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**JUNKET BOSS LEVO CHAN TO BE CHARGED OF HEADING A CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION, ILLICIT EXPLOITATION OF GAMBLING AND MONEY LAUNDERING: REPORT**

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**FBI SEARCHED TRUMP'S ESTATE IN MAJOR ESCALATION OF PROBE**

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AP PHOTO



**South Korea** Some of the heaviest rain in decades swamped Seoul region, turning its streets into car-clogged rivers and sending floods cascading into subway stations. At least eight people were killed — some by drowning in their homes — and seven others were missing, while more rain was forecast. Deserted cars and buses were scattered across streets as the water receded yesterday and workers cleared uprooted trees, mud and debris with excavators.

AP PHOTO



**Japan** Nagasaki paid tribute to the victims of the U.S. atomic bombing 77 years ago on Aug. 9, with the mayor saying Russia's war on Ukraine showed the world that another nuclear attack is not just a worry but "a tangible and present crisis." Mayor Tomihisa Taue, in his speech yesterday at the Nagasaki Peace Park, said nuclear weapons can be used as long as they exist, and their elimination is the only way to save the future of humankind.

AP PHOTO



**Russia** A Russian rocket yesterday successfully launched an Iranian satellite into orbit. The Soyuz rocket lifted off as scheduled at 8:52 a.m. Moscow time (0552 GMT) yesterday from the Russia-leased Baikonur launch facility in Kazakhstan. About nine minutes after the launch, it placed the Iranian satellite called Khayyam into orbit. It's named after Omar Khayyam, a Persian scientist who lived in the 11th and 12th centuries.

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# RELIEF FOR ALL...

**Ho Iat Seng promises that the second batch of economic relief measures is 'for all residents of Macau', thus excluding any gov't support for blue-cards**

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**ECONOMY**

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**MACAU-BEIJING ENTITIES FOR COLLABORATION IN TAIPA HOSPITAL ESTABLISHED**

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**DAILY GAMING REVENUES RECOVERING: BERNSTEIN**

Average daily gaming revenue generated by the Macau SAR gaming sector recovered to MOP36 million (US\$4.5 million) last week, channel checks carried out by brokerage Sanford C. Bernstein indicate. Overall, local casinos raked in a total of MOP250 million between August 1 and 7, with an average daily revenue of MOP36 million. The figure represents a recovery from last month as the city faced its largest outbreak, causing casinos to close for 10 days as part of the city's measure to deter the spread of Covid-19. Entries and exits of the city also recovered to some 6,400 last week, a surge compared to the 734 border crossings in the week prior.

**CONSTRUCTION WORKERS DAILY WAGE AT MOP795**

The average daily wage of construction workers increased by 1.0% quarter-to-quarter to MOP795 in the second quarter of 2022. The average daily wages of local workers (MOP976) and non-resident workers (MOP719) increased by 0.8% and 0.5% respectively. In terms of main occupations, the average daily wages of air-conditioning mechanics (MOP973), welders (MOP850) and electricians and electrical workers (MOP863) rose by 8.0%, 3.3% and 2.3% respectively quarter-to-quarter, while the wages of bricklayers and plasterers (MOP755), concrete formwork carpenters (MOP746) and structural iron erectors (MOP766) fell by 2.8%, 2.1% and 1.6% respectively.

**LAND TRANSPORT PLAN CONSULTATION TO END AUG. 22**

Following the city's recovery from the recent Covid-19 outbreak, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) has announced that the consultation period for the Land Transport (2021-2030) Plan has been extended, with its end date postponed to August 22. The originally planned three sessions of trade-oriented and public consultation will also resume. The first session will be held tomorrow and accommodate only associations and public utility entities. The remaining two sessions will target members of the public and be held this coming Sunday and next Thursday.

**CE AT PLENARY**

# SIZE OF GAMING INDUSTRY ESTIMATED TO BE AROUND 25% OF THE GDP

**RENATO MARQUES**

**T**HE forecasted size of the Macau gaming industry should be around 25% of the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the Chief Executive (CE), Ho Iat Seng said yesterday at the Legislative Assembly (AL).

The CE was at the AL for a Q&A session with the lawmakers on the policy address for this year. Responding to lawmaker Lei Chan U on the perceived results of the economic diversification, he said, "[in the future] MICE and gaming cannot be below 40% of the GDP, because most of our [government] receipts come from these sectors," a statement that, together with the previously-mentioned intention that MICE can represent a share of around 15%, placed the gaming industry share at about 25%.

Reviewing the figures for 2020 and 2021, Ho noted the gaming sector contributed some 21.3% of GDP in 2020. This share increased to 28% last year, he said, hinting again that such a size is "ideal" for Macau's intention of being less reliant on this industry.

Ho also mentioned that the Hotels and Restaurant industry together could only reach some 2.7%, a percentage similar to the figure for the industrial sector (2.3%), but, "We need to understand that these [hotels and restaurants] are the sectors that

RENATO MARQUES



hire more staff and that can easily help to solve the unemployment rate."

Also growing significantly in 2021 was the Retail sector which recovered from 6.9% in 2020 to over 10% last year. Nonetheless, the CE sees an added potential for this sector to represent at least 15% of GDP.

Already representing around 15% was the banking and insurance sector which was accountable for a 14.5% share in 2021, but Ho said this was not enough.

"The banking and insurance

sector figure of 15% is not that high. We did a forecast and we see that we can reach more than that. Also, if we make an extra effort, the retail sector can also reach more than 15%. We are already forecasting this for 2023 and 2024."

The CE also noted that the times when the gaming industry represented some 65% of Macau's GDP are gone and are unlikely to return.

"The gaming sector share was 65% back in 2013 and 2014, but this was not healthy. With the distribution we are planning for the

five main sectors, we can effectively diversify. Of course, we can see that [income from gaming] taxes collected was much higher, but we need healthy development in line with our country."

"We are well aware that the taxes collected [from other sectors] are low and that we cannot push them to pay more as they cannot support that, but we also know that with only around 20% (from gaming) we can basically cover all our [government] expenses. The goal is very clear," the CE concluded.

## Junket mogul Levo Chan officially indicted

**T**HE former CEO of Macau Legend and chairman of junket Tak Chun Group, Levo Chan, will be indicted on charges of founding and heading a "secret association or society", illicit exploitation of gambling, and money laundering.

According to a report issued by the Macao Daily News, the Public Prosecution Office has concluded its investigation of Chan, along with eight associates.

He is the only one of the nine to have been detained in prison.

The charges were similar to the charges against junket mogul Alvin Chau.

Chan, head of the second-largest junket operator in Macau, was arrested for allegedly engaging in illegal gambling activities, running a crime syndicate and money laundering, as authorities stepped up their crackdown on illicit capital outflows from the

Chinese mainland.

According to local reports, Chan could face a maximum possible sentence of 20 years in prison.

In January this year, just a few months after Chau was arrested, police authorities announced that, during their investigation, Chan had failed to cooperate and that they had found a significant amount of evidence in the form of computer data, print documents and cash in their offices and residences. LV



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CE AT PLENARY

# Lawmakers mostly concerned with second batch of MOP10b subsidy

RENATO MARQUES

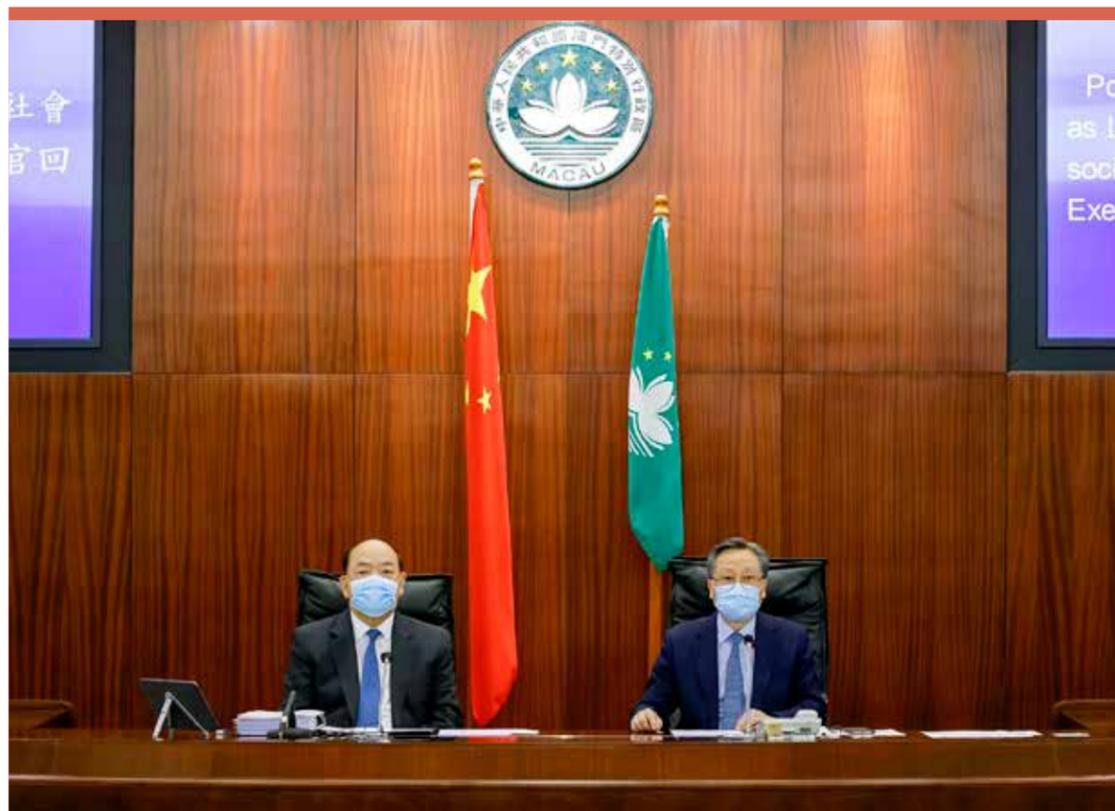
**T**HE second batch of financial support to local residents announced by the government in mid-July and which comprises a total of 10 billion patacas topped the list of concerns of lawmakers yesterday at the Legislative Assembly (AL), in a session solely dedicated to a mid-year Q&A with the Chief Executive (CE), Ho Iat Seng on the policy address for 2022.

Practically all the 31 lawmakers that posed questions to the CE addressed this topic in one way or another. Most of them wanted Ho to explain how the general subsidy to the residents would be operationalized.

On the topic, the CE explained that the Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lei Wai Nong, is still collecting feedback from the different sectors to finalize the rules. In doing so, the aim is to ensure that, this time, all local residents will be included.

“On July 16 we published a report that clearly explains our direction and purpose for this second batch of MOP10 billion. It was very clear (at that time) that these are measures of general support for all residents of Macau,” Ho said, refuting the idea that the government is taking too long to put these measures into practice.

“It is not taking too long. We need to hear the [opinion of] society and several associations and people have been presenting their opinions to the Secretary. We will analyze all of them.” Ho explained that only after the first batch of another MOP10 billion in subsidies is distributed – most of which will be oriented towards workers who were laid off or temporarily unemployed over the



past three years – will the government initiate preparations for the second batch.

“It was only on August 3 that we were able to be cleared of the classification as a high-risk area for Covid-19 infection, so we need to wait a little more and calculate a way to find [financial] support for these measures. It’s not just about making measures; we also need to see if there is enough support to implement them.”

Responding to those who criticized the government for providing a slow response, the CE said that the government has, in fact, “rushed the work to be able to deliver [from August 17] the first batch of the economic relief directed to those more in need.” The CE explained that otherwise, if the normal procedures were

followed, such money would only be available to be distributed by October or November this year, after the legislative summer break.

Taking into account the need to submit a new amendment to the 2022 budget law to include the new subsidies batch and accompanying work, the CE said the government would probably only be positioned to release this general subsidy by November or December this year.

## ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM MOVING FORWARD

Questioned by lawmaker Chui Sai Peng on progress on the public administration reform, the CE said that his government has been accelerating work on the much-needed reforms. Further-

more, thus far in the almost three years of governing, restructuring has been enforced on a total of 30 public services, four of which have been canceled.

Regarding public funds, Ho said that this government has promoted mergers and changes that reduced the previous 23 funds to the current 18.

Promising to continue to enforce the quota of around 34,000 civil servants, the CE said that the government has been putting efforts into electronic government tools to “alleviate the pressure on frontline workers.”

“For this year, we will propose the amendment to the Statute of Personnel of the Public Administration of Macau (ETAPM). This will be presented to the AL in August [this month].”

## AVENIDA DE WAI LONG PROJECT TO BE RECLASSIFIED

In a reply to lawmaker Ma Io Fong, the CE also confirmed that the public housing project initially planned for the Avenida de Wai Long will be reclassified, moving from a general economic housing project to a special project aiming at the so-called “sandwich class” – that is, the intermediate class that does not meet the criteria to apply for economic subsidy with public housing acquisitions but who also lack the financial capacity to attain a housing unit on the private market.

On the topic, Ho said that most likely the Wai Long project would be reclassified to target this intermediate class that comprises most of the younger generations.

This comes from the fact that a study commissioned by the government and conducted by the University of Macau has found that the 24,000 units being built at Zone A of the new landfills would be sufficient to fulfill the needs of the eligible residents.

“The younger generations are also mostly working in the Cotai area, so this housing project [at Wai Long] may be more suitable for them,” Ho said, noting that the project is currently at the design stage and will be subject to further changes regarding the number of housing units available. This is due to the need to increase the living area of the apartments so they are close to the floor area typical of the private housing market.

The CE also said that the government aims to deliver the bill to regulate access to this new type of housing by the end of this year.

## Subsidies to TNR not a gov't policy

**T**HE Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng said that there are “many people in society with their own opinions, but they do not reflect the position or the policies of the government” when questioned on opinions recently aired among society about a potential distribution of 3,000 patacas to non-resident workers (TNR).

“This financial support is

not aimed at TNR. This idea has nothing to do with what we presented to the public on July 16 [when the government announced the subsidy]. As a government, we need to hear all opinions but we cannot accept them all,” he reaffirmed.

In response to an intervention by lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho, Ho reaffirmed that the call for the 3,000 patacas subsidy or voucher

to TNR was a proposal from the associations and that the government only heard those opinions and proposals, accusing Pereira Coutinho of misleading people with his statements and interventions.

Last week, the Macau Chamber of Commerce proposed that the government provide a 3,000 pataca subsidy for blue-card holders as part of the city’s second round of MOP10 billion pataca stimulus amid the pandemic.

The suggestion was put forward after collecting and analyzing opinions from different sectors. **RM**



# NEAR 150 EX-OFFSHORE COMPANIES CONVERT TO NORMAL OPERATIONS

ACCORDING to the government, 147 former offshore companies have retained their existing business names and started operating without an offshore license.

The disclosure was made by Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) in response to lawmaker Lei Chan U's written enquiry dated June 1. The Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) has been consulted on the matter, DSAL emphasized.

Director Wong Chi Hong of DSAL pointed out that all ex-offshore licenses automatically expired at the end of 2022, pursuant to local laws. However, no change to their business details, such as business names or addresses, was needed for them to operate as general businesses.

Wong added that his bureau commenced a series of measures in the fourth quarter in response to the cessation of offshore businesses. Visitations have also been conducted at ex-offshore companies to survey their employment needs.



Meanwhile, between 2018 and 2020, four talk sessions had been held to familiarize affected employees with their rights. A total of 96 people had participated.

Between October 2020 and May 2022, DSAL received 10 complaints related to ex-offshore companies, concerning

13 local and two non-local staff members. The focus of the complaints were on salary and compensation for dismissal. Two of the 15 cases required judicial intervention.

As of June 2022, nine people with backgrounds in offshore business reported being unemployed. AL

## COVID-19

# REGULAR NATS REQUIRED FOR ENTRANTS FROM MAINLAND EXCEPT ZHUHAI

EXCEPT for those arriving directly from Zhuhai, entrants to Macau from mainland China who arrive by air or sea are required to take two tests in three days upon arrival in Macau, the government has announced.

These entrants will be tested immediately upon arrival in Macau. They will not be charged for this test, which will be considered the first of the two-test requirement. Within the following two days, they will be required to take another test at their own cost.

They are also required to demonstrate negative SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid test (NAT) results issued within seven days to board

their flights or ferries.

Meanwhile, as the city gradually resumes normal activities, ferry services between Macau and Shenzhen are also being added. Sixteen departures will be operated each day. Two will be bound for the Exterior Harbor and six for Taipa between 9:15 a.m. and 5:45 p.m. The same number of ferry services will run in the opposite direction between 11 a.m. and 5:45 p.m.

Both governments remind prospective passengers to prepare their health codes at both sides of the border to facilitate smooth passage. Entering Shenzhen, passengers are required to hold two-day negative NAT results. AL



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# Entities for Macau-Beijing collaborations in Taipa Hospital established

ANTHONY LAM

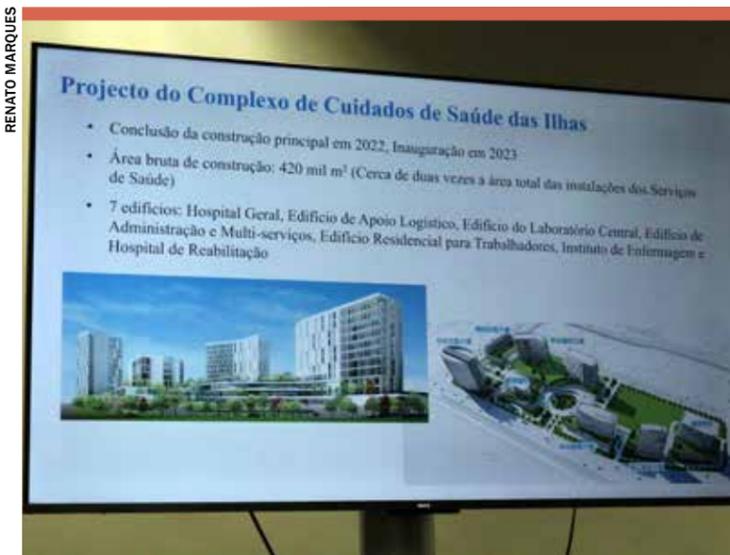
**T**WO entities will be separately launched in preparation for the operations and development of the future public hospital in Taipa, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng announced in the Official Gazette.

Two dispatches have been issued for the matter.

The Preparatory Office of the Macau Medical Center/Macau Hospital of the Peking Union Medical College Hospital and The Peking Union Medical College Hospital/Macau Hospital Strategic Development Committee are the names of the two entities.

The former entity has the purpose of coordinating the preparatory work of the future public hospital in Taipa, which is commonly known as the Island Hospital, and works directly under the supervision of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture.

The latter entity has the purpose of supporting the government to effectively pro-



mote the preparatory work of the future hospital, which the government has previously said should start operations in the fourth quarter next year.

As such, both entities are set to cease power on December 31, 2023, although an extension as per government order is probable.

The committee will have eight members, with four

from mainland China under the recommendation of the National Health Commission. These members ought to be experts in the field of hospital management. One of these members will be the chair of the committee.

The remaining four members will be representatives from the Office of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Health Bureau, Financial

Services Bureau and the field of hospital management.

The rights of administration and operations of the future hospital have been assigned to the aforementioned hospital in Beijing. The government has also previously hinted on the direction of development towards Big Health and health tourism.

For the time being, no law related to the future hospital has been made. Coincidentally, the preparatory office is also vested with the power to promote the specific legislative work necessary for the operation of the new hospital.

The government has referred to the future hospital as the Islands Medical Complex. With this dispatch, the future hospital may be branded with the name of the hospital in Beijing.

Government data shows that the future hospital has a gross floor area of 276,500 square meters, which equates to the area of approximately 26 soccer fields.

Construction is expected to conclude this September, with the lab building concluding slightly later and expected to be completed in January 2023.

Medical staff may be hired from outside of Macau, according to Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong, unless Macau is capable of providing ample staff to the future hospital.

## SHANGHAI CUTS QUARANTINE REQUIREMENT FOR MACAU ARRIVALS

Shanghai has loosened its Covid-19 prevention measures for travelers from Macau, no longer requiring arrivals to undergo a weeklong central and three-day home quarantine. According to authorities, arrivals from Macau must possess two negative nucleic acid test (NAT) certificates and report to neighborhood committees, companies or hotels within 12 hours of arriving. The measures are similar to Zhuhai's requirements for Macau arrivals, which require them to present a negative NAT certificate from the 24 hours prior to their arrival. Upon arrival, travelers are also asked to take a PCR test twice within three days.

## WEATHER BUREAU MULLS ISSUING T8

The weather bureau has considered issuing typhoon signal No. 8 from midnight to dawn today depending on the development of Typhoon Mulan and changes in the local wind. Typhoon signal No. 3 remained in force since 11:30 a.m. yesterday. Under the influence of the broad circulation, its rainband will bring unsettled weather to the city. Winds reach strong wind level at Beaufort scale 6-7, occasionally reaching scale 8 with gusts, and there will be occasional heavy showers and thunderstorms, the bureau warned. The Yellow Storm Surge Warning was issued at 5 p.m. yesterday and flooding is expected to occur today and tomorrow.

## HONG KONG EASES HOME QUARANTINE FOR MACAU ARRIVALS

LYNZY VALLES

**M**ANDATORY home isolation for fully vaccinated individuals arriving in Hong Kong from mainland China and Macau has been cut from seven days to three.

The Hong Kong government announced that, from Friday, people entering under the Return2hk and Come2hk schemes will be required to quarantine at home for three days.

This is followed by four nights of self-monitoring.

Individuals will be given an electronic wristband to wear during the isolation period to ensure they do not leave home.

They are also required to undergo a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test on the fourth and sixth days after their arrival.

Arrivals from Macau will not have an amber health



code, unlike international arrivals.

The amber code prevents individuals from entering sites that check patrons' vaccination records, including restaurants, bars, gyms and beauty salons.

People who arrived on or before August 6 and are undergoing home quarantine "are considered to have completed home quarantine after 9 a.m. on Day 3 of arrival," according to the government statement.

"Under the principles of

science-based and targeted anti-epidemic measures, as well as the proper management of risks and citizen-focused facilitation, we will continue to adjust anti-epidemic measures as appropriate according to the epidemic developments and analyses of scientific data, in order to continue to guard against the importation of cases," the statement added.

Meanwhile, those arriving under quarantine-free Return2hk and Come2hk programs will not be affected.

## CARITAS

## FOOD SHARING PROJECT BENEFITS 5,600 PEOPLE

STAFF REPORTER

**T**HE Food Sharing Project of Caritas Macau has distributed emergency food packs to 5,600 people, most of whom are non-resident workers.

The project started July 25, aiming to help those in need during Macau's Covid-19 outbreak by offering them emergency food packs.

"We are hoping more people will be able to receive different types of food to support their basic needs for at least three to four days," Secretary-General Paul Pun said.

The food pack comprised around two kg of rice, two to three packs of macaroni, pasta or instant noodles, and



canned food.

Some people also received a bread roll, but this depended on the donations that Caritas had received.

According to Pun, most of those in line were non-resident workers, as their compatriots were unable to assist them given that most workers have been on unpaid leave.

Pun also said that while the project may

not be able to service all those in need due to limited resources, a "window" had been provided to allow those in need to feel supported by non-government organizations (NGOs) and the community to help some of their difficulties to be overcome.

Caritas is also currently collecting a new batch of food to launch a second round of charitable food sharing.

ANALYSIS

# ONE-CHINA PRINCIPLE CLEARLY VIOLATED BY TRIP

ZHANG YI

IT'S natural for China to feel angry and oppose the recent visit to Taiwan by United States House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, because the trip openly violates the one-China principle and challenges China's territorial integrity and sovereignty, experts said while explaining China's reaction and the severe countermeasures it has taken.

It's clear that the two sides of the Taiwan Straits are the same country, and the Taiwan question, which is purely China's internal affair, brooks no interference by foreign forces, they said.

Traveling in a military aircraft, Pelosi's second in the line of succession to the US president last week paid a high-profile "official visit to Taiwan", as her office described it in her arrival statement, and was given full protocol treatment by Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party authorities, which make no secret of pursuing "independence" in their party platform.

Pelosi's two-day trip included meeting with the island's leader Tsai Ing-wen and some "human rights" advocates, as well as visiting the island's "legislative authority".

Hundreds of millions of Chinese watched, discussed and were outraged by the provocative trip that was also followed by unprecedented countermeasures by the Chinese government, including canceling three cooperative dialogues or meetings with the defense authorities of the US, suspending climate talks, and conducting live-fire drills surrounding the Taiwan island.

Bao Chengke, assistant director at the Institute for East Asian Studies in Shanghai, said that the visit has trampled on the one-China principle and China's national sovereignty, and was a move that

AP PHOTO



in nature promoted the concept of "one China, one Taiwan".

To the Chinese side, the one-China principle is a bottom line that cannot be crossed. It has been reiterated numerous times by the Chinese government, and is firmly believed by the Chinese people, that the island of Taiwan has been an inseparable part of China's territory for 1,800 years and it's crystal clear that the two sides of the Straits belong to one China.

It was even worse that Pelosi turned a deaf ear to repeated warnings from the Chinese government and still made the trip, Bao said, adding that when something like this happens, it's reasonable for any country to feel angry and take severe countermeasures.

Lin Kuan-ting, a young man from Taiwan who is studying on

the mainland, said he opposes the visit and the US should not interfere in the Taiwan question as the island has always been a part of China. Another Taiwan student on mainland, Lin Pei-ying, said the visit seriously hurt the feelings of compatriots on both sides of the Straits, and the contradictions between the two sides are purely our family matters.

The one-China principle is a widely recognized basic norm of international relations. More than 180 countries have to date established diplomatic relations with China on the basis of their recognition of the one-China principle, according to official records.

When China and the US established diplomatic relations in 1979, the US recognized in the joint communique with China that the government of the PRC is

the sole legal government of China. Since then, the US has long been committed to not developing official relations with Taiwan.

"The one-China principle is part of the postwar international order and has become a general international consensus. As a country that thinks of itself as a champion of the 'rules-based international order', the United States should naturally abide by the one-China principle," Chinese Ambassador to the US Qin Gang wrote in an article in The Washington Post on Thursday.

"President Biden has said many times that the United States will not change its one-China policy and does not support 'Taiwan independence'. But for the 'Taiwan independence' forces, Pelosi's visit represents an exceptionally strong signal that 'the US is on

Taiwan's side'. This goes against the one-China principle, the three Sino-US joint communique and America's own commitments," the article said.

Wu Yongping, director of the Institute of Taiwan Studies at Tsinghua University, said that US support for "Taiwan independence" separatists is a fundamental reason why the Taiwan question is so difficult to resolve.

The US has tried to obscure and hollow out the one-China principle, Wu said, adding that it has colluded with "Taiwan independence" forces on the island and elevated relations with the island in various ways, including arms sales.

After the DPP came to power in Taiwan, it refused to recognize the 1992 Consensus which embodies the one-China principle, creating an increasingly tense and confrontational atmosphere across the Straits, according to Bao from the Institute for East Asian Studies.

Despite the complex situation, experts believe that the two sides of the Straits must be reunified in the future, which is also the will of the entire Chinese nation.

The mainland has great patience in dealing with the Taiwan question, and it has been working to promote integrated development and cooperation between people across the Straits in order to gradually overcome the resentment and differences and find the path of future reunification, Bao said.

Wu said the mainland's ability to resolve the Taiwan question has been increasing as well, which could be seen in the recent countermeasures, and no other forces should underestimate such ability and China's determination to safeguard its sovereignty and unity. CHINA DAILY/XINHUA

STRAIT CRISIS

# Taiwan holds drills, says China seeks control of seas

TAIWAN'S foreign minister said yesterday that China aims to control the East and South China Seas via the Taiwan Strait, describing a greater ambition to upend the Asia-Pacific status quo and prevent nations from aiding the self-governing island.

Minister Joseph Wu spoke at a news conference in Taipei as Taiwan began live-fire military drills to test combat readiness in response to ongoing Chinese exercises that have inclu-

ded launching missiles into waters off the island of 23 million people.

China says its drills were prompted by the visit to the island last week by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, but Wu said China was using her visit as a pretext. China also banned some Taiwanese food imports after the visit and cut off dialogue with the U.S. on several issues including climate change.

He said China aims to upend the status quo and

annex Taiwan, the self-governing island republic it claims as its own territory.

The drills are a rehearsal for an invasion of the island in which it seeks to prevent other countries coming to the island's assistance, Wu said.

The exercises also show China's "geostrategic ambition beyond Taiwan," Wu said.

"China has no right to interfere in or alter" the Taiwanese people's democratic process or interaction

with other nations, he said.

Taiwan and the mainland are separate jurisdictions with "neither subordinate to the other," Wu said.

Since Thursday, China has sent military ships and planes across the midline in the Taiwan Strait and launched missiles into waters surrounding the island. Ignoring calls to calm tensions, Beijing has extended the exercises that amount to a blockade without announcing when they will end.

MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



AP PHOTO



In this early 2022 photo provided by Global Witness, a new rare earth mine is dug into the side of a mountain in Pangwa, Kachin

## 'THE SACRIFICE ZONE'

# Myanmar bears cost of green energy

DAKE KANG, VICTORIA MILKO & LORI HINNANT

**T**HE birds no longer sing. The fish no longer swim in rivers that have turned a murky brown. The animals do not roam, and the cows are sometimes found dead.

The people in this northern Myanmar forest have lost a way of life that goes back generations. But if they complain, they, too, face the threat of death.

This forest is the source of several key metallic elements known as rare earths, often called the vitamins of the modern world. Rare earths now reach into the lives of almost everyone on the planet, turning up in everything from hard drives and cell-phones to elevators and trains. They are especially vital to the fast-growing field of green energy, feeding wind turbines and Tesla engines. And they end up in the supply chains of some of the most prominent companies in the world, including General Motors, Volkswagen, Mercedes, Tesla and Apple.

But an AP investigation has found that their universal use hides a dirty open secret in the industry: Their cost is environmental destruction, the theft of land from villagers and the funneling of money to brutal militias, including at least one linked to Myanmar's secretive military government. And as demand soars for rare earths along with green energy, the abuses are likely to grow.

"This rapid push to build out mining capacity is being justified in the name of climate change," said Julie Michelle Klinger, author of the book "Rare Earths Frontiers," who is leading a federal project to trace illicit energy minerals. "There's still this push to find the right place to mine them, which is a place that is out of sight and out of mind."

The AP investigation drew on dozens of interviews, customs data, corporate records and Chinese academic papers, along with satellite imagery and geological analysis gathered by the environmental non-profit Global Witness, to tie rare earths from Myanmar to the supply chains of 78 companies.

About a third of the companies responded. Of those, about two-thirds did not or would not comment on their sourcing, including Volkswagen, which said it was conducting due diligence for rare earths. Nearly all said they took environmental protection and human rights seriously.

Some companies said they audited their rare earth supply chains; others didn't or required only supplier self-assessments. GM said it understood "the risks of heavy rare earths metals" and would source from an American supplier soon.

Tesla did not respond to repeated requests for comment, and Mercedes said they contacted suppliers to learn more in response to this story. Apple said "a majority" of their rare earths were recycled and they found "no

evidence" of any from Myanmar, but experts say in general there is usually no way to make sure.

Just as dirty rare earths trickle down the supply chains of companies, they also slip through the cracks of regulation.

In 2010, Congress required companies to disclose the origin of so-called conflict minerals — tantalum, tin, gold and tungsten. But the law does not cover rare earths. Audits are left up to individual companies, and no single agency is held accountable.

The State Department, which leads work on securing the U.S. rare earths supply, did not respond to repeated requests for comment. But experts say the government weighs the regulation of rare earths against other green goals, such as the sales and use of electric vehicles. Rare earths are also omitted from the European Union's 2021 regulation on conflict minerals.

The United States offshored its rare earths mining to China in the 1980s because of environmental and cost issues. China's leader at the time, Deng Xiaoping, declared rare earths China's answer to "oil in the Middle East."

For decades the industry prospered. Then, stung by public criticism, officials in Beijing declared war on the country's dirty industries - including rare earths mining.

As mines in China shuttered, ore prices rose. Thousands of miners streamed across the border to neighboring Myanmar, home to some of the world's richest de-

posits of what are known as heavy rare earths.

"It reminds me of the European colonial attitudes towards Africa," said an industry analyst, speaking on condition of anonymity to avoid damaging ties with the Chinese government. "You just can't be relying on third-world-type mining practices in a dictatorship like Myanmar. It's not sustainable."

Guo, a Chinese miner who did not want to use his full name to talk freely, recounted primitive working conditions in Myanmar, including clouds of mosquitoes and nights spent burning logs in ramshackle cabins. The miners dug hundreds of feet deep with shovels and their bare, callused hands.

"I'm only responsible for digging the mountain up and selling it," Guo said. "The rest is none of my business....We just see if we can make money. It's that simple."

There is a name for what Myanmar has become: A "sacrifice zone," or a place that destroys itself for the good of the world.

The sacrifice is visible from the air, in toxic turquoise pools that dot the landscape covered by mountain jungles just a few years ago. Since rare earth clays in Myanmar are soft and near the surface, they can easily be scooped into these pools of chemicals. Satellite imagery commissioned by Global Witness showed more than 2,700 of these pools at almost 300 separate locations.

A villager who lives along a river some 15 miles from the cen-

ter of the mining sites said his wife used to catch and sell fish. Now the few they can catch make them ill.

"There are no fish along the creek, not even small fishes," said the villager, who asked to be anonymous for his safety. "Everything went extinct."

Militias are rampant in these northern forest frontier areas, including at least one tied to the military-backed Border Guard Force. After a coup last year, the Myanmar military or Tatmadaw is under international sanctions for human rights abuses. That means the rare earths money it gets from the militia may be fueling a violent crackdown against civilians. The Myanmar military and militia leaders did not respond to requests for comment.

For Dong, a Chinese miner, the hundreds of dollars he hands to the armed men lining the roads in Myanmar are the price of doing business. He is under no illusions about the damage from acids so strong that they corrode the shovels of his bulldozers and excavators.

"This stuff is unbelievable," he said. "It's definitely polluting."

In the meantime, villagers protest in one area in northern Myanmar where the black cardamom and walnuts still grow — for now.

"They are mining rare earth everywhere and we are no longer safe to drink water," a villager said. "There is nothing to support the children. Nothing to eat."

MDT/AP

MAR-A-LAGO

# Trump says FBI searched estate in major escalation of probe

ERIC TUCKER & MICHAEL BALSAMO, WASHINGTON

**T**HE FBI searched Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate as part of an investigation into whether he took classified records from the White House to his Florida residence, people familiar with the matter said yesterday [Macau time], a move that represents a dramatic and unprecedented escalation of law enforcement scrutiny of the former president.

Trump, disclosing the search in a lengthy statement, asserted that agents had opened up a safe at his home and described their work as an "unannounced raid" that he likened to "prosecutorial misconduct."

The search intensifies the months-long probe into how classified documents ended up in more than a dozen boxes located at Mar-a-Lago earlier this year. It occurs amid a separate grand jury investigation into efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election and adds to the potential legal peril for Trump as he lays the groundwork for another run.

Familiar battle lines, forged during a four-year presidency shadowed by FBI and congressional investigations, quickly took shape again yesterday. Trump and his allies sought to cast the search as a weaponization of the criminal justice system and a Democratic-driven effort to keep him from winning another term in 2024 — even though the Biden White House said it had no prior knowledge of it, and the current FBI director, Christopher Wray, was appointed by Trump five years ago and served as a high-ranking official in a Republican-led Justice Department.

"These are dark times for our Nation, as my beautiful home, Mar-A-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida, is currently under siege, raided, and occupied by a large group of FBI agents," Trump wrote. "Nothing like this has ever happened to a President of the United States before."

"After working and cooperating with the relevant Government agencies, this unannounced raid on my home was not necessary or



appropriate," Trump said in his statement.

Justice Department spokesperson Dena Iverson declined to comment on the search, including about whether Attorney General Merrick Garland had personally authorized it.

Trump did not elaborate on the basis for the search, but the Justice Department has been investigating the potential mishandling of classified information after the National Archives and Records Administration said it had retrieved from Mar-a-Lago 15 boxes of records containing classified information earlier this year. The National Archives said Trump should have turned over that material upon leaving office, and it asked the Justice Department to investigate.

There are multiple federal laws governing the handling of classified records and sensitive government documents, including statutes that make it a crime to remove such material and retain it at an unauthorized location. Though a search warrant does not suggest that criminal charges are near or even expected, federal officials looking to obtain one must first demonstrate to a judge that they have probable cause that a crime occurred.

Two people familiar with the matter, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation, said the search happened earlier and was related to the records probe. Agents were also looking to see if Trump had additional presidential records or any classified documents at the estate.

Trump has previously maintained that presidential

records were turned over "in an ordinary and routine process." His son Eric said on Fox News on Monday night that he had spent the day with his father and that the search happened because "the National Archives wanted to corroborate whether or not Donald Trump had any documents in his possession."

Asked how the documents ended up at Mar-a-Lago, Eric Trump said the boxes were among items that got moved out of the White House during "six hours" on Inauguration Day, as the Bidens prepared to move into the building.

"My father always kept press clippings," Eric Trump said. "He had boxes, when he moved out of the White House."

Trump emerged from Trump Tower in New York City shortly before 8 p.m. and waved to bystanders before being driven away in an SUV.

In his first public remarks since news of the search surfaced, Trump made no mention of it during a tele-town hall on behalf of Leora Levy, the Connecticut Republican he has endorsed in Tuesday's U.S. Senate primary to pick a general election opponent against Democratic U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal. Trump gave his public backing to Levy late last week, calling her yesterday the best pick "to replace Connecticut's joke of a senator."

But in a social media post, he was much more unguarded, calling the search a "weaponization of the Justice System, and an attack by Radical Left Democrats who desperately don't want me to run for President in 2024."

Other Republicans echoed

that message. GOP National Committee Chair Ronna McDaniel denouncing the search as "outrageous" and said it was a reason for voters to turn out in November.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, a Republican who is considered a potential 2024 presidential candidate, said in a statement on Twitter that it was "an escalation in the weaponization" of U.S. government agencies. Kevin McCarthy, the House Minority Leader, said in a tweet that the Justice Department "has reached an intolerable state of weaponized politicization" and said that if Republicans win control of the U.S. House, they will investigate the department.

That Trump would become entangled in a probe into the handling of classified information is all the more striking given how he tried during the 2016 presidential election to exploit an FBI investigation into his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton, over whether she mishandled classified information via a private email server she used as secretary of state. Then-FBI Director James Comey concluded that Clinton had sent and received classified information but the FBI did not recommend criminal charges because it determined that Clinton had not intended to break the law.

Trump lambasted that decision and then stepped up his criticism of the FBI as agents began investigating whether his campaign had colluded with Russia to tip the 2016 election. He fired Comey during that probe, and though he appointed Wray months later, he repeatedly criticized him too as president. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 2001 HAMILTONS CONDEMN 'SEX ASSAULT' ARREST



Former Conservative MP Neil Hamilton and wife Christine have strenuously denied allegations they carried out a serious sexual assault.

The couple have been released "pending further investigations" following five hours of questioning at Barkingside police station in Essex.

Speaking to the press after their release the Hamiltons called the allegations a "monstrous fabrication".

The Hamiltons' solicitor, Michael Coleman, said they had been questioned over accusations they had carried out indecent acts on a woman who was being raped in Ilford in May.

The Hamiltons had co-operated fully with the police and given details about their whereabouts on the night of the alleged offences, Mr Coleman added.

Neil Hamilton, 52, said: "There is no truth whatsoever in the allegations that have been made against me and my wife."

Christine Hamilton described the experience as "ghastly and humiliating" and said she did not expect charges to be brought.

"The whole thing is just nonsense on stilts," she said.

Mr and Mrs Hamilton condemned the alleged involvement in the affair of public relations consultant Max Clifford.

"The whole thing is a total fabrication and a lie and the fact that Max Clifford's name has been put to us by the police is no surprise whatsoever," said Mrs Hamilton.

The couple appeared on the steps of Barkingside police station with TV presenter Louis Theroux, who is making a programme about them.

The former MP was recently declared bankrupt after he lost a libel action against Harrods owner Mohammed Al Fayed over the so-called "cash for questions" affair.

He lost his seat in the 1997 general election to former BBC correspondent Martin Bell who ran against him on an anti-corruption ticket.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The Hamiltons' accuser, Nadine Milroy-Sloan, 28, waived her right to anonymity after she was paid £5,000 for an interview by a Sunday newspaper.

After nearly three weeks of investigations the Hamiltons were cleared as suspects by police. The case against another man named by Ms Milroy-Sloan, Barry Lehaney, was also later dropped.

The Hamiltons began a libel action against their accuser whose assets were frozen by the High Court.

Ms Milroy-Sloan - a mother-of-four from Grimsby in Lincolnshire - was prosecuted for perverting the course of justice.

In May 2003 she was found guilty and the following month was sentenced to three years imprisonment.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

### YOUR STARS

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Sudden changes regarding friendships are likely to occur if you have tried to change others. Be careful not to misplace your wallet or belongings. Take time to talk things over.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20  
You could be misinterpreted if you're not careful. Your mate may not be too sure about your intentions. Channel your energy wisely and you can score points with the boss.

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21  
Don't draw too much attention to yourself at work. You will be able to talk to your lover about future goals and perhaps make plans for the two of you to take a vacation.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
You may want to put your creative thinking cap on. You can get support from groups that you belong to if you're willing to step out on a limb and voice your opinions.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
Don't forget family obligations. You can avoid hassles by sticking to your work and refusing to get involved in gossip or idle chatter. You may find it impossible to get the rest you require.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
You will probably have to defend your mate. Try to spend more time with children and relatives. Use your quick wit to win points and friends.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
Past partners are likely to reappear. If you haven't planned a vacation, then at least try to get away for the weekend. Children may be difficult to handle.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
You need to concentrate on solving existing problems. You are best to back away from commitment. Chances to express your ideas and beliefs can bring popularity as long as you're not arrogant.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
Don't be too quick to judge. Caustic language may cause you to want to get out of the house. Think twice before you volunteer information. Don't second guess yourself, just go to it.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
Time is money and you must be ready to take action in order to reach your highest potential. Spend time by yourself to avoid any conflicts with family members.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
You will have opportunities to advance, but you may have to be willing to make some changes and possibly a residential move. Your attitude is changing rapidly and your plate is overloaded.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
Take care of your personal needs. You need to look into ways to change your self-image. Don't overlook that fact that someone you care about may be hiding something.

### The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



### SUDOKU

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

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

### WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	20	30	fine
Changchun	17	28	cloudy
Chengdu	25	36	cloudy
Chongqing	33	41	fine
Fuzhou	27	37	fine
Guangzhou	24	29	rain
Guiyang	20	31	cloudy
Haikou	25	29	rain
Hangzhou	29	40	fine
Harbin	17	26	cloudy
Hefei	27	39	fine
Nanjing	29	39	cloudy
Shanghai	29	39	overcast
Taipei	26	31	fine
Wuhan	29	38	cloudy
Hong Kong	25	28	thunderstorm
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	12	23	overcast
Frankfurt	17	31	overcast
Paris	19	38	fine
London	16	29	fine
New York	23	29	overcast

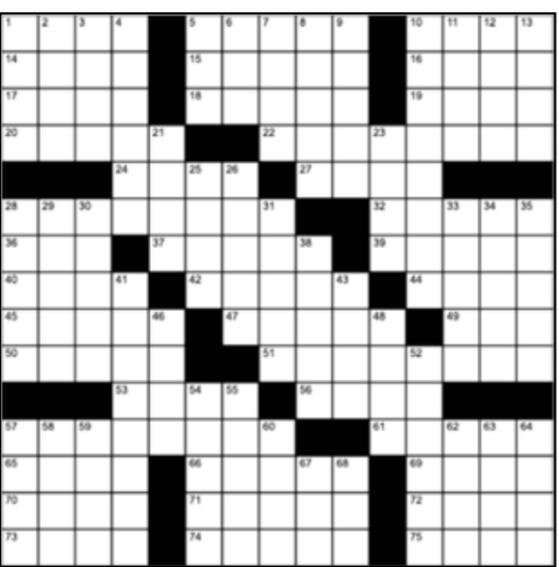
### CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Chapter of the Koran; 5- Charged; 10- Gutter site; 14- Candid; 15- Chum; 16- Radiograph; 17- Golfer Aoki; 18- Can't stand; 19- Smooth sailing; 20- Song part; 22- Hamper; 24- Second start?; 27- Waterproof canvas; 28- Doxy; 32- Open space in a forest; 36- PC key; 37- Outer coat of a seed; 39- Having auricular protuberances; 40- Neighbor of Cambodia; 42- Clock faces; 44- Rampant; 45- Gogol's "\_\_\_ Bulba"; 47- Deadly virus; 49- Awfully long time; 50- Hound's trail; 51- Scene of destruction; 53- 1/100 of a monetary unit; 56- French friend; 57- Articles to be worn on the feet; 61- Falls; 65- Sewing case; 66- Weaned pig; 69- Commedia dell'\_\_\_; 70- Mower brand; 71- We're Off \_\_\_ the Wizard; 72- Muscle injury; 73- Org.; 74- Prophets; 75- Differently;

DOWN 1- Potting need; 2- \_\_\_-daisy; 3- Be a mother to; 4- Consecrate; 5- It's a bit of cheer; 6- Doctors' org.; 7- Evening, informally; 8- Representative; 9- Puccini classic; 10- Model to be imitated; 11- Graceful horse; 12- Still life subject; 13- Observer; 21- Wagon; 23- Hankering; 25- Call for; 26- Actor Davis; 28- Thaws; 29- Son of Abraham; 30- Cross the goal line; 31- Runs through; 33- Disney mermaid; 34- Crusoe's creator; 35- Parades; 38- Hello hi; 41- Authorization; 43- Close with force; 46- Bouillabaisse, e.g.; 48- Among; 52- Rebuke; 54- Bird homes; 55- Lake in the Sierra Nevada; 57- Goat's milk cheese; 58- Western Native Americans; 59- Sharer's pronoun; 60- Wine choice; 62- Hurler Hershiser; 63- School orgs.; 64- Shrivelled, without moisture; 67- \_\_\_ Lingus; 68- French possessive;

**Yesterday's solution**

SLAB	SHAH	HAAD			
HORAE	OISE	ANDI			
OREYS	OREL	REAL			
TOA	CITE	SIERRA			
MOTH	AIRMAN				
ADVERSE	DNA				
TREAT	CAKE	WALK			
RUED	NAOMI	GOBE			
AGREEING	EVAD				
REACT	SWEETEN				
TIPTOP	EARN				
REPART	YETI	CLA			
TRAN	ICES	ESTES			
ARST	NEAT	ROUVE			
LESS	EERO	PISA			



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
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- NAM LONG | 1 BED HKD 8,500
- COLOANE V. | 1 BED HKD 9,300
- COLOANE V. | 2 BEDS HKD 10,500
- COLOANE V. | 2 BEDS HKD 10,000

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- NOVA TAIPA | 4 BEDS HKD 12,880,000
- BAI YUEN GRD. | 3 BEDS HKD 12,800,000
- MANHATTAN | 3 BEDS HKD 12,980,000
- HELLENE G. | 4 BEDS HKD 9,588,000
- NAM LONG | 1 BED HKD 3,780,000
- HELLENE G. | 2 BEDS HKD 9,900,000
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AD

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YURI KAGEYAMA, TOKYO

FASHION

# FAMED JAPANESE DESIGNER ISSEY MIYAKE DIES AT 84

ISSEY Miyake, who built one of Japan's biggest fashion brands and was known for his boldly sculpted, signature pleated pieces, has died. He was 84.

Miyake died Aug. 5 of liver cancer, Miyake Design Office said yesterday.

Miyake defined an era in Japan's modern history, reaching stardom in the 1970s among a generation of designers and artists who reached global fame by defining a Japanese vision that was unique from the West.

Miyake's origami-like pleats transformed usually crass polyester into chic. He also used computer technology in weaving to create apparel. His down-to-earth clothing was meant to celebrate the human body regardless of race, build, size or age.

Miyake even detested being called a fashion designer, choosing not to identify with what he saw as a frivolous, trend-watching, conspicuous consumption. He was well known as the designer behind Apple founder Steve Jobs' trademark black turtleneck.

Again and again, Miyake returned to his basic concept of starting with a single piece of cloth — be it draped, folded, cut or wrapped.

Over the years, he took inspiration from a variety of cultures and

AP PHOTO



Issey Miyake at the National Art Center in Tokyo on March 15, 2016

societal motifs, as well as everyday items — plastic, rattan, "washi" paper, jute, horsehair, foil, yarn, batik, indigo dyes and wiring.

He sometimes evoked images

of Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin, or collaborated with Japanese painter Tadanori Yokoo in images of monkeys and foliage in vibrant, psychedelic hues.

He also collaborated with furniture and interior designer Shiro Kuramata, photographer Irving Penn, choreographer and director Maurice Bejart, pottery maker Lu-

cie Rie and Ballet Frankfurt.

In 1992, Miyake was commissioned to design the official Olympic uniform for Lithuania, which had just gained independence from the Soviet Union.

Born in Hiroshima in 1938, Miyake was a star as soon as he hit the European runways. His brown top, which combined the Japanese sewn fabric called "sashiko" with raw silk knit, was splashed on the cover of the September 1973 issue of Elle magazine.

Miyake was also a pioneer in gender roles, asking feminist Fusae Ichikawa in the 1970s — when she was in her 80s — to be his model, sending the message that garments must be comfortable and express the natural beauty of real people.

Although he made clothes that went beyond the mundane, appearing to reach for the spiritual, he made a point to never get pretentious, always approving of the T-shirt-and-jeans look.

"Designing is like a living organism in that it pursues what matters for its well-being and continuity," Miyake once wrote in his book.

His office confirmed a private funeral had already been held and other ceremonies will not be held in accordance with Miyake's wishes. Miyake kept his family life private, and survivors are not known. MDT/AP

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TOUR DE CHINE

# Pandemic fuels sports biking boom in cycling nation

**L**INDSAY Mo couldn't go to her gym after Beijing shut down indoor sports facilities in May because of a coronavirus outbreak. So she started cycling — and soon fell in love with the sport.

"I realized a racing bicycle was quite different than a regular bike," she said. "It's very fast and exciting, and I couldn't stop anymore."

Bicycles have long been a means of transport in China and once outnumbered cars on city streets. Now cycling is increasingly also seen as a sport by an urban middle class that has benefited from China's growth into the world's second largest economy. What began as a niche sport about a decade ago has turned into a mini-boom.

Biking events organized by Beijing cycling club Qiyi tallied about 10,000 participants over the past year, with about 50% of them regulars. Nationwide, at least 20 million people are participating in the sport, according to the Chinese Cycling Association.

The pandemic has played a role, with authorities moving quickly to close non-essential businesses — including gyms — during outbreaks under a strict zero-COVID approach. Cycling, which can be done individually as well as in groups, has largely been free from restrictions that limit gatherings, especially indoors.

Rides organized by cycling

AP PHOTO



Members of the Qiyi bicycle club climb a hill on a rural road during a group ride through the Baihe River Canyon in the northern outskirts of Beijing

clubs or individual cyclists in Beijing take enthusiasts to outlying mountainous areas or by city landmarks including Tiananmen Square.

For cyclist Yang Lan, the sport also provides an escape from the daily hassles of life in the coronavirus era. "With the pandemic ... it seems to be the only way for us to run away from the terrible city life and pace," she said.

On a recent summer morning, Yang and 14 other cyclists biked along the Baihe River Canyon in rural northern Beijing despite the heat and humidity.

In full cycling gear, they pedaled their racing bicycles hard on both level roads and slopes, swea-

ting through a ride of more than 70 kilometers (45 miles) while enjoying spectacular views.

Pedaling herself forward under her own efforts gives Yang an incomparable pleasure not to be gotten from riding a motorcycle or driving a car.

"It gives you a stronger sense of integration into the natural environment around you, so I find it more interesting," said Yang, who started cycling in February, in the dead of winter, when she was looking for something new.

The boom in cycling reflects the growing popularity of outdoor activities, said Feng Baozhong, vice president of the Chinese Cycling Association.

"Especially after the pandemic, people have a desire to walk out of rooms and buildings to do sports outdoors," Feng said.

Naturally, the trend has boosted the demand for bicycles.

American bicycle brand Specialized says its Beijing stores' sales rose 20% to 30% from March to June, compared to the same period a year earlier. It would be twice as large an increase if not for a shortage of bike products, said He Dong, who is in charge of the Beijing franchised dealer of Specialized.

China's bicycle market size stood at 80 billion to 100 billion yuan (\$12 billion to \$15 billion) in 2021, said Zhou Fuyuan, fou-

nder of Magic Cycling, an online bicycle information platform in China. Sales are forecast to reach \$16.5 billion by 2026, according to online data published by Research and Markets, a market analysis firm.

Surging demand and global supply chain issues mean those wanting to buy bicycles, particularly beginner or medium-level cyclists, must wait weeks or months to get a new cycle. For every Specialized model sold in Beijing at least 10 customers are waiting for their bikes to arrive, He said.

Some choose to pay more for whatever bicycles are in stock. Joanna Lei doubled her budget and spent 60,000 yuan (\$8,900) on her first racing bicycle. She said the money was better spent than on a luxury bag.

"What you are investing in is your own body and a very good workout habit," she said. "I think it's more valuable than clothes that you wear or handbags that you use."

People will have more choices for sports and entertainment when the pandemic is over, but Feng says he expects cycling to remain popular because it's driven by China's growing affluence, growth of the sports industry and increased concern about their health because of COVID-19.

"The pursuit of health will not vanish, so I think there is a good prospect for the sustainability (of cycling)," Feng said.

The sport's popularity is also a sign of the public's growing awareness of environmental protection and pursuit of a low-carbon lifestyle.

"Such a lifestyle is probably healthier and is more beneficial to society," Yang said. "I think people now have a good sense of environmental protection and hope to do good for society." **MDT/AP**

FOOTBALL

# Real Madrid looks to keep momentum at UEFA Super Cup

TALES AZZONI, MADRID

Thursday, 3:00  
Real Madrid v  
Eintracht Frankfurt  
H 1.14, D 51, A 8.6

ODDSCHECKER.COM

**R**EAL Madrid wants to restart the new season the same way it ended the last one — winning a trophy.

Madrid won the Champions League in its final match last season, and tomorrow (Thursday, 3:00) it begins the new season by taking on Europa League winner Eintracht Frankfurt in the UEFA Super Cup in Helsinki, Finland.

It will be the teams' first competitive meeting since

AP PHOTO



the 1960 European Cup final, when Madrid won its fifth straight European title at the time with a thrilling 7-3 win at Glasgow's Hampden Park. Ferenc Puskás scored four goals for Ma-

drid and Alfredo Di Stéfano got a hat trick. Around 127,000 fans watched the match in what is still the highest attendance for a European Cup final.

Madrid is chasing its fifth Super Cup title, and first since 2017, while Frankfurt will be making its first Super Cup appearance following its shootout victory over Rangers in the Europa League final. That win ended the German club's 42-year wait for a European trophy.

Madrid ended last season on a high after comfortably winning the Spanish league and overcoming poor performances to advance in the knockout stages of the Champions League.

It eventually clinched a record 14th European title in the final against Liverpool.

The Spanish powerhouse will be mostly unchanged going into 2022-23, led by Karim Benzema following his best season ever. Vinícius Júnior and Rodrygo are also back in an attack that was dominant last season, and the midfield remains anchored by Casemiro, Luka Modric and Toni Kroos. The team's additions come with central defender Antonio Rüdiger and midfielder Aurélien Tchouaméni.

Isco Alarcón and Gareth Bale left after their contracts expired, but the club did

not replace them despite the disappointment of failing to sign Kylian Mbappé from Paris Saint-Germain. Instead Madrid is hoping for another impressive season up front from the 34-year-old Benzema.

The France striker was the top scorer in the Spanish league and the Champions League. He scored 44 goals in 45 matches with Madrid, and equaled Raúl González as the club's second-highest scorer with 323 goals, behind Cristiano Ronaldo (451).

Benzema scored twice in his two preseason games — a 2-2 draw with Mexican club América and a 2-0 win over Juventus — and did

not play in Madrid's 1-0 loss to Barcelona.

Madrid will play its Spanish league opener on Sunday at promoted Almería.

Frankfurt's season has already started. It routed second-division club Magdeburg 4-0 in the first round of the German Cup, then lost 6-1 at home to Bayern Munich in the Bundesliga opener on Friday, when the visitors led 5-0 at halftime.

The match at the Helsinki Olympic Stadium will be the first UEFA club competition final to be held in Finland, though the venue previously also staged the final of the women's European Championship in 2009. **MDT/AP**

OPINION

Gambling and the Law

Nelson I. Rose



COVID DEVASTATES MACAU CASINOS

You know you are in deep trouble when one of the leading newsletters in your industry discusses the “silver lining” in being shut down: “Macau Casino Closures Provide Some Relief from Cash Burn.” (Asia Gaming Brief)

Macau casinos have so few gamblers, in fact, so little revenue of any kind, that the government finally ordering them completely closed is a small blessing. At least this way, the casinos do not have to keep paying salaries to dealers who have no patrons.

But, of course, it's not exactly good news for casino employees.

Note that some Macau casinos are still paying their staff, even with no revenue coming in. However, even the most formerly profitable casinos cannot keep this up for too many months. At least the American-owned casinos can funnel money from the U.S. or Singapore for a while, until their shareholders rebel.

The problem is COVID, or rather the Chinese over-reaction to the disease. It has now become apparent that COVID is a pandemic only for the unvaccinated: If you get your shots and boosters, and you aren't extremely elderly or obese or otherwise already at risk, there is almost no chance you will end up in a hospital, let alone die.

Residents of Macau are already 90% vaccinated. But the Special Administrative Region (SAR) has only one hospital for the general population. And China has a zero-tolerance system. Beijing literally wants to eradicate the disease completely. An impossible goal, given that the virus is constantly mutating.

What does this mean for the industry? The timing could hardly be worse.

Macau closed its casinos for 15 days when COVID first hit in early 2020 and never recovered. Even after the Macau government let them reopen, their main source of customers, the Chinese Mainland, put one- and two-week mandatory quarantines on any resident who visited the SAR.

I taught a class in International Gaming Law at the University of Macau in May 2020. Or, should I say, I Zoomed a class. Half of my students were in Macau, but the other half were on the Mainland because the University was teaching every class remotely.

I asked one of my Macau students to visit the technically open casinos for me. He went to one of the larger ones in the city. Where there would previously have been 1,000 – 3,000 gamblers, he counted 27. That's literally 27 patrons playing slot machines and baccarat.

Of course, there could have been a few dozen more in the high-roller suites.

What makes the situation so critical, is that the bidding process for the new concessions [...]. And the present casino licensees and the satellite casinos and junket operators who technically fall under those concessions are also running out of money.

I am still confident that the present six concession and sub-concession holders will all be renewed. However, Beijing could use this disaster to allow in a Mainland company with loads of cash – perhaps a favored defense contractor? – to take over one of the six licenses.

As for the more than 40 satellite casinos, their time is coming to an end. Many are presently run by unlicensed third parties, on a revenue-sharing basis. Even if they are allowed to continue, there will have to be more oversight by the actual concession holders, and management fees rather than revenue sharing.

The junket industry has mostly already been demolished. Junket operators face not only COVID and scandals, but continuing strong opposition from Beijing. The People's Republic of China hates the billions of dollars in cash that flows out of the Mainland through Macau. And it has made it clear that it will use all its power over Macau and the border to make it stop.

Chinese authorities have closed Tibet's famed Potala Palace after a minor outbreak of COVID-19 was reported in the Himalayan region. The action underscores China's continued adherence to its “zero-COVID” policy, mandating lockdowns, routine testing, quarantines and travel restrictions, even while most other countries have reopened.

A notice on the palace's Weixin social media site said the palace that was the traditional home of Tibet's Buddhist leaders would be closed from yesterday, with a reopening date to be announced later. China says its hard-line policy has been successful in preventing

large-scale hospitalizations and deaths, while critics including the World Health Organization have decried its impact on the economy and society and said it is out of step with the changing nature of the virus and new methods of prevention and treatment.

China announced 828 new cases of domestic transmission yesterday, 22 of them in Tibet. The majority of those cases showed no symptoms.

Meanwhile, more than 80,000 travelers remain stranded in Hainan island under requirements that they consistently test negative for the virus in coming days before being allowed to leave.

AP PHOTO



A jumping spider (*E. arcuata*) exhibiting leg curling during a REM sleep-like state

DO SPIDERS SLEEP? STUDY SUGGESTS THEY MAY SNOOZE LIKE HUMANS

MADDIE BURAKOFF, NEW YORK

IT'S a question that keeps some scientists awake at night: Do spiders sleep?

Daniela Roessler and her colleagues trained cameras on baby jumping spiders at night to find out. The footage showed patterns that looked a lot like sleep cycles: The spiders' legs twitched and parts of their eyes flickered.

The researchers described this pattern as a “REM sleep-like state.” In humans, REM, or rapid eye movement, is an active phase of sleep when parts of the brain light up with activity and is closely linked with dreaming.

Other animals, including some birds and mammals, have been shown to experience REM sleep. But creatures like the jumping spider haven't gotten as much attention so it wasn't known if they got the same kind of sleep, said Roessler, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Konstanz in Germany.

Their findings were published Monday in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Roessler and her team

dug into the sleep question after she discovered the spiders hanging at night from threads of silk in their lab containers. She had recently scooped up some jumping spiders to study, a common species with a furry brown body and four pairs of big eyes.

“It was just the most unusual thing I've ever seen,” Roessler said of the suspended spiders.

The research showed the spiders' overnight movements looked a lot like REM in other species, she said — like dogs or cats twitching in their sleep. And they happened in regular cycles, similar to sleep patterns in humans.

Many species similar to spiders actually don't have movable eyes, which makes it hard to compare their sleep cycles, explained study co-author Paul Shamble, an evolutionary biologist at Harvard University.

But these jumping spiders are predators that move their retinas around to change their gaze while they hunt, Shamble said. Plus, the young spiders have a see-through outer layer that gives a clear window into their bodies.

“Sometimes as a biologist, you just get really,

really lucky,” Shamble said.

The researchers still have to figure out if the spiders are technically sleeping while they're in these resting states, Roessler said. That includes testing whether they respond more slowly — or not at all — to triggers that would normally set them off.

Critters like the jumping spider are very far from humans on the evolutionary tree. Jerry Siegel, a sleep researcher who was not involved with the study, said he's doubtful that the spiders can really experience REM sleep.

“There may be animals that have activity in quiet states,” said Siegel, of the UCLA Center for Sleep Research. “But are they REM sleep? It's hard to imagine that they could be the same thing.”

But Barrett Klein, an entomologist at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse who was also not involved with the study, said it was exciting to find REM-like signs in such a distant relative. Many questions remain about how widespread REM sleep is and what purpose it might serve for species, he said.

REM sleep is “still very much a black box,” Klein said. MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



EU The leaders of Estonia and Finland want fellow European countries to stop issuing tourist visas to Russian citizens, saying they should not be able to take vacations in Europe while the government of Russia carries out a war in Ukraine. Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas wrote yesterday on Twitter that “visiting Europe is a privilege, not a human right” and that it is “time to end tourism from Russia now.”

AP PHOTO



Kenyans are voting today [Macau time] in an unusual presidential election, where a longtime opposition leader who is backed by the outgoing president faces the brash deputy president who styles himself as the outsider and a “hustler.” The election is considered close, and East Africa's economic hub could see a presidential runoff for the first time. Economic issues such as widespread corruption could be of greater importance than the ethnic tensions that have marked past votes with sometimes deadly results.

AP PHOTO



USA A Southwest Airlines flight attendant suffered a compression fracture to a vertebra in her upper back during a hard landing last month in California, according to federal safety investigators. The National Transportation Safety Board said the impact of landing was so hard that the flight attendant thought the plane had crashed. She felt pain in her back and neck and could not move, and was taken to a hospital.