



**THE PROPOSED SANDWICH-CLASS HOUSING BILL WILL ALLOW FLAT OWNERS TO SELL THEIR UNITS PRIVATELY AFTER A BLACKOUT PERIOD**

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**RESIDENTIAL UNITS' TRANSACTIONS UP 23% IN Q4 2022, CONTAINING ANNUAL CRASH**

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**MGTO PRAISES INDUSTRY AS MACAU OUTPERFORMS LONDON AS WORLD'S FIVE-STAR HOTEL CAPITAL**

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AP PHOTO



**Social media** TikTok said that it's planning two more European data centers, as the popular Chinese-owned video sharing app seeks to allay growing concerns about data privacy for its users in the West. TikTok has been under fire from European and American authorities over concerns that it could scoop up masses of user data and send it to China.

AP PHOTO



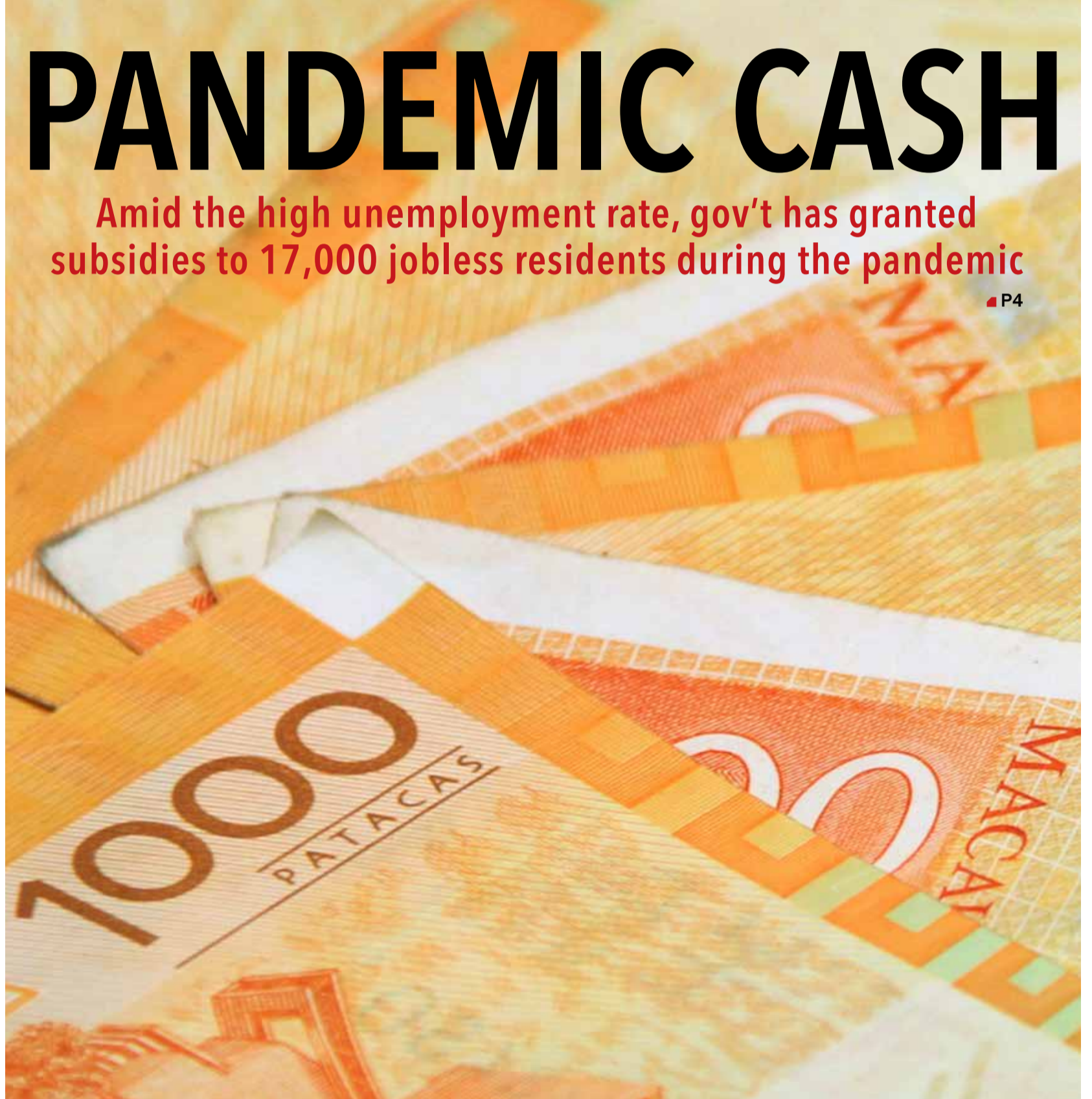
**Indonesian** police said yesterday they will escort back to Italy an Italian-Australian fugitive who was arrested on Indonesia's tourist island of Bali after seven years on the run in connection with drug trafficking and organized crime. Antonio Strangio (pictured), 32, appeared on Interpol's "red notice" list when he was stopped and detained in Bali on Feb. 3 after arriving from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

AP PHOTO



**Ukraine** The amount of grain leaving Ukraine has dropped even as a U.N.-brokered deal works to keep food flowing to developing nations, with inspections of ships falling to half what they were four months ago and a backlog of vessels growing as Russia's invasion nears the one-year mark. Ukrainian and some U.S. officials are blaming Russia for slowing down inspections, which Moscow has denied. Less wheat, barley and other grain getting out of Ukraine, dubbed the "breadbasket of the world," raises concerns about the impact to those going hungry in Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia — places that rely on affordable food supplies from the Black Sea region.

RENATO MARQUES



# PANDEMIC CASH

**Amid the high unemployment rate, gov't has granted subsidies to 17,000 jobless residents during the pandemic**

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## ORIENTAL PEARL

# LAWMAKER SLAMS GOV'T FOR TRAFFIC CONGESTION

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# GOV'T CONFIRMS CE'S FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO PORTUGAL

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# LAWMAKER SLAMS GOV'T UNPREPAREDNESS FOR ORIENTAL PEARL CONGESTION

ANTHONY LAM

As tourism activities have recommenced, traffic congestion is reappearing in many places, such as the Oriental Pearl roundabout, and consequently lawmaker Ron Lam has criticized the government for being unprepared.

In his latest written enquiry, the lawmaker pointed out several design flaws or points of confusion that have led to regular traffic congestion, especially at peak hours, on the aforementioned roundabout after tourists resumed their influx.

The first location he mentioned is the first junction traffic will see when entering the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge border district from the New Urban Zone A. The junction has traffic directions and instructions marked by lines and signage, but without concrete separations, in addition to merging several lanes together.

Lam emphasized that traffic at



the junction was designed so that the opening with the busiest traffic is required to give way to other openings with less busy traffic.

Secondly, when traffic exiting Zone A to the main peninsula reaches the junction at the Oriental Pearl roundabout, it will meet a

bottleneck that merges three lanes into two and suddenly expands to three lanes again. The bottleneck forces traffic to the main peninsula to obstruct the lane towards the Amizade Bridge, so that traffic to Taipa needs to wait with other vehicles.

Consequently, the lawmaker asked if the government would rectify the design flaws mentioned to smooth traffic flow.

Further, he has criticized the government for slow construction of the four roads planned to link the main peninsula with the Zone

A. So far, only one of the roads has been completed.

Although the overpass connecting the north of the main reservoir to the Zone A is being built, it is only set to be completed in October 2024. As there is still a year and a half to go and traffic at the Pearl of the Orient will gradually intensify, the lawmaker has asked about the progress of the construction and whether the construction will conclude on time.

He has also questioned the government on the progress of the overpass linking Avenida de Amizade with the Zone A and another linking the Zone A and the New Urban Zone B, as no news has been released since the 2019 feasibility study for the former and no news whatsoever has been released on the latter.

The Oriental Pearl roundabout has a heavy workload because traffic to and from Areia Preta, Border Gate and Fai Chi Kei, Taipa, as well as the Zone A merges there.

## Gov't confirms CE's visit to Portugal in meeting with Consulate

STAFF REPORTER

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng met with the new Consul-General of Portugal in Macau, Alexandre Leitão, to exchange views on topics including how to strengthen the SAR's bridging role between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

A statement issued by the Government Information Bureau confirmed that arrangements for a forthcoming visit to Portugal by a delegation from the SAR is underway.

The Chief Executive had not carried out any official visits abroad in the past three years due



to the pandemic; and planned for his first official foreign visit to be to Portugal "to demonstrate the respect and importance assigned to the friendly relations between China and Portugal."

The delegation includes entrepreneurs and

news media representatives to "strengthen bilateral ties in the fields of education, science and technology, the pharmaceutical sector, and maritime economy."

As part of the visit, representatives of the SAR government would pay a courtesy call to the

European Commission, with a view to fostering exchanges between Macau and member-states of the European Union in matters linked to commerce and trade, science and technology and tourism.

During the meeting last week at the Government Headquarters, Leitão mentioned topics relating to foreign investors living in communities in mainland China. He discussed the development of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, including the convenience of cross-boundary travel and complementary legal systems.

He hoped Macau would be a platform for enterprises from Portuguese-speaking countries to access the Cooperation Zone, the rest of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and other mainland communities.

## RETURNED OVERSEAS CHINESE ASSOCIATION SENDS SUPPLIES TO TURKEY, SYRIA

ANTHONY LAM

Following the massive earthquakes heavily impacting Turkey and Syria, the Association of Returned Overseas Chinese Macau has coordinated the delivery of critical supplies to affected areas.

The aid effort was announced at the group's recent annual media reception.

Supplies were sourced from mainland China and delivered to the struck areas on account of cooperation between the Chinese communities in the two countries, Lao Nga Wong, president of the group, said.

Lao said the supplies included emergency tents, sleeping bags, quilts, emergency lighting, food and healthcare products. These supplies have already arrived in Syria and the group is working on delivering

similar supplies to Turkey.

The group's head said the group has played a role in providing assistance during past disaster relief initiatives.

Meanwhile, at the recent media reception, Lao said the group will align with the government on its "1+4" development strategy, economic diversification and source market broadening, as well as the national direction of the Macau-Hengqin merger.

He added that throughout its history, spanning over half a century, the group has engaged with over 100,000 overseas Chinese and their kin residing in 65 countries or regions. The group also has 14 entity members. Leo described the group as Macau's most influential association representing the interests of overseas and returned Chinese.

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REAL ESTATE

# Residential units' transactions up 23% in Q4 2022, containing annual crash

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE number of residential units' transactions in the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2022 represented a growth of 23.1% quarter-to-quarter when compared to the third quarter (July to September), information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) has indicated.

Following the same trend was transactions relating to parking spaces, which also grew 21.5% in the same period.

The total value of the transactions, as per Stamp Duty records, has reached some MOP5.9 billion.

The purchase and sale of residential units went up by 108 quarter-to-quarter to a total of 649 units sold, with the total transaction value swelling by 24.5% to MOP4.18 billion.

Existing residential units transacted totaled 630, an increase of 106 units; the transaction value grew by 25.2% to MOP4.06 billion.

Concurrently, the number of pre-sale residential units transacted rose by 2 quarter-to-quarter to 19, and the transaction value



stood at MOP124 million, up by 3.5%.

The average price per square meter of usable area for the overall residential units was MOP91,001, decreasing by 0.9% quarter-to-quarter, while the average prices of those in Taipa (MOP88,369) and Coloane (MOP93,040) fell by 8.1% and 8.6%, respectively.

Against the trend, the price of

those units located in the Peninsula (MOP92,259) rose by 3.2%.

The average price per square meter of existing residential units also went down by 0.9% quarter-to-quarter to MOP90,401.

The transacted units were mainly located in Baixa da Taipa (115 units), Areia Preta new landfills (NATAP) (71 units), and Coloane (46 units), with the ave-

rage prices per square meter reaching, respectively, MOP88,159, MOP105,622, and MOP90,723.

For the pre-sale of residential units, the average price per square meter dipped by 1.4% quarter-to-quarter to MOP138,097.

In high demand were office units, with the average price per square meter of usable area increasing by 24.7% to MOP101,418 quarter-to-quarter.

## 2022 A YEAR OF DROPS

Overall, the year 2022 closed with the number of transactions of building units and parking spaces exhibiting a year-on-year drop of 48.4%.

In the whole year of 2022, the number of building units and parking spaces transacted was 4,544, with a transaction value also shrinking by 50.4% to MOP24.69 billion.

Purchase and sale of residential units dropped by 3,192 year-on-year to 2,809 units; total transaction value declined by 56% to MOP17.97 billion, with the value of existing residential units (2,701 units) and pre-sale residential units (108 units) amounting to MOP17.25 billion and MOP726 million, respectively.

SANDWICH-CLASS

# Future housing discount repayment assessed against then prices

ANTHONY LAM

**T**HE proposed Sandwich-class Housing Bill will allow flat owners to sell their units privately after a blackout period. Owners must repay the amount discounted at the first purchase to the government, based on a calculation made against the price at the time of resale.

The direction was revealed by Lawmaker Vong Hin Fai, head of the parliamentary committee considering the Sandwich-class Housing Bill.

Similar to that for Economic Housing bill, the blackout period

in the Sandwich-class Housing Bill is proposed to be set at 16 years, according to the current version of the Bill.

For example, Vong cited the government as saying, if a unit is sold at MOP1 million at the first purchase, the discounted amount equates to 30% of the price. After 16 years, if the price rises to MOP2 million, the seller will need to pay 30% of MOP2 million to the government as the premium.

In contrast, if the price drops to half a million, the 30% will be counted against MOP500,000, and

the premium to be paid will be MOP150,000.

The government will also task the Financial Services Bureau (DSF) with evaluating the price of the unit. If there is a discrepancy between the DSF-evaluated price and the actual selling price, the higher amount shall prevail in the calculation of the premium.

The Housing Bureau (IH) enjoys a priority purchase right at resale, as in the Economic Housing bill.

Citing the government's explanation, Vong said that the privilege clause is included "to

avoid sellers and buyers conspiring to sell the unit at a price much lower than the market price." In this scenario, not only will the IH have the right to enjoy its priority purchase, but it will also allow the IH to make the purchase at a price calculated by deducting the discounted amount at first purchase from the price tag set by the seller.

Vong further cited the government as saying that government-purchased used apartments will be considered reserved and will be sold at a later date. For these used flats, the government will

apply another 16-year blackout period. However, flats resold on the private market will not be subject to this restriction.

The head of the committee, however, did not mention whether the Bill has proposed an appeal mechanism for sellers to object to DSF's valuation of the former's units.

Vong said only a few committee members considered the length of the blackout period too long. The government position is that unit owners should abide with the future law "because it is built with public funds and sold at sub-market prices."

During the blackout period, units on initial ownership must not be used for profits or used to apply for sub-mortgages. Ownership can only be changed in the case of demise of the owner.

MICE

# OVER 6,000 BUSINESS VISITORS ENTERED MACAU TO ATTEND CONVENTIONS THIS MONTH

RENATO MARQUES

**O**VER 6,000 business visitors have so far entered Macau this month to participate in business activities such as conventions and seminars, the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) revealed in a statement.

According to the same statement, "IPIM facilitated several conventions of large enterprises in Macau in February, bringing more than 6,000 business travelers to the city from various provinces and cities in the mainland," IPIM said, adding new impetus to the diversified economic development.

IPIM says that this was the first of a series of initiatives to take place over the "One-stop" MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) Bidding and Support in the Macau system, which aims to develop the high-end MICE market and increase the staying time of business travelers.

For this, IPIM is providing support to event venues as well as targeted assistance to event organizers to integrate MICE activities and design unique and authentic cultural experience itineraries to drive more business cooperation and visitor spending.

According to the service information, many of the conventions' organizers chose to arrange local tours with a duration of three days or more to allow the business travelers to experience more of the city on either side of the main event that brings them to Macau in a "Tourism+MICE" approach.

Information also collected by IPIM shows that some organizers of five-day, four-night conventions in Macau have been said to be satisfied with the "city's prime location, convenient transportation, and sophisticated convention and exhibition facilities," adding that such factors contributed to reducing the time required for organizing events.

Some of these event organizers have also said they plan to hold more conventions in Macau in April this year.

# FSS PAID UNEMPLOYMENT SUBSIDY TO 17,000 DURING THE PANDEMIC

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE Social Security Fund (FSS) has paid, since 2020 and until the end of 2022, 17,000 unemployment subsidies to local residents, a statistic release from the service has noted.

Of the 17,000 unemployment subsidies granted, 64.7% (11,000) were paid for the period of 90 days, the maximum allowed by the law.

The subsidy, granted to workers who have lost their jobs without a just cause and who cannot immediately find another in a short period granted these residents the amount of 150 patacas per day, that is, 4,500 patacas per month, up to a ceiling of 13,500 patacas (three months).

In the same release, the FSS also noted it had received over the months of December last year and January this year, a total of 75,000 applications for the sickness allowance as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak that infected the majority of the population at the end of last year and the start of 2023.



This subsidy was created many years ago for cases in which, due to a long period of illness, a resident cannot return to his or her professional duties, consequently losing the income that refers to such a period.

Since, in many cases, the recovery from Covid-19 infections lasted from over a week up to two or three weeks, many of the people who applied for this subsidy were doing so due to long-term illness.

For this subsidy, only medical certificates issued by physicians working at public or private

hospitals in Macau, healthcare centers, and registered private physicians are accepted.

This subsidy granted an amount of 114 patacas per day for people in home recovery and 150 patacas per day for those receiving treatment in a hospital setting.

Every Macau resident can apply for this subsidy from the second day of illness until 30 days after the recovery period. The number of days of subsidy will be granted according to the time given by the physician for recovery from the illness and return to normal life.

# MGTO PRAISES INDUSTRY AS MACAU OUTPERFORMS LONDON AS WORLD'S FIVE-STAR HOTEL CAPITAL

STAFF REPORTER

**G**LOBAL rating system Forbes Travel Guide has unveiled the 2023 Star Awards, among which, Macau owns 22 top-rated properties and has become the tourism destination with most Forbes rated Five-Star hotels in the world, outperforming London.

At the same time, a number of restaurants and spas in Macau have also been top-rated by the list.

Macao Government Tourist Office (MGTO) director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes said: "First of all, I'd like to sincerely congratulate the star-winning hotels and teams. Macau's recognition by international authorities is a major affirmation for Macau's tourism, hotel and catering services, and it also shows

that the industry is committed to creating world-class excellent tourism and supporting facilities, and to providing high-quality products and services for tourists.

"This honor helps to attract tourists from all over the world to experience Macau's star-rated facilities and services. It also plays a positive role in fostering the diversified and sustainable development of Macau's tourism industry, and building the city into a world center of tourism and leisure," she added.

Forbes Travel Guide is a world-renowned global rating system that invites anonymous professional inspectors to perform evaluations, based on hundreds of exacting standards for rating luxury hotels, ocean cruises, restaurants and spas around the globe.



## STATS

# Restaurant business fell 28% in Dec. 2022, retail dropped 45%

RENATO MARQUES

**R**ESTAURANTS and similar establishments registered a year-on-year fall in receipts in December 2022, a Statistics and Census Service release shows.

According to the same release, the receipts of the interviewed restaurants and similar establishments dropped 28.4% year-on-year in December, with the receipts of Chinese restaurants decreasing even further by 38.8%.

Concurrently, retail trade establishments also saw their sales dip 44.5% year-on-year in December. Leading the highest drops were the department stores (-60.4%) and watches, clocks and jewellery retailers (-57.7%).



As for the retailers, results month-on-month with November 2022, receipts of the interviewed restaurants and similar establishments went down by 9.6%, a drop led by the receipts of local style cafes, congee and noodle shops, which fell by 12.7%. Contrary to the trend, western restaurants rose by 2.6% in the same period.

While December 2022 was not a very positive month for the their business grew by 22.1% month-on-month in December, with all types of retailers registering an increase in sales. Growing more were the cosmetics and sanitary articles retailers (+47.6%), adults' clothing retailers (+32.2%), and department stores (+29.9%).

While December 2022 was not a very positive month for the

F&B and retail sectors, some 84% of those interviewed said they expected their receipts to increase month-on-month in January this year, taking advantage of the reopening of the border without restrictions to both the mainland and to Hong Kong.

More hopeful that there would be a significant business improvement were the Chinese restaurants (93%) and western restaurants (92%). On the other hand, 5% of the interviewed establishments still predicted that their receipts would decrease month-on-month in January.

Meanwhile, regarding the retail sector, 67% of the interviewed retailers forecast month-on-month sales growth in January.

# SARS REPRESENTATIVES GIVE PRESENTATIONS AT UN

STAFF REPORTER

**R**EPRESENTATIVES from the governments of Hong Kong and Macau SARs have introduced their respective efforts and progress in promoting economic growth, improving people's welfare and developing culture at the United Nations Office at Geneva last week.

They said they would continue to make good use of the central government's support and development opportunities, so as to make further strides within the framework of 'One country, two systems', as cited in a report issued by Xinhua.

Over the past two days, Chen

Xu, China's permanent representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva, said the Chinese delegation carried out constructive dialogues with members of the Committee in an open and candid manner.

"We tried our best to present, in a comprehensive and in-depth way, the progress made in promoting and protecting economic, social and cultural rights" and "we also talked [about] our plans to move forward," he said.

"China welcomes positive remarks made on its implementation of the Covenant, and stands ready to accept specific comments on certain topics."



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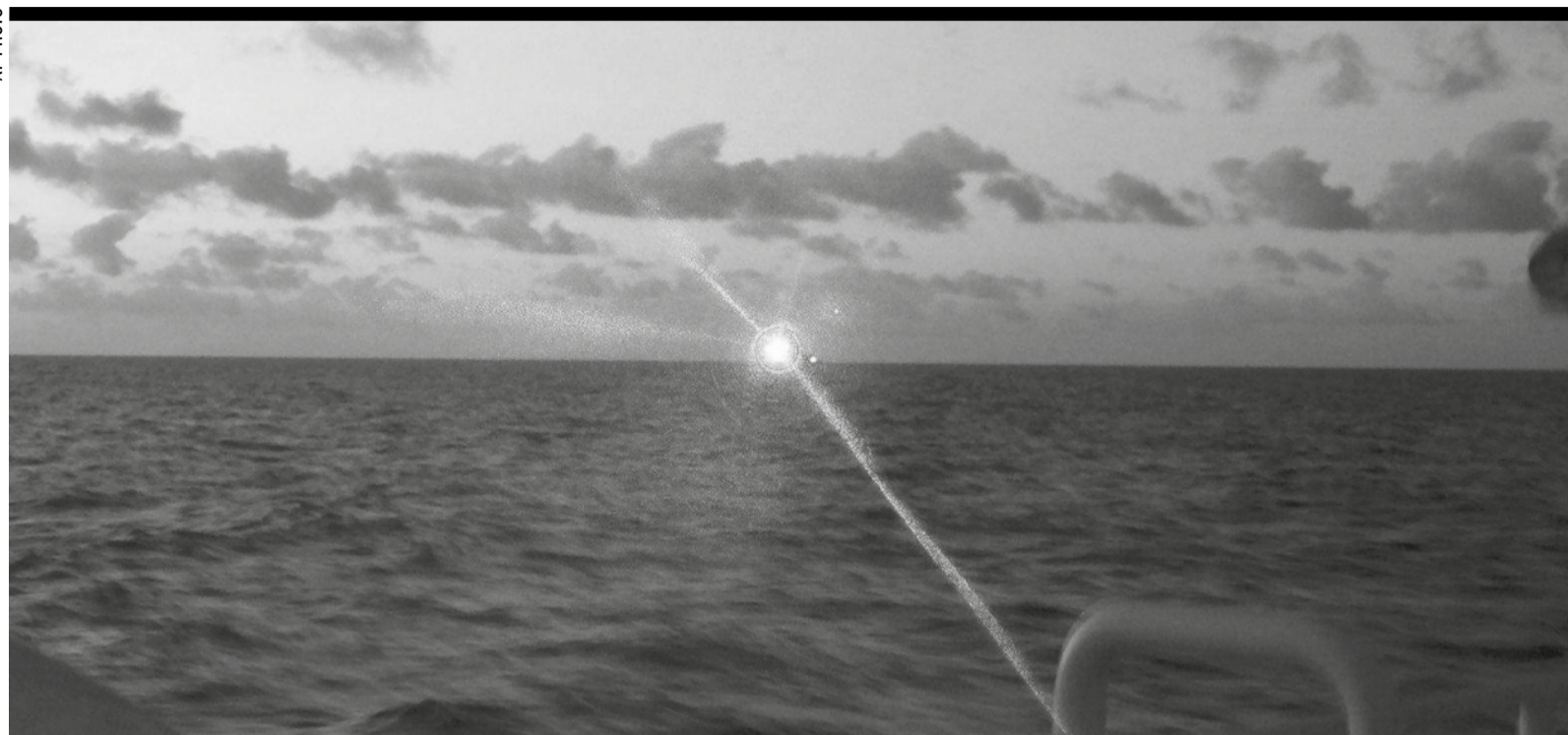
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Military-grade laser light from a Chinese coast guard ship in the disputed South China Sea, Feb. 6

SEA DISPUTES

# MARCOS: CHINA LASER NOT ENOUGH TO ACTIVATE US DEFENSE PACT

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

**T**HE Philippine president said Saturday the Chinese coast guard's use of military-grade laser that briefly blinded some of the crew aboard a Philippine patrol vessel in the disputed South China Sea was not enough for him to invoke a mutual defense treaty with the United States, but warned that such aggression should stop.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. told a news conference he also reminded China's ambassador to Manila that escalating aggression and incursions into Philippine waters by Beijing's coast guard, navy and government-backed

civilian fishing fleets violate an agreement he struck with Chinese President Xi Jinping last month.

"Despite the fact that it was a military-grade laser that was pointed at our coast guard, I do not think that that is sufficient for it to trigger the Mutual Defense Treaty," Marcos said in his first public remarks about the Feb. 6 incident involving two Chinese and Philippine coast guard vessels near the disputed Second Thomas Shoal.

Responding to a question, Marcos said he was concerned that activating the 1951 treaty would ratchet up regional tensions.

Marcos spoke to reporters in

the northern resort city of Baguio where he delivered a speech before cadets and former graduates of the Philippine Military Academy and repeated a vow to defend the country's territory amid a new territorial spat with China.

"This country will not lose one inch of its territory," Marcos said to applause. "We will continue to uphold our territorial integrity and sovereignty in accordance with our constitution and with international law."

"We will work with our neighbors to secure the safety and security of our peoples," Marcos said without elaborating.

Like his predecessor, Rodrigo

Duterte, Marcos has taken steps to nurture friendly ties with Beijing. He met Xi in the Chinese capital early last month to boost relations and discuss the Asian neighbors' long-seething territorial disputes in the strategic waterway that also involve Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei.

China claims the South China Sea virtually in its entirety, putting it on a collision course with other Asian claimants and separately with Washington. The U.S. lays no claims to the disputed sea but has deployed its Navy ships and fighter jets to patrol the waters, promote freedom of mobility and challenge China's territorial

claims.

The contested waters have become a delicate front in the broader rivalry between the U.S. and China in Asia and elsewhere.

In the latest flare-up, the Philippines says a Chinese coast guard ship beamed a high-grade laser to block the Philippine vessel from approaching Second Thomas Shoal, which is held by Philippine forces. The Marcos administration sent a strongly worded diplomatic protest to the Chinese Embassy in Manila and Marcos summoned Chinese Ambassador Huang Xilian on Tuesday to express his concern.

China responded by saying its coast guard ship used a hand-held laser and another light-emitting gadget to harmlessly measure the distance and speed of the Philippine vessel, which it claimed intruded into Chinese territorial waters and was warned to leave the area.

U.S. State Department spokesperson Ned Price said China's "dangerous operational behavior directly threatens regional peace and security, infringes upon freedom of navigation in the South China Sea as guaranteed under international law."

Washington, he said, was standing by its treaty ally Manila following the latest sea feud.

Price renewed a warning that an armed attack on Philippine military forces, public vessels or aircraft, including those of the coast guard in the South China Sea, would invoke U.S. mutual defense commitments under the 1951 treaty.

Australia, Japan, Canada, Germany, Denmark and the United Kingdom also expressed alarm following the Chinese coast guard's use of the military-grade laser against the Philippine patrol vessel that they said threatens regional peace and stability. **MDT/AP**

# Japanese bid farewell to beloved panda returning to China

MARI YAMAGUCHI, TOKYO

**T**HOUSANDS of Japanese fans, some wiping away tears, bid farewell to a beloved Japanese-born giant panda that made her final public appearance Sunday before flying to her home country, China.

The panda fans gathered at Tokyo's Ueno Zoo for one last look at Xiang Xiang, the park's idol since her birth in June 2017.

Yesterday's viewing was limited to 2,600 lucky ones who won their tickets in



an extremely competitive lottery. But many others who didn't win came

anyway to say their goodbyes from outside of the panda house.

"Xiang Xiang is not only cute but charming and funny. She's so attractive

that if you see her once, you want to see her more. I don't think there is any panda like her in the universe," said a visitor who only gave her first name, Yukie. "I've made friends here by sharing it, and that is also her attraction."

Though she was born and grew up at the Tokyo zoo, Xiang Xiang, whose parents Ri Ri and Shin Shin are on loan from China, must return to that country.

China sends pandas abroad as a sign of goodwill but maintains ownership over the animals and any cubs they produce. The animals are native to southwestern China and are an unofficial national mascot.

Divided into groups of

about 10, the visitors were given only a few minutes to quietly say goodbye to Xiang Xiang as she nonchalantly nibbled on bamboo sticks. Viewers held up their mobile phones and cameras to capture her every move.

"I wish Japanese-born pandas could stay in Japan," said Takamichi Masui, an auto parts maker who traveled from Mie, in central Japan. "So many people who came today and fans are sad to see her go. When I saw (Xiang Xiang), I got teary. I wish Xiang Xiang could stay, though I understand it's difficult."

He said he worries if Xiang Xiang can smoothly adapt to her new life in China. **MDT/AP**



KOREAS

# N. Korea makes fresh threats, US bombers fly after ICBM test

HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL

**N**ORTH Korea said yesterday its latest intercontinental ballistic missile test was meant to further bolster its “fatal” nuclear attack capacity and threatened additional powerful steps over upcoming military drills between the United States and South Korea.

The United States responded by flying long-range supersonic bombers in a show of force later yesterday for separate joint exercises with South Korean and Japanese warplanes.

Saturday’s ICBM test, the North’s first missile test since Jan. 1, signals its leader Kim Jong Un is using his rivals’ drills as a chance to expand his country’s nuclear arsenal to get the upper hand in future dealings with the United States. An expert says North Korea may seek to hold regular operational exercises involving its ICBMs.

North Korea’s official Korean Central News Agency said its launch of the Hwasong-15 ICBM was organized “suddenly” without prior notice at Kim’s direct order.

KCNA said the launch was designed to verify the weapon’s reliability and the combat readiness of the country’s nuclear for-

ce. It said the missile was fired at a high angle and reached a maximum altitude of about 5,770 kilometers, flying a distance of about 990 kilometers for 67 minutes before accurately hitting a pre-set area in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

The steep-angle launch was apparently to avoid neighboring countries. The flight details reported by North Korea, which roughly matched the launch information previously assessed by its neighbors, show the weapon is theoretically capable of reaching the mainland U.S. if fired at a standard trajectory.

The Hwasong-15 launch demonstrated the North’s “powerful physical nuclear deterrent” and its efforts to “turn its capacity of fatal nuclear counterattack on the hostile forces” into an extremely strong one that cannot be coun-

tered, KCNA said.

Whether North Korea has a functioning nuclear-tipped ICBM is still a source of outside debate, as some experts say the North hasn’t mastered a way to protect warheads from the severe conditions of atmospheric reentry. The North says it has acquired such a technology.

The Hwasong-15 is one of North Korea’s three existing ICBMs, all of which use liquid propellants that require pre-launch injections and cannot remain

fueled for extended periods. The North is pushing to build a solid-fueled ICBM, which would be more mobile and harder to detect before its launch.

“Kim Jong Un has likely determined that the technical reliability of the country’s liquid propellant ICBM force has been sufficiently tested and evaluated to now allow for regular operational exercises of this kind,” said Ankit

**The North’s launch came a day after it vowed an “unprecedentedly” strong response over a series of military drills that Seoul and Washington plan**

Panda, an expert with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Chang Young-keun, a missile expert at Korea Aerospace University in South Korea, said that North Korea appeared to have launched an upgraded version of the Hwasong-15 ICBM. Chang said the information provided by North Korea showed the missile will likely have a longer potential range than the standard Hwasong-15.

Later yesterday, U.S. B-1B bombers and other aircraft separately trained with South Korean and Japanese fighter jets over and near the Korean Peninsula. A South Korean military statement said yesterday’s training reaffirmed Washington’s “iron-clad” security commitment to South Korea.

North Korea is sensitive to the deployment of U.S. B-1B bombers, which are capable of carrying a huge payload of conventional weapons.

The North’s launch came a day after it vowed an “unprecedentedly” strong response over a series of military drills that Seoul and Washington plan in coming weeks.

In a statement yesterday, Kim Yo Jong, the influential sister of Kim Jong Un, accused South Korea and the U.S. of “openly

showing their dangerous greed and attempt to gain the military upper hand and predominant position in the Korean Peninsula.”

“I warn that we will watch every movement of the enemy and take corresponding and very powerful and overwhelming counteraction against its every move hostile to us,” she said.

North Korea has steadfastly slammed regular South Korea-U.S. military drills as an invasion rehearsal though the allies say their exercises are defensive in nature.

“By now, we know that any action taken by the U.S. and South Korea — however justified from the vantage point of defense and deterrence against (North Korea’s) reckless behavior — will be construed and protested as an act of hostility by North Korea,” said Soo Kim, a security analyst at the California-based RAND Corporation. “There will always be fodder for (Kim Jong Un’s) weapons provocations.”

“With nuclear weapons in tow and having mastered the art of coercion and bullying, Kim does not need ‘self-defense.’ But pitting the U.S. and South Korea as the aggressors allows Kim to justify his weapons development,” Soo Kim said.

U.S. National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said the U.S. will take all necessary measures to ensure the security of the American homeland and South Korea and Japan. South Korea’s presidential National Security Council said it will seek to strengthen its “overwhelming response capacity” against potential North Korean aggression based on the military alliance with the United States.

The South Korean and U.S. militaries plan to hold a table-top exercise this week to hone a joint response to a potential use of nuclear weapons by North Korea. The allies are also to conduct another joint computer simulated exercise and field training in March.

The foreign ministers of South Korea and Japan, meeting on the sidelines of a security conference in Germany on Saturday, agreed to boost a trilateral cooperation involving the United States and exchanged in-depth views on the issue of Japan’s colonial-era mobilization of forced Korean laborers — a key sticking point in efforts to improve their ties, according to Seoul’s Foreign Ministry.

South Korea and Japan are both key U.S. allies but often spat over issues stemming from Tokyo’s 1910-45 colonial occupation of the Korean Peninsula. But North Korea’s recent missile testing spree is pushing the two countries to explore how to reinforce their security cooperation. **MDT/AP**

# Blinken: China's balloon incursion 'must never happen again'

KARL RITTER & MATTHEW LEE, MUNICH

**T**HE top diplomats from the United States and China met on Saturday in the first high-level contact between their countries since the U.S. shot down an alleged Chinese spy balloon two weeks ago, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken sending the message that Beijing's surveillance program had been "exposed to the world."

Blinken and Wang Yi, the Chinese Communist Party's most senior foreign policy official, held the hourlong talks in Munich, where they were attending an international security conference, according to the U.S. State Department.

"I made very clear to him that China sending its surveillance balloon over the United States in violation of our sovereignty, in violation of international law, was unacceptable and must never happen again," Blinken said Saturday in an interview for CBS' "Face the Nation."

His spokesman, Ned Price, said in a statement that Blinken also told the Chinese official that his nation's "high-altitude surveillance balloon program — which has intruded into the airspace of over 40 countries across five continents — has been exposed to the world."

Blinken had canceled a trip



United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken

to Beijing earlier this month due to the balloon incident, which has become a major issue of contention between the two countries. A meeting at the conference in Germany had been widely anticipated.

Blinken also told Wang that the U.S. does not seek conflict with China, repeating a standard talking point that the Biden administration has provided since it has come into office.

"The United States will compete and will unapologetically stand up for our values and interests, but that we do not want conflict with the PRC and are not looking for a new Cold War," Price said. Blinken "underscored the importance of maintaining diplomatic dialogue and open lines of communication at all times."

In addition to the balloon incident, Price said Blinken

had reiterated a warning to China on providing assistance to Russia to help with its war against Ukraine, including assisting Moscow with evading sanctions the West has imposed on Russia.

"I warned China against providing materiel support to Russia," Blinken said in a tweet. "I also emphasized the importance of keeping open lines of communication."

Earlier Saturday, Wang had renewed Beijing's criticism of the United States for shooting down the balloon, arguing that the move did not point to U.S. strength.

Beijing insists the white orb shot down off the Carolina coast on Feb. 4 was just an errant civilian airship used mainly for meteorological research that went off course due to winds and had only limited "self-steer-

ing" capabilities.

Wang, the director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs, repeated that insistence in a speech at the conference and accused the U.S. of violating international legal norms in destroying the object with a missile fired from an U.S. fighter jet.

"The actions don't show that the U.S. is big and strong, but describe the exact opposite," Wang said.

Wang also accused the U.S. of denying China's economic advances and seeking to impede its further development.

"What we hope for from the U.S. is a pragmatic and positive approach to China that allows us to work together," Wang said.

His comments came shortly before an address to the conference by Vice President Kamala Harris, who didn't mention the balloon controversy or respond to Wang's comments. She stressed the importance of upholding the "international rules-based order."

She said Washington is "troubled that Beijing has deepened its relationship with Moscow since the war began" in Ukraine and that "looking ahead, any steps by China to provide lethal support to Russia would only reward aggression, continue the killing and further undermine a rules-based order." **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1986 SOVIETS LAUNCH SPACE STATION MIR



The Soviets have opened a new phase in space exploration with the launch of the world's biggest space station, Mir.

The successful launch of Mir comes just over three weeks after the American space shuttle Challenger disaster, in which seven astronauts died.

At next week's Communist Party congress in Moscow the Mir project is likely to be hailed as proof that the Soviets are leading the peaceful exploration of space.

Mir, which means both peace and world in Russian, is intended to provide a base for a permanently manned complex orbiting the Earth.

It succeeds the Soviet Salyut models, the last of which, Salyut 7, was launched in April 1982 and is still in orbit.

The Americans also had a space station, Skylab, which suffered damage on its initial launch and eventually proved too costly to maintain and fell back to Earth in 1979.

Soviet officials say their new craft represents the transition from research to large-scale production activities in space.

The station has six docking stations, which means other modules or laboratories can be added to it, expanding its size and capability.

The deputy head of the Soviet cosmonaut training centre, Alexei Leonov, said it would only be possible to determine how long Mir would remain in orbit after it had completed its first flight.

He said the cosmonauts, now taking part in a special training programme, would have separate cabins with windows and even individual desks and armchairs.

Mr Leonov explained that Salyut 7 was too small for the plans now being implemented by Soviet experts.

It has only two docking stations and can support a crew of only three, whereas Mir can carry between six and ten people.

The main work of the first cosmonauts on board Mir will be to continue with the experiments in materials processing, begun on Salyut 6 and 7.

Other activities will include observation of the Earth using high-powered cameras, as well as helping locate mineral deposits on Earth and monitor the seas for trawlers.

Courtesy BBC News

## PUTIN'S WAR

# US: Russia has committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine

KARL RITTER & GEIR MOULSON, MUNICH

**T**HE United States has determined that Russia has committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine, Vice President Kamala Harris said Saturday, insisting that "justice must be served" to the perpetrators.

Speaking at the Munich Security

Conference, Harris said the international community has both a moral and a strategic interest in pursuing those crimes, pointing to a danger of other authoritarian governments taking advantage if international rules are undermined.

"Russian forces have pursued a widespread and systemic attack against a civilian population

— gruesome acts of murder, torture, rape, and deportation," Harris said. She also cited "execution-style killings, beatings, and electrocution."

The Biden administration formally determined last March that Russian troops had committed war crimes in Ukraine and said it would work with others to prosecute offenders. A deter-

mination of crimes against humanity goes a step further, indicating that attacks against civilians are being carried out in a widespread and systematic manner.

"Russian authorities have forcibly deported hundreds of thousands of people, from Ukraine to Russia, including children," Harris said. "They have cruelly separated children

from their families."

She also pointed to the attack in mid-March on a theater in the strategic port city of Mariupol where civilians had been sheltering, which killed hundreds, and to the images of civilians' bodies left on the streets of Bucha after the Russian pull-back from the Kyiv area last spring.

Harris said that as a former prosecutor and former head of California's Department of Justice, she knows "the importance of gathering facts and holding them up against the law." **MDT/AP**


## IN CONTEXT

The first crew arrived on board Mir on 15 March 1986 and it remained more or less continuously occupied until November 2000. Crew member Valeri Polyakov stayed up a record 439 days. The end of the Cold War marked a new era of space co-operation. In September 1993 US Vice-President Al Gore and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin announced plans for a new space station, which would later be called the International Space Station, or ISS. In preparation for this new project, the US became more closely involved with Mir. From March 1995 seven US astronauts consecutively spent 28 months on Mir, during which time the spacecraft suffered a number of emergencies including a large fire on 23 February 1997 and a collision with an unmanned cargo ship on 25 June 1997.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER


**YOUR STARS**


**ARIES**  **Mar. 21-Apr. 19**  
 Do what you can to help them but don't neglect your own family. Try to be patient and understanding. Arguments will flare up if you get backed into an emotional corner.

**TAURUS**  **Apr. 20-May. 20**  
 You won't have much time for your mate today. Don't overspend on friends or children. Be sure to take care of any minor ailments.

**GEMINI**  **May. 21-Jun. 21**  
 Make sure that you have all the pertinent facts before taking action. Changes at home might come fast and furious. Your partner may blame you for everything.

**CANCER**  **Jun. 22-Jul. 22**  
 You will meet a person who may turn out to be more than just a friend. You should be trying to clear up legal contracts that have been pending.

**LEO**  **Jul. 23-Aug. 22**  
 Be diplomatic but stem when it comes to giving of yourself. Be careful not to reveal private information. If you can get away for a vacation, do so. You can expect the fur to fly on the home front.


**VIRGO**  **Aug. 23-Sep. 22**  
 You may be frustrated by the way situations are being handled in your personal life. Follow through on some of the good ideas that come up, and you could have a real winner of a deal.


**LIBRA**  **Sep. 23-Oct. 22**  
 Put in some extra hours and finish those careful jobs before you move on to some fun and games. Be sure to catch up on overdue correspondence and help those you love find solutions to their dilemmas.

**SCORPIO**  **Oct. 23-Nov. 21**  
 If you are in the midst of a financial deal, this is your lucky day. You may be emotionally unstable if you let someone you care about get away with verbal abuse. Your partner may push buttons that infuriate you.

**SAGITTARIUS**  **Nov. 22-Dec. 21**  
 Find out more, if you want to start your own business. Don't say things that could be damaging later on. Cut loose. A passionate encounter with your mate should help alleviate that pent-up energy.

**CAPRICORN**  **Dec. 22-Jan. 19**  
 Your domestic scene could continue to be in an uproar today. Keep busy and let them fume while you're not around. You can make favorable changes in your home environment.

**AQUARIUS**  **Jan. 20-Feb. 18**  
 You can make changes that will enhance your appearance. You will be able to talk to your lover about future goals and perhaps make plans for the two of you to take a vacation.

**PISCES**  **Feb. 19-Mar. 20**  
 You need to focus on yourself, not on others. Family members may want you at home, when your heart is telling you to spend time with someone you recently met.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

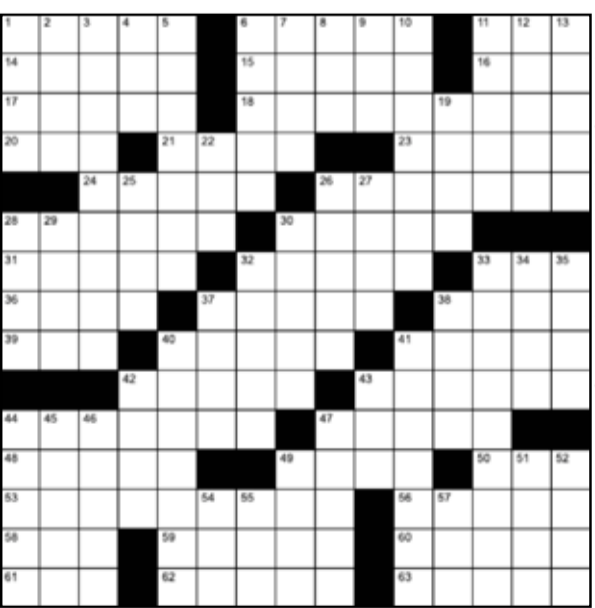
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	-3	6	fine
Changchun	-13	-5	fine
Chengdu	9	13	overcast
Chongqing	11	14	overcast
Fuzhou	9	15	overcast
Guangzhou	13	23	fine
Guiyang	4	10	overcast
Haikou	15	21	cloudy
Hangzhou	1	11	fine
Harbin	-19	-7	cloudy
Hefei	0	13	fine
Nanjing	0	12	fine
Shanghai	3	11	fine
Taipei	13	15	overcast
Wuhan	0	16	fine
Hong Kong	14	19	overcast
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	-14	-4	snow
Frankfurt	4	13	overcast
Paris	3	12	fog
London	7	13	cloudy
New York	5	14	overcast

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Surgery souvenirs; 6- Raise; 11- ER VIP; 14- Shred; 15- External; 16- Bruins great Bobby; 17- According to; 18- Articulate; 20- Sault \_\_\_ Marie; 21- Sale sign; 23- Arm bones; 24- Dam extending across the Nile; 26- Filmic; 28- Icily; 30- \_\_\_ de Leon; 31- Rap sheet info; 32- Pass into disuse; 33- Bigger than med.; 36- Chain piece; 37- San \_\_\_. California; 38- Dispatched; 39- Limb of a felled tree; 40- Walked back and forth; 41- The devil; 42- Member of a motorcycle gang; 43- "Peer Gynt Suite" dancer; 44- Associated; 47- Lyric poem; 48- Maker of Pong; 49- A law \_\_\_ itself; 50- Chafe; 53- Freezing cold personified; 56- Tidily kept; 58- Big galoot; 59- Absolute; 60- Sidestep, circumvent; 61- Cock and bull; 62- Guarded; 63- Blathered;

DOWN 1- Ladies of Sp.; 2- Prehistoric sepulchral tomb; 3- Attractive; 4- Bemoan; 5- Spreads; 6- Driver's invitation; 7- Sharer's pronoun; 8- Judge in 1995 news; 9- Capitol Hill abbr.; 10- Thrash; 11- Italian lady; 12- Killer whales; 13- Summit; 19- Peter Fonda title role; 22- For example; 25- Minn. neighbor; 26- Managed; 27- Words before "many words"; 28- Equal a bet; 29- A dish with many ingredients; 30- Mum's mate; 32- Tied; 33- College sports stand-out; 34- Growl; 35- Sicilian smoker; 37- Bring into existence; 38- Stated; 40- Pathetic; 41- Variety of pool; 42- Dog cry; 43- Appropriate; 44- Indian prince; 45- Military camp; 46- Shoe ties; 47- Diary bit; 49- Manipulator; 51- High hair style; 52- Bingo call; 54- Hwy.; 55- Suffix with Capri; 57- Sister of Zsa Zsa;



**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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AD

SOCIAL MEDIA

# HOW TO KEEP YOUR TWITTER ACCOUNT SECURE — WITHOUT PAYING

ALEX VEIGA, LOS ANGELES

**T**WITTER users were greeted early Saturday with an ultimatum from the social media app: Subscribe to the platform's new premium service or lose a popular account security feature.

A pop-up message warned users they will lose the ability to secure their accounts via text message two-factor authentication unless they pay \$8 a month to subscribe to Twitter Blue.

The message said that starting March 19, users who don't subscribe will be locked out of their accounts until they remove the security feature.

Here are some questions and answers about why Twitter made this change and alternative ways to secure your account:

## WHAT IS TWO-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION?

Two-factor authentication adds a second layer of security to password-protected accounts by having users enter an auto-generated code to log in.



This extra step helps safeguard online accounts because in addition to the password, you need access to a separate app, device or phone number where you can receive the code.

Such codes can be generated by apps like Microsoft Authenticator or Google Authenticator. Or they can be sent to a user's smartphone via text message.

It's the text message-based two-factor authorization that Twitter is now restricting only to subscribers of Twitter Blue.

## WHY IS TWITTER DOING THIS?

In a blog post Wednesday, the San Francisco-based company acknowledged that the text message-based security method has been historically popular with its users, but said the feature is being "used — and abused — by bad actors."

The company did not respond early Saturday to an email seeking more details on how the security method was being abused.

Elon Musk, who completed his \$44 billion takeover of Twitter in October, has been trying to find way to maximize profits at the company.

One of those is Twitter Blue, which among other features allows anyone to pay for verification previously reserved for celebrities, journalists and other well-known people.

In its blog, Twitter encouraged users who are not going to subscribe to Twitter Blue to consider using alternative account security options, specifically an authentication app or security key.

These methods require you to have physical possession of the authentication method and are a good way to ensure your account is secure.

## WHAT ARE OTHER OPTIONS TO SECURE MY TWITTER ACCOUNT?

An authentication app or a security key will also add a layer of account security beyond just a password.

A security key is a small, portable device that generates a set of random numbers that you enter when prompted when logging into an online account.

An authentication app uses the same approach, but instead of a separate physical device, the app is on your phone.

To set up an authentication app to secure your Twitter account, you will need to download one of a number of available applications to your device. They are free in the Apple or Android app stores. If you'd rather not use Google or Microsoft Authenticator, there are other options, including Authy, Duo Mobile and 1Password.

Once you have the app, open the desktop version of Twitter and click on the icon showing ellipses in a circle. There, you'll find "Settings and privacy" then "Security and account access" and finally, "Security." Here, you can select "Authentication app" and follow the instructions to set it up. Twitter will ask you to share your email address to do this, if you have not already.

Once you are all set, you can use the auto-generated numeric codes from your authentication app to add an extra layer of security when logging into Twitter. **MDT/AP**

AD

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FOOTBALL

# Mbappe, Messi inspire PSG to comeback 4-3 win against Lille

**F**RENCH league leader Paris Saint-Germain gave away a two-goal lead then trailed by one goal with four minutes left before Kylian Mbappe and Lionel Messi turned things around and helped PSG to a 4-3 win against Lille on Sunday.

As PSG looked set for a fourth consecutive loss in all competitions, Mbappe snatched a late equalizer in the 86th minute at the Parc des Princes. Messi slotted home the winner deep in added time from a free kick, with a lethal left-footed shot into the bottom right corner.

Messi's goal stopped PSG from slumping into a crisis. The hard-fought win followed a 1-0 defeat at home midweek against Bayern in the Champions League that came after a 3-1 defeat to Monaco and another setback against bitter rival Marseille in the French Cup.

After playing just half an hour



AP PHOTO  
PSG's Lionel Messi celebrates after scoring his side's fourth goal during the French League One soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Lille at the Parc des Princes stadium, in Paris, France, yesterday

against Bayern upon returning from a thigh injury, Mbappe was back in Christophe Galtier's starting lineup. His impact throughout made up for PSG's defensive inadequacies.

The Qatari-backed team led 2-0 after 16 minutes following Neymar's goal but the French

champions then conceded three times, with Bafode Diakite, Jonathan David and Jonathan Bamba all scoring.

There were obvious signs of nerves amid the PSG ranks from the start.

The hosts were immediately under pressure as Tim Weah

found himself unmarked near the edge of the box after David picked him out. The American forward's shot took a deflection and Gianluigi Donnarumma was forced into a reflex save to stop the ball with his feet.

Presnel Kimpembe then put Donnarumma in a difficult situation when he headed the ball back toward the PSG keeper, only to set up David for a one-to-one. The Lille forward looked a bit surprised by the unintended assist and his right-footed shot was not good enough to beat the Italy keeper.

Looking fragile, PSG relied on Mbappe to lead the way.

Set up by Neymar, the France forward burst down the left and cut inside to come face to face with Tiago Djalo and Bafode Diakite. Mbappe nutmegged Djalo and forced his way between the pair, then beat goalkeeper Lucas Chevalier with

a low shot in the 12th minute.

PSG doubled its lead five minutes later with a quick collective move ignited and concluded by Neymar, who slotted the ball into an empty net after Vitinha drew Chevalier before delivering his assist.

Neymar was forced off the pitch on a stretcher in the second half after twisting his right ankle.

Despite the comfortable cushion, PSG looked shaky and could not dictate the play. The hosts often found themselves pegged back in their half and did not hold onto their lead for long.

Lille was rewarded for its efforts from a set piece in the 23rd minute, with Diakité heading the ball home from Andre Gomes' cross after a corner.

Things took a turn for the worse for PSG after Marco Verratti pulled Djalo's jersey in the box, prompting the referee to signal a penalty amid protests from PSG players and staff. David took the kick and coolly wrongfooted Donnarumma to level.

Bamba then put Lille in the driving seat with a superb strike from a tight angle into the top corner, leaving Mbappe shaking his head in disbelief.

MDT/AP

AD

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OPINION

China Daily  
Editorial, China Daily

SAFER WORLD  
REQUIRES SAYING  
NO TO HEGEMONY

With the hostilities in Ukraine showing no signs of abating and geopolitical tensions increasing on multiple fronts, Chinese top diplomat Wang Yi's keynote speech at the Munich Security Conference expounded on China's remedy for the world's woes saying that: "No matter how complex the issue is, dialogue and consultation should not be abandoned. No matter how sharp the dispute is, we should adhere to political settlement. No matter how difficult the situation is, we should give peace a chance."

Addressing the conference on Saturday, Wang, director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, said China will soon publish a concept paper on its Global Security Initiative, which was proposed by President Xi Jinping last year.

The initiative points out that a safer world can only be achieved through a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security perspective, which recognizes that all countries have legitimate security concerns, and underscores the need for efforts to realize a balanced, effective security mechanism for all.

The concept paper will put more flesh on the bones of that initiative by providing more systematic ideas and more feasible measures to solve global security problems.

How to promote peace and development is the main issue facing humanity. China, which has remained a reliable stabilizer for world peace and security, has put forward the Global Security Initiative and the Global Development Initiative as two starter engines for actions to achieve common security and shared development amid the increasingly complicated and intertwined global challenges and the rapid changes sweeping the world.

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it should be that the whole of humanity is inextricably linked and has a shared future. If the Ukraine crisis has proved a point, it is that the security concerns and sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries must be respected.

Reaffirming China's consistent stance on Ukraine, Wang said that it can be summed up as: to promote peace and promote talks. To this end, he said that China will release a paper expounding on its position and its suggestions on how to arrive at a political settlement of the Ukraine crisis.

Ukraine is just one of the security issues plaguing the world, and still more loom as the United States and its Western allies seek to resolve differences and disputes through power politics and are pursuing "absolute security", or exclusive security for themselves, by forming cliques and promoting bloc confrontation. The world needs more than ever to shore up peace, stability and cooperation and say no to hegemony and confrontation.

As Wang said of China's development path, peaceful development is not an expedient measure, let alone diplomatic rhetoric, but a strategic choice made by China after profound reflection on history.

Likewise to make the world safer, all countries need to make the choice to do so. They should choose dialogue instead of force.

Andrew Lloyd Webber, the English composer who created the scores for blockbuster musicals such as "Cats," "The Phantom of the Opera" and "Evita," has written the anthem for King Charles III's coronation, adapting a piece of church music that encourages singers to make a "joyful noise."

The work by Webber is one of a dozen new pieces Charles commissioned for the grand occasion taking place May 6 at Westminster Abbey. It includes words adapted from Psalm 98 and is scored specifically for the abbey's choir and organ.

"I hope my anthem reflects this joyful occasion," Webber said in a statement distributed by Buckingham Palace.

The program for the king's coronation ceremony includes older music and new compositions as the palace seeks to blend traditional and modern elements that reflect the realities of modern Britain. New pieces were composed by artists with roots in all four of the United Kingdom's constituent nations, as well as in the Commonwealth and foreign countries that have sent so many people to its shores.

39TH US PRESIDENT

JIMMY CARTER ENTERS  
HOSPICE CARE AT HOME

BILL BARROW, ATLANTA

FORMER President Jimmy Carter, who at 98 years old is the longest-lived American president, has entered home hospice care in Plains, Georgia, a statement from The Carter Center confirmed Saturday.

After a series of short hospital stays, the statement said, Carter "decided to spend his remaining time at home with his family and receive hospice care instead of additional medical intervention."

The statement said the 39th president has the full support of his medical team and family, which "asks for privacy at this time and is grateful for the concern shown by his many admirers."

Carter was a little-known Georgia governor when he began his bid for the presidency ahead of the 1976 election. He went on to defeat then-President Gerald R. Ford, capitalizing as a Washington outsider in the wake of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal that drove Richard Nixon from office in 1974.

Carter served a single, tumultuous term and was defeated by Republican Ronald Reagan in 1980, a landslide loss that ultimately paved the way for his decades of global advocacy for democracy, public health and human rights via The Carter Center.



AP PHOTO

The former president and his wife, Rosalynn, 95, opened the center in 1982. His work there garnered a Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

Jason Carter, the couple's grandson who now chairs The Carter Center governing board, said Saturday in a tweet that he "saw both of my grandparents yesterday. They are at peace and—as always—their home is full of love."

Carter, who has lived most of his life in Plains, traveled extensively into his 80s and early 90s, including annual trips to build homes with Habitat for Humanity and frequent trips abroad as part of the Carter Center's election monitoring and its effort to eradicate the Guinea worm parasite in developing countries.

But the former president's health has declined over his 10th decade of life, especially as the coronavirus pandemic limited his public appearances, including at his beloved Maranatha Baptist Church where he taught Sunday School lessons for decades before standing-room-only crowds of visitors.

In August 2015, Carter had a small cancerous mass removed from his liver. The following year, Carter announced that he needed no further treatment, as an experimental drug had eliminated any sign of cancer. Carter celebrated his most recent birthday in October with family and friends in Plains, the tiny town where he and Rosalynn were born in the years between World War I and the Great Depression. MDT/AP



AP PHOTO

UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Saturday sought to dampen optimism about an imminent settlement in the dispute over post-Brexit trade rules for Northern Ireland that has brought political turmoil to the region and clouded relations with the European Union. A recent flurry of meetings and diplomatic activity, including his own late-night dash to Belfast on Thursday night, has yet to yield an agreement. Sunak said during a question-and-answer session following his speech at a security conference in Munich.



AP PHOTO

US A Tesla driver was killed and a passenger was critically injured Saturday when the car plowed into a fire truck that was parked on a Northern California freeway to shield a crew clearing another accident, fire officials said. Four firefighters who were in the truck when it was struck on Interstate 680 were treated for minor injuries. The driver was declared dead at the scene, Dutter said. The car needed to be cut open to remove the passenger, who was taken to the hospital.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Anthony Lam



Tourism certainly returning  
A local western-style bakery in the central district famous for its Macanese custard tart saw a queue yesterday afternoon that made two turns and went all the way to the block behind.



AP PHOTO

Tunisia President Kais Saied ordered Europe's top trade union official to leave the North African country after she addressed protesters at a demonstration organized by an influential labor union. Authorities accused Esther Lynch, the Irish general secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation, of making statements that "interfered with Tunisian internal affairs" during a Saturday protest against Saied in the port city of Sfax.