages vary by region, with the highest — 13% — in the New York/New Jersey area.

Nevada has reported 8,263 people dead from the coronavirus since the pandemic began in March 2020, including 6,358 in Las Vegas and surrounding Clark County.

Masks are required for everyone indoors in Clark County unless they are actively eating or drinking, although compliance is not universal. All but two of Nevada's 17 counties have similar rules.

Almost 70% of eligible people in the Las Vegas area have received at least one shot of coronavirus vaccine, and 55% are fully vaccinated, according to the local health district. Statewide, health officials put those numbers at

63% and almost 54%, respectively.

The Southern Nevada Health District reported a seven-day test positivity rate of 9.8% in the Las Vegas area. The measure of the number of people tested for coronavirus and found positive was 6.8% in mid-October. The World Health Organization goal is 5% or below to relax restrictions.

Fireworks were first held on the Strip on the last night of 2000. The display has helped make New Year's Eve one of Las Vegas' biggest events, drawing more than 300,000 revelers, according to tourism officials, and filling more than 250,000 hotel rooms.

"Being able to host this event again is so special because it allows us to close out the year in a memorable way," Christenson said in a statement accompanying Thursday's announcement.

Fireworks by Grucci designs and choreographs the eight-minute pyrotechnic display from atop resort properties that last year included MGM Grand, Aria, Planet Hollywood, Caesars Palace, Treasure Island, Venetian and The STRAT tower. It is accompanied by a soundtrack airing on two on FM radio stations in Las Vegas.

This year the show will add Resorts World Las Vegas, which opened last June. **MDT/AP**

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Congratulations on  
the 22<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of  
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Macau SAR

MELCO





Pro-Beijing candidate Ng Chau-pei waves to supporters on a street in Hong Kong yesterday

# Hong Kong votes for legislature with only loyalists approved

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

**H**ONG Kong was voting yesterday in the first election since Beijing amended the laws to reduce the number of directly elected lawmakers and vet candi-

dates to ensure that only those loyal to China can run.

The semi-autonomous territory was rocked by pro-democracy protests in 2014 and 2019, but they were crushed by security forces, followed by the imposition of a sweeping

national security law that silenced most of the city's opposition activists and led others to flee abroad.

Low turnout was widely expected, and seven hours after voting began, some 839,563 registered voters, or 18.77%, had cast their ballots.

Warton Leung, who did not intend to vote in Sunday's election, said that the lack of choice in candidates dampened enthusiasm for voting.

"Although there is a chance to vote for pro-establishment and democracy candidates, there are few democratic choices, so Hong Kong people do not feel enthusiastic when it comes to voting," he said.

Others, such as Yu Wai-kwan, saw the election as a chance to vote for a better Hong Kong.

"I am voting to choose a new bunch of people to make Hong Kong a better place," Yu said. "I am a patriot, and I just hope for peace and quiet, and to have a good livelihood."

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam visited a polling station Sunday morning and said she had "no particular expectation" about the turnout.

"I would say that the government has not set any target for voter turnout rate, not for this election, not for previous elections, because there is a combination of factors that will affect the voter

turnout rate in any election," she said.

Three protesters from the League of Social Democrats staged a small demonstration across the street from the polling station, chanting "I want real universal suffrage."

## Police chief said about 10,000 officers would be deployed to make sure the election proceeds smoothly

Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Minister Erick Tsang warned that foreign forces may be attempting to undermine the elections after overseas activists urged a boycott of the vote. Under the new election laws, incitement to boycott and casting invalid votes can lead up to three years in jail and a 200,000 Hong Kong dollar (\$26,500) fine.

The latest survey by the Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute found that 39% of respondents indicated that they are unlikely to vote.

Some 4.4 million residents are eligible to vote.

The elections were originally scheduled to take place in September last year, but were postponed with authorities citing public health risks due to the pandemic. The decision was opposed by the pro-democracy camp, which accused the government of using the outbreak to delay the vote.

Hong Kong's largest opposition party, the Democratic Party, fielded no candidates.

Heavy police presence surrounded polling stations. Police chief Raymond Siu said about 10,000 officers would be deployed to make sure the election proceeds smoothly.

To encourage the vote, authorities offered free public transport in an unprecedented move, and sent out reminder messages a day before the polls.

"Casting your vote for HK — our Home! LegCo Election is important to you and HK's future!" the message read, referring to the Legislative Council.

The rubber-stamp Chinese parliament in March passed a resolution to alter Hong Kong's election law that many saw as effectively ending the "one country, two systems" framework under which Hong Kong was to retain its separate legal, political and financial institutions for 50 years following the handover from Britain in 1997.

The assembly voted to give a pro-Beijing committee power to appoint more of Hong Kong's lawmakers, reducing the proportion of those directly elected, and ensure that only those truly loyal to Beijing are allowed to run for office.

The move expanded the size of the chamber from 70 to 90 seats, with members of the Election Committee, a strongly pro-Beijing body responsible for electing the chief executive, making up 40 of those. Another 30 seats are elected by business groupings known as "functional constituencies." The number of directly elected representatives was reduced from 35 to 20. Five seats elected from among district councilors were abolished altogether. **MDT/AP**

AD



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# BEIJING VOWS TO RESPOND AFTER US ENACTS XINJIANG SANCTIONS

CHINA will take all necessary measures to safeguard its institutions and enterprises, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said last week after the U.S. Senate passed a law barring imports from the Xinjiang region unless businesses can prove they were made without forced labor.

The spokesman, Wang Wenbin, said the measure approved by the Senate "indicates that the U.S. has no scruples about smearing China by every means."

"The relevant actions seriously undermine the principles of market economy and international economic and trade rules, and seriously damage the interests of Chinese institutions and enterprises," Wang told reporters at a daily briefing.

"China strongly deplores and rejects that and urges the U.S. to immediately correct its mistake. China will take all necessary measures to resolutely safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese institutions and enterprises," Wang said without elaborating.

The law is the latest U.S. penalty over China's alleged systemic and widespread abuse of ethnic and religious minorities in its far western region, especially Xinjiang's predominantly Muslim Uyghurs.

President Joe Biden is expected to sign the law after overcoming initial hesitation from the White House and what supporters said was opposition from corporations. He also announced new sanctions Thurs-



A worker gathers cotton yarn at a textile manufacturing plant, as seen during a government organized trip for foreign journalists, in Aksu in Xinjiang, in April

day that target several Chinese biotech and surveillance companies, a leading drone manufacturer and government entities for their actions in Xinjiang.

Despite numerous independent investigations finding forced sterilization and large detention camps where many Uyghurs allegedly are compelled to work in factories, China has denounced all such claims as the "lie of the century."

It portrays them as part of an effort to stifle China's growth and damage its reputation. China at first denied the prison-like camps exist but later said they were voluntary centers for job training and de-radicalization. It now says all "students" have graduated.

"The U.S. government is trying to strangle the economy of Xinjiang through its industrial and supply chains under the false pretexts of 'forced labor' and 'violations of human rights,' the official Xinhua News Agency said Friday, citing a report by the Institute for Central Asia Studies under Lanzhou University in northwestern Gansu province.

The U.S. says raw cotton, gloves, tomato products, silicon, fishing gear and a range of solar energy components are among goods allegedly made with help from forced labor.

Xinjiang is a resource-rich mining region, important for both agricultural production and manufacturing. Detainees also are sometimes transferred from

Xinjiang to work in factories elsewhere, making clothing and textiles, electronics, solar energy equipment and car parts, the U.S. says.

U.S. government agencies are required to expand monitoring for forced labor by China's ethnic minorities. The new law establishes a presumption that goods from Xinjiang are made with forced labor, so businesses wanting to import goods from there must prove no involvement of forced labor, including by workers transferred from Xinjiang.

Factory work has long been associated with the camps, through which somewhere between 900,000 and 1.5 million Uyghurs and other Chinese Muslims have passed, said Darren Byler, an assistant professor of international studies at Canada's Simon Fraser University who has studied and written extensively about the camps.

Workers considered troublesome may be given prison terms, sometimes in camps converted into penitentiaries, Byler said. After they leave, they are kept in line through constant surveillance and the threat of being sent back to the camps, he said.

Muslims sent to work in other parts of China are given no choice, are separated from their families and are accompanied by a Xinjiang Communist Party official and police officer, Byler said. Their activities are highly circumscribed and they are not allowed to practice Islam.

"They're living in really unfree conditions," Byler said.

The Commerce Department announced new penalties targeting China's Academy of Military Medical Sciences and 11 research institutes that focus on using biotechnology to support the Chinese military.

The move bars American companies from selling goods and technologies to the entities without a license.

Separately, the Treasury Department announced it was placing DJI, the world's largest drone manufacturer, and seven other Chinese companies on an investment blacklist over their alleged involvement in biometric surveillance and tracking of Uyghurs.

The measure means Americans will be prohibited from buying or selling publicly traded securities connected with the companies.

DJI dominates the global market for small, low-altitude drones used by hobbyists, photographers and many businesses and governments.

The White House announced last week it would stage a diplomatic boycott of the upcoming Winter Olympics in Beijing, citing China's "egregious human rights abuses and atrocities in Xinjiang." U.S. athletes will compete but Biden will not send the usual contingent of dignitaries.

China vowed "resolute countermeasures" over the boycott, but has given no indication of how it plans to respond.

Rights groups note that prison labor has long been a part of the U.S. economy, with inmates producing goods and providing services such as call centers for what is typically reduced pay. Opponents say the system disproportionately profits off the labor of incarcerated Black Americans. **MDT/AP**

## E-COMMERCE

# Alibaba to grow Southeast Asia e-commerce arm to USD100b

ALIBABA this week revealed an ambitious vision to grow its Southeast Asian e-commerce business to \$100 billion in transacted sales as well as a pledge to reach carbon neutrality in its operations by 2030.

China's largest e-commerce company unveiled its vision last week for its Southeast Asian e-commerce arm Lazada in presentation slides uploaded to its site for its annual investor Day, where it typically shares revenue figures and future strategies of its business units with investors. Alibaba's top executive Daniel Zhang also outlined its carbon emission goals

during a presentation Friday.

The plan to quintuple Lazada's total gross merchandise volume — defined as the total amount of sales transacted on its platform — came as the Chinese company looked overseas for sources of growth amid increased competition and a slowing economy in the Chinese market.

Alibaba also eventually aims to have Lazada serve 300 million consumers, according to the presentation slides.

The Hangzhou-based firm took a controlling stake in Lazada in 2016, before investing an additional

\$2 billion to expand the business in 2018.

Alibaba's incoming chief financial officer Toby Xu said during a presentation on Friday that its China commerce segment has faced "near-term challenges of a slowing macro-environment and a heightened level of competition."

"This has resulted in slower GMV and the revenue growth in the most recent quarter," he said. "But we also see opportunities to tap into new addressable markets to grow new users that will position us well for the long term."

Currently, Lazada's gross merchandise volume for the last twelve months

from September 2021 reached \$21 billion, with 159 million monthly active users.

Alibaba CEO Daniel Zhang said in a separate presentation Friday that the company sees a "huge potential in the international markets" going forwards.

"In Southeast Asia, ecommerce penetration is only 11%, and Lazada's annual consumers have reached only 34% of regional Internet users," Zhang said. "There's tremendous potential in both the overall market size and our penetration."

Alibaba's push to expand its Southeast Asia business comes as it faces

fiercer competition in its home market, from rivals in short-video e-commerce such as Kuaishou, as well as group buying platform Pinduoduo, which has invested heavily in sales and marketing expenses to expand its user base.

The company has also faced tighter regulatory scrutiny over the past year, as Chinese authorities increased regulatory oversight in the technology industry following concerns that some Big Tech companies were engaging in anti-competitive and monopolistic behavior. Alibaba was fined a record \$2.8 billion earlier this year after authorities concluded that it had viola-

ted antitrust rules.

Separately, Zhang also announced that the company is aiming to achieve carbon neutrality in its own operations by 2030, while also reducing the amount of emissions across its supply chain and business ecosystem by half.

Zhang said that the company also plans to reduce emissions by using more renewables as well as "energy-saving and efficiency-improving technologies" to reduce emissions. Alibaba would also mobilize consumers, merchants, business partners and service providers to take part in their carbon reduction efforts. **MDT/AP**



**CONGRATULATIONS ON  
THE 22<sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MACAU SAR  
WITH COMPLIMENTS OF  
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INDIA

# MAN BEATEN TO DEATH INSIDE HISTORIC SIKH TEMPLE

A man was beaten to death in the northern Indian city of Amritsar after he allegedly attempted to commit a sacrilegious act inside the historic Golden Temple, one of Sikhs' most revered shrines.

The incident occurred during the daily evening prayer on Saturday, media reported, after the man jumped over a railing inside the inner sanctum and attempted to grab a sword that was kept near the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy book.

TV footage showed people inside the temple rushing to stop him.

Police told New Delhi Television that the man was killed after the incident and that they were checking CCTV footage to glean more information.

"The man, about 20



Policemen stand guard outside the office of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, the organization responsible for the management of Sikh temples near the Golden Temple in Amritsar

to 25 years of age, had a yellow cloth tied on his head and jumped the fence ... the people inside held him and escorted him out to the corridor where there was a violent

altercation and he died," Parminder Singh Bandal, deputy commissioner of Amritsar police, told the channel.

The chief minister of Punjab state, where Amri-

tsar is located, strongly condemned the incident, calling it the most "unfortunate and heinous act to attempt sacrilege," his office tweeted late on Saturday. MDT/AP

PAKISTAN

# DEATH TOLL IN KARACHI SEWER GAS BLAST JUMPS TO 17

THE death toll from a sewer gas blast in Pakistan's largest city of Karachi jumped to 17 as some critically injured people died overnight and yesterday, police said.

Initially, 12 people were reported dead and 11 others injured in Saturday's gas explosion in a sewage system in the commercial hub of Pakistan Saturday.

Senior police officer Sarfaraz Nawaz Shaikh said the loss of lives and property could be blamed on human errors of construction over the sewer. He said the number of injured also increased to 16.

The blast destroyed the HBL bank building constructed over the sewer. The building was one of several ordered

to vacate after violating building laws, according to Mukhtar Abro, a local administrator, who said the structures were to be demolished in coming weeks.

Many sewage channels in the city have been covered, mostly illegally, by constructing concrete structures over them.

Also yesterday, a roadside bomb killed two and wounded three others in a passing vehicle in the country's northwest. Police officer Abdus Samad said the vehicle was destroyed in the blast, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. A search operation has started to trace the culprits who planted the bomb. No one claimed responsibility for the blast near the border of Afghanistan. MDT/AP

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JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

PHILIPPINES

**T**HE governor of an island province in the central Philippines said yesterday at least 63 people died in the devastation wrought by Typhoon Rai in more than half of the towns that managed to contact him, bringing the death toll in the strongest typhoon to batter the country this year to at least 137.

Gov. Arthur Yap of Bohol province said 10 others were missing and 13 injured, and suggested the fatalities may still considerably increase with only 33 out of 48 mayors able to report back to him due to downed communications. Officials were trying to confirm a sizable number of deaths caused by landslides and extensive flooding elsewhere.

In statements posted on Facebook, Yap ordered mayors in his province of more than 1.2 million people to invoke their emergency powers to secure food packs for large numbers of people along with drinking water. Both have been urgently sought in several hard-hit towns.

After joining a military aerial survey of typhoon-ravaged towns, Yap said "it is very clear that the damage sustained by Bohol is great and all-encompassing."

He said the initial inspection did not cover four towns, where the typhoon blew in as it rampa-

# Typhoon deaths top 100, mayors plead for food



Residents stand amid damaged homes following Typhoon Rai in Talisay, Cebu province

ged through central island provinces on Thursday and Friday. The government said about 780,000 people were affected, including more than 300,000 residents who had to evacuate their homes.

At least 64 other typhoon deaths were reported by the disaster-response agency, the national police and local officials. Officials on Dinagat Islands, one of the

southeastern provinces first pounded by the typhoon, separately reported 10 deaths just from a few towns, bringing the overall fatalities so far to 137.

President Rodrigo Duterte flew to the region Saturday and promised 2 billion pesos (\$40 million) in aid. He met officials in Maasin City in Southern Leyte province where he was born. Duterte's family later

relocated to the southern city of Davao, where he served as a long-time mayor before rising to the presidency.

"The moment I was born into this world, I told my mother, 'Let's not stay here because this place is really prone to typhoons,'" Duterte told officials.

At its strongest, the typhoon packed sustained winds of 195 ki-

lometers (121 miles) per hour and gusts of up to 270 kph (168 mph), making it one of the most powerful in recent years to hit the disaster-prone archipelago, which lies between the Pacific Ocean and the South China Sea.

Floodwaters rose rapidly in Bohol's riverside town of Loboc, where residents were trapped on their roofs and in trees. They were rescued by the coast guard the following day. On Dinagat Islands, an official said the roofs of nearly all the houses, including emergency shelters, were either damaged or blown away entirely.

At least 227 cities and towns lost electricity, which has since been restored in only 21 areas, officials said, adding that three regional airports were damaged, including two that remain closed.

The deaths and widespread damage left by the typhoon ahead of Christmas in the largely Roman Catholic nation brought back memories of the catastrophe inflicted by another typhoon, Haiyan, one of the most powerful on record. It hit many of the central provinces that were pummeled last week, leaving more than 6,300 people dead in November 2013.

About 20 storms and typhoons batter the Philippines each year. The archipelago also lies along the seismically active Pacific "Ring of Fire" region, making it one of the countries most susceptible to natural calamities. **MDT/AP**

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AP PHOTO



Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan, center, speaks during the 17th extraordinary session of Organization of Islamic Cooperation Council of Foreign Ministers, in Islamabad, yesterday

# Islamic world unites to aid desperately poor Afghanistan

KATHY GANNON,  
ISLAMABAD

**T**HE economic collapse of Afghanistan, already teetering dangerously on the edge, would have a "horrendous" impact on the region and the world, successive speakers warned yesterday at the start of a one-day summit of foreign ministers from dozens of Islamic countries.

The hastily called meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Islamabad brought together dozens of foreign ministers with the special representatives on Afghanistan of major powers, including China, the U.S. and Russia.

The gathering also included the U.N. undersecretary general on humanitarian affairs as well as the president of the Islamic Development Bank Muhammad Sulaiman Al Jasser, who offered several concrete financing proposals. He said the IDB can manage trusts that could be used to move money into Afghanistan, jumpstart businesses and help salvage the deeply troubled economy.

The dire warnings called for the U.S. and other nations to ease sanctions, including the release upward of \$10 billion in frozen funds following the Taliban takeover of Kabul on Aug. 15.

Speakers also called for a quick opening of the country's banking system and collectively, with the United Nations and international banking institutions, assistance to Afghanistan. Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan directed his remarks to the U.S., urging Washington to drop preconditions to releasing desperately needed funds and restarting Afghanistan's banking systems.

Khan seemed to offer Taliban a pass on the limits on education for girls, urging the world to understand "cultural sensitivities" and saying human rights and women's rights meant different things in different countries. Still other speakers, including the OIC chairman Hussain Ibrahim Taha, emphasized the need for the protection of human rights, particularly those of women and girls.

The new Taliban rulers' acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi was in attendance in the grand hall of the Pakistani Parliament, where dozens of foreign ministers from many of the 57-nation OIC had gathered.

"This gathering is about the Afghan people," said Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, who warned that without immediate aid, Afghanistan was certain to collapse. He said it would have

"horrendous consequences," not just in Afghan lives lost to starvation and disease, but would most certainly result in a mass exodus of Afghans. Chaos would spread, he predicted, and allow terrorism and the drug trade to flourish.

Martin Griffiths, the U.N. undersecretary for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, warned that Afghanistan will not survive on donations alone. He urged donor countries to show flexibility, allowing their money to pay salaries of public sector workers and support "basic services such as health, education, electricity, livelihoods, to allow the people of Afghanistan some chance to get through this winter and some encouragement to remain home with their families."

Beyond that, Griffiths said, "we need constructive engagement with the de facto authorities to clarify what we expect from each other."

Afghanistan's teetering economy, he added, requires decisive and compassionate action, or "I fear that this fall will pull down the entire population."

Griffiths said families simply do not have the cash for everyday purchases like food and fuel as prices soar. The cost of fuel is up by around 40%, and most families spend 80%

of their money just to buy food.

He rattled off a number of stark statistics.

"Universal poverty may reach 97% of the population of Afghanistan. That could be the next grim milestone," he warned. "Within a year, 30% of Afghanistan's GDP (gross domestic product) could be lost altogether, while male unemployment may double to 29%."

Next year the U.N. would be asking for \$4.5 billion in aid for Afghanistan - its single largest humanitarian aid request, he said.

In what appeared to be a message to the Taliban delegation, Qureshi and subsequent speakers, including Taha, emphasized the protection of human rights, particularly those of women and girls.

In an interview with The Associated Press last week, Muttaqi said that Afghanistan's new rulers were committed to the education of girls and women in the workforce.

Yet four months into Taliban rule, girls are not allowed to attend high school in most provinces and though women have returned to their jobs in much of the health care sector, many female civil servants have been barred from coming to work.

Meanwhile, Qureshi said he wanted to see the summit end with concrete solutions to help Afghanistan and its people. He called for the summit to pledge and channel aid to Afghanistan; increase investment bilaterally or through the OIC in education, health, technical and vocational skills; and to establish a group of experts from the OIC, the United Nations, the Islamic Development Bank and others to help Afghanistan "access legitimate banking services and ease the serious liquidity challenges of the Afghan people."

He also called for participants to focus on food security, invest in capacity building inside Afghanistan to fight terrorism and the burgeoning drug trafficking.

"Finally, engage with Afghan authorities to help meet the expectations of the international community, in particular regarding political and social inclusivity, respect for human rights, especially the rights of women and girls and combating terrorism," he said. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1995 'DIVORCE': QUEEN TO CHARLES AND DIANA



The Queen has urged the Prince and Princess of Wales to seek "an early divorce".

Buckingham Palace said the Queen called for an end to the marriage in a letter to each of them earlier this week.

It is understood the prince has replied in agreement with his mother but the princess has yet to respond, according to a Palace spokesman.

"After considering the present situation the Queen wrote to both the prince and princess earlier this week and gave them her view, supported by the Duke of Edinburgh, that an early divorce is desirable," the spokesman said.

"The Prince of Wales also takes this view and has made this known to the Princess of Wales since the letter.

"The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will continue to do all they can to help and support the Prince and Princess of Wales, and most particularly their children, in this difficult period."

The Queen's action comes just weeks after the princess's interview on Panorama which sparked a national debate on the future of the monarchy.

In it she said she did not want a divorce and claimed there were "three people" in their marriage because of Charles' friendship with Camilla Parker Bowles.

Diana was also repeatedly critical of her husband's ability to become king, his family, and their advisers and also admitted committing adultery herself.

Constitutional experts have said divorce would mean the Princess of Wales could never become queen.

The prime minister and senior Privy Counsellors have backed the Queen's decision after prolonged private talks over the last two weeks.

Buckingham Palace's announcement followed discussions between the Queen and the Prime Minister.

Mr Major, who announced the couple's original separation in the Commons in 1992, will make a further statement to MPs once divorce proceedings are under way.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The "fairytale" marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales ended with a "decree nisi" on 28 August 1996. It was a far cry from their lavish wedding at St Paul's Cathedral 15 years earlier, witnessed by a television audience of millions.

As part of the divorce settlement Diana was stripped of her royal title - HRH - and instead became known as Diana, Princess of Wales.

It is understood she was awarded a £17m lump sum and £350,000 a year to run her private office, while Diana and Charles agreed to share custody of their sons.

Almost exactly a year later Diana died in a car crash with her companion Dodi Fayed in Paris.

Prince Charles married Camilla Parker Bowles in April 2005.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
 Don't be disappointed if you don't get your way emotionally. Don't second guess yourself, just go to it. Try not to allow superiors or those in a higher position to take advantage of you.

**TAURUS**  
 Apr. 20-May. 20  
 If you try to manipulate emotional situations you will find yourself alienated. You will have to make some changes regarding your direction if you wish to keep on top of your career expectations.

**GEMINI**  
 May. 21-Jun. 21  
 Your desire for excitement and adventure may be expensive. Try to be a bit more understanding or you may end up spending the evening alone. You will be able to make financial gains.

**CANCER**  
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
 Cultural activities open your eyes to new ways of doing things. Don't spend too much in order to impress others. Your emotional state could leave you vulnerable and confused.

**LEO**  
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
 Attend to things that you should have done yesterday. You may not get your facts correct today; double-check before making any statements. You may have personal problems.

**VIRGO**  
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
 It might be time to shake a leg and do a personal makeover. You will learn a great deal about yourself if you go somewhere secluded. Pamper yourself; the self esteem it brings you will be most gratifying.

**LIBRA**  
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
 Find out all you can; secret enemies may lead you astray. Your uncanny insight will help you make the right choices. You won't be able to keep a secret.

**SCORPIO**  
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
 Be prepared to jump quickly if you wish to stay in the forefront of your industry today. Don't let your health suffer because of worry. You may have been too agreeable to someone who just wanted to use you.

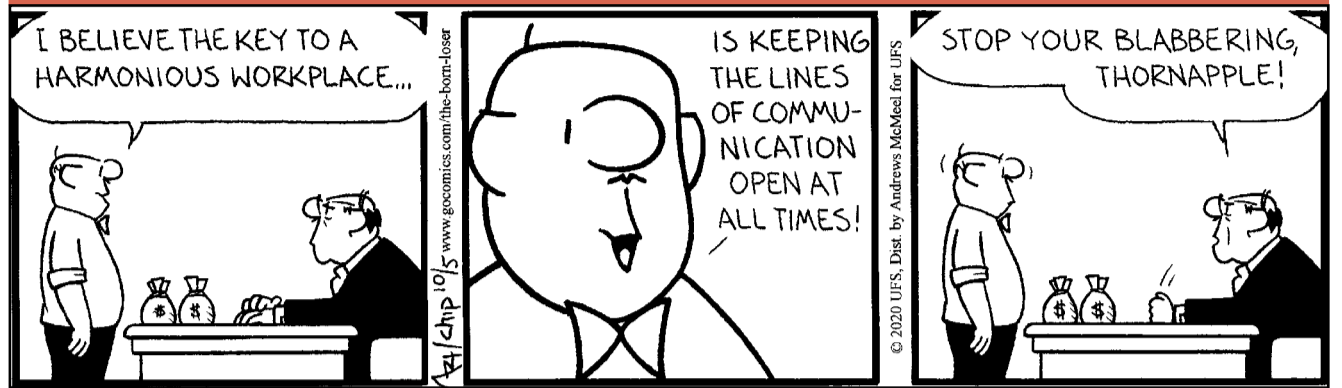
**SAGITTARIUS**  
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
 Try to be patient with their inability to accept your new beliefs. Need some adventure in your life? Exotic destinations beckon you. You can make life easier for an older member of your family.

**CAPRICORN**  
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
 Travel for business will not only bring you valuable information but also profits as well. Any attractions toward clients will be one sided and must be put right out of your head.

**AQUARIUS**  
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
 Travel may be confusing. You can expect to have a problem with your lover. Don't put off the things that they have asked you to do. Travel will result in new romantic attractions.

**PISCES**  
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
 Sudden changes regarding friendships are likely to occur if you have tried to change others. You'll find you're detail oriented today. Social evenings at your place will be highly successful.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	-7	0	fine
Harbin	-19	-13	fine
Tianjin	8	11	cloudy
Urumqi	7	12	cloudy
Xi'an	8	11	rain
Lhasa	-8	-2	overcast
Chengdu	14	20	rain
Chongqing	12	17	cloudy
Kunming	4	7	rain
Nanjing	20	23	cloudy
Shanghai	4	12	fine
Wuhan	-20	-16	fine
Hangzhou	1	10	fine
Taipei	-18	-8	fine
Guangzhou	14	21	rain
Hong Kong	13	20	overcast
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	-3	1	snow
Frankfurt	5	7	fog
Paris	3	9	overcast
London	7	9	cloudy
New York	5	14	overcast

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- German Mister; 5- "On the Waterfront" director Kazan; 9- One of two equal parts; 13- ... saw Elba; 14- Tears; 16- Writer Wiesel; 17- Former Virginia senator Charles; 18- Devoured; 19- Sever with the teeth; 20- Winter pear; 21- ...-Magnon; 22- Sharon's land; 24- Env. notation; 26- Hurt; 27- Long stories; 29- Tepid; 33- Metal fastener; 34- Team; 35- Portico; 36- Levi's rival; 37- Flight segment; 38- Antiquity, old-style; 39- Years in old Rome; 41- Sharp to the taste; 42- Beam; 44- Doesn't stay on topic; 46- Mall frequenters; 47- Tapered seam; 48- Leave at the altar; 49- Decorative pillar; 52- 1980's movie starring Bo Derek and Dudley Moore; 53- Opposite of odd, especially when applied to numbers; 57- Natural blue dye; 58- Make one; 60- Hard to find; 61- All-male; 62- Mediterranean island; 63- Formerly, formerly; 64- Household; 65- Fleshy fruit; 66- Stains;

DOWN 1- Aromatic plant; 2- Switch back?; 3- C.S.A. soldiers; 4- Enclosure formed by the chest bones; 5- Establishes; 6- Pick up; 7- Fascinated by; 8- Summer slaker; 9- Book of the New Testament; 10- Inter ...; 11- Lo-cal; 12- Sense; 15- Giggie; 23- That woman; 25- Spotted, to Tweety; 26- Examine account books; 27- View; 28- Ring; 29- Perjurers; 30- Had dinner at home; 31- Tumbles; 32- Created; 33- Close with force; 34- Square one; 37- Breastbone; 40- Gratify; 42- Poivre's partner; 43- Like some mail; 45- Grand Coulee, for one; 46- Musical ineptitude; 48- Volkswagen model; 49- Money; 50- Not tricked by; 51- Actor Neeson; 52- One with a glazed look, perhaps; 54- Alter; 55- Limerick language; 56- Devices for fishing; 59- Doze;

**Friday's solution**

U	S	A	G	E	T	A	J	S	C	A	N	T
N	O	N	O	S	E	C	O	H	A	N	O	I
T	R	A	D	E	M	A	R	K	A	R	N	I
O	T	T	I	S	E	E	R	L	E	S	S	
P	U	P	P	E	T	E	R	E	P	O	X	
A	N	A	R	C	H	A	R	S	E	N	A	L
L	I	N	E	O	R	K	E	V	E	R		
T	R	E	M	I	N	G	S	T	R	O	D	E
A	L	O	E	C	A	T	N	A	P			
S	N	A	R	L	B	O	O	M	M	I	O	
B	A	T	O	N	C	H	O	P	S	T	I	C
B	L	A	S	E	D	I	S	M	I	S	E	R
E	E	L	E	R	E	O	E	U	L	T	R	A

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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	
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300	
IAM 28 387 333	
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Viewings can be arranged by appointment.

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Ref: 2108 6001

Property Hotlist



**FOR SALE**

**Manhattan**  
**HKD 12,980,000**

1,720 ft<sup>2</sup>  
3   
2



Ref: 1909 6006



**FOR RENT**

**Va Fat**  
**HKD 9,500/mth**

740 ft<sup>2</sup>  
1   
1



Ref: 1910 1006



**FOR RENT**

**Old Taipa studio**  
**HKD 7,900/mth**

440 ft<sup>2</sup>  
1



Ref: 2110 1001

More Listings

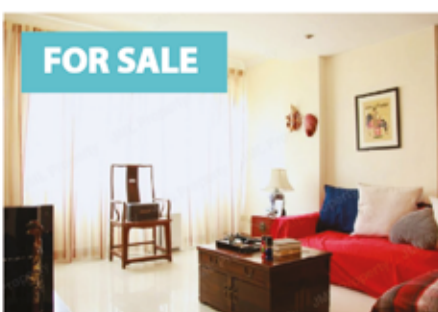
For Sale

- [Taipa] Nam Long 1 1 590 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 3,480,000** Ref: 2108 6002
- [Taipa] Lun Vo 2 1 770 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 4,800,000** Ref: 2107 6001
- [Macau] Macau, ZAPE 2 1 720 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 7,450,000** Ref: 2101 6002
- [Coloane] Hellene Gardens 1 2 2 1,707 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 10,880,000** Ref: 2107 6005
- [Taipa] Manhattan 4 2 2,305 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 15,750,000** Ref: 2005 6001

For Rent

- [Taipa] Old Taipa Studio 1 376 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 7,200/mth** Ref: 2110 1002
- [Macau] One Central 2 2 1,269 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 16,500/mth** Ref: 2005 1002
- [Taipa] Chun U Villa 4 3 1,979 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 16,500/mth** Ref: 2104 1001
- [Cotai] One Grantai 3 3 2,158 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 20,000/mth** Ref: 2105 1002
- [Taipa] BCM building office 4,100 ft<sup>2</sup> **HKD 85,000/mth** Ref: 2101 1001

Rain Dance Property "WE DANCE UNTIL IT'S SOLD!"



**FOR SALE**

**Hellene Gardens**  
**HKD 7,980,000**

1,663 ft<sup>2</sup>  
3   
2   
1



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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

OLYMPICS

# Ferreira takes ski halfpipe win, closing in on Beijing spot

**A**LLEX Ferreira joked that all the spins in his winning run of the men's ski halfpipe final left him feeling dizzy.

This might straighten things out for Ferreira: He's a virtual lock to make the U.S. Olympic team for the Winter Games in Beijing. The silver medalist in Pyeongchang now has back-to-back wins in back-to-back competitions in the same Copper Mountain halfpipe.

Ferreira scored 95.75 points at the Dew Tour contest Saturday to edge teammate Aaron Blunck. Brendan Mackay of Canada wound up third while two-time reigning Olympic champion David Wise finished fifth.

The 27-year-old Ferreira is firmly in the driver's seat to make the U.S. team with three qualifying events remaining. Not that he's viewing the situation in that prism.

"Let's just keep skiing and see where it takes me," Ferreira said.

Wise knows the road ahead will be tough. When he finished his final run, he looked toward the crowd and uttered: "What do you think?" It wasn't enough to wind up on the podium.

"This is going to be the hardest team to make," Wise said in between runs. "It's never been easy. I've got my work cut out for me."

Ferreira, who's from Aspen, has made himself right at home in Copper Mountain. He won the event during a U.S. Grand Prix stop last week.

"This year might just be my year here in Copper," Ferreira said. "So I'm very grateful and thankful to land a couple of good runs out here."

Blunck feels a step closer to Beijing with this result.

"But at the end of the day skiing to me is just skiing and the Olympics aren't what I ski for. I ski for the fun of it," said Blunck, who's from Crested Butte. "It feels nice, but at the same time, I'm going to keep it going and just keep having fun."

The most drama-packed event of the day was the men's snowboard slopestyle competition with Olympic champion Red Gerard winning on his last run. He edged teammate Chris Corning and Mark McMorris of Canada took third.

"I'm honestly speechless," Ge-

rard said. "I can't believe it."

In the women's snowboard slopestyle event, the day belonged to New Zealand's Zoi Sadowski Synnott, who increased the degree of difficulty each run through the course to take the title.

It wasn't the day for two-time Olympic champion Jamie Anderson as she struggled to put together a complete run. On her final attempt, Anderson didn't get enough rotation on a flip and crashed. Anderson was seventh.

Missing from the field was Austrian standout Anna Gasser, the defending Olympic champion in big air, who withdrew moments before the start of the event. Enni Rukajarvi of Finland was second and Japan's Kokomo Murase third. Courtney Rummel was fourth to record the top finish among the Americans.

"I honestly have no words. I'm so excited about it," Rummel said. "It gives me the extra confidence boost." **MDT/AP**



Alex Ferreira of the United States

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OPINION

China Daily  
 Editorial, China Daily

**DIFFERENTIATED POLICIES FOR HOLIDAY TRAVEL REQUIRED**

It is less than two months before Spring Festival ushers in the Year of the Tiger. For many who work in places away from their loved ones, to go home for the family reunion or to choose to stay where they work during the festival has become a question that they need to answer sooner rather than later.

Quite a number of local governments have issued policies requiring people to stay where they work during the holiday in recent days, and more are expected to follow suit.

That is why the call by an expert on Saturday for differentiated policies by local governments in accordance with their local pandemic control situations is noteworthy.

The head of the experts group for responses to COVID-19 under the National Health Commission said at a news conference on Saturday that a local government should base its policy on its local prevention and control situation, and its policy should not be arbitrary.

It is indeed necessary for those places that are designated as high risk to make it mandatory for residents to stay put during the Spring Festival holiday. For those who work in high or medium level risk areas, it is for their own safety against the virus and also to prevent the virus from being spread in an extensive manner that they are being called on to make the sacrifice.

However, for those localities that have not had a single case of infection for months, there is no reason to impose a ban on travel between such places.

Given that many people attach great importance to family reunions during Spring Festival, conditions should be created for them to go home for the holiday as long as detailed arrangements are made to ensure they strictly observe the prevention and control rules.

It is lazy and irresponsible for some local governments to make mandatory rules or even impose a blanket ban on travel from their localities to other places during the traditional holiday.

According to experts most people in low-risk areas should be able to go home for family reunions during the coming Spring Festival so long as their homes are in low-risk areas and they wear masks and strictly follow social distancing rules when traveling.

Instead of simply making mandatory rules requiring residents to stay where they work this Spring Festival, local governments should make detailed arrangements to make sure that control and prevention measures are strictly observed at such venues as railway stations, airports and coach terminals as well as on trains, flights and coaches.

The epidemic prevention and control situation is still complex, and in some places grim, but people should be able to have happy and healthy holidays so long as they exercise caution and act sensibly in the knowledge that the virus has not disappeared and it will take any opportunity to spread.

Local governments should be on high alert and ensure that their epidemic prevention and control systems are always ready for an emergency response.

Germany is tightening travel restrictions for people coming from Britain in response to the rapid spread of the omicron variant there.

The country's national disease control center, the Robert Koch Institute, added Britain to its list of "virus variant areas" yesterday [Macau time]. This means anyone traveling from the U.K. to Germany must enter a mandatory quarantine for 14 days, regardless of vaccination status.

The new restrictions, which will go into effect at midnight Sunday, come as the U.K. reports a record high number of new coronavirus infections. On Saturday, the country saw 90,418

new cases.

The U.K. joins eight African countries, including South Africa, on Germany's list of "virus variant areas."

The Robert Koch Institute's announcement comes in the wake of tightened restrictions for other countries across Europe as the continent faces a fourth wave of infections.

Starting Sunday, France and Denmark are considered "high risk areas," meaning those who are not vaccinated or recovered from the virus must quarantine for 10 days. Dozens of countries, including nearly all of Germany's direct neighbors, have now been added to this category.

AP PHOTO



The Santa Claus Village tourist attraction lit with festive lights early in the morning in Rovaniemi, Finland

**HOPES, FEARS IN FINNISH CHRISTMAS COUNTRY AS OMICRON LOOMS**

JAMES BROOKS,  
 ROVANIEMI

**WORKERS** at Santa Claus Village, a holiday theme park on the edge of the Arctic Circle, chipped away at a frozen dome, using chisels to put the final touches on an ice restaurant-hotel filled with sculptures of snowmen, penguins and huskies.

The Christmas season is in full swing in Finnish Lapland, where venue operators happily report that visitors have returned in numbers approaching pre-pandemic levels. Tourists from elsewhere in Finland and abroad come to revel in the festive spirit at the sprawling theme park, take a reindeer or husky sleigh ride and if they're lucky, glimpse the Northern Lights.

How long the winter fun will last is uncertain as the omicron coronavirus variant leads to new travel restrictions, test requirements and quarantine measures.

"It is a worry, of course, because no one knows what's going to happen," Sanna Karkkainen, CEO of Visit Rovaniemi, the tourism board for the capital of Finnish Lapland. "There's always the worry that are we going to get cancellations."

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns and travel restrictions hit the northern Finnish region's travel industry hard. Before the pandemic, about 60% of Rovaniemi's more than half-million annual

visitors came from abroad, mostly from elsewhere in Europe and some Asian countries.

According to Visit Rovaniemi, just over 11,000 people visited the city last December, an 82% drop from the same month a year earlier. Having survived a wretched 2020, many businesses see this winter as a "turning point," Karkkainen said.

"They could not suffer another year, another Christmas, without customers, that's for sure," she added.

Winter is the busiest tourist season in Finnish Lapland, and Air France and Eurowings recently added new direct flights to Rovaniemi from Paris and Dusseldorf, respectively. Local businesses say demand was high this month as visitors made their way north, relieved to have gotten away after last year's lockdowns.

"I think the last week, last few days, have been busier than ever," Tuomas Palmgren, co-owner of Rovaniemi taxi service Santa Line, said.

Newlyweds Stefanie and Mauro Sammut decided to honeymoon in Finnish Lapland, a complete shift in temperatures from their native Malta. The couple said they feared the trip might get canceled right up until they boarded their flight.

"Once the plane took off, we said, 'OK, we're fine,'" laughed Mauro Sammut, as young children slid past

the couple on sleighs at Santa Claus Village and families posed for photos next to a temperature gauge that read minus 14 degrees Celsius (6.8 degrees Fahrenheit).

SantaPark, a Lapland theme park built in an old air raid shelter, decided to close its doors in March 2020, and with the pandemic continuing to keep visitors away, only reopened this winter. The park's chief experience officer, Ilkka Lankinen, recalled the mental distress of not knowing when they might return.

"We missed last Christmas season totally," he said, standing in the park's "Elf School," where children can take a crash course on becoming one of Santa's trusty helpers. "We tried to have the hotel open, but we also gave up on that one. So, basically, SantaPark has been closed for two years."

Sisters Laura and Anne Marie Spencer of Dublin, Ireland, originally booked their Lapland getaway for December 2020. The pandemic forced them to push back the family trip by a year.

"It wasn't the only holiday that we had to rebook, but we were determined to get here," Anne Marie Spencer said.

There are currently no hugs with Father Christmas at Santa Claus Village — visitors are separated from Santa by a gingerbread cookie-shaped plexiglass screen. MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Russia sent a pair of nuclear-capable long-range bombers to patrol the skies over Belarus on Saturday, a mission intended to underline close defense ties between the two allies amid tensions with the West. The Russian Defense Ministry said the two Tu-22M3 strategic strike bombers practiced "performing joint tasks with the Belarusian air force and air defense." Su-30 fighter jets that Russia has supplied to Belarus escorted the bombers.

AP PHOTO



Russian military transport planes have delivered a shipment of humanitarian supplies to Afghanistan and flew back 200 Russians, Afghan students and others, the defense ministry said. The ministry said that three Il-76 cargo planes will make stopovers in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan before flying to Moscow. It said the planes were carrying citizens of Russia and Kyrgyzstan who wanted to leave Afghanistan, and Afghan students enlisted in Russian universities.

UK A senior member of Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Cabinet resigned Saturday night, adding to a sense of disarray within a government that has faced rebellion from his own lawmakers and voters this week. Brexit Minister David Frost said in a letter to Johnson that he was stepping down immediately after a newspaper reported that he had planned to leave the post next month.

**HOLIDAY TIMES**

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holiday. The Times will be back on the stands on Thursday December 23. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times.