



**VISITOR ARRIVALS STOOD AT 694,000 IN JANUARY - A DECREASE OF 15.4% MONTH-ON-MONTH DUE TO TIGHTENING OF ZHUHAI BORDER-CONTROL MEASURES** P4

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AP PHOTO



**Indian** authorities yesterday sent off tons of wheat to Afghanistan to help relieve desperate food shortages, after they struck a deal with neighboring rival Pakistan to allow the shipments across the shared border. Some 50 trucks stacked to the brim with around 2,500 tons of wheat donated by India began crossing over into Pakistan, according to a statement by India's foreign ministry.

AP PHOTO



**Sri Lanka** has sent back the last of 263 shipping containers of waste from Britain, an official said yesterday, as developing nations look to block the import of refuse and other environmentally hazardous items from wealthier countries. Customs officials in the South Asian country identified the large shipment of waste two years ago, including mattresses, carpets and springs, which the local importers claimed were for recycling.

AP PHOTO



**New Zealand** One protester drove a car toward a New Zealand police line, narrowly avoiding officers, while other protesters sprayed officers with a stinging substance, police said yesterday, as they tightened a cordon around a convoy that has been camped outside Parliament for two weeks. The clashes in the capital of Wellington came a day after police reported that some of the protesters had thrown human feces at them.

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# HK RESTRICTED

**Macau bans Hong Kong arrivals from booking optional quarantine hotels while Carrie Lam orders mass testing in 8-million neighboring SAR** P2

AP PHOTO



## ROSARIO REFUSES LEAD ROLE ON URBAN RENEWAL

P4



# GOV'T BANS HONG KONG RETURNEES FROM BOOKING OPTIONAL QUARANTINE HOTELS

LYNZY VALLES

**R**ETURNEES from Hong Kong will only be allowed to complete their quarantine period at the Treasure Hotel, which is specifically designed for medical observation for residents arriving from high-risk regions.

In a statement issued by the health authority last night, the government said that all those who intend to enter Macau from Hong Kong will have their reservations for other medical observation hotels starting on or after February 25 cancelled.

Yesterday afternoon, a source told the Times that one of the optional hotels has been instructed by the government to stop accepting bookings for Hong Kong returnees. The source further implied that the new instruction from the government would cause chaos among those who have planned to return, as they will have to make sure they are able to secure a place in the 450-room Treasure Hotel.

Currently, arrivals from Hong Kong are required to undergo a 14-day quarantine period, plus another seven days of self-isolation.



Back in November, the government announced the new type of hotel designated for medical observation would start operation in December to accommodate arrivals from high-risk foreign countries, who are required to complete a 21-day quarantine period. Initially the only group of people who were subject to quarantine in the new specialized hotel category were those flying in from Singapore, although the country is now classified as a second-tier high-risk location.

However, due to the fifth

wave of Covid-19 in Hong Kong, returnees from the neighboring region have been added to the list.

Hong Kong will test its entire population for Covid-19 in March, Chief Executive Carrie Lam announced yesterday, as the city grapples with its worst outbreak yet, driven by the Omicron variant.

Another 16 deaths have been reported Monday, including an 11-month-old baby. That same day, daily infection numbers hit a record high, with more than 7,500 new cases.

A Macau nucleic acid testing team was sent to Hong Kong last week to join the fight against the fifth wave of Covid-19.

The team of eight professional inspection and technical personnel, arranged by China Certification & Inspection Group Macau (CCIC Macau), joined CCIC Hong Kong to provide support to the Yuen Long district in Hong Kong.

Beijing has also sent its second batch of medical teams.

Hong Kong is already operating under its strictest curbs on travel, business and public activity since the pandemic began.

## NEW ANNOUNCEMENT TO HAVE NO IMPACT ON OCCUPANCY RATE

**AS** local hotels do not host many guests from Hong Kong, the announcements made by the government will not have an impact to the city's hotel occupancy rate, according to the president of Macau Hotel Association, Rutger Verschuren. Currently, hotels in the city are mainly dependent on mainland tourists, who comprise up to 90% of occupants, while the rest consist

of local staycations. "For the Hong Kong market, it's basically [been] nothing for the last two years," said the president, citing the fact that arrivals from the region require quarantine, therefore, returnees are sent straight to medical observation hotels. "I think the quarantine hotels will definitely feel that and have side effects [business-wise]," he told the Times.

# Macau registers 80th Covid-19 infection, adds another asymptomatic case

RENATO MARQUES

**M**ACAU has recorded one further confirmed case of Covid-19, moving the tally to a total of 80 cases, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center has informed.

The 80th case is a local 58-year-old resident who returned to Macau from Hong Kong on Monday.

The man traveled from Hong Kong to Macau via the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge on the evening of February

19 and had tested negative in a nucleic acid test (NAT) sample collected upon arrival.

He was then sent to the Pousada Marina Infante Hotel in Taipa for medical observation in quarantine. A subsequent NAT done on the evening of February 21 (Monday) returned a positive result, leading to the transfer of the resident to the Public Health Clinical Center in Coloane for close supervision and treatment.

According to the

health authorities, the man has started to present symptoms of the disease, such as a light cough and loss of sense of taste.

The same authorities said that he had been inoculated with three doses of the Sinopharm vaccine in June and July last year and January this year. He has been classified as an imported case of the disease.

Concurrently, the authorities also added one more asymptomatic case in a 49-year-old woman from Macau,

who also arrived from Hong Kong on Monday.

Unlike the man, this woman, although not presenting any symptoms of the disease, tested positive on arrival in Macau and was immediately conducted to the Public Health Clinical Center for treatment in isolation.

Since she has no symptoms of the disease, the case has been recorded as just an asymptomatic patient so does not count towards the local record of Covid-19 cases.



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# Kou Hoi In pledges 'no disease control stricter than gov't guidelines' in parliament

ANTHONY LAM

**T**HE parliament will not implement for itself stricter Covid-19 control measures than what is stipulated for the public in the guidelines issued by the government, Kou Hoi In, president of the Legislative Assembly (AL), said yesterday.

His comment was made on the sidelines of the AL's media lunch. Kou was asked about disease control measures within the parliament, as restrictions in Hong Kong intensified.

"Usually we follow government guidelines," he said. "For example, the lunch [yesterday] has complied with guidelines issued by the Health Bureau."

As for entry to the parliament's plenary meetings, guidelines issued by the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau and the SSM will be followed, the AL president said.

"[Today] there will be a new set of guidelines, so we will comply with that," he added.

When he was asked whether the parliament will implement stricter restrictions than are required by the government's guidelines, the parliamentary president was prompt and clear in replying: "We will not go further than the



government guidelines require."

According to previous records, the parliament required all attendees to the inauguration ceremony of this parliamentary term to get jabbed. If those seeking admission were unvaccinated, they were not accepted into the venue.

During the same period, government guidelines have only required general ceremony atten-

dees to possess negative SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid test results to facilitate entries. Having received a Covid-19 vaccination was not mandatory.

In addition, the government has been stressing that vaccination should be conducted in a voluntary and completely informed manner.

Progressing the discussion on

disease control restrictions, the parliamentary president said that, since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, there had been consideration of, and arrangements made for, health measures. "We have even held virtual meetings [to respond to the situation at the time]," he recalled.

Another topic of concern was the Amendment Bill on the Gambling Law. The president of the AL revealed his satisfaction on the progress of the work of the committee responsible.

"The work progress at the [2nd Standing] Committee has been satisfactory so far. They have held meetings on a tight schedule," he said. "As far as I know, committee members have raised their questions, which are to be answered by government officials."

The matter may need more time, he suggested, because committee members may have follow-up questions for the government.

He added that public opinions on the Bill are still welcomed: "The Legislative Assembly's door is still open to the public for comments and suggestions on the Bill."

Committee president Chan Chak Mo has admitted to receiving a request from the government for prompt consideration of the Bill. Kou admitted to the matter similarly: "I hope the Bill will be

able to be discussed at the plenary in June as we have planned."

The AL has disseminated supporting information to lawmakers for their use during the review on the Bill, Kou further disclosed. "Lawmakers will have the chance to discuss with the government [...] the proposed provisions in the Bill," he promised.

On the question as to whether work in other committees will be halted as many lawmakers who are not members of the 2nd Standing Committee sat in on meetings due to the significance of the Bill, Kou believes such delays are unlikely.

"Lawmakers may not find it convenient to sit-in [on] other committee meetings when the committees to which they belong have meetings scheduled," said Kou. "I can see that most lawmakers are concerned with either the Urban Renewal Bill or the Gambling Bill."

During his speech at the main event, Kou thanked the government, the representative offices of the government in Beijing, as well as the press for their support for the parliament in the past year.

He also hopes the press will continue to be concerned with the work of the parliament, besides providing comments and suggestions to the entity.

# Labor sector lawmaker foresees easing of skills mismatch in construction workforce

ANTHONY LAM

**W**ITH more public work projects to commence gradually in the future, the problem of a skills mismatch between jobs and workers should ease, lawmaker Ella Lei suggested yesterday.

When speaking with the Times on the sidelines of the parliament's annual media lunch yesterday, Lei admitted that, in the recent phase, employment had fallen onto the construction industry.

"Workers in the industry became jobless because their original projects had concluded," Lei explained, noting that "The Labour Affairs Bureau and the Macao Federation of Trade Unions have been providing assistance to them."

The lack of employment



was the result of a skills mismatch, she added. For example, public work projects may be in need of workers with skills absent in the unemployed.

"Although a wider range of skills may be needed in some current projects, such as the Island Hospital

Complex, other projects are still in preliminary or initial phases that are not in need of the skills possessed by the unemployed workers," she remarked, highlighting the New Urban Zone A as an example.

"The workers released from concluded projec-

ts are mostly decoration workers, carpenters as well as electricity and water supply workers, which will not fit in [to] public [road] works," Lei further explained.

However, she hinted that, with the continual progress in public construction projects, such workers will be needed again soon.

As for other industries, Lei said that many workers originally in the gambling industry had sought help. Nonetheless, the overall numbers of unemployed seeking help has improved, considering tourist arrivals have been quite satisfactory during the Lunar New Year period. "Industries such as catering saw improvement in their workforce needs," the lawmaker said. "Although retailers of small and medium size have reported

better revenue during the period, they also attributed toughness in operations to high rental levels."

## VACCINATION IN SCHOOLS

At the same event, lawmaker Ma Io Fong, teacher at Premier School Affiliated to Hou Kong Middle School, expressed his appreciation for the government's measures in boosting vaccination take up, when he was asked questions related to the latest campus vaccination boost instruction given by the government.

The government is urging schools to encourage vaccination by citing the law. Meanwhile, it instructs schools to register, on a weekly basis, the names of students who are not vaccinated.

On the matter, the lawmaker said that "parents, as per their various domestic conditions,

[should] comply with the government's plan on vaccination measures and support."

Moreover, the lawmaker said that, despite the new measure boosting campus jobs, the "no-jab-no-school" strategy has not yet been implemented.

"I have not heard about this as comments or instructions so far," Ma said. "We have not yet been notified [that vaccination] has to be pushed forward mandatorily."

When questioned about the fact that some parents are having doubts about the safety of the vaccines, Ma said: "The government has just issued a measure to offer a day of leave to civil servants who accompany their children to get vaccinated. What I think is better is that the government will issue more measures to encourage the public in general to get vaccinated."

# GOV'T REFUSES LEADING ROLE ON URBAN RENEWAL, BUT AGREES TO PROVIDE SUPPORT

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE government has again ruled out the notion of taking a leading role on urban renewal projects. Members of the executive, including the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, yesterday communicated the government's position to the members of the Second Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL).

The Secretary was leading a group of government representatives in a meeting with the lawmakers comprising the committee responsible for discussing the policies and principles of the Urban Renewal bill.

At the meeting, and against the opinion of some lawmakers, who wished for the government to take a more interventionist approach to urban renewal projects, the members of the executive reaffirmed that urban renewal, namely works involving building reconstruction, must be led by the private owners of such buildings with the agreement of those involved, the president of the committee, Chan Chak Mo, told the media in a briefing following the meeting.



MACAU PHOTO AGENCY

Nonetheless, Chan also said that the government accepted some of the suggestions from the lawmakers, namely on the provision of more support to the urban renewal projects to facilitate the process for building owners and accelerate the procedures.

In issue are Articles 3 and 4 of the bill, the first noting that building reconstruction must be led by the owners and the second noting the support and participation of the government from the process through the Macau Urban Renewal company (MUR).

According to Chan, the government is available to provide

additional support from other government departments including the Land, Public Works, and Transport Bureau.

"The government will not negotiate with the unit owners or acquire the buildings or anything of this kind but said that it can facilitate the works and provide information on technicians and technical aspects of the process as well as in the licensing procedures. The government can help but the responsibility for the urban renewal projects will always be [that of] the owners," Chan explained. "There are people that believe that [it] should be the go-

vernment taking the lead but the government reaffirmed their role is [only] to pay support and to help," he added.

## BUILDING RECONSTRUCTION

Another of the items discussed during yesterday's meeting had to do with the clarification as to whether the building reconstruction is related to single buildings or to an area, which can include two or more buildings at the same time.

According to the government, both options are valid and can occur as long as there are no mixed purposes of the plots of land

involved.

"This can be done but must obey the urban planning laws and regulations because different land plots have been assigned with different purposes. [Such a matter] also depends on the Urban Master Plan and what it settled for that particular area. But the government did not discard both possibilities, one building or an area," Chan said.

Questioned by the media as to whether, aside from the buildings of Iao Hon previously mentioned as being preferential targets for the start of urban renewal, there were any other buildings or areas of focus, Chan said, "We don't know yet. Only after the [Urban] Master Plan is in force we can see clearly. This will depend on the change of purpose of the land plots and other matters that will be established by the Master Plan. Only after the plan is fully implemented we will be able to have a clear picture."

Now the two juridical advisories from the AL and government will discuss technical matters of the bill together before a further meeting of the committee to address the articles one by one in further detail.

## CRIME

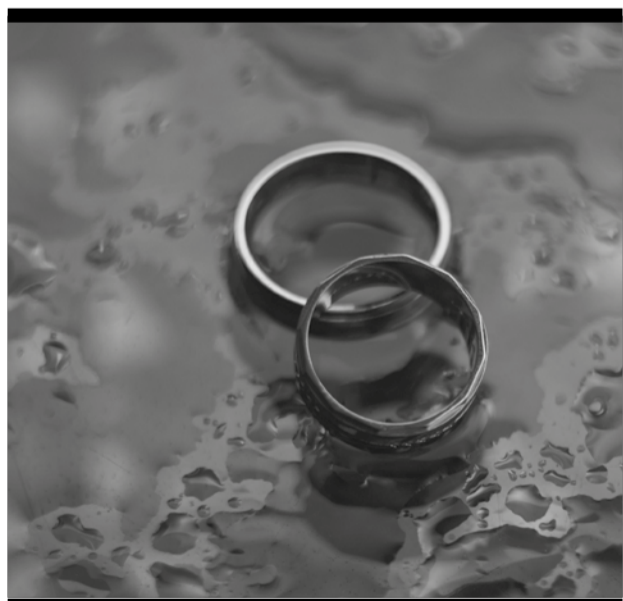
### FAKE MARRIAGE SUSPECT CLAIMS SHE WAS LURED INTO SCHEME BY DEBT

RENATO MARQUES

**A** local 45-year-old woman is being accused, along with two others, of participating in a scheme aiming to grant Macau residency to a mainland man and his daughter, a Public Security Police Force (PSP) spokesperson said during a recent joint press conference of the police forces.

The woman claimed that she was lured into the scheme by a local 40-year-old man who arranged it with the aim of seeing a debt of 80,000 patacas from the woman repaid.

The case arrived at the PSP after suspicions were raised by the Identification Services Bureau (DSI). The bureau found it suspicious that the local woman was requesting residency, claiming a family reunion with a man from the mainland and his daughter (unrelated to the woman) just five months after she had



filed for a divorce.

During the investigation, the woman confessed to police that the marriage with the mainland man was fake, and that she never had met him. The procedures had all been arranged by a third person, to whom the woman owed a large amount of money that she could not repay.

The PSP then located and questioned the suspected organizer of the scheme. He confessed to the crime and said it was he who found the mainland man that would pay him the 80,000 patacas in exchange for the documents.

The deal was never finalized and he did not receive any money, as the

mainland man was only to pay him after he was granted the documents.

Both suspects' cases were transferred to the Public Prosecutions Office on February 18. The local man is being accused under the provisions of Article 78 Law 16/2021 (the new immigration law) which states that anyone who simulates a marriage to obtain a residence permit or special permit to stay in Macau, whether for themselves or someone else, may receive a penalty of two to eight years' imprisonment.

According to the PSP, the local woman is being charged for breaching Article 323 of Macau's Penal Code by making false declarations to the authorities.

The mainland man is still at large and, since he has not entered Macau, the PSP says it has very little information about him or his whereabouts.

## TOURISM

### JANUARY ARRIVALS PLUNGE DUE TO COVID-19 OUTBREAKS IN NEIGHBORING CITIES

LYNZY VALLES

**V**ISITOR arrivals stood at 694,430 in January, representing a decrease of 15.4% in arrivals month-on-month due to the tightening of border-control measures between Zhuhai and Macau.

January saw a series of new outbreaks in the neighbouring region, causing local authorities to impose strict border entry measures to deter the spread of new Covid-19 variants.

The SAR government has shortened the validity of negative nucleic acid test (NAT) results for those entering Macau from Zhuhai in the wake of the new cases, discouraging tourists from traveling to Macau.

The aforementioned arrivals figure, however, is an increase of 24.7% when compared year-on-year, according to data from the Statistics and

Census Service (DSEC).

Same-day visitors (450,428) surged by 56.5% year-on-year, whereas overnight visitors (244,002) dropped by 9.3%.

Meanwhile, the average length of stay of visitors shortened by 0.3 day year-on-year to 1.3 days, while the proportion of same-day visitors (64.9%) grew by 13.2 percentage points.

Regarding the origin point of visitors, the number of visitors from mainland China grew by 29.4% year-on-year to 642,016, with 167,771 of such visitors travelling as part of the Individual Visit Scheme.

There were 44,380 visitors from Hong Kong and 7,896 visitors from Taiwan.

Last month, the city's casino gross gaming revenue (GGR) also recorded a plunge of 20.3% month-to-month, to MOP6.34 billion.

# FMCC charity gala to support alcohol abuse awareness campaign

LYNZY VALLES

**T**HE France Macau Chamber of Commerce (FMCC) 2022 Charity Gala Dinner, to take place on March 25 at MGM Macau, will be themed "Around the World in 80 Days."

FMCC has partnered for the first time with the Association of Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers of Macau (ARTM) to launch the organization's "Alcohol Abuse Awareness Campaign" to raise awareness of the abuse of alcohol in Macau.

At a press conference held yesterday, ARTM statistics were quoted showing that there has been an increase in alcohol consumption among residents when compared to pre-pandemic times.

Therefore, FMCC no-



ted that it is "vital for the society to have a program in place that provides professional counseling when a crisis point is reached with accessible aftercare, to foster holistic means of recovery."

"It's a good timing that we [are giving] extra attention to this service," said FMCC chairman Rutger Verschuren.

At this year's gala, guests will be immersed in one of

French novelist Jules Verne's most famous works in his series of Voyages Extraordinaire, named "Around the World in 80 Days," and embark on a thrilling night filled with spectacular entertainment and cuisines, indulging in the delights and beauty of our extraordinary world.

Speaking to the press, Verschuren said that the chamber is aiming to raise no less than MOP60,000 to

support ARTM's project.

"It's always a crystal ball, but we aim for MOP60,000 or maybe MOP70,000. We always try to have raffle tickets. We also auction items made by people connected with ARTM. Our internal objective is not less than MOP60,000 but hopefully a lot more," he said.

Last year, after several pandemic-related postponements, the gala dinner raised funds for the Macao Fok Sin Association's "Visit the Elderly" project.

The FMCC Charity Gala Dinner 2022, packed with a culinary and entertainment program as has been the case in the past 13 years, is expected to be attended by many community and business leaders in Macau and the Greater Bay Area.

## LAWMAKER TO MEET WITH UM OVER ILLEGAL CURRENCY EXCHANGE SCAM

LYNZY VALLES

**L**AWMAKER José Pereira Coutinho is set to meet with the rector of the University of Macau, Yonghua Song, this week, to follow up on the case of the illegal currency exchange that recently occurred between students and the campus' security guard.

Speaking yesterday on the sidelines of the Legislative Assembly Spring Luncheon, Coutinho expressed concerns over how the security guard made his way into a group chat that otherwise only included students, as well as questioning the accountability of the university and the security guard's company.

Recently, at least 24 Macau students were defrauded out of a total of RMB1.04 million – as part of a practice that was ordinarily only used to target gamblers who needed to have their currency exchanged.

According to media reports, the scammed victims were seeking to exchange from

RMB10,000 up to RMB200,000.

The man lured students by offering a favorable exchange rate and stating that the deal would be made through online banking.

Coutinho hopes that such cases will not occur again, particularly not in circumstances where security guards are supposed to be protecting students.

"We hope there is more accountability and responsibility on both sides: between the university and the security company that was employed by the UM, so that students will not be betrayed by the company that has the responsibility to protect them," he told the Times.

"We're looking at [...] how the board pays attention to dealing with these [scammed] students," the lawmaker added.

The 24 students reported the case to police authorities late last month, while the security guard is suspected of having fled to the mainland.

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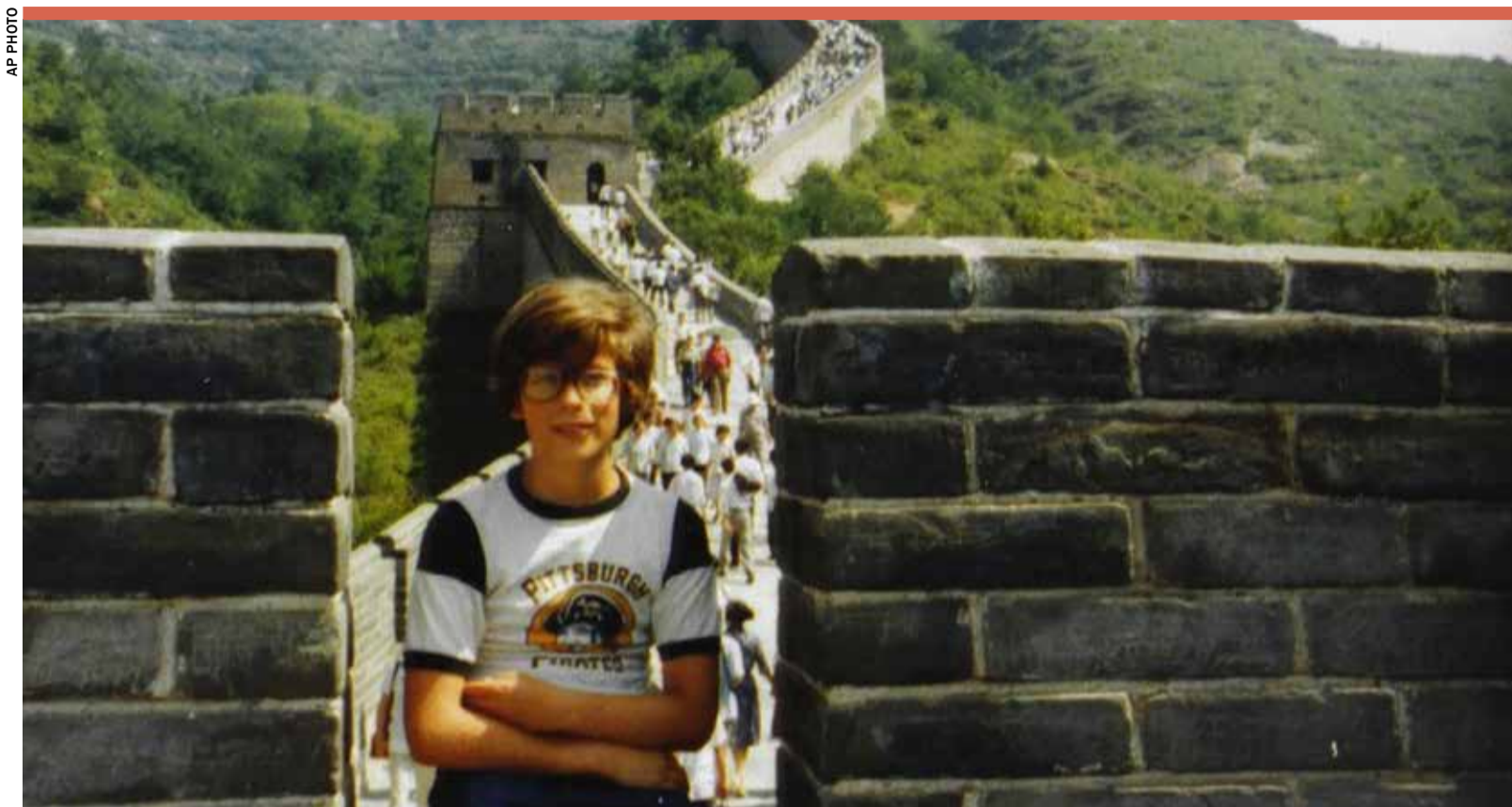
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AD



This photo provided by Ted Anthony shows him at the age of 11 sitting on a section of the Great Wall outside Beijing in fall 1979

IN FIRST PERSON

# ONE AMERICAN LIFE, SET ON NEW COURSE BY NIXON'S CHINA VISIT

TED ANTHONY, BEIJING

**E**ACH afternoon, just after the midday rest break, we'd gather in the music room of Fangcaodi Elementary School. The teacher would hand out a song sheet, mimeographed on pulp paper. We'd stand, ramrod straight, and sing Chinese songs with stirring tunes and — no other way to put it — lyrics of Communist propaganda.

"We are all crack shots. Every bullet annihilates one enemy."

"We are thankful to dear Chairman Mao for building our beautiful school."

"Worker, farmer, soldier — unite and rise up!"

It was the fall of 1979, and I was 11. Three months earlier, I had been sitting in Three Rivers Stadium in Pittsburgh, watching the Pirates start a run that would end in a World Series win I would miss. I was a suburban kid who just wanted to hang out with my friends.

Suddenly I found myself in the belly of what was still, back home, being called "Red China." Though I didn't realize the momentousness of it at first, we were one of the earliest American families to move to China in the months after it and the United States normalized relations.

For this, I had Richard Nixon to thank.

**THE WEEK THAT 'CHANGED THE WORLD'**

Nixon visited Mao Zedong in Beijing 50 years ago this week, when they both led their respec-

tive nations. Nixon called it "the week that changed the world." Seven years later, on Jan. 1, 1979, that meeting echoed into irrevocable history when their successors, President Jimmy Carter and then-Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping, officially established diplomatic relations.

Deng was not China's "paramount leader" yet. But his new project — launching something called "reform and opening-up" that would help infuse capitalism into the communist system — was part of why I ended up in China at age 11.

When China opened to Americans, young people hurried there to teach English. But other than being native speakers, few had language-teaching qualifications. So to teach its teachers to teach English after years of isolation, the Chinese Education Ministry recruited language teachers like my parents, linguists at the University of Pittsburgh.

And so it was that in mid-July 1979 we joined the earliest wave of American families to move to China. My parents were dubbed "foreign experts" and were named to one-year posts at the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute No. 1.

We were installed in the Friendship Hotel, a sprawling compound in then-bucolic northwest Beijing that had been built in the 1950s to house Soviet advisers. It was a miniature city, complete with barbers, a butcher, a movie theater and a huge swimming pool with a 10-meter diving platform. We had the run of most of the place.

One day, in the compound's

"international club," where my parents drank Wuxing Beer with their friends, a rumor spread. Chinese television was going to broadcast its first American show, and the club was the only public place in the compound with a TV set.

The next week we all gathered around a tiny screen. The credits rolled. It was "The Man From Atlantis," a forgettable sci-fi show starring Patrick Duffy, later of "Dallas." It's hard to convey today, in our on-demand world, how thrilled we handful of American kids were at the rare connection to home.

Most Chinese people we encountered — from my teachers at Fangcaodi to my parents' colleagues to random workers I befriended after learning to speak their language — were fascinated by America and knew little of its citizens. They loved hearing about baseball, about McDonald's (which would arrive 12 years later) and about something that astonished everyone in this culture of bicycles: Most Americans had their own cars.

Not everyone was captivated by the United States, though — or, at least, by its leadership. After all, China had just lived through the traumatic Cultural Revolution and had been conditioned to view Americans as bourgeois capitalist "running dogs."

Across Beijing then were red billboards documenting various iterations of "Mao Zhuxi sixiang" — "Chairman Mao thought." We were with a Chinese colleague of my parents and passed such a sign

being erected. It was bright red and still blank.

The colleague pointed to it, looked at my parents and quipped: "Jimmy Carter thought."

**ATRIP TO OUTWEST**

For me today, China in 1979 seems like a distant movie montage that plays in my head.

I picture old men on street corners selling roasted sunflower seeds out of burlap sacks — snacks that tasted vaguely like the burning coal whose scent filled the winter air. I picture young women selling penny popsicles from icebox pushcarts. I picture my school, where kids from divergent cultures — Burma, Bangladesh, Uganda, Rhodesia, even North Korea — were being taught music and math and art in Chinese and could interact and play only if we learned the language. We did, and fast.

I picture our epic, tightly supervised railroad trip across China in February 1980 — all the way from Beijing to Sichuan, out west, before we boarded a boat back east down the Yangtze River. We encountered town after town of people who'd never seen Westerners before — much less Westerners who spoke Beijing-accented Chinese.

They'd gather around us in droves, watching and smiling, always willing to engage and — when they learned we shared a language — tell us about themselves. They'd pepper me with questions, usually about the little instamatic camera I was carrying. If I got a Chinese tone wrong, they'd

instantly correct me; I may have been a foreigner, but I was still a child, after all. I learned as much from those conversations as I did from my classes back in Beijing.

Those images have been overwritten in my mind by images of a new China — a modern China, a fast-moving China, an intricate global presence that touches most every corner of human existence.

So many years later, this is what I want to tell you about living in China at that more-pivotal-than-we-realized moment in history: For me, it shaped what being an American meant.

Before humans could access the world on the phones in our pockets, it was rare to see your country both from the inside looking out and from the outside looking in — particularly from the vantage point of a culture so eager to engage. That perspective, given to me as a child by so many Chinese people both remembered and forgotten, is something I carry with me.

My travels through China that year, and the people I met, also gave me insight into how to listen. The men and women who wanted to know about my American life also told me about their Chinese lives. And though I knew I was passing through and living a life of drastically different circumstances, the language I suddenly shared with them made me realize they were not merely people to see, but people to hear — and, by extension, to work to understand. Which is what brought me back to China years later.

On Sunday, 43 years after moving to Beijing as a child and two decades after living here as a journalist, I covered the closing ceremony of the Winter Olympics. For two weeks, I'd been moving around the COVID "bubble" with the places I loved just out of reach. I had dinner a block from my old school but could not take my colleagues to see it. I smelled Beijing's winter air and caught no whiff of coal. I was sad, but I was OK with it, too. That China is gone, and the complex nation that has replaced it is just as exciting, if not more so.

I still have the pulp pages of those long-ago songs that tried to indoctrinate me. They remind me of something my mother told me long ago: As important as it is to learn about a culture and respect its customs when you live there, you must leave something valuable behind, too. That way, people contemplating the question "What is an American like?" might use you as the example — for the right reason. China became my proving ground for that.

And all that, oddly, is why I — and, I'd wager, other American kids I knew here so long ago — owe an unlikely debt of gratitude to Richard Nixon, who 50 years ago this week helped open the door. **MDT/AP**

# China urges US to honor the commitments made by President Biden: Wang

**C**HINESE State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi yesterday had a telephone conversation with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Blinken congratulated China on the successful Beijing Winter Olympics and the Chinese athletes on their great achievements.

While extending his congratulations to the American athletes for their fine performances in the Beijing Winter Olympics, Wang said that the Chinese and American athletes have fully demonstrated the Olympic spirit by friendly interaction, mutual encouragement and common improvement.

The Chinese foreign minister said that the most important thing in grasping and advancing China-U.S. relations is to implement the consensus reached by the two heads of state.

He stressed that China is willing to effectively manage differences and stabilize China-U.S. relations in line with the three principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation put forward by President Xi Jinping.

According to Wang, the United States has recently launched the so-called new version of the "Indo-Pacific Strategy," publicly listed China as the top regional challenge, and tried to include the strategy of "using Taiwan to

XINHUA



contain China" into the U.S. regional strategy, which is obviously sending a wrong signal of beleaguering and containing China.

Since there are both competition and cooperation between China and the United States, bilateral relations cannot be defined simply by competition, Wang said, adding that some U.S. officials have trumpeted a long-term fierce competition with China, which is likely to evolve into a full-blown confrontation between China and the United States.

China urges the U.S. side to take concrete actions to honor the commitments made by President Biden, Wang noted, adding that Washington cannot say one thing yet do the opposite, eat their words or show no credibility.

The senior Chinese diplomat also said that the 50th anniversary of the Shanghai Communique will come in a few days, the spirit of which is still of great realistic significance to China-U.S. relations today.

He expressed the hope that the United States will stay true to the original aspiration of breaking ice between China and the United States, return to a rational and pragmatic perception of China and jointly push bilateral relations back onto the right track for healthy and stable development.

For his part, Blinken said that as President Biden has said many times, the United States does not seek a new Cold War or to change China's system, adding it opposes "Taiwan independence" and has

no intention of conflict or confrontation with China.

## UKRAINE SITUATION

During the call, Wang expounded China's stance on the Ukraine crisis.

"China is concerned about the evolving situation in Ukraine, and China's position on the Ukraine issue is consistent," the spokesperson quoted the foreign minister as saying, noting that the legitimate security concerns of any country should be respected, and the purposes and principles of the UN Charter should be upheld.

He said the current situation in the Ukraine crisis is closely related to the delay in the effective implementation of the new Minsk agreement, and China will continue to make contacts with all relevant parties according to the merits of the matter itself.

China once again calls on all parties to exercise restraint, realize the importance of implementing the "indivisibility of security" principle, ease tensions and resolve differences through dialogue and negotiation as the situation in Ukraine is getting worse, the spokesperson said.

In a press briefing later yesterday, the Chinese Foreign Ministry called on all parties on the Ukraine issue to remain calm, ease tensions and resolve differences through dialogue and negotiation. XINHUA

# UN expert criticizes China, Russia for arms sales to Myanmar

**A**N independent human rights expert working with the United Nations is criticizing China and Russia for allegedly supplying weapons used by Myanmar's military against civilians since it seized power last year.

Tom Andrews, a special rapporteur working with the U.N. human rights office, urged countries to halt such sales. He also called on the U.N. Security Council, where China and Russia are permanent members, to hold an emergency meeting to discuss a possible ban on sales of arms used by Myanmar's military against civilians.

"The people of Myanmar are imploring the U.N. to act," Andrews said in a statement yesterday. "They deserve an up-or-down vote on a Security Council

resolution that will stop the sale of weapons being used to kill them."

The findings come in a new report from Andrews on the types and amounts of weapons used by the military as early as 2018, when it led a bloody crackdown on the Muslim Rohingya minority that caused hundreds of thousands to flee to neighboring Bangladesh.

Andrews' research described several categories of weapons transfers, with the ones he identified "most problematically" coming from China, Russia and Serbia, because they have been sent since 2018 and continued after the military's takeover last year.

He also cited India for having transferred weapons before the coup, and once afterward, and said three other countries — Be-

larus, Pakistan and Ukraine -- had sent arms before the military takeover but not afterward. He said Israel and South Korea have sent naval vessels to Myanmar since 2018 that could be used against civilians, but have since committed to no longer sending weapons.

Andrews, a former U.S. congressman, said a resolution passed by the U.N. General Assembly in June has failed to have "any discernable impact" on the ability of Myanmar's military to attack civilians, who have demonstrated in large numbers against the government despite its deadly suppression of protests.

Special rapporteurs work with the U.N. human rights office in Geneva based on mandates handed out by the U.N.-backed

AP PHOTO



U.N. special rapporteur on Myanmar, Tom Andrews, addresses a press conference on the human rights situation in Myanmar in Dhaka

Human Rights Council, a 47-member body that currently counts both China and Russia as members.

Widespread nonviolent protests in Myanmar

followed the military takeover in February last year that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. An armed resistance grew after peaceful protests

were put down.

More than 1,500 civilians have been killed by security forces, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners. MDT/AP

ANALYSIS | UKRAINE CRISIS

# Putin recognizes breakaway regions, Biden orders limited sanctions – Five essential reads

NAOMI SCHALIT

**R**USSIAN President Vladimir Putin, in a provocative address that could be construed as a pretext to war, claimed on Feb. 21, 2022, that all of Ukraine belongs to Russia and formally recognized the independence of two breakaway regions in Ukraine that are controlled by Moscow-backed separatists. His government then ordered troops to those regions.

The U.S. and European countries were quick to respond, with the Biden Administration announcing that it “will prohibit new investment, trade, and financing by U.S. persons to, from, or in” the two regions, known since 2014 as the Donetsk People’s Republic and Luhansk People’s Republic. The European Union’s executive branch leader, Ursula von der Leyen, condemned Putin’s action as a “blatant violation of international law.” And NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said, “I condemn Russia’s decision to extend recognition to the self-proclaimed ‘Donetsk People’s Republic’ and ‘Luhansk People’s Republic.’”

To help readers understand the background of these developments, here are five stories The Conversation has published about the centuries-long bad blood between Ukraine and Russia, manifested in everything from religion to political ideology.

## 1. WHY PUTIN STRUGGLES TO ACCEPT UKRAINIAN SOVEREIGNTY

Putin’s announcement that Russia would recognize the independence of the two Ukrainian territories is a reflection of his view that Ukraine is part of Russia’s once-great empire, which at one time ranged from current-day Poland to the Russian Far East.

The Russian president is not alone in that view. Two scholars, Jacob Lassin of Arizona State University and Emily Channell-Justice of Harvard University, write that “for centuries, within the Russian Empire, Ukraine was known as ‘Malorossiya’



Russian President Vladimir Putin signs a document recognizing the independence of separatist regions in eastern Ukraine

or ‘Little Russia.’ The use of this term strengthened the idea that Ukraine was a junior member of the empire.”

Czarist policies from the 18th century forward, write Lassin and Channell-Justice, “suppressed the use of the Ukrainian language and culture. The intention of these policies was to establish a dominant Russia and later strip Ukraine of an identity as an independent, sovereign nation.”

## 2. THE SOVIET ERA ADDED TO RESENTMENT TOWARD RUSSIA

Lassin and Channell-Justice also write about how the shared history of Ukraine and Russia has bred ill will among Ukrainians towards Russia.

Among the many historical grievances: The Soviet Union’s collectivist plans helped wreck the once-famed Ukrainian agricultural sector, leading to a widespread famine in 1932 and 1933, known as the Holodomor.

“Research estimates that some 3 million to 4 million Ukrainians died of the famine, around 13% of the population, though the true figure is impossible to establish because of Soviet efforts to hide the famine and its toll,” write Lassin and Channell-Justice. Soviet leader Josef Stalin prevented Ukrainian farmers

from traveling in search of food, and severely punished anyone who took produce from collective farms, which made the famine much worse for Ukrainians. “As such, some scholars call the famine a genocide,” they write.

## 3. PUTIN’S STRATEGIC PIPELINES

After Putin’s announcement, the Biden Administration said it would impose economic sanctions on those doing business in the eastern Ukraine provinces declared independent by Russia. Biden has also declared that “severe economic consequences” would follow a Russian invasion of Ukraine.

But it may be hard to get allied countries in Europe to go along with such sanctions, writes Ryan Haddad of the University of Maryland. The reason: the dependence of many European countries on Russian energy.

Russia has a long history of using energy to divide the U.S. and Europe, and Haddad writes that “Russian [natural] gas exports to Europe reached a record level in 2021. ... Europe got a glimpse of the potential consequences of this dependence in December 2021, when Russia reduced its gas exports to Europe as the crisis involving Ukraine was heating up.”

## 4. RUSSIA HAS BEEN AT WAR WITH UKRAINE FOR YEARS – IN CYBERSPACE

As the world awaits the possible start of war between Russia and Ukraine, scholar Maggie Smith at the United States Military Academy at West Point says that Russia has been attacking Ukrainian government operations and infrastructure for years via cyberspace.

“Russia has interfered in Ukrainian elections, targeted its power grid, defaced its government websites and spread disinformation,” writes Smith. “Strategically, Russian cyber operations are designed to undermine the Ukrainian government and private sector organizations. Tactically, the operations aim to influence, scare and subdue the population.”

All of those actions, writes Smith, “destabilize Ukraine’s political environment.”

## 5. THE CONFLICT IS ALSO RELIGIOUS

To understand the present, it helps to understand the past. The tensions between Russia and Ukraine are not just political in nature. They’re also religious, writes Arizona State University scholar J. Eugene Clay.

“Two different Orthodox churches claim to be the one true Ukrainian Orthodox Church for the Ukrainian people,” writes Clay. “The two churches offer strikingly different visions of the relationship between the Ukrainian and the Russian peoples.”

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate stresses “the powerful bonds that link the peoples of Ukraine and Russia.” The Orthodox Church of Ukraine, on the other hand, was formally recognized in January 2019 and is “the culmination of decades of efforts by Ukrainian believers who wanted their own national church, free from any foreign religious authority.”

The two churches, writes Clay, reflect a fundamental question: Are Ukrainians and Russians one people or two separate nations? **MDT/THE CONVERSATION**

## this day in history

### 1981 REBEL ARMY SEIZES CONTROL IN SPAIN

Spain is in a state of political confusion after an attempted right-wing coup.

This evening about 200 soldiers and members of the paramilitary Civil Guard stormed the lower house of the Spanish Parliament, the Cortes, firing automatic weapons and shouting orders.

They took hostage about 350 MPs debating a new government.

The group – led by Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Tejero Molina, an officer of the Civil Guard – told all those present to lie down.

Lt Col Tejero then called on the King to make an announcement.

All streets around the building have been sealed off.

The coup plot originated in Valencia, in eastern Spain, under the command of Lieutenant General Jaime Milan del Bosch.

A supporter of the late dictator General Franco, the former commander of the elite Brunete Armoured Division near Madrid was recently transferred because of his opposition to the new political order and was suspected of plotting against it.

The general has declared a state of emergency and ordered tanks onto the streets of Valencia.

In Madrid the rebel army took over the radio and TV stations for 90 minutes. They dispersed when riot police arrived on the scene.

The King meanwhile has called on the civil service to take on the role of parliament based at Zarzuela Palace.

The joint chiefs-of-staff issued a communiqué saying all measures had been taken to put down the rebellion and restore order.

Despite these reassurances Spaniards are now wondering how long their five-year democracy can last.

Although Spain’s transition from dictatorship to democracy has been fairly smooth – until now – there have been rumblings of discontent among the right.

A few weeks ago Spain’s first democratically elected prime minister Adolfo Suarez resigned.

It is believed he was under pressure by the right wing of his Democratic Centre Union party and the armed forces about concessions made to separatists in Catalonia and the Basque regions.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Early the following day, King Juan Carlos appeared on national TV to tell the people he had ordered the armed forces to take all necessary measures to put down the coup.

The rebel forces and their leaders surrendered and released their captives 22 hours after the siege of the Cortes had started.

The revolt was further damaged by the coup generals’ failure to drum up support from other army units around the country.

One more plot was foiled when a group of colonels was discovered planning to seize power on the eve of the October 1982 general election.

The Spanish government was involved in a long-running campaign against the violence of the Basque separatist group Eta.

The group declared a permanent ceasefire on 22 March 2006.

But in December 2006 a bomb went off at Madrid’s airport leaving two people missing, presumed dead. Eta was blamed for the attack.

In January 2007, the Spanish Government declared the peace process “broken, liquidated, finished”.





MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Get motivated and follow up on some self-improvement resolutions. Not everything you hear will be legitimate. Be sure that you have all the facts before you take action.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20  
You can accomplish a lot if you put some effort into household duties or redecorating plans. Don't overload your plate. There's a good chance that they won't come back.

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21  
You should avoid getting involved in the personal problems of colleagues. You can get your point across and make valuable connections. Try to be as mellow as possible.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
You must be sure not to be frivolous, because as the saying goes, easy come, easy go. Get help to finish a project if you need it. Try to keep your cool; you may get a tad frazzled.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
Let your lover know what your personal intentions are. They may cost you dearly. Listen to a good friend who is truly looking out for your best interests.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
You need to make your environment a better place, with more comforts and a better entertainment center. Unexpected changes in friendships could occur.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
You may want to take another look at the investment you are about to make. You'll find it easy to talk about your feeling today. Don't hesitate to find out what your mate's intentions are.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
New friendships will develop through group events. Organize social events or family gatherings. You may want to take extra special care of your luggage if you are traveling today.

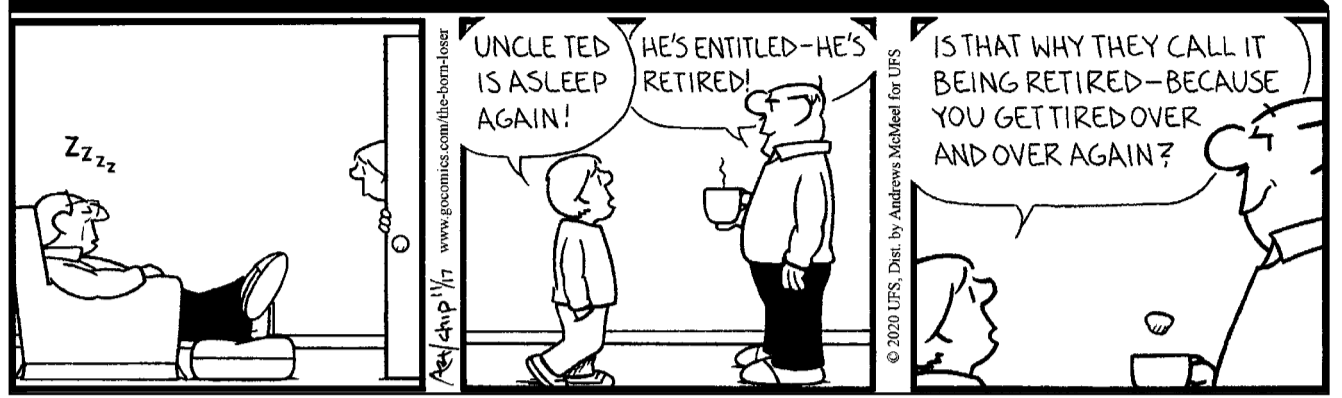
**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
You can meet a new romantic partner or secure the love connection you already have by going out and entertaining yourself. You can have an enjoyable time if you socialize with friends.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
Money problems will get worse if your partner hasn't been playing by the rules. Your outgoing nature will surprise others today. Do not invest in joint ventures.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
Pleasure trips will be a form of healing for your emotional state of mind. Try to understand their point of view. Don't let others bait you into arguments.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
It's time to reevaluate your motives. Your partner could make you angry if they steal your thunder or embarrass you in front of others. Be careful not to overexert yourself.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

**EASY**

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

**EASY+**

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

**MEDIUM**

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

**HARD**

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

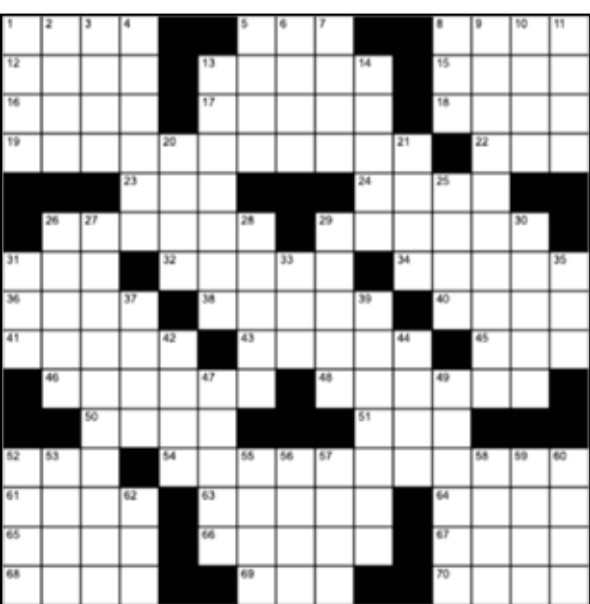
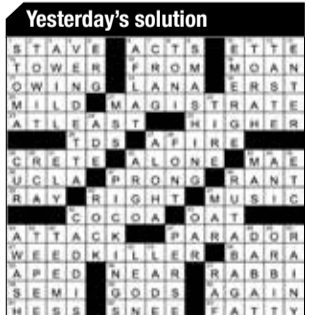
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	-7	5	cloudy
Harbin	-18	-9	cloudy
Tianjin	2	5	overcast
Urumqi	3	5	rain
Xi'an	5	10	overcast
Lhasa	-5	1	fine
Chengdu	4	7	rain
Chongqing	2	4	overcast
Kunming	-2	0	snow
Nanjing	9	12	rain
Shanghai	0	8	cloudy
Wuhan	-1	8	cloudy
Hangzhou	-23	-12	cloudy
Taipei	-3	8	overcast
Guangzhou	4	6	rain
Hong Kong	10	12	rain
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	1	2	snow
Frankfurt	3	7	rain
Paris	6	11	cloudy
London	5	11	cloudy
New York	5	12	clear

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Slippery \_\_\_ eel; 5- Slugger Mel; 8- Madam, I'm \_\_\_; 12- Japanese rice wine; 13- \_\_\_ having fun yet?; 15- Campbell of "Scream"; 16- Peace Nobelist Wiesel; 17- Reason for a raise; 18- Sgts., e.g.; 19- Bougie by-product?; 22- Ques. response; 23- Rocky peak; 24- Breakfast chain, for short; 26- Handsome young man; 29- Like toxic rainfall; 31- Road with a no.; 32- Dazzling display; 34- Organization; 36- Big lugs; 38- Biblical brother; 40- Dress often worn by Hindu women; 41- Run in the wash; 43- Dressed to the \_\_\_; 45- Green or black, e.g.; 46- Current; 48- Resounds; 50- He ran from Iran; 51- Equipment; 52- Quarterback Manning; 54- Variety; 61- Barbecue fare; 63- Sophia of the screen; 64- Big do; 65- Scandinavian capital city; 66- Throw with force; 67- Wish for; 68- Really moved; 69- UK honor; 70- To \_\_\_ (perfectly);

DOWN 1- Just \_\_\_; 2- Room in a casa; 3- Related by blood; 4- Must; 5- Hurler Hershiser; 6- Actress Hatcher; 7- Nest component; 8- Abby's twin; 9- Cut off the head; 10- Mary Kay competitor; 11- Untidy condition; 13- 1981 Neil Diamond hit; 14- Body of values; 20- Single; 21- "Is \_\_\_ it?"; 25- Poems, often used to praise someone or something; 26- Whatsoever; 27- Capable of being annulled; 28- Viewpoint; 29- Compensate; 30- Heals; 31- Hold up; 33- Greek nickname; 35- Actress Zadora; 37- Third son of Adam; 39- Petting; 42- With "eye," unerring aim; 44- Pack and send; 47- Ledge; 49- Capital of Canada; 52- Piccadilly Circus statue; 53- Speech issue; 55- Han \_\_\_ was a "Star Wars" character; 56- Child's bed; 57- Lacoste of tennis; 58- \_\_\_ first you don't...; 59- Caen's river; 60- Brief letter, paper money; 62- Lay down the lawn;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

**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



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MARKETS

# OIL PRICES JUMP, SHARES SINK AS RUSSIAN TROOPS ENTER UKRAINE

ELAINE KURTENBACH,  
BANGKOK

**O**il prices surged nearly 5% and stock prices dropped after Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered forces into separatist regions of eastern Ukraine, bringing a long-feared invasion a step closer.

Russia is a major energy producer and the tensions over Ukraine have brought wide swings in volatile energy prices, on top of the inevitable risks of a broader conflict.

Oil prices already had surged recently to their highest level since 2014. By early yesterday, U.S. benchmark crude oil had advanced 4.9% to \$94.64 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The price of Brent crude, the standard for international oils, jumped 3.9% to \$99.07 per barrel.

U.S. markets were closed Monday for Presidents Day, but markets in Europe and Asia shuddered as Putin moved to secure Russia's hold on Ukraine's rebel regions, adding to fears of a full-

AP PHOTO



scale invasion.

Those actions have undermined hopes for averting a conflict that could cause massive casualties, energy shortages on the continent and economic chaos around the globe.

The U.S. and European Union condemned Russia and prepared to hit President Vladimir Putin's administration and supporters with sanctions. Western powers have feared Russia might use skir-

mishes in Ukraine's eastern regions as a pretext for an attack on the democracy, which has defied Moscow's attempts to pull it back into its orbit.

Russian President Vladimir Putin received no support from members of the U.N. Security Council at an emergency meeting Monday night for his actions to bring separatists in eastern Ukraine under Moscow's control.

Germany's DAX slipped 0.9%

to 14,604.98 and the CAC 40 in Paris lost 0.6% to 6,747.97. Britain's FTSE 100 gave up 0.4% to 7,452.18.

U.S. futures were sharply lower, with the contract for the S&P 500 down 1% and the future for the Dow industrials 0.9% lower.

So far, the biggest losses have been in Russia, where the MOEX index was down 5.4% yesterday after losing nearly 11% on Monday.

The ruble was 2.5% lower.

"The current situation is tightening financial conditions for Russian companies, destabilizing markets and reducing business predictability," Elena Nazarova of ExPro said in a commentary.

In Asian trading, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index dropped 1.7% to 26,449.61 while the Hang Seng in Hong Kong regained some lost ground to close 2.7% lower at 23,520.00. South Korea's Kospi lost 1.4% to 2,706.79 and the Shanghai Composite index fell 1% to 3,457.15. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 lost 1% to 7,161.30.

The turmoil in Ukraine has upped uncertainty at a time when investors already are jittery over

how the world's central banks, especially the U.S. Federal Reserve, will act to counter surging inflation while coronavirus outbreaks fueled by the highly contagious omicron variant cloud the outlook for many countries.

Higher oil prices complicate that situation.

"Indeed, a full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia will leave many central banks with itchy hiking trigger fingers in a quandary," Jeffrey Halley of Oanda said in a report. "The immediate impact would be an exacerbation of the rampant inflationary pressures globally as oil hits \$130.00+ a barrel," he said.

Treasury yields have been falling as investors shift money into the safety of U.S. bonds. The yield on the 10-year Treasury, which affects rates on mortgages and other consumer loans, was at 1.90% by early yesterday, down from 1.93% on Monday.

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar rose to 114.80 Japanese yen from 114.74 yen late Monday. The euro climbed to \$1.1317 from \$1.1312.

U.S. stocks capped a week of volatile trading with a broad sell-off on Friday.

The S&P 500 and Dow Jones Industrial Average both slipped 0.7%. The Nasdaq composite bore the brunt of the selling, skidding 1.2%. Small company stocks also fell, with the Russell 2000 index down 0.9%. **MDT/AP**

AD



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**MOTORSPORT**

# New generation of F1 cars set to hit the track in Barcelona

**F**ORMULA One will get a glimpse of what the season may look like when its new generation of cars hits the track in a test session in Barcelona tomorrow.

It will be the first preseason session following one of the biggest regulation changes in the series, and the first time drivers and teams will get a real feel about what to expect in 2022.

F1 implemented major changes to improve racing and try to make the series more competitive, with new aerodynamic and tire requirements that will make the cars look and feel different from previous years. They will be sporting new rear and front wings, as well as bigger wheels, to allow drivers to race closer together and hopefully increase the number of overtakes.

The older cars used to lose downforce — and their ability to go through turns faster — the closer they got to the cars ahead. The changes were aimed at reducing that loss of downforce and give the trailing drivers more chances



of overtaking.

“Every decision we have made has been towards not dumbing down the sport but making it more achievable for more of the teams and to get a closer competition going on for the future while still leaving it a meritocracy so the

best teams still win,” F1 motorsport boss Ross Brawn said.

The last time F1 underwent drastic rule changes was in 2014, when the turbo-hybrid era started. In 2017, F1 had already introduced design changes that made cars wider and faster to try

to make the series more exciting, though that didn't keep Mercedes and Red Bull from dominating.

“I honestly don't think the regulations will change the general order of things dramatically,” Brawn said. “It will bring it a lot closer and I think we'll see some of what were the mid-field teams challenging. I think we'll have a bigger group of competitive teams.”

F1 is coming off one of its greatest seasons as Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton battled for the title to the end, with Verstappen winning with Red Bull on the last lap of the last race to end Mercedes' seven-year dominance.

“I'm optimistic about the coming season,” Brawn said. “The good teams will always do a good job. They've got the expertise and the experience. Although I'd love to see it, I don't think we're going to see teams further back all of a sudden dominating this year.”

Because of the regulation changes, preseason testing was divided in two parts, with the first

sessions taking place from Wednesday through Friday in Barcelona and three more scheduled for March 10-12 in Bahrain ahead of the season-opener on March 20.

“Now with the new regulations, you have to get used to the car. It's not like you just jump in and it's an upgrade from last year,” Verstappen said. “A lot is unknown about the car [...] I'm very curious to see how the car is behaving on track.”

Cars will also use a higher ratio of sustainable fuel, and new safety features. There will be a lower budget cap for teams, and adjustments have been made to the race weekends to allow drivers and teams to arrive later to tracks.

Both practices on Fridays will take place in the afternoon so media availability can be held in the morning instead of on Thursdays. There will be some changes to the sprint race weekends as well, with more points awarded through to the eighth-place finisher and the top qualifier on Friday being attributed with the pole position for statistical purposes and not only to start up front in the Saturday sprint race.

It will be the longest F1 season yet with 23 races, with the Miami Grand Prix debuting in May on a street course. Races in Japan, Canada, Australia and Singapore have returned after dropping out because of the coronavirus pandemic. **MDT/AP**

**International Women's Day**

## BREAK THE BIAS

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Come and celebrate International Women's Day with a diverse line up of speakers discussing Gender Equality Today, Breaking the Bias. For the second consecutive year, AustCham and BritCham join forces to host this spectacular event to support local woman's charity - The Good Shepherd Sisters.

<b>Date</b>	Tuesday, 8 March
<b>Time</b>	Lunch, 12 noon – 3 pm
<b>Venue</b>	Astor Ballroom, The St. Regis Macao
<b>Price</b>	MOP550 nett per person

<b>Speakers</b>	<b>Host</b>			
 <b>Christiana leong</b> Founding Chairlady, SMART Nursery Macao Founding Chairlady, Zonta Club of Macao	 <b>Eddie McDougall</b> Group CEO The Flying Winemaker	 <b>Luisa Braganca</b> Vice President Assistant General Counsel Sands China Limited	 <b>Renee Chisolm</b> Vice President Operations DFS	 <b>Janet McNab</b> Multi-Property Vice President Sheraton Grand Macao and The St. Regis Macao

All monies raised will be donated to the Good Shepherd Sisters.

**Bookings** [secretary@austcham.mo](mailto:secretary@austcham.mo) or [winnie.wong@britchammao.org](mailto:winnie.wong@britchammao.org)

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**SECURITY CONCERNS OF ALL PARTIES IN UKRAINE CRISIS NEED TO BE ADDRESSED**

With Russian President Vladimir Putin having signed two decrees recognizing “the Lugansk People’s Republic” and “the Donetsk People’s Republic” as independent and sovereign states on Monday, tensions between Russia and the West have further escalated.

The Ukraine crisis is a test of the wisdom of all sides concerned. As State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said in a phone talk with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Tuesday, that means upholding the principles of the UN Charter and finding a solution that addresses the reasonable security concerns of all parties.

One of the main reasons for current frictions is that the Minsk II agreement of 2015 has failed to be implemented. This means that the security concerns of various parties have not been effectively addressed. Particularly those of Russia, which hoped to prevent Ukraine’s greater Western alignment through the Minsk agreements, signed in 2014 and 2015 as part of cease-fire deals in Donbas.

From 1997 to 2020, NATO has expanded eastward five times, acquiring 14 more members. This has moved its security envelope 1,000 kilometers closer to the borders of Russia.

And since the beginning of 2014, NATO has rotated forces through the territories of the new member states in the Baltic and Black Sea regions ostensibly as deterrence against potential Russian interference in them. Moscow on its part views this as a growing threat on its border aimed at containing it politically, militarily and economically.

This, combined with complicated historical animosities, has led to the current crisis, as NATO has an open door policy that it refuses to change, and Ukraine is seeking membership. Ukraine’s capital Kyiv is only 700 kms away from Moscow. It is impossible to imagine the US tolerating any oppositional military alliance that included Cuba as a member or Mexico, yet it seems to expect Russia to accept such a scenario.

The attempt by Ukraine to join NATO rather than making it safer in any way has worsened its security situation by allowing itself to be a key piece on the game board of the US and Russia.

Therefore, not only do the confrontational parties and their proxies need to exercise restraint and show sincerity in seeking to defuse the current tension. Wisdom is also required to draw up an overall security environment for Europe that resolves the grievances and concerns of different parties.

Fundamentally, the crux of the issue is the longstanding animosity between the US and Russia, which should have long ago been consigned to the past. Instead of continuing to lock horns, the two sides need to find a way to finally put aside their historical animosity so they can coexist peacefully.

Queen Elizabeth II canceled scheduled online engagements yesterday because she is still experiencing mild cold-like symptoms after testing positive for COVID-19, Buckingham Palace said.

The 95-year-old monarch “has decided not to undertake her planned virtual engagements today, but will continue with light duties,” a palace spokesman said.

Officials confirmed Sunday that the queen tested positive for COVID-19. The diagnosis prompted concern and get-well wishes

from across Britain’s political spectrum for the queen, the country’s longest-reigning monarch.

The palace said Sunday that Elizabeth, who has been fully vaccinated and had a booster shot, would continue with “light” duties at Windsor Castle over the coming week.

The queen reached the milestone of 70 years on the throne on Feb. 6, the anniversary of the 1952 death of her father, King George VI. She will turn 96 on April 21.



**UKRAINE-RUSSIA: GERMANY SUSPENDS NORD STREAM 2 GAS PIPELINE**

FRANK JORDANS, BERLIN

GERMANY has taken steps to halt the process of certifying the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from Russia, Chancellor Olaf Scholz said yesterday, as the West started taking punitive measures against Moscow over the Ukraine crisis.

The decision, which was criticized by Moscow, is a significant move for the German government.

Scholz said his government made the decision in response to Russian President Vladimir Putin’s recognition of the independence of two breakaway regions in eastern Ukraine that he said marked a “serious breach of international law.”

“Now it’s up to the international community to react to this one-sided, incomprehensible and unjustified action by the Russian president,” he told reporters in Berlin, adding that it was necessary to “send a clear signal to Moscow that such actions won’t remain without consequences.”

Up to now, Berlin had long resisted pulling the plug on the project, despite strong pressure from the United States and some European countries to do so. Washington has for years also argued that building another pipeline bringing natural gas from Russia to Germany — especially one that bypasses

Ukraine — increases Europe’s reliance on Russian energy supplies.

U.S. officials have also warned that Nord Stream 2 poses risks to Ukraine and Poland because it could allow Russia to stop pumping gas through those countries.

Scholz predecessor Angela Merkel had defended the project, as have prominent figures in Scholz’s center-left Social Democratic Party.

“The situation now is fundamentally different,” Scholz said Tuesday, explaining that the government had decided to withdraw a report on the impact that the pipeline — which hasn’t begun operating yet — would have on the security of Germany’s gas supplies.

“That may sound technical, but it’s a necessary administrative step without which the certification of the pipeline cannot happen now,” he said.

Scholz added that Germany’s Economy Ministry would reassess the situation in light of the latest developments.

“That will certainly take time, if I may say so,” he added.

The company that operates Nord Stream 2 declined immediate comment. White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki said on Twitter than the U.S. administration had closely consulted with Germany

overnight and welcomed the announcement.

“We will be following up with our own measures today,” she said on Twitter.

Germany meets about a quarter of its energy needs with natural gas, a share that will increase in the coming years as the country switches off its last three nuclear power plants and phases out the use of coal. About half of the natural gas used in Germany comes from Russia.

The government aims to end the use of all fossil fuels in Germany by 2045.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba praised Germany for suspending certification of the pipeline.

“This is a morally, politically and practically correct step in the current circumstances,” he wrote on Twitter. “True leadership means tough decisions in difficult times. Germany’s move proves just that.”

But Russia’s former president, Dmitry Medvedev, slammed the German government’s decision to halt certification of the pipeline.

“Welcome to the brave new world where Europeans are very soon going to pay 2,000 euros for 1,000 cubic meters of natural gas!” said Medvedev, who is now deputy chair of Russia’s Security Council. **MDT/AP**

**Myanmar** Opponents of military rule gathered yesterday for protests in Myanmar’s cities, defying threats by the authorities to arrest anyone joining demonstrations against the army’s takeover a year ago. The protests marked the anniversary of last year’s “Five-Twos Revolution,” a massive nationwide general strike against army rule just weeks after the military seized power.



**Canadian** lawmakers voted Monday night to extend the emergency powers that police can invoke to quell any potential restart of blockades by those opposed to Covid-19 restrictions. Lawmakers in the House of Commons voted 185 to 151 to affirm the powers. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said that the powers were still needed despite police ending the occupation of the nation’s capital by truckers.



**Colombia** became the latest country in Latin America to expand access to abortion as the nation’s Constitutional Court voted to legalize the procedure until the 24th week of pregnancy. The decision by the tribunal of nine judges fell short of the expectations of pro-choice groups that had been pushing for abortion to be completely decriminalized in Colombia.



**Mexico** This season’s bullfights in Mexico City may be the last, as legislators in the city assembly seek to revive a bill banning the activity. This year’s season closed Sunday at the city’s Plaza Mexico arena, and it was marked by protesters. Last year, the assembly’s Animal Welfare Commission gave preliminary approval to a law banning public events “at which animals are subject to mistreatment and cruelty that result in their death.” But the bill never made it to a vote before the full assembly.