

Severe illness and death can be effectively reduced

Book a COVID-19 vaccine appointment for your booster dose

Please scan QR code or visit website



<https://eservice.ssm.gov.mo/covidvacbook>

Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre



ARTYZEN GRAND LAPA MACAU 澳門雅辰酒店

DISCOVER Good Life Starts Here



AIRASIA IS OFFERING TICKETS FOR SALE ON ITS WEBSITE FOR MACAU-KUALA LUMPUR FLIGHTS DEPARTING ON AND AFTER APRIL 1, THE TIMES HAS LEARNED

P2

ZARA TO CLOSE STORE AT THE LONDONER, RETAINS ZARA HOME

P5

WORLD CUP: A WEEKEND OF 'HISTORIC' MATCHES IN QUARTERS

P10



AP PHOTO



South Korea's Truth and Reconciliation Commission will investigate the cases of dozens of South Korean adoptees in Europe and the United States who suspect their origins were falsified or obscured during a child export frenzy in the mid- to late-1900s. The decision yesterday opens what could be South Korea's most far-reaching inquiry into foreign adoptions yet, after frustration over broken family connections and laundered child statuses and identities grew and demanded government attention. The adopted South Koreans are believed to be the world's largest diaspora of adoptees.

Japan's economy contracted less than previously thought in the last quarter, weathering the country's latest big COVID wave with less damage than had been thought. The Cabinet Office reported yesterday that the economy shrank at a 0.8% annual rate in July-September. That was better than minus 1.2% annual growth reported earlier. In quarterly terms, the world's third-largest economy contracted 0.2% instead of 0.3%.

AP PHOTO



USA climate envoy John Kerry said last month's international global warming talks didn't do enough to speed up cuts in emissions of heat-trapping gases. Kerry told AP that there was progress on some aspects of reducing carbon pollution during the United Nations summit in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. But he said there could and should have been much more and that what was done on the issue was overshadowed by a historic, but what he called potentially "pyrrhic," agreement to establish a compensation fund for poor nations victimized by a warming world.

More on backpage

THE END OF ZERO

Macau authorities relaxed anti-Covid controls, including home-isolation for asymptomatic cases, as mainland moves away from zero-tolerance; Gov't estimates contagion of 'weak variant' could eventually reach 50% or more in the city

P3,6-7

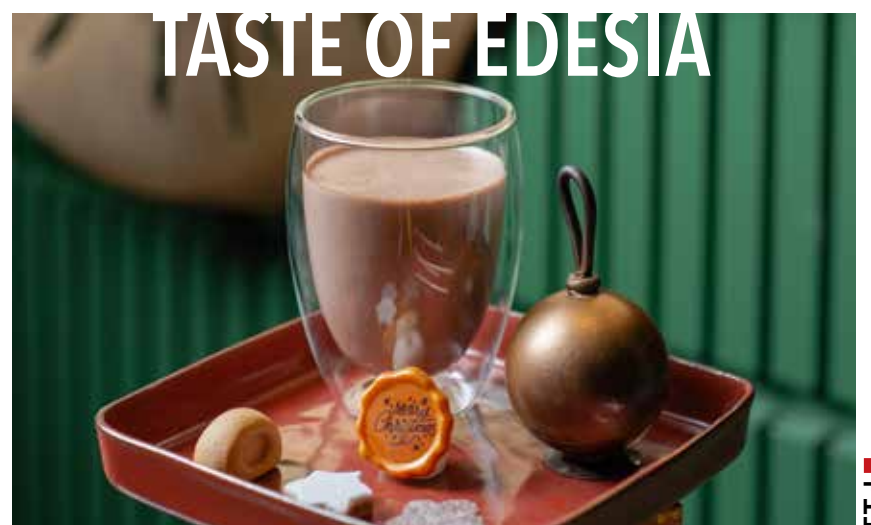


AP PHOTO

GAMING
CASINO
SHARES RISE
AS INVESTORS
BET ON CHINA'S
REOPENING

P2

TASTE OF EDESIA



P11

MDT ARCHIVE



GAMING

INVESTORS BET ON CHINA'S REOPENING LEADING TO CASINO SHARES RISING

LYNZY VALLES

MACAU'S casinos stocks are again on the rise with Wynn Macau in the lead, as its shares rose by 22.39% as China began relaxing its strict zero-Covid policy yesterday.

Wynn Macau's shares rose to HKD9.51 yesterday and are slated to be in the running for the

group's biggest gain in a single day this year.

The other incumbent operators' shares also rose from 5.62% to 15.9%, following the successful renewal of their 10-year license to operate in the city.

In a note, Morgan Stanley analysts Praveen K Choudhary and Gareth Leung said that

Wynn Macau "has a clear edge in terms of premium product offerings, which could become more visible when industry volumes return in 2023."

The analysts also believe that the burden of Wynn Macau's required non-gaming investment is much lower than its peers MGM China Holdings Ltd. and SJM Holdings Ltd., as cited in a

report by Dow Jones.

The institution added that Macau may be just two steps away from travel returning to normal, assuming that borders with the mainland can fully open in the second half of 2023.

"Reopening and easier travel are key themes of 2023," the Morgan Stanley analysts added. Meanwhile, DS Kim, JPMor-

gan's head of Asia gaming, said he expects Macau casino stocks to "finish 2022 strong and start 2023 even stronger." He added that Wynn's shares could be more attractive when there is a clearer picture on how the sector will recover in 2023, as cited in the report.

In a recent Fitch Ratings report, the group forecasts Macau will enjoy a 46% rebound in gross domestic product in 2023, up from a 17% decline.

The forecasts are based on the institution's assumption that the city's gross gaming revenue (GGR) will bounce back to half the pre-pandemic levels.

Recently, the SAR government announced that the city's GGR will be MOP130 billion, similar to its forecast for this year.

However, it could take at least until end-2025 for GDP to return to 2019 levels, "along with moderate non-gaming diversification."

Yesterday, the SAR announced an easing of pandemic restrictions – a move that has been in place for nearly three years, echoing Beijing.

The National Health Commission issued the newly-relaxed regulations on Wednesday, including a loosening of lockdown requirements and the elimination of the requirement to show a recent negative Covid-19 test to enter most public places.

TRAVEL

AirAsia, Philippine Airlines selling April 2023 tickets to Macau

ANTHONY LAM

INTERNATIONAL low-cost carrier AirAsia is offering tickets for sale on its website for flights between Macau and Kuala Lumpur departing on and after April 1, the Times has learned.

The search results as depicted in a screen capture show that there will be two flights operating between the two destinations. The flights will depart Macau in the early afternoon and the evening.

This contradicts a comment made by Celia Lao, Greater China Region general manager at the airli-

ne's sibling operation, AirAsia Digital. Lao said that she did not foresee any resumption of service to Macau in the near future.

Lao highlighted the fact that the airline was Macau's largest non-local airline company prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, with 15% of flights to and from Macau operated by the airline. She hinted that the airline has a strong desire to resume flights to Macau.

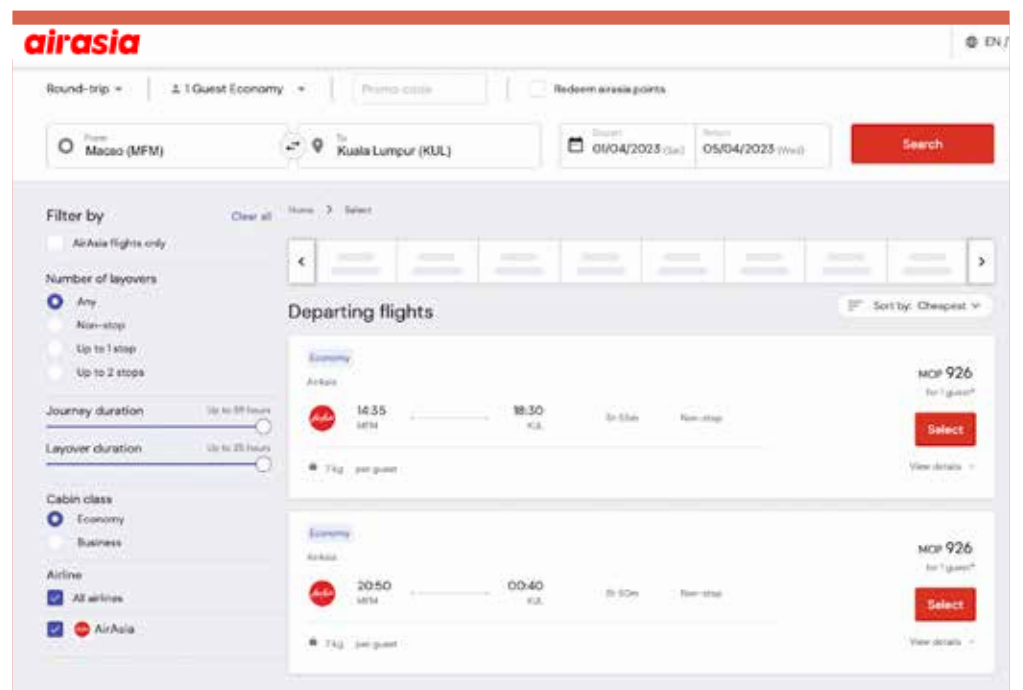
However, she added, with quarantine and other restrictions in place, the company does not see reliable grounds to resume services to the city.

She promised that once

Covid-19 restrictions ease in Macau, the airline will be ready to resume services.

Meanwhile, Philippine Airlines, the flag carrier of the namesake south Asian archipelago country, is selling flight tickets on and after March 26 next year between Macau and Manila, at the price of some MOP2,000 for a return ticket.

Yesterday, the Macau government announced that it will adopt a strategy of co-existence with Covid-19. The government referred to its own strategy as permitting a controlled scale of infection.



www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

REACHING OUT!

+23,000

Like us on facebook.com/mdtimes



MacauDaily 澳門每日時報
Times

DIRECTOR & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF_Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR_Lynzy Valles
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS_Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS_Alex Torrão, Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Anthony Lam, Emilie Tran, Grace Yu, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Jorge Costa Oliveira, Joseph Cheung, Juliet Risdon, Linda Kennedy, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Sérgio de Almeida Correia, Viviana Seguí DESIGNER_Miguel Bandeira | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS_JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES_Associated Press, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua SECRETARY_Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

SEND NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION AND PRESS RELEASES TO: NEWSROOM@MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM WEBSITE: WWW.MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM.MO

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com
OFFICE MANAGER_Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com
ADDRESS_Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84
Advertisement_advertising@macaudailytimes.com
For subscription and general issues: general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd



Health authorities finally abandon zero-Covid policy

RENATO MARQUES

LOCAL authorities have finally abandoned the national policy of “dynamic covid-zero” following the new measures announced yesterday by the China State Council and the National Health Commission.

The new measures have an immediate effect on existing prevention and control measures, reducing the need for a high quantity of nucleic acid tests (NATs) as well as isolation of all positive cases and follow-up on close contacts, authorities announced yesterday during a specially arranged press conference with the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center.

Acknowledging that it is likely that the number of Covid-19 cases will exponentially increase with the new measures, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Elsie Ao Ieong, said that following the guidelines issued by the central authorities, Macau will now learn how to co-exist with the virus following the experiences of other places around the world.

Ao Ieong also noted that it is estimated that between 50% and 80% of the population of Macau could eventually be infected with the virus. Therefore, the role of authorities is to control the growing numbers of infections to prevent severe spikes from causing major disruption

to health care services and the city’s normal activities.

“We hope we can reduce the number of serious cases and especially the deadly ones,” the official said, noting that Macau has achieved a vaccination rate in excess of 90%.

“From this weekend, we will launch a series of measures including accelerating the promotion of the vaccination of the elderly and young children and the distribution of packs to provide essential medicines, tests, and masks. We will start this distribution over the weekend, starting with more vulnerable groups. We are hoping to have covered the whole population within two weeks,” she explained.

The measures include a phased reduction of NATs and replacing these with Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) for those needing to undergo testing on regular basis. The number of tests necessary for those arriving in Macau from the mainland will also be reduced.

Adjustments to border restrictions with Hong Kong as well as Taiwan and other countries are also included, although the details have yet to be announced. The Secretary said that “this would not have an immediate effect, but will be done gradually.”

The director of the Health Bureau (SSM), Alvis Lo, also noted at the press conference that from Monday (December 12),

new measures related to home quarantine for close contacts and asymptomatic cases will be implemented.

The SSM will put an online platform into operation for people in Macau to report their status following a positive RAT report.

This platform will serve as a mode of triage for health authorities to follow up on the cases – especially those who report symptoms and need to be followed closely.

According to Lo, it is expected that when fully enacted, the home quarantine measures can potentially cover 90% of the population, with only 10% likely to need medical treatment. For

these, the SSM has already prepared 600 beds in SSM facilities as well as another 6,000 in quarantine hotels.

KEYWORK GROUPS’ SITUATION UNTANGLED

After some major confusion yesterday following an announcement from the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center on Wednesday regarding significant changes to the NAT rules for key work groups, yesterday the Center made another U-turn and again changed the rules following the 10 new principles for Covid-19 prevention and control issued by the central authorities.

From now on, key work

groups will have to undergo testing every three days. This test can be either NAT or RAT and the type of test will be a decision for each company, Lo confirmed in response to an inquiry from the Times.

On Wednesday, internal information communicated by the services to employers established significantly more restrictive rules that require the majority of these workers to go from one weekly NAT every seven days, to four NATs every two days and three RAT on the interval days between each NAT.

The measure, having been in force for less than 24 hours, nonetheless caused major disruption at the more popular NAT stations like the Kiang Wu Hospital, which hit full NAT capacity yesterday.

20% OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS TO BE TESTED AT SCHOOLS

To avoid a major outbreak in schools, 20% of all students and teachers of all schools in Macau will be subjected to testing via RAT, the director of the Education and Youth Development Bureau, Kong Chi Meng, informed during the press conference.

Kong explained that the idea is to avoid testing the entire school population at all times while still maintaining regular and frequent data on schools to inform decisions on whether to enforce other measures if required.

The measure applies to all non-tertiary education institutions and will result in daily tests, starting Monday (December 12) targeting a control group of 20% of the school population.

This testing will be done through free RAT kits that have already been supplied to the schools.

“According to the results and number of positive cases that we find, we will decide if there is the need for class suspension or other measures,” Kong explained.

FEW ADJUSTMENTS TO BORDER MEASURES FOR NOW

ALTHOUGH officials have confirmed that the new rules include an alleviation of some of the measures enforced regarding entry in Macau for people arriving from all locations, only slight adjustments have been made for now to the requirements on those coming from the mainland from places other than Zhuhai, and those coming from Hong Kong, Taiwan or foreign countries.

The first set of adjusted measures will extend the validity period of NATs needed to enter Macau from 24 hours to 48 hours (except Zhuhai which continues to be 24 hours), while those coming from abroad will still comply with a “5+3” quarantine measure. However, instead of having a red health code for the three days, the health code will now be yellow until a negative NAT result obtained on the eighth day after

arriving in Macau unlocks the green code.

Regarding this first set of measures, Ao Ieong said, “we need to align with China’s policies,” and that further opening of the borders with Hong Kong will “happen soon.”

Addressing the mandatory three-day quarantine in force in Hong Kong for those returning to Macau via the city, Ao Ieong said that negotiations are ongoing. However, she said that the goal is to standardize all quarantine and border rules between the three places (Macau, Hong Kong, and the mainland). She further noted that this is the ultimate goal to be achieved very soon, and for this reason it was not worthwhile negotiating the requirements for each location separately; rather, they would be done all at once. **RM**

GOV'T BOASTS WIDELY SUPPORTED LAND TRANSPORT PLANNING 2021-2030

ANTHONY LAM

THE Transport Bureau (DSAT) has highlighted that 74% of opinions in the public consultation for general land transport planning for 2021 to 2023 support the government's proposal.

A total of 20,840 opinions have been received during the consultation period which ran from May to August.

It must be reiterated that the consultation period was lengthened due to its overlapping with the June 18 Covid-19 outbreak that put the city under around 10 days of de-facto lockdown.

DSAT organized six consultative sessions, with three catering to the general public, two to local associations and the remaining session to the transport industry, attracting a total attendance of 215 people.

Sessions for lawmakers and members of the Transport Advisory Committee were also held. Online channels were also used to gather opinions.

The issues of greatest concern



were increasing pedestrian channels and progressing the development of railways.

In fact, the current Light Rapid Transit (LRT) system has been widely blamed for its sta-

tion arrangements and unpopularity.

In the meantime, DSAT pointed out that the public was most supportive of intelligent bus services, improving trans-

port at border checkpoints and developing smart car parking systems.

Smart car parking entails the use of parking space sensors and indicators to improve

the experience of street-side parking and shorten the time a driver needs to find a spot.

In the consultation document, DSAT pledged to improve local traffic signals. For example, it plans to allow connectivity between signals and systems to equally allot passing and stopping times.

Some data scientists, however, doubt whether this will help ease Macau's traffic during peak hours when most parts of the city are usually packed with pedestrians and cars.

The new 10-year plan (2021-2030) for transport in Macau is a result of the government's learning from Hong Kong, Singapore, and mostly, Chongqing city in Sichuan Province, the director of the DSAT Kelvin Lam Hin San previously said.

As Lam noted, the government wants to continue building a system in which public transport has a predominance over private transport, and in which the LRT system, as well as a pedestrian network, take the main roles.

The plan forecasts that by 2030 the urban population of Macau will be around 791,000 people, which will make the total volume of commutes in Macau reach on average around 3.02 million per day.

AD

2022 MIECF

Macao International Environmental Co-operation Forum & Exhibition
2022年澳門國際環保合作發展論壇及展覽

匯力綠色發展 邁進雙碳目標

Commitment to Green Development
Moving Towards the Dual Carbon Goals

Host

中華人民共和國澳門特別行政區政府
Government of the Macao
Special Administrative Region of
the People's Republic of China

Special Supporting Organisations:

- National Development and Reform Commission of the People's Republic of China
- Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China
- Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of the People's Republic of China
- Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the People's Republic of China

Co-organisers:

- People's Government of Fujian Province
- People's Government of Jiangxi Province
- People's Government of Hunan Province
- People's Government of Guangdong Province
- People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region
- People's Government of Hainan Province
- People's Government of Sichuan Province
- People's Government of Guizhou Province
- People's Government of Yunnan Province
- The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China

Host Co-ordinators:

- Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM)
- Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA)

| Highlighted Activities | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| 09/12/2022 (Friday) | | |
| 10:45 - 12:00 | 2022 MIECF Opening Ceremony Keynote Speech - Ms. Dong Mingzhu | Ballroom, L3 |
| 11:00 - 18:30 | Green Showcase and Green Matching [Open to trade visitors only] | Expo Halls D & E |
| Green Business Co-operation Day and Protocol Signing Ceremony | | |
| 12:30 - 13:00 | Protocol Signing Ceremony | Green Conference Zone, Expo Hall E |
| 14:30 - 18:00 | Green Business Co-operation Day Session 1 Development of Sustainable Innovation Ecosystem with the Intergrowth of Green Industries [Co-organised with PricewaterhouseCoopers Macau] | Ballroom, L3 |
| 10/12/2022 (Saturday) | | |
| 09:00 - 18:00 | Green Showcase and Green Matching [Open to trade visitors only] | Expo Halls D & E |
| Green Forum | | |
| 10:00 - 12:00 | Session 2 The "14th Five-Year" Environmental Plan and the Path to the Future [Co-developed with the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the People's Republic of China] | Ballroom, L3 |
| 11:00 - 12:30 | Session 3 Pan-Pearl River Delta Environmental Protection Industry Conference for Co-operation and Exchange | Green Conference Zone, Expo Hall E |
| 15:00 - 17:00 | Session 4 Energy Transition and Air Quality - Decarbonising the Future | Ballroom, L3 |
| 11/12/2022 (Sunday) | | |
| 09:00 - 17:00 | Green Showcase and Green Matching | Expo Halls D & E |
| 10:00 - 17:00 | Green Public Day | Green Conference Zone, Expo Hall E |

FREE ADMISSION TO THE EXHIBITION. ALL ARE WELCOME.

| Concurrent Event | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| 09/12/2022 (Friday) | | |
| 14:15 - 15:15 | Green Coal Development Forum | Green Conference Zone, Expo Hall E |
| 15:30 - 16:30 | Development Opportunities in Green Finance | Greenovation Zone Pitching Area, Expo Hall D |
| 16:00 - 18:00 | Green Economy and Finance Forum | Green Conference Zone, Expo Hall E |
| 10/12/2022 (Saturday) | | |
| 10:30 - 12:00 | Greater Bay Area New Energy Development & Technology Forum | Greenovation Zone Pitching Area, Expo Hall D |
| 14:15 - 15:15 | The 23rd "Green Booth Award and Electricity Fee Rebate" Presentation Ceremony | Green Conference Zone, Expo Hall E |
| 16:00 - 18:30 | Low Carbon Green Hotels in Macau Contributing to National Dual Carbon Vision | Green Conference Zone, Expo Hall E |
| 11/12/2022 (Sunday) | | |
| 14:00 - 17:00 | "Technology Options for the Dual Carbon Goals" Technical Seminar | Ballroom, L3 |

Greenovation Roadshow
Venue: Greenovation Zone Pitching Area, Expo Hall D

| Venue | 09/12/2022 (Friday) | 10/12/2022 (Saturday) | 11/12/2022 (Sunday) |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 14:00 - 18:00 | | 14:00 - 17:30 | 10:30 - 13:00 14:30 - 16:10 |

Green Public Day Free Battery-electric Shuttle Bus Service

To reduce carbon footprints and mainstream green mobility, we sincerely invite you to visit MIECF by our free battery-electric shuttle bus.

| Bus Stops | 11/12/2022 (Sunday) | Time | Frequency |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Rua de Dr. Pedro José Lobo (Near The Macau Square) - Event venue (The Venetian Macao) | | To venues | Every 45 Minutes |
| Rua de Mercado de Iai Hon (Near the SQUARE Computer Plaza) - Event venue (The Venetian Macao) | | 09:00 - 18:45 | |
| Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida (Near Pak Wai Bus Stop) - Event venue (The Venetian Macao) | | 12:00 - 17:15 | |
| Rua de Seng Yau (Near Urbanização Jardim Nova Taipá Block 21) - Event venue (The Venetian Macao) | | To venues | Every 45 Minutes |
| From venues | | 09:15 - 14:00 12:00 - 17:15 | |

Complimentary parking will be available at the Guest Car Park of The Venetian Macao and The Parisian Macao on 11 December (Sunday) between 09:00 - 18:00 on a first-come-first-served basis due to limited availability.

Enquiry hotline : (853) 8798 9675 Venue : Cotai Expo, The Venetian Macao

Remarks: The programme is subject to change and please refer to the final announcement of the Organisers. For the latest programme, please visit MIECF's official website: www.macaomiecf.com.

MIECF Official Website

ANTHONY LAM

RETAIL firm Zara will cease operations at The Londoner after December 14, the Times has learned.

Inditex Group, a parent company of several fashion brands including Zara, obliquely admitted that it would only retain the Zara Home store at the Londoner Macao.

At the same time, the company admitted that the closure will only affect stores at the Londoner, meaning that the Zara store at the Venetian Macao will remain open.

The low-profile acknowledgement was made by a company spokesperson in an email response to an enquiry from the Times.

On the other hand, Inditex assured that no members on the sales team were dismissed due to the partial termination of operations.

The reason behind the closure may be linked to the plunge in tourist arrivals as well as the level of economic activity in Macau in the past nearly three years, but the Inditex spokesperson stressed that the closure in fact aligns with the company's move towards online shopping.

"Inditex Group has been ac-

Zara to close Londoner store, retains Zara Home



celerating globally and broadening its forward-looking digital transformation strategy since 2020, reinforcing its e-commerce capabilities and upgrading

its stores' network by means of incorporating the latest sales integration technology and absorbing smaller-sized stores."

Although the Zara store at

the Londoner Macao is relatively large and consists of sections for men, women, and children, the Times was told that it is nevertheless consid-

ered a "smaller-sized" store. In contrast, the Venetian Macao store is considered a major or flagship store, despite its similar scale.

The company spokesperson highlighted that "Inditex's commitment to the Macau SAR will be from now on focused on Zara's integrated approach through zara.com and its store at The Venetian as well as on the Zara Home offer at The Londoner."

Regarding the future of team members working at the Londoner store, the Inditex spokesperson said, "Additionally, we must underline that, in the context of this transformation strategy, the Group is offering alternative positions to all staff members in any of the absorbed stores."

Prior to this closure, the group of companies has already closed several stores at both the Venetian Macao and the Londoner Macao, including the brands Pull&Bear, Massimo Dutti, Bershka and Stradivarius.

It is noteworthy that international chains, such as H&M, Vivienne Westwood and Agnes b., have gradually phased their physical operations out from the Macau market, despite newcomers to the market such as Muji and Canada Goose.

AD

Churchill's Table

Celebrate the Festive Holidays with us

This festive season, come and discover the finest treats and gifts at Churchill's Table Retail Shop.

Scan for Details

ADDRESS | Level 1, The Londoner Macao FOR ENQUIRIES | 853 8118 8822
churchillstable.reservation@thelondoner.com.mo

DYNAMIC ZERO-COVID

China's looser measures met with relief,

HUIZHONG WU

A day after China announced the rollback of some of its most stringent COVID-19 restrictions, people across the country are greeting the news with a measure of relief but also caution, as many wait to see how the new approach will be implemented.

Following nationwide protests last month against China's harsh anti-pandemic policies, the government announced Wednesday it was easing some of the strictest measures. Among the most significant changes is that people who test positive for COVID-19 but show no symptoms, or only mild symptoms, can now stay at home rather than being forced into a government field hospital.

Online, government ministries and hospitals are already switching their messaging about how to deal with COVID-19 at home if one gets sick, marking an abrupt 180-degree turn from its policy before Wednesday, when it required all who tested positive to be taken to a government field hospital, a temporary facility built to



treat COVID-19 patients.

A team working for a prominent government doctor, Zhang Wenhong, put out a lengthy explainer yesterday on the virus, emphasizing the vast majority of cases won't require hospitalization and noting that the virus is here to stay.

"The past three years have made us not want to come in contact with the virus ... but actually in human society, there are thousands of microorganisms," the team at Huashan hospital in Shanghai wrote. "Inadvertently, every year we will get sick briefly because we've been infected by

several of these."

Still, experts were careful to emphasize this was not the end of COVID-19 containment.

"It is not that we are going to lie flat. Precision prevention must be still adhered to," said Yu Changping, a doctor in the department of respiratory medicine in the People's Hospital of Wuhan University. "The opening is an irreversible trend in the future because most people have been vaccinated and there has been a lower number of serious illnesses."

Outside experts warned that China will face a challenging first wave, as the loosened measures will likely lead to more infections among a population with little immunity against the virus.

"Every country in experiencing their first wave will face chaos, especially in medical capacity, and a squeeze on medical resources," said Wang Pi-sheng, Taiwan's head of COVID-19 response, yesterday. Wang said Taiwanese living in China could come home for medical treatment, especially if they're elderly or at high risk.

In Guangzhou, a metropolis in southern China that had seen rising case numbers the past few weeks, measures have been relaxed in recent days, which came as a relief to Jenny Jian, a 28-year-old resident.

"On my way to the gym today, I didn't have to scan the health code at all," she said, referring to the QR codes that people have been required to display to show whether they have COVID-19 or are a close contact. "It was implemented very quickly. But policy is one thing. The main thing is to see what the experience is when I step out the door."

In Chongqing, another metropolis with rising infections, people were rushing to buy cold medicines. In Beijing, some pharmacies ran out of common cold medications, facing the same demand.

City residents in Chongqing who need PCR tests for work are now facing long lines after neighborhood PCR testing points shut down last week amid the relaxation of measures.

Many are cautious about whether the restrictions will stop

AD

BNU PERSONAL LOAN
FOR EVERY PERSONAL REASON

No matter if you are planning a getaway trip, home renovation, a life event or family growth, BNU has you covered for EVERY REASON!

Visit any BNU Branch to know your conditions.



仁德 CENTRO MEDICO PEDDER
• 仁德醫療中心 •

We bring high quality of medical service to Macau

General Surgery : Dr. Fok Manson, Dr. Lai Cheuck Seen Edward, Dr. Lau Wing Kee Peter, Dr. Kwong Man, Dr. Nie Fu Zhong, Dr. U Chong San, Dr. Lei Chin Chong

Breast Surgery : Dr. Leong Iat Lun

Urology : Dr. Lo Kwong Yin Richard, Dr. Zhao Yun Qiao

Paediatric Surgery : Dr. Yeung Chung Kwong

Paediatrics : Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

Obstetrics & Gynaecology : Dr. Fong Kuan Io

Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery : Dr. Lam U Lin

Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

ENT : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

Cardiology : Dr. Wong Kwok Yiu Chris, Dr. Jin Chun, Dr. Leong Man Kin

General Medicine : Dr. Ng Kam Hong, Dr. Lam Weng Chio

Dietitian : Chan Lai U Joey

Avenida da Praia Grande No 599, Edifício Comercial Rodrigues 14 e 15 Andar, em Macau
T. 2832 2298 / 2832 2229 Website: www.peddermacau.com
Opening Hours: Mon - Fri 10:00 - 19:00 Sat 10:00 - 14:00 Sun & PH closed

ADVERTORIAL

SANDS CHINA NEWS

“Ink Wash • Abstraction” Art Exhibition on Display at Sands Gallery

Ink Wash • Abstraction is Sands China's latest exhibition at **Sands Gallery**, at the Grand Suites at Four Seasons. Curated by recognized curator Zhang Zikang, the exhibition features more than 30 imaginative works from China's **Feng Zhongyun** and Italy's **Elisa Sighicelli**. It is open to the public until Jan. 8, 2023, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily at Sands Gallery, on the 6th floor of The Grand Suites at Four Seasons.

Organised by Sands China Ltd., Lotus Art, and Rossi & Rossi Gallery, **Ink Wash • Abstraction** is part of Sands China's ongoing commitment to the diversification of art and culture in Macao, providing a platform for promoting extensive exchange and cooperation among local and international art talent.

Integrating Chinese contemporary ink painting and Italian abstract photography, **Ink Wash • Abstraction** is the first joint exhibition in Asia by Feng and Sighicelli, two artists with very different styles, creating an unexpected East meets West encounter.

Born in Beijing and now working and living in Macao, Feng is an ink artist well-known for his unrestrained painting style, featuring vigorous brush strokes and rich colours. The result is visually stunning, showcasing the coexistence of static and dynamic elements as well as contemporary abstract touches, with many of his works collected by Asian and overseas art institutions.

Sighicelli meanwhile is adept at capturing the subtle beauty of sculptures, architecture and still-life objects with experimental photography techniques on unexpected and novel media such as marble, plaster and satin – creating a new space that emerges from a two-dimensional plane into a three-dimensional reality. Her artwork has been exhibited around the world, including in Israel, Italy, France, Australia and Vietnam.

Sands Gallery is a permanent art space that provides an opportunity for guests to explore an ever-changing variety of art exhibitions. The gallery was born out of Sands China's desire to help cultivate an environment that nurtures creativity and art appreciation in Macao. It also aims to support the development of art and culture and to bring a greater diversity of experiences to the city, while promoting and encouraging professional artists in Macao and across the region.



caution

completely and if new measures will be carried out properly.

“All the policies are there, but when it gets to the local level, when it gets to the sub-district level, your neighborhood, it's a complete mess,” said 65-year-old Yang Guangwei, a retiree who lives in Beijing. Yang said many people are dissatisfied with the way national-level policies have been carried out in their neighborhoods.

The new measures also mandate fewer PCR tests, noting the tests must be targeted at those in high-risk industries and not entire districts. At the height of some lockdowns, many cities carried out PCR tests daily. In recent

months, Beijing and Shanghai residents had to take a PCR test every two or three days just to be able to go around the city.

One Beijing resident who only gave his family name, Qian, out of concern for discussing government policy, said that those who needed to get tested will still do so.

“They say don't test, but the workplace still requires it. That's contradictory,” Qian said of his own experience.

Underneath the official announcement of rollbacks by state broadcaster CCTV, social media users also expressed skepticism.

“Can colleges be normal again? Can they be unsealed?” read one comment with 37,000 likes.

Some asked whether certain cities would get rid of their quarantine-upon-arrival measures, as mandated in the national policies announced yesterday.

Others were more positive.

“I haven't traveled in so long!” a user wrote on Weibo. **MDT/AP**

EXPLAINER

RELAXED 'ZERO-COVID' BRINGS BIG CHANGES

In a move that caught many by surprise, China announced a potentially major easing of its rigid “zero-COVID” restrictions, without formally abandoning the policy altogether. It's not clear what exactly prompted the move, although it follows the largest show of public dissent against the ruling Communist Party in more than 30 years by residents fed up with constant testing, quarantines, travel restrictions, rolling lockdowns and business closures. Here's a look at the changes known as the “New Ten Requirements” announced on Wednesday.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHANGES?

Among the most significant changes is one that allows people who test positive for COVID-19 but show no or only mild symptoms to recuperate at home rather than being forced into one of the government field hospitals that have become notorious for overcrowding, lights that stay on 24 hours and poor food and hygiene. Where cases are discovered, lockdowns will be limited to specific apartment floors or buildings. Before, such lockdowns would encompass entire communities, districts and even cities. Widespread lockdowns were a significant factor behind protests in the spring in Shanghai and other cities. Authorities have reduced the requirement to produce a “health code” on a smartphone app that tracks virus testing and the user's proximity to areas deemed at high risk of infection and shows test results. Health codes will still be required for “special places,” including schools, hospitals and nursing homes. That leaves considerable ambiguity.

WHAT ELSE CHANGED?

Other relaxations are more subtle but still significant, like the length of lockdowns, which can only last five days if no new cases are detected. That's a major change from the open-ended lockdowns that could drag on for weeks and leave residents with no information

or ability to plan ahead. Restrictions on the sale of cold and cough medicine are also being lifted. During the height of the pandemic, such over-the-counter medications could only be purchased through a lengthy application process. While never clearly explained, the rules were thought to be aimed at those trying to cover up COVID-19 symptoms to avoid being tested and sent to quarantine. Just visiting a pharmacy risked triggering the health code smartphone app, resulting in a visit from hazmat-attired health authorities and police. More emphasis is also being placed on providing the elderly with vaccines and booster shots, and a greater focus will be placed on members of the population who suffer from cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and other underlying factors that can increase vulnerability to COVID-19.

Local governments are also barred from suspending business and public transportation in areas not considered at risk. They are also forbidden from blocking fire exits — an apparent reference to the apartment fire in the western city of Urumqi last month that helped set off the street protests. In theory, that would prevent some of the more extreme measures taken to block people into their homes, like locking their doors from the outside, welding steel bars across passages and fencing in entire communities. Schools without cases will be required to return to in-person classes, and emergency patients who do not have a recent negative test can no longer be barred from hospitals.

WHAT'S THE EFFECT ON SOCIETY, ECONOMY?

The new measures will likely take some time to be implemented and leave considerable wiggle room to keep some restrictions in place. Communities whose health care resources are barely adequate at the best of times will likely be the last to drop what they see as the last line of defense against potentially overwhelming outbreaks. **MDT/AP**



Brittney Griner

GRINER FOR BOUT

WNBA star freed in US-Russia prisoner swap

ERIC TUCKER, MATTHEW LEE & ZEKE MILLER, WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Joe Biden says WNBA star Brittney Griner is safe in American custody and on her way home after being released from Russia in an extraordinary prisoner swap.

Biden said in an address from the White House yesterday that these “past few months have been hell for Brittney” but that she was in good spirits.

Griner was freed in an exchange in which the United States released convicted Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout.

Russia freed Griner yesterday in a dramatic high-level prisoner exchange, with the U.S. releasing notorious Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout, American and Russian officials said. The swap, at a time of heightened tensions over Ukraine, achieved a top goal for President Joe Biden, but carried a heavy price — and left behind an American jailed for nearly four years in Russia.

The deal, the second such exchange in eight months with Russia, procured the release of the most prominent American detained abroad. Griner is a two-time Olympic gold medalist whose monthslong imprisonment on drug charges brought unprecedented attention to

the population of wrongful detainees.

Biden’s authorization to release a Russian felon once nicknamed “the Merchant of Death” underscored the escalating pressure that his administration faced to get Griner home, particularly after the recent resolution of her criminal case and her subsequent transfer to a penal colony.

The swap was confirmed by U.S. officials with direct knowledge of the negotiations who were not authorized to publicly discuss the deal before a White House announcement and spoke on condition of anonymity. Biden spoke with Griner on the phone Thursday while her wife, Chelle, was in the Oval Office. The president was to address reporters later in the morning.

“Moments ago I spoke to Brittney Griner. She is safe. She is on a plane. She is on her way home,” Biden tweeted.

The Russian Foreign Ministry also confirmed the swap, saying in a statement carried by Russian news agencies that the exchange took place in Abu-Dhabi and that Bout has been flown home.

Russian and U.S. officials had conveyed cautious optimism in recent weeks after months of strained negotiations, with Biden saying in November that he was hopeful that Russia would engage

in a deal now that the midterm elections were completed. A top Russian official said last week that a deal was possible before year’s end.

Even so, the fact that the deal was a one-for-one swap was a surprise given that U.S. officials had for months expressed their determination to bring home both Griner and Paul Whelan, a Michigan corporate security executive jailed in Russia since December 2018 on espionage charges that his family and the U.S. government has said are baseless.

In releasing Bout, the U.S. freed a former Soviet Army lieutenant colonel whom the Justice Department once described as one of the world’s most prolific arms dealers. Bout, whose exploits inspired a Hollywood movie, was serving a 25-year sentence on charges that he conspired to sell tens of millions of dollars in weapons that U.S. officials said were to be used against Americans.

The Biden administration was ultimately willing to exchange Bout if it meant Griner’s freedom. The detention of one of the greatest players in WNBA history contributed to a swirl of unprecedented public attention for an individual detainee case — not to mention intense pressure on the White House.

Griner’s arrest in February made her the most high-profile American jailed abroad. Her status as an openly gay

Black woman, locked up in a country where authorities have been hostile to the LB-GTQ community, infused racial, gender and social dynamics into her legal saga and made each development a matter of international importance.

Her case not only brought unprecedented publicity to the dozens of Americans wrongfully detained by foreign governments, but it also emerged as a major inflection point in U.S.-Russia diplomacy at a time of deteriorating relations prompted by Moscow’s war against Ukraine.

The exchange was carried out despite deteriorating relations between the powers. But the imprisonment of Americans produced a rare diplomatic opening, yielding the highest-level known contact between Washington and Moscow — a phone call between Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov — in more than five months.

In an extraordinary move during otherwise secret negotiations, Blinken revealed publicly in July that the U.S. had made a “substantial proposal” to Russia for Griner and Whelan. Though he did not specify the terms, people familiar with it said the U.S. had offered Bout.

Such a public overture drew a chiding rebuke from the Russians, who said they preferred to resolve such cases in private, and carried the risk of weakening the U.S. government’s negotiating hand for this and future deals by making the administration appear too desperate. But the announcement was also meant to communicate to the public that Biden was doing what he could and to ensure pressure on the Russians.

Besides the efforts of U.S. officials, the release also followed months of back-channel negotiations involving Bill Richardson, the former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and a frequent emissary in hostage talks, and his top deputy Mickey Bergman. The men had made multiple trips abroad in the last year to discuss swap scenarios with Russian contacts.

Griner was arrested at the Moscow’s Sheremetyevo Airport in February when customs officials said they found vape canisters with cannabis oil in her luggage. She pleaded guilty in July, though still faced trial because admitting guilt in Russia’s judicial system does not automatically end a case. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1957 UK Post Office ISSUES CHRISTMAS WARNING



The General Post Office has started its annual campaign urging members of the public to post their Christmas cards early to ensure they arrive on time.

At a news conference today the Postmaster General, Ernest Marples, produced some useful advice on present packing and card sending and advised people to “Post early.”

He told journalists of his own difficulties wrapping parcels with string that broke in his hands. He said that wrapping fell apart on 13,000 parcels at Mount Pleasant sorting office in London last year and asked people to pack carefully with strong string.

He also asked people to ensure their handwriting was clear and legible and to print the names of towns in block capitals.

He recollected a day he accompanied a Liverpool postman on his rounds as he puzzled over a letter which had writing “as intensely undecipherable as my own”.

Mr Marples also explained this year was a particular problem as Christmas falls on a Wednesday.

This means most people will expect letters posted on the Monday before to arrive on time. But he urged us to “Post early” and send cards “prior to the preceding weekend” before Christmas Day.

This will alleviate the massive workload on the Post Office which is bracing itself for a fourfold increase on the usual amount of articles it handles - about 800 million cards, letters and parcels over the Christmas period.

It will be spending £4m on extra staff and lorries to deal with the festive rush of letters.

Tomorrow is the last day for posting cards to Europe and 12 December is the last date for sending letters to Europe, except to certain parts of Norway.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The General Post Office stopped delivering letters on Christmas Day in 1960 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in 1965 in Scotland.

The GPO ceased to be a government department on 1 October 1969 and was nationalised as a public corporation, a process pushed forward by the then Postmaster General Anthony Wedgwood Benn.

It was also split into two divisions - postal and telecommunications.

British Telecom was created in 1980 and severed its links with the Post Office in 1981.

The Post Office is now divided into Royal Mail, Parcelforce and Post Office Counters plc.

Over Christmas 2002, Royal Mail delivered 2.1 billion cards, letters and parcels to 27 million addresses.

An estimated 20,000 extra staff were recruited to help the regular workforce of 143,000 postmen and postwomen.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You need adventure and excitement in your life. Travel will be favorable. Travel opportunities must be taken advantage of. Don't be too quick to voice your opinion.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Listen to others carefully. You will be extremely sensual; take precautions and don't take any risks. Sort situations out as best you can. Watch your spending habits.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Self-improvement could bring amazing results. Do not let others exhaust you financially. Trips will be enjoyable, and communication with your lover will clear up any misconceptions.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You need to get down to basics with regard to yourself. Put your energy into learning new skills or picking up valuable information.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You will be erratic and quite likely to make personal mistakes. Secret activity is evident. Things may not be as they sound. Minor health problems could put you out of commission for the day.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Try not to overspend on luxury items. Make changes to your living quarters that will please the whole family. Be careful not to consume too many spicy foods.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Look before you leap. Self-deception is likely. Now is the time to concentrate on building a strong financial future for your family.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Be careful how you handle friends and relatives, they may take things the wrong way. You will learn valuable skills if you sign up for seminars today.

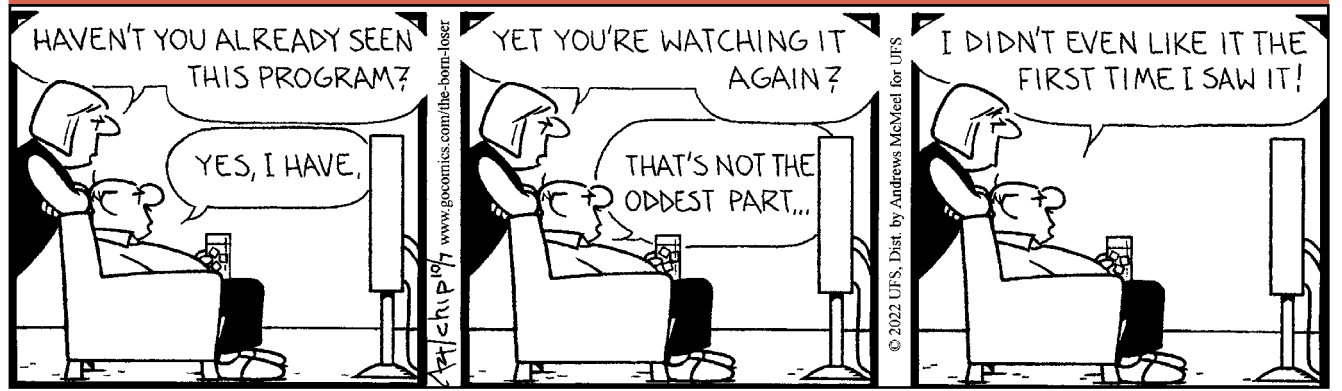
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
There might be a problem with a will or with an insurance policy. Your lover will be extremely sensitive and now will not be a good time to make changes that they won't like.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Get involved in creative projects that will enhance your earning power. Refrain from arguing with your mate. Use your better judgment before you sign up for a costly venture.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Creative endeavors will give you somewhat of an outlet. You can make reasonable bids on real estate or large items for your home.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
You need to be careful not to make promises that you can't fulfill. Don't be too quick to judge. Confusion could result when communicating with others.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

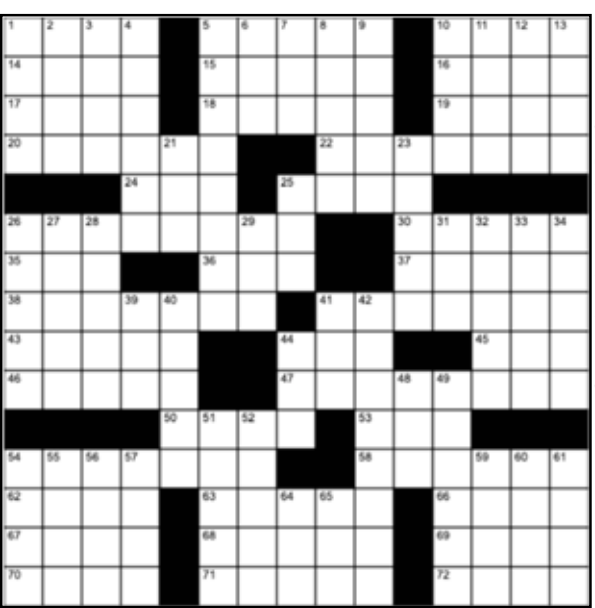
| | MIN | MAX | CONDITION |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----------|
| CHINA | | | |
| Beijing | -5 | 7 | fine |
| Changchun | -13 | -2 | fine |
| Chengdu | 7 | 12 | cloudy |
| Chongqing | 10 | 13 | cloudy |
| Fuzhou | 13 | 20 | cloudy |
| Guangzhou | 11 | 21 | fine |
| Guiyang | 3 | 6 | overcast |
| Haikou | 17 | 21 | cloudy |
| Hangzhou | 8 | 13 | overcast |
| Harbin | -15 | -5 | fine |
| Hefei | 5 | 9 | overcast |
| Nanjing | 8 | 10 | overcast |
| Shanghai | 10 | 15 | overcast |
| Taipei | 17 | 21 | rain |
| Wuhan | 6 | 11 | overcast |
| Hong Kong | 16 | 23 | clear |
| WORLD | | | |
| Moscow | -3 | -2 | snow |
| Frankfurt | -3 | 3 | overcast |
| Paris | -2 | 3 | overcast |
| London | -2 | 3 | overcast |
| New York | -1 | 8 | clear |

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Faux pas; 5- Total disorder; 10- Repeat; 14- Joan of art; 15- Summarize; 16- Feng ___; 17- Russian river; 18- Aggregate of qualities that make good character; 19- Lacking; 20- Irish tongue; 22- Swallow greedily; 24- Acorn dropper; 25- Commedia dell'___; 26- Economized; 30- Like Loki; 35- Bauxite, e.g.; 36- Ancient; 37- Mob scenes; 38- In practice but not in law; 41- Lattice; 43- Shed ___; 44- Dundee denial; 45- Bambi's aunt; 46- Turkish palace; 47- Grottesque likeness; 50- A head; 53- Permit; 54- Prophecy; 58- Home of Odysseus; 62- Architectural pier; 63- Ostentatious glamour; 66- Neural transmitter; 67- Dreg; 68- Actress Graff; 69- Salamander; 70- Final; 71- Out of ___; 72- Building wings;

DOWN 1- Complacent; 2- Old Italian money; 3- Dies ___; 4- Hoi ___; 5- Eccentric; 6- The Beatles' "And I Love ___"; 7- Hotshot; 8- Western; 9- Used up; 10- Canadian gas brand; 11- Burn slightly; 12- Suspended; 13- River to the Seine; 21- Cartesian conclusion; 23- Category; 25- Make another point; 26- Fountain treats; 27- El Greco's birthplace; 28- Allude; 29- "Hold On Tight" band; 31- Lubricate; 32- Actor's parts; 33- Tour of duty; 34- Short literary composition; 39- Penlight battery; 40- Weeps; 41- Pitch; 42- Understands; 44- Ultimate; 48- Spot checker?; 49- Natural gas component; 51- Protection; 52- Big fiddle?; 54- Drop; 55- Draft classification; 56- Hwys.; 57- 3:00; 59- Skating jump; 60- Monk's hood; 61- Pismires; 64- Occupational suffix; 65- Explosive stuff;

Yesterday's solution



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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 | |



It's prime time to **BUY & RENT!**

有關樓宇廣告詳情, 請向職員查詢
For more information on advertising laws, please speak to one of our representatives.

RENT

CONTACT US & SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY!

hello@jmlproperty.com
www.jmlproperty.com

f jmlmacau @jmlproperty

Bai Yuen Garden
HKD 12,800,000 3 beds 2 bath

Nova Taipa Gardens
HKD 11,280,000 4 beds 2 bath

Kok Wui
HKD 7,200/mth 2 beds 1 bath

AD

MATCH OF THE DAY

ENGLAND DEFENDER WALKER AIMS TO CONTAIN MBAPPE AT QUARTERS

JAMES ROBSON, DOHA

WITH five goals at the World Cup so far, Kylian Mbappe is living up to his reputation as the man best-placed to succeed Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo as soccer's biggest star.

Spare a thought then for Kyle Walker, who is set to mark the France striker when England takes on the defending champions in the quarterfinals on Saturday.

"I do understand what I need to do and that's obviously to stop him," the Manchester City right back said.

Walker described Mbappe as "probably" the best player in the world and accepted there is particular focus on how he handles the situation at Al Bayt Stadium. But he believes there has been too much talk about just one player when France has a squad full of world-class talent.

"The game is not England vs. Mbappe. The game is England

AP PHOTO



England's Kyle Walker

vs. France," Walker said. "OK, he's a tool they have in their armory that's very good, but there are other very good players and we can't underestimate those players that have won big titles, won big cups. He's a great player, we all know that. That's why all the ques-

tions are about him, but let's not forget (Olivier) Giroud, who scored countless goals for France and in the Premier League.

"(Ousmane) Dembele who, for me, is just as good on the other wing, is a very tricky player. Then you've got (Antoine) Griezmann

and stuff like this. These players can cause you the problems. OK, we take our hat off to him, he is a great player. For me, all the questions shouldn't be about him."

Mbappe is aiming to win his second World Cup after his starring role when France won the

title in Russia four years ago. He scored four goals in that tournament and has already surpassed that number in Qatar with five.

Walker has come up against the Frenchman three times in the Champions League with City against Paris Saint-Germain, winning twice and losing once. Mbappe only managed to score one goal in those three games — and that was in a 2-1 loss in November 2021.

While France won the title in Russia, England was knocked out by Croatia in the semifinals.

Walker believes the team is better placed to go further this time after reaching the final of last year's European Championship, which it lost on penalties to Italy.

France, he said, hold no fear for this England team.

"We take our hats off to them. They are world champions. They have the respect they deserve. They won the last World Cup," Walker said. "But I can assure you that each and every one of us will not be rolling out the red carpet for them to go and perform, thinking it's a theater for them to showcase their great talent. We have also got great talent that we need to be speaking about as well." MDT/AP

MATCH OF THE DAY

Van Gaal ahead of confronting Argentina: 'We can become world champions'

RONALD BLUM, DOHA

THREE wins from the title that has eluded the Netherlands, Louis van Gaal has filled his World Cup with hugs, kisses and dancing.

Leading his nation for the third time at age 71, he is the tournament's oldest coach. He also may be the most dapper, pacing the sideline in a neon orange tie, dark business suit and dress shoes.

Van Gaal has the Dutch on a 19-game unbeaten streak going into today's [Saturday, 03:00] quarterfinal against Lionel Messi and Argentina. Known as the Iron Tulip, he has entertained off the field as much as his players have on the pitch.

Van Gaal responded to praise from a Senegalese reporter 25 minutes into a news conference with an excited: "Oh, I can hug you. I'll give you a big, fat hug later," according to his translator.

And after the news conference, LVG did just that,

AP PHOTO



Head coach Louis van Gaal of the Netherlands

beckoning for Papa Mahmoud Gueye to meet him at the side of stage, then wrapping his arms around the 28-year-old and giving him eight pats on the back followed by a tap on the face.

A few days later, Van Gaal puckered up. He was seated next to Denzel Dumfries, who scored one goal and assisted on two others in the 3-1 win over the United States that put the Dutch in

the quarterfinals. A reporter from Aruba asked Van Gaal how proud he was of the defender, who has an Aruban father.

"Yesterday or a day before yesterday, I gave him a big fat kiss. I am going to give him another big fat kiss so everybody can see," the coach said. He leaned over, put an arm around the player and placed a smack near Dumfries' right ear.

A short while later, Van Gaal followed his players on a jubilant dance line while arriving at the St. Regis Doha. Quite different from his demeanor after the 2-0 win over host Qatar, when a Dutch reporter told him the result wasn't enough.

"Of course, you can give your opinion. I don't agree with you and I'm not going to expand on that because I think that you have a different perspective on football than I have," Van Gaal said. "So why don't you write that down, that you think it is terribly boring, that you're going home tomorrow because you couldn't care less?"

Ahead of the U.S. match, he described criticism as a constant.

"If I have to believe the Dutch media, we'll never become world champion," Van Gaal said. "In 2014, it was exactly the same. Extremely negative. Now it's the same all over again. I am used to it, and I think my players are used to it, so we will calmly move on."

Then he added playfully in English: "Maybe you can take now a picture after this declaration."

He smiled and said: "Cheese."

Van Gaal has coached Ajax, Barcelona, AZ Alkmaar, Bayern Munich and Manchester United, winning seven league titles, but he is seeking his first national team championship.

Mindset is as essential as tactics.

"He gives us a lot of confidence, a lot of clarity. Everybody knows what he needs to do," Dumfries said. "He keeps us on our toes and he frankly tells us what needs to be improved."

Sitting next to the player, Van Gaal quickly interjected with a wide smile: "It's not for nothing that we brought Denzel along."

Van Gaal took over the Oranje for the first time in 2000 and quit two years later after they failed to qualify for the 2002 World Cup. He returned in 2012 and coached them at the 2014 World Cup, where Argentina beat the Netherlands on penalty kicks in the semifinals. The Dutch took third with a 3-0 victory over host Brazil, and then he quit for the second time.

"We can become world champions — not that we will become world champions," Van Gaal said. "We can become world champions." MDT/AP

THE QUARTERS

| | Date | Time | Home | Away | ODDS |
|------------|--------|-------|-------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Fri | Dec 9 | 23:00 | Croatia | Brazil | H 9.8, D 5.25, A 1.37 |
| Sat | Dec 10 | 3:00 | Netherlands | Argentina | H 3.71, D 3.18, A 2.3 |
| Sat | Dec 10 | 23:00 | Morocco | Portugal | H 6, D 3.79, A 1.72 |
| Sun | Dec 11 | 3:00 | England | France | H 3.15, D 3.33, A 2.55 |

TASTE OF EDESIA

Variations of Oabika

IRENE SAM, MDT

THIS holiday season, Four Seasons Macao proudly presents Valrhona Afternoon Tea Menu at **Xiao Ting**, the first in Macau to incorporate cocoa fruit juice concentrate Valrhona Oabika into delicacies that reflect the savoir-faire and culinary finesse of talented chefs at the hotel.

A pioneer and benchmark in the world of chocolate, Valrhona produces the precious Oabika, cocoa fruit juice with a nuanced aromatic profile, oscillating between fruity and tangy notes. The magical taste, syrupy texture, and amber color immediately inspire a sensorial journey to the heart of plantations, where the rare and exceptional cocoa tree is discovered.

Available in December, the exclusive afternoon tea set features both savory and sweet delights. Valrhona Dulcey, salmon pot pie, clam veloute, sauternes-soy jelly pairs umami characteristics with the smooth and creamy chocolate. The velvety, enveloping texture of chocolate complements the pastry beautifully to create a sumptuous ex-

perience. Valrhona Oabika, foie gras berliner, bacon jam serves the French delicacy mixed with Valrhona Manjari 64% inside a berliner, enhanced with Oabika infused jam and bacon on top.

For those with a sweet tooth, Valrhona Manjari 64% with black pepper red currant praline is sure to spice up the festive season with a passionate, fruity flair. Valrhona Yuzu, hazelnut nougat refreshes the palate with a hint of acidity melting into a nutty aroma manifested through a pleasantly chewy texture.

To complete the exquisite gastronomic journey, specials drinks are also designed to woo discerning gourmets. Presented on a trolley displaying three flavors of Oabika syrup: Original, Bay Leaf infused, and Mulled Spices, a tasting portion of Golden Rose Tea invites guests to select a choice to be mixed together with the treat. Furthermore, as the weather cools during the winter season, "Four Seasons Signature Festive Valrhona Caraibe 66% Hot Chocolate" will warm the hearts and minds of all as a chocolate ball with cotton candy slowly melts inside.



Macau Racing Tips

By Davy Chiu, MDT



THE ABERDEEN 1050M SAND 2022-12-09|Fri|20:15

SOLID banker for this Friday night meeting is **Mr. Donut**, having six wins and one second under his belt in all his Macau outings, my vote for this race is him. The only thing that may hinder his victory is the big weight, but **Mr. Donut** is a sand freak he love to race on sand and has the gifted draw of barrier one. He could be short in the tally, my strategy would bank in with another two runners to get the exotics, looking at the field Out To Win and Fortune Treasure could give some challenge to **Mr. Donut** down the straight. But our selection should have an upper hand in this contest.

Race 3 Hores no. 1 Mr. Donut to win, with Hores no. 2 Out To Win & Horse no. 4 Fortune Treasure for all your Exotic Bets. Good Luck



OPINION

World Views

John Crimaldi, University of Colorado
 MDT/The Conversation



**TOILETS SPEW INVISIBLE
 AEROSOL PLUMES WITH
 EVERY FLUSH**

Every time you flush a toilet, it releases plumes of tiny water droplets into the air around you. These droplets, called aerosol plumes, can spread pathogens from human waste and expose people in public restrooms to contagious diseases.

Scientific understanding of the spread of aerosol plumes – and public awareness of their existence – has been hampered by the fact that they are normally invisible. My colleagues Aaron True, Karl Linden, Mark Hernandez, Lars Larson and Anna Pauls and I were able to use high-power lasers to illuminate these plumes, enabling us to image and measure the location and motion of spreading aerosol plumes from flushing commercial toilets in vivid detail.

Toilets are designed to efficiently empty the contents inside the bowl through a downward motion into the drain pipe. In the flush cycle, water comes into forceful contact with the contents inside the bowl and creates a fine spray of particles suspended in air.

We found that a typical commercial toilet generates a strong upward jet of air with velocities exceeding 6.6 feet per second (2 meters per second), rapidly carrying these particles up to 5 feet (1.5 meters) above the bowl within eight seconds of the start of the flush.

To visualize these plumes, we set up a typical lidless commercial toilet with a flushometer-style valve found throughout North America in our lab. Flushometer valves use pressure instead of gravity to direct water into the bowl. We used special optics to create a thin vertical sheet of laser light that illuminated the region from the top of the bowl to the ceiling. After flushing the toilet with a remote electrical trigger, the aerosol particles scatter enough laser light to become visible, allowing us to use cameras to image the plume of particles.

Even though we expected to see these particles, we were still surprised by the strength of the jet ejecting the particles from the bowl.

A related study used a computational model of an idealized toilet to predict the formation of aerosol plumes, with an upward transport of particles at speeds above the bowl approaching 3.3 feet per second (1 meter per second), which is about half of what we observed with a real toilet.

Scientists have known for decades that flushing toilets can release aerosol particles into the air. However, experimental studies have largely relied on devices that sampled the air at fixed locations to determine the number and size of particles toilets produce.

While these earlier approaches can confirm the presence of aerosols, they provide little information about the physics of the plumes: what they look like, how they spread and how fast they move. This information is critical to develop strategies to mitigate the formation of aerosol plumes and reduce their capacity to transmit disease.

As an engineering professor whose research focuses on interactions between fluid physics and ecological or biological processes, my laboratory specializes in using lasers to determine how various things are transported by complex fluid flows. In many cases, these things are invisible until we illuminate them with lasers.

An advantage of using laser light to measure fluid flows is that, unlike a physical probe, light does not alter or disrupt the very thing you are trying to measure. Furthermore, using lasers to make invisible things visible helps people, as visual creatures, better understand complexities in the fluid environment they live in.

Aerosol particles containing pathogens are important human disease vectors. Smaller particles that remain suspended in air for a period of time can expose people to respiratory diseases like influenza and COVID-19 through inhalation. Larger particles that settle quickly on surfaces can spread intestinal diseases like norovirus through contact with the hands and mouth.

Toilet bowl water contaminated by feces can have pathogen concentrations that persist after dozens of flushes. But it is still an open question as to whether toilet aerosol plumes present a transmission risk.

Google has to delete search results about people in Europe if they can prove that the information is clearly wrong, the European Union's top court said yesterday.

The European Court of Justice ruled that search engines must “dereference information” if the person making the request can demonstrate that the material is “manifestly inaccurate.”

People in Europe have the right to ask Google and other search engines to delete links to outdated or embarrassing information about themselves, even if it is true, under a principle known as “right to be forgotten.”

Strict data protection rules in the 27-nation bloc give people the right to control what appears when their name is searched online, but the regulations frequently pit data privacy concerns against the public's right to know.

In the latest case, two managers at a group of investment companies, who weren't identified, asked Google to remove search results based on their names that linked to articles criticizing the group's investment model. They said the articles made false claims.

Google said it welcomed the decision.



In this image taken from footage by Saudi State TV, President Xi Jinping (left) listens to the Chinese national anthem next to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh, yesterday

**PRESIDENT XI AT SAUDI
 PALACE TO MEET ROYALS
 ON MIDEAST TRIP**

JON GAMBRELL, DUBAI

CHINESE leader Xi Jinping met yesterday with Saudi Arabia's crown prince while on a visit to the kingdom, solidifying ties with a region crucial to his country's energy supplies as sanctions intensify on Russia over its war on Ukraine.

Xi arrived at Al Yamama Palace in Riyadh and was greeted by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, King Salman's assertive son who stands ready to rule the oil-rich kingdom in the decades to come. Xi shook hands with the prince as an honor guard on horseback carried Saudi and Chinese flags.

It wasn't immediately clear what the two focused on in their discussions, though Xi in a newspaper column published by Al Riyadh newspaper said “exchanges between China and Arab states date back more than 2,000 years.” The column also quoted a saying by Islam's Prophet Muhammad: “Seek knowledge even if you have to go as far as China.”

“The Arab people value independence, oppose external interference,

stand up to power politics and high-handedness, and always seek to make progress,” Xi's column read.

He also noted that the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, which include Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, serve as “an energy tank for world economy.” China, the world's largest crude oil importer, relies heavily on Saudi oil, paying tens of billions of dollars annually to the kingdom.

Saudi state media released silent video of Xi and Prince Mohammed meeting at the palace, with a large picture of King Salman hanging in the background. It wasn't immediately clear where the 86-year-old monarch was.

Gulf Arab states are trying to recalibrate their foreign policy as the United States turns its attention elsewhere in the world.

Russia's war on Ukraine — and the West's hardening stance on Moscow — has also left the Arab countries wanting to cement ties with China.

Beyond China's oil purchases, its construc-

tion expertise could be tapped as well for Prince Mohammed's planned \$500 billion futuristic city of Neom on the Red Sea. Chinese construction firms have worked elsewhere in Arab countries in the Persian Gulf, particularly in Dubai in the UAE.

Saudi Arabia, home to the holiest sites in Islam, also has provided political cover to China over its harsh policies toward Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities. More than a million have been sent to detention centers, forced to denounce Islam and swear fealty to Xi and the party.

The trip to Saudi Arabia marks a further move by Xi to restore his global profile after spending most of the pandemic inside China. The visit is his third overseas trip since early 2020. It also comes as Xi, who was granted a third five-year term as leader in October, has faced street protests over his zero-COVID-19 policies that represent the most-significant challenge to his rule.

During the visit, Xi is expected to attend the inaugural China-Arab States Summit and a meeting of the GCC. MDT/AP



USA Hundreds of journalists and other employees at The New York Times began a 24-hour walkout, the first strike of its kind at the newspaper in more than 40 years. Newsroom employees and other members of The NewsGuild of New York say they are fed up with bargaining that has dragged on since their last contract expired in March 2021. The union announced last week that more than 1,100 employees would stage a 24-hour work stoppage starting at 12:01 a.m. Thursday unless the two sides reach a contract deal.



Germany The former chief executive of financial services company Wirecard, Markus Braun (pictured), and two other ex-managers went on trial yesterday over the firm's collapse in what has been described as the biggest case of fraud in post-war Germany. Wirecard was long the darling of fintech scene until it filed insolvency proceedings in 2020, saying 1.9 billion euros that had been on its balance sheet could not be found.

Ukraine After its searches of holy sites belonging to the historic Orthodox church, the nation's security agency posted photos of evidence it recovered — including rubles, Russian passports and leaflets with messages from the Moscow patriarch. Supporters and detractors of the church debate whether such items are innocuous — or increase suspicions the church is a nest of pro-Russian propaganda and intelligence-gathering.

HOLIDAY TIMES

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holiday. The Times will be back on the stands on Tuesday December 13. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times.