



**BNU REPORTED AN UNAUDITED PROFIT AFTER TAX OF MOP40M IN THE FIRST QUARTER, A DECREASE OF 64% YEAR-ON-YEAR**

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**GAMING: US SUES STEVE WYNN OVER RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA BACK IN THE DAY**

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**NORTH KOREA BOASTS RECOVERY AS WHO WORRIES OVER MISSING DATA**

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AP PHOTO



**China** said yesterday that U.S. investigators haven't released any information about the cause of a China Eastern Airlines jetliner crash in March after The Wall Street Journal reported its flight data recorder indicated someone pushed the Boeing 737-800 into a steep dive. American investigators confirmed to the Civil Aviation Administration of China that they released no information to reporters, the government newspaper Global Times reported.

AP PHOTO



**Thailand** The remains of an American airman who went missing in action in World War II may finally be on their way home, thanks to a chance discovery of records in flood-threatened archives in Thailand. U.S. and local authorities held a solemn ceremony yesterday at an air base in eastern Thailand to honor and repatriate remains recently recovered from a rice field in the north of the country.

**Indonesian** police said yesterday they arrested 24 suspected militants believed to have links to extremists accused of beheadings in remote mountain jungles and who pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group. Twenty-two of the suspects were arrested over the weekend in Poso, an extremist hotbed in Central Sulawesi province, and two others were arrested in East Kalimantan province on Borneo and in Jakarta's satellite city of Bekasi, Central Sulawesi police said.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH

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GAMING

# US SUES CASINO MOGUL STEVE WYNN OVER RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA

**T**he Justice Department sued longtime Las Vegas casino mogul Steve Wynn yesterday [Macau Times] to compel him to register as a foreign agent because of lobbying work it says he performed at the behest of the Chinese government during the Trump administration.

The department said it had advised Wynn repeatedly over the last four years to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, or FARA, and is suing now because Wynn refused to do so.

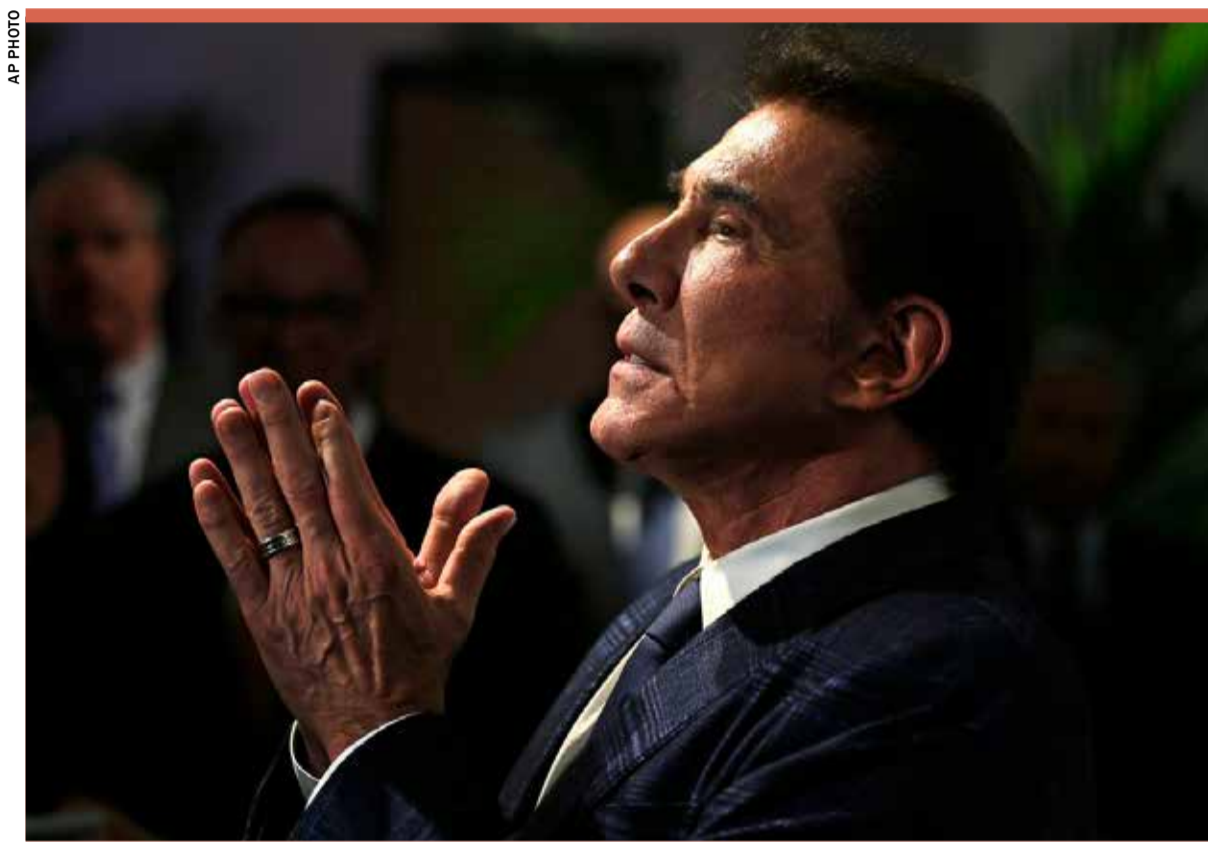
Though the Justice Department has ramped up efforts to criminally prosecute people who don't register as foreign agents, officials described this case as the first lawsuit of its kind in more than three decades.

"Where a foreign government uses an American as its agent to influence policy decisions in the United States, FARA gives the American people a right to know," Assistant Attorney General Matthew Olsen, the head of the department's National Security Division, said in a statement.

A spokesperson for the department declined to comment on why the department had pursued a lawsuit rather than criminal charges.

Wynn's lawyers said that they would contest the suit.

"Steve Wynn has never ac-



AP PHOTO

ted as an agent of the Chinese government and had no obligation to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act," said a statement from attorneys Reid Weingarten and Brian Heberlig. "We respectfully disagree with the Department of Justice's legal interpretation of FARA and look forward to proving our case in court."

The complaint alleges that Wynn, who stepped down from his company, Wynn Resorts, in 2018 after multiple women

accused him of sexual misconduct, lobbied then-President Donald Trump and members of his administration for several months in 2017 to remove from the United States a Chinese national who had been charged with corruption in China and was seeking political asylum in America. The efforts to have the man removed from the U.S. were ultimately unsuccessful.

The lawsuit says the lobbying effort was done on behalf of senior Chinese government officials, including Sun Lijun, the

then-vice minister of the Ministry of Public Security who sought Wynn's help in trying to get the Chinese national's new visa application denied, according to the complaint.

The lobbying effort also included conversations over dinner with Trump and by phone, and multiple visits to the White House for apparently unscheduled meetings with the issue was discussed.

The complaint says Wynn was motivated to protect his business interests in China. At the

time, his company owned and operated casinos in the Chinese territory of Macau. The government in Macau had restricted the number of gaming tables and machines that could be operated at Wynn's casino, the Justice Department says, and he was scheduled to renegotiate licenses to operate casinos in 2019.

FARA, enacted in 1938 to unmask Nazi propaganda in the United States, requires people to disclose to the Justice Department when they advocate, lobby or perform public relations work in the U.S. on behalf of a foreign government or political entity.

The complaint alleges that Wynn was drawn into the lobbying effort by Elliott Broidy, a prominent fundraiser for Trump and the Republican Party who pleaded guilty in 2020 in an illicit lobbying campaign aimed at getting the Trump administration to drop an investigation into the multibillion-dollar looting of a Malaysian state investment fund and for his role in a covert lobbying effort that sought to arrange for the return of a Chinese dissident living in the U.S.

Broidy was later pardoned by Trump at the end of his administration.

The dissident was not referred to by name by prosecutors, but it matches the description of Guo Wengui. Guo left China in 2014 during an anti-corruption crackdown led by President Xi Jinping that ensnared people close to Guo, including a top intelligence official. Chinese authorities have accused Guo of rape, kidnapping, bribery and other offenses and have sought the return of the self-exiled tycoon. **MDT/AP**

## Lawyer's Day consultations to include mainland lawyers

ANTHONY LAM

**T**his year's Lawyer's Day, to be held this weekend, will include mainland lawyers in the free consultation sessions in addition to their 20 local counterparts, the Macau Lawyers' Association (AAM) announced yesterday.

According to the AAM, the annual free-of-charge legal consultations will in-

clude two lawyers from the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, two from Zhuhai and 20 from Macau.

These lawyers will take turns providing professional opinions on enquirers' legal questions.

The sessions are free and will run from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on May 21 and 22 at the Macau Business Tourism Centre at Sena-

do Square.

Promoting this year's free consultation service, AAM president Jorge Neto Valente emphasized that the service is free to all, on an orderly first-come, first-served basis.

Valente said that residents who are faced with problems related to property purchases or investments in Hengqin, for example, can feel free to approach

the two lawyers practicing there for professional legal insights.

The AAM will also host a two-day seminar at Lotus Hall in the World Trade Centre as part of the program for this year's Lawyer's Day. The seminar will cover challenges and opportunities amid Macau's fostering of adequate economic diversification.

The seminars will featu-

re legal professionals from Macau, Lusophone countries, Guangdong province and Hong Kong. Valente revealed that speakers will discuss opportunities for the legal sector in the Belt and Road as well as in Hengqin.

He highlighted the seminar session featuring officials from the Legal Affairs Department and the Financial Services Depart-

ment in the Hengqin on May 22.

The AAM will, as in previous years, also host a sports day on May 21. Lawyers and other participants will join together for friendly games of basketball, badminton, table tennis and a 5km run.

The Lawyer's Day opening ceremony will be held at the Grand Lisboa Palace tomorrow evening.

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FILIPINO DOMESTIC HELPERS ENTRY PILOT SCHEME

# Restrictions drop, PH requires minimum salary of USD1,200

LYNZY VALLES & ANTHONY LAM

**F**ROM next Monday, applications seeking workers under the Filipino Domestic Helpers Entry Pilot Scheme will be open to all, the Health Bureau (SSM) has announced.

Currently, only households with children aged 3 to 12 years, with ill members or people with disability, or with people aged over 65 are eligible to file applications.

This time, anyone with a need for domestic help will be eligible to file applications, subject to additional criteria, from May 23.

The additional criteria include full vaccination, including third-dose boosters where necessary, for Filipino domestic helpers who plan to work in Macau. The same vaccination requirement will apply to children and the elderly in the Macau household.

However, the Philippine Consulate General in Macau SAR has issued a statement last night, noting that the Filipino Domestic Helpers Entry Pilot Scheme's development "has not addressed the vital requirements under the long-established Philippine regulations covering the deployment of Filipino workers for overseas employment."

As cited in the statement, the standard employment contract verified by the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Macau should have a minimum salary of equivalent to USD1,200 for a "profes-

LYNZY VALLES



sionally-trained and government-certified caregiver suited to the job requirements stated in the pilot scheme."

Insurance coverage is also compulsory, as well as the provision of a two-way airfare.

The contract should also state that attendant travel costs such as cost of the SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid test (NAT) and quarantine in Macau will be arranged and paid for by the employer.

Based on current Philippine regulations, failure to comply with the above minimum requirements shall prohibit a prospective Fi-

lipino overseas worker from leaving the country.

Under the city's pilot scheme, employers will have to agree to pay any quarantine or hospitalization costs in Macau for domestic helpers.

Furthermore, prospective domestic helpers must possess a valid Philippine passport, intend to enter Macau to work, possess a valid working visa for Macau, depart from a place outside mainland China or Hong Kong and be on the prioritized list compiled by the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL).

In line with this, the Consulate

said that it "remains ready to pursue further discussions with the concerned authorities of Macau."

As previously reported by the Times, the number of domestic workers have opted to go back home for good with many deciding that not seeing their families for over two years is a big price to pay for a minimum wage.

Data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) shows that the number of domestic workers in the region has declined to 27,100 in 2021, a 13% decrease from 2020 figures that stood at 31,100.

## UM TO HOLD 2022 GRADUATION ON MAY 28

The University of Macau (UM) will hold its 2022 graduation ceremony on May 28 in a format combining online and in-person elements. This year, more than 1,800 students from bachelor's degree programs will receive graduation certificates. Of these, 125 have completed programs offered by the Honors College. The graduation ceremony will be held at 4 p.m. in the Sports Complex (N8). Only graduates will be admitted to the main stadium for the ceremony.

## 63 SUSPECTED ILLEGAL WORKERS PICKED UP IN APRIL

A total of 63 suspected illegal workers were detected last month in a government operation. The Public Security Police Force, the Labour Affairs Bureau and other authorities found the workers after inspecting 312 construction sites, private flats, commercial premises and industrial establishments. In a similar operation in March, the government agencies, acting both independently and jointly, found 64 suspected illegal workers through inspections at 295 locations.

# Parliament reminds tax agency to reach taxpayers virtually

**W**HILE considering the Taxation Code, a parliamentary committee has recommended that the tax agency use digital channels wisely to remind taxpayers about outstanding taxes.

Yesterday, the parliament's Third Standing Committee studied Articles 127 to 151 of the draft of the Taxation Code. Iong Kong Leong, director of the Financial Services Bureau sat in on the meeting.

After the meeting, committee president Vong Hin Fai revealed that the official was reminded by committee members to use digital means, such as text messages and email,

to remind taxpayers to pay outstanding taxes.

The process under discussion, as proposed in the bill, will see a 30-day normal tax payment period. It is proposed in the bill that, 60 days after the conclusion of the normal tax payment period, the unpaid total sum, including the original tax amount, late-payment interest and a fine amounting to 3% of the original tax amount, will be considered in default.

According to the proposal, tax agents should remind taxpayers with outstanding payments 15 days prior to the end of the 60-day period.

Vong shared committee members' opinion that taxpayers in this group should be reminded immediately after the 30-day normal tax payment period. Iong assured the committee that digital means of communication are in use currently.

The bill proposes that only five days be given for the account default process, and committee members questioned the feasibility of this in light of the complexity of the process, Vong said.

The committee president said Iong was convinced that both tax and interest should be refunded in cases where the go-



vernment has mistakenly charged or over-charged taxpayers.

Under the bill, if a taxpayer is dissatisfied with a decision against them

from the Tax Review Committee, they are allowed to file a judicial appeal. AL

PUBLIC HEALTH

# ANOTHER CASE OF SCRUB TYPHUS RECORDED

ANTHONY LAM

**M**ACAU has recorded this year's second case of Tsutsugamushi Disease, also known as Scrub Typhus, the Health Bureau (SSM) announced.

Earlier this month, the bureau reported that the first case, a 67-year-old local woman, developed symptoms May 4. Symptoms include mild fever, coughs and runny nose. On May 7, her symptoms worsened to swelling in the right axillary lymph node. The next day she started to feel shortness of breath, tightness in the chest, dizziness and weakness.

Originally, the private Kiang Wu Hospital diagnosed her with breathing and cardiac failure. The diagnosis was later corrected after the medical staff found an eschar the size of a soybean on her back.

The patient works out



every day at the Mong-Ha Hill and regularly walks on the lawn there.

The second case is a 61-year-old woman, a local resident who works as a cleaner in Mong-Ha Hill. She developed symptoms of fatigue and muscle pain around May 4. The symptoms continued to worsen and she developed a high fever on May 10. She went

to the Kiang Wu Hospital for treatment and was diagnosed with scrub typhus.

According to the SSM, symptoms can include fever, headache, muscle pain and skin rash. A distinctive symptom is the formation of painless penetrating ulcerative eschars at the wound of the Tsutsugamushi mite bite.

The SSM warns that se-

rious complications are possible, such as pneumonia, encephalitis and myocarditis, resulting in respiratory failure, shock, and even death. The mortality rate can be as high as 60%.

Members of the public are recommended, when they visit the countryside, to take measures to lower the possibility of getting bitten by the insects, such as wearing mosquito repellent made with DEET, as it helps repel Tsutsugamushi.

Pet keepers should frequently wash and trim their pets, and use flea combs to remove fleas on the pets, as well as regularly inspect pets bedding and conduct deworming.

Maintaining personal hygiene, including doing laundry regularly, especially immediately after spending time in nature, will also help stop the spread of the disease, the SSM added.

GBA

# TCM TO BE A MAJOR INDUSTRY IN HENGQIN: ZONE PLAN

STAFF REPORTER

**T**HE Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin was selected as a key development area of the biomedicine industry in Guangdong Province, officials announced at a recent press conference of the Medical Products Administration of Guangdong Province.

As stated in the General Plan for Building the Hengqin Cooperation Zone, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), one of Macau's signature businesses, will be a major industry in Hengqin.

The Hengqin-based TCM Science & Technology Industrial Park of Cooperation Between Guangdong & Macao has also become an important platform for the local TCM industry.

It is currently home to

over 220 companies, of which 54 are Macau-funded enterprises involved in the fields of TCM, cosmetics, healthcare products, medical devices, and medical services.

In addition, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Summit on High-quality TCM Development, as well as the Biomedicine & Health Industrial Cluster Innovation Conference (Hengqin) will also be held in Cooperation Zone permanently.

Guangdong has also been increasing its opening-up level to Hong Kong and Macau in sectors like finance, law, architecture, and tourism. For instance, the quota for vehicles from Macau entering Hengqin has increased by 10,000. Guangdong has now become the first choice of entrepreneurship on the Chinese mainland for Hong Kong and Macau youths.

AD

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CRIME

# Son accused of attempting to scam father

RENATO MARQUES

A mainland man is being accused of attempting to defraud his father of RMB15 million, a Judiciary Police (PJ) spokesperson announced yesterday at the regular joint police forces press conference.

The case started with a phone call from the father to the PJ, in which he claimed that his son had been held against his will over a gambling debt of RMB15 million.

The complainant said his son had been kidnapped and was being held captive in a Taipa hotel until money arrived to repay his debt.

The PJ initiated an investigation and soon located the son and a third person at a casino in Taipa.

Through questioning, PJ investigators determined that the son had taken out a loan with a third man surnamed Lei, also from the mainland. This money was to be used for both gambling and loan sharking, but the son spent loan

funds at casino tables.

Although it was true that the second suspect had held the travel documents of the first as guarantee for his money, the PJ found that he was never kidnapped and that the debt was for only RMB6.7 million, not RMB15 million.

Under questioning, the pair admitted that they were working together to extort money from the first suspect's father.

Both suspects are being accused of aggravated fraud, and the second suspect is also being accused of usury.

Both have already been presented to the Public Prosecutions Office to follow up the accusations and for further proceedings.

## OVER MOP125,000 LOST IN REAL ESTATE SCAM

A 15-year-old Macau woman has reportedly lost over MOP125,000 while attempting to invest in real estate on the mainland, the PJ announced.

According to a PJ spokesperson, the woman's mother told po-



lice that her daughter had met a woman on the internet who made an investment proposal for a housing unit on the mainland for only RMB100,000.

The teenager, interested in investing to earn money, then took

MOP110,000 and HKD15,000 from her family home to a store in Avenida de Horta e Costa which helped her to send the cash to an account in the mainland.

She told the police that, after the money was sent to the main-

land bank account, she immediately lost contact with the person who had offered her the investment. She then told her mother what had happened, leading her to suspect fraud and make a report to the PJ.

BANKING

## BNU PROFITS DROP 64% TO MOP40M IN Q1

LYNZY VALLES

BANCO Nacional Ultramarino, S.A. (BNU) reported an unaudited profit after tax of MOP39.9 million, a decrease of MOP 69.5 million (-63.6%) as compared to the same period in 2021.

In a statement, the bank said that its financial performance continued to reflect the low interest rates environment and heightened uncertainties of the global and Macau economies, with net interest income down by MOP6.7 million and net fees and commission income down MOP9.1 million.

During the first quarter of 2022, the bank also reported a net charge for impairment on credits and financial investments of MOP34 million (compared to MOP1.2 million in Q1, 2021) upon the adoption of the new Macau Financial Reporting Standards, primarily reflected in the "bank's conservative impairment model on the forward economic outlook arising from inflationary



risks and tighter Covid-19 related restrictions in mainland China," the firm said in a statement.

In terms of disposal of financial investments, it recorded a net loss of MOP26.3 million (compared to a net gain of MOP3.4 million in Q1, 2021), mainly due to recent interest rate hikes in the U.S. and downgrading activities.

"With the growth and financial integration of the Greater Bay Area and introduction of the Guangdong-Macao In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, the bank's Hengqin branch continued to cater especially to the financial needs of investors from Macau and Hong Kong, including individuals and corporates," the bank's statement said.

## ROTARY CLUB HOLDS 'UPCYCLING' COMPETITION

THE Rotary Club of Macau recently held an initiative aimed at raising awareness of environmental issues for students in the SAR.

The event was aimed at promoting the concept of "upcycling" locally, bringing it to Macau students aged between 12 and 18 via a competition in which participants shared creative ideas on how to convert everyday items that might otherwise be discarded, into something valuable.

The competition, titled "Together We Go Eco: Upcycle To Change Lives," at-

tracted a total of 22 teams who submitted ideas for upcycling.

During the competition finals, the top nine teams showcased their concepts to the judges and answered their questions, according to a statement issued by the organizer.

The competition was held at Saint Paul School and a total of five awards were handed out, recognizing creativity, popularity and usefulness.

A team from Choi Nong Chi Tai School was crowned the champions, while the first runners-up were

a team from Sheng Kung Hui Choi Kou School Macau & Escola Dong Nam, followed by a team from Saint Paul School.

The "most popular" award went to the same team from Sheng Kung Hui Choi Kou School Macau & Escola Dong Nam, while a team from Keang Peng School won the "most creative" award.

The Rotary Club of Macau, established in 1947, making it the second-oldest club in District 3450, partnered with Green Future Macau to put on the event. LV



# PROSECUTOR: TAIWANESE CHURCH GUNMAN HAD 'DIABOLICAL PLAN' TO MASSACRE

AMY TAXIN & STEFANIE DAZIO, SANTA ANA (CALIF.)

**T**HE man charged with opening fire on a Taiwanese church congregation of mainly elderly people in Southern California wanted to "execute in cold blood as many people in that room as possible," a prosecutor said yesterday [Macau time] in announcing murder, attempted murder and other charges for the shooting that killed one person and wounded five.

Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer described David Wenwei Chou, 68, as a monster whose rampage was thwarted by the heroic actions of a doctor who charged at him, a pastor who hit Chou with a chair and several parishioners who tied him up until police arrived.

"This monster crafted a diabolical plan to lock the church doors with his victims inside in order to lead what he thought were innocent lambs to slaughter," Spitzer said. "But what he didn't realize was the parishioners at the church that day weren't lambs — they were lions and they fought back against the evil that tried to infiltrate their house of worship."

Spitzer said Chou was motivated by hatred for Taiwan, where he was born after his family was forced from mainland China when Communists prevailed in a civil war that ended in 1949. He apparently chose the church at random and didn't know anyone there, authorities said.

He drove from his home in Las Vegas on Saturday and arrived at the church the next day. Chou spent about an hour mingling with dozens of members of the congregation at a luncheon, which Spitzer said was Chou's way of gaining their trust so they wouldn't notice as he began carrying out his plot — chaining closed doors, super gluing locks and placing incendiary devices in several locations.

Chou's method amounted to "lying in wait," Spitzer said, a legal designation that can enhance penalties if he is convicted.

"This case is about the person concealing themselves in plain view," he said.

If Chou is convicted and the jury finds the enhancements to be true, he would face a sentence of either life in prison without possibility of parole or the death penalty, Spitzer said.

Chou's arraignment was continued to June 10 and he did not enter a plea during his first court appearance. He will continue to be held without bail. His public defender, Tania Vallejo, did not immediately return an email re-

AP PHOTO



A memorial honoring Dr. John Cheng sits outside his office building in Aliso Viejo, California

questing comment.

Authorities have said Chou — a U.S. citizen who worked for years as a security guard — was motivated by hatred of Taiwanese people documented in handwritten notes that authorities found. Spitzer said he is considering hate crime charges but needs more time to investigate.

"While there's very strong evidence right now that this was motivated by hate, we want to make sure we have put together all the evidence that confirms that theory in the case," he said. Federal authorities are conducting their own hate crime investigation.

Tensions between China and Taiwan are at the highest in decades. China has not ruled out force to reunify with Taiwan.

Chou had ties to a Las Vegas organization opposed to Taiwan's independence from China, according to Taiwanese media.

Baltimore Orellana, a former neighbor in Las Vegas, said Chou had been a friendly landlord but his life unraveled after his wife left him last year and returned to Taiwan. Spitzer said the suspect's wife is terminally ill.

Chou moved into a four-bedroom house in February. His roommate, Jordin Davis, said he was a kind and quiet man who often shared his food. Chou identified himself as a Christian and made a cross in black tape on the roof of his car but never talked about religion, Davis said.

The two had few conversations beyond small talk or chatting about Davis' dog, Zeus. Chou would "come home, go to sleep, take a shower, go to work and just repeat that routine all over again," Davis said.

Chou only spoke about Taiwan once, during a conversation less than two weeks ago, Davis said. Chou said he felt the Taiwanese government was corrupt and disliked how people on the island were sympathetic to the leadership.

"He made himself seem like he was basically a political refugee," Davis said.

Authorities searched the home this week, Davis said, and took a laptop. Officials have said they are investigating electronic records as part of the investigation.

## The gunman opened fire and in the ensuing chaos Dr. John Cheng tackled him, allowing other parishioners to subdue him

Chou is accused firing at parishioners during a Sunday luncheon for members of Irvine Taiwanese Presbyterian Church, which worships at Geneva Presbyterian Church in the community of Laguna Woods.

He had two 9 mm handguns — legally purchased years ago in Las Vegas — and three bags, containing four Molotov-cocktail-type incendiary devices and

extra ammunition, according to authorities. He opened fire and in the ensuing chaos Dr. John Cheng, 52, tackled him, allowing other parishioners to subdue him and tie him up with an extension cord, the authorities said.

Cheng died and five people were wounded, including an 86-year-old woman and four men ranging from 66 to 92, the sheriff's department said. Some already have been released from the hospital and others were in stable condition, according to the church's former pastor, Billy Chang.

The luncheon came after a morning service to welcome Chang, who had served the church for 20 years. Chang moved back to Taiwan two years ago and this was his first time back.

Chou entered the church sanctuary during services, giving his name to the receptionist as "Da-Wei Chou," and sat in the back reading one of the church-provided Chinese-language newspapers, according to a church statement issued yesterday.

He was wearing a black shirt with a word written on it in white that some believed said "Security," the statement said.

The service was followed by an adult Sunday school session that Chou apparently did not attend, but he showed up later at the lunch, the church said.

Near the end of the lunch, some parishioners took pictures

with Chang and started leaving. They saw Chou beginning to lock the doors with iron chains but he allowed them to exit, the church statement said.

"When they asked him about his actions, he refused to answer. They assumed he was a security guard," the statement said.

One man forgot some things inside the church and wanted to return, but Chou didn't let him into the hall and another church member who was inside said he saw Chou nailing two exit doors shut, the statement said.

In a statement yesterday recounting the shooting, Chang said he first thought Chou was using a toy gun as a prank when Chou opened fire. When Chang realized it was actual gunfire, he picked up a chair and threw it at Chou, who fell on the floor. Chang rushed at Chou and three other congregation members held Chou down and tied him up.

"It wasn't until then I noticed that Dr. Cheng was lying face-down to my front right with three bloody bullet wounds on the back, not moving," Chang said.

Authorities have said that Cheng had charged at Chou and disrupted the gunfire. Sheriff Don Barnes on Monday called Cheng's heroism "a meeting of good versus evil" that probably saved the lives "of upwards of dozens of people."

Cheng, who practiced sports medicine, had recently lost his father and took his mother to the luncheon. He was well known in the community and liked by his patients. MDT/AP

NORTH KOREA

# Pyongyang boasts recovery as WHO worries over missing data

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

**N**ORTH Korea yesterday added hundreds of thousands of infections to its growing pandemic caseload but also said that a million people have already recovered from suspected COVID-19 just a week after disclosing an outbreak, a public health crisis it appears to be trying to manage in isolation as global experts express deep concern about dire consequences.

The country's anti-virus headquarters announced 232,880 new cases of fever and another six deaths in state media yesterday. Those figures raise its totals to 62 deaths and more than 1.7 million fever cases since late April. It said more than a million people recovered but at least 691,170 remain in quarantine.

Outside experts believe most of the fevers are from COVID-19 but North Korea lacks tests to confirm so many. The outbreak is almost certainly larger than the fever tally, since some virus carriers may not develop fevers or other symptoms.

It's also unclear how more than a million people recovered so quickly when limited medicine, medical equipment and health facilities exist to treat the country's impoverished, unvaccinated population of 26 million.

Some experts say the North



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, a doctor visits a family during an activity to raise public awareness of the Covid-19 prevention measures

could be simply releasing people from quarantine after their fevers subside.

Globally, COVID-19 has killed about 6.3 million people with the true toll believed to be much higher. Countries with outbreaks of a similar size to North Korea's official fever tally have confirmed thousands of deaths each.

World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Tuesday that North Korea has not responded to its request for more data about its outbreak.

Before acknowledging COVID-19 infections for the first time last week, North Korea had held to a widely doubted claim of keeping out the virus. It also shunned

millions of vaccine shots offered by the U.N.-backed COVAX distribution program, likely because of international monitoring requirements attached to them.

North Korea and Eritrea are the only sovereign U.N.-member countries not to have rolled out vaccines, but Tedros said neither country has responded to WHO's offers of vaccines, medicines, tests and technical support.

"WHO is deeply concerned at the risk of further spread in (North Korea)," Tedros said, also noting the country has worrying numbers of people with underlying conditions that make them more likely to get severe COVID-19.

WHO emergencies chief Dr. Michael Ryan said unchecked

transmission of the virus could lead to new variants but that WHO was powerless to act unless countries accepted its help.

The North has so far ignored rival South Korea's offer to provide vaccines, medicine and health personnel, but experts say the North may be more willing to accept help from its main ally China. South Korea's government said it couldn't confirm media reports that North Korea flew multiple planes to bring back emergency supplies from China on Tuesday.

North Korean officials during a ruling party Politburo meeting Tuesday continued to express confidence that the country could overcome the crisis on its own, with the Politburo members discussing ways for "continuously maintaining the good chance in the overall epidemic prevention front," the official Korean Central News Agency said.

There's suspicion that North Korea is underreporting deaths to soften the blow for Kim, who already was navigating the toughest moment of his decade in power. The pandemic has further damaged an economy already broken by mismanagement and U.S.-led sanctions over Kim's nuclear weapons and missiles development.

At the Politburo meeting, Kim criticized officials over their early pandemic response, which he said underscored "immaturity in the state capacity for coping with

the crisis" and he blamed the country's vulnerability on their "non-positive attitude, slackness and non-activity," KCNA said.

He urged officials to strengthen virus controls at workplaces and redouble efforts to improve the supply of daily necessities and stabilize living conditions, the report said.

North Korea has also deployed nearly 3,000 military medical officers to help deliver medicine to pharmacies and deployed public health officials, teachers and students studying health care to identify people with fevers so they could be quarantined. The country has been relying on finding people with symptoms and isolating them at shelters since it lacks vaccines, high-tech medicine and equipment, and intensive care units that lowered hospitalizations and deaths in other nations.

While raising alarm over the outbreak, Kim has also stressed that his economic goals should be met. State media reports show large groups of workers are continuing to gather at farms, mining facilities, power stations and construction sites, being driven to ensure their works are "propelled as scheduled."

North Korea's COVID-19 outbreak came amid a provocative run in weapons demonstrations, including its first test of an intercontinental ballistic missile in nearly five years, in a brinkmanship aimed at forcing the United States to accept the idea of the North as a nuclear power and negotiate economic and security concessions from a position of strength.

U.S. and South Korean officials also believe North Korea could conduct its seventh nuclear test explosion this month. MDT/AP

AUSTRALIA

# Morrison won't say who might attend Tokyo summit

**A**USTRALIA'S opposition leader Anthony Albanese said yesterday that he will begin rebuilding trust in his nation if he wins weekend elections and attends a summit with U.S., Indian and Japanese leaders in Tokyo just three days later.

Albanese said he will be "completely consistent" with the current administration on Chinese strategic competition in the region if he travels to the summit of the Indo-Pacific strategic alliance known as the Quad on Tuesday.

But he said Australia had been placed in the "naughty corner" in United Nations climate change negotiations by refusing to adopt



more ambitious emissions reduction targets at a November conference.

"One of the ways that we increase our standing in the region, and in particular

in the Pacific, is by taking climate change seriously," Albanese told the National Press Club.

President Joe Biden's administration and Australia

"will have a strengthened relationship in our common view about climate change and the opportunity that it represents," Albanese said.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison yesterday would not say who might represent Australia in Tokyo.

Morrison said there were "conventions in place" to deal with the election but did not elaborate on how those conventions would work if the result were close.

Albanese has said he would have himself sworn in as prime minister as soon as Sunday or Monday in order to attend the summit.

Sydney University constitutional law expert Anne

Twomey said Morrison would have to resign as prime minister before Governor General David Hurley could swear in Albanese.

Albanese blamed Morrison for a "whole series of Australia's international relations being damaged."

He said Morrison misled the United States that a secret plan to provide Australia with a fleet of submarines powered with U.S. nuclear technology had the support of Albanese's center-left Labor Party. In fact, Labor wasn't told of the plan until the day before it was announced in September.

Albanese also accused Morrison of leaking to the media personal text mes-

sages from Emmanuel Macron to discredit the French president's complaint that Australia had given no warning that a French submarine contract would be canceled.

In November, French Ambassador to Australia Jean-Pierre Thebault described the leak a "new low" and a warning to other world leaders that their private communications with the Australian government could be weaponized and used against them.

Labor also has described a new security pact between China and the Solomon Islands as Australia's worst foreign policy failure in the Pacific since World War II. MDT/AP



NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg and Sweden's Ambassador to NATO Axel Wernhoff shake hands during a ceremony to mark Sweden's and Finland's application for membership in Brussels

MILITARY

# NATO chief hails 'historic moment' as Finland, Sweden apply

LORNE COOK, BRUSSELS

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said yesterday that the military alliance stands ready to seize a historic moment and move quickly on allowing Finland and Sweden to join its ranks, after the two countries submitted their membership requests.

The official applications, handed over by Finland and Sweden's ambassadors to NATO, set a security clock ticking. Russia, whose war on Ukraine spurred them to join the military organization, has warned that it wouldn't welcome such a move, and could respond.

"I warmly welcome the requests by Finland and Sweden to join NATO. You are our closest partners," Stoltenberg said. "All allies agree on the importance of NATO enlargement. We all agree that we must stand together, and we all agree that this is an historic moment which we must seize."

"This is a good day at a critical moment for our security," a beaming Stoltenberg said, as he stood

alongside the two envoys, with NATO, Finnish and Swedish flags at their backs.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has demanded that the alliance stop expanding toward Russia's borders, and several NATO allies, led by the United States and Britain, have signaled that they stand ready to provide security support to Finland and Sweden should he try to provoke or destabilize them during the time it takes to become full members.

The countries will only benefit from NATO's Article 5 security guarantee — the part of the alliance's founding treaty that pledges that any attack on one member would be considered an attack of them all — once the membership ratification process is concluded, probably in a few months.

The move is one of the biggest geopolitical ramifications of the war and will rewrite Europe's security map. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson welcomed it in a tweet and said that "Putin's appalling ambitions have transformed the geopolitical contours of our continent."

For now though, the application must be weighed by the 30 member countries. That process is expected to take about two weeks, although Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has expressed reservations about Finland and Sweden joining.

If his objections are overcome, and accession talks go as well as expected, the two could become members soon. The process usually takes eight to 12 months, but NATO wants to move quickly given the threat from Russia hanging over the Nordic countries' heads.

Canada, for example, says that it expects to ratify their accession protocol in just a few days — while in the Baltic region, Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas tweeted: "I encourage a rapid accession process. We in Estonia will do our part fast."

Stoltenberg said that NATO allies "are determined to work through all issues and reach rapid conclusions."

The fact that the Nordic partners applied together means they won't be losing

time by having to ratify each other's membership application.

"That Sweden and Finland go hand in hand is a strength. Now the process of joining the talks continues," Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde told the Swedish news agency TT.

It shouldn't take long to win approval in the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Their prime ministers issued a joint statement yesterday saying that they "fully endorse and warmly welcome the historic decisions" taken in Helsinki and Stockholm.

Public opinion in Finland and Sweden has shifted massively in favor of membership since Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

Finland and Sweden cooperate closely with NATO. They have functioning democracies, well-funded armed forces and contribute to the alliance's military operations and air policing. Any obstacles they face will merely be of a technical, or possibly political nature.

NATO's membership process is not formalized, and the steps can vary. But first their requests to join will be examined in a sitting of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) of the 30 member countries, probably at ambassadorial level.

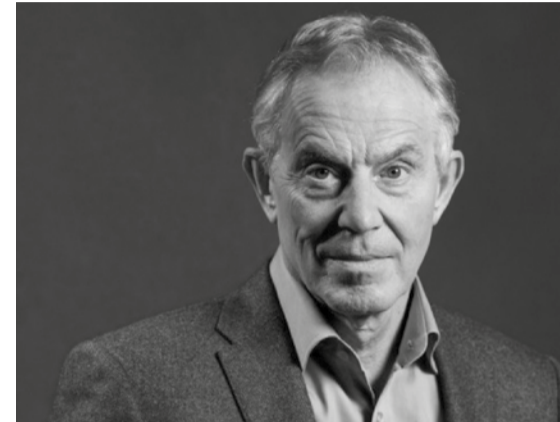
The NAC will decide whether to move toward membership and what steps must be taken to achieve it. This mostly depends on how well aligned the candidate countries are with NATO political, military and legal standards, and whether they contribute to security in the North Atlantic area. This should pose no substantial problem for Finland and Sweden.

Moving forward, during accession talks that could be concluded in just one day once the terms of those negotiations are set, the two will be asked to commit to uphold Article 5 and to meet spending obligations concerning the NATO in-house budget, which runs to around \$2.5 billion dollars, split proportionally among what would be 32 member countries.

Finland and Sweden would also be made aware of their role in NATO defense planning, and of any other legal or security obligations they might have, like the vetting of personnel and handling of classified information. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 2004 ANGRY DADS HIT BLAIR WITH PURPLE FLOUR



Protesters have hurled condoms full of purple flour at British Prime Minister Tony Blair as he addressed MPs in the House of Commons, prompting an urgent review of security.

The PM was speaking at the dispatch box during his weekly question and answer session soon after midday when father-of-two Ron Davies threw two missiles from the front of the public gallery normally reserved for VIPs.

A second man, Guy Harrison, shouted and held up a poster, before police rushed in and arrested the men.

As one missile hit the PM's back and another landed at his feet, Mr Blair turned around and looked bemused.

The Speaker, Michael Martin, ordered all MPs to leave the chamber while the powder was examined and found to be safe.

Campaign group Fathers 4 Justice said they had orchestrated the incident to demand equal rights for divorced fathers trying to gain access to their children.

The attack has led to calls for improved security at Westminster.

Only last month a £600,000 security screen was installed in front of the public gallery to prevent such an incident.

But the front three rows - normally reserved for ambassadors and guests of MPs and peers - are not protected.

In a later statement to the House of Lords, Labour peer Baroness Golding said the two protesters were guests of hers and she offered "unreserved apologies" to the Speaker, MPs and fellow peers.

It is believed the two men got tickets to the VIP section of the gallery at a charity auction.

Mr Blair's spokesman said the prime minister wanted to know when he could return to finish question time - but the Speaker vetoed the move.

Commons business recommenced at 1330 BST.

Home Secretary David Blunkett said a security review had already been launched at Westminster after recent breaches at Buckingham Palace.

The security services will bring forward recommendations "very quickly indeed", but it could mean there will be more restrictions on access to Parliament, he said.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Ron Davis and Guy Harrison were both convicted of disorderly behaviour and fined £500 and £600 respectively. A cross-party group of MPs condemned the media coverage of the flour bomb attack saying it had "rewarded" Fathers 4 Justice for their actions.

Fathers 4 Justice continued to organise various stunts climbing onto well-known landmarks, such as York Minster, Buckingham Palace and St Paul's cathedral, dressed as superheroes to highlight their cause.

Their membership increased by thousands and branches were opened in other parts of the world.

A security review of the House of Commons led by MI5 did not prevent further intrusions into Parliament.

In September 2004, five protesters broke into the Commons chamber to demonstrate against the ban on fox-hunting.

In January 2006, Fathers 4 Justice disbanded following reports linking the group to a plan to kidnap Tony Blair's five-year-old son Leo. It re-formed following a protest stunt on the BBC's National Lottery Show in May 2006.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Erratic behavior may confuse others, and mood swings may result in isolation. Be careful not to come on too strongly. Take some time out.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20  
You will tend to overeat today. Overindulgence will mean poor health. Attempt to face key issues with lovers or problems could escalate.

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21  
Your domestic scene could continue to be in an uproar today. You will be extremely receptive to new and progressive methods at work. Social events will lead to a strong and stable relationship.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Take the time to help old friends or relatives who have had a stroke of bad luck. Take a look at the possibilities of starting a small part time business with friends or relatives.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
Take time to find out if anyone has a better suggestion before you make arrangements for the whole family. You may want to take a look at your direction in life.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
Someone close to you may need help. Avoid arguments with relatives who might be conservative and outdated. Channel your energy into passionate interludes with your lover.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
You may be sensitive concerning friends and their situations. You can make a big difference to children if you are understanding of the difficulties they are experiencing.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
Things have been moving so quickly that you need to do something physical to release your tension. Secret affairs may only cause complications in your life. Don't push your mate away.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
You can spend a passionate evening with someone you cherish if you make your plans early. Your unique approach to life will interest others. Reciprocate by offering helpful hints.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
Travel will lead you in new directions. Resist any idle chatter. Don't lend or borrow money or belongings. Your goals will be in reach if you direct your energy wisely.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
You may find that others do not do things the way you want; however, if the job gets done, let it pass. You can win points if you present your ideas today. You will do best to entertain those you wish to close deals with.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
Physical activity will help defuse your frustration. You may as well work on projects that will allow you to make progress. Your mate is going to want and need some attention.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	16	30	cloudy
Changchun	13	27	cloudy
Chengdu	15	23	overcast
Chongqing	16	23	overcast
Fuzhou	18	25	overcast
Guangzhou	19	29	cloudy
Guiyang	13	17	overcast
Haikou	22	28	cloudy
Hangzhou	17	21	overcast
Harbin	12	25	thunderstorms
Hefei	16	23	overcast
Nanjing	19	24	cloudy
Shanghai	17	23	overcast
Taipei	22	26	rain
Wuhan	17	20	rain
Hong Kong	24	27	cloudy
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	4	14	showers
Frankfurt	17	29	showers
Paris	17	26	rain
London	12	22	overcast
New York	16	24	showers

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Chuck; 5- Swabbies; 9- Vinegary prefix; 14- Novelist Waugh; 15- Actor McGregor; 16- Brit's discharge; 17- Old Italian money; 18- Hindu rite; 19- New Brunswick neighbor; 20- Person who mends shoes; 22- Pattern of colorful curving figures; 24- Unit of computer memory; 25- Spirited horses; 26- Current unit; 29- Copper and zinc alloy; 31- "Otello" composer; 32- Milne creation; 33- Tear; 36- Lord, is \_\_\_?; 37- Disordered; 40- Med. care option; 41- Hoover, for one; 42- Cutting tool; 43- Zones; 45- Like Loki; 47- Violation of trust; 48- Catalog; 51- New Mexico art colony; 52- A ramjet; 54- Lack of reason; 58- Willow provision; 59- Russian river; 61- \_\_\_-majesté; 62- Unit of magnetic induction; 63- Pianist Peter; 64- Futile; 65- Staggering; 66- Midge; 67- Formerly, formerly.

DOWN 1- Bath powder; 2- Mixed bag; 3- Belgrade native; 4- Healed over, like a scrape; 5- Cylindrical; 6- Alert; 7- St. Louis griddle; 8- Break, card game; 9- Lets in; 10- Stops; 11- "South Pacific" hero; 12- In shape; 13- Follows orders; 21- Song part; 23- Japanese beer brand; 26- Gung-ho; 27- Intro to physics; 28- Prissy; 29- Alcoholic drink; 30- Routine; 32- Cushions; 33- She played Carla on "Cheers"; 34- Apple variety; 35- Ritz; 38- Firm; 39- Christmas song; 44- Determine; 45- Dried strip of egg dough; 46- Trying experience; 47- Round of voting; 48- Dreadlocks wearer; 49- Early anesthetic; 50- Pursue; 51- Ornamental coronet; 53- Manure; 55- Stuff; 56- Fertility goddess of Egypt; 57- Small change; 60- Stimp's pal.



**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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FILM

# ZELENSKY OPENS CANNES FESTIVAL, LINKS WAR AND CINEMA

JAKE COYLE, CANNES

**T**HE 75th Cannes Film Festival kicked off yesterday [Macau time] with an eye turned to Russia's war in Ukraine and a live satellite video address from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who called on a new generation of filmmakers to confront dictators as Charlie Chaplin satirized Adolf Hitler.

After tributes and musical numbers, Zelenskyy was streamed live for the formally attired audience who had gathered for the premiere of Michel Hazanavicius' zombie comedy "Final Cut."

Zelenskyy, dressed in his signature olive green shirt, drew a thunderous standing ovation and spoke at length about the connection between cinema and reality. He referenced films like Francis Ford Coppola's "Apocalypse Now" and Charlie Chaplin's "The Great Dictator" as not unlike Ukraine's present circumstances.

Zelenskyy quoted Chaplin's final speech in "The Great Dictator," which was released in 1940, in the early days of World War II: "The hate of men will pass, and dictators die, and the power they took from the people will return to the people."

"We need a new Chaplin who will demonstrate that the cinema of our time is not silent," implored Zelenskyy.

The Ukrainian president pushed filmmakers not to "stay silent" while hundreds continue to die in Ukraine, the largest war in Europe since WWII, and show that cinema "is always on the side of freedom."

The war is to be a regular presence in Cannes, where the festival has barred Russians with ties to the government from attending this year. Set to screen are several films from prominent Ukrainian filmmakers, including Sergei Loznitsa's documentary "The Natural History of Destruction." Footage shot by Lithuanian filmmaker Mantas Kvedaravius before he was killed in Mariupol in April will also be shown by his fiancée, Hanna Bilobrova.

Even "Final Cut," the latest film from "The Artist" filmmaker Hazanavicius, was renamed from its original title, "Z," after Ukrainian protesters noted that the letter Z to some symbolizes support for Russia's war in Ukraine.

Formally attired stars including Eva Longoria, Julianne Moore, Bérénice Bejo and "No Time to Die" star Lashana Lynch were among those who streamed down Cannes' famous red carpet. More star-studded premieres — "Top

Gun: Maverick!" "Elvis!" — await over the next 12 days, during which 21 films will vie for the festival's prestigious top award, the Palme d'Or.

But the opening and the carefully choreographed red-carpet parade leading up the steps to the Grand Théâtre Lumière again restored one of the movies' grandest pageants after two years of pandemic that have challenged the exalted stature Cannes annually showers on cinema.

"Dear friends, let's come out of this dark together," said opening ceremony host Virginie Efira.

After last year requiring regular COVID-19 testing and masks in theaters — and no kisses on the red carpet — Cannes has largely done away with pandemic protocols. Masks are recommended inside but are rarely worn.

Cannes presented an honorary Palme d'Or to Forest Whitaker, who received a standing ovation. Whitaker, who won best actor at Cannes 34 years ago for his performance as Charlie Parker in Clint Eastwood's "Bird," said that while ascending the steps to the Palais des Festivals, he could still hear chants of "Clint! Clint!" ringing in his ears. Eastwood is one of few others who have been awarded an honorary Palme.

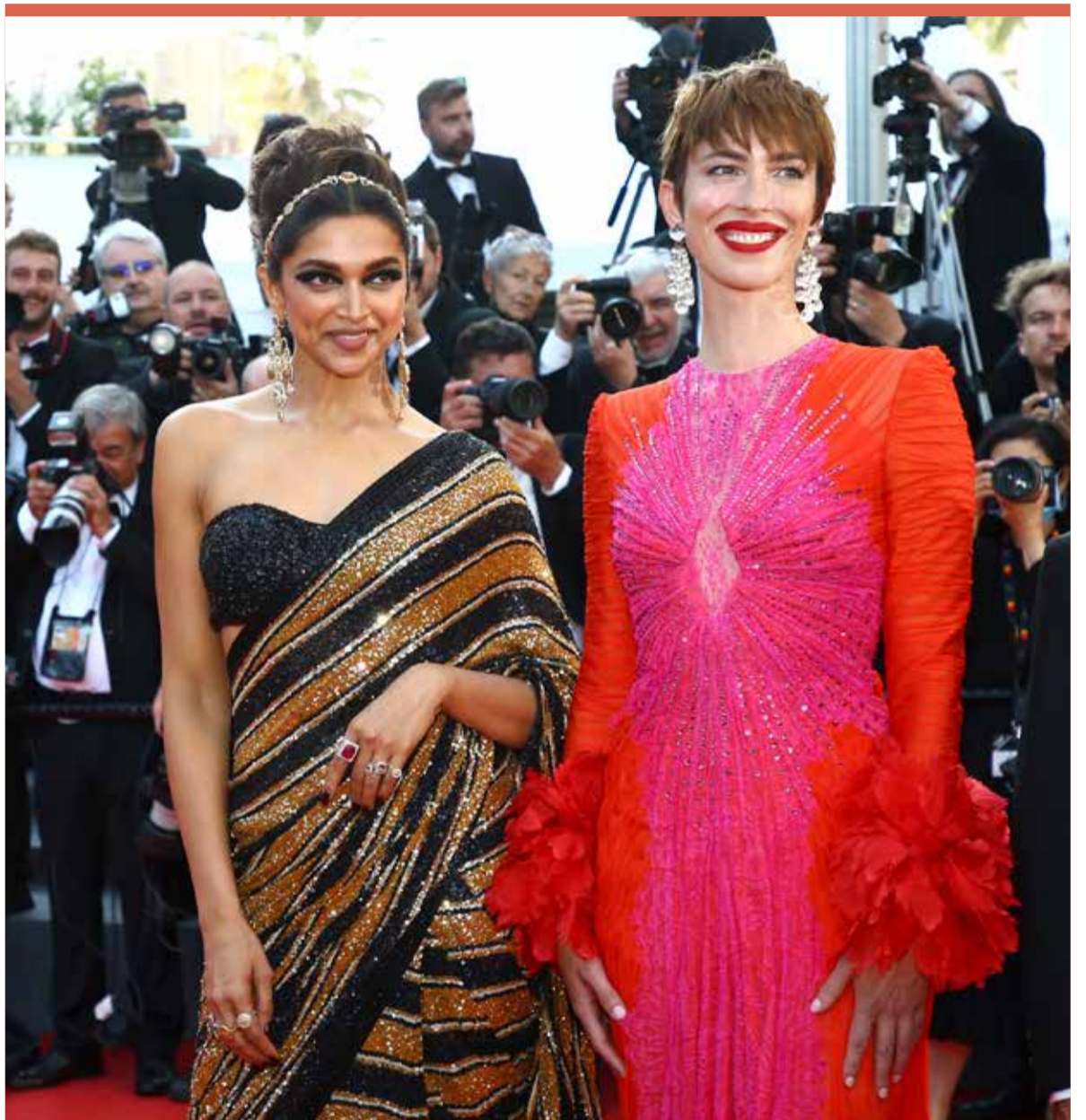
Yesterday, Cannes also unveiled the jury that will award the Palme d'Or. French actor Vincent Lindon is leading a jury that includes Deepika Padukone, Rebecca Hall, Asghar Farhadi, Trinca, Ladj Ly, Noomi Rapace, Jeff Nichols and Joachim Trier.

Questions of gender equality have long surrounded the Cannes Film Festival, where no more than five female filmmakers have ever been a part of the Palme competition lineup and only two women directors have won it. On Monday, Fremaux defended the festival, arguing that it selects films purely on the basis of quality. Hall, who last year made her directorial debut with the film "Passing," was asked about her opinion on Cannes' record.

"I believe that it is a work in progress. I mean for the whole film industry, not just the Cannes Film Festival," replied Hall. "The way of dealing with these things needs to be addressed on a grassroots level as well. It's not just the festivals or public-facing situations. It's about all the minutiae of what goes into the industry at large."

Farhadi, the Oscar-winning Iranian director, also spoke for the first time about an ongoing plagiarism suit regarding his previous film, "A Hero," which won the Grand Prix in Cannes last

AP PHOTO



year. A former film student of Farhadi's, Azadeh Masihzadeh, has accused him of stealing the idea of the film from a 2018 documentary she made in a workshop taught by Farhadi.

At the tradition-upholding Cannes, the world's largest and most glitzy temple to film, cinema, controversy and glamour

swirl together in a 12-day spectacle of red carpet premieres and rampant movie deal-making up and down the Croisette. Theatrical release is a requirement of any film vying for the Palme, which has prevented streaming services from playing a big role at Cannes.

But this year, one new festival partner — TikTok — has rai-

sed some eyebrows. The festival is hosting TikTok creators from around the world and holding a separate contest for best (very short) videos created during the festival. Thierry Fremaux, artistic director of Cannes, granted TikTok wasn't the future of cinema.

"The cinema remains the final art," said Fremaux. **MDT/AP**

FOOTBALL

# Liverpool beats Southampton, title race goes to the wire

SOUTHAMPTON 1, LIVERPOOL 2

**T**HE Premier League title race is going to the wire. Remarkably, an unprecedented quadruple is still on for Liverpool.

Tired and hit by injuries after winning the FA Cup final on Saturday, Liverpool fielded a second-choice lineup against Southampton and demonstrated a great mentality to come from behind to win 2-1 yesterday [Macau time].

It leaves Jurgen Klopp's team a point behind Manchester City heading into the final round of a thrilling league campaign. That's on Sunday, when Liverpool is at home to Wolverhampton at the same time as City hosts Aston Villa — managed by Liverpool great Steven Gerrard.

"Whatever happens this season, we have done ourselves proud," Liverpool midfielder James Milner said. "All we could

AP PHOTO



do is take it to the last game and we've done that."

City remains the favorite in its bid for a sixth league title in 11 seasons, but Liverpool has done its part by taking the defending champions all the way.

In fact, the Reds are taking every competition to the final game this season, with a Champions League final against Real Madrid still to come on May 28. They've already

won both domestic cups in a season for the ages.

Joel Matip completed Liverpool's latest comeback by unwittingly heading home the winning goal in the 67th minute at St. Mary's Stadium.

Klopp's team had also come from behind in its previous two league games, a 2-1 win against Villa and a 1-1 draw with Tottenham. It just doesn't know when

it is beaten.

"We keep going," Klopp said. "We never give up. That's how it is."

The game came only three days after Liverpool's energy-sapping FA Cup triumph over Chelsea, which went 120 minutes before the Reds won a penalty shootout. Mohamed Salah and Virgil van Dijk were injured at Wembley Stadium and didn't travel to Southampton. Fabinho was already injured. Andrew Robertson and Luis Diaz were unused substitutes.

Despite the slew of changes, Liverpool dominated a passive Southampton team with nothing left to play for this season but still fell behind in the 13th minute when Nathan Redmond cut inside from the left and sent in a shot that deflected off Milner and into the far corner.

Liverpool's players kept their composure and replied 14 minutes later when Diogo Jota laid the ball off to Takumi Minamino, who

displayed quick feet before firing a rising shot inside Alex McCarthy's near post. The Japan forward was on loan at Southampton last season and hadn't started a league game since then.

The rest of the match saw Liverpool camped inside Southampton's half but only managing to create half-chances. The atmosphere was starting to get tense when Liverpool was gifted what proved to be the winning goal, after a corner by Kostas Tsimikas was glanced on at the near post by Southampton forward Mohamed Elyounoussi.

The ball flew across the area, skimmed off the head of Southampton's Kyle Walker-Peters, hit the forehead of Matip and rebounded into the far corner beyond McCarthy's despairing dive.

Liverpool was 14 points behind City at one point in January, albeit with two games in hand. Somehow, the title is still within reach with 90 minutes left to play. And Gerrard, who never won the league with Liverpool as a player, could yet have a decisive role in helping his former team win it this time.

"If we said in January it would go to the last game, we would have taken that," Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson said. "Hopefully Stevie and Villa do us a favor." **MDT/AP**

**HOLIDAY RENTAL HOUSES**

Lugar das Letras Casa de Gouvães

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

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OPINION

China Daily  
 Editorial, China Daily

WASHINGTON'S LIAISONS DANGEROUSLY IMPRUDENT

Relations between China and the United States are in a very bad shape now. Perhaps the worst they have been since diplomatic relations were established in 1979.

Since then, never have both the Democratic and Republican parties and both chambers of the US Congress been so united against China. And US lawmakers have never been so unanimous when it comes to any motion targeting China.

The relationship has obviously crossed some kind of Rubicon, and may never go back to where it was pre-2018. But that is why this relationship, no matter how people evaluate it within today's paradigm, needs special circumspection. The harmful potential of a confrontational China-US relationship are readily imagined. Differences must be managed well to prevent them from getting out of control, and potential flashpoints need to be handled with all due care and attention.

Yet some people in Washington clearly don't want a well-managed China-US relationship. Knowing full well that Taiwan is the most sensitive topic in bilateral ties, they're repeating an old trick to try and project an "independent" status for the island.

After the US president signed into law a legislative bill urging the secretary of state to help Taiwan regain "observer" status at the World Health Assembly, they are pressing the World Health Organization for Taiwan's presence at next week's 75th session.

Whether Taiwan is allowed to take part without Beijing's endorsement is a test of the WHO's commitment to the United Nations Charter and international conventions.

There are effective arrangements in place for the Taiwan health authorities to participate in professional and technical activities held by the WHO, and obtain and report epidemic information. And the central government has previously made special arrangements for Taiwan's participation in the WHA, under the precondition that it upholds the one-China principle, as was the case from 2009 to 2016.

Given that the Tsai Ing-wen administration refuses to accept that premise, Beijing cannot endorse its participation in the WHA, and it has urged the US to adhere to the one-China principle and refrain from helping the Taiwan secessionists expand the island's so-called "international space", warning that otherwise it will cause further damage to China-US relations and further undermine peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits.

US State Department spokesman Edward Price reiterated just last Wednesday that the US doesn't support Taiwan independence. But the move regarding the island's WHA presence is clearly another attempt to push the envelope on that crucial principle the two governments agreed on.

It is critical that Washington is prudent when it comes to Taiwan-related issues lest it make a disastrous miscalculation by emboldening the Taiwan secessionists to do something reckless.

China has removed certain COVID-19 test requirements for people flying in from countries like the United States and shortened the pre-departure quarantine period for some inbound travelers, as it finetunes its stringent measures to cope with the Omicron variant, Reuters has reported.

The slight relaxations were made in response to factors including the "characteristics of coronavirus variants", according to notices from Chinese embassies and consulates that did not provide further details.

From Friday, travelers from Dallas, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle will no longer need an RT-PCR test seven days before

they fly, or any antibody tests, according to notices issued yesterday from the Chinese embassy in the United States and several consulates.

According to Reuters, those travelers will still need to do two RT-PCR tests within 48 or 24 hours of their flights - depending on which airport they are flying out of - plus another pre-flight antigen test, those notices showed.

Meanwhile, at a media briefing yesterday, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus described China's "zero-COVID" strategy as "not sustainable" after similar remarks last week drew sharp criticism from China.



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen

EU RUSHES OUT \$300 BILLION ROADMAP TO DITCH RUSSIAN ENERGY

THE European Union's executive arm moved yesterday to jump-start plans for the 27-nation bloc to abandon Russian energy amid the Kremlin's war in Ukraine, proposing a nearly 300 billion-euro (\$315 billion) package that includes more efficient use of fuels and faster rollout of renewable power.

The European Commission's investment initiative is meant to help the 27 EU countries start weaning themselves off Russian fossil fuels this year. The goal is to deprive Russia, the EU's main supplier of oil, natural gas and coal, of tens of billions in revenue and strengthen EU climate policies.

"We are taking our ambition to yet another level to make sure that we become independent from Russian fossil fuels as quickly as possible," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said in Brussels when announcing the package, dubbed REPowerEU.

With no end in sight to Russia's war in Ukraine and European security shaken, the EU is rushing to align its geopolitical and climate interests for the coming decades. It comes amid troubling signs that have raised concerns about energy supplies that the EU relies on and have no quick replacements, including Russia

cutting off member nations Poland and Bulgaria after they refused a demand to pay for natural gas in rubles.

The bloc's dash to ditch Russian energy stems from a combination of voluntary and mandatory actions. Both reflect the political discomfort of helping fund Russia's military campaign in a country that neighbors the EU and wants to join the bloc.

An EU ban on coal from Russia is due to start in August, and the bloc has pledged to try to reduce demand for Russian gas by two-thirds by year's end. Meanwhile, a proposed EU oil embargo has hit a roadblock from Hungary and other landlocked countries that worry about the cost of switching to alternative sources.

In a bid to swing Hungary behind the oil phaseout, the REPowerEU package expects oil-investment funding of around 2 billion euros for member nations highly dependent on Russian oil.

Energy savings and renewables form the cornerstones of the package, which would be funded mainly by an economic stimulus program put in place to help member countries overcome the slump triggered by the coronavirus pandemic.

Von der Leyen said the price tag includes about 72 billion euros for grants and 225 billion euros for loans.

There is a push to fund energy efficiency and renewables.

The European Commission also proposed ways to streamline the approval processes in EU countries for renewable projects, which can take up to a decade to get through red tape. The commission said approval times need to fall to as little as a year or less.

It put forward a specific plan on solar energy, seeking to double photovoltaic capacity by 2025. The commission proposed a phased-in obligation to install solar panels on new buildings.

The European Commission's recommendations on short-term national actions to cut demand for Russian energy coincide with deliberations underway in the bloc since last year on setting more ambitious EU energy-efficiency and renewable targets for 2030.

These targets are part of the bloc's commitments to a 55% cut in greenhouse gases by decade-end compared with 1990 emissions and to climate neutrality by 2050.

In that context, the commission urged EU lawmakers in European Parliament and national governments to deepen their own proposals for 2030 energy-savings and renewables objectives. MDT/AP



India A wall collapsed in a salt packaging factory in western India yesterday, killing at least 12 workers and injuring another 13, a government administrator said. The workers stocking salt in bags were found buried in the wall debris in the factory in Morbi district, 215 kilometers west of Gandhinagar, the capital of Gujarat state, said J.B. Patel, the district officer. The injuries of 13 workers, mostly fractured bones, were not life-threatening, Patel said.



United Nations chief launched a five-point plan to jump-start broader use of renewable energies, hoping to revive world attention on climate change as the U.N.'s weather agency reported that greenhouse gas concentrations, ocean heat, sea-level rise, and ocean acidification reached record highs last year. "We must end fossil fuel pollution and accelerate the renewable energy transition before we incinerate our only home," Antonio Guterres said. "Time is running out."

European Union A EU-backed war crimes court sentenced two leaders of a Kosovo war veterans' association to 4 1/2 years in prison yesterday for witness intimidation and obstructing justice. The Hague-based Kosovo Specialist Chambers said Hysni Gucati and Nasim Haradinaj prevented prosecutors "from effective investigations and prosecutions" of former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army. The court found the two men guilty of intimidating witnesses by publicizing leaked confidential documents "pertaining to the investigations and internal work" of the prosecutors.

Mount Everest Hundreds of climbers who scaled Mount Everest over the last few days taking advantage of favorable weather conditions have begun to return safely down the mountain. Among them are climbers who set records on the world's highest peak, including the first Ukrainian woman to scale Mount Everest. A Nepali Sherpa broke her own record reaching the 8,849-meter summit for the 10th time — the most times any woman has climbed Mount Everest. Lakpa Sherpa, 48, said she is next planning to scale the world's second-highest peak, K2 in Pakistan.