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**UAE** South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol received an honor guard welcome Sunday on a trip to the United Arab Emirates as he hopes to expand its military sales here. Yoon's visit comes as South Korea conducts business deals worth billions of dollars and stations special forces troops to defend the UAE, an arrangement that drew criticism under his liberal predecessor. Now, however, it appears the conservative leader wants to double down on those military links even as tensions with neighboring Iran have already seen Tehran seize a South Korean oil tanker in 2021.



**Iran** said this weekend it executed a former high-ranking defense ministry official and dual Iranian-British national, Ali Reza Akbari (pictured) despite international warnings not to carry out the death sentence. The execution further escalated tensions with the West amid the nationwide anti-government protests shaking the Islamic Republic. The hanging of Akbari suggests an ongoing power struggle within Iran's theocracy. It also harkened back to the mass purges of the military that immediately followed Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution.



**Ukraine** The death toll from a Russian missile strike on an apartment building in the southeastern city of Dnipro rose to 23 yesterday, the local government reported as rescue workers scrambled to pull survivors from the rubble. Emergency crews worked through the frigid night at the multi-story residential building, the site of the worst casualties from a barrage of Russian strikes Saturday on Ukrainian cities. The attacks, which also targeted the capital, Kyiv, and the northeastern city of Kharkiv, ended a two-week lull in Moscow's widespread strikes on Ukraine's power infrastructure and urban centers.

# CNY WARM-UP

Some 160,000 visitors entered Macau from Friday to Sunday, according to official statistics - surpassing MGTO's forecast for the upcoming Chinese New Year weekend

P3



RENATO MARQUES

**NEPAL**

## 68 CONFIRMED DEAD AFTER PLANE CRASHES IN POKHARA

AP PHOTO



P8

### REINALDO 'UNCLE RAY' CORDEIRO DIES IN HONG KONG

Reinaldo Maria Cordeiro, better known to his legions of radio listeners as "Uncle Ray", has died peacefully in a Hong Kong hospital aged 98. SCMP reported yesterday. He died on Friday at the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre surrounded by his closest friends, with singer Joe Junior leading a chorus of "You'll Never Walk Alone", the committee arranging his funeral said. Born in Hong Kong on December 12, 1924, at the family home in Wan Chai Road, Cordeiro was a descendant of Portuguese immigrants from Macau.

### MARIO HO ELECTED MEMBER OF CPPCC

On January 12, his birthday, Mario Ho, 28, announced that he is now a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). On a Weibo post, late Stanley Ho's youngest son wrote: "to me, this year's birthday is exceptionally meaningful. I'm very honored to be elected as a member of the 13th Hubei Provincial Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. And today, on my birthday, [it] is my first time attending the conference as an official member." Ho is said to have big plans for the e-sports scene in China and Macau.

### AVIATION

# TIGERAIR TAIWAN PREPARING FOR MACAU ROUTE RESUMPTION

ANTHONY LAM

**TIGERAIR** Taiwan has said that it is preparing to resume flights between Macau and Taiwan, but no exact date has been given, in a response to the Times.

Tigerair Taiwan is the low-cost carrier of the island. It is a subsidiary of one of Taiwan's three airline companies that operate international flights, China Airlines. The brand was originally from Singapore but the Tigerair company in Singapore was acquired by Scoot, making Taiwan now the sole owner of the brand.

As part of an agreement commonly referred to as the Open Skies Policy, flights between Macau and Taiwan do not have frequency of capacity restrictions. Airlines can easily increase or decrease flights according to demand with little to no application procedures.

The sole restriction is that only Macau or Taiwan airlines can operate services between the two places.

Prior to December last year, travellers from Taiwan to Macau were required to conduct centralized quarantine. Taiwan has long lifted this requirement. Despite accepting tourists holding Macau passports, Taiwan requires these tourists to travel within a group tour for the entire trip.

BRIAN/PLANESPOTTERS.NET



Those travelling from Macau holding foreign passports are not subject to this requirement.

Against this background, many airlines have already started resuming services to Macau. Tigerair Taiwan's internal competitors, EVA Air and Starlux Airlines, have quickly increased flights to Macau. In contrast, the low-cost carrier has not yet done so.

On the question about plans to resume flights between Macau and Taiwan, Emily Yu, assistant manager at the marketing and public relations team of the low-cost carrier, noted that the

airline was "preparing for the resumption of the Macau route."

Apart from giving no exact date, Yu added that "tourism-related demand and supply in Macau will be continuously and dynamically monitored to identify the most appropriate timing for the resumption, taking into account market and related demands after Covid-19 restrictions."

Before Covid-19, Macau had been a popular destination among Taiwanese tourists. Taiwan accounted for the third-largest tourism market of origin, after mainland China and

Hong Kong.

Taiwan has also always been a popular tourism destination for people from Macau. Steven Feng, general manager at the Macau branch of Starlux Airlines, said that many Macau people would consider travelling to Taiwan for the weekend.

EVA and Starlux are currently operating a daily flight between the two places. Prior to Covid-19, EVA also operated services to Kaohsiung in southern Taiwan and Taichung in central Taiwan. These two routes have not yet resumed.

### ACADEMY

# UM professor contributions to biomedical sciences distinguished by the Royal Society of Biology

**UNIVERSITY** of Macau (UM) professor Chen Xiuping, working at UM's Institute of Chinese Medical Sciences (ICMS), has been elected a fellow of the UK's Royal Society of Biology for his contributions to the field of biomedical sciences, the UM reported in a press statement.

As the university noted, Chen's achievement is also an acknowledgement of

the innovation work being done at the ICMS. This work has made an impact upon research, which has been recognized internationally.

As one of the most important and influential biology organizations worldwide, the Royal Society of Biology is committed to promoting educational and academic activities related to life sciences, as well as the development of

biotechnology. The society awards fellowships every year to influential scientists with significant contributions to their fields of research or society around the globe.

Chen's work has been largely dedicated to pharmacology research with a focus on the development of new drugs for the treatment of cancer, inflammatory, and cardiovascular diseases. He proposed a

new non-apoptotic programmed cell death method - Noptosis - which has created a new subfield in the research of programmed cell death.

Chen also ranks 53rd among the 175 top scholars in the pharmaceutical discipline in China by Elsevier and 64th among the top 100 pharmaceutical leaders of China in the Global Scholars Database in 2022. RM



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TOURISM

# Record-breaking weekend in visitors' number, 160,000 in three days

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HIS weekend was a record-breaking one in what concern the number of visitors to Macau. In three days (Friday to Sunday) Macau registered according to the Public Security Police Force (PSP) the entry of 150,927 tourists (until 9 p.m. on Sunday).

The figure not only represents an exponential increase on the figures seen previously but surpasses the numbers registered recently namely at the beginning of the month when Macau scored an influx of 109,386 visitors on the first three days after the border restrictions were removed.

The number of tourists arriving in Macau currently seems to anticipate a good outcome over the Lunar New Year (CNY) holi-



days that start on January 22 and for which the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) has forecasted an arrival of about 48,000

visitors per day during this period. The figures registered last weekend already surpass such a prediction with an average of over

50,000 people (50,309) being registered.

Saturday (January 14) was the day that recorded a higher fig-

re with a total of 55,845 visitors arriving through all border checkpoints, followed by Sunday (48,340 until 9 p.m.). Friday registered the lower figure (46,742) as most of the entries were registered in the later part of the day, but it was not very far from the average for the whole weekend.

The Border Gate continues to be, by far, the most used entry point to Macau with almost 3-fold the Macau Port Area at Hengqin Port being the second most used.

A significant increase in movement was registered at the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge with some 17,819 visitors entering through this border post.

Of note is also that in total 27,098 of those arriving in Macau over the weekend had come from the neighboring SAR of Hong Kong.

## LOCAL DOCUMENTARY FILM CONTEST CALLS FOR PROPOSALS

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE "Local View Power" documentary film contest is returning once again in 2023 with the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), calling from proposals until March 8, the organizer informed.

As in previous occasions the contest aims to promote the development of cinematography and encourage local independent filmmakers to create more local films.

Applicants must be legally registered as local associations or be Macau ID holders aged 18 or above. They also must meet the requirements indicated in the program regulations.

The contest is divided into three categories, including "Documentary", "Short-Feature" and "Animation", each of which is also divided into three levels, including "Advanced Level", "Open Level" and "Freshmen Level".

The works will be evaluated by a panel of selected professionals in-

vited by the IC that will select up to 14 works and offer a total amount of up to MOP1.32 million for production, with a maximum amount of MOP280,000 for some production entities, subject to the category and level.

The selected teams will be guided by professionals who will provide one-on-one advice to each team.

Started in 2007 the "Local View Power" has been providing support for creators to put their ideas into practice in a more professional way, creating also conditions for film lovers who wish to have an attempt into this world for the first time.

In the past editions, nearly 150 proposals were granted support and resulted in cinematographic works, many of which have been screened in public at film festivals in Macau and abroad, as well as on other public occasions.

More information on the regulation and application form can be obtained from the IC's website ([www.icm.gov.mo](http://www.icm.gov.mo)).

## LOOKING FOR JOBS

# Chinese flock to Macau, Hong Kong for private Covid booster shots

**P**PRIVATE services offering Chinese travelers access to mRNA vaccines are attracting droves of mainlanders to Macau and Hong Kong seeking a booster shot that their government has refused to approve.

As part of its dismantling of the country's zero-Covid policy last month, China's government also lifted quarantine requirements and other border restrictions, The Guardian reported.

The report said that it prompted a wave of interest in overseas travel, particularly for the upcoming Lunar New Year holiday later this month. However, there also appears to be a large contingent seeking the mRNA bivalent vaccines.

Throughout the pandemic, the Chinese government has allowed its citizens



only domestically-produced vaccines while refusing to approve foreign-made jabs. Health experts and medical studies have raised concerns about the efficacy of China's vaccines, which use an inactivated virus, compared with the mRNA vaccines available elsewhere, The Guardian reported.

According to the British newspaper,

the appetite for the overseas vaccine is difficult to quantify, but services offering travel packages and self-funded shots in Hong Kong and Macau have become available in recent weeks. Clinics in Thailand and Singapore have also reported increased interest from Chinese travellers.

The BioNTech/Pfizer mRNA vaccine is free for residents

of Macau and Hong Kong.

On Chinese social media platform, C3Hong Kong Life, a travel service for mainlanders advertised bookings from 8 January for people to travel to Hong Kong and receive the vaccination in exchange for HKD1,680.

It offered a full vaccination travel package providing "expert guidance, vaccine appointments, round-trip itinerary arrangements, border pickup and other services."

The Macau University of Science and Technology has a website for people to book vaccine appointments at prices starting at HK\$1,360. All appointments – approximately 100 a day – are booked out until mid-February.

Staff at one cross-border travel agency, xBorder, said they had facilitated "many" people travelling to Macau – where entry restrictions were looser than those in Hong Kong – in the last quarter of 2022, and were receiving a lot of interest from people wanting to go to Hong Kong. **PC**



ANTHONY LAM



**ECONOMY**

# GROUP EXPECTS PROSPERITY INDEX TO IMPROVE THIS MONTH

**T**HE city's Prosperity Index is estimated to increase by almost a whole point this month, the Macau Economic Association (MEA) announced in a statement.

The index for last month was 1.9. The association's estimate for this month is 2.8,

which is a significant increase of 0.9 points. Although the index is still at unsatisfactory levels, if circumstances remain unchanged it will likely continue to increase.

In fact, the association predicts the indices for this and the coming two months will range between 2.8 and

3.4 points. It also predicts the index to stabilize during the second or the third quarter.

The basis of this bold prediction is that Beijing has changed its approach to Covid-19 and now considers it a disease of less concern. With most disease control measures lifted alongside resump-

tion of interactions between Macau and mainland China and Hong Kong, visitor arrivals in Macau boomed immediately. This is the reason the index has improved, the association highlighted.

The association expects the economy will further improve, with more tourists expected to visit Macau. The local government has initiated targeted promotions on tourism and, as Lunar New Year is just around the corner, more mainland and Hong Kong tourists are expected to visit.

Additionally, the confirmation of casino licenses and announcements of casino operators' future development plans will help draw a wider range of tourists to Macau, as these plans will include mostly non-gambling elements.

The association boldly claimed that despite fluctuating external conditions, Macau's economic revivals "have not been obstructed." It recapped the IMF's and the World Bank's pessimistic outlook on the world's economy in the coming two years.

Externally, the drop of global demand in commodities has struck China's export figures hard. Internally, consumer confidence in mainland China has not yet recovered from three years of Covid-19 measures.

Nonetheless, mainland residents were recorded to be satisfied with spending on travelling. The travelling figures during the New Year holidays have recovered to 43% of the year-over-year levels from 2019. The association hinted that with its main trade focused on tourism, Macau will be reinvigorated as tourism resumes.

Looking back, the city had 2.0 and 1.9 for the index for the past two months, mostly caused by business suspensions due to the mass Covid-19 outbreak in December. **AL**

**BANKING**

# AMCM WORKING ON HKD INSTANT DIGITAL TRANSFER ACROSS LOCAL BANKS

**I**NSTANT bank wiring of Hong Kong Dollars will be possible with the next phase of the Easy Transfer function, Chan Sau San, president of the Monetary Authority of Macau has said.

Chan's comment was made in reply to lawmaker Lei Chan U's written inquiry on November 14, 2022.

The finance official did not give a specific date as to when the second phase of the function would be rolled out.

Apart from the instant transfer of Hong Kong Dollars between local banks, the second phase of the function will also facilitate transfer between banks and digital payment institutions such as Mpay and Alipay.

With the introduction of this update, the function will then allow users to transfer funds from their bank accounts to top up their wallets with digital payment platforms and make payments directly with funds from their bank account using another digital payment platform.

Although the function boasts instant bank wires, not all local banks have opted to provide the service. For example, OCBC Wing Hang Bank will collect and process all instructions either at the beginning or the end of each bank working day. It also does not provide transfer by phone number.

"In light of the new services, financial institutions may need to charge clients for certain transfer services, so as to maintain and constantly improve their quality of service," Chan revealed, adding that his bureau will "as ever before maintain communications with financial institutions and encourage progress in their enhanced response to [public] desire for convenient financial services."

Chan also said that the AMCM would monitor market needs and include more services for the Easy Transfer function. Studies about Easy Transfer between Macau and Hengqin will be conducted as well.

Chan also disclosed that since its launch in October 2022, 300,000 bank accounts have been recorded using the function. This is from 2.7 million transactions that were recorded during the same period, 60% of which were made outside bank hours.

The function was launched to the public in December 2021.

In his inquiry, Lei asked the AMCM president about the status of the function as well as whether there would be service charges applied in future. Related to this, he also asked if the AMCM had negotiated with financial institutions on the matter. Another question of his was about extending the function to Hengqin or even Guangdong. **AL**

AD

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## The Sweeten Spectacular at MGM COTAI

MGM co-curated with Zhou Yi, the "Sugar King" of China to present the "Fondant Art Exhibition", highlighting the most fragrant of the five flavors - sweetness with innovative edible art to elevate daily life's beautiful moments.



As a renowned fondant cake master with multiple international gold awards, including the Best Award at Cake International and the International Fondant Cake Design Top Artist Award at CAKE MASTER, Zhou Yi is known as the "Sugar King" of China. Zhou is particularly skilled at carving ancient Chinese characters with fondant art that originated in the West. With a goal of letting the world see the beauty of the Orient, Zhou has stunned the world with his sophisticated masterpieces by integrating traditional culture with popular elements.



Located in the Infinite Harmony exhibition space at MGM COTAI, guests can find themselves surrounded by five beautiful fondant sculptures specifically created for MGM. They are infused with the historic Chinese dough-sculpting methods, as well as carving, painting, and tailoring craftsmanship. Each fondant sculpture is rich in cultural nuance and showcases customs that are deeply rooted in our daily lives, including the joy of the feast, the etiquette of filial piety, the happiness of marriage, and the traditional wedding rituals from "Three Books and Six Rituals". The works adopt bold and advanced suspension technique for the first time, elevating them to life-size heights for maximum visual impact. Additionally, the exhibition will also display Zhou's glamorous and trendy fondant art pieces of Chinese characters for a limited time.

To take the exhibition experience to a whole new level, a cross-disciplinary mini-theater guided tour experience is also available on weekends. The exhibition is available from 12pm to 8pm every day and it is entirely free! Discover the art of living and be awe in of the edible art only at MGM. For more information, please visit [mgm.mo](http://mgm.mo)



CNY warm up: Travelers wearing face masks walk toward the entrance of the Beijing Railway Station in Beijing

COVID-19

# China reports 60,000 deaths, says peak passed

JOE MCDONALD, BEIJING

**C**HINA this weekend reported nearly 60,000 deaths in people who had COVID-19 since early December, offering hard numbers for an unprecedented surge that was apparent in overcrowded hospitals and packed crematoriums, even as the govern-

ment released little data about the status of the pandemic for weeks.

Those numbers may still underestimate the toll, though the government said the "emergency peak" of its latest surge appears to have passed.

The toll included 5,503 deaths due to respiratory failure caused by COVID-19 and 54,435 fatalities

from other ailments combined with COVID-19 since Dec. 8, the National Health Commission announced. It said those "deaths related to COVID" occurred in hospitals, which means anyone who died at home would not be included in the numbers.

The report would more than double China's official COVID-19 death toll to 10,775 since the di-

sease was first detected in the central city of Wuhan in late 2019. China has counted only deaths from pneumonia or respiratory failure in its official COVID-19 death toll, a narrow definition that excludes many deaths that would be attributed to COVID-19 in much of the world.

China stopped reporting data on COVID-19 deaths and infections after abruptly lifting anti-virus controls in early December despite a surge in infections that began in October and has filled hospitals with feverish, wheezing patients. Hospitals in Beijing across the country have been overwhelmed with patients, and funeral homes and crematoriums have struggled to handle the dead.

The World Health Organization and other governments appealed for information after reports by city and provincial governments suggested as many as hundreds of millions of people in China might have contracted the virus.

Infection numbers now appear to be falling based on a decline in the number of patients visiting fever clinics, said a National Health Commission official, Jiao Yahui.

The daily number of people going to those clinics peaked at 2.9 million on Dec. 23 and had fallen by 83% to 477,000 on Thursday, according to Jiao.

"These data show the national emergency peak has passed," Jiao said at a news conference.

Whether China truly has passed a COVID-19 peak is hard to assess, said Dr. Dale Bratzler, chief COVID officer at the University of Oklahoma and head of

quality control at the university's hospital.

"That's difficult to know," Bratzler said. "China quarantined people indoors, there are many people unvaccinated, the people are vulnerable."

Dr. Albert Ko, an infectious disease physician and professor of public health at the Yale School of Public Health, said the number of COVID-19 deaths China is reporting may be a "significant underestimation" because of how they define them.

"They're using a very narrow case definition for (COVID) deaths," Ko said. "They have to have respiratory failure ... in order to be counted as a case you have to be at a place where they can say you fulfilled all the requirements, and that's at a hospital."

Hospitals in China, Ko said, are located mostly in large cities where COVID outbreaks have been reported, not in isolated rural areas.

"This is the Lunar New Year, people are traveling, going to the countryside where the population is vulnerable," Ko said. "We're really worried about what's going to happen in China as this outbreak moves to the countryside."

For nearly three years, China had kept its infection rate and deaths far lower than those of the United States and some other countries at the height of the pandemic with a "zero-COVID" strategy that aimed to isolate every case. That shut down access to some cities, kept millions of people at home and sparked angry protests.

Those rules were suddenly eased in early December after some

ECONOMY

# China's trade surplus swells to \$877.6b as exports grow

**C**HINA'S trade surplus swelled to a record \$877.6 billion last year as exports rose despite weakening U.S. and European demand and anti-virus controls that temporarily shut down Shanghai and other industrial centers.

Exports increased 7% from a year earlier to \$3.95 trillion, decelerating from 2021's explosive 29.9% gain, customs data showed this weekend. Imports edged up 1.1% to 2.7 trillion, cooling from the previous year's 30.1% rise as economic growth slowed and consumer spending weakened.

The country's politically volatile global trade surplus expanded by 29.7% from 2021's record, already the highest ever for any economy.

"China's foreign tra-



de and exports showed strong resilience in the face of many difficulties and challenges," said a customs agency spokesperson, Lu Daliang, at a news conference.

Export growth slumped late in the year after the

Federal Reserve and other central banks raised interest rates to cool record-setting inflation by slowing economic activity.

December exports fell for a third month, contracting by 10.1% from a year earlier to \$306.1 billion.

That was bigger than November's 9% slide.

Last year's exports to the United States edged up 1% over 2021 to \$581.8 billion despite tariff hikes by President Joe Biden's predecessor, Donald Trump, that still are in place on many

goods. Chinese imports of American goods declined 1% to \$177.6 billion.

China's annual trade surplus with the United States, one of the irritants that prompted Trump to hike tariffs, widened by 1.8% from 2021 to \$404.1 billion.

Forecasters expect Chinese export growth to weaken further as the possibility of recession in Western economies increases. Some expect this year's exports to shrink.

"China's exports are likely to contract until the middle of the year," Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics said in a report this week.

Earlier in 2022, trade also was hampered by anti-virus controls that shut down Shanghai and other industrial centers in March for up to two months, dis-

rupting manufacturing and global shipping.

In December, exports to the United States fell 19.5% from a year earlier to \$301.1 billion. Imports of American goods shrank 7.3% to \$228.1 billion. That produced a \$78 billion surplus, down 17.5% from a year earlier.

Exports to the 27-nation European Union tumbled 39.5% to \$43.6 billion. Imports of European goods fell 31.3% to \$24 billion. China's trade surplus with Europe fell 50% to \$19.6 billion.

"Downward pressure on the world economy is increasing," warned the customs agency's Lu.

Also in December, Chinese imports from Russia, mostly oil and gas, rose 8.3% over a year earlier to \$9 billion. **MDT/AP**

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

of the largest shows of public dissent against the ruling Communist Party in more than 30 years. That set off new problems in a country that relies on domestically developed vaccines that are less reliable than others used globally, and where older people — those more susceptible to dying from the virus — are less likely to be vaccinated than the general population.

The Health Commission said the average age of people who died since Dec. 8 is 80.3 years, and 90.1% are aged 65 and above. It said more than 90% of people who died had cancer, heart or lung diseases or kidney problems.

“The number of elderly patients dying from illness is rela-

tively large, which suggests that we should pay more attention to elderly patients and try our best to save their lives,” said Jiao.

The United States, South Korea, Japan and several other countries have imposed virus testing and other controls on people arriving from China. Beijing retaliated on Wednesday by suspending issuance of new visas to travelers from South Korea and Japan.

This month, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said agency officials met with Chinese officials to underline the importance of sharing more details about COVID-19 issues, including hospitalization rates and genetic sequences. **MDT/AP**

## WHO APPEALS TO BEIJING TO RELEASE MORE COVID-19 INFORMATION

**T**he World Health Organization has appealed to China to keep releasing information about its wave of COVID-19 infections after the government announced nearly 60,000 deaths since early December following weeks of complaints it was failing to tell the world what was happening.

The announcement Saturday was the first official death toll since the ruling Communist Party abruptly dropped anti-virus restrictions in December despite a surge in infections that flooded hospitals. That left the WHO and other governments appealing for information, while several countries imposed controls on visitors from China.

The announcement “allows for a better understanding of the epidemiological situation,” said a WHO statement. It said the WHO director-general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, talked by phone with Health Minister Ma Xiaowei.

“WHO requested that this type of detailed information continued to be shared with us and the public,” the agency said.

The National Health Commission said only deaths in hospitals were counted, which means anyone who died at home wouldn't be included. It gave no indication when or whether it might release updated numbers.

A health official said the “national emergency peak has passed” based on an 83% decline in the daily number of people going to fever clinics from a Dec. 23 high.

The report would more than double China's official COVID-19 death toll to 10,775 since the disease was first detected in the central city of Wuhan in late 2019. China has counted only deaths from pneumonia or respiratory failure in its official toll, which excludes many fatalities that might be attributed to the virus in other countries.

### HONG KONG EXPRESS

High-speed train service resumed yesterday between China's mainland and Hong Kong under restrictions that allow 5,000 passengers from each side to make the trip daily and require a negative virus test within the previous 48 hours.

The two sides are reopening travel links that were suspended under Beijing's “zero-COVID” strategy, which aimed to keep the virus out of China. Hong Kong imposed different but similarly severe restrictions that blocked most international travel.

Candice Zhong, a resident of the neighboring mainland city of Shenzhen who arrived in Hong Kong, said she planned to visit the city's two major theme parks.

“I want to come to Hong Kong to see what it's like now,” Zhong said at the Hong Kong Mass Transit Railway terminal. “I will go to Disneyland and Ocean Park.” **MDT/AP**



### ADVERTORIAL

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### MGM Shares the Charm of Marine Sports – “2023 MGM Macao International Regatta”

Jointly organized by the Sports Bureau and Ursa Major Sailing Event Management and title sponsored by MGM, the “2023 MGM Macao International Regatta” was concluded with success in January, which has attracted 300 athletes from around the globe to sail and compete fiercely in the sea of Macau. Honored to become the title sponsor once again, MGM devoted its undivided support towards this international marine sport event by promoting the initiative of ‘Tourism+Sports’.



**Pansy Ho, Co-Chairperson and Executive Director of MGM China Holdings Limited** said, “As one of the city's original branded sports events, the ‘2023 MGM Macao International Regatta’ has rolled out a new chapter of marine sports in Macau. It has also played an active role in promoting sports tourism by utilizing Macau's water resources granted by the Central Government, which poses great significance to the city's tourism development. MGM is honored to be the title sponsor of this race for two consecutive years, and we believe it will continue to be a key highlight of marine tourism that helps enriching and diversifying the tourism offerings of Macau.”



#### Supports Local Sailing Athletes

With the aim of nurturing local sailing athletes and promoting sailing sports, MGM joined hands with Macau Sailing Association to sponsor local athletes, Lai Weng Fat and Lok Chong Heng, to take part in the International Catamaran Invitational. Being the only Macau team in the race, both Lai and Lok, who are local experienced windsurfing athletes, said, “Previously, it has been difficult for local sailing athletes to practice for the race due to the lack of Hobie 16 sailboat in Macau. Therefore, this race was a precious opportunity for us to compete in an international race and learn from world-class sailing athletes. We hope to enhance our skills and represent Macau in more international competitions.”

#### Enriches Sport Tourism Offerings with Fun Activities

In view of enriching sports tourism products to make the race more attractive and engaging to all, MGM also took the initiative to organize more exciting side events at MGM MACAU, including the new “Sailing Fun Day” and the display of Hobie 16 sailboat. These fascinating happenings welcome all residents and tourists to experience and enjoy the charm of sailing sports.



The “Sailing Fun Day” was a three-day event that took place at the Vista of MGM MACAU. The fun-packed event includes an array of sailing-themed game booths, remote-controlled sailboats competitions, Optimist sailing and windsurfing trial experiences, family workshops, gastronomic offerings and interactive performances.



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AP PHOTO



Locals watch the wreckage of a passenger plane in resort town Pokhara yesterday

NEPAL

# 68 confirmed dead after plane crashes in Pokhara

UPENDRA MAN SINGH & SHEIKH SAALIQA KATHMANDU

A plane crash has killed at least 68 people, according to Nepal's Civil Aviation Authority. A regional passenger plane with 72 aboard crashed into a gorge while landing at a newly opened airport in the resort town of Pokhara yesterday, in the country's deadliest airplane accident in three decades.

Scores of rescue workers and onlookers crowded near a steep gorge yesterday afternoon, as rescuers combed the wreckage on the edge of the cliff and in the ravine below.

Local resident Bishnu Tiwari, who rushed to the crash site to help search for bodies, said the rescue efforts were hampered because of thick smoke and a raging fire that engulfed the aircraft.

"The flames were so hot that we couldn't go near the wreckage. I heard a man crying for help, but because of the flames and smoke we couldn't help him," Tiwari said.

It was not immediately clear what caused the accident.

A witness said he saw the aircraft spinning violently in

the air after it began to attempt a landing, watching from the terrace of his house. Gaurav Gurung said the plane fell nose-first towards its left and then crashed into the gorge.

At the crash site near the Seti River, about 1.6 kilometers (nearly a mile) away from Pokhara International Airport, rescuers sprayed fire hoses and heaved ropes down to another smoldering part of the wreck below. Some bodies, burned beyond recognition, were carried by firefighters to hospitals, where grief-stricken relatives had assembled. At Kathmandu airport, where the flight began, family members appeared distraught as they were escorted in and at times exchange heated words with officials as they waited for information.

"The plane caught fire after the crash. There was smoke everywhere," Gurung said.

The aviation authority said the aircraft last made contact with the airport from near Seti Gorge at 10:50 a.m. before crashing.

The twin-engine ATR 72 aircraft, operated by Nepal's Yeti Airlines, was flying from the capital, Kathmandu, to Pokhara, a 27-minute flight. It was carrying 68 passengers including 15 foreign nationals, as well as four

crew members, Nepal's Civil Aviation Authority said in a statement. The foreigners included five Indians, four Russians, two South Koreans, and one each from Ireland, Australia, Argentina and France. No survivors have been found yet. The search continued yesterday evening.

Tek Bahadur K. C., a senior administrative officer in the Kaski district, said he expected rescue workers to find more bodies at the bottom of the gorge.

Images and videos shared on Twitter showed the aircraft's fuselage was split into multiple parts that were scattered down the gorge.

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, who rushed to the airport after the crash, set up a panel to investigate the accident.

"The incident was tragic. The full force of the Nepali army, police has been deployed for rescue," he said.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that it's still trying to confirm the fate of two South Korean passengers and has sent staff to the scene. The Russian Ambassador to Nepal, Alexei Novikov, confirmed the death of four Russian citizens who were on board the plane.

The type of plane involved, the ATR 72, has been

used by several airlines around the world for short regional flights. Introduced in the late 1980s by a French and Italian partnership, the aircraft model has been involved in several deadly accidents over the years. In 2018, an ATR 72 operated by Iran's Aseman Airlines crashed in a foggy, mountainous region, killing all 65 aboard.

In Taiwan two earlier accidents involving ATR 72-500 and ATR 72-600 aircrafts happened just months apart.

ATR identified the plane involved in yesterday's crash as an ATR 72-500 in a tweet. According to plane tracking data from flightradar24.com, the aircraft was 15 years old and "equipped with an old transponder with unreliable data."

Yeti Airlines has a fleet of six ATR72-500 planes, company spokesperson Sudarshan Bartaula said.

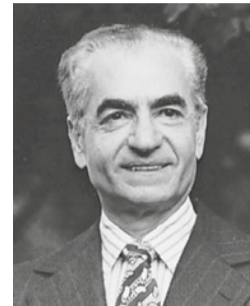
Pokhara, located 200 kilometers west of Kathmandu, is the gateway to the Annapurna Circuit, a popular hiking trail in the Himalayas. The city's new international airport began operations only two weeks ago. It was built with Chinese construction and financial support. The Chinese ambassador to Nepal, Chen Song, said in a tweet he was "very shocked" to learn of the accident. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1979 SHAH OF IRAN FLEES INTO EXILE

The Shah of Iran has fled the country following months of increasingly violent protests against his regime.

Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlevi and his wife, Empress Farah, left Tehran and flew to Aswan in Egypt.



The couple's three youngest children were flown to the United States yesterday.

Official reports say the Shah has left for a "vacation" and medical treatment. In fact, he was asked to leave by the man he appointed prime minister earlier this month.

Over the past few months, there have been an increasing number of violent clashes between security forces and anti-Shah demonstrators.

Opposition to the Shah has become united behind the Muslim traditionalist movement led by Iran's main spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, from exile in France.

There have been calls for the Ayatollah's return - and news of the Shah's departure was greeted with mass celebrations across Iran.

British and United States' ex-patriates living in Iran - regarded as symbols of westernization - have been the frequent target of attacks. Thousands have left the country.

Martial law was declared in many cities on 8 September. But later that month, industrial action by thousands of Iranian workers culminated in a mass strike by employees in the oil industry.

The strike sparked riots and rallies across the country in support of the Ayatollah.

Western governments, like the US, UK and West Germany, have continued to express support for the Shah.

The Shah appointed a new military government in early November. But it failed to stem the rising tide of support for the Ayatollah.

Earlier this month he appointed a new prime minister, Dr Shapur Bahktiar. When, on 13 January, the Ayatollah declared a revolutionary Islamic council to replace what he called the "illegal government" of Iran, Dr Bahktiar persuaded the Shah it was time to leave.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The Shah never returned to Iran. He died in exile in Egypt in 1980.

Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran on 1 February after 14 years' exile.

He threw out Dr Bahktiar's government on 11 February and, after a referendum, declared an Islamic Republic on 1 April.

Khomeini guided his country's revolutionary social, legal, and political development until his death in 1989.

He presided over the country during the Iran/Iraq war, only reluctantly agreeing a ceasefire. He also issued a fatwa against author Salman Rushdie.

Two decades later, liberals ushered in a period of transformation with their election victory in 2000 over the conservative elite.

But reformist president Mohammad Khatami was at odds with hardliners, including the supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, and failed to make good on his promises.

He was replaced by the ultra-conservative Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in June 2005.

President Bush declared Iran part of an "axis of evil" in 2002. Washington accused Tehran of attempting to develop nuclear weapons, although Iran says its nuclear ambitions are peaceful.

Tehran resumed its uranium conversion process in 2005, provoking a diplomatic showdown with the international community.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES** Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
 You can expect changes in your financial situation as well as in your status. You might be overly emotional when dealing with your partner. Keep calm.

**TAURUS** Apr. 20-May. 20  
 You must make them stand on their own two feet regardless of how much you want to make things better for them. Talk to peers who you trust in order to get sound advice.

**GEMINI** May. 21-Jun. 21  
 Your loved ones could set you off. You might find that the extra cash will come in handy when an opportunity to invest comes along.

**CANCER** Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
 Travel and communications will not run as smoothly as you had hoped. You have your own family to consider as well. Go after your professional goals.

**LEO** Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
 Someone around you is bouncing off the walls. Be sure not to burn any bridges. You can come up with solutions to the problems responsible for inefficiencies at work.

**VIRGO** Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
 Don't be too quick to react. Set aside any decisions regarding your personal life today. For best results get out of the office and do your job en route.

**LIBRA** Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
 You have a lot to offer. Family outings should include visiting friends or relatives. Think about taking the time to complete unfinished domestic chores.

**SCORPIO** Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
 New romantic relationships will develop through group activity related to sports events. You may want to make changes that will not be to their liking.

**SAGITTARIUS** Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
 Do your chores and get on with the things you enjoy doing. A change in position could be better than you thought. Try to do things with children that will enable you to bond closer to them.

**CAPRICORN** Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
 Get involved in activities that will be fun for the whole family. You will be full of good ideas, and your choice of activities may bring you enrichment far beyond your expectations.

**AQUARIUS** Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
 Take a close look at contracts and agreements that have been offered to you. You will easily capture the interest of those you talk to.

**PISCES** Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
 Assist a relative or good friend by setting of a budget for them. Look out for those wanting to push you into a disagreement. Work quietly on your own.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

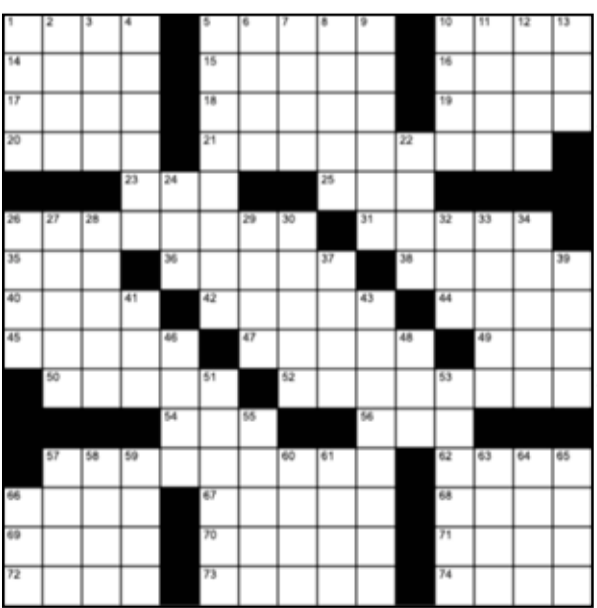
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	-10	1	fine
Changchun	-18	-10	fine
Chengdu	1	7	cloudy
Chongqing	0	3	overcast
Fuzhou	8	12	cloudy
Guangzhou	7	12	cloudy
Guiyang	-2	0	rain
Haikou	12	17	cloudy
Hangzhou	-2	3	fine
Harbin	-27	-14	fine
Hefei	-5	3	fine
Nanjing	-5	2	cloudy
Shanghai	-1	3	cloudy
Taipei	11	12	rain
Wuhan	-4	5	fine
Hong Kong	12	15	overcast
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	-3	-2	snow
Frankfurt	-1	6	rain
Paris	2	8	rain
London	-4	4	rain
New York	1	8	fine

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- One of two equal parts; 5- Idaho capital; 10- Nest component; 14- Peter Fonda title role; 15- Burning desire?; 16- \_\_\_ but known...; 17- Dirty; 18- Distributed cards; 19- Got down; 20- Get better; 21- Scooter; 23- Latin 101 verb; 25- Word used to precede a woman's maiden name; 26- Restore confidence; 31- \_\_\_ Gay; 35- Modern address; 36- Absolute; 38- Miss Doolittle; 40- Not kosher; 42- Spiral; 44- Not pro; 45- Sharpened; 47- Family car; 49- Always; 50- Rod used to reinforce concrete; 52- Repudiate; 54- Yank's foe; 56- Cookbook abbr.; 57- Dhoti; 62- Put aboard; 66- Actor Connery; 67- Off-limits; 68- Hip bones; 69- Missing; 70- Old French expression meaning "goodbye"; 71- Money-related; Abbr.; 72- Fully aware of; 73- City in West Yorkshire; 74- Word in many college names;

DOWN 1- Quiet; 2- Spiny houseplant; 3- Sci-fi princess; 4- Guys; 5- Criticize; 6- Nabisco cookie; 7- The wolf \_\_\_ the door; 8- Athenian lawgiver; 9- Dinner course; 10- Baht spender; 11- Travel on foot; 12- Romeo's last words; 13- Obtain, slangily; 22- Nota \_\_\_; 24- East Lansing sch.; 26- Batting Babe; 27- Diamond flaw?; 28- Coeur d'\_\_\_ ID; 29- Hwys.; 30- Conger catcher; 32- Play stub?; 33- Fabric woven from flax yarns; 34- Early Mexican; 37- Travel on; 39- Yorkshire river; 41- Short mo.; 43- Yellowish; 46- Fix hose; 48- Rejections; 51- Type of thermometer; 53- Raise; 55- Part of an ice skate; 57- Boxer Spinks; 58- Kiln for drying hops; 59- Fascinated by; 60- Drama award; 61- Nailed obliquely; 63- That's \_\_\_!; 64- Round object, often used to store computer data; 65- Apiece; 66- \_\_\_-pitch softball;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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



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660 ft<sup>2</sup> | HKD3,980,000



**HELLENE GARDENS**  
3 bed 2 bath  
1,663 ft<sup>2</sup> | HKD9,200,000



**HELLENE GARDENS**  
4 bed 2 bath  
2,530 ft<sup>2</sup> | HKD12,500,000



**HELLENE GARDENS**  
3 bed 2 bath  
1,663 ft<sup>2</sup> | HKD7,680,000



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FOOTBALL

# China's reopened borders raise hopes for soccer resurgence

JOHN DUERDEN

**A**FTER three years of isolation and financial struggles in Chinese soccer, the country is reopening its borders and economy to the outside world. With it, frustrated fans, financially challenged clubs and unpaid players in the Chinese Super League might receive some long-awaited good news.

The 2022 season was unrecognizable from the 2019 edition, the last before COVID-19 hit. Then the league had an average attendance of over 24,000, the highest in Asia, and a number of big-name foreign imports.

From 2020 onwards, Beijing's "zero-COVID" policy, designed to stamp out the virus, meant that teams mostly played in empty stadiums at centralized venues. Players were stuck in bio-secure bubbles for months on end and international stars, unable to



Huang Kaizho of Guangzhou Evergrande (left) fights for the ball against Leandro Velazquez of Johor Darul Ta'zim during their AFC Champions League group I soccer match at Sultan Ibrahim Stadium in Johor, Malaysia, last April

enter the country, were released from contracts.

It also meant little ticket, broadcast or sponsorship revenue for clubs. In 2021, defending champion Jiangsu FC folded and several other clubs have struggled to pay players.

Opening up the country may not mean a return to the carefree spending of the previous decade but is a prerequisite to starting the journey back to pre-pandemic le-

vels. It is reported that clubs will play home and away games in the 2023 season.

"It almost feels like there has been no league in the past three years with delays, months without games and strange schedules," Shanghai Shenhua supporter Wang Yi told The Associated Press. "Some fans have lost interest but I think that will change when we can all get together at the stadium again."

Due to the government's strict policies, foreign teams were unable to enter the country, forcing China to play 2022 World Cup qualifiers in neutral venues. It finished next to last in its final qualification group, eight points behind Oman. The country was scheduled to host the 2023 Asian Cup in June but last May, Beijing relinquished its staging rights.

"It remains to be seen if and how quickly Chinese football can return to its ambitions and plans of 2019, and prior to that." Simon Chadwick, professor of Sport and Geopolitical Economy at Skema Business School, told the AP, adding that state help will be needed.

"It is important that the sport doesn't just restart, but that it is kick-started . . . there must be a worry that unless both the government and Chinese football commit themselves to refreshing and relaunching it, then the sport could get stuck in the inter-

national doldrums."

The pandemic also exacerbated a downturn in China's overheated property market. With more than half of the clubs in the top tier owned, at least in part, by real estate companies, it has been a major soccer issue.

Evergrande, the property developer, saw its club Guangzhou, who won eight titles in the previous decade, relegated in December after the team's stars left and were replaced by young domestic players.

Opening up the country is expected to boost the housing market especially as, in December, Chinese state banks opened up a line of credit worth around \$460 billion for real estate companies. It remains to be seen if this will ease the financial strain on clubs.

"One suspects that the Chinese government will be keen to decouple football from its previous unhealthy relationship with property investors," added Chadwick. "Both sectors need to discover some market discipline whilst being subject to the state's appropriate guidance."

For now though, fans just want to go and see their teams play.

"I won't believe it until it happens," said Wang. "It is when something disappears that you know how much it means. It will be very exciting." **MDT/AP**

AD

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**OPINION**

**China Daily**  
 Editorial, China Daily

**REGAINING THEIR LOST TRADE MOMENTUM IN INTERESTS OF BOTH AUSTRALIA AND CHINA**

The latest remarks from Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on boosting relations with China are a welcome signal that Canberra is willing to join hands with Beijing to continuously inject positive energy into bilateral ties so that Sino-Australian cooperation can regain steam and bring greater benefits to both sides.

In an interview with the Australian media on Saturday, Albanese said China is a major trading partner of Australia and “We believe that it is in both our countries’ interests to continue to develop more positive relations”.

Indeed, trade between the two countries, buttressed by a free trade agreement in 2015, was developing on a fast track before 2020. In the past three years bilateral trade has regrettably nosedived after encountering some severe difficulties, largely stemming from the previous Australian government’s anti-China policies.

Since Albanese’s Labor government took power in May, it has abandoned its predecessor’s China-bashing stance and opted for a more pragmatic approach toward ties with Beijing. A series of high-ranking interactions, including President Xi Jinping’s meeting with Albanese on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia, and Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong’s visit to Beijing in December, have built rapport and stabilized bilateral ties.

Prior to Albanese’s well-intended remarks on promoting bilateral trade, Chinese Ambassador to Australia Xiao Qian has also struck an upbeat tone, saying that “the relationship between China and Australia is at a critical stage of turnaround”, and that “we will be sending more positive messages to build up more confidence for people in both countries to come back to normal trade relations”.

There are signs that Beijing and Canberra are translating their messages of goodwill into real action as media reports said four Chinese companies have been granted approval to buy Australian coal, with the first batch expected to arrive in late February. Though he stopped short of confirming it, Ambassador Xiao said he welcomed moves in that direction.

Latest statistics show China-Australia trade reached \$220.91 billion in 2022, down 3.9 percent year-on-year, with Australian exports to China reaching \$142.09 billion, a drop of 13.1 percent year-on-year. But the rapidly thawing relations between Beijing and Canberra foretell that such a gloomy picture for bilateral trade will not continue this year.

As two countries with different social and political backgrounds, it is natural that Beijing and Canberra may not see eye to eye with each other on some issues. But farsighted politicians will find ways to bridge the gaps and navigate the differences, rather than choose to harm the mutual interests of the two countries.

However, it needs more wisdom for Canberra to put Australia-China ties fully back on the right trajectory again, given the arduous task of balancing its relations with China and the US.

**‘THEY ARE ON THE RUN’: SOMALIA LEADS FIGHT AGAINST AL-SHABAB**

Enough was enough. For 13 years, extremists with al-Qaida’s East Africa affiliate had controlled Mohamud Adow’s village in central Somalia, imposing harsh ideology and arresting local teachers and traditional leaders.

Then, word came that Somali forces in a surprising national offensive had expelled the fighters from nearby villages.

A small group of residents sneaked out one night in August to meet with Somali troop commanders and invited them into their village of Rage-El. The 80-year-old Adow was among those taking up arms, joining a local militia fighting alongside Somali forces in rural battles with battered guns.

“The people were living in agony,” said Adow, one of several witnesses interviewed by The Associated Press.

Enough was enough. For 13 years, extremists with al-Qaida’s East Africa affiliate had controlled Mohamud Adow’s village in central Somalia, imposing harsh ideology and arresting local teachers and traditional leaders.

In what is being called “total war” by the government of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud’s that was elected in May, Adow and others across the Horn of Africa nation are being encouraged to stand up to the al-Shabab extremists who have long embedded in society, exploiting clan divisions and extorting millions of dollars a year from businesses and farmers in their quest to impose an Islamic caliphate.

Last week, Somalia’s government announced a “people’s uprising.”

Full story on [macaudailytimes.com.mo/category/buzz](http://macaudailytimes.com.mo/category/buzz)

**NEVADA RAIL MUSEUM CAT WHO BECAME AN INTERNET HIT MOURNED**

THE historic Nevada Northern Railway Museum is mourning the death of its resident cat who became an unlikely internet sensation.

Dirt — short for Dirtbag — died last week in the town of Ely at the age of 15, the railway said on its website.

The semi-feral feline was a staple at the museum, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reported. His online notoriety, stemming from a Facebook photo an employee posted five years ago, led to the creation of Dirt merch including keychains, T-shirts, mugs and even his own

coffee blend.

Dirt was free to come and go at the museum, which lies 240 miles north of Las Vegas. He was born in the railway’s engine house, Railway President Mark Bassett said. His name came from his orange and white coat always being stained with dirt and grease and from loathing baths.

When Dirt’s pictures first hit the internet, social media treated the cat less like dirt and more like a dignitary.

“We had a family fly over from China to LA, to Las Vegas, rent a car and drive to Ely to see Dirt,” Bassett told the newspa-

per. “And it’s like, ‘He’s a cat! He’s not on display.’”

The museum is known for offering train rides pulled by century-old steam engines and tours of the machine shop and engine house. Bassett said Dirt always came out during the tour, to the delight of visitors, who wanted his picture.

He said the cat undoubtedly increased attendance.

The museum plans to honor Dirt with a funeral service and two bronze statues, Bassett said.

Meanwhile, Dirt Jr. — or D.J. — another rescue cat, still resides at the museum. **MDT/AP**



**Germany** Thousands of people demonstrated in persistent rain this weekend to protest the clearance and demolition of the Luetzerath village in western Germany that is due to make way for the expansion of a coal mine. There were standoffs with police as some protesters tried to reach the edge of the mine and the village itself. Swedish climate campaigner Greta Thunberg joined the demonstrators who chanted “Every village stays” and “You are not alone.”



**USA** When most people think of “carpaccio,” they think of the thinly sliced raw beef appetizer made famous by Venice’s iconic Harry’s Bar. Few people know that the dish is named for a lesser-known Venetian, the Renaissance painter Vittore Carpaccio, because of the intense red hues he favored. Carpaccio the painter has recently been getting more attention outside his native Venice. In November, the National Gallery in Washington inaugurated the first retrospective exhibit of his work outside Italy. The show, “Vittore Carpaccio: Master Storyteller of Renaissance Venice,” is set to move to Venice’s showcase Palazzo Ducale on March 18.



**USA** R’Bonney Gabriel, a fashion designer, model and sewing instructor from Texas who competition officials said is the first Filipino American to win Miss USA, was crowned Miss Universe yesterday [Macau time]. Gabriel closed her eyes and clasped hands with runner-up Miss Venezuela, Amanda Dudamel, at the moment of the dramatic reveal of the winner, then beamed after her name was announced.



AP PHOTO

© Steve Crise 2018

Dirt—short for Dirtbag—died Wednesday, Jan. 11 in the town of Ely surrounded by railroad staff