



HO IAT SENG MET WITH MACAU MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS TO GATHER SUGGESTIONS WHILE COMPILING HIS NEXT POLICY ADDRESS

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COVID-19: NAT VALIDITY FOR TRAVELERS FLYING ABROAD EASED

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UNESCO IS URGED TO MAINTAIN A FIRM STANCE IN REDUCING THE HEIGHT OF THE BUILDING PROJECT LOCATED AT CALÇADA DO GAIO

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AP PHOTO



Japan A tropical storm that dumped heavy rain as it cut across Japan moved into the Pacific Ocean yesterday after killing two and injuring more than 100, paralyzing traffic and leaving thousands of homes without power. New damage was reported in southern Japan, where Typhoon Nanmadol hit over the weekend before weakening as it moved north.

AP PHOTO



Palestinian security forces yesterday exchanged fire with militants in the center of the West Bank's second-largest city, as angry residents pelted an armored jeep with objects and chased it away. One man was reported dead. The incident, sparked by an arrest raid against local militants, marked a rare case of deadly internal Palestinian fighting in the occupied West Bank. It also reflected the deep unpopularity of the internationally recognized Palestinian Authority

AP PHOTO



Lebanon hopes to adopt key reforms demanded by the International Monetary Fund for a long-delayed but urgently needed bailout before the end of next month if there is "political will", Lebanon's caretaker economy minister said yesterday. Amin Salam spoke to The Associated Press after meeting with an IMF delegation that has been visiting Lebanese officials since Monday.

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EVERYDAY IRREGULARITIES

Side-betting activities widespread in casinos' VIP rooms: Alvin Chau

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HENGQIN TO BOOST INCENTIVES TO ATTRACT MACAU TALENTS

XINHUA



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SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE CASE IN LOCAL CHILDCARE FACILITY

A suspected instance of child abuse is alleged to have occurred in a local childcare facility, a woman said in the Macau Forum Monday. The woman alleged her two-year-old son's arm was found to be dislocated after he returned home from childcare on September 13. She alleged her son was abused or mistreated at the center. The head of the center alleged that the child dislocated his own arm when he was sleeping. The woman considered this account to be unreasonable and reported the incident to police. At present, the child's case has been followed up by the Judiciary Police and the Social Welfare Bureau.

257 CASES OF OVERTIME STAYS BEING CHARGED

Since a parking time limit was introduced in Qingmao port on August 24, around 257 infringements have been recorded as of September 19, according to data from Public Security Police Force (PSP). Drivers who illegally parked their vehicles or overstayed the time limit of 10 minutes at the Macau Frontier Post Building at Qingmao port will be fined MOP600. PSP reminded drivers that both parking offences and exceeding the permitted time limit for parking can be charged together at the same time, with a traffic fine of MOP1,200.

POST OFFICE'S CHRISTMAS CUT-OFF DATES

The Post and Telecommunications Bureau (CTT) has recently announced the cut-off dates for Christmas mail. Mail to Asia and the Middle East will mostly be affected by a cut-off date within or after October. Mail to India, Japan and South Korea are exceptions, with cut-off dates on September 23, 27 and 28 respectively for small items. Mail to Finland, Norway and Sweden will cut off in September, while mail to Portugal will cut off on October 6. Most European destinations will see a cut-off date within October. The CTT did not mention the cut-off date for Christmas mail to Australia, while parcels mailed to New Zealand will cut off on September 27.

SUNCITY TRIAL

PARALLEL GAMING WAS WIDESPREAD ACROSS ALL VIP ROOMS IN MACAU, CHAU SAYS

RENATO MARQUES

PARALLEL gaming activities in local casino VIP rooms were taking place for a very long time, even before Macau's handover, the former junket and entertainment mogul, Alvin Chau, said yesterday during the second session of the trial involving 21 defendants. The trial is related to the alleged unlawful activities by the former gaming promotor Suncity Group.

"Parallel gaming activities have [long been happening] in Macau," Chau said when questioned by several lawyers, adding, "I believe that the majority of VIP rooms [in Macau] had this type of activity [and not only the one operated by Suncity]."

The former leader of the largest junket company in Macau further explained his awareness of such activities "before the handover" and gaming liberalizations, adding that these activities were very common "and happening every day."

When questioned about how casino security and the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) staff reacted to such activities, Chau said that sometimes when the activity was too obvious and involved a dozen people in a corner of a room, inspectors would come and order them to stop or in some cases expel the players from the room.

Chau noted that the activity, although not legal, could never be done in a concealed manner and without the knowledge of those involved in the gaming business (namely the concessionaires), as staff, gaming chips, cash transferences, exchanges, and other resources were needed to facilitate such activities.

Questioned why this activity would take place separately from legal betting systems, Chau explained that some players (high rollers) wanted to make very large bets that were beyond the table limits.

In response to questions from several lawyers representing the various defendants, Chau also

RENATO MARQUES



admitted to the court that some of these high rollers, after a long-term relationship with the company (Suncity), had often been interested in partnering with the company and attracting others they knew were interested in the same scheme.

Questioned if it was the company that solicited and informed players of this type of scheme, Chau responded, "None of our staff members ever had competencies to decide or instigate parallel gaming activities."

He also continued to deny the accusations of involvement in illegal online gaming activities as well as phone betting, although he admitted the company did participate in and offer such services to its patrons as recently as 2014, after which time it was made illegal by the DICJ and prompted the company to move the activity to the Philippines.

Questioned on practical matters regarding betting at the casino table and the use of mobile phones while doing so, Chau admitted to not knowing the exact procedures. "As I am not a gambler myself, I do not really

know how these things work at the tables. But I know that it is a rule imposed by DICJ that players cannot use their phones while playing."

According to Chau, phone betting via a third party or a representative was possible and legal in Macau between 2003 and 2014.

After Chau's hearing was concluded, the trial session continued hearing from the second defendant in the case, Jeffrey Si Tou, a former employee of Suncity accused of being involved with illegal online betting and other activities related to the approval of loans and money transfers between Suncity and another company - UE - a company based in the mainland and that operated a platform of proxy betting by video streaming in casinos abroad, namely in the Philippines, but also in other jurisdictions called SCM.

Si Tou and his lawyer, David Gomes, attempted to explain on several occasions that he was an employee of the Strategic Department of Suncity. As such, part of his job was to coordinate com-

munications between Suncity and UE, passing information between both sides but without ever having any direct involvement in any online gaming activities.

Si Tou explained that the wording SCM caught in a wiretapping communication was not referring to this platform but rather to a type of gaming table that the company had in the Philippines at Solaire casino. This was necessary to perform some rearrangements including arranging a different table allocation, a task that was within his job duties.

Gomes hinted that the prosecution had "jumped to conclusions" on several occasions without taking account of evidence, ignoring reports from the Judiciary Police on the same defendant with respect to his role within the company.

The court will convene again today to continue the trial. The trial is expected to have three more sessions this week, presiding Judge Lou Ieng Ha said. However, it was noted that such an arrangement will depend on the proceedings of the upcoming sessions.

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For subscription and general issues: general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

UNESCO urged to review Guia Lighthouse project in new letter

LYNZY VALLES

A concerned group is urging UNESCO to maintain a firm stance on the decision it made in 2008 in reducing the height of the building project located at Calçada do Gaio to 52.5 meters.

In a letter addressed to the assistant director-general for Culture of UNESCO, the Concern Group for the Protection of the Guia Lighthouse urged UNESCO to seek permission from the Chinese central government to declassify the reports sent to UNESCO.

"This will allow Macau residents and the international community to verify the authenticity of these studies and their conclusions," the group wrote. "UNESCO should clearly clarify the meaning of 'revise the design of the upper floors of the unfinished high-rise building at 18-20 Calçada de Gaio' to be more transparent and to lessen their visual impact," it added.



The letter comes as the group has long urged local authorities and UNESCO to help halt the unfinished high-rise building at 18-

20 Calçada de Gaio.

The first appeal letter was sent by the group to UNESCO on October 31 2007. The Chief Execu-

tive Directive No. 83/2008 was published on April 16 2008 in Macau.

"On the same day, the then

director of Public Works Bureau of the Macau SAR made a public commitment on behalf of the Macau SAR Government to Macau residents and the international community," the group recalled.

The association added that the then-official promised that the height of the unfinished building at Calçada do Gaio would be reduced to 52.5 meters to comply with the height limit in Chief Executive Directive No. 83/2008. In a subsequent meeting, the director also reiterated the above government position to members of the group.

"In this connection, it is a great shame that the previous two Chief Executives did not keep the promise and did not resolve the mess during their terms of office, a period of more than 11 long years," said the group.

The project was approved in the governance period of Ao Man Long, when corruption and fraud prevailed in the approval of building projects.

"It is a great shame that, after the case of Ao Man Long, Macau government officials continue to be forgetful. They pretend that the above promise to Macau residents and the international community does not exist," the group added.

COVID-19

Departure NAT validities for foreign travels eased

WHILST many countries are no longer requiring SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid test (NAT) results upon arrival or departure, the Macau government updated the validity requirements for departure NAT results yesterday.

In a statement announcing the change, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre noted that, from today onwards, travelers to destinations other than the neighboring Guangdong Province should possess negative NAT results of varying validity periods, depending on the destination.

Travelers flying out of Macau to destinations in which NAT results are no longer required should possess a result issued within seven days, inclusive of the day on which the sample was collected. The centre added that, if the NAT is taken in Macau, a result that is valid for traveling should be requested upon registration. The result can



be in electronic or paper form.

Those flying from Macau to mainland Chinese cities are recommended to check with their airline to confirm the validity requirements, as these vary across different cities.

People flying from Macau to Taiwan or Singapore should have a result issued within seven days, with the specimen collection date included, despite both des-

tinations no longer requiring NAT results upon arrival.

Those traveling by bus to Hong Kong will not be required by Macau to bear NAT results. However, should they be entering Hong Kong through its Come2HK or Return2HK schemes, they will be required by Hong Kong to bear negative NAT results issued within 72 hours from the specimen collection date. **AL**

331,397 TOURISTS

AUGUST VISITORS DOWN 19% Y-O-Y

VISITOR arrivals recorded a staggering increase in August, totaling 331,397, attributable to the easing of cross-border measures between Zhuhai and Macau in early August.

Although the increase was about 3,295.8%, the figure came from a low baseline as July visitor arrivals drastically dropped by 98.8% to 9,759 due to the city's partial lockdown in response to its largest outbreak since mid-June.

The figure represented a 19% drop year-on-year, data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) shows.

Overnight visitors (177,640) increased 17.5% year-on-year, whereas same-day visitors (153,757) declined 40.4%.

Having been affected by the previous wave of the pandemic, some visitors extended their stays until August, leading the average length of stays of overnight visitors to rise by 1.5 days year-on-year to 5.4 days.

As regards the source



of visitors, the number of visitors from mainland China fell 21.5% year-on-year to 290,138, with 124,255 visitors traveling under the Individual Visit Scheme

In the first eight months of this year, the number of visitor arrivals fell 25.8% year-on-year to 3,806,263. Same-day visitors (2,341,772) and overnight visitors (1,464,491) fell 6.5% and 44.2% respectively.

The validity period of nucleic acid test (NAT) results taken for the purpose of crossing the border, changed from 24

hours to 48 hours as of yesterday, Zhuhai health authorities announced, a measure that will likely boost tourism arrivals in the upcoming Golden Week holidays.

Given the recent increase in tourism, Macau might see an average of 30,000 tourists per day during the October 1 holidays, according to tourism associations.

Dubbed the Golden Week, the seven-day holiday is a major event in mainland China, with the other being the May 1 holiday, which also lasts seven days. **LV**

65 TOURISM TRADE WORKERS GET INT'L ACCREDITATION FOR ENGLISH PROFICIENCY IN H1

ANTHONY LAM

THE city has seen 65 workers from the tourism industry obtain international English accreditation in the first half of the year, a government body has disclosed.

In response to lawmaker Ella Lei's written inquiry dated August 5, acting director Cheng Wai Tong of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) made this disclosure. His reply was dated September 1.

The lawmaker asked about retention and cultivation of a multidisciplinary workforce as well as culinary or design professionals in the tourism industry. She feared that, with Covid-19 restrictions still lingering in Macau, the tourism industry may not have a sufficient workforce



when the city fully reopens to the foreign world. She acknowledges the cultivation of culinary professionals, which the government commenced in 2017, when the city was listed as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy.

In addition to this disclosure, citing the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL), Cheng reiterated that vo-

cal training-examination programs have been made available since 2015. As of July this year, more than 1,200 local residents have obtained vocational aptitude accreditations at various levels.

Moreover, the DSAL has, since 2013, also started offering courses covering various disciplines, such as language, customer service

and interpersonal communications.

Cheng added that interested parties may also consider pursuing a career through higher education, and that five of the city's higher education institutions are operating related programs, with over 2,300 students having taken part in the past academic year.

On attracting cultural clientele, the MGTO official pointed out, citing the Cultural Affairs Bureau, that the Virtual Reality experience at the Ruins of St Paul's would be commenced this year. Resident shows will also be introduced to several venues, such as the Mandarin House, the Dom Pedro V Theatre and the Navy Yard. The tourism industry will also be commissioned to operate certain businesses at arts and cultural venues.

F&B SECTOR REVENUES PLUNGE 70% IN JULY

REVENUES for restaurants and similar establishments dropped by 71.4% year-on-year in July amid the partial lockdown as the city faced its largest outbreak during the summer.

Data from the the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), showed that receipts of Chinese Restaurants and Japanese & Korean Restaurants fell by 85.6% and 83.1%, respectively.

In comparison with June, the receipts of these interviewed restaurants and similar establishments (229) went down by 52.5% in July; while the revenues of Chinese Restaurants and Japanese & Korean Restaurants declined by 73.0% and 71.7%, respectively.

The city's non-essential businesses came to a halt in July to deter the spread of the pandemic, which also deterred restaurants from accepting dine-in services.

As regards business ex-

pectations for August, most of the interviewed restaurants and similar establishments and retailers anticipated a month-on-month increase in receipts, since no new infection cases were found in the community at the end of July.

There were 80% of the interviewed restaurants and similar establishments expecting their receipts to grow month-on-month in August, while around 13% of the interviewed establishments still predicted that their receipts would decrease month-on-month in August.

Meanwhile, sales of the interviewed retailers plunged by 82.0% year-on-year in July; Leather Goods Retailers (-96.3%), Watches, Clocks & Jewellery Retailers (-95.6%), Department Stores (-93.8%) and Cosmetics & Sanitary Articles Retailers (-91.3%) all posted a decline of over 90% in sales, while Supermarkets (+28.7%) registered an increase. **LV**

AD

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CE, NPC Macau members meet for upcoming Policy Address

ANTHONY LAM

CHIEF Executive Ho Iat Seng recently met with the Macau members at the National People's Congress (NPC) to gather suggestions while compiling his next Policy Address.

The Policy Address is normally released in November.

According to a statement from the government, the meeting covered a variety of topics, from the construction of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin and the bond market, to the reconstruction of old local districts and the city's post-Covid economy.

After reiterating the popularity of the previous release of 3-billion-yuan bonds in Macau, Congressman Kou Hoi In, who is also the president of the local parliament,



recapped the field trip to the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region catering to all NPC Macau mem-

bers, citing the old district rejuvenation in Liuzhou, a city in Guangxi, as a feasible lesson for Macau.

He pointed out that the Inner Harbor District has a multitude of iconic architectures and busines-

ses, so revival of the district is recommended to transform it into a set of tourist attractions to inject new life into the neighborhood. Cultural tourism should also enjoy greater promotional attention in alignment with the national positioning of Macau as a world tourism and leisure center.

Meanwhile, Congressman Lau Ngai Leong suggested the local government focus its attention on improving hardware and software capabilities in the city in anticipation of the future release of bonds. In addition, he hoped that the government would continue refining Hengqin to attract further businesses and talent to improve popularity.

In addition, Congressman José Chui, a local lawmaker, suggested the government add commercial spaces to Light Rapid Transit (LRT) stations. He believed it would help lessen the financial burden on the government, while improving the appeal of LRT as a transport mode.

In response, the head of the government pledged he would spare no effort on e-governance, Big Data, talent cultivation and academic development work.

GBA

NIE XINPING: HENGQIN WILL PROVIDE FURTHER SUPPORT AND SERVICES TO INT'L TALENTS

STAFF REPORTER

ATTRACTING international talents and people from Macau to help develop Hengqin is one of the goals of the Hengqin authorities, said an authority representative, according to media reports.

"The Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin is a place where domestic and international people meet," said Nie Xinping, director of the Hengqin Office of the Guangdong Provincial People's Government and deputy director of the Executive Committee of the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin.

Last September, China issued a general plan for building a Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin. Later, the organizations responsible for administration within the Zone were established. In the past 12 months there have been great efforts to develop the zone.

"It's the deep cooperation between Guangdong and Macau that makes the zone special," Nie said. According to Nie, Macau has the advantages of being a



free trade port, while the mainland possesses "abundant resources and talent."

He mentioned that they will respond to the needs of Macau residents and enterprises to develop in the zone, continuously implement reforms such as the provision of technological support and flexible measures to promote the integrated development of Hengqin and Macau. The aim is to accomplish over 100 items for achieving convergence across various aspects of governance in

the next three years.

"Attracting more Macau residents to develop in Hengqin is one of their goals," Nie said. To realize this goal, the priority is to develop the four major industries. These include technological research and development and high-end manufacturing; Chinese medicine and other Macau-branded industries; cultural tourism, exhibition and trade; and modern finance.

The Hengqin authorities will also push forward the

substantial operation of industries to create high-quality jobs for Macau residents, especially among the young, he said.

Meanwhile, the hope is that the zone can attract the development of more international talent in Hengqin, Nie said, through policy formulation such as the establishment of special funds for overseas talent. For those willing to settle down in Macau, a settling-in allowance, landing fee and research start-up funds will be provided.

POLLUTION BUREAU PLEDGES TO MONITOR NOISE CONSTANTLY

ANTHONY LAM

In response to lawmakers' questions, the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA) emphasized it has been continually notified about noise complaints.

Lawmaker Lei Leong Wong has, in his previous written enquiry, questioned the effectiveness of the DSPA's noise monitoring efforts. The lawmaker disclosed he had received requests for assistance from residents, who reported that the noise created by businesses operating at night near their homes did not improve, even after they had lodged complaints with the government. According to the complainants, the relevant businesses did not answer the door in response to complaints and Lei attributed this to the lack of improvement.

The DSPA revealed it would normally visit complainants to gauge the noise level. If this was not possible, it attempted to gauge the noise levels nearby and interpret these levels pursuant to the relevant acoustic standards.

In addition to that, the DSPA would also work with police to prevent and control noise pollution. For example, citing the Office of the Secretary for Security, the DSPA disclosed that after receiving complaints concerning industrial and commercial venues, the police would deploy officers for investigations.

If discussion is possible, the officers will suggest that the business operators lower the noise level. Otherwise, the officers will file a record of the complaint. In both scenarios, the police will refer the cases reported to the bureau, the DSPA added.

Lei also questioned how the DSPA intended to improve the effectiveness of noise control laws.

On this, the bureau said it had received about 400 noise pollution complaints since 2015, when the Environmental Noise Prevention and Control Law was enacted. It added that continual supervision over such incidents is undertaken.

Nonetheless, no plan to review the law has been made.

AP PHOTO



PANDEMIC

CHINA QUARANTINE BUS CRASH PROMPTS OUTCRY OVER 'ZERO COVID'

HUIZHONG WU, TAIPEI

A nighttime bus crash that killed 27 people in southwest China this week has set off a storm of anger online over the country's strict COVID-19 policies.

The initial police report did not say who the passengers were and where they were going, but it later emerged they were headed to a quarantine location outside their city of Guiyang, the capital of Guizhou province.

The bus with 47 people on board crashed about 2:40 a.m. Sunday. City officials announced many hours later that the passengers were under "medical observation," confirming reports they were being taken to quarantine.

Following public anger, Guiyang fired three officials in

charge of Yunyan district, where the residents had been picked up, the provincial government said Monday. Guiyang's deputy mayor apologized at a news conference, bowing and observing a moment of silence.

Online, many wondered at the logic behind transporting people outside of Guiyang, accusing the government of moving them so that the city would no longer report any new cases.

"Will this ever end? On the top searches (on social media), there's all sorts of pandemic prevention situations every day, creating unnecessary panic and making people jittery," one person wrote. "Is there scientific validity to hauling people to quarantine, one car after another?"

Guiyang officials had announced the city would achieve "societal zero-COVID" by Monday,

one day after the crash.

The phrase means new infections are found only among people already under surveillance — such as those in a centralized quarantine facility or who are close contacts of existing patients — so the virus is no longer spreading in the community.

China has managed the pandemic through a series of measures known as "clearing to zero," or "zero COVID," maintained through strict lockdowns and mass testing.

The approach saved lives before vaccines were widely available, as people refrained from public gatherings and wore masks regularly. However, as other countries have opened up and loosened some of the most onerous restrictions, China has held steadfast to its zero-COVID strategy.

While China has cut down its quarantine time for overseas arrivals and said it would start issuing student visas, the policy remains strict at home. Officials are concerned about the potential death toll and the impact any loosening would have on the country's stretched medical system.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has cited China's approach as a "major strategic success" and evidence of the "significant advantages" of its political system over Western liberal democracies.

Yet, even as other countries open up, the humanitarian costs to China's pandemic approach has grown.

Earlier this year in Shanghai, desperate residents complained of being unable to get medicines or even groceries during the city's two-month lockdown, while some died in hospitals from

lack of medical care as the city restricted movement. Last week, residents in the western region of Xinjiang said they went hungry under a more than 40-day lockdown.

According to FreeWeibo, a website that tracks censored posts on the popular social media platform, three of top 10 searches on Weibo related to the bus accident.

Many fixated on images of the bus shared by social media users. One photo showed the bus after it had been retrieved from the accident site. Its roof was crushed and portions missing. Another photo allegedly showed the driver decked out in a full white protective suit.

Users online questioned how a driver could see properly when his face was covered up, and why he was driving so late at night. Many comments were censored but some that expressed discontent with the current approach to the pandemic did remain up.

"I hope that the price of this pain can push for change faster, but if it's possible, I don't want to pay such a high price for such a change," said the comment with the most likes on an online report about the accident by state broadcaster CCTV. "Condolences."

One of the passengers on the bus said her whole building had been taken for central quarantine, according to a report by Caixin, a business news outlet. Yet her apartment building had not reported a single case, according to a friend who shared their text conversation with Caixin.

Another popular comment quoted a proverb, "These human lives are like straw."

Yesterday, Guizhou reported 41 new COVID-19 cases in the entire province. The province has been on high alert in the past few weeks after discovering one case at the end of August. It has locked down its capital city, using the euphemistic "quiet period" to describe the move, which means people are not allowed to leave their homes. **MDT/AP**

Hong Kong man arrested after paying tribute to queen

HONG Kong police said yesterday they have arrested a man who paid tribute to Queen Elizabeth II near the city's British Consulate for alleged sedition.

Police said the 43-year-old man was detained late Monday near the consulate, where dozens of people had gathered to remember the late monarch. Elizabeth was sovereign in the city when it was a British colony before its handover to Chinese

rule in 1997.

Local media reports said the detained man had stood outside the consulate playing songs on a harmonica including "Glory to Hong Kong," the anthem of pro-democracy protests that rocked the city in 2019. Video shared on social media showed the crowd singing along as the man played.

Police said the man was arrested for investigation on suspicion of "committing an act with

sedition intent." They did not provide further details.

Thousands of Hong Kong residents have lined up in recent days in front of the British Consulate and left floral tributes to the queen, known affectionately as "boss lady" by many in the city who still remember colonial rule.

Until the arrest, Hong Kong authorities had allowed the orderly, somber outpouring of grief to continue. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



People wait in line to pay tribute to Queen Elizabeth II outside the British Consulate in Hong Kong, last week

CRYPTOCURRENCY

S. Korea requests Interpol's help in Terraform Labs probe

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

SOUTH Korean prosecutors have asked Interpol to issue a fugitive alert for the founder of Terraform Labs as they investigate a \$40 billion crash of the firm's cryptocurrency that devastated retail investors around the world.

The Seoul Southern District Prosecutors' Office asked Interpol on Monday to circulate the "red notice" for Do Kwon across the agency's 195 member nations to find and apprehend him.

A South Korean court recently issued arrest warrants for Kwon and five other people connected to Terraform Labs as prosecutors investigate allegations of fraud and financial crimes in relation to the implosion of its digital currencies in May. South Korea's Foreign Ministry said Tuesday that it's processing the prosecutors' request to restrict or revoke the passports of Kwon and four other suspects who are South Korean.

Interpol had not publicized the red notice for Kwon on its website as of Tuesday morning, and South Korean prosecutors say



A screen, right, showing the falling values of the Luna is seen at a cryptocurrency exchange in Seoul

the designation may take more than a week. Interpol describes such notices as requests to law

enforcement worldwide to locate and provisionally arrest fugitives "pending extradition, surrender,

or similar legal action." Kwon's whereabouts are unknown.

South Korean authorities initially believed Kwon was in Singapore before the city-state's police announced last week that he wasn't there. Kwon, who has been accused of exaggerating the stability of his digital currencies before their collapse, insisted in a tweet Sunday that he wasn't on the run from any "government agency that has shown interest to communicate."

"We are in full cooperation and we don't have anything to hide," Kwon said in the tweet.

The collapse of Terraform Lab's digital currencies, TerraUSD and Luna, affected an estimated 280,000 South Korean investors while causing broader turmoil in the global cryptocurrency market.

TerraUSD was designed as a "stablecoin." Those are pegged to stable assets like the U.S. dollar to prevent drastic fluctuations in prices. However, around \$40 billion in market value was erased for the holders of TerraUSD and its floating sister currency, Luna, after the stablecoin plunged far below its \$1 peg in May.

South Korean prosecutors launched the investigation following collective complaints filed by dozens of investors.

The Bank of Korea, South Korea's central bank, said in a report published in June that the collapse of TerraUSD and Luna was a major factor in the global cryptocurrency market shrinking by more than 40% compared to late 2021, when its market value reached over \$2.3 trillion. **MDT/AP**

AUSTRALIA

Miner Fortescue reveals USD6.2 billion carbon plan

AUSTRALIAN iron ore miner Fortescue Metals Group announced on yesterday a \$6.2 billion plan to eliminate fossil fuels and carbon emissions from its operations by the end of the decade.

The world's fourth-largest iron ore producer expects to save \$818 million a year from 2030 based on current prices of diesel, gas and carbon credits, said a Fortescue statement to the Australian Securities Exchange.

Most of the spending is planned for 2024-28. It includes an additional 2-to-3 gigawatts of renewable energy generation and battery storage as well as a green mining fleet of trucks and trains.

The target by 2030 of "real zero terrestrial emissions" -- no fossil fuels and with only temporary, if any, offsets -- would prevent 3 million metric tons of car-

bon dioxide-equivalent greenhouse gas emissions a year.

Fortescue is a member of the First Movers Coalition, a platform launched by the U.S. State Department and the World Economic Forum last year for companies to harness their buying power and supply chains to nurture early markets for innovative clean energy technologies.

Other big companies are also stepping up moves to cut their carbon emissions.

Last week, Samsung Electronics announced it was shifting away from fossil fuels and aiming to entirely power its global operations with clean electricity by 2050.

Fortescue chairman Andrew Forrest said Fortescue, based in Perth, Western Australia state, was already benefiting financially from a decarbonization policy that began two years ago.

The new decarbonization strategy has "set an example that a post-fossil fuel era is good commercial common sense," Forrest said in a statement.

"There's no doubt that the energy landscape has changed dramatically over the past two years and this change has accelerated since Russia invaded Ukraine," Forrest said.

"Consistent with Fortescue's disciplined approach to capital allocation, this investment in renewable energy and decarbonization is expected to generate attractive economic returns for our shareholders through energy cost savings and a sharp reduction in carbon offset purchases, together with a lower risk-cost profile and improvement in the integrity of our assets," Forrest added.

Australia's new center-left Labor Party government has enacted a law



setting a target to reduce the nation'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%-28% by 2030. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna speaks at a press conference at the French Mission, Monday, in New York

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

French foreign minister urges Iran: Accept nuclear deal

EDITH M. LEDERER,
UNITED NATIONS

FRANCE'S foreign minister on Monday urged Iran to take the last offer on the table to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, saying the window of opportunity "is about to close." A high-ranking European Union official said he didn't expect any progress on the issue this week at the annual gathering of world leaders.

Both officials said things looked promising last month, until an Iranian response. French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna said Iran raised issues linked to its obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, considered the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament.

She gave no details. But under the treaty's provisions, the five original nuclear powers — the United States, China, Russia (then the Soviet Union), Britain and France — agreed to negotiate toward eliminating their arsenals one day. Nations without nuclear weapons promised not to acquire them in exchange for a guarantee to be able to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

In 2018, then-President Donald Trump pulled the United States out of Iran's nuclear deal with those five nuclear powers and Germany. The agreement placed curbs on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for billions of dollars in sanctions relief,

which Tehran insists it has never received.

The U.S. withdrawal raised tensions across the wider Middle East and elicited a series of attacks and incidents. Current U.S. President Joe Biden's administration has been working to renew the agreement.

All the parties except Iran have stressed "that there will be no better offer on the table for Iran, and that the onus is really on Iran to make its decision," Colonna said at a news conference on the sidelines of this week's gathering of world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly.

She and other European foreign ministers met later Monday. After emerging from the meeting, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said there were no new developments on Iran. And he said he expected "nothing will happen this week."

"There's a proposal on the table, and this proposal will remain on the table," he said at a news conference. "I don't see a better solution than the one that we have proposed."

In an interview aired Sunday on CBS-TV's "60 Minutes," Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi demanded guarantees that the U.S. would not withdraw again from a nuclear deal. As Raisi left Tehran for the General Assembly meeting, he said his delegation had "no plans whatsoever" to meet or negotiate with U.S. leaders.

On another nuclear issue,

Colonna said France will convene a meeting Wednesday with U.N. nuclear chief Rafael Grossi on the precarious state of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in southeastern Ukraine. The plant, Europe's largest, is occupied by Russia but still operated by Ukraine.

There has been shelling in and around the facility; Russia and Ukraine have traded accusations of blame for the strikes.

Colonna said she spoke to Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Monday morning about the need for Ukraine, Russia, and all countries in the world "to avoid a nuclear catastrophe."

She said Lavrov seemed to be "open to listening to some detailed proposal" by Grossi, who has called for a "nuclear safety and security protection zone" around the Zaporizhzhia plant.

Colonna accused Russia of attacking the foundations of the United Nations by waging its unjustified war against Ukraine "in a very brutal way" with shelling of civilian targets, violent acts, "rapes, torture and forced liquidation."

"All of these are war crimes," she said.

The French minister said Russia is crossing three thresholds in the war: the legal threshold by violating U.N. Charter rules that call for peaceful settlement of disputes among states; the moral threshold "by the extent of the crimes committed

in Ukraine"; and the political threshold by destabilizing global food and energy security.

Russia has said it launched its "special military operation" for the sake of Ukrainians, many of them Russian speakers, who Moscow said were being oppressed by their government. Putin declared that it was aimed at the "demilitarization" of Ukraine to remove a perceived military threat to Russia by "neo-Nazis" — rhetoric condemned by Ukraine and the West as a fictitious cover for an act of aggression.

Colonna also called on China to stop its "very aggressive" behavior toward Taiwan. She stressed that "the status quo must not be questioned by China and not by using means that are not peaceful." Her comments followed a statement from Biden, broadcast Sunday on "60 Minutes," that American forces would defend Taiwan if Beijing tries to invade.

China's government on Monday denounced the U.S. president's remarks, saying they violate a U.S. commitment not to support formal independence for Taiwan, a step Beijing has said would lead to war. Biden's comment added to displays of official American support for the island democracy in the face of growing shows of force by the mainland's ruling Communist Party, which claims Taiwan as part of its territory. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1998 CLINTON'S GRAND JURY TESTIMONY RELEASED



Bill Clinton's testimony about his relationship with a young female assistant has been released to the United States public.

The video of the American president's 17 August interview in front of the Grand Jury was taken to a television station at 0910 local time (1410 BST) and broadcast immediately by many US networks.

During the examination President Clinton was questioned by prosecutors about the exact nature of his affair with Monica Lewinsky - and whether he had previously lied under oath.

The president's defence against the accusations relied on elaborate definitions of certain words.

The interview was originally taped on the insistence of the investigating team for the benefit of a jury member who could not attend the hearing.

But members of the House of Representatives justified the release of the tape by saying the public had the right to see all the evidence of the Starr Report.

"It's not a pretty sight... But the key thing we've all got to focus on is what is the truth", said Charles Canady - a republican on the House Judicial Committee.

A visibly uncomfortable President Clinton was forced to defend previous statements about his affair with Miss Lewinsky by quibbling over the precise definition of his words.

In particular he said "sexual relations" did not to him mean "sexual intercourse" - which he denied having with the former White House intern.

Challenged later in the hearing, he argued the meaning of the smallest of words contained in one of his lawyers' statements.

"It depends upon what the meaning of the word 'is' is. If 'is' means 'is and never has been' that's one thing - if it means 'there is none', that was a completely true statement," he said.

After facing the Grand Jury, the president now awaits the verdict of the American people.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

On 9 December 1998 the House Judiciary Committee proposed four articles of impeachment against the president.

Ten days later - after a bitter debate between republicans and democrats - the House of Representatives voted to confirm the recommendation.

Bill Clinton became only the second president in American history to face such an indictment, but he refused to resign.

His trial began on 7 January 1999 and ended on 12 February when senators voted to acquit him of the impeachment charges of perjury and obstruction of justice.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Your positive attitude and intellectual outlook will draw others to you. Try not to lose your cool, and make your point known. You can make the most headway if you put in some overtime.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
You need to look into some private matters before you can proceed with your plans. You will have to be careful not to let infatuations with colleagues get out of hand.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Regardless of your first reaction, the outcome will be favorable. Property investments, insurance, tax rebates, or inheritance should bring you financial gains. Take some time out.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Deception is likely. A need to express yourself may come out in creative ways. You need to be active and spend time with friends you enjoy.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
If you join intellectual or cultural groups, you should meet individuals who stimulate you. You will be full of energy and you need to find something constructive to do.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
You may be in an extremely passionate mood today. You may have difficulties with someone close to you. Involve yourself in group endeavors.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You can get a great deal accomplished if you bring work home. Concentrate on getting ahead financially and let your personal life settle down for a while.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Don't jump too quickly if someone tries to make you join in on their crusade. You might not accomplish all that you want to at home today. Be sure not to burn any bridges.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You could be drawn to events that concern children. You may be emotionally unstable if you let someone you care about get away with verbal abuse. Don't let others bully you into agreeing with them.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Be careful not to come on too strongly. It will be important that you have your priorities straight. Overindulgence could cause problems for you with your loved ones.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Attend trade shows that will allow you to look at new products. Travel and creative hobbies will be your best outlet. Joint ventures might prove to be unfavorable.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Strengthen your position among your peers. You can expect to have a passionate time if you go out with someone you are romantically interested in.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

EASY

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

EASY+

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

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

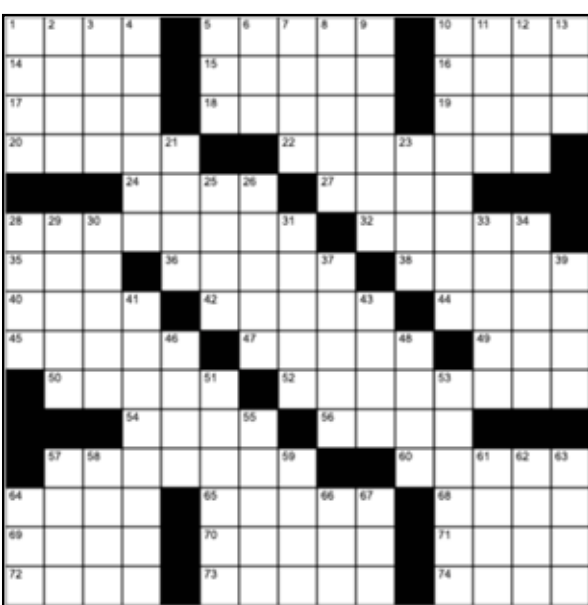
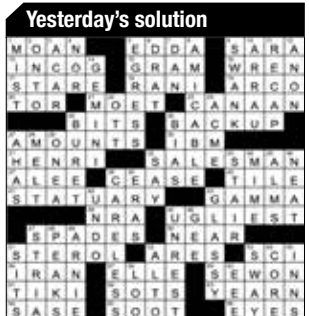
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	13	26	fine
Changchun	4	16	fine
Chengdu	19	23	overcast
Chongqing	22	29	rain
Fuzhou	24	33	fine
Guangzhou	25	35	thunderstorms
Guiyang	19	27	showers
Haikou	25	31	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	18	27	cloudy
Harbin	4	15	fine
Hefei	18	26	cloudy
Nanjing	17	23	cloudy
Shanghai	20	25	cloudy
Taipei	23	28	cloudy
Wuhan	20	29	cloudy
Hong Kong	25	29	overcast
WORLD			
Moscow	8	16	rain
Frankfurt	4	18	overcast
Paris	7	20	overcast
London	9	21	overcast
New York	21	27	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Boy or man; 5- Prince Valiant's wife; 10- Soft shoes; 14- Homecoming guest; 15- Singer Bryson; 16- Banned apple spray; 17- Thrust with a knife; 18- Mary of "The Maltese Falcon"; 19- Actress Gershon; 20- Was able; 22- Roof item; 24- Energy units; 27- Gutter location; 28- End of a railroad line; 32- Lute of India; 35- Sister of Zsa Zsa; 36- Sticum; 38- One in prison for good; 40- Coscant's reciprocal; 42- Feeble peevish complaint; 44- Motion picture; 45- Rocklike; 47- Gandhi's land; 49- Campaigned; 50- Smith's block; 52- 20th president of the U.S.; 54- Blunted blade; 56- Side; 57- Supposed; 60- Gives a 9.8, say; 64- Nabisco cookie; 65- Healing plants; 68- Present; 69- Quick look; 70- Quizzes, trials; 71- Romain de Tiroff, familiarly; 72- Bern's river; 73- Upright; 74- Cong. meeting;

DOWN 1- Not fern; 2- Singing voice; 3- Hawaiian outdoor feast; 4- Symbol; 5- Therapists' org.; 6- Bandleader Brown; 7- I could ___ horse!; 8- Steak order; 9- Main arteries; 10- Like a lodestone; 11- Actress Lena; 12- Injectable diazepam, in military lingo; 13- Mme., across the Pyrenees; 21- Faucet problem; 23- Devil's doing; 25- Chew on; 26- Japanese dish; 28- Actress Harper; 29- "Don't Cry for Me, Argentina" musical; 30- Blathered; 31- Sharp pain; 33- Flaming; 34- Of the kidneys; 37- Conclude by; 39- Rip apart; 41- Wrapper; 43- Cork's place; 46- Holy moly!; 48- Whence one may worship; 51- Official emissary; 53- Mental pictures; 55- Conger catcher; 57- Length times width; 58- Lip-curling facial expression; 59- Prescribed amount; 61- Air-filled rubber hoop, become fatigued; 62- Newts; 63- Canonized Fr. women; 64- ___-Locka, Florida; 66- List-ending abbr.; 67- Concorde, e.g.;



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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- HELLENE G. | 3 BEDS HKD 12,500
- 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

FOR SALE

- JADE GARDEN | 4 BEDS HKD 15,380,000
- 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
- TAIPA STUDIO | 1 BED HKD 3,980,000
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AP PHOTO



British Prime Minister Liz Truss and her husband Hugh O'Leary arrive for the funeral service of Queen Elizabeth II at Westminster Abbey in central London, Monday

TRADE

BRITAIN'S TRUSS DOESN'T EXPECT UK-US TRADE DEAL ANYTIME SOON

JILL LAWLESS, NEW YORK

PRIME Minister Liz Truss has kicked off her first visit to the United States as Britain's leader with an admission that a U.K.-U.S. free trade deal is not going to happen for years.

Truss said a trans-Atlantic deal is not one of her priorities — a sharp contrast with the stance of her immediate predecessors as Conservative prime minister, Bo-

ris Johnson and Theresa May. Both dangled the promise of a deal with the world's biggest economy as one of the main prizes of Britain's exit from the European Union.

"There (aren't) currently any negotiations taking place with the U.S., and I don't have an expectation that those are going to start in the short to medium term," Truss told reporters aboard her plane to New York, where she landed yesterday to attend the United Na-

tions General Assembly.

Truss said she was more focused on obtaining accession to the Trans-Pacific trade partnership and striking trade deals with India and the Gulf Cooperation Council of states including Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

"Those are our trade priorities," she said.

Truss's downbeat assessment about trans-Atlantic trade came ahead of her first one-on-one

meeting with President Joe Biden since she took office two weeks ago. The two leaders are due to meet Wednesday on the sidelines of the U.N. gathering in New York. Both were among scores of world leaders who attended the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II in London on Monday.

Truss said her priorities for the meeting with Biden were "making sure that we are able to collectively deal (with) Russian aggres-

sion," and ensuring "we are not strategically dependent on authoritarian regimes."

"I want to work with our allies like the United States, like France, the EU, the Baltic States, Poland to take on the challenge we face from Russian aggression," she said. "That should be our priority."

That puts the U.K. broadly in line with Biden's tough stance toward Russia and China, but the trade impasse leaves the oft-touted "special relationship" between Britain and the U.S. on the back burner.

Supporters of Brexit say one of the chief benefits of leaving the bloc, and its vast free market of almost half a billion people, is the chance for the United Kingdom to make new trade deals around the world.

U.K.-U.S. trade talks were launched with fanfare soon after Britain left the EU in 2020, but negotiations faltered amid rising concern in the U.S. administration about the impact of Brexit, especially on Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland is the only part of the United Kingdom that shares a border with an EU member, and Brexit has brought new customs checks and paperwork for Northern Ireland trade, an issue that has spiraled into a political crisis for the power-sharing government in Belfast.

In response, Britain has announced plans to suspend the checks and rip up part of its Brexit treaty with the EU — a move that angered the bloc and alarmed Washington. Biden has warned that no side should do anything to undermine the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, the cornerstone of Northern Ireland's peace process.

Truss says she wants to reach agreement with the EU, but will push ahead with rewriting the treaty if that fails. She has said the situation can't be allowed to "drift." **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

Melco named Corporate Social Responsibility of the Year by Global Gaming Awards



Melco Resorts & Entertainment has been honored by Global Gaming Awards Asia 2022 as Corporate Social Responsibility of the Year.

The Asian edition of Global Gaming Awards recognizes

Melco's contributions and innovative CSR initiatives to give back to the community it serves.

The category nominees comprised over 100 operators, with 7 companies short-

listed, and the finalist was selected by the judging panel's over 30 industry executives in APAC.

Lawrence Ho, chairman & CEO of Melco, said, "We feel honored to be recognized by Global Gaming Awards Asia for our efforts in giving back to the communities we serve. Throughout the course of the pandemic, we have listened to society's morphing needs to provide timely, proactive solutions."

Meanwhile, the gaming operator's Simple Acts of Kindness volunteering initiative, now in its second phase, enables its colleagues to "devote their working hours to the betterment of the community."

Wynn donates MOP80 million to UM



Wynn Resorts (Macau) S.A. has announced a donation of MOP80 million to the University of Macau Development Foundation (UMDF). The contribution will support the development of the University of Macau in different

aspects as well as the initiatives of its Asia-Pacific Academy of Economics and Management.

The Asia-Pacific Academy of Economics and Management of the University of Macau highlights interdis-

ciplinary cooperation, with its aim being to promote interdisciplinary research that has implications for the socio-economic development of Macau and the Greater Bay Area.

"Over the years, Wynn has been committed to supporting the development of the University of Macau through the UMDF in the areas of teaching, research, social services and talent cultivation. Our efforts include providing support for the academic and research initiatives of the Asia-Pacific Academy of Economics and Management, continuously pushing for Macau's local teaching and research work," the gaming operator said in a statement.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

DANIELLA MATAR, MILAN

WORLD CUP

Tough start at Milan for US defender Dest

UNITED States defender Sergiño Dest joined Italian champion AC Milan with the hope of getting more playing time ahead of the World Cup.

He's gotten off to a tough start. "American Horror Story, a 45-minute episode," was how Italian newspaper Gazzetta dello Sport described Dest's Serie A debut, giving him a rating of five out of 10 for his performance in Sunday's 2-1 loss to Napoli. Other newspapers labelled it "a catastrophe" or simply "bad."

Dest, who joined on loan from Barcelona on transfer deadline day, had played in both of Milan's Champions League group games but made his first appearance in the Italian league when he came on as a halftime substitute for Davide Calabria against Napoli.

He struggled from the outset and after less than 10 minutes gave away the penalty that led to the opening goal — and Milan's first loss of the season — when he fouled speedy Napoli winger Khvicha Kvaratskhelia.

"Dest is a good player. As is Kvaratskhelia," Milan coach Stefano Pioli said. "Calabria also struggled against the Georgian."

The 21-year-old Dest has a



In this June 8, 2019, file photo, United States' Sergiño Dest, left, and Ecuador's Gonzalo Plata challenge for the ball during a quarterfinal soccer match at the U20 World Cup in Gdynia, Poland

Surinamese-American father and Dutch mother and chose to play for the United States instead of the Netherlands, where

he was born and raised. He has scored two goals in 17 matches for the national team.

Dest started his career at Ajax

before moving to Barcelona two years ago for 21 million euros (then \$24.7 million) but he couldn't establish himself as a regular starter.

He had plenty of minutes in his first season at Barcelona, under coach Ronald Koeman, but then his playing time gradually decreased. He nevertheless had chances under coach Xavi Hernández in the Europa League last season but also couldn't take advantage of them.

And Dest knew that, with the World Cup approaching in November, he needed to have a regular place in a team.

United States coach Gregg Berhalter plans to announce his World Cup squad on Nov. 9, five days before the deadline to submit it to FIFA.

Dest is a first-choice right back for the American team and also a backup on the left behind Antonee Robinson.

If healthy, Dest seems almost guaranteed to start against Wales in the Americans' open-

ing group game on Nov. 21 — DeAndre Yedlin, Reggie Cannon, Joe Scally are big drop-offs in comparison — but he'll want to take some form with him to Qatar.

WAITING ON REUS

Germany faces an anxious wait to see if Borussia Dortmund captain Marco Reus will be ready in time for the World Cup following a serious-looking ankle injury in the Ruhr derby on Saturday.

Dortmund said the 33-year-old Reus will miss three to four weeks because of a ligament injury in his right ankle. It seems an optimistic assessment from a club that has rushed players back from injuries too soon in the past — United States midfielder Gio Reyna had repeated setbacks last season.

Reus has only played 48 games for Germany. He missed the team's winning World Cup run in 2014 with an ankle injury and Euro 2016 with a groin injury. He played at the World Cup in 2018 but skipped the next European Championship to recover after his season with Dortmund.

Germany coach Hansi Flick called up Leipzig defender Benjamin Henrichs as a replacement for the upcoming games against Hungary and England. MDT/AP

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OPINION

World Views

J. Eugene Clay Arizona State University, MDT/The Conversation

WHY POPE FRANCIS CHOSE TO HIGHLIGHT RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DURING HIS VISIT TO KAZAKHSTAN

Pope Francis spent three days in Kazakhstan, starting Sept. 13, 2022, to attend the Seventh Congress of World and Traditional Religions. The pope met with religious leaders, called for increased religious freedom and condemned religious justifications for war and violence.

The pope's appeal for peace in the former Soviet republic of Kazakhstan was especially significant in light of Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine, which he called "senseless."

Most Christians in Kazakhstan belong to the Russian Orthodox Church, whose leader, Patriarch Kirill, has justified the Russian invasion as a moral crusade. Francis had hoped to meet with Kirill, who chose not to attend the congress. In Kirill's absence, Francis addressed his remarks to the Russian Orthodox delegation.

As a scholar who has spent over 30 years studying Christianity in the former Soviet Union, I've followed the pope's visit with keen interest. He has chosen to highlight the causes of peace and religious freedom — matters of particular concern to Kazakhstan's Catholic minority.

Christianity in Kazakhstan

Although Kazakhstan is predominantly Muslim, over 4 million Kazakhstanis profess Christianity. This represents over a quarter of the country's total population of 19 million. Over 80% of Kazakhstan's Christians are ethnic Russians.

Christian missionaries brought their gospel to Central Asia as early as the third century after Christ. By the seventh century, Christians had established important centers along the Silk Road, the trading routes from China to Constantinople.

The Assyrian Church of the East, a branch of Christianity that developed in the Persian Empire, had a significant presence on the territory of Kazakhstan well into the 12th century.

After the Muslim conquest of Central Asia in the seventh and eighth centuries, Christianity slowly lost influence and began a long decline. In the 14th century, Franciscan missionaries from Italy briefly created a diocese in today's southeastern Kazakhstan.

The Russian conquest

In the 17th century, Russia began its expansion into Siberia and the northern Kazakh steppes. Cossack soldiers, who belonged to the Russian Orthodox Church, established military outposts, where they also practiced their faith. In addition, the "Old Believers" — religious dissenters who broke with the official Orthodox church over ritual questions — fled to Siberia and northern Kazakhstan to escape persecution. Old Believers continue to maintain their communities in eastern Kazakhstan's Altay Mountains.

The Russian conquest of Central Asia in 1860s and 1870s further increased the numbers of Christian settlers in the region. In 1871, the Russian Orthodox Church established the Diocese of Turkestan, which included much of today's Kazakhstan. The diocesan center was the town of Vernyi, which is now called Almaty and is Kazakhstan's largest city.

The Russian Orthodox Church also tried, with limited success, to convert the nomadic Kazakhs, who practiced Islam. In 1881, it created a special missionary society to preach the gospel to the Kazakhs. The mission translated the Bible and some liturgical texts into Kazakh. Despite these efforts, most Kazakhs remained Muslim.

Seeking new farmland, German Mennonites and Russian evangelical Christians settled in Kazakhstan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These colonists established a Protestant presence in this increasingly diverse territory. [Abridged]

Belgian bishops yesterday published a proposed text for a prayer liturgy for same-sex couples that includes prayers, Scriptural readings and expressions of commitment, despite a 2021 Vatican directive barring church blessings for gay couples.

The Flemish-speaking bishops stressed that the "moment of prayer" was by no means akin to a sacramental marriage, which Catholic doctrine says is a lifelong union between a man and woman. Rather, they said their proposal is part of the Belgian church's effort to be more responsive to its gay members and to "create a climate of respect, recognition and integration." They cited Pope Francis' call

for the church to be more welcoming to gays.

The publication of the text, first reported by the Dutch newspaper *Nederlands Dagblad*, marks the latest salvo in efforts by more progressive churches to extend greater outreach to gays, led by the German church and its controversial "synodal" process of dialogue with the German laity.

Catholic teaching holds that gays must be treated with dignity and respect, but that homosexual acts are "intrinsically disordered."

Last year, the Vatican's doctrine office decreed that the church cannot bless same-sex unions "because God cannot bless sin."

UN CHIEF: WORLD IS 'PARALYZED' AND EQUITY IS SLIPPING AWAY

EDITH M. LEDERER, UNITED NATIONS

In an alarming assessment, the head of the United Nations warned world leaders yesterday that nations are "gridlocked in colossal global dysfunction" and aren't ready or willing to tackle the challenges that threaten humanity's future — and the planet's. "Our world is in peril — and paralyzed," he said.

Speaking at the opening of the General Assembly's annual high-level meeting, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres made sure to emphasize that hope remained. But his remarks reflected a tense and worried world. He cited the war in Ukraine and multiplying conflicts around the world, the climate emergency, the dire financial situation of developing countries and setbacks in U.N. goals for 2030 including an end to extreme poverty and quality education for all children.

He also warned of what he called "a forest of red flags" around new technologies despite promising advances to heal diseases and connect people. Guterres said social media platforms are based on a model "that monetizes outrage, anger and negativity." Artificial intelligence he said, "is compromising the integrity of information systems, the media, and indeed democracy itself."

The world lacks even the beginning of "a global architecture" to deal with the ripples caused by these new technologies because of "geopolitical tensions," Guterres said.

His opening remarks came as leaders from around the planet reconvened at U.N. headquarters in New York after three years of pandemic interruptions, including an entirely virtual meeting in 2020 and a hybrid one last year. This week, the halls of the Uni-



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres speaks at the start of the Transforming Education Summit at United Nations headquarters, Monday

ted Nations are filled once more with delegates reflecting the world's cultures. Many faces were visible, though all delegates are required to wear masks except when speaking to ward off the coronavirus.

Guterres made sure to start out by sounding a note of hope. He showed a video of the first U.N.-chartered ship carrying grain from Ukraine — part of the deal between Ukraine and Russia that the United Nations and Turkey helped broker — to the Horn of Africa, where millions of people are on the edge of famine. It is, he said, an example of promise and hope "in a world teeming with turmoil."

He stressed that cooperation and dialogue are the only path forward — two fundamental U.N. principles since its founding after World War II. And he warned that "no power or group alone can call the shots."

"Let's work as one, as a coalition of the world, as united nations," he urged leaders gathered in the vast General Assembly hall.

It's rarely that easy. Geopolitical divisions are undermining the work of the U.N. Security Council, international law, people's trust in democratic insti-

tutions and most forms of international cooperation, Guterres said.

"The divergence between developed and developing countries, between North and South, between the privileged and the rest, is becoming more dangerous by the day," the secretary-general said. "It is at the root of the geopolitical tensions and lack of trust that poison every area of global cooperation, from vaccines to sanctions to trade."

Before the global meeting was gaveled open, leaders and ministers wearing masks to avoid a COVID-19 super-spreader event wandered the assembly hall, chatting individually and in groups. It was a sign that that despite the fragmented state of the planet, the United Nations remains the key gathering place for presidents, prime ministers, monarchs and ministers.

Nearly 150 heads of state and government are on the latest speakers' list, a high number reflecting that the United Nations remains the only place not just to deliver their views but to meet privately to discuss the challenges on the global agenda -- and hopefully make some progress. **MDT/AP**



Russia's Kremlin-controlled lower house of parliament yesterday approved legislation that toughens punishment for soldiers breaching their duties, in an apparent effort to boost discipline in the ranks amid the fighting in Ukraine. The set of amendments to Russia's Criminal Code that was quickly endorsed by the State Duma introduces severe punishments for failure to follow orders, desertion or surrendering to the enemy.

Spain will temporarily slash sales tax on natural gas from 21% to 5% to help consumers face rising energy costs this winter as Russia has cut back gas exports to Europe amid the war in Ukraine. Terera Ribera, Spain's minister charged with energy policy, said that the reduction in sales tax will last until Dec. 31 but can be extended beyond that date if needed. It also will apply to the sale of firewood and biomass pellets.



Ugandan health authorities yesterday reported that a man who died a day earlier had tested positive for the virus that causes Ebola. They said it's still unknown how the 24-year-old man became infected with the Sudan strain of Ebola, for which there is no approved vaccine.



Tigray A spokesman for Tigrayan authorities said yesterday that Eritrea has launched a full-scale offensive along the country's border with northern Ethiopia in what appears to be an escalation of last month's renewal of fighting. The Eritreans are fighting alongside Ethiopian federal forces, including commando units, as well as allied militia, said Getachew Reda.