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AN UNDISCLOSED NUMBER OF GP FOREIGN RACERS ARE UNDERGOING THE MANDATORY 7+3 QUARANTINE PERIOD: GOV'T

P2

NEW DIRECTIVES CONCERNING HEALTH CODE CAUSE DISRUPTIONS IN CITY

P4

HONG KONG COURT LETS UK LAWYER DEFEND MEDIA TYCOON JIMMY LAI

P6



AP PHOTO



North Korea fired a short-range ballistic missile toward its eastern sea yesterday, extending a recent barrage of weapons demonstrations including what it described as simulated attacks on South Korean and U.S. targets last week. Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missile was launched from the western town of Sukchon, north of the capital, Pyongyang, and flew across the country toward waters off the North's eastern coast.

AP PHOTO



Bangladesh Fish, rice, mangrove trees and the lush delta wetlands where the massive Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna rivers drain into the Bay of Bengal. It's not luxury. But for the farmers and fishermen who live by the world's largest mangrove forest, it's more than enough. Now, the environment is at risk. More on macaudailytimes.com

AP PHOTO



Egypt The world should confront climate change the way it does nuclear weapons, by agreeing to a non-proliferation treaty that stops further production of fossil fuels, a small island nation leader urged yesterday [Macau time]. The proposal by the prime minister of Tuvalu, Kausea Natano (pictured) came as vulnerable nations pushed for more action and money at international climate talks in Egypt, while big polluters remained divided over who should pay for the damage industrial greenhouse gas emissions have done to the planet.

More on backpage

RESIDENTIAL PARK

High-rise residential buildings near Nova Grand confirmed, leisure facilities ditched

P3



TOURISM
TAIPA HOUSES TO FINALLY RUN MACANESE-STYLE RESTAURANT

P3



GRAND PRIX

ORGANIZERS SUGGEST PEOPLE WALK TO REDUCE TRAFFIC DURING RACES

RENATO MARQUES

THE organizing committee of the Macau Grand Prix event (MGPOC) is suggesting people in Macau commute on foot as much as possible during the event days to reduce traffic, Mok Soi Tou, Head of Coordination Department of the Transport Bureau (DSAT) said yesterday in a press conference on the traffic arrangements ahead of the GP.

In the last event, Mok recommended that people opt for public transport instead of using private vehicles. This time, Mok advised people to refrain from using public transportation altogether, as much as possible.

With the opening of the new Guia Hill Pedestrian Tunnel to the public, he hopes "people can make use of this new facility to facilitate commuting between Horta e Costa areas and ZAPE district."

According to the same official, "such a route takes only 10 to 15 minutes on foot." For this reason, people are "advised to walk [instead of taking any form of vehicle transportation] to avoid increasing traffic pressure and traffic



jams during the event."

As in previous years, traffic will be congested during the four days, as many streets and roads will be closed to give way to the racing event at Guia Circuit, as well as the necessary exit routes and emergency vehicles.

A total of 50 bus routes will be

modified, and one of them (H2) will be suspended. As with previous events, the DSAT will put into operation two special temporary bus routes (12T and 31T) that will connect the Praça de Ferreira de Amaral Bus Hub to the Forum Macau. These bus routes will operate free of charge from

early morning on November 17 until November 20 evening.

ROADWORKS SUSPENDED IN SOME AREAS TILL 23

Mok also announced that several roadworks that have been ongoing in several areas of the city, including the Avenida Dr.

Sun Yat-Sen and the Rua de Luis Gonzaga Gomes, will be suspended to facilitate the traffic during not only the GP but also the events that follow until the end of the year. Referring specifically to the Avenida Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, Mok said that the first phase of certain gas piping works had been concluded on November 7.

However, the second phase will only start from 2023 to coordinate with the year-end events that include the Macau International Marathon, among others.

FERRY TERMINAL PARKING LOT TO REOPEN

Another of the facilities are used by the GP is the Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal public parking lot.

Addressing several aspects of the traffic arrangements, MGPOC Infrastructure Subcommittee Coordinator and engineer Diamantino Torrado said that the parking lot will be returned to public usage from November 25. Furthermore, the plan is to remove all metal barriers along the main streets and roads of the central district of Macau by November 26, with the remaining ones to be gone by the first few days of December.

The number of gates that allow traffic to pass through every day after the event program is concluded increased from 150 to 162 this year.

GRAND PRIX

Foreign racers have arrived and are undergoing quarantine

RENATO MARQUES

AN undisclosed number of foreign racers who will take part in this year's Macau Grand Prix have already arrived in Macau and are undergoing the mandatory 7+3 quarantine period, the coordinator of the Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee (MGPOC) and Sports Bureau president, Pun Weng Kun said yesterday during a press conference on the GP traffic arrangements.

According to Pun, over 150 racers will participate in this year's event, from which "more than 10 are participants in the Motorcycle GP event," he said. There are also other fo-

reign racers who will join the event in the "touring cars" categories.

According to information provided late last week by the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) representative to the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre, Lau Fong Chi, there are around 60 people among racers, team members, and other staff from the GP who need to undergo quarantine.

On Saturday, around 50 of these people were already undergoing quarantine in Macau, she said during the press briefing from the Centre.

Pun also said that a large number of the over 150 racers participating in this

year's GP are from Macau but also from Hong Kong and mainland China. He added that among the foreigners, most of them come from different European countries and are already in quarantine. All are in good health and with no positive cases to note.

As the Times learned, most of the motorcycle riders arrived in Macau last Friday and Saturday. They are currently on their fifth or sixth quarantine day and it is expected that they will be out from the quarantine hotel before the GP official inauguration ceremony takes place at the Tap Seac Square this Saturday (November 12).



MGPOC NOT AWARE OF TICKET SALE NUMBERS

Questioned on the topic by the media, Pun said that at the moment the organizers do not have a precise figure on the number of tickets that have already been sold to spectators for

the GP event.

According to Pun, the sales "only started around 10 days ago so it is too early to provide a result," he said, adding that it should be similar to previous years.

Pun said that to comply

with pandemic prevention guidelines, spectators will have to have their temperature checked before entering the GP venue and will also have to scan the venue location QR code and wear a facemask at all times.

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PUBLIC WORKS

High-rise building near Nova Grand confirmed despite heated debate

ANTHONY LAM

AFTER dropping the provisional car tire park, the government has decided to build a high-rise building at the former cotton mills in Taipa, a plan that was passed yesterday at the Urban Planning Committee (CPU) despite debates surrounding it.

The plan, which consists of the three plots of land formerly used by the old cotton mills and another plot on the opposite side of the road, attracted 462 opinion pieces, in contrast to the usual couple of opinions garnered for other plans. The Land and Urban Construction Bureau (DSSCU), the executive body that supports the functioning of the CPU, admitted that a majority of these opinions were against the development plan.

Most of these opinions call for the withdrawal of the plan to build residential buildings and to instead build cultural and leisure facilities, such as parks. Other opposing opinions called for decreasing the heights of these buildings, from 90 meters to 60.

Located next to and diagonally opposite the southwestern tip of the Nova Grand residential estate, the high-rise buildings planned will inevitably block the views of certain residents at the estate. The DSSCU disclosed at yesterday's meeting that "neighboring developments have reached as tall as 150 meters."

During the discussion, CPU member Leong Pou U first asked about the government's response to the overwhelming number of



ANTHONY LAM

opposing opinions.

To this, Mak Tat Io, vice director of the DSSCU, defended the government's position, citing the Master Urban Plan. Noting that the district is designated for residential use in the Master Urban Plan, the public works official suggested that these plots of land should not be used for leisure facilities.

Mak added that the plots of land are strategically located in the heart of Taipa, in close proximity to a Light Rapid Transit station and Hengqin.

He also said that the working population and the residential population in Taipa are not proportional to each other, meaning that there are more people

working than living in Taipa. Referring to data from the past census, he pointed out that Taipa only had a population density slightly surpassing 80,000 per square kilometer, while the Macau Peninsula's population density was 150,000 per square kilometer.

In further defense of the plan, Mak said that the environment within this district "is relatively comfortable," adding that land buffers have been reserved for the development's coverage. The DSSCU has permitted a 100% use of the land with a 10-times maximum plot ratio for the development.

Mak stressed that other plots of land in Taipa will later be allotted for cultural and leisure use in

accordance with the Master Urban Plan.

On the sidelines of the meeting, after being quizzed for details on which plots of land to which the vice director was referring, Lai Weng Leong, director of the DSSCU and the chair of the CPU, refrained from making any disclosures but assured that announcements will be made in due course.

Leong later followed up on population density, questioning why the government was not focusing on improving people's quality of life.

Mak responded by saying that the government will not increase population density in Taipa to the levels seen in Macau.

He then referenced the government's plan to increase the population to 808,000 by 2040, suggesting that more people should be allocated to Taipa.

Member Sio Chi Weng followed up on the government's plan in terms of establishing public facilities in the area. Lai recapped Mak's earlier response and reiterated that such facilities will exist elsewhere in Taipa.

Another member, Chan Chio I, asked about building footbridges, a facility which is included in the plan that will connect the four plots of land. Considering the private nature of the development, Chan wanted to clarify the topic and who would be responsible for the development.

The part of the facility that will be located within the private residential estate will be built by the property developer. In contrast, other parts of the footbridges will rely on investments by the government.

Member Álvaro dos Santos Rodrigues said that the plots of land "have always been appointed for residential use," although the DSSCU disclosed that three of the four plots of land had never had planning drafts issued.

He told his fellow members that there is still unused land in Taipa that the government can use for leisure. The CPU is a consultative body and technically has no legal rights to veto any planning drafts submitted by the government.

Some other members expressed concerns over future traffic following the conclusion of the development.

Taipa Houses to finally run Macanese-style restaurant 2023

THE government has launched a public tender for restaurant operators to take over a Macanese-style restaurant at the Taipa Houses for two years, in line with its goal to promote the local culture.

In the Official Gazette, the government stated that bids are open until December 30, with the opening of tenders to be held on January 4, 2023.

As part of the criteria, only local residents or companies with at least half of their capital held by Macau residents qualify as potential bidders.

In 2016, the parties behind the project to revitalize the Taipa Houses-Museum

agreed not to open a Portuguese restaurant on the site.

The decision was based on "a significant number of opinions from concerned citizens about the possibility that such a project would affect the surrounding environment." The group has since decided to "suspend the plan, keeping the original function of the building as a touristic interest house."

Former Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, had initiated the revamp of the five Taipa Houses-Museum with the goal of promoting Portuguese and Macanese culture. LV



HEALTH CODE DOWN TWICE FOLLOWING NEW RULE ON RESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES

ANTHONY LAM

THE Macau Health Code system was out of order twice yesterday due to the Health Bureau (SSM) requiring all users to input their residential addresses manually.

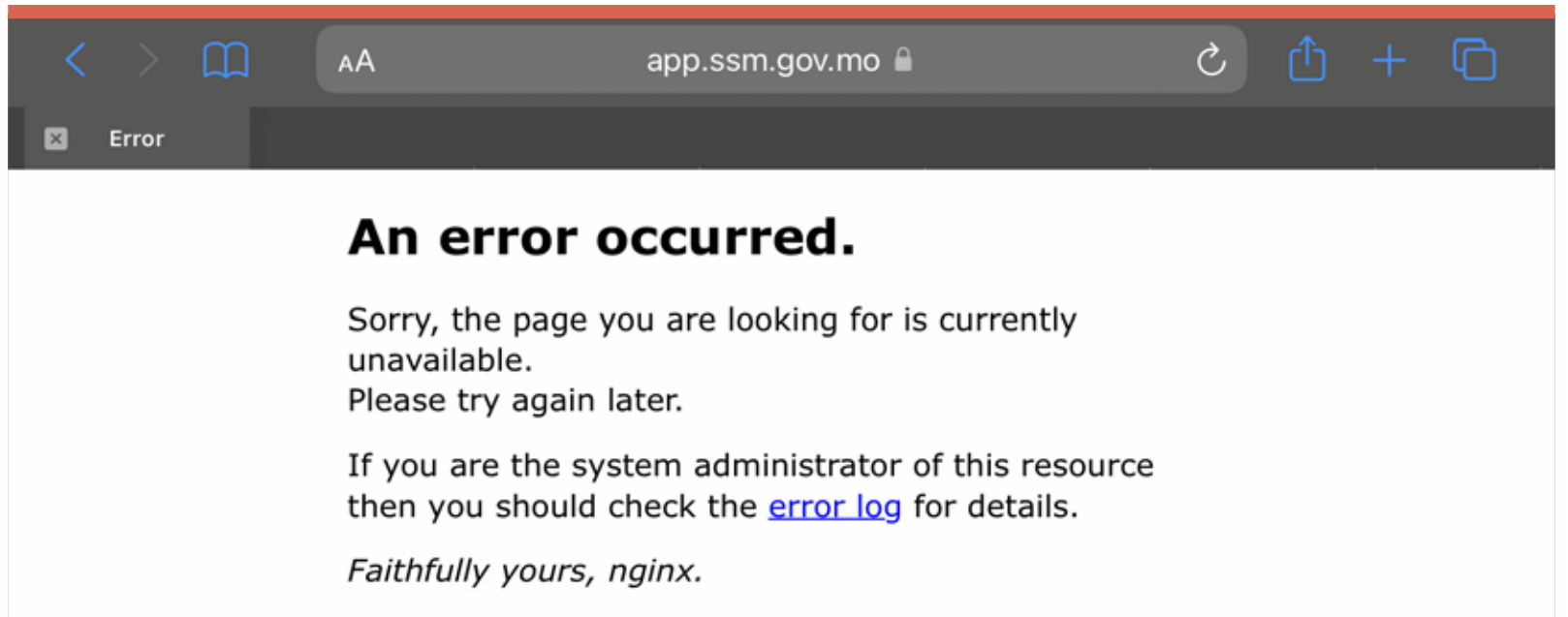
The system was down twice yesterday – at about 7:35 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. – causing disruption to the service.

The outages, especially the morning one, disrupted many people's movements, as numerous schools and private and public entities are strictly complying with the SSM's health code inspection and footprint code scanning recommendations.

The glitch also led to a jammed immigration at the Border Gate and Hengqin checkpoints.

Local police had to increase manpower to control the crowds and inspect health codes of travelers that were generated in Guangdong.

The Public Security Police Force (PSP) stated that it took about an hour for travelers to cross the



border.

In the statement issued following the afternoon outage, the SSM noted that the afternoon outage occurred for about half-an-hour.

Meanwhile, the option to "Give consent to the Health Bureau to retrieve personal information from the Identification

Services Bureau if registered address falls into the affected area(s)" was automatically removed from the Macau Health Code app yesterday.

Instead, members of the public must complete their up-to-date residential address in Macau to generate a health code in the app.

During the past outbreak, the SSM identified that many health codes had been mistakenly converted to the wrong colors due to users forgetting to update their residential addresses at the Identification Services Bureau (DSI).

As such, when the SSM retrieved the addresses from the DSI, many people were identified as

residing at the wrong address.

However, the problem has not been fully addressed, as many people had their addresses inputted correctly but still were given their codes in the wrong color.

Those who fail to update their address on their designated date will not be able to generate a health code.

Lawmaker urges gov't to nurture aviation professionals as airport expands

ANTHONY LAM

AS the green light has been granted to expand the city's airport, lawmaker Ella Lei urged the government to nurture professionals in the aviation industry in her written inquiry.

Lei stated that she regards the current situation as worrying, as the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions have drastically reduced the scale of aviation traffic to and from Macau. This has consequently led to professionals departing from the industry to maintain their income and quality of life.

She questioned the government on whether it had conducted evaluations on the matter and what conclusions it had drawn.

Moreover, she foresaw challenges existing for some time before the city returns to normality, despite the world deciding



to coexist with the virus. The lawmaker asked how the government would prepare for the future of the aviation industry, in light of any evaluations on the impact of the pandemic.

Her most in-depth question concerned the future of aviation professionals. After highlighting the government's solution of offering jobs

as part of the airport expansion, Lei emphasized that the expanded airport would be in dire need of aviation professionals too.

Nonetheless, she pointed out, the government rarely mentions its plans regarding the cultivation of professionals or any studies that have been conducted on the matter. Hence why Lei is deman-

ding answers from the government.

Previously, Beijing approved the expansion of the Macau International Airport.

The project will reclaim about 1.3 square kilometers of land and will be completed in phases.

The local government expects the expanded airport to handle 15 million passengers annually.

MORTGAGE LOANS APPROVED BY BANKS UP 15% M-O-M

NEW residential mortgage loans (RMLs) approved by Macau banks grew by 15.4% month-to-month to MOP1.92 billion in September 2022, according to statistics released by the Monetary Authority of Macao.

Of these, new RMLs to residents represented 99.4% of the total and grew by 17% to MOP1.91 billion.

The monthly average of new RMLs approved between July and September 2022 was MOP1.5 billion, up by 13.7% from the previous period (June to August 2022).

Recent government data shows that the overall residential property price index for July – September 2022 decreased by 1.7% over the previous period (June – August

2022) to 250.4, as the city faces continued economic downturn due to the pandemic.

The overall residential property price index in the third quarter of 2022 decreased by 3.2% from the second quarter.

Meanwhile, new commercial mortgage loans (CMLs) decreased by 8.4% month-to-month to MOP1.87 billion. Within this total, new CRELs to residents, which occupied 91.9% of the total, fell by 15.4% to MOP1.72 billion, while new CRELs to non-residents grew to MOP152.2 million. The monthly average of new CRELs approved between July and September 2022 was MOP1.8 billion, a decrease of 67.5% from the previous period (June to August 2022). LV



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

GEG Proactively Promotes National Education



GEG has titled sponsored the Youth National Education Competition for 14 consecutive years, attracting an accumulated participation of more than 110,000 students from local schools and universities.

Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) strongly believes that “education engenders a strong country” and is amongst the firsts to promote and sponsor youth national education programs in the city. For 14 consecutive years, GEG has supported the much-applauded GEG Macau Cup – Youth National Education Competition where local youths, as well as GEG’s team members, acquired insights into China’s latest developments and achievements, and develop a strong sense of belonging to the country and its spirit of ‘loving the motherland and loving Macau’. Emphasizing on deepening local students’ knowledge and understanding of Chinese sportsmanship and the country’s outstanding sports achievements, this year’s competition set a new record of attracting the participation of more than 110,000 students from nearly 30 schools.

INSPIRED BY CHINESE SPORTSMANSHIP

Students from one of the winning teams, Mr. Steve Ng, Ms. Gloria Jiang and Ms. Annie Che from Pui Ching Middle School, Macau, shared that, during their preparation, they were given the opportunity to learn about China’s sports

development and were amazed by the impressive achievements and sportsmanship of national athletes. Moreover, the competition inspired them to continue to strive for excellence in their studies and to pay attention to the different sports events and happenings, which are important for their social networking and personal development. Furthermore, they gained friendship and experienced the significance of teamwork as highlighted in the Chinese sports spirit.

GEG NATIONAL EDUCATION SERIES

In addition to the continuous support for the GEG Macau Cup – Youth National Education Competition, GEG also proactively instills a sense of national belonging among its team members and local youth through different programs under the “GEG National Education Series”. In celebration of the centenary of the founding of the Communist Youth League of China (CYLC), GEG recently organized an extended seminar where Ms. Wang Jiangyan, associate professor of The Central Institute of Socialism, and Mr. Xu Qing, former associate professor of The People’s Liberation Army, shared their insights over the power of youth through an in-depth online sharing session and on-site music appreciation respectively. GEG invited over 200 students from local secondary schools, representatives from universities, GEG team members and members of the GEG Youth Achievement Program to participate in the activities, in hopes of encouraging Macau’s next generation to lead the new era by fulfilling their responsibilities and missions to contribute to China’s national rejuvenation.



Winning team from Pui Ching Middle School



GEG organized an extended seminar and invited experienced guests to share insights over the power of youth to 200 students, YAP members and GEG team members.

PARTICIPANT SHARING



Allen Ma

Mr. Allen Ma, a secondary student from Kao Yip Middle School, said, “Young people represents hope and is the driving force of society’s sustainable development. As Macau’s new generation, we should contribute our youth power and serve the country with our strengths. The sharing has enlightened me and gives me determination to help those in need and contribute to the betterment of mankind.”



Gary Lao

Mr. Gary Lao, one of the participating YAP members, believes that GEG provided an informative seminar that allowed them to access national education knowledge outside of classrooms and textbooks. “I was inspired by the self-strengthening mentality of the CYLC, and will better equip myself and fulfill my civic responsibilities by proactively participating in social affairs and supporting Macau’s integration with the national development.”



Meng Wong

Mr. Meng Wong, one of the attending GEG team members, was impressed by the contributions of the CYLC. He said, “Thanks to GEG’s arrangement, the seminar offered me an opportunity to solidify my knowledge of national education and heighten my patriotism. It also encouraged me to share these gains and reflections with my family and children, thereby passing on the spirit of ‘loving the motherland and loving Macau’ to the future generation.”

HONG KONG

COURT LETS UK LAWYER DEFEND JIMMY LAI

A Hong Kong court yesterday upheld the decision to let a veteran British lawyer defend pro-democracy newspaper publisher Jimmy Lai at his upcoming national security trial.

Lai, the 74-year-old founder of the now-defunct Apple Daily, was arrested after Beijing imposed a sweeping national security law to crack down on dissent following widespread protests in 2019. He faces three charges of conspiracies to collude with a foreign country and a separate sedition charge. His trial is expected to begin on Dec. 1.

The National Security Law criminalizes acts of succession, subversion, terrorism, and collusion with foreign forces. If convicted, Lai faces the maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

Timothy Owen KC, a London-based legal veteran who specializes in criminal and human rights law, was granted court approval last month to represent Lai despite objections from the city's secretary of justice and the Hong Kong Bar Association.

At that time, the judge said the case would be important to "the development of local jurisprudence on the application of the National Security Law and the protection of the freedom of expression," adding it was in public interest to have an eminent overseas specialist like Owen involved at the trial.

Facing an appeal from the justice secretary, judges at the Court of Appeal endorsed the previous ruling yesterday, saying public perception of fairness in the trial was important to the administration of justice.

"The court must adopt a flexible and sensible approach to arrive at a decision that would best suit the public interest in this application," they said.

Hong Kong uses the same common law jurisdiction as the U.K. Apart from having overseas judges serve in the city's courts, lawyers from other jurisdictions practicing common law can also work within the city's legal system, especially when their expertise are needed for some cases.

Owen, who works in Matrix Chambers, has appeared in previous Hong Kong's high-profile cases. **MDT/AP**



Australia's Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Richard Marles

AUSTRALIA TO BLOCK FORMER MILITARY PILOTS FLYING FOR CHINA

ROD MCGUIRK,
CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA'S defense minister said yesterday he had told the nation's military to review secrecy safeguards in response to concerns that "Beijing was recruiting pilots to train the Chinese People's Liberation Army."

Defense Minister Richard Marles ordered the review after asking the Defense Department last month to investigate reports that China had approached former Australian military personnel to become trainers.

"In the information that has now been provided to me

by Defense, there are enough concerns in my mind that I have asked Defense to engage in a detailed examination about the policies and procedures that apply to our former Defense personnel, and particularly those who come into possession of our nation's secrets," Marles told reporters.

Marles declined to say whether any Australian had provided military training to the Chinese.

He said a joint police-intelligence service task force was investigating "a number of cases" among former service personnel.

"What we are focused on

right now is making sure that we do examine the policies and the procedures that are currently in place in respect of our former Defense personnel to make sure they are adequate," Marles said. "And if they are not, and if there are weaknesses in that system, then we are absolutely committed to fixing them."

Australia's allies Britain and Canada share Australia's concerns that "China is attempting to poach military expertise," officials told the Associated Press.

Britain's Defense Ministry last month issued an intelligence alert warning former and current military pilots

against Chinese headhunting programs aimed at recruiting them.

Armed Forces Minister James Heapey said authorities will make it a legal offense for pilots to continue with such training activities.

Sky News and the BBC reported that about 30 British former military pilots are currently in China training PLA pilots. The reports said the pilots are paid annual salaries of 240,000 pounds (\$272,000) for the training.

Canada's Department of National Defense was also investigating its own former service personnel, noting they remained bound by secrecy commitments after they leave the Canadian Armed Forces.

The Australian Defense Department will report to the minister by Dec. 14.

Neil James, chief executive of the Australian Defense Association think tank, said Australian laws on treason, treachery and secrecy protection were convoluted and depended on circumstances.

"For example, it's pretty hard to charge anyone with treason outside wartime," James told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

James said there were no circumstances in which former Australian military personnel should be working with the Chinese.

"Most people in the Defense Force would be disgusted if people are actually doing this, because you're potentially training people to kill Australians in the future," James said. "That's just not on. It's a moral obligation and a professional one as much as it's a legal one." **MDT/AP**

TAIWAN

Tsai thanks British minister for support

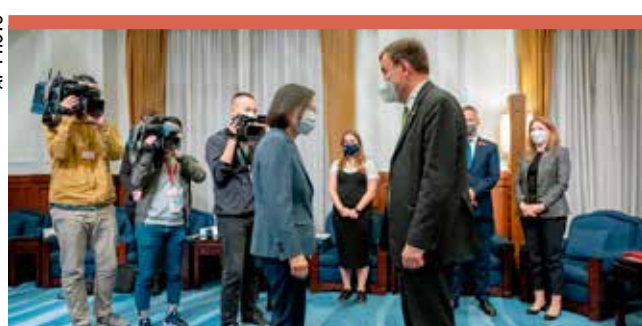
TAIWAN'S leader Tsai Ing-wen yesterday thanked British Trade Minister Greg Hands for London's support for Taiwan after he became the latest foreign official to defy Chinese pressure and visit the self-ruled island democracy.

Tsai expressed hope for "new heights" in British-Taiwanese relations and "joint achievements" at a time when the mainland's ruling Communist Party is stepping up efforts to intimidate the island, which Beijing claims as part of its territory.

"Let me take this opportunity to thank the government of the United Kingdom for its longstanding support of Taiwan's international participation and for advocating for peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait," Tsai said.

For its part, Britain is looking to develop new trade partnerships since leaving the European Union in 2020. Hands became the first British official to visit Taiwan since that year's start of the coronavirus pandemic.

Britain and other large countries have no offi-



Taiwan leader Tsai Ing-wen (center left) greets visiting British Trade Minister Greg Hands in Taipei yesterday

cial relations with Taiwan, which split with the mainland in 1949 following a civil war, but maintain extensive informal ties with the island, one of the biggest global traders and

a center for high-tech industries.

Britain and China are due to take part in next week's meeting of the Group of 20 major economies in Indonesia. Taiwan

and China will attend an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting this month in Bangkok, Thailand, where Taiwan will be represented by a business leader instead of Tsai.

Other foreign officials including Speaker Nancy Pelosi of the U.S. House of Representatives have visited Taiwan to show support for its elected government in the face of threats by Beijing to seize the island by force.

On Monday, China's foreign ministry demanded Britain stop official contacts with Taiwan, which the mainland says has no right to conduct foreign relations. China has imposed visa bans and other sanctions on foreign of-

ficials and governments that extend contacts to Taiwan.

Britain wants closer cooperation with Taiwan in semiconductors, wind energy and education, Hands told the island's Central New Agency. Taiwan manufactures most of the world's high-end processor chips, while Britain is home to ARM, a leading chip designer.

"Our relationship reaches beyond trade and investment as two groups of islands with strong democracies and institutions," Hands said. "We have much in common and face many challenges as like-minded partners." **MDT/AP**

EAST ASIA SUMMITS

Myanmar tops Asian meeting's agenda as global issues loom

DAVID RISING, BANGKOK

SOUTHEAST Asian leaders convene in the Cambodian capital today, faced with the challenge of trying to curtail escalating violence in Myanmar while the country's military-led government shows no signs of complying with the group's peace plan.

U.S. President Joe Biden will be on hand for the Phnom Penh summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which comes as Washington and Beijing are increasingly jockeying for influence in the Asia-Pacific region. It sets the stage for the Group of 20 meetings in Bali, Indonesia, that immediately follow and are expected to include Chinese President Xi Jinping and possibly Russian President Vladimir Putin, then the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Bangkok.

In addition to Myanmar, the four-day meetings are expected to focus on ongoing disputes in the South China Sea, pandemic recovery issues, regional trade and climate change.

Neither Xi nor Putin is expected to attend the ASEAN talks or the parallel East Asia Summit, though both China and Russia are thought to be sending high-level delegations headed by Prime Minister Li Keqiang and possibly Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Looming large over ASEAN,



Police officers pose for a souvenir in a group photo as they guard near the Phnom Penh International Airport for the upcoming ASEAN summits in Phnom Penh

the G-20 and APEC are the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and Russia's consequent search for new markets for its energy resources, as well as resulting supply chain and food security issues, China's increasingly aggressive saber-rattling over Taiwan, and rising tension in the Korean Peninsula.

By attending the ASEAN summit in person, Biden will be able to push American interests and also visibly demonstrate Washington's renewed commitment to the region, said Thomas Daniel, an expert with Malaysia's Institute of Strategic and International Studies.

Former U.S. President Donald Trump skipped the summits after 2017 and left the 2017 meetings early, before the

plenary session of the East Asia Summit, a key regional strategic dialogue, leaving then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to stand in for him.

"For Southeast Asia it's really important to physically show up, and I think the Americans are very aware of this," Daniel said. "I cannot emphasize how much damage was done by the Trump administration not showing up — and it's not just not showing up, it's sending representatives that are seen as just further downgrades."

ASEAN this year is elevating the U.S. to a "comprehensive strategic partnership" status — a largely symbolic enhancement of their relationship but one that puts Washington on the same level as China, which was granted

the distinction last year.

Ahead of the summit, Daniel Kritenbrink, U.S. assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, said the talks would be an opportunity to work on a "broad range of diplomatic priorities across the region" and to focus on "carrying out everything we've promised rather than coming forward with another long list of new initiatives."

"A high-level U.S. presence at these summits will demonstrate our strong and enduring commitment to the region," he said at a late October roundtable hosted by Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"From the president to the secretary of state, throughout the entire U.S. government, we

know that America's future security and prosperity are entirely dependent on what happens in the Indo-Pacific," he said.

China's Foreign Ministry did not mention the U.S. when outlining details of Li Keqiang's upcoming appearance, saying only that the country is "committed to its foreign policy of maintaining world peace and promoting common developments."

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, whose country has the rotating chairmanship of ASEAN, has invited Ukraine to participate in the summit and the country's foreign minister met with Hun Sen ahead of the event yesterday.

Hun Sen's office said he spoke with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy by phone at the start of the month, and that the Ukrainian leader had requested to address the summit by video, but it was not immediately clear if that had been approved.

Kritenbrink applauded the inclusion of Ukraine, and said the U.S. was working with its ASEAN friends to "ensure that Ukraine meaningfully participates and that the (East Asia Summit) partners send a strong message that big countries cannot simply take what they want from smaller neighbors."

He added that the U.S. would talk with ASEAN nations about additional steps to put pressure on Myanmar's regime to push it to stop the killings and move toward a democratic path.

"We are not going to sit idly by while this violence continues," Kritenbrink said.

ASEAN, which includes Myanmar, has tried to play a peacemaking role since shortly after the country's military ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi and seized power in February 2021. **MDT/AP**

Australian PM hopes for meeting with President Xi at summit

AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said yesterday a bilateral meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping would be a "positive thing" if one can be arranged on the sidelines of one of the leaders' summits to be held in Southeast Asia this month.

Albanese's shift from neutral language about the prospects of his first meeting with the Chinese leader suggests the Australian leader expects that talks will take place.



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese

"I've made it very clear that dialogue is a good thing, and so if a meeting is arranged with Xi, then that would be a positive

thing," Albanese told reporters.

Albanese leaves Australia tomorrow for an East Asia Summit in

Cambodia, followed by a Group of 20 meeting in Indonesia, then an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum meeting in Thailand.

Albanese said his office was organizing a "range of meetings" with "various leaders," which would be announced when details were finalized.

China-Australia relations have shown signs of thawing since May when Albanese's center-left Labor Party won elections for the first time in nine

years. Beijing immediately relaxed a ban on minister-to-minister contacts.

Albanese has urged China to demonstrate good faith toward his new government by lifting a series of official and unofficial trade barriers that is costing Australian exporters an estimated 20 billion Australian dollars (\$13 billion) a year. But China has shown no signs of easing trade restrictions.

China's Ambassador to Australia Xiao Qian said in August that Beijing would discuss with Australia whether conditions were right in November for Albanese to meet Xi in Indonesia during the G-20 summit. Xi is not expected to attend the

East Asia Summit.

The meeting would come as competition for influence among South Pacific island nations heightens between Australia and China since Beijing struck a security pact with the Solomon Islands early this year that has raised fears of a Chinese naval base being established in the region.

Bilateral relations with Australia's previous conservative government soured over issues including Australian demands for an independent inquiry into the COVID-19 pandemic and a ban on Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei's involvement in the Australian 5G networks on security grounds. **MDT/AP**

USA

Voters approve recreational marijuana in Maryland, Missouri

ANDREW DEMILLO,
LITTLE ROCK (ARK.)

MISSOURI voters have approved a ballot measure legalizing recreational marijuana for adults 21 and older and expunging most records of past arrests and convictions.

Approval of the new constitutional amendment comes just four years after Missouri voters legalized medical marijuana. The latest initiative will allow those licensed to sell medical marijuana to quickly covert to general sales.

Records involving previous nonviolent marijuana offenses will automatically be expunged, except for selling to minors or driving under the influence. The initiative also allows people currently incarcerated for most nonviolent marijuana offense to have their convictions overturned and be set free.

Revenue from a state tax on marijuana sales will fund the expungement process, veterans services, drug addiction treatment and public defenders.

Voters approved recreational marijuana in Maryland and rejected it in Arkansas and North Dakota in elections seen as a test of legalization's support in even the most conservative parts of the country.

Maryland's vote for legalization made the state the 20th to take that step. Measures also were on the ballot in Missouri and South Dakota.

"By voting for legalization, Marylanders have rejected the failed ideas of the past and have chosen to reform their laws to protect civil liberties and promote racial justice," Erik Altieri, executive director of NORML, one of the nation's oldest legalization advocacy groups, said in a statement.

The state voting in Tuesday's elections follows moves by President Joe Biden toward decriminalizing marijuana. Biden last month announced he was pardoning thousands of Americans convicted of simple possession of marijuana under federal law.

Advocates of the marijuana initiatives have said Biden's announcement may give a boost to their efforts.

Heading into the election,



recreational marijuana was legal in 19 states, and polls have shown opposition to legalization softening. All of the states with recreational marijuana on the ballot, except for Maryland, voted for Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election.

About 6 in 10 voters support legalizing the recreational use of marijuana nationwide, according to VoteCast, an extensive survey of more than 90,000 voters nationwide conducted for The Associated Press by NORC at the University of Chicago.

The five states currently have legal medical marijuana programs. That includes Arkansas, which in 2016 became the first Bible Belt state to approve medical marijuana. The state's dispensaries opened in 2019, and more than 91,000 patients have cards to legally buy marijuana for medical conditions.

The legalization campaigns raised about \$23 million in the five states, with the vast majority in Arkansas and Missouri. More than 85% of contributions in those two states came from donors associated with companies holding medical marijuana licenses, according to an Associated Press analysis of the most recent campaign finance reports.

In Arkansas, supporters ran upbeat ads touting the thousands of jobs they said would be created by the mea-

sure. Opponents ran more ominous spots, warning voters to "protect Arkansas from big marijuana."

"The marijuana industry spent millions of dollars trying to write itself into the Arkansas Constitution," said Jerry Cox, executive director of the Family Council Action Committee, one of the groups opposing the measure. "Now they know that Arkansans do not support that kind of crony politics."

The initiative drew the criticism of traditional legalization opponents as well as some medical marijuana advocates, who said the Arkansas proposal placed too many limits and would only benefit a handful of dispensaries. Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson, a former head of the federal Drug Enforcement Administration, also opposed the measure.

David Owen, who led North Dakota's legalization effort, said he wasn't sure another effort would be made after the proposal was rejected.

"Tonight was not what we wanted, but the people have spoken and we have to prepare for the next steps," Owen said.

North Dakota's proposal would have allowed people 21 and older to legally use marijuana at home as well as possess and cultivate restricted amounts of cannabis. It also would have established policies to regulate retail stores,

cultivators and other types of marijuana businesses.

"It's pretty clear North Dakota families don't want marijuana across the state," said Luke Niforatos, executive vice president of Smart Approaches to Marijuana, a Virginia-based political organization against marijuana legalization, which helped fight the measure in North Dakota.

Missouri's proposal would legalize recreational marijuana for adults 21 and older and expunge records of past arrests and convictions for nonviolent marijuana offenses, except for selling to minors or driving under the influence. Maryland's proposal will also make changes in criminal law and create automatic expungements of past marijuana possession convictions.

South Dakotans, including a sizable number of Republicans, voted to legalize marijuana possession in 2020, but that law was struck down by the state Supreme Court in part because the proposal was coupled with medical marijuana and hemp. This year, recreational pot stood by itself as it went before voters.

In Colorado, where recreational marijuana has been legal for nearly a decade, voters took up a proposal that would allow the use of certain psychedelic substances. If approved, it would make Colorado the second state to take such a step. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1982 BREZHNEV RUMOURS SWEEP MOSCOW



Speculation is growing that Leonid Brezhnev, who has ruled the Soviet Union for the past two decades, has died.

Suspicion that a senior Communist party figure had died were fuelled by a sudden change of the television schedules on Wednesday evening.

Light entertainment programmes were replaced by sombre documentaries about the Russian revolution and the Second World War. Newsreaders on the main evening news bulletin dressed in black but made no announcement of any death.

Mr Brezhnev was last seen in public on Sunday at the traditional Red Square parade in Moscow to mark the anniversary of the 1917 revolution.

The 75-year-old leader had not looked well for several years but there was no indication of his imminent death.

Mr Brezhnev's failure to sign a public message of congratulations to Angola's president on Wednesday - Angola's national day - has fuelled belief he is dead.

The Soviet leader normally signs messages to all "friendly" heads of states so the absence of his signature represents a previously unheard of breach of protocol.

If he has indeed died it will mark the end of an era for the Soviet Union.

Leonid Brezhnev ousted Russia's former leader, Nikita Khrushchev, in a coup in 1964.

He has since been in undisputed control of USSR and its 260 million people.

His control of the fates of another 120 million people in eastern-bloc Communist states was famously demonstrated by the crushing of an attempt to liberalise Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Despite his declining health his grip on power has never weakened and he has outlasted five American presidents.

The delay in confirmation of Mr Brezhnev's death may mean his successor has not yet been chosen.

Commentators say the most likely candidate is Mr Brezhnev's closest colleague, Konstantin Chernenko.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The following day an official announcement was made of Leonid Brezhnev's death.

He had died of a heart attack early on Wednesday morning.

After five days of national mourning he was given a state funeral and buried in the Kremlin in Red Square.

Leonid Brezhnev was succeeded by another Communist hardliner, Yuri Andropov, the former head of the secret police.

In March 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev became leader of the Soviet Union.

He immediately began a policy of "glasnost" and "perestroika" - openness and restructuring.

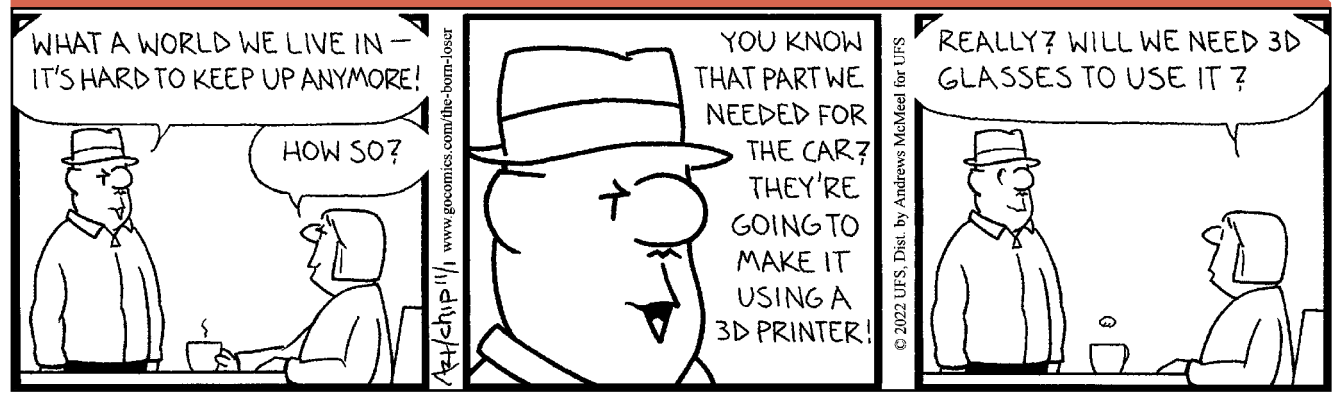
Less than a decade later, in 1991, the Soviet Union was consigned to history when the Congress of People's Deputies voted for its dissolution.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

<p>ARIES Mar. 21-Apr. 19</p> <p>Catch up on overdue paperwork. You may have to take a short trip to visit someone who hasn't been well. Pleasure trips will be favorable and bring about romance.</p>	<p>TAURUS Apr. 20-May. 20</p> <p>Your mate may not have been honest with you. Don't let your personal partner hold you back or slow you down. You may be able to get some good advice about your personal problems.</p>
<p>GEMINI May. 21-Jun. 21</p> <p>Take time to help a friend who hasn't been feeling well. If you've been under stress and worrying about older members of the family, it's time to come to terms with the situation.</p>	<p>CANCER Jun. 22-Jul. 22</p> <p>You must try to help. Do some research if you want to find information that you can apply against the opposition you face. Your time, not your cash, will do a lot more for your relationship.</p>
<p>LEO Jul. 23-Aug. 22</p> <p>Look into alternatives that would better suit both your needs. You may have difficulties finishing projects you start. Put your thoughts on paper.</p>	<p>VIRGO Aug. 23-Sep. 22</p> <p>Positive connections can be made if you get involved in environmental organizations. Don't blow situations out of proportion.</p>
<p>LIBRA Sep. 23-Oct. 22</p> <p>Be prepared to make compensations and adjustments. Do not expect others to do your work. You need a day to rest and relax with the ones you love.</p>	<p>SCORPIO Oct. 23-Nov. 21</p> <p>Business partnerships will prove lucrative. You'll have amazing ideas, but superiors may try to block your attempts at implementing them.</p>
<p>SAGITTARIUS Nov. 22-Dec. 21</p> <p>Don't count on others to cover up for your shortcomings. You will learn valuable information if you travel today. A new relationship can be yours if you get out with friends.</p>	<p>CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 19</p> <p>You may find yourself in an uncomfortable situation if you have overloaded your plate unintentionally. Try to avoid serious discussions with loved ones.</p>
<p>AQUARIUS Jan. 20-Feb. 18</p> <p>You may be admired by colleagues and employers for your diplomatic way of handling your work and those you work with.</p>	<p>PISCES Feb. 19-Mar. 20</p> <p>Your mate will appreciate your honesty. You won't have much time for your mate today. Exercise programs will be effective.</p>

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	5	17	cloudy
Changchun	0	11	cloudy
Chengdu	16	19	overcast
Chongqing	16	25	cloudy
Fuzhou	21	26	cloudy
Guangzhou	18	28	cloudy
Guiyang	13	24	fine
Haikou	21	28	rain
Hangzhou	15	25	fine
Harbin	-4	7	fine
Hefei	13	25	fine
Nanjing	13	25	cloudy
Shanghai	16	24	cloudy
Taipei	21	25	cloudy
Wuhan	14	28	fine
Hong Kong	23	26	fine
WORLD			
Moscow	7	9	rain
Frankfurt	4	13	overcast
Paris	6	14	overcast
London	13	16	overcast
New York	13	19	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Savory jelly; 6- Chicken, e.g.; 10- Regrets; 14- Cattail's locale; 15- Baseball family name; 16- Take apart; 17- Sports stadium; 18- Stool pigeon; var.; 19- Anna of "Nana"; 20- Walk stealthily; 22- Transient; 24- President pro ____; 26- Resides; 27- Red powdery condiment; 31- 100 square meters; 32- Early Mexican; 33- Africa's most populous city; 36- Hesitant sounds; 39- Monetary unit of China; 40- Rainbow maker; 41- "Garfield" canine; 42- Grads-to-be; 43- Merchandise; 44- Put together; 45- ____ Brooks, filmmaker responsible for "Blazing Saddles"; 46- Many; 48- Representative; 51- Lion tail?; 52- Physically active; 54- System of social perfection; 59- Discharged a debt; 60- Lend of tennis; 62- Representative; 63- Fashion mag; 64- Large town; 65- Gaucho's rope; 66- Go-getter; 67- Blackthorn fruit; 68- Grand ____ National Park;

DOWN 1- Amo, amas, ____; 2- Delhi wrap; 3- Type of school or cook; 4- " ____ She Lovely?"; 5- Disordered; 6- Devoted follower; 7- Lemony Snicket's evil count; 8- Earth; 9- Tepid; 10- Steal livestock; 11- Before; 12- Paradises; 13- Album unit; 21- A mouse; 23- Architect Saarinen; 25- PC shortcut; 27- Is worthwhile; 28- Bleu hue; 29- School orgs.; 30- Cartoon Chihuahua; 34- Help, resource; 35- Point in question; 36- Pop singer Brickell; 37- Ceremonial act; 38- Observed; 40- What senators play?; 41- Thunder Bay's prov.; 43- Basic unit of heredity; 44- Arriviste; 45- Crumble; 47- East Lansing sch.; 48- Author Calvino; 49- Whence Pinochet; 50- Polite; 52- Mimicked; 53- Roman censor; 55- Double curve; 56- Heating fuel; 57- Excited about; 58- ____ impasse; 61- Comic Louis;

Yesterday's solution

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222	Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
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	

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China's domestically made C919 passenger jet takes off during the 14th China International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition in Zhuhai

AVIATION

CHINESE MAKER ANNOUNCES 300 ORDERS FOR NEW JETLINER

A state-owned Chinese commercial jet manufacturer set up to try to compete with Boeing and Airbus says it has secured orders for 300 of its first long-range jetliners from Chinese leasing companies.

Orders for the single-aisle C919 were announced last week by Commercial Aircraft Corp. of China during the Zhuhai air show in southern China. COMAC also announced 30 orders for its shorter-

-range ARJ21 jet.

COMAC was established in 2008 as part of government efforts to transform China into a creator of profitable technologies and reduce reliance on foreign products.

The C919, which is meant to compete with the Airbus A320 and Boeing 737, has a layout of 158 to 168 seats and a range of 4,075 to 5,555 kilometers, according to the manufacturer. The plane made its first flight

in May 2017.

The latest buyers include leasing units of Bank of China Ltd., Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd. and China Construction Bank Ltd.

Before the sales announcement, COMAC said it had received 815 orders for the C919 from 28 customers. Most are Chinese, but COMAC also has announced orders from GE Capital Aviation Services and Thailand's City Airways. **MDT/AP**

TECH

Elon Musk sells \$3.95 billion worth of Tesla stock

TWITTER'S new owner and Tesla CEO Elon Musk has sold nearly \$4 billion worth of Tesla shares, according to regulatory filings.

Musk, who bought Twitter for \$44 billion, sold 19.5 million shares of the electric car company from Nov. 4 to Nov. 8, according to Tuesday's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

He sold \$7 billion of his Tesla stock in August as he worked to finance the Twitter purchase he was trying to get out of at the time. In all, Musk has sold more than \$19 billion worth of Tesla stock since April, including those in Tuesday's filings, likely to fund his share of the Twitter purchase.

Most of Musk's wealth is tied up

in shares of Tesla Inc. On Tuesday, his personal net worth dropped below \$200 billion, according to Forbes, but he is still the world's richest person.

Musk had lined up banks including Morgan Stanley to help finance the Twitter deal. His original share of the deal was about \$15.5 billion, Wedbush Analyst Dan Ives estimated. But if equity investors dropped out, Musk would be on the hook to replace them or throw in more of his own money.

Tesla's shares closed down \$5.78, or 2.9%, at \$191.30. The stock has lost 52% of its value since the start of this year. In comparison, the S&P 500 index has lost about 20% of its value so far this year. **MDT/AP**



CORPORATE BITS

Sands China sponsors Mastering Cotai seminar



Sands China Ltd. sponsored and hosted this year's Mastering Cotai academic seminar yesterday at The Londoner Macao, drawing close to 150 online and offline attendees. Now in its fourth year, Mas-

tering Cotai has a mission of bridging the research work of academia with the tourism, hospitality and gaming industry in the city.

The annual seminar is organized by the Faculty of Bu-

siness Administration of the University of Macau, whose master's degree students present discoveries and insights from their postgraduate research theses and receive immediate feedback from experts in the industry.

Seven postgraduate students made presentations yesterday on their various research topics, which included consumer adoption of mobile payment systems in Macau, guests' hotel reviews in Macau during the pandemic, the effectiveness of integrated resorts' social media communication strategies, and the importance of the back-of-house environments of Macau's integrated resorts.

Quinta da Marmeleira debuts at China Import Expo



The Macau office of the Quinta da Marmeleira vineyard in Portugal has premiered the brand at the China International Import

Expo (CIIE), which is held in Shanghai. The last day of this year's expo will be held today, the office said in a statement.

The company showcased a variety of wines from three different collections, which highlighted the verde (green) body and South European texture. According to the company, the wines were liked by many spectators at the event.

The vineyard was set up in response to the call of Beijing's Belt-and-Road Initiative. Wines produced at the vineyard have been sold in the markets of Macau and mainland China for a number of years.

This edition of the CIIE celebrates the participation of 145 countries and regions as well as 284 World 500 enterprises.

FOOTBALL

UEFA gathers European team to oppose Super League at meeting

GRAHAM DUNBAR, GENEVA

ORGANIZERS of European soccer's Super League project got the meeting they asked for yesterday [Macau time] with UEFA's president. They found many more opponents also waiting there to criticize them.

The meeting was held amid secrecy at UEFA headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland, four months after the parties were on opposite sides of a European Court of Justice hearing in an ongoing case that resulted from a group of storied clubs' failed launch of their own breakaway competition in April 2021.

Super League promoter A22 Sports Management wanted a first formal meeting with UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin after last month appointing its own chief executive.

This week, instead of facing just Ceferin, the three-man A22 delegation led by CEO Bernd Rei-



AP PHOTO

chart was met with a room full of European soccer leaders ready to denounce the Super League.

Bayern Munich and Paris Saint-Germain were among the clubs teaming with leagues, player union leaders and fan representatives to help send UE-

FA's message.

UEFA said in a statement they had "stressed together that the opposition to the self-proclaimed super league remains overwhelming today as it has been since April 2021."

In its own statement, A22 ack-

nnowledged it had met a tough crowd.

"This is an important signal to clubs and fans across Europe that we need discussion and that it is welcome, even when it is difficult," the Madrid-based company said.

A revamped Super League plan is expected to have more clubs from a broader base of countries playing in multiple divisions

The Super League has been mostly closely identified with three clubs — Real Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus — who are the only ones among 12 founder members yet to disown it.

UEFA noted "with surprise,

the claims of A22 Sports CEO that this company is not representing any clubs in any capacity, including the three clubs who continue to openly support the project."

A revamped Super League plan is expected to have more clubs from a broader base of countries playing in multiple divisions, with promotion and relegation to dispel the image of being a closed breakaway that would threaten domestic leagues.

"A22 also reiterated that it is fully committed to open competitions based on sporting merit

and the fundamental role played by national leagues — which would be complementary to a new format," the company said.

A22 did not identify any of the "numerous clubs who wish to take part in this dialogue."

The European court in Luxembourg has set a Dec. 15 target to give

a non-binding opinion on the challenge by A22 and the clubs to what they claim is UEFA monopoly control of international competitions.

A final ruling is expected in about six months. **MDT/AP**

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OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**POSITIVE SIGN FOR
 REBUILDING OF
 SINO-AUSTRALIAN TIES**

It is encouraging to see that despite the differences that still exist between them, Australia and China have maintained effective communication and contact, and are working for the easing and improvement of Sino-Australian relations, which serves the fundamental interests of both. This is especially significant given that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The telephone conversation between Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and his Australian counterpart Penny Wong on Tuesday, during which they both expressed willingness to rebuild mutual trust and bring bilateral relations back on track, reflects the great importance the two countries attach to their comprehensive strategic partnership.

There is no denying that bilateral relations have run into difficulties in recent years, which has led to a downturn in Chinese investment in Australia as well as increasing trading disputes between the two countries. This, as Wang has previously noted, is mainly because some political forces in Australia insist on seeing China as an adversary rather than a partner, and portraying China's development as a threat rather than an opportunity.

Australia was the first country to exclude Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei from the development of its 5G network, and has been closely toeing the line of the United States' "Indo-Pacific strategy" to contain China, for example, by taking a confrontational stance toward the country on such issues as the South China Sea and Taiwan.

Yet despite this, the common interests of China and Australia far outweigh their differences, and some progress has been made to ease their strained relations since a new government under Prime Minister Anthony Albanese came to power in May.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of diplomatic relations between China and Australia. And the bilateral economic and trade cooperation between the two countries, which is carried out in the spirit of mutual respect and seeks common ground while shelving differences, has brought tangible benefits to both sides and the broader region. The Albanese government should know that the improvement of China-Australia relations serves the fundamental interests of both sides and meets the common expectations of the two peoples and the international community.

In their talks by telephone on Tuesday, Wong reiterated to Wang that Australia will continue to adhere to the one-China policy and seek to develop more stable and mutually beneficial relations with China on the basis of mutual respect.

China values its relations with Australia, and regards Australia as an important partner for dialogue and cooperation. So long as the two countries meet each other halfway by working together toward the goal of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, they will surely be able to rebuild mutual trust and pave the way for the sound and healthy development of Sino-Australian relations in the future.

**VOTECAST: INFLATION TOP CONCERN,
 BUT DEMOCRACY A WORRY TOO**

**THE
 BUZZ**

Just as Republicans had hoped, high inflation was the top consideration for voters in the midterm elections, AP VoteCast shows. But the survey reveals that a core issue for President Joe Biden, the survival of democracy, also weighed heavily on voters' minds, as control of Congress - and a choice between sharply contrasting visions of America - hung in the balance.

The result, as of yesterday, was an election in which Democrats displayed strength, appearing to avoid the massive losses that often beset the party in power during a midterm vote. With ballots still being counted, though, it was unclear if they would retain control of at least one chamber of Congress.

The survey depicts a country mired in pessimism about America's future and its political leadership, with lingering tensions in how people feel about Biden and his predecessor, Donald Trump, shaping choices at the ballot box.

The detailed portrait of the American electorate is based on results from VoteCast, an extensive survey of more than 94,000 voters nationwide.

About half of voters say inflation factored significantly in their vote, as groceries, gasoline, housing, food and other costs have shot up in the past year and raised the specter of inflation.

**US CONSPIRACISTS SEEKING
 KEY STATE ELECTION
 POSTS FALLING SHORT**

NICHOLAS RICCARDI

REPUBLICANS who backed Donald Trump's failed efforts to overturn the 2020 election lost key races to oversee elections in some competitive states, even as others remained positioned to take those offices in more conservative parts of the country.

Doug Mastriano, the GOP nominee for governor in Pennsylvania who was seen outside the U.S. Capitol on the day of the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection and regularly communicated with Trump as the then-president tried to reverse his loss to Joe Biden, lost to Democrat Josh Shapiro on election night. The state's governor appoints the secretary of state, who is the top voting official.

In Minnesota, Republican Kim Crockett, who echoed some of Trump's lies about voting, lost her bid for secretary of state, which in most states is the position that oversees state elections. In Michigan, Democratic Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson declared victory over Kristina Karamo, a community college instructor who became one of the most prominent election conspiracists in the country. The Associated Press has not yet called the race.

And in New Mexico, Republican Audrey Trujillo, who cheered on Trump's effort to reverse the voters' will in 2020, lost to Democratic Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver.

Races in Arizona and Nevada, major swing states where election conspiracists were competing for secretary of state positions, remained too early to call. But many democracy advocates and Democrats were cheered by the initial tallies in political battlegrounds.

"Ultimately, some voters likely chose candida-



Republican Kim Crockett, who echoed some of Trump's lies about voting, lost her bid for secretary of state, in Minnesota

tes in part because they were committed to telling the truth and protecting election integrity," said Ben LaBolt, a Democratic strategist.

Still, in Republican-leaning states, some election conspiracists did win secretary of state offices.

Alabama voters gave the position to state Rep. Wes Allen, who backed a groundless lawsuit to overturn Biden's victory that was dismissed by the U.S. Supreme Court. In Indiana, Diego Morales, who ousted the Republican incumbent in the party primary by repeating Trump's election lies, won the race for secretary of state by defeating Democrat Destiny Scott Wells.

Wyoming Republican Chuck Gray, a state lawmaker who also endorsed efforts to overturn the 2020 election, was running unopposed for secretary of state.

All told, half of the 22 Republicans vying to be secretaries of states — and overseeing elections in most states — have repeated Trump's election lies. Seven endorsed his attempts to overturn the will of the people and remain in power.

"If they win, we're going to have someone

who's run on a platform of election denial, saying, 'Actually, elections are only legitimate when my candidate wins,'" said David Becker, executive director of The Center for Election Innovation & Research and co-author of "The Big Truth," a book warning of the dangers of Trump's election lies.

In Arizona, state Rep. Mark Finchem, who attended Trump's rally on Jan. 6, 2021, right before the violent assault on the U.S. Capitol, has made clear he would not have certified Biden's 2020 win in that state. The GOP nominee in Nevada, Jim Marchant, made the same promise.

Republican Kristina Karamo in Michigan insisted Biden didn't actually win her state, but he did — and by more than 154,000 votes. Less than two before this year's midterms, Karamo sued to change Detroit's election procedures. A judge dismissed the case on Monday, saying there was no evidence to support the allegations. Yesterday [Macau time] she tweeted a post from a conspiracy website spreading more doubt on the voting in the Democratic Party's bastion in the state. **MDT/AP**



Russia The jailed American basketball star Brittney Griner (pictured) has been moved to a penal colony in Russia, her legal team said yesterday. A Russian court rejected her appeal of her nine-year sentence for drug possession last month. "Brittney was transferred from the detention center in Iksha on the 4th November. She is now on her way to a penal colony. We do not have any information on her exact current location or her final destination," the statement from her legal team said.



USA Control of Congress hung in the balance yesterday as Democrats showed surprising strength, defeating Republicans in a series of competitive races and defying expectations that high inflation and President Joe Biden's low approval ratings would drag the party down. In the most heartening news for Democrats, John Fetterman (pictured) flipped a Republican-controlled Senate seat that is key to the party's hopes of maintaining control of the chamber.

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USA Republican U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio has won a third term, defeating U.S. Rep. Val Demings and holding a key seat as the GOP tried to regain control of a closely divided Senate. Rubio, 51, faced perhaps his toughest battle since he was first elected in 2010 after serving as the Florida House speaker. Once a presidential hopeful in 2016, Rubio's name is less often mentioned as a potential 2024 candidate.