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GROUP EXPECTS PROSPERITY INDEX TO REMAIN LOW FROM AUGUST TO NOVEMBER, STILL POINTS FINGER AT THE JUNE 18 COVID OUTBREAK

MARGARINE SAMPLES RETAILED IN MACAU FAIL CONTAMINANT TEST IN HONG KONG

THE LABOR BUREAU WILL HOST A YOUTH EMPLOYMENT FAIR AT THE VENETIAN NEXT MONTH, OFFERING NEARLY 1,000 VACANT POSITIONS

Philippines Gunmen killed three soldiers in an ambush in the southern Philippines yesterday in violence that coincided with the president's visit to the region to pledge support for a 2014 peace deal with Muslim rebels that has eased decades of fighting. There was no indication the attack on the soldiers in the island province of Basilan was connected to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s attendance at a ceremony with former Muslim rebel leaders in another southern province.



G7 The Group of Seven major economies have agreed to take a tougher, more coordinated stance toward China when it comes to trade, Germany's economy minister said yesterday. After a two-day meeting with fellow G-7 officials, Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection Robert Habeck told reporters that discussions about China were part of an effort to ensure high international trade standards and to prevent Beijing from using its economic might to steamroll other nations.



South Korea The leaders of South Korea and Japan will meet next week on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in New York, Seoul officials said yesterday, in what would be the countries' first summit in nearly three years amid tensions over history. The two sides have agreed on a meeting between South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and are discussing the exact timing, Kim Tae-hyo, a deputy national security director for Yoon, told reporters.

More on backpage

NOT SO NEAR

Local authorities distrust WHO's analysis that the end of Covid is 'in sight', saying it will heed to Beijing's recommendations

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SURVEY
NEARLY 50% YOUTH OPTING FOR GIGS DUE TO FLEXIBILITY



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**CE LEADS
DELEGATION TO
HENGQIN**

The Chief Executive (CE) Ho Iat Seng is leading a government delegation to Hengqin in Zhuhai, to attend the fourth meeting of the Administrative Committee of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin; the Guangdong-Macao Cooperation Joint Conference 2022; and a ceremony to mark the completion of construction of the Customs Supervision Building serving the Cooperation Zone's "second-tier" tariff area. While the CE is away, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, will be Acting CE, while the other four secretaries are part of the delegation.

**FOREIGN
EXCHANGE
RESERVES AT
MOP212.9B**

The preliminary estimate of Macau SAR's foreign exchange reserves amounted to MOP212.9 billion (USD26.34 billion) at the end of August 2022. The reserves increased by 1.4% from the revised value of MOP210.0 billion for the previous month, according to data provided by the Monetary Authority of Macao. The SAR's foreign exchange reserves at end-August 2022 represented 10 times the currency in circulation or 85.6% of pataca M2 at end-July 2022. The trade-weighted effective exchange rate index for the pataca rose 0.36 points month-to-month and 7.11 points year-on-year to 110.3 in August 2022, implying that the exchange rate of the pataca grew against the currencies of Macau's major trading partners.

ECONOMY

GROUP EXPECTS PROSPERITY INDEX TO REMAIN LOW FROM AUGUST TO NOVEMBER

ANTHONY LAM

THE Macau Economic Association has announced that it expects the city's Prosperity Index to remain at a low level – 1.8 or 1.9 points – from August to November, with the July index at 1.2 points.

The index for August has not yet been released, but the association estimates it to be 1.8 points.

Justifying the disappointing outcome and pessimistic estimation, the association is pointing the finger at the June 18 Covid-19 outbreak, which put nearly 2,000 people in medical or semi-medical confinement, during which time six elderly patients succumbed to the disease.

Tourist arrival figures, hotel occupancy rates and gross gambling revenue (GGR) were also seismically impacted by the outbreak – not to mention that commercial activities were nearly completely suspended for 13 days in mid-July.

Moreover, the association



pointed out, the M2 money supply has fallen for the past nine months. Cargo imports, the only

indicator used to calculate the Prosperity Index, which remained satisfactory in June, also saw

a year-over-year plunge of 71.5% and month-on-month plunge of 58.2% in July to MOP4.39 billion. This brought the score of this indicator from 8 points to zero points, explaining the low index for July.

Commenting on the forecast for the August index, the association pointed out that the GGR in August was nearly MOP2.2 billion, with a gradual warming of the tourism market.

Discussing the overall economic situation and outlook, the association highlighted that the pressure on an interest rate increase for local banks will become more obvious. Judging from the US Consumer Price Index (CPI) for August being 8.3% higher than for July, the market expects the Federal Reserve to further increase interest rates to 0.75%.

It worries that if the American interest rates rise as forecast, banks in Macau will feel pressure to follow suit, owing to the fact that their costs will rise under such conditions. However, it added that local people – mortgagors, for example – will see heavier burdens in terms of interest. As such, the recovery of the local economy will experience greater uncertainties as spending power will inevitably shrink.

The association added that mainland China will represent a strong backing for Macau's recovery.

Margarine samples retailed in Macau fail contaminant test in Hong Kong

ANTHONY LAM

THE Hong Kong Consumer Council has announced that it has detected various levels of food processing contaminants in 15 margarine samples that include products being sold in Macau.

The council regularly runs quality tests on various products and publishes the results as stories in its monthly publication.

In this recent test on butter, margarine and spread products, the council included 28 samples – 12 butter and 15 margarine and spreads. In terms of chemical contaminants or toxins,



the council detected no 3-MCPD or glycidol in all of the 12 butter samples. The latter chemical is genotoxic, the council pointed out.

As for the 15 samples of margarine and spreads containing vegetable oils,

over 80% – specifically 13 samples – were detected as including the toxic 3-MCPD, while over 90% or 15 samples were found with the genotoxic carcinogen glycidol. The council added that a sample of the afore-

mentioned carcinogen has exceeded the maximum level of European Union's (EU) standard.

Butter, meanwhile, was found to have a relatively higher content of total fat, saturated fatty acids (SFAs) and trans fatty acids (TFAs). The council noted that their risks to health should not be overlooked.

Excessive consumption of 3-MCPD over a prolonged period has been found to adversely affect the kidney functions, central nervous system, and male reproductive system of experimental animals. On the other hand, glycidol, when hydrolyzed, is believed to

be a cause of cancer.

The product Daisy Spread contained both butter and vegetable oil but has not been found to be contaminated with either glycidol or 3-MCPD.

At the same time, Lurpak Salted Spreadable was tested for glycidol. President's Ambassador Culinary Fat Blend (Unsalted), Flora Light Spread, Meadows Spread with Sunflower Oil, Snow Brand NeoSoft Spread, Meiji Butter Soft and Olive Grove Classic Spread Butter were all tested for both 3-MCPD and glycidol.

The council also reminded people of the need for mild consumption of such spreads to reduce their sodium intake. It also found discrepancies between the labelled and actual nutrient contents in half of all samples.

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COVID-19

Macau spectates as WHO announces pandemic end 'in sight'

RENATO MARQUES

LOCAL authorities are not yet trusting the optimistic words of the World Health Organization (WHO) director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus who on Wednesday announced that the end of the Covid-19 pandemic "is in sight."

Local authorities said on the topic yesterday that they prefer to wait and keep observing the development of the pandemic as well as following the guidelines coming from both the WHO and China's central government on the matter.

When questioned on the matter, the acting division head for health promotion at Health Bureau (SSM), Valerie Wong, said that the SSM and the government are "observing and evaluating constantly on the matter, as well as following the recommendations from the WHO regarding the pandemic as well as mainland authorities," adding also that the measures decided upon for Macau are "related to our [Macau's] reality and according to our plan of tackling the pandemic."

On Wednesday, during a virtual press conference, the WHO director-general said that the world has never been in a better position to end the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We are not there yet. But the

FLORA TANG



A red code zone in June

end is in sight," the official remarked, based on the figures of the weekly reported deaths caused by the disease, which are the lowest since March 2020.

It is estimated that over the course of almost three years the disease and health complications resulting from Covid-19 infections have caused the death of almost 6.5 million people and infected over 606 million.

Nonetheless, the optimistic words of Tedros did not follow any announcement of less restrictive measures, with the director-general advising the governments to "take a hard look at their policies and strengthen them for Covid-19 and future viruses," while urging them to vaccinate 100% of their high-risk groups and keep testing for the virus.

"Now is the time to run harder

and make sure we cross the line and reap the rewards of all our hard work," Tedros reaffirmed.

OMICRON VACCINES STILL UNDER EVALUATION

To an inquiry from the media on the possibility of Macau acquiring a new type of vaccine, namely one specially designed for the Omicron variant of the virus that has been rolled out already in

several countries by two different manufacturers, health authorities said that they are still analyzing the data from the use of these vaccines to evaluate whether these vaccines are or are not adequate for Macau.

On the matter, Wong said, "After the evaluation, if we find that these are adequate, we can promote the necessary changes to our vaccination program."

Local authorities have no plans to reduce restrictions for Golden Week

RENATO MARQUES

LOCAL authorities have no plans, for the time being, to reduce the border restrictions in place ahead of the National Day holiday "Golden Week," which takes place in the first week of October.

Questioned on the topic, the acting division head for health promotion at Health Bureau (SSM), Valerie Wong said, "At this moment, we have no plan to reduce any restrictions," adding that the situation in the neighboring cities, namely Zhuhai, is experiencing instability at present.

Wong had been questioned as to whether there was any plan to facilitate the

LYNZY VALLES



entry of more visitors over the so-called "Golden Week of the National Day" as a

means of boosting tourism and local economic recovery. The same official also no-

ted that, late last week, two groups of 10 people have been called on to repeat a

nucleic acid test (NAT) after two positive results were returned from a 10-in-1 mixed sample.

According to the same official, the groups involved comprised people who had returned or arrived from Hong Kong and Taiwan and had a history of trips to several locations. She also advanced that the individual tests done on those 20 people had all returned negative results, with the authorities thinking that it might have been caused by a false positive sample as several of those involved had just finished isolation periods and some were still in the self-health management period.

She could not provide details on the CT level found, but she said that the people were all retested on the grounds of the possibility of relapse from a previous infection, which was then ruled out.

NO SCOPE TO LOWER PRICE OF INDIVIDUAL NAT

Wong also said in response to a media inquiry that there is currently no scope to reduce the prices of the NAT done in individual sampling mode, for those people who have recently recovered from Covid-19. She explained that these NATs, as they are tested individually, "have a 10-fold increase in cost over the 10-in-1 mixed sample tests," noting that the prices provided by the service suppliers (from 150 to 200 patacas) are according to the cost of the NAT.

Following such an exercise, the regular cost of a 10-in-1 NAT should be between 15 to 20 patacas each, while currently, the price of such a test type in Macau is still 45 patacas.

SURVEY

NEARLY 50% YOUTH OPTING FOR GIGS DUE TO FLEXIBILITY

STAFF REPORTER

A survey titled "gig work and youth people in Macau at digital age" published by the Macao New Chinese Youth Association (MNCYA) shows that most people agree that a stable job brings more security than gig work.

The gig economy refers to an economic model in which the self-employed make a living by taking on short-term jobs (gig work). In Macau, gig work is divided into five types: food delivery service providers, micro-workers, professional service providers, live broadcasters and taxi drivers.

The survey's results were introduced by the MNCYA's executive-director Hugo Leong, deputy executive-director Michael Leong and two research co-investigators at a press conference yesterday.

A survey shows that a total of 47% of people expressly said they were willing to accept non-permanent work (gig work) as their choice of job. Flexible working hours, the ability to accumulate working experience and earn a higher income were the main reasons cited.

FLORA TANG



Around 40% of people considered gig work to be formal work. Moreover, nearly half of those surveyed agreed that doing gig work is more feasible for them, while over half of those surveyed believed that doing gig work made it difficult to reach the expectations of their family upon them.

"The gig economy overturned the [...] traditional working mode," Leong explained, saying that gig workers could earn income through multiple jobs, not just through providing a service for a single industry or platform,

which created more ways and sources of income.

In other words, gig workers changed their working mode from selling time to selling the result of working to earn money.

"Although lower pressure and the ability to work [on their own terms] were the advantages, at the same time, this brought up some social problems such as an unclear relationship between gig workers and employers, customs and industries," said Leong.

Leong mentioned that most gig workers did not benefit from the Labour Relations Law, thus,

workers were in a disadvantaged situation during an employment relationship.

Therefore, according to the survey, compared to full-time work, people thought that the disadvantages of doing gig work were low stability, lack of space for advancement and weak stability in the source of work, with a total of 66.7%, 40.2% and 36.9%, respectively.

Meanwhile, a total of 77.8% people agreed that stable work could bring better protection for themselves, and that stability of work has a positive relationship

with a sense of achievement, happiness and security while working.

However, 68.5% people were not optimistic about their employment situation.

"Compared to situation before the pandemic, people [are] more worried about employment prospects presently," said Leong.

Regarding the employment policy of Macau government, around 27.2% people believed that the policy had an effect in helping residents to find a job.

To this end, MNCYA indicated some recommendations to the government, including that the government conduct research on the development of gig work in Macau as soon as possible, promote legislative work for the non-permanent work system and release working requirements for protecting the labor rights of gig workers.

MNCYA conducted the survey in late May and early June of 2022 by using a randomized street questionnaire to interview young people aged 18 to 34 in Macau, with a total of 805 questionnaires returned.

The survey aims to gather the perspectives of local youth on job values and the mode of gig work, to gain an in-depth understanding of the reasons they choose gig work in the digital age and the acceptance level of gig work.

AD



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Gov't to host employment fair offering 1,000 vacancies

THE Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) will host a youth employment fair at The Venetian Macao on October 8 and 9, offering nearly 1,000 vacant positions, the bureau has announced.

Nearly 60 entities from Macau and Hengqin have signed up to participate in the event, across industries such as leisure and entertainment, retail, finance, technology development, catering and construction, among others.

They are set to offer vacancies in a range of areas, including financial analysis, transport services, professional engineering, banking, hotel, docent services and retail sales.

For peripheral support, booths will be set up to provide assistance to jobseekers in terms of career planning, aptitude training, social security and youth entrepreneurship. Mock interviews and



résumé writing workshops will also be offered to jobseekers.

Jobseekers can also submit their curriculum vitae via the DSAL website prior to the fair.

With the theme of 'Youth Employment Starts Here and Now', the DSAL said that it hopes the event will build between young people and enterprises in Macau a job-matching and

communication platform, where youths can foster career development and enterprises can conduct on-site interviews to recruit the talent they need for their business.

The fair will be organized in collaboration with the Macao New Chinese Youth Association and the General Association of Chinese Students of Macau, the DSAL added. **AL**

Committee identifies winners of this year's youth awards

THE Youth Affairs Committee identified the winners of all of this year's youth awards at its second plenary meeting of the year, which was held yesterday.

Each year, the committee awards accolades to organizations to highlight the events that they held in the previous year. Usually, the committee chooses events that it considers helpful in promoting certain qualities among Macau's youth community.

This year, the Youth Activity Awards will go to Bosco Youth Service Network, the General Association of Chinese Students of Macau and the Association of Young Volunteers of Areia Preta of Macau.

The Civic Education Award, meanwhile, will go to the Macao Youth Volunteers Association, the General Association of Chi-



nese Students of Macau and the Macao Basic Law Youth Ambassador Promotion Association.

The committee also announced that this year's Youth Service Award will go to Paul Pun, Executive Director of Caritas Macau. Pun has worked in Macau for decades to promote the interests of the poor, the elderly and youth.

At the meeting, Cheong Man Fai, chief of the Youth Depart-

ment of the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ), reported the progress of the Macau Youth Index Social Survey 2022.

Cheong said that the survey would be conducted from September to November this year. Questionnaires will be distributed physically on the street and online. The results will be used by the government for policy-making purposes. **AL**

GBA 80 APPLICATIONS FOR HENGQIN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM APPROVED

STAFF REPORTER

TWO internship programs for local youth have provided a quota of 130 interns, of which, so far, 80 people have been approved, said Livelihood Affairs Bureau of Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin acting deputy-director Fong Fong Tan.

"Macau youth are the one of the main targets of the internship program. Partner organizations of the program also need to [...] meet the direction of the development of key industries in Macau," said Fong.

The two internship programs provided a quota of 130 interns, and received 544 applications from local youth. However, just 80 people have completed the program due to the pandemic.

The authorities of Macau and Hengqin have promoted some measures to attract local people to start a business and gain employment in Hengqin.

Since the development of In-Depth Cooperation Zone, the



attraction of Macau residents to Hengqin has increased significantly.

As a next step, the authorities said it will strive to start hiring staff to attract more talent such as local youth to employment in the cooperation zone by using an attractive salary and incentive system.

Meanwhile, September 17 marks the anniversary of the administrative organization of the Guangdong-Macao in-depth cooperation zone in Hengqin.

AD

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XI, PUTIN MEET IN UZBEKISTAN AS UKRAINE WAR DOMINATES

CHINESE President Xi Jinping and Russia's Vladimir Putin met for talks on boosting ties between their countries yesterday, an encounter that follows a major setback for Moscow on the battlefield in Ukraine.

The two leaders met in Uzbekistan on the sidelines of the eight-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a security alliance created as a counterweight to U.S. influence that also includes India, Pakistan and four ex-Soviet nations in Central Asia.

Along with Russian's attack on Ukraine, backdropping the summit are the brief eruption not far from the event site of hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as strains in China's relations with Washington, Europe, Japan and India due to disputes over technology, security and territory.

Speaking at the start of his one-on-one talks with Xi, Putin blasted what he described as an "ugly" effort by the United States and its allies to maintain their perceived global domination.

"Attempts to create a unipolar world have recently taken an absolutely ugly shape. They are absolutely unacceptable for the vast majority of countries on the globe," the Russian president said in opening remarks.

Xi was more careful, saying that together with Russia, China was ready to "set an example of a responsible world power and to play a leading role to take the rapidly changing world on a track of sustainable and positive development."

The SCO summit in the ancient



Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, and Chinese President Xi Jinping, right, talk during their meeting on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, yesterday

city of Samarkand is part of Xi's first foreign trip since the start of the coronavirus pandemic 2 1/2 years ago, underscoring Beijing's desire to assert itself as a regional power.

The presidents' meeting came after Russia was forced to pull back its forces from large swaths of northeastern Ukraine last week amid a swift Ukrainian counteroffensive. Ukraine regaining control of several Russian-occupied villages and cities represented Moscow's largest setback since its forces had to retreat from areas near the Ukrainian capital early in the war.

Xi's government, which said it had a "no limits" friendship with Moscow before the invasion of Ukraine in late February, has refused to criticize Russia's military actions. Beijing and India are buying more Russian oil and gas, which helps Moscow offset the

impact of Western sanctions imposed over the invasion.

"We highly appreciate the well-balanced position of our Chinese friends in connection with the Ukrainian crisis," Putin said at the start of his talks with Xi.

Russia, in turn, has strongly backed China amid tensions with the U.S. that followed a recent visit to Taiwan by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

"We condemn the provocations of the U.S. and its satellites in the Taiwan Strait," Putin told Xi.

Putin also met yesterday with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, whose country is on track to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Raisi said Moscow and Tehran were finalizing a major treaty that would bring their relations to a "strategic level."

He and Putin both criticized the U.S. at the start of their mee-

ting. Raisi accused the U.S. of breaching its obligations under Iran's nuclear deal with world powers. Putin gibe American officials, saying "They are masters of their word - they give it and then take it back whenever they want."

The Russian leader also held meetings with Central Asian leaders and planned to meet Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday.

There was no indication whether Modi might meet Xi. Relations between India and China are strained due to clashes between the countries' soldiers from a border dispute involving a remote area of the Himalayas.

Putin is also scheduled to meet one-on-one with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan. Turkey and Azerbaijan have the status of "dialogue partners" with the SCO.

Earlier this week, Azerbaijan and Armenia engaged in cross-border shelling that killed 176 troops on both sides, marking the most serious hostilities in nearly two years between the decades-long adversaries. The fighting has put Moscow, which has tried to maintain close ties with both countries, in a precarious position.

Putin's meeting with Erdogan will be closely watched for their statements on Ukraine and a July deal brokered by Turkey and the U.N. to clear the way for exports of grain and other agricultural products that were stuck at Ukraine's Black Sea ports after the Russian invasion.

The Chinese leader is promoting a "Global Security Initiative" announced in April following the formation of the Quad by Washington, Japan, Australia and India in response to Beijing's more assertive foreign policy. Xi has given few details, but U.S. officials complain it echoes Russian arguments in support of Moscow's attack on Ukraine.

The region is part of China's multibillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative to expand trade by building ports, railways and other infrastructure across an arc of dozens of countries from the South Pacific through Asia to the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

Yesterday, Xi met with President Sadyr Zhaparov of Kyrgyzstan and said Beijing supports the "early operation" of a planned railway linking China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, the Chinese foreign ministry said.

China's economic inroads into Central Asia have fueled unease in Russia, which sees the region as its sphere of influence.

Xi made a one-day visit Wednesday to Kazakhstan en route to Uzbekistan. Pope Francis was in Kazakhstan, but they didn't meet. **MDT/AP**

No sighting in northern Philippines of Chinese rocket debris

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

PHILIPPINE officials have warned of possible danger to aircraft and ships from debris from a new Chinese rocket launch that might fall in northern Philippine waters, authorities said yesterday, adding no debris has been sighted so far.

The Philippine Space Agency said China's Long March 7A rocket was launched Tuesday night from the Wenchang Space Launch Center on Hainan island. That prompted the agency to notify

Philippine authorities of potential danger in two offshore areas where the debris could crash down.

The possible "drop zones" were 71 kilometers off Burgos town in Ilocos Norte province and 52 kilometers from Santa Ana town in Cagayan province, the space agency said, citing information from a notice to pilots released by the Civil Aviation Administration of China.

Rocket parts that detach before reaching space should by design fall back offshore less

than an hour after a rocket launch, Philippine Space Agency spokesperson Tricia Zafra said.

"So far, no sighting. We continue to seek out reports," Zafra told The Associated Press. "Hopefully, no injuries or damage related to it."

The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines warned Wednesday in a notice to pilots about the possible danger posed by the debris in the two northern Philippine offshore areas.

"While debris from

CZ-7A is unlikely to fall on land features or inhabited areas in the Philippine territory, falling debris still poses a considerable threat to ships, aircraft, fishing boats, and other vessels that will pass through the drop zones," the Philippine Space Agency said in a statement Tuesday.

In July, the core stage debris of a Long March 5B rocket that was launched by China landed in Philippine waters in an uncontrolled reentry, the agency said. No damage or injuries were reported.



AP PHOTO



U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi speaks during a meeting with Taiwanese leader Tsai Ing-wen, right, in Taipei, Taiwan, Aug. 3, 2022

China slams US Senate bill supporting Taiwan's defense

DAVID RISING,
BANGKOK

CHINA'S Foreign Ministry accused the United States of violating its commitment to the "One China" principle and interfering in internal Chinese affairs yesterday, after the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations committee approved a new bill that could significantly increase American defense support for the island of Taiwan.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told reporters in Beijing that China had "lodged serious complaints" with Washington over the legislation, which still needs U.S. House and President Joe Biden's approval to become law.

"The one-China principle is the political foundation of China-U.S. relations," she said. "If the bill continues to be deliberated, pushed forward or even signed into law, it will greatly shake the political foundation of China-U.S. relations and cause extremely serious consequences to China-

-U.S. relations and peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait."

China claims the self-governing democracy of Taiwan as its own territory, and has not ruled out retaking the island by force if necessary. The sides split after a civil war in 1949 and have no official relations, with China cutting off even informal contacts following the election of independence-leaning Taiwanese leader Tsai Ing-wen in 2016.

Under its "One China" policy, the United States recognizes the government in Beijing while allowing for informal relations and defense ties with Taipei.

It takes a stance of "strategic ambiguity" toward the defense of Taiwan — leaving it open whether it would respond militarily were the island attacked.

The Taiwan Policy Act of 2022, approved by the committee on Wednesday, sets out to "support the security of Taiwan and its right of self-determination," providing billions of dollars in de-

fense funding to enhance its "counter intervention capabilities."

Democratic Sen. Bob Menendez, who co-authored the bipartisan bill with Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham, stressed that its focus is on deterrence and that China should not see it as a threat.

"The bill we are approving today makes clear the United States does not seek war or increased tensions with Beijing. Just the opposite," he said in a statement. "We are carefully and strategically lowering the existential threats facing Taiwan by raising the cost of taking the island by force so that it becomes too high a risk and unachievable."

The committee's approval of the bill comes at a time when tensions between Beijing and Washington were already high over Taiwan following the visit of U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taipei last month.

That prompted China to fire missiles into the Taiwan Strait and mobilize large numbers of ships

and warplanes for exercises around the island.

China sees high-level foreign visits to the island as interference in its affairs and de facto recognition of Taiwanese sovereignty, and there has been a steady stream of high-level U.S. visitors since Pelosi's visit.

The Biden administration has insisted that the United States' "One China" policy has not changed.

Despite a lack of formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan, the U.S. is its strongest political backer and source of defensive arms, and during her visit Pelosi said she wants to help the island defend itself.

In a statement, Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it would continue to maintain close communication with the U.S. government on the bill, with the hope "it could become law and make further progress in deepening U.S.-Taiwan's friendly relationship, and ensure the freedom, peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific area." **MDT/AP**

ADVERTORIAL

GREAT TIMES

Say "Santé" to an Impeccable Evening at ABA Bar

WHEN it comes to creating wonderful memories, a hearty meal with great accompaniment and wine is a fine place to start. There are plenty at Aux Beaux Arts and ABA Bar to say "Santé" to. Its ambiance, set in the 1930s brasserie with mahogany walls and copper-tone interiors, creates the perfect backdrop for a cozy dinner in a classic vintage environment. With our chef's team reinterpreting classic French comfort dishes, our open bar completes the look and feel of the experience.



In addition to the stellar wine list, ABA Bar also caters to those seeking the enjoyment of another level. Relish in an evening of the King of Champagne – KRUG, complimented by premium caviar, freshly shucked oysters, French cheeses, and more. A collection of quintessence French Champagne cocktails such as French 75, Kir Royale, and French Mimosa makes a good option as something more playful and chicer. Our bartenders are also eager to craft French cocktails with a bold charm, and our top picks would be Boulevardier – a cousin of the wider known Negroni, with just the swap of gin to bourbon whiskey; another pick would be Side Car, a concoction of equal part Cognac, Cointreau and lemon juice.

Over the years, ABA Bar at Aux Beaux Arts has taken home the highest honor of «Three-Glass Excellent Glass Rating» under China's Wine List of The Year Awards, "Three-Star Award" under World's Best Wine Lists Award, and "Three-Glass Grand Award" under Wine Spectator.



If you're looking for a flute of bubbles, spirits, or cocktails, the ABA Bar makes for the perfect destination for pre-dinner drinks or a romantic nightcap. For enquiries or reservations, please call 8802 2319.

Popular 2022 Sands Shopping Carnival

THE annual Sands Shopping Carnival has once again been a massive success as the city's largest shopping festival, with this year's event attracting more than 100,000 visits.

With local retailers heavily hit by the pandemic, suffering setbacks from the gloomy economic climate, Sands China has spared no effort to provide a free business platform for local, small, and medium enterprises (SMEs) and Sands Shoppes retailers during the pandemic.

For the gaming operator, giving back to society, especially to local firms, remains a priority – economic turmoil or not.

Originally scheduled for July, the carnival was postponed to September 10 to 12, coinciding with Mid-Autumn Festival this year, and was officially launched with representatives from the government, finance and business sectors in attendance.

With Sands China's unwavering determination and commitment to the community, the carnival not only provided an ideal shopping and leisure hotspot for families, but it also offered the best deals to Macau residents and tourists to stimulate domestic consumption and help boost the economy.

"The Sands Shopping Carnival was born out of our desire to uphold the business philosophy of supporting the growth of SMEs and the SAR government's economic revival initiative amid the pandemic period," said Dr. Wong, president of Sands China Ltd.

"It was beyond our expectations when its debut was so widely successful, with visits exceeding 100,000 during the three-



-day event. The synergistic effect between local and international brands helps boost the Consume for the Economy initiative, making local businesses achieve positive outcomes," the executive added.

The three-day mega event caused buzz and excitement in town, attracting over 100,000

arrivals, keeping retailers extremely busy selling their products left and right – a scene SMEs have long hoped for.

It is the third year that Sands China has held the event, and total visits for the three carnivals exceeded 310,000.

Opened to the public admission-free from noon to 10 p.m.

daily, Saturday-Monday, Sept. 10-12 at Cotai Expo Halls A and B, booths were free of charge to exhibitors to sign up for again this year. In all, the 2022 Sands Shopping Carnival comprised over 530 booths and featured eight exhibition zones across 21,000 square metres: Sands retailers; household products; family fun

products; gourmet; healthy lifestyle; sports accessories; cultural, creative and IP; and children's entertainment.

Among its more than 260,000 products, the 2022 Sands Shopping Carnival offered 12,000 special daily MOP1 items to spoil shoppers during their weekend shopping sprees.

Local businesses achieve positive outcomes

Local retailers and non-government associations have expressed their utmost gratitude to Sands China Ltd. for providing a platform to showcase their products and services.

"This is the greatest event for our company," says Lao Kam Chio, Managing Director of Macau Plops Investment Ltd

"We have participated in other similar events, but the past two editions have been the most successful ones for our company," said the managing director.

Sands China has always worked to ensure local businesses achieve positive outcomes.

Starting from the beginning of this year, the company began receiving many enquiries from local SMEs asking about the carnival's opening date.

For Lao, carnivals such as this are sig-

nificant for boosting their revenues, as SMEs in the city have long been struggling under the turmoil of the pandemic's economic impact on them.

Emilia So, another retailer at the event, echoed the same sentiments.

Her store, Serendipity Handmade, retails natural products from Japan that can be used as essential oils and perfumes.

"We're [confident] that this event will certainly drive more sales as it coincides with the Mid-Autumn Festival," said the SME owner.

"Visitors here have a rather strong will to purchase goods so we're confident," she added, noting that exhibitions such as the carnival help boost local SMEs' exposure – which is what local firms now need.

For some retailers such as On Kei Fro-

zen Meat Food, Ivan Ao Ieong who oversees the company said Sands Shopping Carnival have provided a huge boost for revenue, each time up to 30% over the last two years.

Meanwhile, for Macau Special Olympics, the group considers the carnival an extremely beneficial platform for the association's members to interact with the public.

"This platform helps our users have the chance to practice their social skills with guests attending the carnival, and aside from promoting our services to the public so they learn more about us, it helps the public know that they can do something for the community," said Hetzer Siu, National Director of Macau Special Olympics.

"It's very important for us, in an inclu-

sive society, to have interactions with the community [...] and this is a good platform," he added.

Meanwhile, participating for the third time, the Everyone Stray Dogs Macau Volunteer Group has a mission to rescue animals that have been abandoned or have been strays.

The NGO has rescued about 600 animals, 95% of which are stray dogs.

Chairman of the association, Chan In Cheng, has expressed gratitude to Sands China for allowing them to promote their goal in a free business platform where they could earn income by also selling the association's merchandise.

Sands China pledges it will continue its unwavering support for local SMEs and NGOs, and make every effort to assist them.

boosts SMEs' revenues amid pandemic



ON-SITE SUPPORT

Sands Cares Ambassadors provided on-site support to local community organisations who were invited to participate in the carnival, and manned booths run by community organisations as part of the company's ongoing support to social inclusion.

A 15TH ANNIVERSARY MILESTONE

As The Venetian Macao celebrates its 15th anniversary this year, the third Sands Shopping Carnival is one of the milestones of the concerted effort between Sands China and the Macau community. "Come rain or shine, we remain unwavering in our commitment to walk alongside the Macau com-

munity," said Dr. Wong. "We also strive to support the development of local SMEs by providing them a free business platform in this largest sale event in Macau, with an objective to transform it into one of the significant events in the city," he added. For Dr. Wong, efforts made during these three years have paid

off, as they have contributed to both the local economy and the community. The 2022 Sands Shopping Carnival was the result of the collaboration and support of many parties. It was organised by Sands China Ltd., co-organised by the Macao Chamber of Commerce, supported by the Economic and

Technological Development Bureau, the Macao Government Tourism Office, and the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute, and the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau, and sponsored by Bank of China Macau Branch, ICBC (Macau), BNU and Bank of Communications Macau Branch.



Hetzer Sio

Chan In Cheng

Ivan Ao leong

Emilia So

Lao Kam Chio

CLIMATE CHANGE

SAMSUNG SETS GOAL TO ATTAIN 100% CLEAN ENERGY BY 2050

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

SAMSUNG Electronics is shifting away from fossil fuels and aiming to entirely power its global operations with clean electricity by 2050, a challenging goal that experts say could be hampered by South Korea's modest climate change commitments.

South Korea-based Samsung is a top producer of computer memory chips and smartphones and, by some estimates, the biggest energy consumer among hundreds of global companies that have joined the "RE100" campaign to get 100% of electricity from renewable sources like wind or solar power.

In announcing its target yesterday the company said it aims to achieve net zero carbon emissions across its mobile device, television and consumer electronics divisions by 2030, and across all global operations including semiconductors by 2050.

It plans to invest 7 trillion won (\$5 billion) through 2030 on projects aimed at reducing emissions from process gases, controlling and recycling electronic waste, conserving water and minimizing pollutants. It plans to develop new technologies to reduce power consumption in consumer electronics devices and data centers, which would require more efficient memory chips. It also will set long-term goals to reduce emissions in supply chains and logistics.

"Samsung is responding to the



threats of climate change with a comprehensive plan that includes reducing emissions, new sustainability practices and the development of innovative technologies and products that are better for our planet," Jong-Hee Han, the company's CEO, said in an emailed statement.

Samsung's plan drew praise from some of its investors, including Dutch pension fund manager APG, which said the company could potentially make a "significant contribution" in cleaning up South Korea's electricity market, considering its impact and influence on the national economy.

But APG also expressed concern that Samsung's announcement comes at a time when South Korea has been dialing back on

its climate change goals.

The conservative government of President Yoon Suk Yeol, who took office in May, has focused much of its energy policy on promoting nuclear-generated electricity. Desperate to boost a weak economy, Yoon's government has also indicated reluctance to sharply reduce the country's dependence on coal and gas, which generate about 65% of South Korea's electricity.

South Korea got 7.5% of its electricity from renewable sources in 2021, significantly lower than the 30% average among rich nations making up the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Yoon's government recently adjusted the country's renewable energy tar-

get to 21% of the total energy mix by 2030, softening the 30% target announced by his liberal predecessor, Moon Jae-in.

Samsung acknowledged it would have a harder time converting to renewable electricity sources at home than at its foreign operations, where it aims to get to 100% clean energy by 2027. It said renewable energy supplies in South Korea "have begun to expand but remain limited," while its electricity needs continue to rise as it boosts production at its domestic semiconductor lines to meet global demands.

"As a long-term investor in Korea, we are concerned about how the government plans to reconcile the industry's desperate need for clean electricity to stay

relevant in the long run," Yoo-Kyung Park, APG's Asia Pacific head of responsible investment and governance, said in a statement.

Samsung, South Korea's biggest company, had faced growing pressure to do more to reduce its carbon emissions as it lagged behind some of its peers in climate commitments. Those companies include Apple, a major buyer of Samsung's chips, which joined RE100 in 2016 and plans to be carbon neutral across its entire business and manufacturing supply chains by 2030, putting the pressure on its suppliers to meet those requirements.

Samsung is the crown jewel of an export-reliant economy driven by manufacturing of semiconductors, cars, display panels, mobile phones and ships, industries that tend to have high energy consumption.

Samsung used 25.8 terawatt hours of electricity for its operations last year, which was nearly twice the amount consumed by all households in the South Korean capital of Seoul and more than other global technology giants like Google, Apple, Meta, Intel, and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company.

Samsung's embrace of clean electricity could have significant supply chain effects, pushing other companies to boost their renewable energy supplies, said Ousam Jin from the Seoul-based Corporate Renewable Energy Foundation.

"Most meaningfully, Samsung's RE100 commitment sends a strong signal to the renewable energy market and policymakers to increase the supply of renewable energy considering the company's massive electricity usage," Jin said. **MDT/AP**

Australian PM supports Charles continuing climate advocacy

ROD MCGUIRK, CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA'S Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said King Charles III continuing to advocate for climate change action in his new apolitical role as monarch would be "perfectly acceptable."

Albanese was speaking ahead of an Australian delegation's scheduled departure from Sydney yesterday for Queen Elizabeth II's funeral.

Albanese said the new king would decide whether he continued to advocate for reduced greenhouse gas emissions as he had done for years as a prince.

"It's important that the monarchy distance from



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, second left, walks in central Sydney after a press briefing, Wednesday

party political issues. But there are issues like climate change where I think if he chooses to continue to

make statements in that area, I think that is perfectly acceptable," Albanese told Australian Broad-

casting Corp.

"It should be something that's above politics, the need to act on climate

change," Albanese added.

In his first speech as king last week, Charles suggested he would be more circumspect as monarch and step back from his advocacy on a range of issues.

The lifelong environmentalist said he was confident work on "the issues for which I care so deeply" would "go on in the trusted hands of others."

Albanese's new center-left Labor Party government has enshrined in law a target to reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions by 42% below 2005 levels by the end of the decade.

Under the previous conservative government, Australia had been branded a laggard on climate action over its target to reduce

emissions by only 26% to 28% by 2030.

Australia said it was helping officials from Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, Samoa and a fifth unnamed British Commonwealth nation in the Oceania region travel to London for the funeral on Monday.

But those officials are not flying on the same Royal Australian Air Force plane as Albanese, his partner Jodie Haydon, Governor-General David Hurley and his wife Linda Hurley. They are accompanied by nine so-called "everyday Australians," including wheelchair tennis star Dylan Alcott, who have been invited by Buckingham Palace. **MDT/AP**

RELIGION

Pope urged to avoid 'supermarket of religions' in Kazakhstan

NICOLE WINFIELD,
NUR-SULTAN

POPE Francis reaffirmed the critical value yesterday of interfaith dialogue to contrast the "folly of war," even as one of his own bishops warned that Francis' participation in a big interfaith peace conference in Kazakhstan could imply papal endorsement of a "supermarket of religions."

Francis delivered the closing speech to the Kazakh government's triennial conference of traditional religions, which gathered some 80 Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist and Taoist faith leaders who called for greater interfaith efforts to combat war, poverty, climate change and other ills facing the world.

Francis praised the summit and underlined its conclusion that religion can never be used to justify war -- a call that came against the backdrop of the Russian Orthodox Church's support of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.



Pope Francis waves at the end of a meeting with priests, religious men and women, seminarians and catechists at the Our Lady Of Perpetual Help Cathedral in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, yesterday

The final document says "extremism, radicalism, terrorism and all other forms of violence and wars, whatever their goals, have nothing to do with true religion and must be rejected in the strongest possible terms."

Without mentioning Russia

or any other warring country by name, the final document calls on world leaders to "abandon all aggressive and destructive rhetoric which leads to destabilization of the world, and to cease from conflict and bloodshed in all corners of our world."

Francis told the gathering that interfaith encounters such as the Kazakh summit are "more valuable than ever in challenging times like our own, when the problems of the pandemic have been compounded by the utter folly of war."

With a delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church at the table, Francis said peace was "urgently needed."

"We plead with you, in the name of God and for the good of humanity: Work for peace, not weapons! Only by serving the cause of peace, will you make a name for yourselves in the annals of history," he said.

A note of caution, however, came from Bishop Athenasius Schneider, the auxiliary bishop of Astana and one of Francis' most vocal critics. Schneider has joined other traditionalist and conservative cardinals and bishops in criticizing several of Francis' signature gestures and what they say are his doctrinal ambiguities on issues such as divorce and remarriage, homosexuality and interfaith ou-

treach.

As an auxiliary bishop of Kazakhstan's capital, Schneider had to help play host to Francis during his three-day visit and had a prominent role in the pontiff's Thursday morning visit to the capital's cathedral. He accompanied Francis' wheelchair down the aisle at the start of the meeting and introduced a line of dignitaries who met the pontiff afterward, serving as translator.

But Schneider has also joined American Cardinal Raymond Burke in criticizing a landmark 2019 document Francis signed with the grand imam of al-Azhar university in Cairo which, among other things, said that all religions are "willed by God." Some Catholic critics have said the idea that God actively wanted a plurality of religions could lead to relativism that would accept that all religions are equally valid paths to God, when the Vatican holds that Catholicism provides the only true path to salvation.

The so-called "Human Fraternity" document was held up as an example of "great historical significance" by Kazakhstan's president at the start of the interfaith conference, and the final communiqué recognized its "importance and value" in calling for "peace, dialogue, mutual understanding and mutual respect among believers for the common good." MDT/AP

AD

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馬天龍 Nuno Sardinha da Mata °
趙魯 Zhao Lu °•
馬傑安 João Nogueira Marques

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AP PHOTO



LONG LIVE THE KING

Crowds queue for queen's coffin as Charles spends quiet day

JILL LAWLESS,
MIKE CORDER
& DANICA KIRKA, LONDON

THOUSANDS of mourners lined up through the night to file past the coffin of Queen Elizabeth II in Parliament's Westminster Hall yesterday as King Charles III spent a day in private to reflect on his first week on the throne.

The queue to see the queen lying in state grew through the day to stretch for 4.4 miles, past Tower Bridge. The line snaked along the south bank of the River Thames and then over a bridge to Parliament. Thousands in the line didn't mind the hours of waiting.

"I'm glad there was a queue because that gave us time to see what was ahead of us, prepared us and absorbed the whole atmosphere," said health care professional Nimisha Maroo. "I wouldn't have liked it if I'd had to just rush through."

Buckingham Palace released details of the queen's funeral on Monday, the first state funeral to be held in Britain since the death of Winston Churchill in 1965. Royalty and heads of state from a round the world will be among 2,000 people attending the Westminster Abbey service, which will be followed later in the day by a smaller committal service at Windsor Castle.

At the end of the day, the queen will be buried in a private family service at Windsor alongside her late husband, Prince Philip, who died last year.

After a day of high cere-

mony and high emotion on Wednesday as the queen was borne in somber procession from Buckingham Palace, the king was spending the day working and in "private reflection" at his Highgrove residence in western England. Charles has had calls with U.S. President Joe Biden and French President Emmanuel Macron and is speaking to a host of world leaders — many of whom will come to London on Monday for the queen's funeral.

Heir to the throne Prince William and his wife Kate visited the royal family's Sandringham estate in eastern England to see some of the tributes left by well-wishers. The couple walked slowly along metal barriers as they received bouquets from the public and chatted to well-wishers. Other royals fanned out across the U.K. to thank people for their support, with the queen's son, Prince Edward, and his wife Sophie visiting Manchester and his sister Princess Anne in Glasgow.

On Wednesday the queen left Buckingham Palace for the last time, borne on a horse-drawn carriage and saluted by cannons and the tolling of Big Ben, in a solemn procession through the flag-draped, crowd-lined streets of London to Westminster Hall.

Charles, his siblings and sons marched behind the coffin, which was topped by a wreath of white roses and her crown resting on a purple velvet pillow.

The military procession underscored Elizabeth's seven decades as head of state as the national mourning process

shifted to the grand boulevards and historic landmarks of the U.K. capital.

The 900-year-old Westminster Hall is now the focus of events, as the queen lies in state until Monday.

The display of mass mourning is an enormous logistical operation, with a designated 10-mile route lined with first aid points and more than 500 portable toilets. There are 1,000 stewards and marshals working at any given time, and 30 religious leaders from a range of faiths to stop and talk to those in line.

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, the spiritual leader of the Church of England, wore a high-visibility vest emblazoned with the words "Faith Team" as he spoke to mourners.

Welby, who led a service for the royal family when Elizabeth's coffin reached Westminster Hall, paid tribute to the queen as "someone you could trust totally, completely and absolutely, whose wisdom was remarkable."

Thousands have already paid their respects, filing past the casket draped with the royal standard and topped with a diamond-encrusted crown.

People old and young, dressed in dark suits or jeans and sneakers, walked in a steady stream through the historic hall, where Guy Fawkes and Charles I were tried, where kings and queens hosted magnificent medieval banquets, and where previous monarchs have lain in state.

After passing the coffin, most mourners paused to look back before going out

through the hall's great oak doors. Some wiped away tears; others bowed their heads or curtsied. One sank onto a knee and blew a farewell kiss.

Keith Smart, an engineer and British Army veteran, wiped away tears as he left the hall. He had waited more than 10 hours for the chance to say his goodbye.

"Everybody in the crowd was impeccably behaved. There was no malice, everybody was friends. It was fantastic," he said. "And then, to come into that room and see that, I just broke down inside. I didn't bow — I knelt to the floor, on my knees, bowed my head to the queen."

The late-night silence was broken when one of the guards standing vigil around the coffin collapsed and fell forward off a raised platform. The man, his chest adorned with medals, could be seen on livestreams of the queen's coffin lying in state swaying on his feet before pitching forward onto the floor. Two police officers rushed to his assistance.

Crowds have lined the route of the queen's coffin whenever it has been moved in its long journey from Scotland — where the monarch died Sept. 8, aged 96 — to London.

On Tuesday night, thousands braved a typical London drizzle as the hearse, with interior lights illuminating the casket, drove slowly from an air base to Buckingham Palace.

Earlier, in Edinburgh, about 33,000 people filed silently past her coffin in 24 hours at St. Giles' Cathedral. MDT/AP

this day in history

1992 UK CRASHES OUT OF ERM



The government has suspended Britain's membership of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism.

The UK's prime minister and chancellor tried all day to prop up a failing pound and withdrawal from the monetary system the country joined two years ago was the last resort.

Chancellor Norman Lamont raised interest rates from 10% to 12%, then to 15%, and authorised the spending of billions of pounds to buy up the sterling being frantically sold on the currency markets.

But the measures failed to prevent the pound falling lower than its minimum level in the ERM.

The second rise in the interest rate was reversed by the beleaguered chancellor soon after the withdrawal from the ERM, setting it at 12%.

The move is a dramatic U-turn in government policy, as only last week Prime Minister John Major reaffirmed the government's commitment to remaining within the mechanism.

Mr Lamont admitted it had been an extremely difficult and turbulent day, but a Downing Street spokesman said he would not resign.

The shadow chancellor, Gordon Brown, said colossal errors of judgement by the prime minister and chancellor had betrayed the British people.

Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown said the government's policy had failed.

"They have lost control of the economic situation," he told the BBC.

But both politicians stopped short of calling for the chancellor's resignation.

Britain's decision to join the ERM in October 1990 represented a major shift in the direction of the government and has become a cornerstone of the country's European policy.

But Conservative MP for Stone William Cash, said the policies of the government and the chancellor should now be reconsidered.

"I think that the position of Norman Lamont at the moment is extremely precarious... We are in a state of political shambles," he said.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

All member countries agreed to keep their currency value within set limits linked to the German mark.

As a consequence they were forced to adopt the anti-inflation policies of the German Bundesbank.

Membership of the ERM has become a Brussels-imposed condition to joining the Euro - Europe's single currency.

Britain did not rejoin after 16 September 1992 - a day which became known as "Black Wednesday".

Seven months later in May 1993, Norman Lamont was replaced as chancellor by Kenneth Clarke.

He became a fierce right-wing critic of John Major's government.

In the 1997 general election he lost his House of Commons seat and a year later was made a life peer.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Travel for business purposes may bring the highest returns. Your lover will be extremely sensitive and now will not be a good time to make changes that they won't like.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
You should be promoting your ideas. Look into alternatives that would better suit both your needs. Your talents might just be discovered.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Broaden your horizons and look into programs that will teach you awareness and relaxation. Help if you can, but more than likely it will be sufficient just to listen.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Property investments should pay off. Travel will enhance romance and adventure. Don't expect the whole family to be overjoyed.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You will do your best work on your own. You might find added popularity with those around you today. Resist the temptation to gamble. Risks will not be profitable.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Try to keep ahead of the game. Your personal life is going through a state of confusion. However, you should be concerned about what they want in return.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You must steer clear of overindulgent individuals. You will have the discipline to make changes you feel are necessary. Curb your mood swings; they could result in loneliness.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
You will be viewed as a sensitive, compassionate individual and others will ask you for advice. You may find yourself in a predicament with family members.

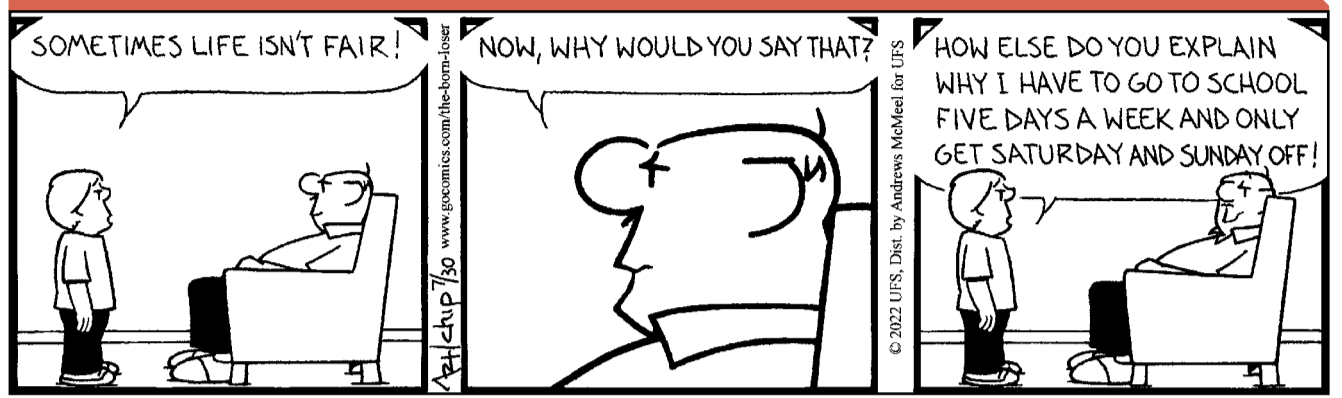
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
A passionate encounter with your mate should help alleviate that pent-up energy. Physical activity will help defuse your frustration. Ignore colleagues who appear to be going in circles.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Keep busy and let them fume while you're not around. Make alternate plans just in case you need to make a career shift. Don't let your jealous imagination play games with you.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Eliminate situations that are no longer to your advantage. Be honest with yourself before getting involved with someone who is likely to lead you on.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
All your energy should be directed into moneymaking opportunities. You can open up to your mate and let them know what you expect out of this relationship.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY					EASY+							
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MEDIUM					HARD						
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	7	6		5			8				

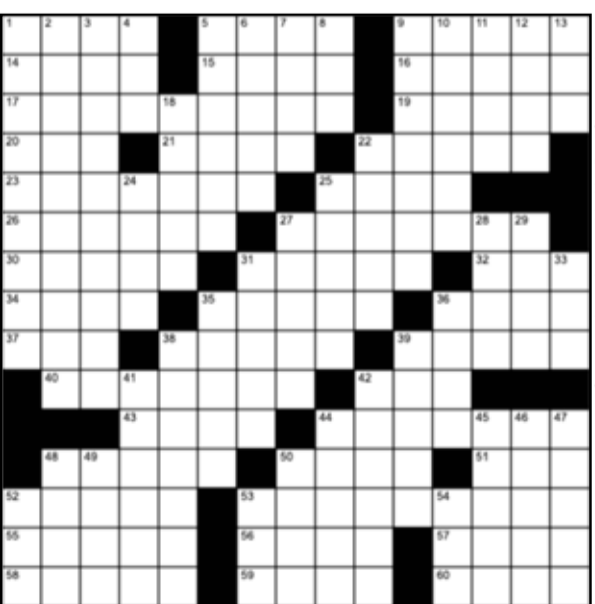
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	20	30	cloudy
Changchun	15	21	rain
Chengdu	19	23	overcast
Chongqing	25	32	rain
Fuzhou	25	35	cloudy
Guangzhou	23	35	fine
Guiyang	19	24	showers
Haikou	26	32	cloudy
Hangzhou	21	28	rain
Harbin	14	24	cloudy
Hefei	21	28	overcast
Nanjing	21	23	rain
Shanghai	23	27	overcast
Taipei	25	30	rain
Wuhan	21	32	cloudy
Hong Kong	29	33	clear
WORLD			
Moscow	8	18	rain
Frankfurt	9	18	overcast
Paris	8	17	overcast
London	7	17	overcast
New York	17	30	clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Army N.C.O.; 5- Horne solo; 9- Pixie; 14- Like ___ not; 15- 1996 Tony-winning musical; 16- Befuddled; 17- Lay waste; 19- Carplike fish; 20- Hydrocarbon ending; 21- Bushy hairdo; 22- Bay window; 23- Layer of material; 25- Warts and all; 26- Bodily organ; 27- Giggle; 30- Clear the boards; 31- Conceals; 32- Chop off; 34- Pub quantity; 35- Western; 36- General ___ chicken; 37- Animal pouch; 38- Gillette razors; 39- Eats to a plan; 40- Nor's partner; 42- Foot digit; 43- Arise (from); 44- Companion; 48- Tree insect; 50- Shoppe sign word; 51- Calendar abbr.; 52- ___. I'm Adam; 53- Transmit; 55- At quite an incline; 56- ___ above; 57- Doozy; 58- Biblical verb; 59- Spouse; 60- Like pie?;

DOWN 1- Dodges; 2- Very loud; 3- Control; 4- ___-la-la; 5- Tricky; 6- Give guns again; 7- A big fan of; 8- Chowd down; 9- Cloths; 10- On the line; 11- Of course!; 12- Sincere; 13- Thanksgiving tuber; 18- French composer Erik; 22- Willow; 24- Kind of prof.; 25- Peaks of Peru; 27- Lute of India; 28- Different; 29- Cheer; 31- Seraglio; 33- Letter addenda; 35- Different; 36- Echelon; 38- Try; 39- Like some stadiums; 41- Sharon's land; 42- So far; 44- Influence; 45- Maytag brand; 46- Prescribed amounts; 47- Diary bit; 48- Alternative to a shower; 49- Ancient theaters; 50- Killer whale; 52- Ed.'s pile; 53- Pow!; 54- Runner Sebastian;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IAM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
- Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
- Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



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- COLOANE V. | 2 BEDS HKD 10,000

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- 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
- TAIPA STUDIO | 1 BED HKD 3,980,000
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DRIVE IN

JIMINY CRICKET! A LIVE-ACTION 'PINOCCHIO'

JAKE COYLE AP FILM WRITER

AFTER a string of live-action remakes, from "Beauty and the Beast" to "The Lion King," the Walt Disney Co. has finally gotten around to "Pinocchio." Along the way, there have been some nice performances, enormous heaps of CGI and, lest anyone forget, one very blue Will Smith.

Whether any of these movies have done much to improve the originals is very much up for debate, and undertaking "Pinocchio" poses even more particular challenges. Most pressing: What you do with Pinocchio? Nice kid and all. A little wooden. But if we're being honest here, he's always been a bit of a dud.

Do you cast a young actor to play the puppet once brought to life? Alongside some live performers (Tom Hanks, Cynthia Erivo) and some CGI characters, director Robert Zemeckis has used computer imagery to render Pinocchio (voiced by Benjamin Evan Ainsworth) much in the style and vocal pitch of the 1940 cartoon. The effect is an awkward fusion of fake and real that strains to find any magic in between. This "Pinocchio," unfortunately, is no real



Pinocchio, voiced by Benjamin Evan Ainsworth, and Tom Hanks as Geppetto

boy, at all.

It's also one of two adaptations of the fairy tale coming this fall. Zemeckis' "Pinocchio" premieres Thursday on Disney+. Later comes a stop-motion version by Guillermo del Toro. The directors are magicians both, and they will surely have radically different takes on the old Italian tale. In a few months, we'll be able to compare them, nose to nose.

Zemeckis' film opens with a reminder of how foundational "Pinocchio" has been to the Disney myth-making machine. As the familiar castle logo plays with

"When You Wish Upon a Star," Jiminy Cricket (voiced by Joseph Gordon-Levitt) floats down under an umbrella to stake claim to the studio theme song. "Isn't that a catchy little tune?" he asks.

But aside from any poignant corporate lineage, the original "Pinocchio" remains about as pure an example of Disney at its archetypal best as anything. Maurice Sendak once aptly described it as possessing "the golden glamour of a lost era; it is a monument to an age of craft and quality in America."

Zemeckis' film, in its ways just

as representative of its cinematic era, keeps much of the 1940 film's narrative shape but maintains little of its tension as a morality tale. Pleasure Island feels too much like where rafts of financially motivated remakes like "Pinocchio" might properly reside.

This time, the story — penned by Zemeckis and Chris Weitz — feels like it's lurching from one set piece or song-and-dance number to another, with cameos from Erivo (in the flesh, as the Blue Fairy and "Wish Upon a Star" singer) and Keegan-Michael Key, as the voice of the deceptive red fox

Honest John. Certainly, "Hi-Did-dle-Dee-Dee (An Actor's Life For Me)" has a different resonance in a movie where actors compete with CGI creations for oxygen.

The best reason to see "Pinocchio" is, unsurprisingly, Hanks, who brings a soulful melancholy to Geppetto. It's a corollary to Hanks' performance as another European-accented performance as Presley manager Tom Parker in "Elvis." Only in that film, Hanks was the one pulling the strings on a big-tent star.

There are moments, still, that remind you of Zemeckis' considerable powers. Enchantment doesn't always feel so far away when the director has scale to play with, like when Jiminy floats gracefully down to the whale-like creature that has swallowed Pinocchio. Or when Pinocchio's nose shoots out and Jiminy teeters on it like how Gordon-Levitt, as high-wire artist Philippe Petit, did at a higher altitude in "The Walk."

"Pinocchio," a Disney+ release, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association of America for peril/scary moments, rude material and some language. Running time: 111 minutes. ★★☆☆

AD

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TASTE OF EDESIA

Time for Negroni

IRENE SAM, MDT

TO celebrate "Negroni Week," an endeavour to raise money for charity around the world with Campari at its heart, **Four Seasons Hotel Macao** becomes part of the initiative through "Poured by Four Seasons," a collective approach among Four Seasons bars in Asia to showcase a special menu of cocktails that reflects an innovative zest to woo discerning palates. Since its inception in 2013, participating "Negroni Week" bars and restaurants have been inspired to put their creative twist on the classic cocktail. Four Seasons Macao will feature a spectacular menu with four Negronis until 25th September.

Xiao Ting at Four Seasons Macao proudly presents two cocktails inspired by its signature venues. Slices of fresh orange fruits are meticulously embedded into sake, enhancing the sweet and bitter fusion of OHTE Negroni. Inspired by fine sake pops, OHTE Negroni is composed of Antica Formula, Campari, and fresh orange-infused sake. A touch of burned cinnamon magically weaves a veil of sweet yet spicy smoke into the air. Altogether, citrus characteristics are heightened with the use of a spice, while underlying elegance is exuded through the simplicity of sake.

Ladies will undoubtedly be excited about the Rose Negroni. Composed of Antica Formula, Golden Rose tea-infused Gin, and fresh strawberry-infused Campari, Rose Negroni thrills the senses with its romantic visual presentation and aromatic nature. Inspired by the fine selection of premium tea in Xiao Ting, Golden Rose Tea is carefully combined with gin to bring out its floral notes. To top it off, the concoction is filled with CO2 that produces sparkles, dazzling the eyes like stardust in a rosy night sky.

Next, the Negroni Tropicana presented by VIRTÙ from Four Seasons Tokyo at Otemachi. With coconut-infused Campari at its heart, Sweet Vermouth and pineapple-infused rum are mixed to create a laid-back tropical style Negroni with hints of subtly savoury coconut. The result is a pleasantly smooth, mellow combination that imparts a dreamy aroma that lingers in the mouth.

Last but not least, Four Seasons Hong Kong's Argo came up with Black Pearl, a sophisticated concoction of Bourbon Whiskey, Sweet Vermouth, Campari, Cynar, and bitters. Negroni meets Manhattan in this rich and spirit-forward serve, characterised by aromatic and bitter notes topped up with an umami finale given by sesame oil. Playful and interesting, the blend juxtaposes a variety of flavours unexpectedly.



Macau Racing Tips

By Davy Chiu



MACAU JOCKEY CLUB OPENING DAY CHARITY RACE (DIV 1) 1200M TURF

2022-09-17 | Sat | 14:00

If there is one horse in the opening day that have a solid chance to get into the money, it has to be **Senior** in Race 1. His work in the morning stands out especially his track work this Wed's morning with Luis Corrales, it shows **Senior** is ready to fire. He may be short in the betting but **Senior** is clearly the best horse in the field and the one to beat. Drop back from 1500M to 1200M and with the booking of Luis Corrales he is the banker of the day. Good luck to his connection and looking forward to his good showing tomorrow.

Race 1 Horse no. 1 Senior Win & Place and banker for your exotics



OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

ACT AIMED AT INDUCING PROXY WAR

The United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee's approval of the so-called Taiwan Policy Act on Wednesday marks another dangerous step toward a green light being given to the country providing direct military assistance to the Chinese island.

The US has sold weapons to Taiwan for decades, but the new bill goes further by providing US security assistance of \$4.5 billion to the island over four years, and it also lays out sanctions on the Chinese mainland if it resorts to the use of force to realize national reunification.

Although the White House has not said whether President Joe Biden will sign the Act into law, the strong bipartisan support it has garnered in Congress may force his hand should it pass a full vote in the full Senate and the House of Representatives, as it is expected that it would have enough support to override a presidential veto.

If that happens, it will not only be a move the US side takes to unilaterally change the status quo of the Taiwan Straits, but also a watershed incident in the development of Sino-US relations as it will seriously trample on the redline drawn by Beijing and pose a grave and direct threat to China's core national interests.

It would also violate the commitments the US made to Beijing on the establishment of diplomatic relations, as the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office would be renamed the Taiwan Representative Office, becoming a de facto embassy, and the US government would be instructed to interact with Taiwan as it would with any government.

The content of the Act essentially negates the three Sino-US joint communiques, which are binding in terms of international law. It exposes that international law is nothing but a joke for Washington. If it randomly tramples on the basic norms of international relations and is not willing to honor its words, how can the US be trusted by the international community?

Senator Bob Menendez, a member of the Democratic Party who heads the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said that the US "does not seek war or heightened tensions with Beijing", and "We are carefully and strategically lowering the existential threats facing Taiwan by raising the cost of taking the island by force so that it becomes too high a risk and unachievable."

That shows that US lawmakers dangerously underestimate Beijing's resolve and capability to prevent the island from being cleaved from the motherland. What the Act will do if it becomes law, will simply turn the island into another proxy for the US in a war that some of its lawmakers seem rabidly itching to start.

LEBANESE CHEER AS THEIR DANCERS WIN AMERICA'S GOT TALENT

The news of a Lebanese dance group winning the TV competition show America's Got Talent brought a rare moment of joy yesterday to many in this crisis-hit Mideast country.

Mayyas, an all-female dance troupe, dazzled the show's judges and audience on the competition's 17th season before winning \$1 million and a headlining show at the Luxor Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. The group paid tribute to their native country during their performances and on social media in the buildup to the finale.

The victory is a major boost for any aspiring artist. But inside Lebanon, where the political leadership is scrambling to overcome years of economic and political turmoil, there was a high-profile rush to congratulate the dance troupe.

Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati and a handful of lawmakers congratulated Mayyas on social media, while President Michel Aoun's office in a statement said the Lebanese head of state will award the dancers Order of Merit medallions upon their return home.

THE BUZZ



People wearing protective suits with their luggage enter the shuttered Communication University of China in Beijing, Monday

PANDEMIC

WHO: COVID END 'IN SIGHT', DEATHS AT LOWEST SINCE MARCH 2020

THE head of the World Health Organization said Wednesday that the number of coronavirus deaths worldwide last week was the lowest reported in the pandemic since March 2020, marking what could be a turning point in the years-long global outbreak.

At a press briefing in Geneva, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the world has never been in a better position to stop COVID-19.

"We are not there yet, but the end is in sight," he said, comparing the effort to that made by a marathon runner nearing the finish line. "Now is the worst time to stop running," he said. "Now is the time to run harder and make sure we cross the line and reap all the rewards of our hard work."

In its weekly report on the pandemic, the U.N. health agency said deaths fell by 22% in the past week, at just over 11,000 reported worldwide. There were 3.1 million new cases, a drop of 28%, continuing a weeks-long decline in the disease in every part of the world.

Still, the WHO warned that relaxed COVID testing and surveillance in many countries means

that many cases are going unnoticed. The agency issued a set of policy briefs for governments to strengthen their efforts against the coronavirus ahead of the expected winter surge of COVID-19, warning that new variants could yet undo the progress made to date.

"If we don't take this opportunity now, we run the risk of more variants, more deaths, more disruption, and more uncertainty," Tedros said.

The WHO reported that the omicron subvariant BA.5 continues to dominate globally and comprised nearly 90% of virus samples shared with the world's biggest public database. In recent weeks, regulatory authorities in Europe, the U.S. and elsewhere have cleared tweaked vaccines that target both the original coronavirus and later variants including BA.5.

Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO's technical lead on COVID-19, said the organization expected future waves of the disease, but was hopeful those would not cause many deaths.

Meanwhile in China, residents of a city in the country's far western Xinjiang region have said they are experiencing hunger,

forced quarantines and dwindling supplies of medicine and daily necessities after more than 40 days in a lockdown prompted by COVID-19.

Hundreds of posts from Ghulja riveted users of Chinese social media last week, with residents sharing videos of empty refrigerators, feverish children and people shouting from their windows.

On Monday, local police announced the arrests of six people for "spreading rumors" about the lockdown, including posts about a dead child and an alleged suicide, which they said "incited opposition" and "disrupted social order."

Leaked directives from government offices show that workers are being ordered to avoid negative information and spread "positive energy" instead. One directed state media to film "smiling seniors" and "children having fun" in neighborhoods emerging from the lockdown.

The government has ordered mass testing and district lockdowns in cities across China in recent weeks, from Sanya on tropical Hainan island to southwest Chengdu, to the northern port city of Dalian. **MDT/AP**



Pakistani engineers and soldiers cleared a key highway yesterday to enable aid workers to speed up supplies to survivors of devastating floods that have left hundreds of thousands homeless and killed 1,508 people, the majority of them women and children. Traffic between the flood-hit city of Quetta, the capital of southwestern Baluchistan province, and the southern Sindh province had been suspended for weeks after floods damaged the key highway.

Armenia A cease-fire between Armenia and Azerbaijan held yesterday following two days of fighting that killed 176 soldiers on both sides. Armen Grigoryan, the secretary of Armenia's Security Council, said the truce brokered thanks to international mediation took effect at 8 p.m. (1600 GMT) Wednesday. A previous cease-fire that Russia brokered Tuesday had quickly failed.



European Union's executive arm proposed new legislation yesterday that would force manufacturers to ensure that devices connected to the internet meet cybersecurity standards, making the 27-nation bloc less vulnerable to attacks. The EU said a ransomware attack takes place every 11 seconds, and the global annual cost of cybercrime is estimated at 5.5 trillion euros in 2021. In Europe alone, cyberattacks cost between 180 and 290 billion euros each year, according to EU officials.



France A major wildfire that ravaged forests in southwestern France stopped spreading yesterday, according to local authorities. The prefecture of the Gironde region said the wildfire has burned more than 37 square kilometers since Monday, leading to the evacuation of 1,840 people. Over 1,000 firefighters, six Canadair aircrafts, three Dash planes and two helicopters have been fighting the flames.