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CTM

**HEALTH AUTHORITIES DECIDED TO EASE RESTRICTIONS ON ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATIONAL VENUES MOVING CAPACITY CAP TO 75%**

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**GOV'T UNAWARE OF QUARANTINE HOTEL PROMOTION, LATER DELETED**

P4

**SHANGHAI OUTBREAK SHOWS SIGNS OF WANING AS CASES FALL**

P7



**Israel** lashed out at Russia over "unforgivable" comments by its foreign minister Sergey Lavrov (pictured) about Nazism and antisemitism — including claims that Adolf Hitler was Jewish. Israel, which summoned the Russian ambassador in response, said the remarks blamed Jews for their own murder in the Holocaust. It was a steep decline in the ties between the two countries at a time when Israel has sought to stake out a neutral position.



**Philippines** One supporter wrote a stirring campaign song that has been played nearly 4 million times on Spotify. Other volunteers are barnstorming villages, going door-to-door to endorse Vice President Leni Robredo (pictured) in next week's presidential election. The stakes are high: If Ferdinand Marcos Jr., clinches the presidency, as surveys suggest, it will mark a stunning about-face for a nation where millions poured out into the streets in 1986 to force out a dictator.



**Indonesia** Millions of Muslims in Indonesia returned to celebrate Eid al-Fitr in full swing yesterday after two years of subdued festivities due to pandemic restrictions and travel curbs. Eid al-Fitr marks the end of the Islamic holy month Ramadan, when the faithful fast from dawn to dusk. The return of the Eid tradition of homecoming has caused great excitement for people in the world's most populous Muslim-majority country.

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# BIG OR SMALL



**Casinos revenue slumps in April, the lowest in 18-months; arrivals surge on May holiday**

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**LABOR**

**NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED INCREASES TO 13,300**

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**AUTHORITIES HINT AT FULLY VACCINATED NEW SCHOOL YEAR**

P4



**YESTERDAY  
COLDEST MAY DAY  
SINCE 1952**

The Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau reported that the temperature dropped to 14.9 degrees Celsius at 7 a.m. yesterday, the coldest May temperature in 70 years. Sunday's temperature was also low, at 16.6 degrees Celsius. Also, Hong Kong saw its coldest May day in almost a century yesterday at 16.4 degrees Celsius, the lowest since 1917. The weather bureau last week warned that the weekend will see the arrival of a northeastern monsoon in Macau. With its arrival, the weather was expected to become slightly cooler.

**DRONE SHOW  
TONIGHT**

The postponed Light Up Macao Drone Gala 2022 will open today with two drones coming center-stage over Nam Van Lake at 8 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., designed with the theme of "Spring Rejoice." The other shows will be held at 8:30 p.m. and 9:45 p.m. on May 4, and at 8 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. this weekend weekend (May 7 and 8). The event will present eight drone shows with the seasonal themes set for the four evenings — "Spring Rejoice," "Fun-Tastic Summer," "Golden Fall Delights" and "A Merry Winter."

**13-YEAR-OLD  
ARRESTED  
FOR ARSON**

A 13-year-old resident has been caught smoking and burning objects on the 29th floor of a residential building in Areia Preta. The Judiciary Police (PJ) handed him over to the prosecutor on suspicion of arson after fire was reported on the staircase. According to the PJ spokesperson, upon investigation, the primary student admitted to smoking in the staircase and burning objects when bored. Burnt objects were found at the scene and a garbage bin was found with scorch marks.

**NEW LOW**

**GAMING REVENUE SLUMPS IN  
APRIL, LOWEST IN 18 MONTHS**

LYNZY VALLES

**T**HE Macau SAR's gross gaming revenue dropped steeply to MOP2.68 billion in April, the lowest figure recorded since September 2020 as the city continues to endure stricter border restrictions whenever fresh outbreaks arise in neighboring regions.

Data from the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau shows that last month's revenue is 68.1% lower year-on-year and 27.1% lower than in March.

April's revenue only equates to about 11% of pre-pandemic figures for the same month.

The results were slightly lower than the median analyst estimate of a fall of 66.5% year-on-year. In March, the city had already reported a 56% drop in gaming revenue.

Last month, brokerage Sanford C. Bernstein's Vitaly Umansky said that the figure for April could drop if "further tightening occurs," noting that "April's GGR – and potentially May – is likely to continue a recent trend of weakness."

Border restrictions and Covid-19



cases in the mainland are factors contributing to the negative forecast, as Macau had earlier imposed stricter border policy for travelers from Guangdong, requiring nucleic acid tests with a validity of only 24 hours. Later in April, the SAR again relaxed the policy to 72 hours, which boosted daily gaming averages in the last week of the month.

However, while holidays in China such as the Golden Weeks in May and October have traditionally been peak seasons for the city, China's zero-Covid strategy, which requires lockdowns in districts with

high Covid-19 cases such as Shanghai and Beijing, are keeping many visitors at home.

Therefore, recovery still chiefly depends on the development of China's outbreaks and lockdown measures.

The city's accumulated revenue in the first four months of this year reached MOP20.452 billion, down 36.2 percent year-on-year.

Recently, a forecast from Fitch Ratings stated that Macau's economy would only expand by 19% in 2022, based on the assumption that gaming revenue would recover

to about 44% of its pre-pandemic levels, far lower than the initial expectation in relation to overall economic expansion of 36%.

The International Monetary Fund expects that economic growth will only accelerate to 23% in 2023 before gradually converging upon its long-term potential of around 3.5% over the medium term – boosted by the increasing investment linked to the issuing of new gaming concessions and the further integration of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

**Golden Week arrivals 'started very well'**

ANTHONY LAM

**A** tourist arrival count surpassing 40,000 on April 30 "surpasses [...] predictions," local tourism board chief Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes said over the weekend.

In mainland China there is a public holiday period of five days' duration for International Labor Day. The holidays commenced this year on April 30. On the first day, 41,584 tourists entered Macau.

The count is the highest daily number of arrivals so far this year.

Data from the Public Security Police Force shows that as of 9 p.m. last night, there were a total of 23,653 tourist arrivals.

The director of the Macao Government Tourism



Office (MGTO) said that with this tourist arrival count recorded for the opening of the long holiday in the mainland, the holiday has "started very well." The tourism chief hoped that the momentum will be maintained, so as to bring

buzz to Macau to boost economic revival.

Prior to the holiday, the MGTO director released an estimate for the average tourist arrivals during the holiday period of about 30,000 per day. On May 1, she lifted the expectation

to 35,000.

Senna Fernandes revealed that the overall hotel booking rate during the May 1 holidays was about 40%. She highlighted that some hotels in Cotai would see a 60% booking rate.

According to the fore-

cast, the weather will not be sunny and fine during the holiday period. Senna Fernandes hopes that this would not discourage nearby tourists from visiting the city.

Hoping to retain Guangdong Province as Macau's principal source market, Senna Fernandes disclosed that a campaign aiming to promote Macau among the province's residents is ready.

Open-deck vehicles will be used to tour the streets of six cities in the province to familiarize local residents with Macau and to attract them to the city. Tourists from Guangdong account for 60% of the current tourist arrivals.

Meanwhile, the Macao Week marketing roadshow series will be re-launched. Senna Fernandes said that once the Covid-19 situation on the mainland stabilizes, work on the campaign can commence.

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# Lawmakers call for better protection on food deliverers

ANTHONY LAM

**L**AWMAKERS have submitted written inquiries to the government asking for better protection and welfare for food couriers, following a deadly traffic collision in Cotai last Friday.

The incident occurred at a roundabout near The Venetian resort on Friday, taking the life of a motorcyclist who worked as a food courier for mFood, a subsidiary of the cashless payment service platform Macau Pass.

Lawmaker Leong Sun Iok sees the need for the executive branch to review the current scale of the food delivery business and protections for food couriers. He proposes a system that manages full-time, part-time and self-employed couriers in an integrated manner. Centralized safety training and vocational guidelines should also be



compiled.

Leong argued that couriers have a need to keep moving and often get fines for illegal parking.

On this matter, Leong's colleague José Pereira Coutinho restated on his social media page that he had asked the government to provide temporary parking areas for food deliverers in January. He also asked if it was possible to designate motorbike lanes, such as those in use on

the Sai Van Bridge, to ensure safety.

Director Lam Hin San of the Transport Bureau replied to Coutinho, saying designated motorbike lanes were not part of the bureau's plan.

Both mFood and the Labor Affairs Bureau have issued statements expressing their concern at the fatal collision. Assistance has been arranged for the family of the victim.

mFood has also stressed

that it has a series of training programs for its employees, including operational safety, road safety, vehicle conditions and seven-day personal training for new recruits.

At the time of going to press, no updates on investigations have been announced by the Public Security Police Force on the collision. Following the accident, the police are calling upon eye witnesses to the collision to come forward.

## EMPLOYMENT

### NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED INCREASES TO 13,300

**T**HE number of unemployed residents increased by 500 from the previous period to 13,300, according to data provided by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC).

The unemployment rate of local residents (4.5%) for January-March 2022 increased by 0.2 percentage points from the previous period (December 2021-February 2022). Meanwhile, the underemployment rate dropped by 0.1 percentage point to 2.8%.

Total employment was 371,200 and the number of employed residents totalled 278,900, down by 2,400 and 2,100 respectively from the previous period.

Among the unemployed searching for a new job, most of them

were previously engaged in Gaming & Junket Activities and in the Construction sector. Meanwhile, the proportion of new labour market entrants seeking their first job decreased by 1.5 percentage points to 5.9% of the total unemployed.

Number of the underemployed fell by 500 from the previous period to 10,600, with a notable drop in the number of those engaged in Gaming & Junket Activities.

Analysed by industry, employment in Gaming & Junket Activities (72,700) and Restaurants & Similar Activities (20,900) dropped by 3,800 and 2,500 respectively quarter-to-quarter, while that in Real Estate & Business Activities (34,700) increased by 1,800. LV

## COVID-19

# Gov't eases restrictions for entertainment venues, capacity up to 75%

RENATO MARQUES

**L**OCAL health authorities have decided to ease the restrictions for entertainment and recreational venues, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center has informed.

Entertainment venues can now be occupied up to 75% of their total capacity instead of the previous 50%, the coordinator of the local Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Leong Iek Hou, announced during the latest briefing from the center on the pandemic.

Nonetheless, Leong noted the relaxation is not without trade-offs, since the increased capacity is only available to venues that fully comply with the prevention and control guidelines and at which all the staff, performers and those involved are fully vaccinated or possess a valid negative nucleic acid test.



During the announcement, Leong said that the decision to ease the capacity limit for the venues is based on the current vaccination rate in Macau, which, according to official figures of May 1 at 4 p.m., now stands at 87.98%.

Questioned whether members of the public must offer proof of compliance with the vaccination rule to the event organizer while purchasing tickets or upon entry to a given performance or event, the same government official said, "This will depend on the organi-

zers. They will have to issue their own guidelines on how to guarantee that the conditions are strictly followed."

Until these guidelines are amended by event organizers, it is unclear whether citizens must present proof of vaccination while purchasing venue entry tickets or whether they can do so as their own responsibility. In the latter case, individuals would risk being prevented from entering the venue if incomplete or inaccurate information was provided to the organizers at the time of booking.

## Healthcare Subsidy Scheme 2022

Electronic healthcare vouchers, more convenient and time-saving



### Beneficiaries and period of use

- The Macao SAR Government will issue healthcare vouchers of MOP600.00 to holders of valid or renewable Macao SAR Permanent Resident Identity Card as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023.
- Vouchers can be used during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

### Using vouchers

- Beneficiaries only need to present their valid MSAR Permanent Resident Identity Card to an enrolled health professional at the time of consultation, and the corresponding voucher amount will be deducted through the electronic system.

### Transfer of vouchers (choose one of below methods)



Through a self-service kiosk



After registering mobile phone number at a self-service kiosk, transfer vouchers at any time via the Health Bureau website or mobile app



To be processed by the health professional at the time of consultation



Visit the Health Subsidy Scheme Support Centre for staff assistance



Through "Macao One Account"



Enquiry

Website  
[www.vs.gov.mo](http://www.vs.gov.mo)

Hotline  
2822 5050

Facsimile  
2822 3030



澳門特別行政區政府衛生局  
Serviço de Saúde do Governo da Região Administrativa Especial de Macau



# GOV'T UNAWARE OF HOTEL QUARANTINE ADS GIVING 'INCOMPLETE INFORMATION'

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE government was unaware of an advertising campaign recently launched by one of the hotel quarantine venues in Macau that might be misleading residents abroad hoping to return to Macau this month.

When questioned on the topic by the Times, Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) representative for the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center, Liz Lam, said that the government was unaware of the campaign, and would leave further comments for a future occasion.

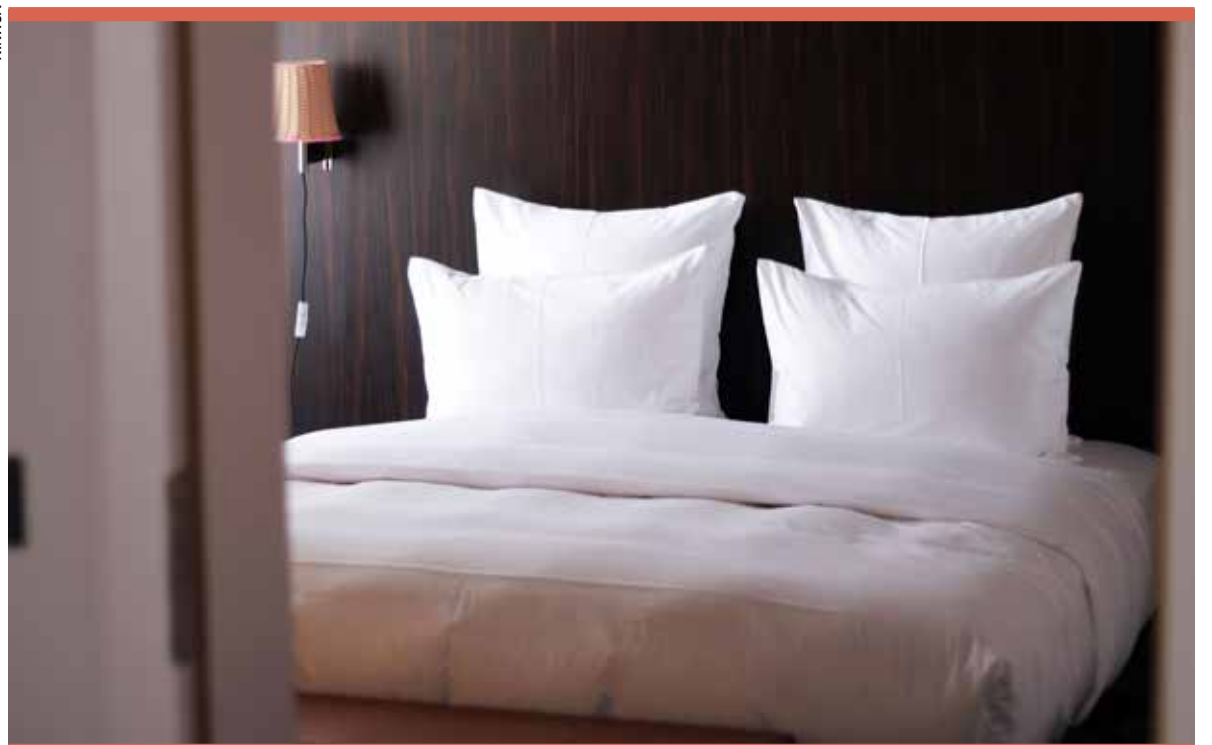
The Times spoke to the MGTO representatives on the sidelines of the press briefing. After learning the facts, the representatives confirmed that no changes had been made to the rule that travelers returning to Macau must undergo their quarantine period of 14 days in the only hotel offering closed-loop quarantine, that is, the Treasure Hotel, located near the Macau International Airport.

The advertisements, which have been circulating on social media through sponsored posts for a couple of days, were aimed at attracting Macau returnees to the hotel in question for their 14-day quarantine period, offering the possibility of winning a "Free Quarantine Staycation" in an online competition, redeemable between April 26 and May 31.

The lucky winner of the competition for the most "likes" on the posts submitted would win a complimentary 14-night stay in the quarantine hotel, including three daily meals valued at MOP16,520 net.

According to MGTO officials at the center's Covid-19 briefing, this promotion would not apply to those arriving from high-risk Covid-19 countries. In effect, this means that only those arriving from Taiwan would be eligible for the prize offered in the online campaign.

Asked if the advertising was somewhat deceptive and could lead residents abroad into error, Lam said, "I guess it is a case of



incomplete information. Maybe we need to communicate with the hotels to provide more accurate information to avoid confusion."

A full review of the terms and conditions by the Times found

no mention of the fact that particular groups would be ineligible for the promotion, less still that it would only be open to arrivals from Taiwan.

After the case was brought to the attention of the tourism au-

thorities, the page on the hotel website presenting the offer and stating the terms and conditions was deleted.

Furthermore, cross-promotions on several social media platforms were also removed.



COVID-19

## Authorities hint at fully vaccinated new school year

RENATO MARQUES

**H**EALTH authorities have said that they are still considering whether to require that only fully vaccinated students and teachers may start the 2022-2023 school year beginning in September.

When questioned on the matter at the latest Novel

Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center press briefing, the coordinator of the local Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Leong Iek Hou, admitted that the option is being evaluated. "Regarding the next school year, we do not have yet a clear plan. We are still evaluating the possibilities," she

said, responding to the question of whether vaccination would be mandatory to start the new school year.

"As for the summer activities to be hosted during the school summer break: yes, to join in these activities they [the students] should be vaccinated. This has been already announced and we will

move ahead accordingly," Leong added.

Although the vaccination rate in Macau currently stands at almost 90% of the population, authorities persist in calling for more vaccination of two main groups, namely, the elderly and young children (3 to 11 years old).

One factor which may be slowing the vaccination rate for younger children is the delayed arrival of a specifically adapted mRNA vaccine from BioNTech.

The acquisition of this vaccine was announced several months ago. However, citing several delays in supply, health authorities say that they have not been able to confirm when these vaccines will arrive in Macau.

"We continue to communicate with the suppliers, asking for a delivery of the vaccines as early as possible, but so far that has not been possible. We want an additional 10,000 doses of this vaccine," Leong added.

Although this specifically formulated vaccine dosage has not yet arrived, authorities are proceeding with the vaccination of children of this age group by using common (adult dosage) vaccines with the dosage manually adjusted by Health Bureau professionals at the time of the inoculation.

## NEW AIPIM BOARD CALLS FOR MORE SUPPORT TO ENGLISH, PORTUGUESE MEDIA

STAFF REPORTER

**T**HE new board directors of the Macau Portuguese and English Press Association (AIPIM) has pledged to work with the SAR government to achieve goals including the increased funding from the Government Information Bureau as well as extending subsidies to the English-language press.

After the election of the members of the Governing Bodies for the 2022-2024 biennium last week, AIPIM's board of directors fully resumes the functions assigned to it by the statutes.

José Miguel Encarnação was voted as president of the board of directors, while Paulo Barbosa was elected vice-president.

The board intends to organize training courses and workshops on the current legislation in the Macau SAR, and on the Programmatic Guidelines and Concrete Initiatives of the Greater Bay Area and Hengqin Intensive Cooperation Zone Projects. The board also intends to resume the organization of workshops to ensure the continuous training of media professionals.

The board stated that it will also alert the authorities to facilitate the hiring of non-resident labor for the sector amid the entry ban of non-residents in Macau – a restriction that has been in place in since march 2020.



# Exhibition presents rich history of Chinese art and culture with charitable cause

**R**ENOWNED Chinese artist, Water Poon, is showcasing his artworks at the Sands Gallery – an art exhibition space that is strategically positioned to attract art lovers and inspiring artists to the Macau SAR.

A versatile artist, Master Poon is offering art lovers an extraordinary aesthetic experience through his varied art forms through the ongoing exhibition: 101 Bowls – An Art Exhibition Featuring Water Poon's Art & Romy Cheung's Fashion.

With the unprecedented demand for shared experiences, Sands China is once again hosting an exposition at the gallery – this time, for a charitable cause.

With a theme of "Full of Content, Full of Love," the exhibition was created as a labour of love by Chinese artist Water Poon and Romy Cheung.

In this new state-of-the-art space, Poon is showcasing over 40 ceramic bowls, some themed on the 24 Chinese solar terms, alongside one-of-a-kind folk art costumes designed by Cheung.

Some of the costumes feature traditional Nantong blue calico from Jiangsu province, incorporating modern design into traditional materials to demonstrate the power of guochao, or the rising China cultural tide.

Poon has long worn many hats: artist, photographer, designer and film director.

The exhibition has toured in Guangzhou, Shanghai and Dongguan, with donations made to respective NGOs for youth education along the way, and Poon could not be more proud – expressing his eagerness to continue his partnership with Sands China.

For the Macau exhibition, 10 of Poon's bowls are being donated for a charity sale, with all proceeds going to Rainbow Road, a project to help rural teenagers, especially those in ethnic regions of China, enhance their artistic abilities and promote the transmission of the



cultural and artistic heritage of ethnic minorities.

"I am very excited to present these works from the '101 Bowls' series at Sands Gallery. Art is a pillar of culture, and it is an honour to be able to present the rich history of Chinese art and culture with this exhibition," said the artist.

The showcased bowls not only serve as a container, but as a medium to spread love and goodwill to the community.

"I'm even happier that my art can turn into goodwill by nurturing the youth in rural areas of China to learn about and appreciate arts," Poon explained.

"My gratitude goes to Sands China for their support and for helping raise visitors' awareness of Chinese

art at its properties, and to all philanthropists who have supported this initiative," he further added.

alms bowl of a Buddhist monk, the bowls and clothing on display showcase the truth, goodness and beauty of nature.

**"By bringing exhibitions like this to Sands Gallery, we hope to contribute to Macau's positioning as a multicultural exchange and cooperation base between Chinese and Western culture."**

DR. WILFRED WONG

The artist explains that the idea of "101" represents reunification after the achievement of consummation, returning to the starting point, and not forgetting the original intention, which is the communication of love and goodwill via the bowls as the medium.

Also inspired by the mantle and

The ongoing exposition is part of Sands China's ongoing commitment to the diversification of art and culture, providing a platform for promoting extensive exchange and cooperation among local and international art talent.

As a large-scale resort operator, Sands China has long been heeding the government's call to step up efforts to diversify Macau's offerings, as well as to bolster the city's economic diversity, especially in these trying times.

For the president of Sands China, Dr. Wilfred Wong, there is indeed no limit to the artistic form that the gallery at Four Seasons is

willing to host.

"By bringing exhibitions like this to Sands Gallery, we hope to contribute to Macau's positioning as a multicultural exchange and cooperation base between Chinese and Western culture," said Dr. Wong.

For Dr. Wong, residents and visitors now have the opportunity to explore an ever-changing variety of art exhibitions at the permanent art space on the 6th floor of The Grand Suites at Four Seasons.

"It is up to the individual curators to see how to make use of the space in the best way possible. [...] We're hoping that each year, we'll have at least five to six major exhibitions that each lasts for a month or a bit over," said the top executive.

Sands China is also grateful to the Macao Liaison Office and the Macau SAR government for their continued guidance and support.

101 Bowls – An Art Exhibition Featuring Water Poon's Art & Romy Cheung's Fashion at Sands Gallery is open to the public 11 a.m.-7 p.m. daily April 28-May 29, 2022.





HAO VS LVS

# LVS WINS COURT CLAIM CASE AGAINST AAEC, COURT SOURCE SAYS

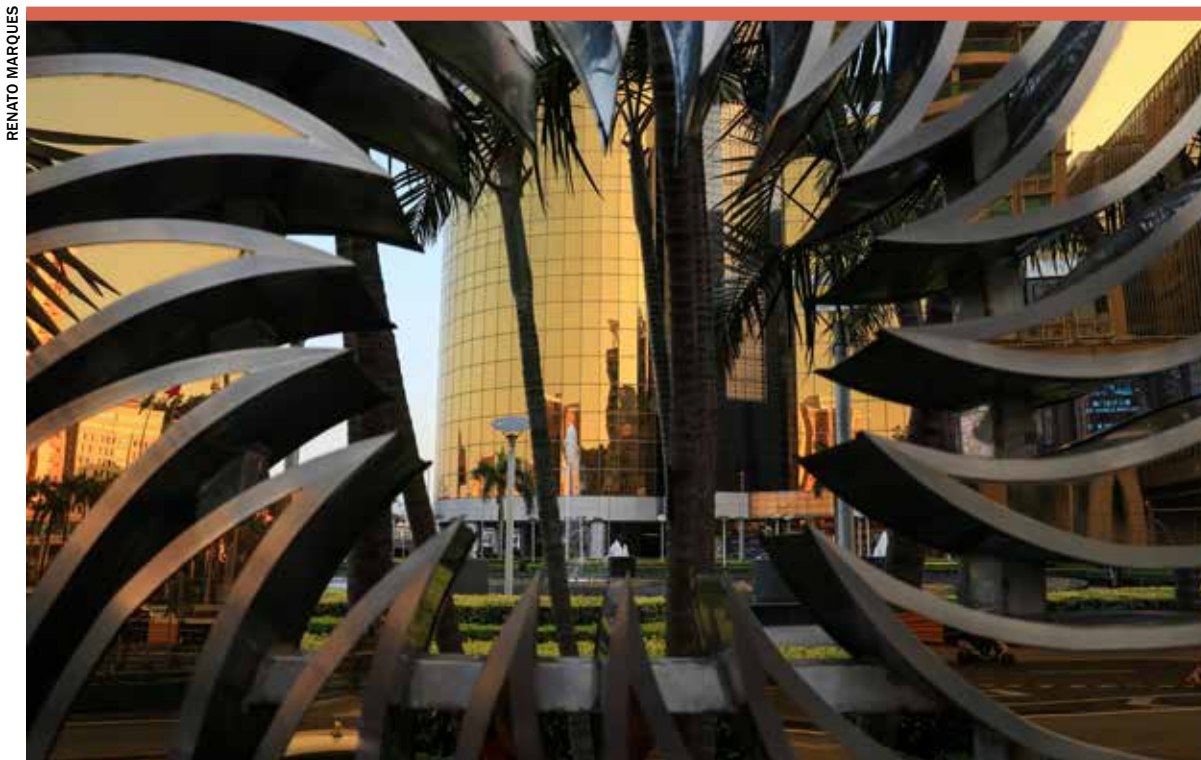
RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE local subsidiaries of the Las Vegas Sands Corporation (LVS) have, at first instance, won the court case against their former business partner Asian American Entertainment Company (AAEC), TDM reported, citing a court source.

Although the final verdict has not yet been made public, the ruling comes as no surprise. It has been known since the last trial hearing at the Court of First Instance (TJB) in late February that the lawyer representing the interests of the company led by the Taiwanese businessman Marshall Hao had acknowledged that the case was lost in the TJB, and that he was already preparing an appeal to the Court of Second Instance (TSI).

At the time, AAEC lawyer Jorge Menezes said that his preparation for the appeal will follow the reading of the facts that the court considers proven or unproven. This comment led to the acknowledgment from the AAEC that they had lost the case in the TJB.

Menezes also said that, in his entire legal career, he had never seen a judgment with so many



flaws and contradictions. At the time he opted not to present any concrete objections to the factual matters established by the court, noting that he would prefer to leave such objections for the appeal he would be filing in the TSI.

Meanwhile, commenting on the matter, a source familiar with the plaintiff told the Times that

the court contradicts written documents in a "distressing manner," adding that it disregards all independent witnesses and concentrates solely on the testimony of David Friedman, an ex-employee of LVS, who provided nearly 200 pages of "biased written testimony."

"We see this as a political deci-

sion, not a judicial decision. The trial was conducted very fairly, but something remarkable happened in January that made it change its course, becoming a political affair, which is quite sad," said the source.

"Further evidence of the political motivation [behind the decision] is the court finding that

Asian American acted in bad faith, fining it in an unprecedented way. This aims at denying Asian American the right to appeal, because the law states that bad faith revokes the court fee exemption. The goal is to have the lawsuit terminated before the gaming tender is over," the source added.

AAEC will lodge its appeal and will bring several matters of concern to the attention of the relevant US authorities.

Previously, Menezes also said that he was willing to take the case through every avenue of appeal available in the attempt to secure justice for his client, who, he said, has been seeking justice in the matter for over 20 years.

In the final court hearing, held in mid-February, the court considered that most of the facts presented by the plaintiff to the court to justify a compensation claim of around MOP60 billion were unproven, anticipating the verdict that is now reported.

The AAEC's claims for compensation from the LVS subsidiaries are made on the grounds that the LVS subsidiaries replaced AAEC with Galaxy Entertainment Group as their business partner at a very late stage of the public tender for the gaming licenses in Macau. Hao considers that LVS' move has caused severe damage to his company and business prospects, claiming that he is entitled to a large share of the profits earned by LVS through its Macau operations for the past two decades.

## Car designer raises awareness on EVs' advantages

ANTHONY LAM

**D**ESPITE many components of electric vehicles (EV) not being biodegradable, a car designer suggests the public see the good side of the story.

The comments were made by car designer Filipe Bragança on the sidelines of a breakfast briefing organized by the France Macau Chamber of Commerce (FMCC).

In an EV, the battery and the computer circuits at least are not biodegradable. Not only are they not biodegradable, they are even toxic to the ecosystem. Moreover, the generation of electricity is not necessarily clean. Many countries are struggling to find space to store nuclear waste from the generation of this type of power.

When answering this, Bragança said: "Practically, in daily life, as a [means of] commuter [transport], EVs are very user-friendly when



moving from point A to B. An EV has 70% less components in comparison to an Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicle."

He sees this as the main advantage in EV to ICE car in terms of environmental friendliness. "If we look in this perspective, EVs are environmentally friendly. Many [parts] in the supply chain can be cut," he said. However, Bragança pointed out that in reality, the situation is different.

"Currently, we are witnessing the fourth generation of EVs, which have their own production lines," he explained. "In the coming generations, the production will be even more environmentally friendly."

He then blamed the size of current EVs as not being appealing enough to attract new users. Many current EV models are at least 5 meters in length, he said, with a relatively heavy body, making

the footprint significant. They also need huge batteries to support their own bodies.

Bragança also pointed out that the manufacturing process of the battery used on EVs requires "an astronomical amount of energy", making the component even less environmentally friendly.

"This is not the optimization of EV technologies," he said.

His optimized vision of

the means of transportation is a simple chassis on top of four wheels, with two or four seats on the chassis. According to the academic, they should have light weights and easy controllability.

"People get into the car, press a button and go," he explained. "When they press the button again, they can go home."

Today's EVs, he said, use a lot of small components. "This is what we aim for," he said. "We can [then] find entrepreneurs to make that, from which they can make money."

Many EVs, furthermore, are not designed to last, as the academic explained. These cars are only designed to operate for about five years, after which the owners are expected to replace them. This is also a burden on the sustainability factor, he said.

A number of existing EVs have an inexpensive price tag during the manufactu-

ring phase, but when they go into the showrooms, their price tags are replaced with a vastly inflated version, according to the academic.

"For daily usage, having an EV is much better for the common driver than having an ICE car," Bragança explained. "[However], in terms of the initial price, EVs are too expensive for car owners."

According to the information on Bragança as distributed by the FMCC, he started his career in automotive design in Switzerland at Franco Sbarro in 1992, where he designed a number of concepts, among which is the 1992 SWATCH car, later SMART Benz.

Appointed Global Design Director at IDIADA China Shanghai in 2016, he was responsible for the full design development of the Lowest world CX record SEAT CRONUZ compact Electric crossover.



COVID-19

# Shanghai outbreak shows signs of waning as cases fall

**T**HE COVID-19 outbreak that has shut down most of Shanghai appears to be waning, with the number of new cases falling below 10,000 a day over the weekend.

Authorities have begun a limited easing of a citywide lockdown that has disrupted the lives of millions of residents and dealt at least a temporary blow to China's economy. Many have been confined to their apartments for three weeks or more. They reported difficulty ordering food deliveries in the early days of the lockdown and higher prices for what they could get.

China's largest city recorded about 7,000 cases a day on Saturday and Sunday, down from a peak of 27,605 nearly three weeks ago on April 13. Shanghai reported 32 deaths, raising the death toll to 454. Most of the victims have been elderly and many were unvaccinated.

Even as many other countries relax pandemic restrictions, the Chinese government has stuck to a "zero-COVID" approach that restricts travel, mass tests entire cities and sets up sprawling temporary facilities to try to isolate every infected person. Lockdowns start with buildings and neighborhoods but become citywide if the virus is spreading widely.

Many outside experts say it's time for China to change course. Lockdowns helped buy critical

AP PHOTO



time at the start of the pandemic but zero-COVID no longer makes sense from a public health perspective and imposes socioeconomic costs, said Richard Reithering, the vice president for global health at RTI International in Washington, D.C.

"Continuing to enforce a zero-COVID-19 policy now, including a lockdown approach and restricting travel, is almost like pretending we have learned nothing over the past two years, now that effective treatment options and various vaccines are available," he said.

But Chinese officials worry that a major outbreak could overwhelm the health care system and lead to more deaths, particularly among the unvaccinated elderly.

Authorities in Beijing have closed schools, carried out mass testing of more than 20 million people and imposed targeted lockdowns of buildings and neighborhoods to try to prevent what is still a small outbreak from reaching Shanghai proportions and necessitating a citywide lockdown.

The Chinese capital reported 50 new cases, bringing the total to 400 in the 11-day-old outbreak. Restaurants and gyms have been ordered shut for the May Day national holiday that runs through Wednesday. Major tourist sites in the city, including the Forbidden City and the Beijing Zoo, will close their indoor exhibition halls starting today.

Shanghai has recorded about 400,000 cases in China's largest

outbreak since the start of the pandemic.

Reithering said a zero-COVID policy is a blanket strategy rather than one driven by epidemiological data. Rather than citywide lockdowns, China should focus on areas where there are clusters of cases, enforce social distancing and other prevention measures and redouble its vaccination efforts, particularly among the elderly, he said.

## MAY HOLIDAY LESS TRAVELED

Many Chinese marked a quiet May Day this year as the government's "zero-COVID" approach restricts travel and enforces lockdowns in multiple cities. Millions remain restricted to their buildings or compounds in Shan-

ghai, China's largest city, under a lockdown that has only slightly eased.

Under an order announced the previous afternoon, all Beijing restaurants were closed to dine-in customers Sunday and can offer only takeout and delivery through the end of the national holiday on Wednesday. Parks and tourist attractions in the Chinese capital are limited to half capacity. The Universal Studios theme park, which opened last year, said it had shut down temporarily.

In Qianmen, the touristy neighborhood around the street that leads to the imposing gates of the former imperial palace, some people bought food from stalls and ate on outdoor benches. Wang Liying said sales at her noodle and stir-fry restaurant have plunged 98% during the holiday compared to last year.

"The remaining 2% is very little for us," she said. "There is not much we can do with the pandemic."

The virus situation varies across the vast nation of 1.4 billion people, but the Transport Ministry said last week that it expected 100 million trips to be taken from Saturday to Wednesday, which would be down 60% from last year. Many of those who are traveling are staying within their province as local governments discourage or restrict cross-border travel to try to keep out new infections.

China is sticking to a strict "zero-COVID" policy even as many other countries are easing restrictions and seeing if they can live with the virus. Much of Shanghai — a finance, manufacturing and shipping hub — remains locked down, disrupting people's lives and dealing a blow to the economy. **MDT/AP**

CHANGSHA

# Two people rescued 50 hours after China building collapse

**T**WO people were rescued Sunday from the rubble of a building in central China more than 50 hours after it collapsed, leaving dozens trapped or missing, state media said.

Separately, police arrested nine people including the building owner on suspicion of causing a major liability accident, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

State broadcaster CCTV showed video of rescuers bringing a woman out on a stretcher about 4:30 p.m. Some could be heard shouting words of encouragement during the operation. She was taken to a hospital and is in stable condition, CCTV said. State media re-

ported another person was brought out alive in the evening but provided no details.

Seven people have been rescued from the building, which collapsed Friday afternoon in the inland city of Changsha, the capital of Hunan province. About 20 others remained trapped, and another 39 had not been accounted for as of late Saturday.

Besides the owner, police said they had arrested three people in charge of design and construction and five others for what they said was a false safety assessment for a guest house on the building's fourth to sixth floors.

In photos the building appeared to have pancaked down to about the second floor, leaving rubble strewn on the sidewalk. It had stood in a row of buildings about six stories tall.

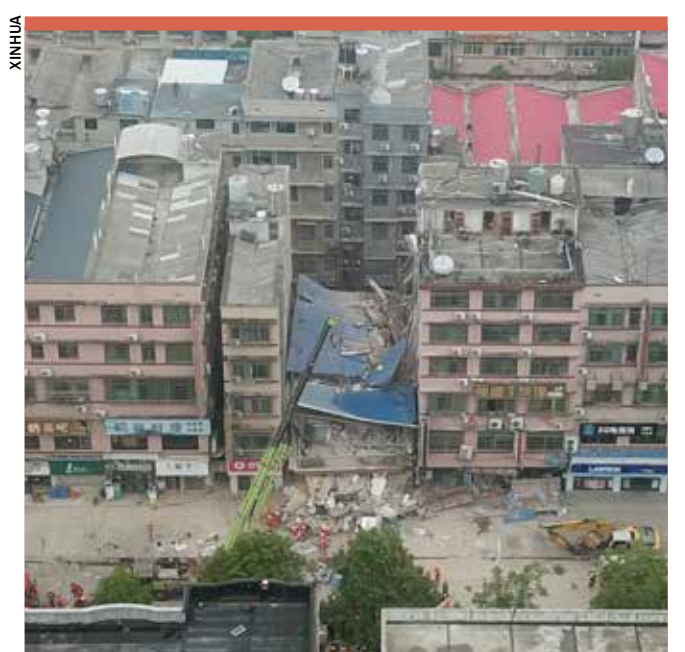
Xinhua said the building had eight floors, including a restaurant on the second floor, a cafe on the third floor and residences on the top two floors. Other media reports said it was a six-story building. Tenants had made structural modifications to the building, but the cause of the collapse remained under investigation, Xinhua said.

Police said the Hunan Xiangda Engineering Testing Co. issued the false sa-

fety report on April 13. The arrested included the legal representative of the company and four technicians suspected of providing the assessment.

Following an increase in the number of collapses of self-built buildings in recent years, Chinese President Xi Jinping said Saturday that it was necessary to check such structures for any hidden dangers and fix them to prevent major accidents, Xinhua said.

Poor adherence to safety standards, including the illegal addition of extra floors and failure to use reinforcing iron bars, is often blamed for such disasters. **MDT/AP**



The site of a collapsed self-constructed residential building in Changsha, central China's Hunan Province



PUTIN'S WAR

# Evacuations under way in Mariupol; Pelosi visits Ukraine

CARA ANNA & YESICA FISCH,  
ZAPORIZHZHIA

**A** long-awaited evacuation of civilians from a besieged steel plant in the Ukrainian city of Mariupol was under way Sunday, as U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi revealed that she visited Ukraine's president to show unflinching American support for the country's defense against Russia's invasion.

Video posted online by Ukrainian forces showed elderly women and mothers with small children bundled in winter clothing being helped as they climbed a steep pile of debris from the sprawling Azovstal steel plant's rubble, and then eventually boarded a bus.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said more than 100 civilians, primarily women and children, were expected to arrive in the Ukrainian-controlled city of Zaporizhzhia yesterday.

"Today, for the first time in all the days of the war, this vitally needed (humanitarian) corridor has started working," he said in a pre-recorded address published on his Telegram messaging app channel.

The Mariupol City Council said on Telegram that the evacuation of civilians from other parts of the city would begin yesterday. People fleeing Russian-occupied areas in the past have described their vehicles being fired on, and Ukrainian officials have repeatedly accused Russian forces of shelling evacuation routes on which the two sides had agreed.

Later Sunday, one of the plant's defenders said Russian forces resumed shelling the plant as soon as the evacuation of a group of civilians was completed.

Denys Shlega, the commander of the 12th Operational Brigade of Ukraine's National Guard, said in a televised interview Sunday night that several hundred civilians remain trapped alongside nearly 500 wounded soldiers and "numerous" dead bodies.

"Several dozen small children are still in the bunkers underneath the plant," Shlega said. "We need one or two more rounds of evacuation."

Sviatoslav Palamar, deputy commander of the Azov Regiment, which is helping defend the steel plant, told The Associated Press in an interview from Mariupol on Sunday that it has been difficult even to reach some of the wounded inside the plant.

"There's rubble. We have no special equipment. It's hard for



AP PHOTO

soldiers to pick up slabs weighing tons only with their arms," he said. "We hear voices of people who are still alive" inside shattered buildings.

As many as 100,000 people may still be in blockaded Mariupol, including up to 1,000 civilians hunkered down with an estimated 2,000 Ukrainian fighters beneath the Soviet-era steel plant — the only part of the city not occupied by the Russians.

Mariupol, a port city on the Sea of Azov, is a key target because of its strategic location near the Crimea Peninsula, which Russia seized from Ukraine in 2014.

U.N. humanitarian spokesman Saviano Abreu said civilians who have been stranded for nearly two months at the plant would receive immediate humanitarian support, including psychological services, once they arrive in Zaporizhzhia, about 140 miles (230 kilometers) northwest of Mariupol.

Mariupol has seen some of the worst suffering. A maternity hospital was hit with a lethal Russian airstrike in the opening weeks of the war, and about 300 people were reported killed in the bombing of a theater where civilians were taking shelter.

A Doctors Without Borders team was at a reception center for displaced people in Zaporizhzhia, in preparation for the U.N. convoy's arrival. Stress, exhaustion and low food supplies have likely weakened civilians trapped underground at the plant.

Ukrainian regiment Deputy Commander Sviatoslav Palamar, meanwhile, called for the evacuation of wounded Ukrainian fighters as well as civilians. "We don't know why they are not taken away, and their evacuation to the territory controlled by Ukraine is not being discussed," he said in a video posted Saturday on the regiment's Telegram channel.

Video from inside the steel plant, shared with The Associated Press by two Ukrainian women who said their husbands

were among the fighters refusing to surrender there, showed men with blood-stained bandages, open wounds or amputated limbs, including some that appeared gangrenous. The AP could not independently verify the location and date of the video, which the women said was taken last week.

Meanwhile, Pelosi and other U.S. lawmakers visited Kyiv on Saturday. She is the most senior American lawmaker to travel to the country since Russia's Feb. 24 invasion. Her visit came just days after Russia launched rockets at the capital during a visit by U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres.

Rep. Jason Crow, a U.S. Army veteran and a member of the House intelligence and armed services committees, said he came to Ukraine with three areas of focus: "Weapons, weapons and weapons."

In his nightly televised address Sunday, Zelensky said more than 350,000 people had been evacuated from combat zones thanks to humanitarian corridors pre-agreed with Moscow since the start of Russia's invasion. "The organization of humanitarian corridors is one of the elements of the negotiation process (with Russia), which is ongoing," he said.

Zelensky also accused Moscow of waging "a war of extermination," saying Russian shelling had hit food, grain and fertilizer warehouses, and residential neighborhoods in the Kharkiv, Donbas and other regions.

"What could be Russia's strategic success in this war? Honestly, I do not know. The ruined lives of people and the burned or stolen property will give nothing to Russia," he said.

In Zaporizhzhia, residents ignored air raid sirens and warnings to shelter at home to visit cemeteries Sunday, when Ukrainians observe the Orthodox Christian day of the dead.

"If our dead could rise and see this, they would say, 'It's not pos-

sible, they're worse than the Germans,'" Hennadiy Bondarenko, 61, said while marking the day with his family at a picnic table among the graves. "All our dead would join the fighting, including the Cossacks."

Russian forces have embarked on a major military operation to seize significant parts of southern and eastern Ukraine following their failure to capture the capital, Kyiv.

Russia's high-stakes offensive has Ukrainian forces fighting village-by-village and more civilians fleeing airstrikes and artillery shelling.

Ukrainian intelligence officials accused Russian forces of seizing medical facilities to treat wounded Russian soldiers in several occupied towns, as well as "destroying medical infrastructure, taking away equipment, and leaving the population without medical care."

Getting a full picture of the unfolding battle in eastern Ukraine is difficult because airstrikes and artillery barrages have made it extremely dangerous for reporters to move around. Also, both Ukraine and Moscow-backed rebels have introduced tight restrictions on reporting from the combat zone.

But Western military analysts have suggested the offensive was going much slower than planned. So far, Russian troops and separatists appeared to have made only minor gains in the month since Moscow said it would focus its military strength in the east.

Hundreds of millions of dollars in military assistance has flowed into Ukraine since the war began, but Russia's vast armories mean Ukraine will continue to require huge amounts of support.

With plenty of firepower still in reserve, Russia's offensive could intensify and overrun the Ukrainians. Overall the Russian army has an estimated 900,000 active-duty personnel, and a much larger air force and navy.

In Russia's Kursk region, which borders Ukraine, an explosive device damaged a railway bridge Sunday, and a criminal investigation has been started, the region's government reported in a post on Telegram.

Recent weeks have seen a number of fires and explosions in Russian regions near the border, including Kursk. An ammunition depot in the Belgorod region burned after explosions were heard, and authorities in the Voronezh region said an air defense system shot down a drone. An oil storage facility in Bryansk was engulfed by fire a week ago. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1990 LATVIA TO DECLARE INDEPENDENCE



Members of the new parliament of the Soviet republic of Latvia have met to discuss independence from Moscow.

Leaders of the Latvian Popular Front are confident they can muster the majority they need to change the constitution.

In March this year, neighbouring Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to pass a unilateral declaration of independence. In retaliation, the Kremlin shut off supplies of crude oil and natural gas.

Latvia is hoping to avoid a similar confrontation with the USSR's President Mikhail Gorbachev by calling for a transition period before full independence takes effect.

This morning, their elected representatives led a procession to a memorial in the capital, Riga, dedicated to those who fought and died for Latvian independence after World War 1.

The Lithuanian president, a guest at today's opening of parliament, had this advice for the Latvians - "Courage!"

One strategy put forward was to adopt parts of the Soviet constitution to avoid being accused of breaking the law.

"We have to avoid any confrontation because it would be useless, unproductive," said Nikolai Neiland, head of the Independent Communist Party.

Russian demonstrators outside the parliament building held up banners reminding politicians inside that almost half of Latvia's population is ethnically Russian and that independence might provoke a backlash.

Also out on the streets of Riga were groups of Soviet paratroopers. They say they are here for a parade but nationalists believe their presence is a crude reminder of Soviet power.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The following day the Latvian parliament declared "de jure" independence of Republic of Latvia. President Gorbachev could not resist pressure from hardliners in Moscow determined to prevent the break-up of the Soviet Union, and he issued a decree annulling the declaration.

Then in January 1991 Soviet special troops stormed and took over Latvia's Interior Ministry building.

The occupation continued until the failed Moscow coup in August that year, when the Latvian parliament voted for full independence and banned the Communist Party. A few weeks later, on 7 September, Russia's President Boris Yeltsin recognized the independence of Latvia and its Baltic neighbours Estonia and Lithuania. All three were admitted into the United Nations the same month.

Moscow hardliners were particularly concerned for the large numbers of ethnic Russians and other migrants who live in the Baltic states.

In fact, tough legislation was soon introduced making it very difficult for Russians to gain Latvian citizenship.

But the law was eventually modified after international criticism.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
 Daydreaming will be your downfall. You are best not to nag or criticize. Try not to spend too much on children or entertainment. Look into joining groups that can give you hands-on advice about business.

**TAURUS**  
 Apr. 20-May. 20  
 Your anger may be impossible to contain if you get into debates with family members. It might be time for you to take a quantum leap from one career to another. Travel may be confusing.

**GEMINI**  
 May. 21-Jun. 21  
 You should feel a little more stable about your position; however, don't be surprised if a job offer comes your way. Your pursuits may end up being fruitless.

**CANCER**  
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
 Plans to make physical improvements may lead to psychological changes, too. Try spending the day catching up on any responsibilities that need to be taken care of.

**LEO**  
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
 Lovers will be less than accommodating, and decisions regarding personal direction a necessity. Think of changes to your home that will please and add to everyone's comfort.

**VIRGO**  
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
 You may be emotional and quick to judge others. You may have the day off but your thoughts will be on your work and your cash situation. Don't be too quick to spend money.

**LIBRA**  
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
 Your family may be feeling neglected and unloved. You should look into making some physical changes, such as new hair color or toning up your body.

**SCORPIO**  
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
 Don't be afraid to make additions to your house. You will attract new love interests. Problems with females you live or work with will try your patience and cause temper flare ups.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
 New romantic partners may attend a function that puts you in the limelight. Good day for romance. Your emotional state could leave you vulnerable and confused.

**CAPRICORN**  
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
 You have to believe in yourself and your talents. You need some help today. Your emotional state could leave you vulnerable and confused.

**AQUARIUS**  
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
 Involvement in groups will be favorable and lead to valuable information. Go out with friends. Don't make promises. New partnerships will develop if you join investment groups.

**PISCES**  
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
 You should channel your efforts into getting rid of bad habits. Your ability to help others will win you points. You can make progress if you deal with the right individuals.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

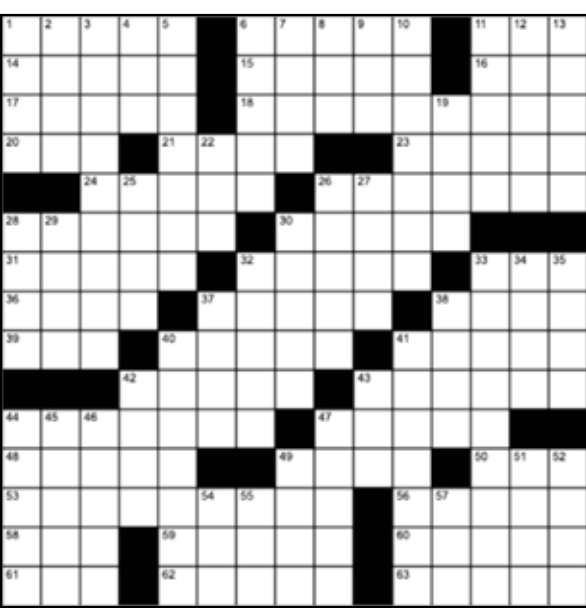
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	10	26	fine
Changchun	1	16	cloudy
Chengdu	11	25	cloudy
Chongqing	12	23	cloudy
Fuzhou	15	21	cloudy
Guangzhou	16	23	showers
Guiyang	8	17	cloudy
Haikou	19	21	rain
Hangzhou	13	24	cloudy
Harbin	-1	16	cloudy
Hefei	11	25	fine
Nanjing	12	25	fine
Shanghai	14	25	cloudy
Taipei	17	19	rain
Wuhan	11	26	fine
Hong Kong	23	26	overcast
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	6	16	cloudy
Frankfurt	8	21	overcast
Paris	9	21	overcast
London	9	16	overcast
New York	11	18	cloudy

**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS** 1- Cover story; 6- Pontificate; 11- Scale notes; 14- Small change; 15- It merged with Exxon; 16- Prior to; 17- Compadre; 18- Skinny; 20- Slip preventer; 21- Expensive seating area; 23- Hackneyed; 24- Maytag brand; 26- Former monetary unit of the Netherlands; 28- Revolve; 30- Trunk; 31- Similar; 32- 200 milligrams; 33- Apex; 36- Blackthorn fruit; 37- The Little Mermaid; 38- Made tracks; 39- Give one star, say; 40- Unfolds; 41- Like some bears and icecaps; 42- Give it \_\_\_!; 43- Free from ostentation; 44- Fortification; 47- Ulan \_\_\_; 48- Red as \_\_\_; 49- Puts into words; 50- Found it!; 53- Adapted for burrowing; 56- Red River city; 58- Musical syllable; 59- Scope; 60- Come about; 61- Ave. crosses; 62- Go-ahead; 63- Twice, a comforting comment;

**DOWN** 1- Economist Smith; 2- Peru's capital; 3- Counterfeit; 4- Panhandle; 5- Set apart; 6- Last Greek letter; 7- Capital of Italy; 8- Attorney's org.; 9- Spasm; 10- Snob; 11- Stinking; 12- Aggregate of qualities that make good character; 13- Passover meal; 19- Woody's son; 22- Half and half?; 25- Bring into existence; 26- Pierces; 27- Russian river; 28- Coarse file, angry tone of voice; 29- Spicy stew; 30- Spoil; 32- Summit; 33- Freedom from bigotry; 34- Nest eggs, briefly; 35- Vivacious; 37- Impersonator; 38- Commotion; 40- Art of public speaking; 41- Aimless bit of gunfire; 42- Primates with short tails or no tail; 43- Spring month; 44- Floating platforms; 45- End early; 46- Flat-topped hills; 47- Bundles; 49- Wise one; 51- It may be happy; 52- Yorkshire river; 54- Actress Charlotte; 55- Officeholders; 57- Rhine wine;



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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SALE RENT



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3

**FOR SALE** HKD 3,780,000  
**Large Studio in Central Taipa**

**FOR SALE** MACAU  
HKD 7,080,000 MONG HA

2

**FOR RENT** HKD 9,500  
**Beautiful flat in Coloane Village**

1

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# SALE

TAIPA | Commercial Building | HKD 80,000,000  
TAIPA | Nova Taipa | 4 | HKD 12,880,000  
TAIPA | Nova Park | 2 | HKD 10,800,000  
TAIPA | Buckingham | 2 | HKD 8,590,000  
MACAU | Bai Yuen G. | 3 | HKD 12,800,000

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# RENT

TAIPA | Soi Cheong | 1 | HKD 6,800  
MACAU | San On | 2 | HKD 10,500  
COLOANE | 1 Oasis | 2 | HKD 11,200  
MACAU | S. Lazaro | 2 | HKD 6,900  
TAIPA | Old Taipa | 1 | HKD 7,900

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FOOTBALL

# Champions League matchups: Liverpool, Man City defend leads

**T**HE Champions League is heading toward a third all-English final in four seasons unless Spanish rivals can overturn first-leg losses.

Here's a look at second-leg matches in the semifinals taking place this week:

Wednesday, 3:00  
Villarreal v Liverpool  
H5, D 4.2, A 1.74

Villarreal surpassed expectations to reach the final four after upsetting former champions Juventus and Bayern Munich, and Liverpool was unable to inflict a knockout blow at Anfield.

Still, Unai Emery, a master of strategy in knockout competitions, faces the enormous challenge of engineering a comeback over a Liverpool side that is seeking a historic quadruple of the Champions League, Premier League, FA Cup and League Cup titles.

Villarreal will rely on an attack that shares with Real Madrid the highest number of goals scored at



home in the Spanish league this season (38). At its Estadio de la Cerámica, Villarreal also beat Bayern Munich 1-0 in the quarterfinals and had to settle for a 1-1 draw with Juventus despite outplaying the Italian side.

Emery is hoping that Gerard Moreno can play after he missed the first match with a leg injury, but

the Spain striker remains doubtful. Emery rested several starters, including forward Arnaut Danjuma, during Saturday's 2-1 loss to Alavés that left Villarreal seventh in the Spanish league. For the team from a small town near Spain's eastern coast, winning the Champions League is the only way back into the competition next season.

Liverpool made five changes from the side that beat Villarreal when it played at Newcastle on Saturday despite being involved in a Premier League title race. The second-place team managed to secure the 1-0 win that kept it a point behind Manchester City, all while star striker Mohamed Salah was only needed on the field for 25 minutes. Fabinho and Thiago Alcantara also only came on in the second half while Ibrahima Konate and Trent Alexander-Arnold didn't come off the bench at all as the depth of the squad was clear.

Liverpool, which beat Tottenham in the 2019 Champions League final, has already won the League Cup this season and plays the FA Cup final against Chelsea in two weeks.

Thursday, 3:00  
Real Madrid v Man City  
H 3.5, D 4, A 2.1

After the hugely entertaining seven-goal opener, it's the eagerly awaited second instal-

ment of the record 13-time European champions against the ruthless attacking machine of Pep Guardiola's City. With City dominating the first leg at home for long stretches, the slender loss ensured the defeat wasn't as painful for Madrid as it could have been, thanks to another couple of goals from Karim Benzema. Even though he only played the last 30 minutes against Espanyol on Saturday, the France forward still had time to score and complete a 4-0 win. It's now 42 goals from 42 appearances this campaign — the form that will put him in contention for the Ballon D'Or.

Carlo Ancelotti could afford to rest Benzema for most of the domestic game given Madrid's league dominance, and a record-extending 35th league title was wrapped up.

While Madrid's players were recovering from Saturday night's celebrations through the streets of the Spanish capital, City's squad was resting up after another win in its defense of the Premier League title. Beating Leeds 4-0 kept City a point ahead of Liverpool and Kevin De Bruyne didn't need to be called on at all.

City lost last season's final to Chelsea and is seeking its first Champions League title. **MDT/AP**

AD

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OPINION

**Multipolar World**

Jorge Costa Oliveira



**THE FINANCING OF THE BRI**

The estimated overall cost of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is, by nature, ill-defined as there are still projects being discussed and several of those agreed upon may not materialize for a variety of reasons. There are no official figures on the total amount of loans and investments in BRI projects, but according to data provider Refinitiv's Infrastructure 360 BRI Database, by the end of 2020, the value of total BRI projects reached nearly \$4.3 trillion. Of those, 2,193 projects - valued at \$2.5 trillion - were BRI projects, while 2,100 other projects with a combined value of \$1.8 trillion were classed as "projects with Chinese involvement."

According to Bruce-Lockart, in 2017 ongoing BRI projects, including significant infrastructure projects in Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa, amounted to about one trillion dollars. The BRI is financed in several ways. The main source of financing for BRI projects are loans from China's state-owned banks, in particular the China Development Bank (CDB) and the Export-Import Bank of China (EIBC). The Chinese government has issued guidelines for the major state-owned commercial banks - the Bank of China, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, and the China Construction Bank - to also support projects embedded in the BRI, and that has taken place.

Another source of financing for projects in the BRI are loans provided by multilateral banking - from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), to the recently established Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank (NDB).

To bolster the funds available for BRI projects, the Chinese government has also created the Silk Road Fund with an initial allocation of \$40 billion.

Depending on the project or set of projects included in a route or corridor, there is also funding from local banks and financial institutions via either debt or equity.

After 2016, the CDB and the EIBC began to cut new loans for projects into the BRI. In part, this is because the huge initial infrastructure spend is now coming to an end with the conclusion of the projects, and financing and construction has either completed or nearing completion. In addition, the pandemic crisis in 2020 led to a global drop of 42% in investments abroad (UNCTAD); in the projects included in the BRI this drop can also be observed - a total of -52% compared to 2019.

But in the case of the CDB this stems from two other factors: (i) on the one hand, a lower willingness to maintain a strong exposure in overseas projects as it faces a dilemma between supporting China's global trade diplomacy and supporting the growth of the Chinese economy with new domestic loans; (ii) on the other hand, the need to improve credit risk analysis and monitoring project execution, due to the new policies of the Chinese authorities to increase efficiency in the allocation of credit and public funds and to combat corruption.

**UKRAINE ADMITS 'GHOST OF KYIV' FIGHTER PILOT IS A MYTH**

On social media, the "Ghost of Kyiv" was a military hero, an ace fighter pilot hailed for supposedly shooting down multiple Russian planes. The tales began just days into the war and circulated for months, bolstered by official Ukrainian accounts.

But on Saturday, Ukrainian authorities admitted that the legendary pilot was a myth.

"The Ghost of Kyiv is a super-hero legend whose character was created by Ukrainians!" Ukraine's air force said in Ukrainian on Facebook.

The statement came after multiple media outlets published stories wrongly identifying Major Stepan Tarabalka as the man behind

the moniker. Tarabalka was a real pilot who died on March 13.

But he was not the Ghost of Kyiv, the force said in Saturday's statement.

"The information about the death of the The Ghost of #Kyiv is incorrect," Ukraine's air force wrote in a separate post Saturday on Twitter. "The #GhostOfKyiv is alive, it embodies the collective spirit of the highly qualified pilots of the Tactical Aviation Brigade who are successfully defending #Kyiv and the region."

The legend emerged just a day after Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

**NEW ZEALAND WELCOMES BACK TOURISTS AS PANDEMIC RULES EASED**

NICK PERRY, WELLINGTON

NEW Zealand welcomed tourists from the U.S., Canada, Britain, Japan and more than 50 other countries for the first time in more than two years yesterday after dropping most of its remaining pandemic border restrictions.

The country has long been renowned for its breathtaking scenery and adventure tourism offerings such as bungy jumping and skiing. Before the spread of COVID-19, more than 3 million tourists visited each year, accounting for 20% of New Zealand's foreign income and more than 5% of the overall economy.

But international tourism stopped altogether in early 2020 after New Zealand imposed some of the world's toughest border restrictions.

The border rules remained in place as the government at first pursued an elimination strategy and then tried to tightly control the spread of the virus. The spread of omicron and vaccinations of more than 80% of New Zealand's 5 million population prompted the gradual easing of restrictions.

New Zealand reopened



to tourists from Australia three weeks ago and yesterday to about 60 visa-waiver countries, including much of Europe. Most tourists from India, China and other non-waiver countries are still not allowed to enter.

Tourists will need to be vaccinated and to test themselves for the virus before and after arriving.

"Today is a day to celebrate, and is a big moment in our reconnection with the world," said Tourism Minister Stuart Nash.

At Auckland Airport, flights bringing in tourists began landing from early in the morning, coming in direct from places including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Kuala Lumpur, and Singapore.

The border reopening will help boost tourism

ahead of New Zealand's upcoming ski season. But the real test of how much the tourism industry rebounds will come in December, when the peak summer season begins in the Southern Hemisphere nation.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said more than 90,000 people had booked flights to New Zealand in the seven weeks since the reopening was announced and 21 international flights were scheduled to land yesterday in Auckland.

"Our tourism industry have felt the effects of the global pandemic acutely, and are working hard to prepare," she said.

Ardern said there were no immediate plans to ease virus testing and vaccination requirements for tourists. MDT/AP

Japan Coast guard officials searched the office of a Japanese tour boat operator yesterday as part of a criminal investigation into suspicions that professional negligence caused the sinking of a vessel carrying 26 people in a national park last month. The Kazu 1 sightseeing boat started the tour in Shiretoko National Park on the northeastern side of Hokkaido, on April 23 despite forecast rough seas and warnings from other tour operators. It made a distress call that afternoon saying it was sinking.



Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is expected to talk with his Thai counterpart Prayuth Chan-ocha about economic matters, upheaval in Myanmar and Russia's war in Ukraine when they meet yesterday in the middle of his five-nation overseas tour. Kishida arrived in Thailand on Sunday after visits to Indonesia and Vietnam. He is scheduled to go to Italy and the United Kingdom after Thailand.



USA Jill Biden will spend Mother's Day meeting with Ukrainian mothers and children who fled for their lives after Russian President Vladimir Putin opened war against Ukraine, the White House announced yesterday [Macau time]. The May 8 meeting will take place in Slovakia, one of two eastern European countries the first lady plans to visit during a five-day trip that starts Thursday. She also will be stopping in Romania.

European Union energy ministers will meet today [Macau time] to discuss Russia's decision to cut gas supplies to Bulgaria and Poland, and debate planned new sanctions over Moscow's war on Ukraine. The 27 nation-bloc has imposed five rounds of sanctions on Russian officials, oligarchs, banks, companies and other organizations since Russian troops invaded Ukraine in February.

**THE DECISIVE MOMENT**

AP Photo/Bruna Prado



A performer from the Salgueiro samba school parades during Carnival celebrations at the Sambadrome in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.