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Times

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“THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’”

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LAWMAKERS ARE MOSTLY SATISFIED WITH THE FIRST VERSION OF GOVT'S PROPOSED BILL TO UPDATE LAWS REGULATING THE GRANTING OF CREDIT TO GAMBLERS

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CHINA PLANS TO LAND ASTRONAUTS ON MOON BEFORE 2030

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AP PHOTO



Malaysia's maritime agency said yesterday it found a cannon shell believed to be from World War II on a Chinese-registered vessel and was investigating if the barge carrier "was involved in the looting" of two British warship wrecks in the South China Sea. Malaysian media reported that illegal salvage operators were believed to have targeted the HMS Repulse and the HMS Prince of Wales, which were sunk in 1941 by Japanese torpedoes, days after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

AP PHOTO



North Korea yesterday notified neighboring Japan that it plans to launch a satellite in coming days, which may be an attempt to put Pyongyang's first military reconnaissance satellite into orbit. Japan's coast guard said the notice it received from North Korean waterway authorities said the launch window was from May 31 to June 11, and that the launch may affect waters in the Yellow Sea, East China Sea and east of the Philippines' Luzon Island.

AP PHOTO



Kosovo Ethnic Serbs in northern Kosovo clashed with police at a municipal building yesterday as they tried to take over one of the local communes where ethnic Albanian mayors entered last week with the help of authorities. The violence was the latest incident as tensions soared over the past week, with Serbia putting the country's military on high alert and sending more troops to the border with Kosovo, which declared independence in 2008.

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LONG WEEKEND RAISES VISITORS' BAR AGAIN

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AP PHOTO



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10 CANDIDATES FROM SARS PRE-SELECTED FOR BEIJING'S SPACE PROGRAM

The selection of the fourth batch of taikonauts, China's new generation of astronauts, is proceeding as planned and will be completed by the end of this year, the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) announced yesterday. The selection process was launched in 2022 and will result in 12 to 14 reserve taikonauts being picked, each with different specializations, such as spacecraft pilots, flight engineers and payload specialists, said CMSA Spokesperson Lin Xiqiang. "For the first time, the post of payload specialist is open to people from Hong Kong and Macau," Lin noted. By March, the first stage of the selection process had been completed, and more than 100 candidates then entered the second round, including more than 10 from Hong Kong and Macau.

MACAU TO HOST WORLD SCHOOL BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

The Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) of Macau has secured the hosting rights for the World School Basketball Championship 2024. Yesterday, the "Agreement on the Hosting of the ISF World School Basketball Championship 2024" was officially signed. The international championship, organized by the International School Sports Federation (ISF), aims to foster cultural exchange among young people worldwide while enhancing their sports skills and competitiveness. Kong Chi Meng, DSEDJ director said the contest serves as a platform for fostering friendships and promoting sports exchange among young athletes from around the world.

SIXTH PHASE OF FOREST RESTORATION BY JUNE

In the second quarter of this year, the sixth phase of mountain forest restoration will be carried out in areas on both sides of Estrada Militar, south of Hac Sá Reservoir and in Long Chao Kok in Coloane, spanning a total area of 35 hectares. It is planned that 35,000 new saplings will be planted next year, according to the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM). Since 2018, the IAM has carried out ecological restoration of mountain forests in phases, and the planting of over 125,000 saplings of more than 120 native tree species has been completed. The survival rate of saplings has reached over 90%.

COMMITTEE LAWMAKERS MOSTLY SATISFIED WITH CASINO CREDIT BILL

RENATO MARQUES

LAWMAKERS are mostly satisfied with the first version of the bill presented by the government to update laws regulating the granting of credit to gamblers to play in local casinos.

The first meeting of the Second Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL), led by Chan Chak Mo, concluded it was unnecessary to draft questions to the government on this matter, Chan told the media after the meeting.

Lawmakers are concerned with only a few aspects of the bill, which are more related to ensuring it has enough elements to be effective in tackling all the potential issues.

Chan also recalled that the bill is mostly to update the granting of casino credit rules, adjusting it to the new gaming laws approved last year and that are now in force.

The committee chairman also noted the object and purpose are very clear and restrict the granting of credit for gambling, credit that must be mandatorily granted in gaming chips.

Some aspects of these rules have already been addressed and are part of other gaming laws. An example is the one that regulates the operation of casinos where it is already sta-



ted that gaming promoters can grant credit to gamblers, as long as they have a contract with the concessionaire that allows them to either to grant the credits on their own, or in the representation of the concessionaire.

Chan noted that one of the questions raised in the debate of this bill was as to whether there was any limitation on the type of gaming chips to be given to the players as credit. This matter was already under discussion previously, with the government saying at the time that the credit could be issued in either non-negotiable or negotiable chips.

This bill also defines – in Article 30 – which types of credit granting can or cannot constitute usury with some lawmakers expressing opinions that the government might also have to update Law number 8/96/M, which regulates the liceity of gaming activities.

The AL committee chairman said most of the matters to be resolved are "technical" and will be solved by the juridical advisories from the AL and the government. After this, the committee will invite the government representatives to a meeting with the lawmakers to respond to any questions and

doubts they may have.

In the first draft of the bill, one of the matters that concerned several lawmakers was related to the protection of the rights of the credit grantors in case the gamblers failed to repay their debt. Chan said, however, that the matter has already been debated enough and that there are judicial procedures that can be taken in such cases that are not limited to Macau jurisdiction, considering that there are enough guarantees for the casinos and promoters in pursuing the repayment of the credits granted, even beyond Macau's borders.

Gov't approves casinos' old district rejuvenation proposals

ANTHONY LAM

THE government "basically" approves rejuvenation plans for the city's older districts submitted by the six casino operators, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng has been cited as saying by local media.

The comment was reportedly made by Chief Executive Ho Iat

Seng at a press conference concluding the official visit of Xia Baolong, director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council.

While in Macau, the national official visited the non-gambling elements at two local hotels and resorts. As seen from earlier reports, Xia visited a new con-

vention and exhibition complex in Cotai.

Elaborating on the rejuvenation plan, Ho said "[casino operators] understand the mentality of tourists, what they are looking for and what to invest to rejuvenate the districts," as cited by local media All About Macau.

The head of the government further com-

mended the plans for being "very well done" and "very detailed." He also hoped these plans could be implemented as soon as possible.

He said the plans should bring older districts to "awakening" so that they would develop alongside the Cotai district. He suggested rejuvenation requires efforts from

both public and private sectors, adding that each sector working out their functions with coordination will lead to "a good direction."

On the other hand, Ho said the casino operators have been fulfilling their non-gambling promises made during the license bidding procedure. He believed that non-gambling investments will leverage developments in MICE, culture and sports, which is a commitment of gaming development in Macau.

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PUBLIC WORKS

Low public approval for some Zone A proposals

ANTHONY LAM

THE first five proposals in the planning for New Urban Zone A, including one related to the Zone's population number, garnered only 45.8% of public approval.

The concluding report on the public consultation of the

planning for the Zone was released yesterday by the Land and Urban Construction Bureau (DSSCU). It is available on the bureau's website.

In the consultation documents, the first five proposals concerned the use and conditions for use of land on the Zone, and restrictions on public and private entities, as well

as the expected population, which was set to 96,000 people.

The lowest approval rating – 44% – was found for the proposals on future road networks and means of transport on the Zone. The government has proposed that the Light Rapid Transit will be a transport backbone on the Zone, while two north-south and two east-west

main roads will outline the entire road network.

In contrast, people did not much oppose the proposal for the construction of a pedestrian-friendly district, with a 65.4% approval rate.

The most highly supported proposal is the one on greening and green corridors, which garnered a 75.3% approval rate.

Members of the public were not very enthusiastic in proactively providing feedback. The consultation has received 1,283 statements of opinion, of which only 385 were submitted unprompted, accounting to 30% of all feedback. The bureau distilled them into 6,170 opinions.

The bureau has also conducted data digging and collected 238 submissions from traditional media – including online-print hybrid media – and 660 from online platforms and social media.

Each submission or entry online or each speech made at public consultation sessions was considered an instance of feedback, the bureau noted.

The consultation was conducted between Oct. 7 and Dec. 5, 2022. Six consultation seminars were organized with half catering to the general public. The six sessions accommodated 360 attendees with 72 speeches from the audience.

Construction on and near the Zone is in full swing, even though the final report has only just been released.

SUBMISSIONS FOR LA BIENNALE DE VENEZIA OPEN

From today until July 28, the Macao Museum of Art is calling for submissions for the "60th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale de Venezia – Collateral Event from Macao, China" contest. Successful entries will be featured in the exhibition in Venice, Italy, next April. As the exhibition is considered the largest international platform for contemporary artistic exchange, the aim is for Macao to promote its contemporary art to an international audience. Proposals must be submitted in teams, with the condition of one team member having submitted work to other contemporary art exhibitions and having a tertiary degree with a major in art.

DSAL WARNS AGAINST WORKPLACE HEAT STROKE

Since the yellow high temperature warning is now effective in Macao because of the extremely hot weather, the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) has appealed to workers to beware of heatstroke and encourage them to arrange job rotations. Those who work in high temperatures and humid environments for extended periods are also encouraged to take short breaks at appropriate times. DSAL also appeals to the industry to pay attention to ventilation in the workplace to avoid accidents such as heatstroke and gas poisoning.

TOURISM

Long weekend once again raised daily visitors average, industry recovering

RENATO MARQUES

THE long weekend that included the public holiday of the Buddha's Birthday Friday has contributed again to the rise of the average daily visitor figure of Macau.

According to data made available by the Public Security Police Force, 264,842 tourists entered Macau over the three days (May 26 to 28), a number that accounts for a daily average of 88,281.

As expected, the visitors from the mainland continue to top the chart of those visiting Macau, but the considerable influx of visitors from the neighbo-



ring region of Hong Kong, as well as foreigners, is noteworthy.

Over the course of the three-day weekend, 92,421 people from Hong Kong entered Macau, a number

that accounts for about 19% of the total, while some 16,566 people from several nationalities and origins also arrived in Macau, amounting to about 3% of the total.

Earlier in the weekend and speaking to the media, the director of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, said that with the figures currently seen in visitation, the overall tourism industry of Macau has already reached a recovery level of about 50% when compared to pre-pandemic times.

According to figures cited by Senna Fernandes, Macau is now receiving, on average, some 60,000 visitors per day, expressing hopes that, with the arrival of the summer holiday season, such a figure can still be raised a little further.

Also of note from the long weekend statistics is the fact that the difference between the number of visitors arriving via the Border Gate (the preferential entry port) and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Port has been reduced, with the last accounting for some 81,239 entries, while Border Gate registered 96,436.

ONE ACCOUNT FINALLY AVAILABLE FOR TNRS

RENATO MARQUES

THE Macao One Account government service platform has become accessible to non-resident workers (TNRs).

From yesterday, all those living and working in Macau can create accounts on the platform to maintain personal information and access several services online, the government announced in a press statement.

Through the mobile application, TNRs can access services including inquiries related to work and working permits.

According to the government, around 160 representatives from local associations, employment agency associations, medical institutions, and property management, as well as hotels and banking

industries, participated in the two sessions.

The One Account system currently provides functions and services including social welfare, job searching, transportation and medical services, a total of around 70 services.

TNRs and other non-Macao residents will have access to some of the areas of the platform such as My Health, My Information, My e-Affairs, My Cards and My Tax, and other functions and services such as inquiries and updates of non-resident workers' status and information.

TNRs may also be able to book appointments for service counters and pay for living expenses, traffic violation fines and perfume various other transactions.

OCCUPANCY RATE AT 80% IN APRIL

The average occupancy rate of guest rooms in April rose by 50.0 percentage points year-on-year to 79.8%, according to data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). The number of guests of hotel establishments in April leapt by 199.0% year-on-year to 1.1 million; guests from mainland China (739,000), Hong Kong (254,000) and Taiwan (18,000) jumped by 202.2%, 1,171.4% and 407.3% respectively, whereas local guests (45,000) dropped by 52.8%. In the first four months of 2023, the average occupancy rate of guest rooms of hotel establishments went up by 38.2 percentage points year-on-year to 76.2%.

MEETING, EXHIBITION EVENTS CONTINUE TO RISE IN Q1

A total of 208 meetings, incentive, conference and exhibition events were held in Macau in the first quarter of this year, an increase of 111 year on year, according to the latest Statistics and Census Service released yesterday. The report indicated that the number of participants and attendees rose by 20.5% to 199,000. A total of 196 meetings and conferences were held in the first quarter, up by 120 from the same period of last year. The number of participants surged by 258.1% to 22,000.

GUANGDONG- HONG KONG- MACAU UNIVERSITY ENERGY SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ALLIANCE ESTABLISHED

The University of Macau (UM) has co-initiated the establishment of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao University Energy Science and Technology Alliance under the framework of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao University Alliance. The establishment of the union was co-created with the Southern University of Science and Technology, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and Sun Yat-sen University. The signing ceremony and the Carbon Neutral Energy Forum for Universities in Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macau were held yesterday at UM, marking the official establishment of the alliance.

FREE ADMISSION TO GP MUSEUM ON JUNE 1

The Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) has announced the Grand Prix Museum will be open to the public for free Thursday, June 1. In addition to this, special activities will celebrate the second anniversary of the expansion of the museum. According to the MGTO, the "Gridiron Simulator" will be launched Thursday, allowing visitors to experience the sensation of driving a Grand Prix motorcycle on the famous Guia Circuit.

ANTHONY LAM

IN 2022, nine people died as a result of workplace accidents, and over 4,200 workers were injured, according to the latest data from the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL).

According to the report released last week, one fatality was found allegedly to be related to violations of occupational safety and health law and regulations. Nonetheless, the bureau underlined that all fatality cases were set to be reviewed by the judiciary and adjustments to these numbers are a possibility once judicial rulings are available.

Of all injuries documented, 22 workers lost their ability to work permanently, while 4,243 lost ability temporarily. Of the latter group, 456 did not require leave of absence.

Compared to last year's data, the overall injury figure has dropped 12%. As for injuries resulting in the permanent and temporary loss of occupational abilities, as well as of fatality, respectively 10.5%, 78.8% and 40% decreases were recorded compared to 2021.

In 2022, nearly all workplaces were called to suspend operations for at least a week due to Covid-19 lockdowns.

Categorizing injuries by

WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS KILL NINE LAST YEAR



type of profession, the gaming and other service industries logged the highest number of workplace injuries, reaching 959 or 22.4%. In the hotel and dining industry, 799 injuries or 18.7% were recorded. In real estate and industrial and commercial services, 507 injuries

or 11.9% were recorded. All three professions had one fatal accident.

The construction industry, however, is the profession with the highest fatality record, reaching four. The other two fatalities happened in the manufacturing and the transport, storage and com-

munication industries, with one fatality each.

In terms of accident rate per 1,000 workers, the transport, storage and communication, the manufacturing, as well as the hotel and dining industries were the top three, reaching 25.4%, 21.7% and 17.7% respectively.

GBA

HONG KONG'S COLORFUL BUN FESTIVAL RETURNS AFTER COVID-19 CANCELLATIONS

LOUISE DELMOTTE
& ALICE FUNG

HONG Kong's colorful Bun Festival is back after three years of COVID-19 restrictions.

Visitors packed the tiny island of Cheung Chau to watch children parade in costumes and to eat buns stamped with the Chinese characters for "peace" and "safety."

The festival's highlight is a midnight "bun-scrambling" competition in which climbers race up a tower covered with plastic buns, trying to grab as many as possible. It was suspended for decades after an accident in 1978 when a collapse injured many, and only restarted in 2005.

After COVID-19,

AP PHOTO



the bun scramble has returned, but for this year, it's limited to one smaller tower.

The festival's comeback is a sign that normal life is returning to Hong Kong after its tight pandemic restrictions.

During the para-

de, children dressed as legendary deities or historic characters are carried on stands above the heads of the crowd through the island's narrow lanes.

This year, some wore firefighter costumes to pay tribute to the Hong Kong res-

cue crews that helped search for earthquake survivors in Turkey in February. Cantonese opera artists also staged performances in a bamboo theater.

"Everyone is so happy," said Cheung Chau resident Chow Hoi-kiu. "The per-

formers are having a hard day. They started the day's preparation early. I'm sure it's tough and so we are here to watch and support them."

There were long lines outside shops selling steam buns and stores stocked with bun-themed souvenirs.

Kwok Siu-kan, owner of the Kwok Kam Kee Cake Shop, said she hopes the buns will bring people prosperity.

"If you eat the buns, you will have even more peace and safety," Kwok said.

The event, also known as the Cheung Chau Jiao Festival, has been celebrated for more than 100 years, according to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Office. It says that according to folklore, residents started the rituals and traditions to dispel disaster and pray for blessings after the island was devastated by a plague. **MDT/AP**

GAMING

New bill to build Athletics stadium on Las Vegas Strip caps Nevada's cost at \$380m

GABE STERN,
CARSON CITY (NEV.)

A bill introduced last week in the Nevada Legislature would give the Oakland Athletics up to \$380 million for a potential 30,000-seat, \$1.5 billion retractable roof stadium on the Las Vegas Strip.

The bulk of the public funding would come from \$180 million in transferable tax credits from the state and \$120 million in county bonds, which can vary based on interest rate returns. Clark County also would contribute \$25 million in credit toward infrastructure costs.

The A's have been looking for a home to replace Oakland Coliseum, where the team has played since arriving from Kansas City for the 1968 season. The team previously sought to build a stadium in Fremont, California, as well as San Jose and finally the Oakland waterfront — all ideas that never materialized.

The plan in the Nevada Legislature won't directly raise taxes. It can move forward with a simply majority vote in the Senate and Assembly. Lawmakers have a little more than a week to consider the proposal before they adjourn June 5, though it could be voted on if a special session is called.

The Athletics have agreed to use land on the southern end of the Las Vegas Strip, where the Tropicana Las Vegas casino resort sits. Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao has said she is disappoint-

AP PHOTO



ted the team didn't negotiate with Oakland as a "true partner."

Las Vegas would be the fourth home for a franchise that started as the Philadelphia Athletics from 1901-54. It would become the smallest TV market in Major League Baseball and the smallest market to be home to three major professional sports franchises.

The team and Las Vegas are hoping to draw from the nearly 40 million tourists who visit the city annually to help fill the stadium. The 30,000-seat capacity

would make it the smallest MLB stadium.

MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred last week said a vote on the Oakland Athletics' prospective move to Las Vegas could take place when owners meet June 13-15 in New York.

The plan faces an uncertain path in the Nevada Legislature.

Last Thursday, Democratic leaders said financing bills, including for the A's, may not go through if Republican Gov. Joe Lombardo vetoes the five budget bills, which he has threatened to

do as many of his priorities have stalled or faded in the Democratic-controlled Legislature.

Under the bill, the Clark County Board of Commissioners would create a homelessness prevention and assistance fund along the stadium's area in coordination with MLB and the Nevada Resort Association. There, they would manage funds for services, including emergency rental and utility assistance, job training, rehabilitation and counseling services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The lease agreement with the Las Vegas Stadium Authority would be up for renewal after 30 years.

Nevada's legislative leadership is reviewing the proposal, Democratic state Assembly Speaker Steve Yeager said in a statement Thursday.

"No commitment will be made until we have both evaluated the official proposal and received input from interested parties, including impacted community members," Yeager said. **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

Galaxy's new youth program to 'cultivate local talent'



To develop local talent for the integrated tourism and leisure sector, the Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) recently inaugurated its "Integrated Resort Youth

Development Program" in collaboration with the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) at the Banyan Tree Ballroom of Galaxy Macau.

With a training quota of more than 50, the program

will feature training and career development opportunities for Macau residents in numerous sectors such as food and beverage, housekeeping and VIP hospitality through 300 hours of professional training over a 12-month period.

"DSAL attaches great importance to talent cultivation and thanks GEG for its support and cooperation to jointly launch the "Integrated Resort Youth Development Program," with an aim of fostering employment and upward mobility of local residents whilst facilitating quality development of the tourism sector," the director of DSAL, Wong Chi Hong, said.

Teamlab SuperNature kicks off with new interactive spaces



In collaboration with the Tokyo-based international art collective teamLab, The Venetian Macao held the official launch of the "teamlab SuperNature Macau" exhibition, featuring

three new interactive artwork spaces: "Floating Flower Garden: Flowers and I are of the Same Root, the Garden and I are One," "Massless Clouds Between Sculpture and Life," and

"EN TEA HOUSE," as well as the renewal of the "Light Sculpture" series.

"The launch of new artwork spaces will further enrich Sands China Ltd.'s portfolio of arts and entertainment offerings and demonstrates our strong support for the [government's] 'tourism+' cross-sector integration initiative," president of Sands China, Wilfried Wong, said.

"It would be our great pleasure if people's experience here creates the opportunity to explore a new perception of the continuity between ourselves and the world," the founder of teamLab, Toshiyuki Inoko, added.



DIRE STRAIT

TAIWAN SAYS CHINESE WARSHIPS PASS THROUGH THE STRAIT

TAIWAN'S Defense Ministry said last weekend that it detected three Chinese warships, including the Shandong aircraft carrier, passing through the Taiwan Strait, as Beijing keeps

up pressure on the self-ruled island it claims as its own.

The ministry said it was monitoring the movements of the ships and will respond accordingly. In a tweet, the minis-

try said that the three vessels were headed north along the Taiwan Strait at noon and were steering along the west of the median line — an unofficial boundary once tacitly accep-

ted by both sides.

China has stepped up its military activities around Taiwan in recent months amid deteriorating U.S.-China ties.

China claims Taiwan as its

own territory to be brought under its control by force if necessary and regularly sends ships and warplanes into airspace and waters near the island.

The ministry also said that in the 24 hours from 6 a.m. Friday to Saturday, it detected 33 of China's People's Liberation Army aircraft and 10 navy vessels around Taiwan. Twelve of the aircraft had crossed the median line of the Taiwan Strait or entered the island's air defense identification zone.

In response, Taiwan's armed forces deployed aircraft, navy vessels and land-based missile systems.

In April, the Chinese military said it was "ready to fight" after completing three days of large-scale combat exercises around Taiwan that simulated sealing off the island in response to Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen's trip to the U.S.

Last August, China intensified war games around Taiwan, with missile firings and incursions into Taiwanese waters and airspace following then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taipei. **MDT/AP**

HONG KONG

Second-largest pro-democracy party disbands amid political crackdown

ONE of the few remaining pro-democracy parties in Hong Kong voted to dissolve itself on Saturday, joining a growing list of organizations that have disbanded as authorities crack down on dissent.

Civic Party chairman Alan Leong told reporters that the dissolution of the party was a "writing on the wall" as there was no one to take over. None of its members at an extraordinary general meeting filed nominations for executive positions.



Civic Party leaders leave a news conference after being disqualified for a legislative election in Hong Kong, July 30, 2020

Thirty of the 31 members voted to disband, with one person abstaining.

The party, which was

founded in 2006, was made up of mostly professionals, lawyers and academics. At its peak, it won six seats in

the Hong Kong legislature during the 2012 elections, and was the city's second-largest pro-democracy party after the Democratic Party.

Several members were charged with subversion under the national security law that was imposed by Beijing following massive 2019 protests calling for political freedoms.

They were accused of participating in an unofficial primary to pick up the best candidates for the legislative

elections that would allow the pro-democracy camp to win a majority of seats. Authorities, however, said that the primary was aimed at subverting the government.

In a written statement, Leong thanked "all like-minded people who joined our long walk to democracy for different parts of the journey."

"Today, the Civic Party is bidding Hong Kong farewell," he wrote. "We hope Hong Kong people will live in the moment with a hopeful and not too heavy heart. Live in truth and believe in tomorrow."

Since the national security law was passed, the city has undergone major changes to its political landscape. An overhaul of Hong Kong's electoral system was made

to ensure that only "patriots" loyal to China would be able to take office, and more than 200 people have been arrested for allegedly committing acts that endanger national security.

Many pro-democracy political organizations in Hong Kong have already disbanded. They include the protest organizer Civil Human Rights Front and the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, which was behind the annual Tiananmen Square vigil. The vigil has been banned for the last three years.

The city, which used to be a bastion of free speech and expression, has not seen a large-scale pro-democracy protest since 2020. **MDT/AP**

HONG KONG

GOV'T DENIES KNOWLEDGE ABOUT UYGHUR STUDENT, SLAMS AMNESTY FOR

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

HONG Kong Saturday criticized rights group Amnesty International's accusation that a Uyghur student disappeared after being interrogated at the airport, and said that government records showed

that he had not entered or been refused entry to the city.

Amnesty International said Friday that Abuduwaili Abudurehman, who was born in Xinjiang in western China, had traveled to Hong Kong from South Korea to visit a friend on

May 10 but has since gone missing after he texted the friend about being interrogated after his arrival. He spent the last seven years studying in Seoul, completing a Ph.D. in sports and leisure in 2022, according to the group.

In a statement, the go-

vernment strongly condemned Amnesty's "groundless and unfounded remarks" as an attempt to smear it.

"In fact, the records of the HKSAR Government show that the person has not entered or been refused entry by Hong Kong,"

the statement read, referring to the official name of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. "The organization deliberately attacked the HKSAR Government and slandered the human rights situation in Hong Kong without checking the fact."

The government requested an apology from the group.

"While Abuduwaili remains missing, we will remain concerned for his safety. His friend who reached out to Amnesty International has still not been able to make contact with

NEW SPACE RACE?

Beijing plans to land astronauts on moon before 2030

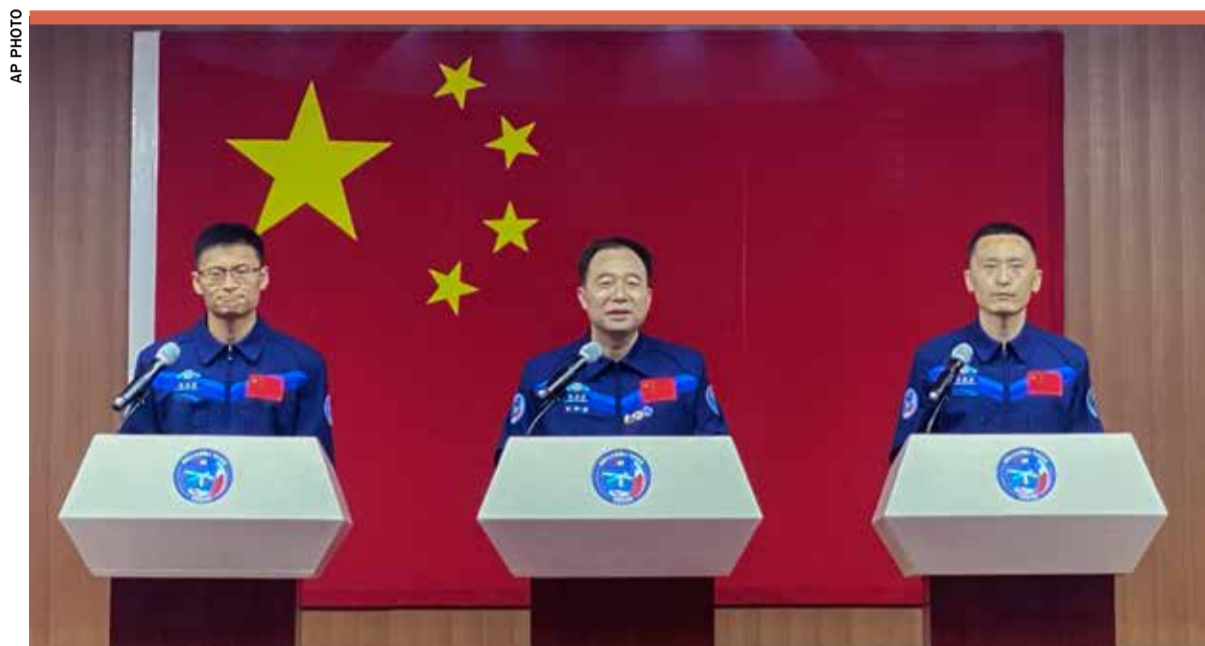
CHINA plans to land astronauts on the moon before 2030, which would be another advance in what's increasingly seen as a new space race.

The U.S. aims to put astronauts back on the lunar surface by the end of 2025.

Deputy Director of the Chinese Manned Space Agency Lin Xi-qiang confirmed China's goal at a news conference yesterday but gave no specific date.

Lin also said China plans to expand its orbiting crewed space station with an additional module. A new three-person crew is scheduled to head to the Tian-gong station on Tuesday aboard the Shenzhou 16 craft and will overlap briefly with the three astronauts already aboard.

The fresh crew includes a civilian for the first time. All previous crew members have been in the People's Liberation Army, the military wing of the country's ruling



Chinese astronauts for the upcoming Shenzhou-16 mission from left, Gui Haichao, Jing Haipeng and Zhu Yangzhu behind glass meet the reporters at a press conference at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center

Communist Party.

Gui Haichao, a professor at Beijing's top aerospace research institute, will join mission commander

Jing Haipeng and spacecraft engineer Zhu Yangzhu as the payload expert.

China completed the Tian-

gong space station in November with the third of three modules, centered on the Tianhe living and command module.

China's first manned space mission in 2003 made it the third country after the former Soviet Union and the U.S. to put a person into space.

China built its own station after it was excluded from the International Space Station, largely due to U.S. objections over the Chinese space programs' intimate ties to the PLA.

Space is increasingly seen as a new area of competition between China and the United States — the world's two largest economies and rivals for diplomatic and military influence. The astronauts NASA sends to the moon by the end of 2025 will aim for the south pole where permanently shadowed craters are believed to be packed with frozen water.

Plans for permanent crewed bases on the moon are also being considered by both countries, raising questions about rights and interests on the lunar surface. U.S. law tightly restricts cooperation between the two countries' space programs and while China says it welcomes foreign collaborations, those have thus far been limited to scientific research.

In addition to their lunar programs, the U.S. and China have also landed rovers on Mars and Beijing plans to follow the U.S. in landing a spacecraft on an asteroid. **MDT/AP**

AVIATION

First domestically made passenger plane completes maiden commercial flight

CHINA'S first domestically made passenger jet flew its maiden commercial flight on Sunday, as China looks to compete with industry giants such as Boeing and Airbus in the global aircraft market.

The C919 plane, built by the Commercial Aviation Corporation of China, carried about 130 passengers on the flight, according to state-owned



newspaper China Daily. The jet took off Sunday morning from Shanghai

Hongqiao Airport and landed less than two hours later in Beijing.

The flight was operated by state-owned China Eastern Airlines and

the side of the plane was emblazoned with the words: "The World's First C919."

The inaugural flight comes as COMAC looks to break into the single-aisle jet market in a direct challenge to Airbus and Boeing. Airbus's A320 and Boeing's B737 jets are the most popular aircrafts typically used for domestic and regional flights.

While COMAC designed many of the C919's parts, some of its key components are still sourced from the West, including its engine.

The company plans to build 150 C919 planes each year for the next five years, according to earlier state media reports.

The C919, which had been in development for 16 years, has a maximum range of about 5,630 kilometers and is designed to carry between 158 and 168 passengers.

Over 1,200 C919 jetliners have been ordered, COMAC says, with China Eastern Airlines under contract to buy five of them. **MDT/AP**

R SAYING HE DISAPPEARED AT AIRPORT

him after he sent a message saying he was being questioned by Chinese police at the time of his expected arrival in Hong Kong," Amnesty replied to The Associated Press in response for seeking comment.

"If he had flown to Hong Kong from South Korea,

there would be records of him boarding the plane," said Nyrola Elima, an independent Uyghur researcher based in Sweden.

"If it is true that he did not enter Hong Kong, he would have let his closest friends know his whereabouts for the last

two weeks," Tahir Imin, a Washington, D.C.-based Uyghur academic and founder of the Uyghur Times, said.

"The statement from Hong Kong authorities is a blatant lie and attempt to avoid international criticism," he said. **MDT/AP**



TURKEY

Erdogan turns away reform-minded challenger to win another term

SUZAN FRASER & ZEYNEP BILGINSO, ANKARA

TURKISH President Recep Tayyip Erdogan turned away a challenger who sought to reverse his authoritarian-leaning changes, securing five more years to oversee the country at the crossroads of Europe and Asia that plays a key role in NATO.

Erdogan prevailed by winning more than 52% of the vote in Sunday's presidential runoff, which came two weeks after he fell short of scoring an outright victory in the first round. A majority of Turkish voters in the second round chose him over challenger Kemal Kilicdaroglu, showing their support for a man who they see as a strong, proven leader.

Voters were divided between loyalty to Erdogan, who has ruled for two decades, and hopes for the opposition candidate, who promised to return to democratic norms, adopt more conventional economic policies and improve ties with the West.

With his immediate political future secure, Erdogan must now confront skyrocketing inflation that has fueled a cost-of-living crisis and rebuild in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake that killed more than 50,000 people.

In two speeches — one in Istanbul and one in Ankara — Erdogan thanked the nation for entrusting him with the presidency again.

"We hope to be worthy of your trust, as we have been for 21 years," he told supporters on a campaign bus outside his home in Istanbul.

He said the divisions of the election are over, but he continued to rail against his opponent.

"The only winner today is Turkey," Erdogan said outside the presidential palace in Ankara, promising to work hard for Turkey's second century, which he called the "Turkish century." The country marks its centennial this year.



Turkish President and People's Alliance's presidential candidate Recep Tayyip Erdogan makes a speech at the presidential palace, in Ankara

Supreme challenges lie ahead, starting with the economy that has taken a beating from what critics view as Erdogan's unorthodox policies. He also must tend to massive rebuilding efforts in 11 provinces hit by the Feb. 6 earthquake that leveled entire cities.

Kilicdaroglu said the election was "the most unjust ever," with all state resources mobilized for Erdogan.

"We will continue to be at the forefront of this struggle until real democracy comes to our country," he said in Ankara. He thanked the more than 25 million people who voted for him and asked them to "remain upright."

The people have shown their will "to change an authoritarian government despite all the pressures," Kilicdaroglu said.

Supporters of Erdogan, a divisive populist and masterful orator, took to the streets to celebrate, waving Turkish or ruling party flags, honking car horns and chanting his name. Celebratory gunfire was heard in several Istanbul neighborhoods.

His next term is certain to include more delicate maneuvering with fellow NATO members over the future of the alliance and the war in Ukraine.

Leaders across the world sent their congratulations, highlighting Turkey and Erdogan's enlarged role in global politics.

Western politicians said they are ready to continue working with Erdogan des-

pite years of sometimes tense relations. Most imminently, Turkey holds the cards for Sweden's hopes to join NATO. The bid aims to strengthen the military alliance against Russia and is central to the continuity of a deal to allow Ukrainian grain shipments and avert a global food crisis.

"No one can look down on our nation," Erdogan said in Istanbul.

Steven A. Cook, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Council on Foreign Relations, said Turkey was likely to "move the goal post" on Sweden's membership in NATO as it seeks demands from the United States.

He also said Erdogan, who has spoken about introducing a new constitution, was likely to make an even greater push to lock in changes adopted by his conservative and religious Justice and Development Party, or AKP.

In his victory remarks, Erdogan said rebuilding the quake-struck cities would be his priority. He also said a million Syrian refugees would go back to Turkish-controlled "safe zones" in Syria as part of a resettlement project being run with Qatar.

Erdogan has retained the backing of conservative voters who remain devoted to him for lifting Islam's profile in Turkey, which was founded on secular principles, and raising the country's influence in international politics.

Erdogan's rival was a soft-mannered former civil

servant who has led the pro-secular Republican People's Party, or CHP, since 2010. The opposition took months to unite behind Kilicdaroglu. He and his party have not won any elections in which Erdogan ran.

In a frantic outreach effort to nationalist voters in the runoff, Kilicdaroglu vowed to send back refugees and ruled out peace negotiations with Kurdish militants if he was elected.

Erdogan and pro-government media portrayed Kilicdaroglu, who received the backing of the country's pro-Kurdish party, as colluding with "terrorists" and supporting what they described as "deviant" LGBTQ rights.

In his victory speech, Erdogan repeated those themes, saying LGBTQ people cannot "infiltrate" his ruling party or its nationalist allies.

In Ankara, Erdogan voter Hacer Yalcin said Turkey's future was bright.

"Of course Erdogan is the winner ... Who else? He has made everything for us," Yalcin said. "God blesses us!"

Erdogan, a 69-year-old Muslim, is set to remain in power until 2028.

He transformed the presidency from a largely ceremonial role to a powerful office through a narrowly won 2017 referendum that scrapped Turkey's parliamentary system of governance. He was the first directly elected president in 2014 and won the 2018 election that ushered in the executive presidency. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1981 BANGLADESHI PRESIDENT ASSASSINATED



The president of Bangladesh, Zia Rahman, has been assassinated in the south-eastern city of Chittagong.

President Zia is believed to have died at 0430 local time when rebels stormed a government guest house.

He is reported to have been killed by sub-machine-gun bullets when he opened the door of his room to see what was happening outside.

Eight people are thought to have died in the shooting, including a security officer, an officer who was guarding the president and one of the attackers.

The killing was believed to be part of an army rebellion and government forces have taken control of the town after rebel leader Major General Manzur Ahmed fled.

One report on Bangladesh radio said Maj Gen Manzur was hiding in the hills outside Chittagong, while another report said he had been captured.

There are reports that Maj Gen Manzur staged a coup attempt partly because he resented a planned transfer to a non-command post in Dhaka.

Following the death of the 45-year-old president, the rebels announced they were forming a revolutionary committee but diplomats said they had failed to win support from army units across the rest of Bangladesh.

The army, under its chief of staff, Major General Hussain Muhammad Ershad, remained loyal to the Dhaka government and quickly put down the rebellion.

The Bangladesh government said the uprising in the port city had been carried out by a "few miscreants".

In the capital Dhaka, tens of thousands of people have taken to the streets to show their grief at the death of their president, who was widely admired and respected.

Abdus Sattar, who has been named as acting president, has declared a state of emergency and a 40-day period of mourning. He also called on Maj Gen Manzur to surrender.

Dhaka airport is closed and all telephone and telex links to India have been suspended.

Army officers have been involved in several attempts to remove President Zia from office during his six-year rule.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The president was assassinated by a small group of army officers. The killing was alleged to have been ordered by Major General Manzur.

Manzur was later reported to have been captured in a tea garden in Chittagong and killed by army officers.

A military court tried 31 officers in connection with an attempted coup and 12 were executed for complicity in the assassination of the president. In 2000, a parliamentary committee in the capital Dhaka concluded that the trial of those accused of killing him was not conducted in accordance with the law.

The committee recommended that the families of the 12 army officials hanged for the murder should be compensated.

A member of the committee, a former army officer, told the BBC that the committee considered that the officers were sentenced to death without valid evidence in some cases and were the victims of injustice.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Don't count on correspondence to clear up major problems. You will have to watch out for minor health problems related to stress. Children may cause limitations.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 Keep your mind on your work and stay away from situations that could ruin your reputation. This is a good day to check out your investments.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 Be sure to pay attention to your financial status. Pleasure trips will be favorable and bring about romance. Compromise if you wish to have any fun at all.

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Spend time getting into physical activities with your lover. You will find the perfect outfit if you shop today. You could be quite erratic regarding your personal relationship.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 You will be emotional when dealing with coworkers or employers. You need an outlet that will not only stimulate you but also challenge your intelligence as well.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 If you haven't already, consider starting your own business. You can finish projects early, which will bring you praise from superiors. Try not to spend too much on children or entertainment.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 You must not make unnecessary changes today. Romance may be likely if you travel. Be careful that you don't overextend yourself. Don't exaggerate.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Communicate with relatives who may need advice in order to find solutions to their existing problems. You mustn't make promises that you won't be able to keep.

SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Someone you care about may let you down or criticize your methods. Try to channel your energy into professional endeavors.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Try to bend to their wishes if you want to avoid conflict. Having your own business is a good idea. Look into attending seminars that can expand your perception.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Problems with relatives and friends could surface. Be sure to get involved in self-improvement programs that will bring you in contact with interesting people.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Empty promises will cause confusion. Travel will promote new romantic connections. You can find out important information if you listen to friends and relatives.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

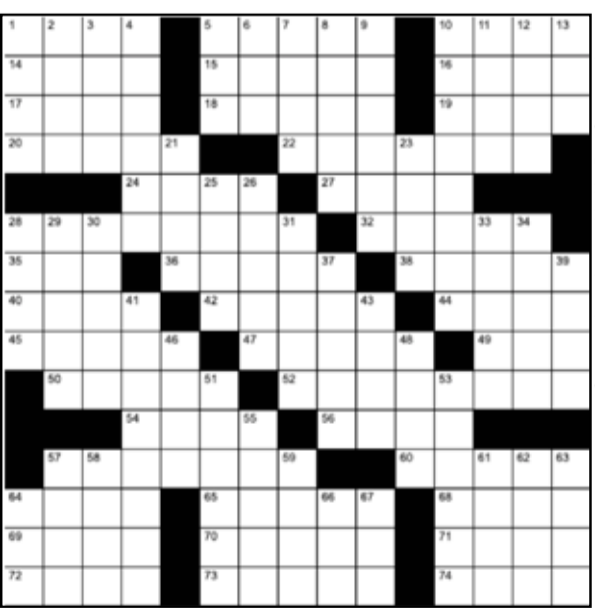
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	19	25	overcast
Changchun	11	24	fine
Chengdu	22	34	fine
Chongqing	24	32	thunderstorms
Fuzhou	25	35	cloudy
Guangzhou	26	37	fine
Guiyang	20	28	showers
Haikou	26	34	cloudy
Hangzhou	23	31	thunderstorms
Harbin	10	24	fine
Hefei	20	23	rain
Nanjing	21	26	overcast
Shanghai	24	28	rain
Taipei	24	27	rain
Wuhan	23	28	cloudy
Hong Kong	28	33	overcast
WORLD			
Moscow	12	22	cloudy
Frankfurt	12	23	cloudy
Paris	12	24	cloudy
London	10	20	cloudy
New York	12	23	fine

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Electronic music pioneer; 5- Red fluorescent dye; 10- "Dancing Queen" quartet; 14- "Puppy Love" singer; 15- Muse of poetry in Greek mythology; 16- Milk source; 17- Letter opener; 18- Eminent; 19- Gag reflex?; 20- Tries; 22- Distinguished; 24- Initial stake in a hand of poker; 27- Skin marking, often due to injury; 28- Circumvent; 32- ___ Gay; 35- Poker legend Ungar; 36- Outdoes; 38- Maytag brand; 40- ___ dancing is popular with cowboys; 42- Paris "thanks"; 44- Jason's craft; 45- Martini garnish; 47- Snare; 49- ___-X; 50- French school; 52- First public performance; 54- Peru's capital; 56- Singer Young; 57- Ambulatory; 60- Like non-oyster months; 64- Food critic Sheraton; 65- New Hampshire's state flower; 68- "Trinity" author; 69- Get ___ the ground floor; 70- Sidestep, circumvent; 71- Germinated grain used in brewing; 72- Wide-eyed; 73- Donnybrook; 74- Ballpark figs.

DOWN 1- Aggregate; 2- Put a lid ___; 3- Gumbo thickener; 4- Braggart; 5- Still, in poetry; 6- Granada gold; 7- Fill to surfeit; 8- Units; 9- Forget it!; 10- Sebaceous cyst; 11- Pinto or lima; 12- Monetary unit of Thailand; 13- ___ standstill; 21- Rebuff; 23- "Peter Pan" dog; 25- Abound; 26- Ruhr city; 28- 1952 Winter Olympics setting; 29- Of some benefit; 30- Part of a military uniform; 31- Razor sharpener; 33- Big; 34- Ire; 37- Disdain; 39- First-class; 41- Developing; 43- Uh-huh; 46- "East of Eden" director Kazan; 48- Islamic chieftain; 51- Symbol; 53- Light up; 55- Not dead yet; 57- Chinese dynasty; 58- Melville tale; 59- Airline to Tel Aviv; 61- Important times; 62- River sediment; 63- Fast fliers; 64- Actress Farrow; 66- Summer drink; 67- Bee follower.



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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HELLENE GARDENS
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1,663 ft² | HKD7,680,000



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750 ft² | HKD3,988,000



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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

RUGBY ACADEMY

Open Day a hit with Macau youngsters

DONALD SHAW, MDT

WYNN and the Macau Bats Rugby Club joined forces to conduct a Rugby Open Day last week which allowed Macau youngsters, aged between 6 and 12, to experience touch rugby for the first time. The Open Day was held at The International School's playing field, close

to Wynn Palace, and more than 60 children enrolled to get a feel for the game.

"Rugby is a great sport for girls and boys to play, it's relatively easy to play, encourages teamwork and self-discipline, respect for others and is fun!" according to Miguel Oliveira, Head of the Macau Bats. "This Open Day builds on a number of

initiatives we have undertaken with local schools to increase participation in the sport. We are also very appreciative of the role that Wynn is playing in supporting the game locally."

Following on from the success of the Greater Bay Area tournament the day before, Frederic Luisutto, Chief Operating Officer of Wynn Macau, Limited commented "We are delighted to see Macau developing these sporting ties and competitions locally and across the GBA. We will continue to support and grow these events in the future."



FOOTBALL

Benfica wins record 38th league title on final day of season

BENFICA won its first Portuguese league title in four years after beating Santa Clara 3-0 over the weekend on the final day of the season.

FC Porto finished two points behind in second after beating Guimaraes 3-0. Last year's champion needed last-place Santa Clara to pull off a surprising win at Benfica to have a realistic shot at defending its title.

It was Benfica's record-extending 38th league title and its first since 2019. Since Benfica's last title, Porto had won it twice and Sporting once.

"It was a long struggle throughout the season. We needed the last game and we managed to pull it off," said Benfica coach Roger Schmidt, who joined the club last sum-



mer. "We are very proud, but also relieved by this title. We put in a lot of effort and we deserve to be champions."

Portugal striker Gonçalo Ramos headed in a cross from Alexander Bah near the far post for the opener in the seventh minute against Santa Clara.

Rafa Silva doubled the lead in the 28th with a first-touch shot from inside the area. Alex Grimaldo added the third

from the penalty spot in the 60th.

Benfica entered the home game two points ahead of Porto. If they had ended up tied on points, Benfica still held the advantage on goal difference in the tiebreaker with Porto.

Benfica ended the season with the league's best attack with 82 goals scored and its best defense with only 20 goals conceded. **MDT/AP**

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



OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**CHIP COMPANIES
 VICTIMS OF TECH
 HEGEMONY**

As of last week, various entities from the members of the de facto chip club Washington is trying to set up to starve the Chinese mainland of advanced chips and the equipment to make them have expressed their unwillingness to limit their production and investment in China. It is only those on the island of Taiwan, under the coercion of the secessionist-minded Tsai Ing-wen authorities, that have not added their voices to the chorus.

The Republic of Korea government has urged the Joe Biden administration to review its “guardrail” rules regarding its chip subsidies, as it doesn’t think that the US government providing ROK chip companies, such as Samsung and SK Hynix, with subsidies to encourage them to invest in the United States should affect their decisions to expand production in the Chinese mainland.

And the Dutch government has also stressed the necessity for the Netherlands to take the initiative to continue to engage with such a major economy as China, which it says is a preferred economic and trade partner.

Also, the CEOs of Nvidia and Panasonic, two chip giants from the US and Japan respectively, have, on different occasions, both said that the Chinese mainland market is irreplaceable.

All these highlight the strong resistance to Washington’s attempts to re-shape the global industry and supply chains of the chip sector in the US’ favor. Although the Biden administration might lure the chip giants to expand production in the US through providing them market-law-distorting subsidies, it cannot offer a substitute to the Chinese mainland’s huge chip market if it forces them to withdraw from it as a condition for receiving the subsidies.

The US’ decoupling efforts in the chip industry will disturb the stability of related industries worldwide, including automobiles, information and electronics. During that process the companies from the US and its allies will bear the main brunt of Washington’s weaponization of technology and trade for its own geopolitical ends as it will push up the prices of relevant end products from the Chinese mainland.

After the Japanese government announced that it will implement China-targeted export control measures on semiconductor manufacturing equipment from July this year last week, the share price of a number of Japanese semiconductor-related companies, including Screen Semiconductor Solutions, Advantest and Disco, fell instantly.

That clearly shows the market’s view of the influences of the US’ tech offensive. The Chinese mainland accounted for about 30 percent of Japan’s chip and related equipment exports last year. It remains to be seen how the Japanese companies will fill the gap now that Tokyo is shutting their doors upon the Chinese mainland at the behest of the US.

And that question applies to all companies the US wants to use as pressure points to hobble China’s modernization.

UGANDA’S PRESIDENT SIGNS INTO LAW TOUGH ANTI-GAY LEGISLATION WITH DEATH PENALTY IN SOME CASES

THE BUZZ

Uganda’s president has signed into law tough new anti-gay legislation supported by many in this East African country but widely condemned by rights activists and others abroad.

The version of the bill signed by President Yoweri Museveni doesn’t criminalize those who identify as LGBTQ, a key concern for campaigners who condemned an earlier draft of the legislation as an egregious attack on human rights.

But the new law still prescribes the death penalty for “aggravated homosexuality,” which is defined as cases of sexual relations involving people infected with HIV as well as with minors and other

categories of vulnerable people.

A suspect convicted of “attempted aggravated homosexuality” can be imprisoned for up to 14 years, according to the legislation.

Parliamentary Speaker Anita Among said in a statement that the president had “answered the cries of our people” in signing the bill.

The leaders of the U.N. AIDS program, the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the Global Fund in a joint statement yesterday said they “are deeply concerned about the harmful impact” of the legislation on public health and the HIV response.

AP PHOTO



Justine Triet, winner of the Palme d’Or for ‘Anatomy of a Fall, at Cannes

CANNES

‘ANATOMY OF A FALL’ WINS PALME D’OR; THIRD TIME FEMALE DIRECTOR WINS TOP HONOR

JAKE COYLE, CANNES

JUSTINE Triet’s “Anatomy of a Fall” won the Palme d’Or at the 76th Cannes Film Festival in a ceremony last weekend that bestowed the festival’s prestigious top prize on an engrossing, rigorously plotted French courtroom drama that puts a marriage on trial.

“Anatomy of a Fall,” which stars Sandra Hüller as a writer trying to prove her innocence in her husband’s death, is only the third film directed by a woman to win the Palme d’Or. One of the two previous winners, Julia Ducournau, was on this year’s jury.

Cannes’ Grand Prix, its second prize, went to Jonathan Glazer’s “The Zone of Interest,” a chilling Martin Amis adaptation about a German family living next door to Auschwitz. Hüller also stars in that film.

The awards were decided by a jury presided over by two-time Palme winner Ruben Östlund, the Swedish director who won the prize last year for “Triangle of Sadness.” The ceremony preceded the festival’s closing night film, the Pixar animation “Elemental.”

Remarkably, the award for “Anatomy of a Fall” gives the indie distributor Neon its fourth straight Palme winners. Neon, which

acquired the film after its premiere in Cannes, also backed “Triangle of Sadness,” Ducournau’s “Titane” and Bong Joon Ho’s “Parasite,” which it steered to a best picture win at the Academy Awards.

Triet was presented the Palme by Jane Fonda, who recalled coming to Cannes in 1963 when, she said, there were no female filmmakers competing “and it never even occurred to us that there was something wrong with that.” This year, a record seven out of the 21 films in competition at Cannes were directed by women.

After a rousing standing ovation, Triet, the 44-year-old French filmmaker, spoke passionately about the protests that have roiled France this year over reforms to pension plans and the retirement age. Several protests were held during Cannes this year, but demonstrations were — as they have been in many high-profile locations throughout France — banned from the area around the Palais des Festivals. Protesters were largely relegated to the outskirts of Cannes.

“The protests were denied and repressed in a shocking way,” said Triet, who linked that governmental influence to that in cinema. “The merchandising

of culture, defended by a liberal government, is breaking the French cultural exception.”

“This award is dedicated to all the young women directors and all the young male directors and all those who cannot manage to shoot films today,” she added. “We must give them the space I occupied 15 years ago in a less hostile world where it was still possible to make mistakes and start again.”

After the ceremony, Triet reflected on being the third female director to win the Palme, following Ducournau and Jane Campion (“The Piano”).

“Things are truly changing,” she said.

The jury prize went to Finnish director Aki Kaurismäki’s “Fallen Leaves,” a deadpan love story about a romance that blooms in a loveless workaday Helsinki where dispatches from the war in Ukraine regularly play on the radio.

Best actor went to veteran Japanese star Koji Yakusho, who plays a reflective, middle-aged Tokyo man who cleans toilets in Wim Wenders’ “Perfect Days,” a gentle, quotidian character study.

The Turkish actor Merve Dizdar took best actress for the Nuri Bilge Ceylan’s “About Dry Grasses.”

MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Iraq Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani (pictured) announced plans for a \$17 billion regional transportation project intended to facilitate the flow of goods from Asia to Europe. The announcement was made at a one-day conference in Baghdad that convened transport ministers and representatives from Iraq, the Gulf countries, Turkey, Iran, Syria, and Jordan.

AP PHOTO



USA Vice President Kamala Harris, the first woman to deliver a commencement speech at West Point, lauded graduating cadets for their noble sacrifice in serving their country, but noted they were entering an “unsettled world” because of Russian aggression and the rising threats from China. “The world has drastically changed,” Harris told the roughly 950 graduating cadets. She referred to the global pandemic that took millions of lives, as well as the fraught shifts in global politics in Europe and in Asia.

AP PHOTO



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez yesterday called an early general election for July 23 in a surprise move after his Socialist party took a serious battering in local and regional elections. Prior to Sunday’s debacle, Sánchez had insisted that he would ride out his four-year term with leftist government coalition partner United We Can, indicating that an election would be held in December.

AP PHOTO



Nigeria Bola Tinubu (pictured) will today take over as president of Africa’s most populous country at a period of unprecedented challenges. A former governor of Lagos, the country’s economic hub, Tinubu, 71, will succeed President Muhammadu Buhari to lead a country that by 2050 is forecast to become the third most populous nation in the world, tied with the United States after India and China.