

THE JOURNEY BEGINS
IN GRATITUDE FOR THE SUCCESSFUL FULL LAUNCH OF
THE LONDONER MACAO

OUR SINCERE THANKS AND APPRECIATION TO

MR. EDMUND HO, VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF
THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE MACAO SAR,
MR. LEI WAI NONG, SECRETARY FOR ECONOMY AND FINANCE

MS. MARIA HELENA DE SENNA FERNANDES, DIRECTOR OF THE MACAO GOVERNMENT TOURISM OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OF THE MACAO SAR AND THE COMMUNITY

FOR ATTENDING THE LONDONER MACAO GRAND CELEBRATION ON MAY 25





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SECRETARY ELSIE AO IEONG U IN PORTUGAL WITH AIMS TO STRENGTHEN SINO-PORTUGUESE COOPERATION ON BIG HEALTH

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UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DROPS TO 3.6% FROM FEBRUARY-APRIL

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AFTER TYPHOON MAWAR BATTERED GUAM, 'WHAT USED TO BE A JUNGLE LOOKS LIKE TOOTHPICKS'

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AP PHOTO



China Former Houston Rockets star Yao Ming has stepped down as head of China's struggling national basketball league. An eight-time NBA All-Star, Yao had been leading efforts to commercialize the top-tier 20-team Chinese Basketball Association Management Company since his appointment in 2017. A notice on the CBA's website thanked Yao for his service. It gave no indication of the reason behind Yao's departure other than that the board of directors had determined it was time for new leadership. [More on p8](#)

AP PHOTO



Japan Three people including two police officers were killed in Nagano in central Japan yesterday and a suspect with a rifle and knife was holed up inside a building, police said. NHK public television said a person later escaped from the building and that some other people might still be inside. A witness told NHK that a woman fell while being chased by the suspect, who then stabbed her with a knife and shot at two police officers as they arrived at the scene in a patrol car in Nakano city in Nagano prefecture.

AP PHOTO



South Korea successfully launched a commercial-grade satellite for the first time yesterday as part of its growing space development program, as rival North Korea is pushing to place its first military spy satellite into orbit. The two Koreas, technically in a state of war, have no military reconnaissance satellites of their own and both are eager to possess them. The South Korean launch will likely assist its efforts to develop a space-based surveillance system.

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RESURRECTING STRONG



Macau is rebounding quicker than expected; future of the city just fine without junkets, said Rob Goldstein, CEO of Las Vegas Sands, in an exclusive interview with the Times [P5](#)

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DOCTOR RATIO NEARLY THREE PER 1,000 PATIENTS

There were 1,965 doctors and 2,863 nurses in Macau at the end of 2022, up 4.1% and 4.4% year-on-year respectively, according to Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) data. The number of doctors and nurses per 1,000 patients rose 0.1 and 0.3 to 2.9 and 4.3 respectively. Hospital outpatient consultations fell 1.6% year-on-year to 1,931,000, averaging 2.9 consultations per capita; consultations for those aged 65 and above increased 16.9% to 492,000 (25.5% of total). Meanwhile, 503,000 doses of inactivated Covid-19 vaccine (-37.4%) and 191,000 doses of mRNA Covid-19 vaccine (+11.6%) were administered in 2022.

41 SUSPECTED ILLEGAL WORKERS DETECTED IN APRIL

A total of 41 suspected illegal workers were detected across the city in April, according to data from the Public Security Police. Alongside the Labour Affairs Bureau's operations, they inspected 291 locations in April to identify illegal workers. Last month, 38 illegal workers were found following inspections of 509 sites.

TYPHOON MAWAR TO BRING WEATHER UP TO 33 DEGREES NEXT WEEK

Typhoon Mawar is expected to affect the coastal areas of Guangdong at the beginning of next week and bring sustained hot weather of up to 33 degrees Celsius, according to the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG). Whether the typhoon will affect Macau depends on the turnaround at the beginning of next week. According to the SMG, it is more likely to turn to the northeast, although there is still a certain chance of it entering the South China Sea.

GOV'T TO HOLD NEW THEMED WORKSHOPS DURING CULTURAL DAY

On "China Cultural and Natural Heritage Day" on June 10, the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) will organize numerous workshops in various cultural sites of Macau to promote the city's cultural heritage. The "Genesis and Spirit - Showcase of Hainan Intangible Cultural Heritage" program starting on June 30 will highlight the culture of Hainan Province and feature activities such as a folk costumes show of the Li ethnic group, a traditional performing arts showcase, Qiong opera performances and arts and crafts workshops.

DSI KIOSKS DOWN FOR SYSTEM UPDATE

The Identification Services Bureau (DSI) self-service kiosks for identification document applications will be not operating today due to system updates, the bureau announced in a statement. The work, which already affected kiosks yesterday, will continue until 9 p.m. today. During this period, all DSI self-service kiosks dedicated to applications for Macau Resident Identity Cards and Macau travel documents and certificates will be unavailable. During the system upgrade, eligible applicants can still lodge applications via their Macao One Account. The kiosks will resume normal functioning after the system upgrade has finished.

AO IEONG BEGINS PORTUGAL VISIT WITH FOCUS ON BIG HEALTH

RENATO MARQUES

THE Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Elsie Ao Ieong, yesterday began her visit to Portugal by meeting with the Chinese Ambassador to Portugal, Zhao Bentang.

Following in the footsteps of a larger delegation, led by the Chief Executive, that toured Portugal last month, Ao Ieong's visit aims to exchange views on the continued strengthening of Sino-Portuguese cooperation on social affairs and culture, with the area of Big Health as a main focus.

In the meeting with Zhao, the Secretary presented work related to the area of social affairs and culture within the framework of the development strategy of adequate diversification "1+4" of Macau,



including projects to promote the development of priority industries, such as the health industry (Big Health) and "culture and sport."

She noted a cooperation project in the field between the Polytechnic University of Macau and China Media Group Asia-Pacific headquarters, which will use technology

from the Chinese-Portuguese-English Machine Translation Laboratory to translate news from the mainland into Portuguese and broadcast it to Portuguese-speaking countries.

The Secretary also mentioned that, during her trip, meetings will also be held with the Portuguese health authorities, as well as several higher educa-

tion institutions and local museums, with some cooperation agreements to be signed.

As on previous occasions, Ambassador Zhao expressed his willingness to serve as a bridge for communication between Macau and Portugal, coordinating and reinforcing exchanges and cooperation between the two parties.

The delegation from the Social Affairs and Culture department includes staff from the cabinet of Ao Ieong, the director of the Education and Youth Development Bureau, Kong Chi Meng, the President of the Cultural Affairs Bureau, De-land Leong, the Director of the Health Bureau, Alvis Lo, and the Deputy Head of the Economic and Commercial Delegation of Macau in Lisbon, Lúcia Abrantes dos Santos.



HERITAGE

LOCAL TEMPLE MANUSCRIPTS REGISTERED AS UNESCO WORLD MEMORY

Archives and manuscripts of the local Kong Tac Lam Temple have been inscribed in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register.

Nestled in a narrow descending alley in the Penha district and surrounded by low-rise residential buildings - also known as tong lau - the temple's name suggests its nature as a monastery for nuns

in Buddhist understanding.

According to data provided by the local government to UNESCO, the collection, dating from the late Ming Dynasty to mid-20th century, comprises over 6,600 volumes of archives and manuscripts in 2,300 titles, rare books, Bayeux Sutra, old photos and paintings.

These materials

were created and collected by masters and the intelligentsia connected with the temple since its formal establishment in 1924 as a result of its educational and cultural activities, especially for women in Macau, mainland China and surrounding areas.

An important documentary heritage of Macau, the collection shows the unique and extraordinary role of the temple in the dissemination of Buddhist teaching and ideology for women in the region, as well as in advocating social change and reform, especially in the liberation of women and raising of their social status.

Macau featured in another Spanish inscription. The Royal Philanthropic Expedition of the Smallpox Vaccine, 1800-1820, pointed out that this mission had helped save lives in Macau and Guangzhou. **AL**

TWO MEN IN THEIR 50S DIE BY SUICIDE

RENATO MARQUES

Two men in their fifties have reportedly died by suicide in Macau just a few hours apart. The cases, as reported by the Judiciary Police (PJ), appear unrelated.

In the first case, a 51-year-old male was found dead in the bathroom of a hotel room in downtown Macau.

According to the PJ the man was a resident from the mainland.

In the second case, reported yesterday morning, a 52-year-old male resident of Macau was found dead at his home.

According to the PJ, which deployed investigators to the scene after the body was found by members of the Fire Services Bureau, the

man was last seen by family members around May 21 and no one reported knowing of any problems which might have contributed to his death.

In both cases, the PJ said there were no suspicions of criminal activity, with suicide suspected. The causes of death for both men will be confirmed later through forensic examinations.

This is the third suicide the PJ has reported this week.

The Social Welfare Bureau encourages residents to be conscious of their psychological and emotional state as well as those of their relatives and friends. If in need of support, residents can call Caritas' Life Hope hotline (28525222) or IAS' counseling hotline (28261126).

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LYNZY VALLES



GAMING

Rob Goldstein: Macau 'resurrecting strong', group to further invest over USD3.9 billion

of the year, already surpassing total gross gaming revenue in 2022. If these results continue, the sector will achieve the government's estimate of MOP130 billion for this year.

Sands China has led this quarter's earnings growth, notching up revenue of USD1.27 billion in the three months from January through March, more than double the figure from the same period last year.

In Goldstein's view, the group will continue to be a dominant player here in Macau – particularly with the full opening of The Londoner and what it has to further offer in terms of entertainment, retail and food and beverage.

"Macau is not going to stop. I can't predict what date [it will surpass 2019 levels] but it has been wonderful. It is resurrecting quickly, much quicker than Singapore, and this place is too good to be

denied," said Goldstein.

The top official of Sands China's parent company remarked that the gaming operator is positioned to grow for years to come, boasting of its

"We'll invest more than that. That's a baseline.... We've never been hesitant to deploy capital in Macau. We are big believers in the market and USD3.9 billion is a small number compared to [what can be done] in the next 10 years.... We can't invest enough," he said.

Although Macau's return to normalcy is still in its infancy, the executive disclosed that the May revenue figures will be a new post-pandemic high, noting, "We

"Macau is not going to stop. It is resurrecting quickly, much quicker than Singapore, and this place is too good to be denied"

ROB GOLDSTEIN
CEO OF LAS VEGAS SANDS

planned investment in non-gaming segments.

Under the new gaming concessions, Sands China made a USD3.9 billion commitment, which, according to Goldstein, was what the government had asked of them.

However, this figure is just a baseline, with Goldstein promising to deliver more non-gaming elements including meetings and conventions, hotel suites, food and beverage and retail.

see May numbers and I think [that's] the best month of the year so far.... The question is fast and how far."

Asked about the crackdown on junkets and how it will affect the group's VIP market, Goldstein is assured that "customers are still there, but how they get here is different."

"The junkets [was] an end of an era, but we move forward. The future of Macau is just fine without the junkets," he said.

LYNZY VALLES

THE Macau SAR will continue to record new post-pandemic highs as it is currently "resurrecting strong" – a comeback that came as a surprise and a much stronger rebound than many expected.

In an exclusive interview with the Times, Rob Goldstein, chairman and CEO of Las Vegas Sands, expressed further confidence in the city's

offerings which he feels will continue to attract visitors, as well as mainland and foreign players – even without junket operations.

Following the end of the zero-Covid policy in early January, the long-awaited return of the gaming and tourism sector has arrived after a nearly three-year drought of tourism and gaming revenue.

In a recovery boost, casinos have raked in MOP49.36 billion in the first four months

Harry Potter Exhibition to open at The Londoner

ANTHONY LAM

THE Harry Potter Exhibition will be held at the resort this December, as announced yesterday at The Londoner Macao.

The news was disclosed by sports star David Beckham at the performance for the resort opening at the new Londoner Arena. Beckham is the brand ambassador of the resort.

Officially referred to as Harry Potter: The Exhibition, the touring event celebrates the iconic moments, characters, settings, and beasts as seen in the Harry Potter film series and the

ANTHONY LAM



David Beckham, brand ambassador of The Londoner Macao

Wizarding World.

According to Sands China Limited (SCL), the exhibition will employ immersive design and innovative technology to present a tour through

the books – Harry Potter and Fantastic Beasts series by JK Rowling – featuring key original props, costumes, characters and locations.

To stage an interactive

journey, the exhibition will allow participants to choose their favourite Hogwarts house, wands and Patronus to begin a personalised journey through this immersive expe-

rience: plop down in Hagrid's giant chair, squeeze into the Cupboard Under The Stairs, among other scenes from the films.

Meanwhile, at yesterday's event, Beckham highlighted that his last time in Macau was four years ago. Once he set foot at The Londoner, "he started to feel at home."

He is behind the 14 Beckham Suites at the resort. Looking back, he revealed that although he was not in Macau, he treasured the time to constantly refining the project. "I stayed in one of the suites this week, and it feels fun to see my-

self – in photographs – everywhere in the suite," said Beckham.

Las Vegas Sands (LVS) co-founder and wife of late LVS owner Sheldon G. Adelson, Miriam Adelson, recapped in her speech the vision of her late husband, who transformed Cotai into what is.

Robert Goldstein, LVS president and CEO, highlighted that the achievements SCL made on Cotai has realized late Adelson's vision, "and it will be even greater."

Besides the opening of the fan-shaped arena, last night also saw performances by Chinese singer GEM Tang, Chinese pianist Lang Lang and Chinese theatre actor-singer Ayungga.

RENATO MARQUES



LABOR

Unemployment rate drops to 3.6% from February-April

RENATO MARQUES

THE local unemployment rate dropped 0.3% between February and April this year. The drop is from the previous four-month period from January to March this year, the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) noted in a statistics release.

At the end of April, the general unemployment rate was 2.8%, with the unemployment rate of local residents at 3.6%.

The DSEC added that the underemployment rate also edged down by 0.1% to 2.1% in the same period.

Additional statistical information shows that the current labor force living in Macau is 371,200 people, with a labor force participation rate of 67.8%.

There are 360,700 people in employment, of which 282,200 are residents of Macau. The figures represent an increase of 1,400 people in the total workforce, of which 1,000 are local residents.

The sectors that contributed most to the creation of jobs over the four-month period were the gaming and junket activities and hotels category, and restaurants and similar activities.

The number of people registered as unemployed dropped in the exact amount of those who obtained jobs (1,000) from the previous period, to a current total of 10,500.

Of those unemployed and searching for a new job, most were previously engaged in the construction sector and gaming and junket activities, the DSEC data reveals.

The proportion of new labor market entrants seeking their first job also decreased, shrinking by 2.9% to reach 3.9% of the total unemployed.

In relation to underemployment, the reduction of about 100 from the previous period to 7,900 people was related mostly to those working in the construction sector and the transport and storage sector.

ECONOMY

GDP UP 38.8% YEAR-ON-YEAR IN Q1

RENATO MARQUES

MACAUS Gross Domestic Product (GDP) saw growth of 38.8% in the first quarter (Q1) of this year compared to the same period of 2022, a release from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) has confirmed.

The DSEC attributed the rise to positive factors such as the relaxation of border control measures, the full resumption of travel between Hong Kong and Macau, and the restart of group tours from the mainland to Macau.

During the first quarter, exports of services surged 71.5% year-on-year, with exports of gaming services and exports of other tourism services increasing by 100% and 72.9% respectively. At the

same time, exports of goods reduced by 40.6%.

Domestic demand increased by 1.6% year-on-year, mainly driven by the government's final consumption expenditure.

The imports of goods recorded a drop of 6.9%, unlike the imports of services which rose by 24%.

The economic output of Macau recovered to 66.4% of its level in Q1 of 2019 (pre-pandemic) with the implicit deflator of GDP, which measures the overall changes in prices, going up by 2.5% year-on-year.

The DSEC also noted that, despite a steady economic recovery, household final consumption expenditure in the domestic market dropped by 12.1% year-on-year, stemming from a shift in part

of the private consumption expenditure to government spending caused by livelihood subsidies, combined with a decrease in the population and the resumption of outbound travel by residents after the pandemic.

Concurrently, household final consumption expenditure abroad grew by 53.5%.

Overall private consumption went down by 7.5% year-on-year.

EXPENDITURE PLAYS A SIGNIFICANT ROLE

During the same period, the government's final consumption expenditure increased by 30.1% year-on-year, due to higher expenditure on economic relief measures such as livelihood subsidies and electricity subsidies, compared to the same

quarter last year. Net purchases of goods and services rose by 80.5% while compensation of employees rose by just 0.2%.

Gross fixed capital formation decreased by 0.5% year-on-year, of which construction investment grew by 0.1% while equipment investment dropped by 3%.

Public construction investment went up by 28.2%, resulting from increased investment in the construction of public housing and the fourth Macau-Taipa bridge; meanwhile, equipment investment shrank by 7.5%.

Conversely, private investment shrank, with construction investment falling 17.5% year-on-year owing to reduced investment in casinos, and equipment investment down by 2.5%.

EMPLOYMENT

LABOR BUREAU FINDS JOBS FOR OVER 4,500 PEOPLE SO FAR

ANTHONY LAM

IN the first five months of this year, over 4,500 jobseekers have been successfully matched with jobs through government initiatives, the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) announced yesterday in a statement.

According to the statement, between January and May this year, the bureau helped 4,582 people find jobs. In contrast, last year saw only around 6,000 successful matchings.

MACAU PHOTO AGENCY



The success rate in the first five months amounts to 75% of last year's entire figure, the bureau emphasized, adding that

the figure amounts to about 1.6% of the local workforce, as calculated at the end of March.

The bureau also dis-

closed that, from the start of this year, 62 profession-specific matching sessions and 24 leisure enterprise matching sessions have been organized.

A large-scale recruitment fair co-organized by the bureau and the Macao Federation of Trade Unions (FAOM) on May 5 and 6 attracted the participation of 56 enterprises, including those in the tourism, hotel, transport, retail, banking, public utility, culture and

MICE sectors.

The bureau emphasized it has not forgotten jobseekers in the construction industry. From early this year to May 22, a total of 361 construction workers have been matched with jobs through the bureau.

On training fresh university graduates, the bureau stated that, since 2020, a specific scheme had connected 503 graduates to jobs. The scheme saw companies offering 5,501 internship

posts and accepting 1,681 interns. Of these, 1,351 finished their internships and 710 saw further job offers from the respective companies.

Collaborations with mainland employers have also commenced, the bureau added, to prepare fresh university graduates for career development in and beyond Hengqin.

The bureau added that it has updated its strategies and organized matching sessions targeting different professions in light of the city's changing workforce needs.

TECH

Elon Musk wants to build a digital town square - but his debut for DeSantis had a tech failure

BARBARA ORTUTAY

ELON Musk wants to turn Twitter into a “digital town square,” but his much-publicized Twitter Spaces kickoff event, with Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis announcing his run for president, struggled with technical glitches and a near half-hour delay Tuesday.

The billionaire Twitter owner said the problems were due to “straining” servers because so many people were trying to listen to the audio-only event. But even at their highest, the number of listeners listed topped out at around 420,000, far from the millions of viewers that televised presidential announcements attract.

“There’s so many people,” said host David Sacks amid the disruptions. “We’ve got so many people here that we are kind of melting the servers, which is a good sign.”

After it concluded without further disruptions, Musk, DeSantis and Sacks played off the event as a success, with Sacks quipping “it’s not how you start, it’s how you finish — and we finished really strong.”

Musk a day earlier dubbed the event a historic first for Twitter, saying it would be “the first time something like this is happening on social media.”



The webcast was scheduled to start at 6 p.m. ET but nearly 30 minutes passed with users getting kicked off, hearing microphone feedback and enduring other technical problems before it finally began. The audience remained under 500,000.

DeSantis opponents had a field day with the delayed announcement.

“Glitchy. Tech issues. Uncomfortable silences. A complete failure to launch. And that’s just the candidate!” said Steven Cheung, a spokesperson for former President and current candidate Donald Trump.

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Democrat from New York, tweeted, “We had more people join when I played Among Us,” referencing the

popular video game.

Twitter has suffered a host of technical issues since Musk took over and fired or laid off roughly 80% of its staff — including engineers tasked with keeping the site running. A day before the DeSantis event, speaking at The Wall Street Journal’s CEO Council Summit in London, Musk expressed confidence about Twitter’s future and said he is “going to start adding people to the company” but gave no further details.

Musk bought Twitter last fall for \$44 billion. Since then, he has upended the platform’s verification system, loosened its content moderation policies in line with his views as a “free speech absolutist,” spread mi-

sinformation and engaged with far-right figures, all the while working to attract jittery advertisers back to the platform to turn it profitable. His grand vision, he has said repeatedly, is to eventually turn Twitter into an “everything app” for everyone — a digital town square where people can hear from world leaders and politicians without the need for traditional media as a go-between.

But he seems to mainly be courting conservatives and Republicans lately, referring to Democrats and liberals as infected by the “woke mind virus” and reinstating extremist accounts that were banned by Twitter’s previous administration.

The campaign launch event with DeSantis continued the trend — though it remains to be seen whether the platform can become a go-to destination for mainstream politicians when it continues to show evidence of instability. For instance, the word “DeSaster” was trending on Twitter yesterday [Macau time] as users mocked the botched campaign launch.

In the world of traditional media and politics, a glitchy half-hour delay and an audience in the hundreds of thousands rather than millions, yesterday’s Twitter Spaces

event might look like a failure. But in Silicon Valley, failure is often spun as positive, even essential in developing new products and improving existing ones. Twitter Spaces — which Twitter launched in 2020 to compete with the then-popular audio chat site Clubhouse — is generally not used for audiences in the hundreds of thousands, so in some ways it was not a surprise that the event was marred with technical problems.

“It’s much worse for DeSantis than it is for Musk,” said Jo-ellen Pozner, a business professor at Santa Clara University, noting that just a month ago Musk’s SpaceX launched a rocket that exploded minutes after its launch from Texas. After the explosion, Musk called it “an exciting test launch of Starship! Learned a lot for next test launch in a few months” in a tweet.

“It is clearly a difficult situation for DeSantis, who wants to project competence, who wants to forestall criticism,” she said. “Musk has an easier out by just saying that ‘this was the first time we tried it, it didn’t work out perfectly, but next time we’ll do much better,’ in the classic Silicon Valley approach to failing fast and learning more.”

Pozner said it remains an “open question” how Twitter is going to be valued as a broad digital platform down the line.

“I think will depend on, you know, how he and the top management react to this and how they spin it,” she said.

After DeSantis logged off, Musk and Sacks extended an open invitation to any other presidential candidate who wants to do a Twitter Spaces event. Whether or not they get any takers could signal what the future holds for Twitter as a “public square.” MDT/AP

CORPORATE BITS

SJM hosts work experience sessions for young adults



In line with its “from society, for society” principle, SJM organized a “Workplace Experience Series” earlier in May at the Grand Lisboa Palace, involving young adults from the Centro Residencial Ar-

co-Iris Youth Home of Caritas Macau and Sheng Kung Hui Macau Social Services Coordination Office which the company said would help them “develop their potential” and “pave the way

for a better future.”

The series of workshops included vocational training seminars during which SJM employees shared practical knowledge on topics such as interview skills, resume writing and dress codes, as well as Q&A sessions to give participants a better understanding of employment standards in integrated resorts and corporations, as well as the workplace environment in these companies.

The program ended with a visit to the SJM back-of-house areas to reinforce attendees’ job-seeking skills and to empower them to prepare early and build a solid foundation for their future careers.

Hennessy partners with NBA for new limited edition



Hennessy and the National Basketball Association (NBA) expanded a global partnership, making Hennessy the first “Official Spirit of the NBA”.

“Hennessy is thrilled to shine a light on this season’s new and vibrant Hennessy V.S.O.P NBA 2023 Limited Edition,” the cognac producer said in a sta-

tement. The brand-new gift box and the bottle include the logos of the two iconic brands, designed with a bright orange gift box, mimicking the basketball texture.

“As for the sumptuous cognac itself, the distinctiveness of Hennessy V.S.O.P lies in its adaptability, versatility and harmony; as a grape-based spirit, besides being perfect on its own or on the rocks, it blends beautifully with fresh fruits, spices and soda without ever losing its character and taste,” the group added.

The limited edition is now available at selected retailers.

AP PHOTO



SPORTS

CHINESE BASKETBALL LEGEND YAO MING STEPS DOWN AS HEAD OF NATIONAL LEAGUE

FORMER Houston Rockets star Yao Ming has stepped down as head of China's struggling national basketball league.

An eight-time NBA All-Star, Yao had been leading efforts to commercialize the top-tier 20-team Chinese Basketball Association Management Company since his appointment in 2017.

A notice on the CBA's website thanked Yao for his service. It gave no indication of the reason behind Yao's departure other than that the board of directors had determined it was time for new leadership.

Yao was one of the first Chinese athletes to become an international household name when the Houston Rockets drafted him with the first pick in 2002. The

2.29-meter center played for eight seasons in the NBA before retiring in 2011, citing chronic injuries.

Allegations of corruption have dogged the league in recent years. Two teams, the Jiangsu Dragons and Shanghai Sharks, were ejected from the league finals last month after being found to have engaged in unsporting conduct over a series of turnovers that resulted in a come-from-behind win by the Sharks.

The outcome was judged as suspicious and resulted in a swift investigation and punishments for both teams. Managers and coaching staff from each team have been barred from the league for up to five years.

China's basketball and football leagues have drawn foreign talent

and commercial endorsements, but are weighted down by uncertain ownership lineups and the influence of government. Some officials have been placed under investigation for bribe taking and other forms of corruption.

Yao's replacement is veteran sports journalist Xu Jicheng, who served on committees bidding for and overseeing management of the 2008 Beijing Olympics and last year's Winter Games.

Basketball remains enormously popular in China, largely because of Yao's storied NBA career. That's despite a year-long ban on NBA games being shown in the country after a team executive angered Beijing with remarks supporting Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement. **MDT/AP**

SHIPPING

HK-FLAGGED VESSEL BRIEFLY RUNS AGROUND IN SUEZ CANAL, LATER REFLOATED

AHong Kong-flagged ship briefly ran aground yesterday in Egypt's vital Suez Canal, though authorities said they were able to refloat it after it momentarily disrupted the waterway.

The Xin Hai Tong 23 ran aground at the southern mouth of the Suez Canal, the body that oversees the waterway said in a statement. The ship was being towed to another area by three tug boats after an "emergency malfunction," it said, that caused it to stop sailing.

The Suez Canal Authority said that traffic flow had returned to normal in the canal, which connects the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea.

Leth Agencies, which oversees traffic in the canal, had said that four other vessels were stopped in line behind it after it ran aground.

The ship is a bulk carrier, which typically carries cargo. The ship measures some 190 meters by 32 meters.

The Ever Given, a colossal container ship that crashed into a bank on a single-lane stretch of the canal in March 2021, blocking the waterway, was bigger. A massive salvage effort by a flotilla of tugboats, helped by the tides, freed the skyscraper-sized vessel six days later, ending the crisis and allowing hundreds of waiting ships to pass through the canal. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



In this photo provided by The Suez Canal Authority in Egypt, the bulk carrier ship Xin Hai Tong 23 (left) is towed after it ran aground at the southern mouth of the Suez Canal yesterday

HONG KONG

21-year-old sentenced to 5 years for thwarted bomb plot

KANIS LEUNG,
HONG KONG

AHong Kong man was sentenced to more than five years in prison for participating in a thwarted bomb plot that aimed to build resistance forces, in a closely watched case involving high school students accused of serious crimes following the 2019 anti-government protests.

Prosecutors said Alexander Au, 21, and the five others in court yesterday had planned to manufacture explosives and target

court buildings. Their plot was foiled due to a police investigation, and no bombs were made and no casualties occurred.

Though the six are not among the most prominent activists in Hong Kong's suppressed democracy movement, their case has drawn attention because they were all students when the prosecution began in 2021 and they were charged with conspiracy to carry out terrorist activities under the National Security Law.

Earlier this month, Au

and four defendants, aged between 17 and 20, pleaded guilty to conspiring to cause explosions that are likely to endanger life and property, an alternative to the terrorism charge that falls under a separate law. The remaining defendant Ho Yu-wang, 19, admitted to the terrorism charge.

Ho was described as one of the plot masterminds. Judge Alex Lee said at yesterday's sentencing that the plot would have worsened the social situation in Hong Kong had it materialized and could

have caused casualties.

Lee sentenced Au to five years and eight months, saying Au was more culpable since he was involved in renting a room in a guesthouse for making explosives and inspecting targeted buildings with Ho.

Three defendants, who were younger than 21 and had relatively minor roles, would be sent to rehabilitation-focused training centers, Lee said. They could be held for up to three years, but the true length of their stays will

depend on authorities' evaluation of their conduct.

The sentencing hearing of Ho and the remaining defendant was postponed to September. The pair only stayed briefly in the court room.

While Lee was handing down the penalties, two of the defendants who stayed slightly shook their heads.

When police raided the guesthouse room in 2021, officers seized equipment believed to be used for making explosives. They also alleged Ho had written

in notes that his goal was to destabilize Hong Kong, promote conflicts between the central government and others, then build up a resistance group.

The National Security Law that Beijing imposed on the city after the protests criminalizes acts of succession, subversion, terrorism, and collusion with foreign forces. It has led to the arrests of many prominent activists, including activist publisher Jimmy Lai and former student leader Joshua Wong. **MDT/AP**

ADVERTORIAL

SANDS CHINA NEWS

Sands China Launches Sands Resorts Incubation Centre and Signs MOU with PFM

Promotes young entrepreneurship, technical innovation and smart tourism

Sands China launched a new programme this month, the **Sands Resorts Incubation Centre**, aimed at encouraging technological innovation, discovering local innovative enterprises with development potential, and introducing innovative solutions for smart integrated resorts – through a series of targeted seminars and competitions. The Centre seeks to help entrepreneurs transform their conceptual ideas into commercially viable offerings that are poised for success in the marketplace.

Additionally, **Sands China Ltd.** signed a **memorandum of understanding (MOU)** with **Parafuturo de Macau Investment and Development Limited (PFM)**. The goal of the MOU is for Sands China to work together with PFM's **Macao Young Entrepreneur Incubation Centre** to identify potential enterprises through periodic workshops, classroom trainings, and competition events. By sharing industry expertise and business knowledge, they aim to enhance the development of Macao's young entrepreneurs and support the growth of local small, medium, and micro suppliers.

They are also collaborating on the **2023 Macau Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition**, which Sands China is sponsoring, including sponsoring the establishment of a prestigious **Sands Best Application Value Award**. The award aims to support young people to utilise their creativity, while encouraging the cultivation of more entrepreneurial projects related to Macao's development as a smart city and its advancement in MICE tourism and leisure technology. For local projects in the competition, Sands China is prioritising providing coaching and training, business matching, exhibition and visiting opportunities, and the chance to become a Sands China supplier.

The programme launch and MOU signing took place at The Venetian Macao during a press conference at the **BEYOND Expo** event May 12. The press conference concluded with the introduction of the **Sands Innovation Challenge**, a collaborative project by Sands China and the BEYOND Expo that aims to provide better tourism experiences in terms of functionality and sustainability, while rewarding commercially valuable products and solutions targeted at the integrated resort industry.

Shortlisted teams will present their ideas and solutions to a judging panel of representatives from Sands China and BEYOND Expo, who will provide feedback and guidance on their innovation, operability, and commercial viability. The three top teams will win an integrated resort experience worth up to a combined MOP 240,000.

Initiatives like these are part of Sands China's support of the government's promotion of the long-term and sustainable development of smart tourism and high-tech industries.



AP PHOTO



Microsoft office building in Beijing

CYBERSECURITY

Microsoft: Chinese hackers could be laying groundwork for disruption

FRANK BAJAK, BOSTON

STATE-BACKED Chinese hackers have been targeting U.S. critical infrastructure and could be laying the technical groundwork for the potential disruption of critical communications between the U.S. and Asia during future crises, Microsoft said yesterday [Macao time].

The targets include sites in Guam, where the U.S. has a major military presence, the company said.

Hostile activity in cyberspace — from espionage to the advanced positioning of malware for potential future attacks — has become a hallmark of modern geopolitical rivalry.

Microsoft said in a blog post that the state-sponsored group of hackers, which it calls Volt Typhoon, has been active since mid-2021. It said organizations affected by the hacking — which seeks persistent access — are in the communications, manufacturing, utility, transportation, construction, maritime, information technology and education sectors.

Separately, the National Security Agency, the FBI, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and their counterparts from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Britain published a joint advisory sharing technical details on “the recently discovered cluster of activity.”

A Microsoft spokesman would not say why the software giant was making the announcement now or whether it had recently seen an uptick in targeting of critical infrastructure in Guam or at adjacent U.S.

military facilities there, which include a major air base.

John Hultquist, chief analyst at Google's Mandiant cybersecurity intelligence operation, called Microsoft's announcement “potentially a really important finding.”

“We don't see a lot of this sort of probing from China. It's rare,” Hultquist said. “We know a lot about Russian and North Korean and Iranian cyber capabilities because they have regularly done this.” China has generally withheld use of the kinds of tools that could be used to seed, not just intelligence-gathering capabilities, but also malware for disruptive attacks in an armed conflict, he added.

Microsoft said the intrusion campaign placed a “strong emphasis on stealth” and sought to blend into normal network activity by hacking small-office network equipment, including routers. It said the intruders gained initial access through internet-facing Fortiguard devices, which are engineered to use machine-learning to detect malware.

The maker of Fortiguard devices, Fortinet, did not immediately respond to an email seeking further details.

“For years, China has conducted aggressive cyber operations to steal intellectual property and sensitive data from organizations around the globe,” said CISA Director Jen Easterly, urging mitigation of affected networks to prevent possible disruption. Bryan Vorndran, the FBI cyber division assistant director, called the intrusions “unacceptable tactics” in the same statement. **MDT/AP**

GUAM

After Typhoon Mawar battered the island, 'what

GRACE GARCES BORDALLO,
HAGATNA

MANY residents of Guam remained without power and utilities yesterday after Typhoon Mawar tore through the remote U.S. Pacific territory the night before and ripped roofs off homes, flipped vehicles and shredded trees.

There were no immediate reports of deaths and injuries but the central and northern parts of the island received more than 2 feet of rain as the eyewall passed. The island's international airport flooded and the swirling typhoon churned up a storm surge and waves that crashed through coastal reefs and flooded homes.

"We are waking up to a rather disturbing scene out there across Guam. We're looking out our door and what used to be a jungle looks like toothpicks — it looks like a scene from the movie 'Twister,' with trees just thrashed apart," said Landon Aydlett, a meteorologist with the

National Weather Service.

"Most of Guam is dealing with a major mess that's gonna take weeks to clean up," he added.

The strongest typhoon to hit the territory of roughly 150,000 people since 2002, Mawar briefly made landfall around 9 p.m. Wednesday as a Category 4 storm at Andersen Air Force Base on the northern tip of the island, weather service officials said.

The scope of the damage was difficult to ascertain early on, with power and internet failures making communication on the far-flung island difficult. Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero said in a video message late yesterday morning that roads were passable, but residents should avoid driving and stay home due to ongoing strong winds.

"We have weathered the storm," Leon Guerrero said, adding that "the worst has gone by."

As the typhoon crept slowly over the island, it sent solar panels flying and crumbled part of a hotel's exterior wall to the ground, according to videos

AP PHOTO



posted on social media. At what felt like its peak intensity, the winds screeched and howled like jets, and water swamped some homes.

Leah del Mundo spent the night with her family in their concrete home in Chalan Pago, in central Guam. She told The As-

sociated Press they tried to sleep but were awakened "by violent shaking of the typhoon shutters and the whistling strong winds."

"It's not our first rodeo," she said via text message. "We've been through worse. But we brace ourselves for the cleanup, repairs, restoration afterwards."

Winds peeled back the roof of Enrique Baza's mother's house in Yona, allowing water to damage everything inside.

"My mom's house didn't escape," he said, adding that his mother stayed with him in his concrete home during the storm.

He drove around in a pickup

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C&C RECEIVED THE 1ST SILVER
"DEIGNAN AWARD"
FOR RESPONSIBLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP
IN MACAU (2023)



used to be a jungle looks like toothpicks'



truck looking for supplies to repair his mother's roof, but most stores were without power and only accepting cash. Many wooden or tin homes he passed were badly beaten or collapsed.

"It's kind of a shock," he said. In Tumon, on Guam's northeastern shore, winds tore a

granite countertop from a hotel's outdoor bar and tossed it into the air. Guests scrambled to stack chairs to brace the doors, and windows buckled and creaked.

"It was like a freight train going on outside," said Thomas Wooley, who recounted how wind and rain pushed through

the aluminum shutters of his family's concrete home overlooking Tumon Bay. When day broke, he found their outdoor china cabinet toppled and its contents shattered on the ground. A chainsaw-wielding relative helped clear downed branches.

"We've got tons of work to do,"

Wooley said. "It's going to take a few days to clean it up."

Guam's weather service office in Tiyan said it would shut down operations in the morning for workers to get home to families and assess damage at their homes. Counterparts in the Honolulu office took over their duties.

In a sign of how much help Guam might need, the Navy ordered the USS Nimitz aircraft carrier strike group to head to the island to assist in the recovery effort, according to a U.S. official. The Nimitz, along with the USS Bunker Hill, a cruiser, and the USS Wayne E. Meyer, a destroyer, were south of Japan and expected to arrive in Guam in three or four days, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss ship movements not yet made public.

Guam is about 3,800 miles west of Hawaii and 1,600 miles east of the Manila, the capital of the Philippines.

By yesterday afternoon, Mawar was centered 135 miles northwest of Guam and 150 miles west of Rota, Guam's nei-

ghbor to the north, moving west-northwest at 7 mph.

Power was also knocked out for all of Rota, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. said late Wednesday. The island has about 2,500 residents, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The storm strengthened to 155 mph winds yesterday and regained its status as a super typhoon, according to the weather service. Mawar, a Malaysian word that means "rose," was forecast to maintain this intensity for the next two days.

After moving away from Guam, the storm is expected to track generally northwest over a large, empty expanse of ocean for days, and it could threaten Taiwan next week.

Guam is a crucial hub for U.S. forces in the Pacific, with about 6,800 service members assigned to the island, according to the Pentagon. Military officials evacuated personnel, dependents and employees, sent ships out to sea and moved aircraft off the island or secured them in protective hangars. **MDT/AP**

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AP FILE PHOTO



PUTIN'S WAR

South Africa under more scrutiny over Russian ship as ruling ANC says it would 'welcome' Russian leader

GERALD, CAPE TOWN

THE South African government was under more pressure yesterday [Macau time] for declining to release cargo documents relating to the visit by a Russian ship that the United States alleges collected a consignment of weapons for Moscow.

Separately, a top official in South Africa's ruling party added to the scrutiny of the country's relationship with Russia by saying the party would "welcome" a visit by President Vladimir Putin, who has been indicted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes.

The comments by African National Congress Secretary General Fikile Mbalula regarding Putin were made in an interview with the BBC and in the context of the Russian leader attending a summit of the BRICS economic bloc in South Africa in August. The bloc is made up of Brazil, Russia, China, India and South Africa.

"If it was according to the ANC, we would want President Putin to be here, even tomorrow, to come to our country," Mbalula said in the interview, excerpts of which were posted on the ANC's social media channels on Tuesday. "We will welcome him to

come here as part and parcel of BRICS."

As a signatory to the International Criminal Court treaty, South Africa is obliged to arrest Putin if he enters the country. The South African government has indicated it will not carry out the arrest warrant if Putin does travel for the summit, although it hasn't said that explicitly.

"Do you think that a head of state can just be arrested anywhere?" Mbalula, a former Cabinet minister who is now the ANC's top administrative official, said in the BBC interview.

He told the BBC interviewer there was hypocrisy on the part of the West related to the arrest warrant for Putin because, he said, Britain and other Western nations committed crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan and no heads of state were arrested.

Mbalula last month referred to the United States as one of the countries "messing up the world."

There has been increasing anti-U.S. and anti-West rhetoric in the ANC and sometimes in parts of South Africa's government since Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year, despite South Africa maintaining it has a neutral stance on the war.

The trend is troubling for the U.S. and other Wes-

tern partners of South Africa because of its status as an influential democracy in the developing world, and Africa's most developed economy.

South Africa has a historical relationship with Russia connected to the old Soviet Union's military and political support for the ANC when it was a liberation movement fighting to end the racist apartheid regime that oppressed the country's Black majority. The West appears concerned that the ANC's old ideological ties to Russia are now pulling South Africa into Moscow's political orbit amid burgeoning global tensions. There are also growing economic ties between Africa, a continent of 1.3 billion people, and China.

The concerns were laid bare by the U.S. Ambassador to South Africa earlier this month when he accused it of providing weapons to Russia via a cargo ship that docked at a naval base near the city of Cape Town in December. Ambassador Reuben Briggerty said "I would bet my life" that weapons were loaded onto the Russian-flagged Lady R, which is under U.S. sanctions for alleged ties to a company that has transported arms for the Russian government.

The South African government has denied it made any arms transaction with Russia, although it hasn't categorically ruled out the possibility that another entity did so secretly. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has ordered an inquiry.

Yesterday, South Africa's main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, challenged the government to come clean if it had nothing to hide and release a cargo manifest for the Lady R's visit to the Simon's Town naval base.

A DA lawmaker also asked Defense Minister Thandi Modise to release the documents during a debate in Parliament on Tuesday. Modise refused to do so while also using an expletive to repeat the government's denial that any weapons were loaded onto the ship.

Modise has said that the Russian ship was visiting to deliver an ammunition shipment to South Africa that was ordered in 2018 but delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Modise's refusal to make public the cargo manifest was supported by fellow ANC lawmakers, who said the documents were "classified." Modise said they would be handed over to the inquiry into the incident. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1998 VETERANS REJECT JAPANESE 'SORROW'



Emperor Akihito of Japan has spoken of his "deep sorrow and pain" over the suffering inflicted by his country during World War II, but did not apologise for the treatment of prisoners in work camps.

Addressing a state banquet at Buckingham Palace, attended by the Queen, Duke of Edinburgh, Queen Mother and 11 other senior Royals, the Emperor said he could "never forget" the many kinds of suffering experienced by so many.

War veterans said that Emperor Akihito had not gone far enough and demanded a "real, meaningful apology."

They are angry with Japan over its refusal to offer more substantial compensation and a full apology for their suffering during the war.

Earlier, in a gesture of contempt, former prisoners of war turned their backs on Emperor Akihito and whistled the wartime anthem Colonel Bogey as he rode with the Queen in a Royal carriage down The Mall.

Later, outside nearby Westminster Abbey where the emperor laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a memorial to the dead of World War I, around 500 protesters repeated their protest, turning their backs and humming Colonel Bogey again.

Under the post-war Japanese constitution, Emperor Akihito is a non-political figurehead and, as such, cannot formally apologise for the suffering inflicted by the Japanese imperial army.

But in the banquet speech on Tuesday, delivered in Japanese, he came close to saying sorry.

"It truly saddens me, however, that the relationship so nurtured between our two countries should have been marred by the Second World War.

"The Empress and I can never forget the many kinds of suffering so many people have undergone because of that war.

At the thought of the scars of war that they bear, our hearts are filled with deep sorrow and pain. All through our visit here, this thought will never leave our minds.

We sincerely hope that such a history will never be repeated between our two nations."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Of the 50,016 British military personnel taken captive by the Japanese 12,433 died or were killed in captivity.

The survivors campaigned for years for extra compensation for the horrors they endured. On 26 November 1998 a Japanese court ruled against them saying the issue was settled when Japan made a token payment of £76 (the equivalent of £1,200 today) to the servicemen in the early 1950s.

Two years later, the British government granted a total of £100m to 16,700 former PoWs or their widows "in recognition of the unique circumstances of their captivity".

The chairman of the Japanese Labour Camp Survivors' Association, Arthur Titherington, said the veterans would continue to seek a full apology from the Japanese emperor.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

 ARIES Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You will benefit by taking care of other people's concerns. Social events may lead to a romantic interlude. Strengthen your position among your peers.	 TAURUS Apr. 20-May. 20 Be careful when dealing with loved ones. Try not to be overly generous. Your anger may be impossible to contain if you get into debates with family members.
 GEMINI May. 21-Jun. 21 Your boss may not be in the best of moods today. Do not invest in joint ventures. Changes could be overwhelming. Those you work with may have little consideration for the underdog.	 CANCER Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You will be in the mood for competition, and your ability to lead a group will bring you popularity. It's hard to stay mad if the object of the anger refuses to react.
 LEO Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You can make financial deals that will bring you extra cash. Spend some quality time with the one you love. Your talents will shine at work.	 VIRGO Aug. 23-Sep. 22 You may have more people on your domestic scene than anticipated. You are best to work at home if you can. Jealousy may get in the way of a good relationship.
 LIBRA Sep. 23-Oct. 22 Your persuasive nature will win the heart of someone you've had your eye on. Some time spent with that special someone should be your intent.	 SCORPIO Oct. 23-Nov. 21 You will accomplish the most through orderly activities. Don't overspend to impress someone who interests you. Try not to overreact to the loss.
 SAGITTARIUS Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You must not let others talk you into doing things that will probably limit you financially at a later date. Those you work with may have little consideration for the underdog.	 CAPRICORN Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Think before you act if you wish to avoid friction. Pamper yourself today. You can expect the fur to fly on the home front. Your mind will be wandering to exotic destinations.
 AQUARIUS Jan. 20-Feb. 18 If boredom has set in, find new and unique directions that offer interesting friendships. You are ready to blow up and your stress level has gone into over drive.	 PISCES Feb. 19-Mar. 20 Exhaustion combined with overindulgence could result in minor health problems. Talk to superiors about problems that you feel are getting out of hand.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



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WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	16	30	cloudy
Changchun	14	28	showers
Chengdu	19	27	overcast
Chongqing	22	29	cloudy
Fuzhou	22	33	rain
Guangzhou	26	33	cloudy
Guiyang	19	28	overcast
Haikou	26	33	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	19	28	rain
Harbin	14	27	thunderstorms
Hefei	20	27	rain
Nanjing	19	28	thunderstorms
Shanghai	21	29	cloudy
Taipei	22	28	rain
Wuhan	20	25	rain
Hong Kong	28	31	thunderstorms
WORLD			
Moscow	14	26	overcast
Frankfurt	9	22	overcast
Paris	12	23	overcast
London	8	19	overcast
New York	13	23	fine

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Son of Adam and Eve; 5- Failure; 8- A Baldwin brother; 12- Actress Hatcher; 13- Pertaining to the kidneys; 15- Old Italian money; 16- Kiln for drying hops; 17- Digression; 18- Footfall; 19- Plan beforehand; 22- Canterbury can; 23- Verse starter?; 24- Caspian Sea feeder; 26- Position, in Britain; 29- Was merciful to; 31- Despot Amin; 32- Plumber's tool; 34- Metal fastener; 36- Staying power; 38- Steak order; 40- ___ sapiens; 41- Indian form of address; 43- Eventually become; 45- Cedar Rapids college; 46- Rambler; 48- Talks; 50- Actress Moore; 51- Charlemagne's realm; Abbr.; 52- TV attachment; 54- Financial analyst; 61- Excuse me; 63- Current location; 64- I could ___ horse!; 65- Cheek; 66- Wanting; 67- Broadway opening; 68- Formerly, formerly; 69- Skid row woe; 70- Ollie's partner;

DOWN 1- At the apex of; 2- Tolerate; 3- Gaelic language of Ireland or Scotland; 4- Chemical indicator; 5- Ricky's portrayer; 6- Military group; 7- Arp's art movement; 8- Capp and Capone; 9- Capital of the US state of Arkansas; 10- ... saw Elba; 11- ___ Crunch; 13- Shining; 14- Cessation; 20- Tolkien tree creatures; 21- Ages; 25- Foot part; 26- Brainstorms; 27- Peignoir; 28- Trademark; 29- Transmits; 30- Band's sample tapes; 31- French pronoun; 33- ___Tiki; 35- Misfortune; 37- Male parent; 39- Agreeableness of sound; 42- Explosive weapon; 44- Andean country; 47- Rest atop; 49- Trojan War hero; 52- Still life subject; 53- Burn slightly; 55- Scored 100 on; 56- Nair rival; 57- Scoundrels; 58- Diplomacy; 59- Bluesy James; 60- Picnic spoiler; 62- Colo. clock setting;

Yesterday's solution

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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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

MARK KENNEDY, MDT/AP
ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

DRIVE IN

'ABOUT MY FATHER' IS A MESSY, LIMP ROM-COM WITH ROBERT DE NIRO AS BAIT

IF you were to resurrect the tired storyline of a young couple having to meet their partners' parents and were looking around for someone to play the gruff, disapproving future father-in-law, one name should definitely not pop out. Robert De Niro.

Yes, he's hysterical as the intense, no-nonsense, overprotective dad who'd make any suitor turned wide-eyed. Yes, he's good at playing the role with the straightest of faces. We know that because he's done it to great effect in "Meet the Parents." Many times.

And yet "About My Father" brings out this revered Oscar-winner for a sloppy reprise of that role in a consistently unfunny rom-com that you get the distinct feeling might not be in theaters at all if he didn't lend his deadpan glower.

Comedian Sebastian Maniscalco has co-written and stars in this big sloppy Italian American kiss about family that not only leans into stereotypes — working-class Italians on one side, WASPs on the other — but plows the field with them.

Maniscalco plays a Chicago hotel manager in love with a country club-raised artist (played by the always-smiling Leslie Bibb) who both have a lesson to learn

AP PHOTO



Robert De Niro as Salvo in a scene from "About My Father"

about the push and pull of blood. "The family is not just one thing. It's everything," is the motto the Maniscalco clan live by. It would have been a powerful message in 1972.

Maniscalco's early life was built on thrift thanks to his father, Salvo, played by De Niro, a man who came to Chicago from Sicily for a better life and brought with him a savage work ethic and a chip

on his shoulder about wealth. He didn't buy his son a skateboard for Christmas, he made a janky one. Why does he love the Fourth of July? "It's the only holiday you don't have to buy a gift."

On the other side is the Collins clan, who came to America on the Mayflower. Mom (Kim Cattrall) is a U.S. senator and dad (David Rasche) is CEO of a luxurious hotel group. They live in a gated

compound in Maryland with peacocks wandering around. "You should see the house in Aspen," mom says.

The plot turns on a July 4th holiday meeting when the Maniscalco father and son visit the girlfriend's family to suss each other out. Will Salvo be too nice? Is he not trying enough? Could he be trying to sabotage his son's happiness? Is his son pretending to be

someone's he's not? Can all this be solved with some pasta and parmesan? Marone!

The clash of cultures is immediately strong, mostly mocking the kombucha-drinking, monogrammed pajamas-wearing and tennis-playing WASPs. (There's also a Grandma Moses art joke for those still awake. Grandma Moses jokes slay.) The Maniscalcos have their own quirks, like spritzing cologne at every moment. The filmmakers — Laura Terruso directs from a script by Maniscalco and Austen Earl — have the meatballs to frame all this as an immigrant story.

Things sag and then get weird at the end, as this rom-com turns into a rom-com where the target is dad. There's even a running-to-the-airport scene when the penny drops for Salvo's son. But you'll have figured out that this was a cash grab long before that.

"About My Father," a Lionsgate release, is rated PG-13 for "for suggestive material, language and partial nudity." Running time: 89 minutes. ★★☆☆

AD

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TASTE OF EDESIA

Mesa by José Avillez

IRENE SAM, MDT

PORTUGUESE Chef José Avillez, known around the world as the first chef in Portugal to earn two Michelin stars at his own restaurant in Lisbon, is now collaborating with Mesa at The Karl Lagerfeld Macau. Chef Avillez, who is passionate about promoting Portuguese gastronomy to the world, is the perfect partner for Mesa as it strives to promote Macau as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy.

Chef Avillez naturally chose Macau for his latest culinary adventure as he shares a very special bond with this unique destination of Portuguese and Chinese heritage. In a nod to Macau's East-meets-West gastronomic culture, Mesa by José Avillez brings two talented chefs

together – Chef de Cuisine André Lai from the East and Chef Avillez from the West – to showcase the very best of contemporary Portuguese cuisine.

“The important historical relationship between Portugal and Macau immediately captivated my interest,” Chef Avillez said. “I started by thinking about the concept of the restaurant and the menu. Chef André Lai, the resident chef at Mesa, who knows the products, tastes and local culture well, made significant contributions. My goal as mentor, is to be the lighthouse Chef Lai follows in search of gastronomic excellence. I also aim to be an important source of inspiration for creating an exceptional contemporary Portuguese culinary journey for guests of Mesa by José Avillez.”

Chef Avillez brings a number of his own successful dishes

from his restaurants in Portugal and presents them in a brand new way with Chef Lai. Together, the two chefs have thoughtfully crafted a menu of contemporary Portuguese flavours, which manifest the tradition, quality, authenticity and farm-to-table philosophy of dining. Think classic favourites and seasonal specialties that use eclectic Portuguese ingredients with a hint of modern flair. Designed for sharing, some of these dishes are inspired by more traditional flavours, such as the Spring Piri Piri chicken with French fries and the Crispy suckling pig with French fries and orange salad, and others by more contemporary flavours, such as the Tempura cone with tuna tartare and spicy soya, the Algarve prawns marinated over lime or the citrus Kumquat signature ball dessert. The Mesa by

José Avillez menu complements an extensive Portuguese wine list closely developed in cooperation with Portuguese wineries and local distributors, as well as a wide selection of spirits and liquors.

Designed by fashion legend Karl Lagerfeld, Mesa by José Avillez's interior features a bold, blend of contemporary design and oriental inspiration. Here, the Designer's signature style

and favourite colours – geometric patterns, shapes, and lines in black, white and gold – are stylishly infused with elements from the East. In the unique and sophisticated atmosphere of Mesa by José Avillez, it is possible to discover the tradition, quality and authenticity of contemporary Portuguese cuisine through the culinary artistry of Chef Avillez and resident Chef Lai.

BOOK IT

Tom Hanks' novel shares inside look at moviemaking

THERE may be no one better suited to tell the tale of how a movie gets made than Hollywood icon and master of the motion picture Tom Hanks.

His debut novel follows the life of a story from its inspiration to when it hits the silver screen. The fictional tale captures the magic of the process, yes, but also the crawling, detail-packed moviemaking step, presented just so in

the bulk of the novel.

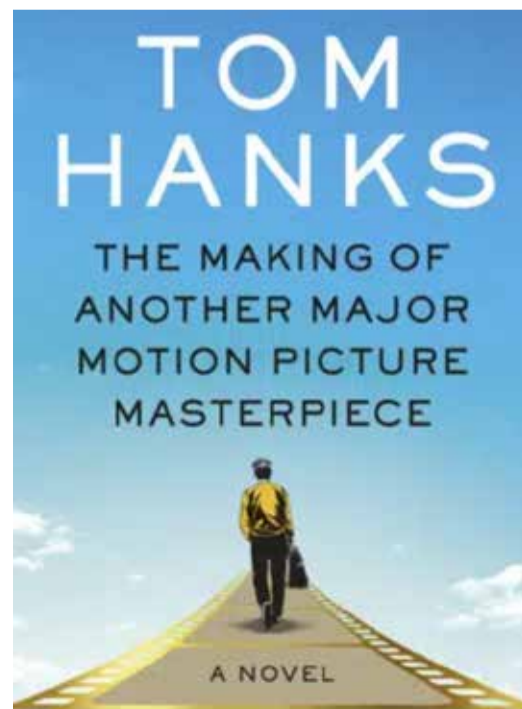
The first act takes place in the '70s, introducing readers to Robby Anderson, a 5-year-old with a knack for drawing comic strips, and his hero and Marine veteran uncle, Bob Falls. When Uncle Bob exits Robby's life as quickly as he entered it, all Robby has left of him is a comic likeness he drew of his uncle as a World War II flame-thrower superhero.

Robby grows up to create a fully fledged comic strip based on said character, and after fast-forwarding to present day, the strip is discovered in a collection of old comics by genius movie director Bill Johnson, who's seeking inspiration for a Marvel-esque superhero movie he's itching to make.

Perhaps at its heart, this novel acts as a thank you to the unsung heroes of

movie production. Drivers, makeup artists and personal assistants alike all get a shot in the spotlight, sometimes at the expense of some semblance of any story progression.

At one point, Bill's agent says his script has “too many scenes, too many characters, too many pages and not enough conflict.” The same could be said for this novel, but if you have the patience to sit back and get to know each lovingly crafted character as much as Hanks wants you to, you can learn some interesting aspects of moviemaking and get a glimpse of what it takes to make a motion picture masterpiece. **KIANA DOYLE, MDT/AP**



“The Making of Another Motion Picture Masterpiece,” by Tom Hanks (Knopf)

OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**CHINA-RUSSIA TIES
 NOBODY'S BUSINESS
 BUT THEIR OWN**

Although some Western countries have expressed their disapproval of Sino-Russian cooperation and seek to distort the economic and trade ties between the two countries as proof that China is supporting Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, this is part and parcel of the "evil empires" guff they are peddling to the gullible.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning stated categorically that "China-Russia cooperation does not target any third party, nor is it subject to disruption or coercion by any third party."

Her back-in-your-face response was a rebuttal of the disapprobation voiced by the usual parties at China hosting a delegation led by Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin. The visit is intended to give substance to the agreement reached between the two heads of state to promote greater complementarity and joint development of traditional trade and emerging areas of cooperation.

China is Russia's largest trading partner, with trade between the two sides reaching a record \$190 billion last year, according to Chinese customs data.

Energy is an obvious lubricant for greater cooperation. Russia has it to sell and China wants to buy it. China became Russia's top energy customer last year.

But trade between the two countries is more than just energy. Thanks to their complementary trade structures, the value of China-Russia imports and exports soared 41.3 percent on a yearly basis to \$73.15 billion in the first four months of 2023, indicating a bright prospect for the two countries to realize the goal of \$200 billion for bilateral trade, a target set by the two leaders for this year.

In today's turbulent world, that China and Russia are making efforts to expand their cooperation and strengthen ties should be perceived as a contribution to world peace, stability and development. Only those with a narrow world view and clinging to the Cold War mentality would question its purpose.

Guided by the two heads of state, China and Russia have blazed a path of major-country relations featuring strategic trust and good neighborliness, setting a good example for international relations.

But China, like the majority of the countries in the world, has adopted a different stance than the West over the Ukraine conflict, which forms a stark contrast to what the US-led Western countries have been doing in imposing sanctions on Russia and constantly fanning the war flames in Ukraine. For this reason, the US-led clique is trying to stigmatize China's relations with Russia.

Despite all the brickbats, China will continue to strengthen its cooperation with Russia while at the same time pushing for a lasting diplomatic resolution of the Ukraine crisis.

20 RICHEST COUNTRIES ACCOUNT FOR OVER HALF OF 50 MILLION PEOPLE IN 'MODERN SLAVERY': REPORT **THE BUZZ**

The world's 20 richest countries are fueling forced labor and account for over half the estimated 50 million people living in "modern slavery," according to a report released yesterday [Macau time].

The report by the Walk Free foundation, a rights group that focuses on modern slavery, said six members of the Group of 20 nations have the largest number of people in modern slavery — either in forced labor or forced marriage. India tops the list with 11 million followed by China with 5.8 million, Russia with 1.9 million, Indonesia with 1.8 million, Turkey with 1.3 million and the United States with 1.1 million.

"Most of the countries with lowest prevalence of modern slavery — Switzerland, Norway, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Ireland, Japan, and Finland — are also members of the G20," the report said.

Last September, a report by the U.N.'s International Labor Organization and International Organization for Migration and Walk Free estimated that 50 million people were living in "modern slavery" — 28 million in forced labor and 22 million in forced marriage.

"Modern slavery permeates every aspect of our society," Walk Free Founding Director Grace Forrest said in a statement.

AP PHOTO



TINA TURNER, 'QUEEN OF ROCK 'N' ROLL', DIES AT 83

TINA Turner, the unstoppable singer and stage performer who teamed with husband Ike Turner for a dynamic run of hit records and live shows in the 1960s and '70s and survived her horrifying marriage to triumph in middle age with the chart-topping "What's Love Got to Do With It," has died at 83.

Turner died yesterday [Macau time], after a long illness in her home in Küsnacht near Zurich, according to her manager. She became a Swiss citizen a decade ago.

Few stars traveled so far — she was born Anna Mae Bullock in a segregated Tennessee hospital and spent her latter years on a 260,000 square foot estate on Lake Zurich — and overcame so much. Physically battered, emotionally devastated and financially ruined by her 20-year relationship with Ike Turner, she became a superstar on her own in her 40s, at a time when most of her peers were on their way down, and remained a top concert draw for years after.

"How do we say farewell to a woman who owned her pain and

trauma and used it as a means to help change the world?" Angela Bassett, who played Turner in the 1993 biopic "What's Love Got to Do With It," said in a statement.

"Through her courage in telling her story, her commitment to stay the course in her life, no matter the sacrifice, and her determination to carve out a space in rock and roll for herself and for others who look like her, Tina Turner showed others who lived in fear what a beautiful future filled with love, compassion, and freedom should look like.

With admirers ranging from Mick Jagger to Beyoncé to Mariah Carey, the "Queen of Rock 'n' Roll" was one of the world's most popular entertainers, known for a core of pop, rock and rhythm and blues favorites: "Proud Mary," "Nutbush City Limits," "River Deep, Mountain High," and the hits she had in the '80s, among them "What's Love Got to Do with It," "We Don't Need Another Hero" and a cover of Al Green's "Let's Stay Together."

Her trademarks inclu-

ded a growling contralto that might smolder or explode, her bold smile and strong cheekbones, her palette of wigs and the muscular, quick-stepping legs she did not shy from showing off. She sold more than 150 million records worldwide, won 12 Grammys, was voted along with Ike into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1991 (and on her own in 2021) and was honored at the Kennedy Center in 2005, with Beyoncé and Oprah Winfrey among those praising her. Her life became the basis for a film, a Broadway musical and an HBO documentary in 2021 that she called her public farewell.

As she recounted in her memoir, "I, Tina," Ike began hitting her not long after they met, in the mid-1950s, and only grew more vicious. Provoked by anything and anyone, he would throw hot coffee in her face, choke her, or beat her until her eyes were swollen shut, then rape her. Before one show, he broke her jaw and she went on stage with her mouth full of blood.

MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Cambodia's top opposition party was barred yesterday from participating in elections set for July after the Constitutional Council refused to overturn a decision not to register the party over a paperwork issue. The Candlelight Party, the sole credible challenger to the governing Cambodian People's Party in the upcoming polls, lost its appeal because its complaint was deemed unlawful, the council said in a brief statement. The decision is final and cannot be appealed.

AP PHOTO



Turkey Two opposing visions for the country's future are on the ballot when voters return to the polls Sunday for a runoff presidential election that will decide between an increasingly authoritarian incumbent and a challenger who has pledged to restore democracy. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a populist and polarizing leader who has ruled Turkey for 20 years, is well positioned to win after falling just short of victory in the first round of balloting on May 14. He was the top finisher even as the country reels from sky-high inflation and the effects of a devastating earthquake in February.

AP PHOTO



Ukraine The chairman of Ukraine's parliament yesterday offered words of reconciliation over World War II-era mass murders that have strained relations with its neighbor and strategic ally Poland for 80 years. "Human life has equal value, regardless of nationality, race, sex or religion," Ruslan Stefanchuk (pictured) told Polish lawmakers. "With this awareness we will cooperate with you, dear Polish friends, and we will accept the truth regardless of how uncompromising it may be."

HOLIDAY TIMES

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holiday. The Times will be back on the stands on Tuesday May 30. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times.