

Severe illness and death can be effectively reduced

Book a COVID-19 vaccine appointment for your booster dose

Please scan QR code or visit website



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

Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre



A BRANCH OF MACAU'S OLDEST CHINESE BANYAN TREE, NEXT TO 150-YEAR-OLD TIN HAU TEMPLE, FELL AND DAMAGED THE ROOF OF THE BUILDING P6

'BIG SIX' YET AGAIN EQUATED TO PUBLIC ENTITIES IN NEW LAWS P4

NEW ZEALAND'S ECONOMY DIPS INTO RECESSION AS HIGHER INTEREST RATES BITE P7



Myanmar Recent fierce fighting between the army and resistance fighters has killed at least 26 civilians, including six children, in an area east of the capital, according to reports. The fighting took place in Shan State's Pekon township, a hotly contested area in the armed struggle that arose after February 2021 when the army seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. The takeover prompted widespread public protests, whose violent suppression by the security forces triggered an armed resistance that now spans much of the country.



New Zealand Two men who helped run the once wildly popular pirating website Megaupload were each sentenced by a New Zealand court yesterday to more than two years in prison. The sentencing of Mathias Ortmann and Bram van der Kolk ended an 11-year legal battle by the men to avoid extradition to the United States on more serious charges that included racketeering.



Australia's Parliament passed legislation yesterday to prevent Russia from building a new embassy near Parliament House citing threats of espionage and political interference, as tensions grow between Moscow and a major supporter of the Ukraine war effort. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the legislation would extinguish Russia's lease on the site of a second embassy based on the advice of security agencies. More on p10

More on backpage

ALIEN AFFAIRS

Non-Chinese residents may lose right to run for election, but can vote, according to electoral draft laws; National Security Defense Commission replaces CAEAL in evaluating candidates' eligibility P4-5

THUNDERSTRUCK

Macau was under heavy rainfall overnight till the wee hours of yesterday – these two pictures were taken in milliseconds during intense lightning P6



PAULO COUTINHO/MDT

FORENSICS

HOW THE UNABOMBER'S UNIQUE LINGUISTIC FINGERPRINTS LED TO HIS CAPTURE

ROGER J. KREUZ
UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

CAN the language someone uses be as unique as their fingerprints?

As I describe in my forthcoming book, "Linguistic Fingerprints: How Language Creates and Reveals Identity," that was true in the case of Theodore Kaczynski.

Kaczynski, who was known as the Unabomber, died in a North Carolina prison on June 10, 2023, reportedly by suicide.

Kaczynski had been a math prodigy and a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, before he withdrew from society and declared war on the modern world.

From a remote cabin in Montana, he sent a number of explosive devices through the mail. In other cases, he planted them. Between 1978 and 1995, 16 of his bombs killed three people and seriously injured nearly two dozen more.

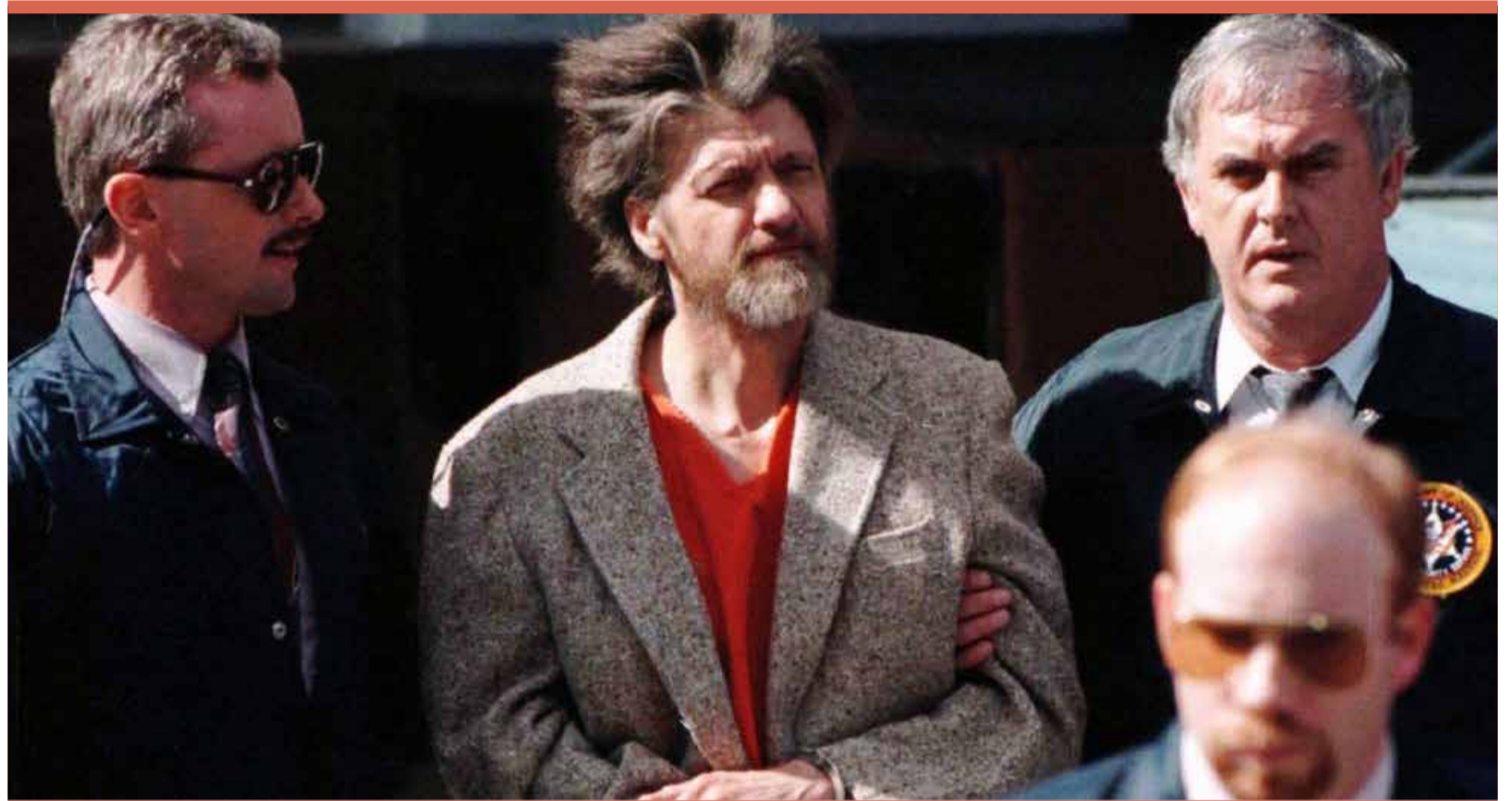
Kaczynski's crimes triggered the longest and most expensive criminal investigation in U.S. history. Law enforcement had little to go on other than a few letters that the terrorist had sent to the media, as well as fragments of notes that had survived his device's detonations.

SPELLINGS AND WORD CHOICES OFFER CLUES

In 1995, there was a breakthrough. That's when the Unabomber offered to pause his attacks if a newspaper published his manifesto about the evils of modern society. Controversially, The Washington Post did so. The FBI supported the paper's decision, hoping that someone would recognize the terrorist based on the writing style of the 35,000-word essay.

FBI forensic linguist James Fitzgerald and sociolinguist Roger Shuy were able to uncover several clues about the terrorist's identity based on the manifesto and his other writings.

For example, the Unabomber used strange misspellings for some words, such as "wilfully" for "willfully," and "clew" for "clue." Shuy recognized these as spelling reforms that had been cham-



pioned by The Chicago Tribune during the 1940s and 1950s, although they were never widely adopted.

Their use by the bomber suggested he might have spent his formative years in or near Chicago.

Fitzgerald noted the use of terms like "broad," "chick" and "negro" in the manifesto was consistent with the vocabulary a middle-aged person from that era.

The Unabomber also referred to "rearing children" as opposed to "raising children." The former term is characteristic of the northern U.S. dialect and would be consistent with someone who grew up in or near the Windy City.

The manifesto also contains such fairly esoteric terms as "anomic" and "chimerical," suggesting that its author was highly educated.

A BROTHER'S SUSPICIONS

But the move to publish the manifesto ended up being the decisive factor.

It was read in Schenectady, New York, by Linda Patrik, who showed it to her husband, David Kaczynski. She asked if he thought it sounded like something his brother Ted could have written.

David was initially skeptical. Then he noticed that the essay

contained unusual expressions, like "cool-headed logicians," that he remembered his estranged sibling making use of. He approached the FBI with his suspicions, and it was noted that David's brother had been born in Chicago in 1942.

A search of Kaczynski's cabin turned up explosive devices, as well as the original copy of the manifesto. Kaczynski pleaded guilty in 1998 and was incarcerated until his death at age 81.

FINGERPRINTING AUTHORS

The Unabomber investigation has been justifiably hailed as a triumph of forensic linguistics. But sleuths of prose and punctuation have had other notable victories.

Even something as seemingly trivial as unusual punctuation can provide clues to a suspect's identity – which is what happened in 2018, when a forensic linguist was able to pin a murder on a British man because of his unusual use of commas and spacing when sending text messages.

Similar techniques have been used by language experts to identify authors. In 1996, "Primary Colors," a novel based on Bill Clinton's presidential campaign, was published by "anonymous."

English professor Donald Foster was able to finger Newsweek columnist Joe Klein as the author of the work, noting similarities between the text of "Primary Colors" and Klein's other published work, which included the use of unusual adverbs ("goofily"), states described as modes ("crisis mode") and drawn-out interjections ("naww").

And in 2013, "The Cuckoo's Calling," a novel authored with the pen name Robert Galbraith, was exposed as having been written by J.K. Rowling. Patrick Juola, a computer scientist, and Peter Millican, a philosopher, independently identified the author of the Harry Potter series as the crime novel's true author. Both men used computer programs to analyze such factors as the distribution of word lengths and common word usage in books written by several suspected authors. They then compared the results to "The Cuckoo's Calling" and identified Rowling as the closest match.

AN INFALLIBLE METHOD?

These techniques seem almost magical when they work. But they're not foolproof.

In 2018, The New York Times published an op-ed written by an anonymous "resister" inside the

Trump administration. However, the editorial was too short for linguistic analysis.

Even after the resister published a full-length book, titled "A Warning," it wasn't possible to identify the author. He eventually outed himself as Miles Taylor. He had served as the chief of staff in the Department of Homeland Security. But because he had never published anything else, there was no text to which "A Warning" could be compared.

And scholars are still debating the identity of Elena Ferrante, the pseudonym used by a bestselling Italian novelist. Ferrante has published a dozen books, including "My Brilliant Friend," but the author's true identity remains controversial.

Either way, technological advances have made it increasingly difficult for people who leave a paper trail to hide their identities – and the old adage to "not put anything in writing" is as true as it's ever been.

This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article here: <https://theconversation.com/how-the-unabombers-unique-linguistic-fingerprints-led-to-his-capture-207681>. MDT/THE CONVERSATION

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

REACHING OUT!

+25,000

Like us on facebook.com/mdtimes



MacauDaily 澳門每日時報 * DIRECTOR & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF_Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR_Lynzy Valles
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS_Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

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

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

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C,

MACAU SAR Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com

For subscription and general issues:

general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

EVENTS

IPIM says MICE on the rise

ANTHONY LAM

THIS summer holiday will see 35 MICE events being held in or followed up by Macau, Sam Lei, local trade and investment official, disclosed yesterday afternoon.

Lei is a member of the Executive Committee of the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM), which in the past few days hosted a group of 40 regional MICE stakeholders, such as event organizers, exhibitors and industry critics, on a familiarization trip in Macau.

The aforementioned 35 events – which will include some professional meetings with over 1,000 participants – are expected to draw over 240,000 cumulative participants, Lei added.

Reiterating the IPIM's stance, Lei emphasized the confidence in more events in the rest of the year, reaching the target of having 1,000 MICE events in this year.

Looking into the future, Lei disclosed that the IPIM would lead delegations to MICE events in the Thai capital of Bangkok in September and Barcelona in Spain

ANTHONY LAM



in November to promote MICE in Macau-Hengqin. The event in Spain, he underlined, will have international impact.

Yesterday saw the negotiation session of the familiarization trip. A multitude of local enterprises, such as venue owners, MICE groups, event coordinators, leisure facility operators and Air Macau, held discussion sessions with stakeholders.

Lei highlighted that the trip was conducted both online and offline. Over 400 matching sessions that connected 27 MICE-related companies in Macau and Hengqin as well as 168 mainland and international buyers were held.

Before yesterday's physical discussion sessions, Lei briefly introduced Macau's conditions to participants, highlighting facts such as the city having 240,000 square

meters of event space and 39,000 hotel rooms. He emphasized that Macau is one of the few locations in the region that is capable of hosting events with over 10,000 participants.

DELEGATES ASTONISHED BY NEW FACILITIES

When asked to recap their visit to Macau, several delegates made special reference to the new are-

na at the Galaxy Macau resort, describing it as world-class and magnificent. Many of the delegates had not visited Macau in the past few years, and remarked at the development of MICE facilities.

Shawn Li, vice president of growth at Dragon Trail China, a marketing firm, expressed his confidence in Macau in terms of his company's global development. He also sees Macau's advantages and competitiveness as a mid- to long-range destination.

Holding similar views was James Beacher, director at Venue Hub and Martin Donovan, director at Greater Bay Strategies. The former is a MICE information platform and the latter a MICE intelligence collector. Both are based in Hong Kong.

They saw opportunities in Macau amid Hong Kong's experience and Guangdong's size. Nonetheless, their view is that it can only be achieved by regional collaborations, such as breaking down a major event into smaller sections for each location to host those events at which they are proficient.

In addition, Beacher suggested that facility operators in Macau should start seeing the entire picture to allow better experience and transportation during MICE peak periods.

AD

2023 金沙物美
Sands Shopping Carnival 嘉年華

The Largest Discount Sale in Macao

- Featuring 580+ Booths of International Brands and Macao Specialties
- International Brands Up to 80% Off
- Mega Food Court
- Little Master Chef Workshop
- K-POP Dance Competition
- Karaoke King Singing Competition

7/20 12:00 - 22:00 Invited Session | 7/21 - 23 12:00 - 22:00 Open for Public

Cotai Expo Halls A & B, The Venetian Macao

Event Information Free Admission

FOREX RESERVES CLIMB TO MOP217.8B BY END-MAY

The Monetary Authority of Macao announced yesterday that its preliminary estimate of the city's foreign exchange reserves amounted to MOP217.8 billion at the end of May, a 2.0% increase from last month's revised value of MOP213.4. Macau's foreign exchange reserves at end-May represented 10 times the currency in circulation, or 86.4% of pataca M2 at end-April. The trade-weighted effective exchange rate index for the pataca rose 1.05 points month-on-month and 0.58 points year-on-year to 102.1 in May, implying that, overall, the exchange rate of the pataca grew against the currencies of Macau's major trading partners.

CUSTOMS BUSTED MASTERMIND ATTEMPTING TO ENTER MACAU ILLEGALLY BY UNDERWATER PROPELLER

The local police and the Customs have jointly cracked down on a ringleader attempting to illegally enter Macau by swimming with the help of an underwater propeller, and arrested five people during the small hours on Wednesday. Two of the five were service providers, while the rest were clients. The service providers have been charged with the joint criminal syndicate and aiding illegal immigrants. The three clients, on the other hand, had been barred from entering Macau. The motivation for entering Macau was to conduct illicit currency exchange.

MAN APPROPRIATES NEARLY MOP1.2M IN FAKE CELLPHONE RESELLING PLOT

An unemployed man, 26, was arrested at the Qingmao Border Checkpoint on Wednesday by the police for allegedly scamming a total of MOP1.18 million from three men from Hong Kong and Costa Rica, by claiming to them that he had the means to purchase phones at cheaper prices so they could earn money by reselling the phones in mainland China. According to the police, the three victims reported the case in April after losing contact with the suspect, who admitted to having committed the crime and was referred to the Public Prosecutions Office for further investigation.

MDT ARCHIVE



'BIG SIX' YET AGAIN EQUATED TO PUBLIC ENTITIES

RENATO MARQUES

THE amendments to the electoral laws for the election of the Chief Executive (CE) include new provisions that equate the duties of independence of the six gaming concessionaires (Big Six) with those of the public entities and departments.

One of the main changes proposed notes the inclusion in the electoral law of an "explicit provision

of the duty of neutrality and independence of the gaming concessionaires in the election of the CE," the director of Legal Affairs Bureau (DSAJ), Leong Weng In, noted in her presentation.

She said that taking into account the electoral law for the Legislative Assembly (AL), besides public services and entities, as well as other companies of public nature, this duty of neutrality is extended to the gaming concessionaires. Such

information was later complemented by Secretary André Cheong, who explained that the Big Six, as major employers in the city, have the capacity to potentially influence election results by exercising influence over their workers, a situation that the government wants to see very clearly regulated in the new law.

The incitement to "not to vote, blank voting or invalid voting" will also be the subject of regulation,

Leong added, noting that the current laws only have provision for cases related to electoral fraud or the offer of incentives to vote for a specific candidate. In the review, the government wants to criminalize the call for abstention or null votes, as the acts are seen as "influencing the voters' intention and they disturb the ... order, justice and fairness of the elections," the DSAJ director remarked.

FINES FOR 'ELECTORAL POLLS' AND UNOFFICIAL RESULTS DISCLOSURE

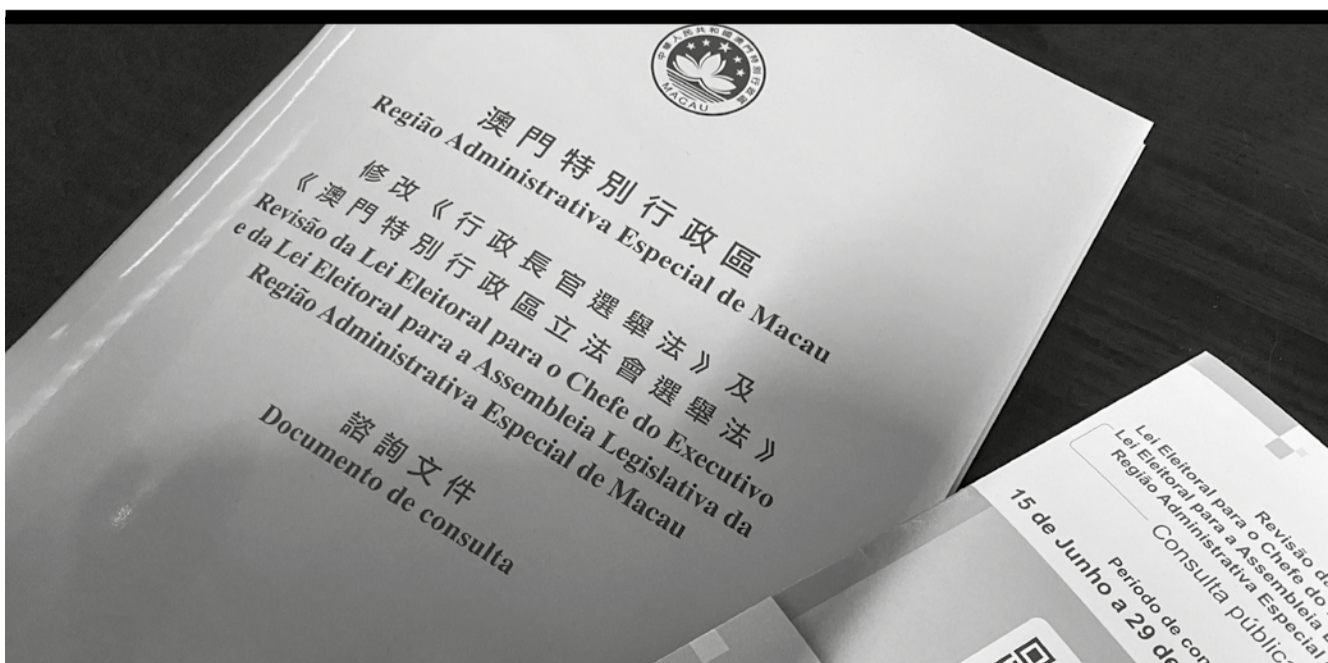
Another aspect that the new electoral law amendments aim to address is overruling any potential unofficial or anticipated revelation of a voting trend or electoral polls. A common method of measuring and evaluating the election process elsewhere is set to be completely banned in Macau, with fines to be established for those that "disclose or promote the disclosure of results of surveys and electoral polls related to candidates." This is valid "from the start of the election campaign and until the following day of the election," with those failing to comply to be subject to a fine.

This rule applies to both the CE and the Legislative Assembly (AL) elections.

Also under tighter scope will be the "early election campaigns" from different groups, with the new law aiming to move the date of the commencement of the campaigning ban from the "date of publication of final accepted candidate lists" to the "date of presentation of the candidacies." In practical terms, this will prevent early campaign actions like the ones usually seen by the groups when they are delivering the candidacy documents to the Legislative Assembly Electoral Affairs Commission, and would also prevent the early revelation of the people presenting applications before these are evaluated by the National Security Defense Commission.

National security commission to replace CAEAL in

RENATO MARQUES



RENATO MARQUES

THE National Security Defense Commission (CDSE), an entity created in 2018 with the mission of supporting the Chief Executive (CE) in decision-making on matters related to the Macau Special Administrative Region (SAR) and in the scope of the defense of the State security, as well as other managerial work, will replace the Legislative Assembly Electoral Affairs Commission (CAEAL) in the task of inspecting and evaluating the eligibility of the candidates submitting applications to run for the



Non-Chinese nationals 'not eligible' to run in local elections, SAFP head says

RENATO MARQUES

NON-CHINESE nationals will not be able to run in upcoming elections for the Legislative Assembly (AL), at least according to the interpretation of the director of the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP), Eddie Kou.

"Regarding the residents that do not have Chinese nationality they do have the capacity of eligibility," Kou said in response to a media inquiry on the topic during the press conference that launched the public consultation on the amendments to be enforced to the electoral laws for the

AL members and the election of the Chief Executive (CE).

Addressing the same topic at a later stage, the Chief of Office of André Cheong, Lam Chi Long, tried to backpedal somewhat on the opinion expressed by Kou, stating that in the current law in force there is no specific mention of nationality as eligibility criteria, adding that it is too soon to say what will be the concrete provision of the new law, as it is just now entering a period of public consultation and "we need to hear what the members of the public have to say on it," he remarked.

Although the proposal to establish as an eligibility criterion the

possession of Chinese nationality is not clearly stated in the public consultation document, it might come as a consequence of the main goal stated by the Secretary for Administration and Justice, André Cheong for the laws' revision, which is, to establish mechanisms and rules to ultimately ensure that "only patriots can govern Macau."

Possessing Chinese nationality is already a criterion of eligibility in the case of bids for the CE post but not for lawmakers' posts.

This matter already created some controversy during the last elections for the AL when it was noted that, to take the post, candidates running in AL elections

would have to pledge allegiance to the People's Republic of China, something that in the eyes of many would not be possible in the case of foreign citizens.

During the public consultation period, which lasts for 45 days, members of the public can submit opinions through the dedicated website (<https://cs.elections.gov.mo>) or by more traditional means such as by letter (to SAFP), phone (8868 8866) or fax (8987 0011/8987 0022).

As usual, a series of eight public hearing sessions will also be organized, including six dedicated to different professional sectors and two open public sessions.

GUANGZHOU TO HOST THE 18TH INT'L SME FAIR IN JUNE

The 18th China International Small and Medium Enterprises Fair (CISMEF) is scheduled to take place in Guangzhou from June 26 to 30. In a press conference, Xu Xiaolan, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT), stated that the fair, jointly organized by MIIT, the State Administration for Market Regulation, and the provincial government of Guangdong, will prioritize addressing the specific needs of small and medium-sized enterprises. During the fair, the second International Cooperation Summit for Small and Medium Enterprises will also be held. As of now, approximately 1,600 domestic exhibitors and 300 international exhibitors have registered for the fair, according to Lyu Yuyin, Vice Governor of Guangdong Province. As of the end of 2022, China had a total of 52 million micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, with the MIIT having nurtured nearly 9,000 "little giant" firms.

100-DAY COUNTDOWN FOR HANGZHOU ASIAN GAMES

Macau plans to send about 190 athletes to compete in 21 sports of the Asian Games, and some teams have gone to the Chinese mainland or overseas to prepare for the competitions, hoping to achieve good results, said Pun Weng Kun, Vice President of the Sports and Olympic Committee of Macao and President of Macao Sports Bureau. "Macau notched one gold, two silver and two bronze medals at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta. Traditionally Macau has advantages in martial arts, karate and other sports. Our athletes are training hard and I believe that they can perform well. For the Hangzhou Asian Games, we are full of confidence," said Pun. "In the past 20 years, the martial arts team has won medals at every Asian Games, especially gold medals in 2010 and 2018," said Iao Chon In, Macau's coach.

evaluating candidates' eligibility

post of legislators.

This is one of the six main proposals stated in the amendments aimed at electoral laws, which entered a public consultation process from yesterday until July 29 and was presented yesterday morning in a press conference held by the Legal Affairs Bureau (DSAJ).

While presenting the main proposals for the revision, the director of DSAJ, Leong Weng In, noted that one of the important amendments proposed has to do with the perfecting of the mechanism of evaluation of the eligibility of the candidates for the post of

CE, an evaluation mechanism that also extends to the candidates to the AL elections, as well as for the members of the electoral college of the CE.

On this matter, it is proposed that the CDSE replace both the roles of CAEAL, the Electoral Affairs Commission for the Chief Executive (CAECE), and the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP), in this task.

According to the proposal, the CDSE will issue a binding opinion about those that do not gather the requisites, noting that this opinion is final and will not

be open to any appeal or review, nor even an appeal to the courts.

Questioned on the topic by the media, Secretary for Administration and Justice, André Cheong said that this change has to do with the facilitation of the process, as he remarked, "CDSE has a lot more resources to make this evaluation and come up with a decision on the eligibility of the candidates."

ENSURE 'PATRIOTISM' AT ALL TIMES

Another of the changes related to the eligibility evaluation relates to the conversion of the CAECE

into a permanent entity that will continuously supervise the eligibility of the members for the college that elects the CE.

Cheong explained that the entity will be able to re-evaluate at any point in time the eligibility of a person, even when this person is already in the post.

Additionally, there will be sanctions to be established including temporary bans from exercising the role or reapplying to the post.

On this topic, Cheong gave the example of the neighboring region of Hong Kong where these bans have a duration of five years. No-

ting that this matter is still open to discussion in the public consultation document that does not set a precise time for the penalties, Cheong said nonetheless that he believes that the duration of the bans "should be of at least one term," advancing that bans of two or three years "would be unsuitable" as well as the "enforcement of permanent bans, [which] would not be suitable either."

In the proposal it is stated that a member can lose the eligibility quality when, "during their tenure, and due to proven facts, [he or she][commits acts that] do not defend the Basic Law or are not loyal to the Macau SAR.

The same bans will also

apply to those running for the AL, with Cheong hinting that in these cases it should be proposed that the legislator will lose this capacity at least for the whole term and until new elections, having still to pass through the evaluation of the CDSE to be accepted on the following elections.

The Secretary also advanced that he wants to have the public consultation report done as quickly as possible and as soon as the consultation period ends so "opinions collected can be used to perfect the bill immediately and submit it to the AL for approval," Cheong said, noting that the election for the CE is already next year and the process will already follow the new regulation.

GAMING

PHILIPPINE BILLIONAIRE LOOKS TO EXPAND CASINOS BEYOND MANILA

ANDREW Tan, a billionaire from the Philippines, has set his sights on expanding his casino empire beyond the bustling streets of Manila. Alliance Global Group Inc., the investment company led by Tan, is actively seeking opportunities in other thriving tourist destinations across the country, as reported by Bloomberg.

Yesterday, during the company's annual meeting, Kevin Andrew Tan, CEO, expressed the Alliance Global Group's interest in key tourism hubs nationwide.

The move comes as the Group anticipates a resurgence in the tourism sector, fueled by the global recovery of travel.

They aim to capitalize on the recent years' downturn in Macau, following China's crack-down on money fleeing the country, which has cast a shadow over the region's gambling hub. Meanwhile, the Philippine gaming sector itself is undergoing significant changes, with the government contemplating the privatization of state-owned casinos.

Travellers International Hotel, the gaming venture under Alliance Global, witnessed a notable turnaround in 2022. Boasting a record-breaking gross-gaming revenue and recovering non-gaming earnings, the company recorded a net income of 1.1 billion pesos (\$19.6 million), according to the Bloomberg report yesterday.

As part of their expansion plans, Alliance Global has allocated approximately 4 billion pesos from this year's 70 billion peso capital expenditure for the ongoing development of Travellers' Newport World Resorts casino complex.

In a strategic move, Alliance Global recently acquired the casino-venture partner, Genting Group, further consolidating its position in the industry.

Tan leads Alliance Global Group Inc., an investment company with interests in various sectors, including the gaming industry.

With the anticipation of a tourism rebound and the changing landscape of the gaming sector, the Philippine billionaire aims to position his company for success in the country's evolving gambling market. **PC**



LEAKS AFFECT BORDER GATE COVERED SIDEWALK AMID RED RAINSTORM WARNING

THE covered sidewalk connecting Toi-San District with the Border Gate border checkpoint has seen rainwater leaking from cracks amid the Red Rainstorm warning on Wednesday night, local media has reported.

As the time approached midnight, the Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) issued the aforementioned rainstorm warning at 10:50 pm on Wednesday. The warning was in effect until 1:45 a.m. the next day.

Minor floods in low-lying areas and roadside troughs were witnessed as the rainstorm ripped through Macau.

Many people who wanted to go to Zhuhai through the aforementioned border checkpoint were forced to find shelter under the covered sidewalk. However, as the covered sidewalk was experiencing leaks, people could not ultimately keep dry, according to local media outlet Macao Daily News.

According to the same report, border checkpoint



users felt frustrated about the reliability of the facility. They hoped the government could repair the leakage as soon as possible, since even

heavier rainfall is a usual scenario in summer in Macau.

Last couple of days' heavy rainfall was mainly caused

by the combined influence of an active southwesterly airstream and a trough of low pressure, which the SMG warned of late last week. **AL**

Canopy of city's oldest Chinese Banyan falls, damages 150-year-old temple

A branch of Macau's oldest Chinese Banyan Tree, situated next to the 150-year-old Tin Hau Temple, fell and damaged its roof on Wednesday morning, the government has announced.

The Banyan Tree, aged 262 years and inscribed in the Ancient and Renowned Trees Archive, has been adjacent to the Tin Hau Temple on Rua dos Pescadores. The temple, meanwhile, was constructed in 1865 using proceeds collected by a religious householder. The temple underwent a restoration in 1987.

The tree has been identified with certain infections recently, according to the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM), which is the authority overseeing tree conservation matters.

The IAM brushed off responsibility for the ma-

ttter, emphasizing that it had notified the "relevant entities and premises owner" to conduct care on the tree.

It cited the Cultural Heritage Protection Law as stating that old trees within private premises should be cared for by the property owner.

Meanwhile, considering the temple's status as an exemplar of local cultural heritage, the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has also intervened. It stated that after acknowledging the report into the fallen tree branch, the bureau immediately deployed officers to handle the matter.

As of press time, the IC has pointed out that the structure of the temple was intact. Only the porcelain tiles on the roof were damaged. The event caused no injury, the IC added. **AL**



New Zealand's economy dips into recession as higher interest rates bite

NEW Zealand's economy has dipped into recession as higher interest rates take their toll, new figures released yesterday show.

Gross domestic product fell by 0.1% in the March quarter, following a revised 0.7% fall in the previous quarter, Statistics New Zealand said. That fulfils the nation's definition of a recession, which is at least two consecutive quarters of negative growth.

The slowdown comes after New Zealand's central bank raised its benchmark interest rate 12 straight times to 5.5% as it tries to tame inflation. The rate is at its highest level since 2008, making it more expensive for people to borrow money for homes, cars and other purchases. The Reserve Bank of New Zealand has indicated it doesn't plan to raise the rate any further for now and that its next move will be a cut.

The downturn in growth was in line with economists' expectations, and the currency was little changed, with one New Zealand dollar trading at around 62 U.S. cents.



Taken over the full year, the picture looked rosier. New Zealand's economy grew by 2.9% after strong growth in the first two quarters. And with such a small dip in the March quarter, it's possible the recession call could be

reversed when the latest figures are revised next quarter.

Contributing to the drop in growth were a series of deadly weather events, including flooding in Auckland and a cyclone.

"The adverse weather and re-

sulting flooding caused significant damage and disruption, particularly across the North Island," Statistics New Zealand wrote in a release.

The biggest drivers of the downturn were business services,

down 3.5%, and transport, postal and warehousing, down 2.2%. Going against the trend, media and telecommunications rose 2.7%.

One of the most notable affects of higher interest rates has been on the housing market. Since peaking 18 months ago, average house prices in New Zealand have fallen by about 18%. However, there are signs the market might have reached a low point. Statistics released Thursday showed prices were flat when compared with the previous month and sales volumes were rising in some areas.

Kiwibank economists Jarrod Kerr and Mary Jo Vergara said the central bank had raised rates too high and they expect the economy will contract more over the year ahead.

"If households spend less, which is what we are seeing, then the economy will contract harder," they wrote in an analysis. "If businesses pull back on their hiring and investment, which is what we're hearing, then the economy will contract harder."

AD

仁德 CENTRO MEDICO PEDDER
◆ 仁德醫療中心 ◆



We bring high quality of medical service to Macau

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

Breast Surgery : Dr. Leong Iat Lun

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

Paediatric Surgery : Dr. Yeung Chung Kwong

Paediatrics : Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

Obstetrics & Gynaecology : Dr. Fong Kuan Io

Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery : Dr. Lam U Lin

Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

ENT : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

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

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

Dietitian : Chan Lai U Joey

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



6.18
LIFESTYLE MEGA SALES
時尚生活嘉年華
8 ~ 18 / 6 / 2023

up to **60% OFF**
Hotel and Dining Discount
住宿體驗及美饌佳餚
優惠高達四折



ARTYZEN
BRAND LAPA MACAU
澳門雅緻酒店

ANALYSIS

BLINKEN HEADS TO BEIJING THIS WEEKEND ON MISSION TO KEEP COMMUNICATIONS OPEN

MATTHEW LEE, WASHINGTON

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken will travel to China this weekend as part of the Biden administration's push to repair deteriorating ties between Washington and Beijing and keep lines of communication open, the State Department said yesterday [Macau time].

Blinken will be the most senior U.S. official to visit China since President Joe Biden took office. His visit had initially been planned for early this year but was postponed indefinitely after the discovery and shootdown of what the U.S. said was a Chinese spy balloon over the United States.

Since then, however, there have been lower-level engagements between the U.S. and China despite ongoing hostility and recriminations over both sides' actions in the Taiwan Strait, the South China Sea, China's refusal to condemn Russia for its war against Ukraine, and allegations from Washington that Beijing is attempting to boost its worldwide surveillance capabilities, including in Cuba.

The State Department said Blinken had spoken with his Chinese counterpart, Foreign Minister Qin Gang, on Tuesday night to confirm his trip, which will begin on Sunday and was first reported by The Associated Press and other news organizations last week. Blinken will leave Washington late today [Saturday, Macau time].

"While in Beijing, Secretary Blinken will meet with senior PRC officials where he will discuss the importance of maintaining open lines of communication to responsibly manage the U.S.-PRC relationship," the department said, using the acronym for the People's Republic of China. "He will also raise bilateral issues of concern, global and regional matters, and potential cooperation on shared transnational challenges."

Two senior U.S. officials downplayed the prospects for any significant breakthrough on the wide array of problems between the countries during Blinken's visit. Instead, they said it was aimed at restoring a sense of calm and normalcy to high-level contacts.

"This is a really critical series of engagements that we'll have in Beijing at a crucial time in the relationship that we again hope will, at a minimum, reduce the risk of miscalculation so that we do not veer into potential conflict," said Daniel Kritenbrink, the top U.S. diplomat for East Asia and the Pacific.

"We're not going to Beijing with the intent of having some sort of breakthrough or transformation

AP PHOTO



Foreign Minister Qin Gang and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken

in the way that we deal with one another," he said. "We're coming to Beijing with a realistic, confident approach and a sincere desire to manage our competition in the most responsible way possible."

"We're clear-eyed about the PRC," said Kurt Campbell, the top Asia expert at the National Security Council. "We know efforts to shape or reform China over several decades have failed and we expect China to be around and to be a major player on the world stage for the rest of our lifetimes."

"As the competition continues, the PRC will take provocative steps – from the Taiwan Strait to Cuba – and we will push back," Campbell said. "But intense competition requires intense diplomacy if we're going to manage tensions. That is the only way to clear up misperceptions, to signal, to communicate, and to work together where and when our interests align."

In its readout of the Blinken-Qin phone call, China's foreign ministry said Qin urged the United States to respect "China's core concerns" such as the issue of Taiwan's self-rule, "stop interfering in China's internal affairs, and stop harming China's sovereignty, security and development interests in the name of competition."

Qin noted China-U.S. ties "have encountered new difficulties and challenges" since the beginning of the year, and the two sides' res-

ponsibility is to work together to properly manage differences, promote exchanges and cooperation and stabilize relations, it said.

Blinken, who will be the first secretary of state to visit China since 2018, expects to meet with Qin on Sunday, as well as China's top diplomat, Wang Yi, and possibly Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday, according to U.S. officials.

"We're coming to Beijing with a realistic, confident approach and a sincere desire to manage our competition in the most responsible way possible."

DANIEL KRITENBRINK
TOP US DIPLOMAT FOR EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The trip will take place amid myriad complications in U.S.-China relations, which have steadily declined over the past several years dating back to the Trump administration, starting with trade and industrial espionage.

Those concerns grew rapidly to include human rights concerns over the treatment of Uyghur Muslims and other minorities in China's western region of Xinjiang, Hong Kong, Tibet, and increasing Chinese assertiveness toward Taiwan, and then escalated over questions about the origin of the COVID-19 virus.

Blinken's visit came out of a meeting in Bali last year between Xi and Biden, who agreed that

the world's two largest economies must remain in contact and take precautions to ensure there are no miscalculations in their global rivalry that could lead to conflict. The trip came within a day of happening in February but was delayed after the spy balloon incident. Beijing insists the craft was a weather balloon that strayed off course.

Contacts after that have taken place, but they have been rare as tensions have risen over China's conduct in the South China Sea, aggressive actions toward Taiwan and support for Russia's war against Ukraine. Earlier this month, China's defense minister rebuffed a request from U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin for a meeting on the sidelines of a security symposium in Singapore.

However, shortly after postponing his trip to Beijing, Blinken met briefly with Wang at the Munich Security Conference in Germany. And, CIA chief William Burns traveled to China in May, while China's commerce minister traveled to the U.S.. And Biden's national security adviser Jake Sullivan met with Wang in Vienna in early May.

More recently, the top U.S. diplomat for the Asia-Pacific region, Daniel Kritenbrink, traveled to China last week along with a senior National Security Council official to finalize details of Blinken's trip.

Just in the past several days, though, the Biden administration

has said that it has quietly blunted Chinese efforts to bolster its intelligence collection and military capabilities around the world, including in Cuba.

Blinken said on Monday that when Biden took office in January 2021, U.S. intelligence agencies briefed him "on a number of sensitive efforts by Beijing around the world to expand their overseas logistics, foreign collections infrastructure to allow them to project and sustain military power at a greater distance."

Although the Chinese had already upgraded their facilities in Cuba in 2019, Blinken said Biden determined that more needed to be done because Trump administration officials "weren't making enough progress on this issue and we needed a more direct approach."

He did not elaborate on what had been done since, although the Biden administration has moved rapidly to expand its diplomatic presence, especially in Indian Ocean and the Pacific island nations, where it has opened or has plans to open at least five new embassies over the next year or so.

"We've been executing on that approach quietly, carefully, but in our judgment, with results," Blinken said. "We've engaged governments that are considering hosting PRC bases at high levels. We have exchanged information with them. Our experts assess that our diplomatic efforts slowed down this effort by the PRC."

After his meetings in Beijing, Blinken will travel to London to attend a Ukraine reconstruction conference on June 21, the State Department said. **MDT/AP**

DIPLOMACY

Premier Li meets with president Abbas in effort to increase Middle East presence

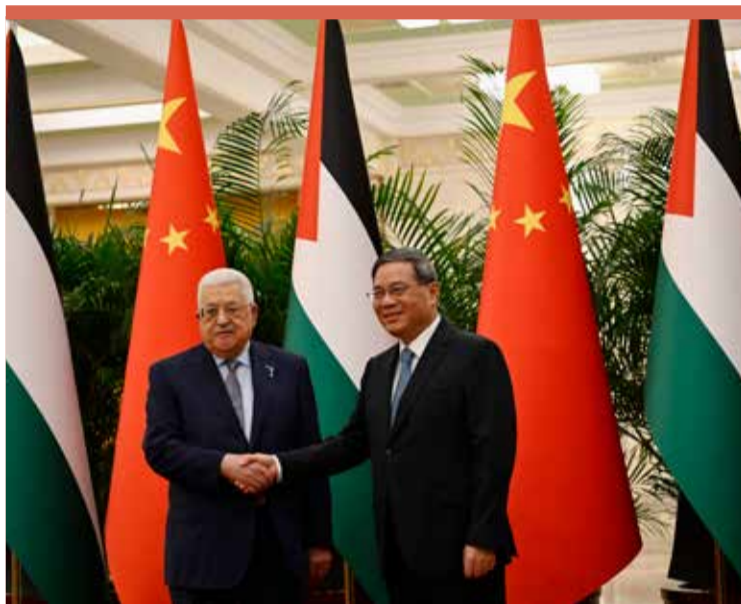
Chinese Premier Li Qiang met with visiting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas yesterday in a drive by Beijing to elevate relations and increase its overall presence in the Middle East.

Li, who took office just this spring with little foreign policy experience, called Abbas "an old friend of the Chinese people" who has made "important contributions to the promotion of China-Palestinian relations."

The meeting came a day after Abbas was greeted with full military honors by Xi Jinping, China's president and head of the ruling Communist Party.

The sides then announced the formation of a "strategic partnership," paving the way to boost China's influence in the region at a time when Beijing's chief rival for global influence, the United States, is seen as withdrawing from the region following the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and complications in ties with regional power Saudi Arabia.

China, meanwhile, is seeking energy resources and markets for its military and civilian exports while also promoting its version of authoritarian government as part of joint challenge



Premier Li Qiang (right) receives Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, yesterday

with Russia to the Western-led democratic world order.

Beijing has long maintained diplomatic ties with the Palestinian Authority, and it appointed a special envoy to meet with Israeli and Palestinian officials. But its experience in the region is mainly limited to construction, manufacturing and other economic projects.

China relies on such partnerships to bolster its diplomatic posture and give large Chinese corporations a leg up when negotiating infrastructure deals in

line with the government's "Belt and Road Initiative."

China also has sought close ties with Israel to expand its diplomatic presence and to gain access to high technology.

Abbas' visit follows China's hosting of talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia that resulted in the restoring of diplomatic relations between the two Mideast rivals and boosting China's standing in the region.

The Riyadh-Tehran rapprochement was seen as a diplomatic victory for China as Gulf

Arab states perceive the United States as gradually withdrawing from the wider region.

China has hosted a growing list of world leaders since reopening its borders in the spring after a three-year virtual shutdown due to its extreme "zero-COVID" policy.

Those have included French President Emmanuel Macron and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, whose visits sparked controversy over China's pursuit of its campaign to cut off foreign support for self-governing Taiwan and block criticism of its human rights record.

This weekend, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is expected to visit Beijing after previous plans were postponed over the presence of an alleged Chinese spy balloon over the U.S.

Following that visit, Li is travelling to France and Germany, marking his debut on the international stage as premier and the second-ranking member of the ruling party. The Foreign Ministry announcement yesterday that Li would take part in a seventh round of China-Germany government talks and attend a financial summit in Paris during the June 18-23 visits. MDT/AP

FDI

BILL GATES VISITS CHINA AS LEADERS TRY TO REVIVE FOREIGN BUSINESS INTEREST

MICROSOFT Corp. co-founder Bill Gates says he is in Beijing, joining a series of foreign business figures who have visited China as the ruling Communist Party tries to revive investor interest in the country.

Gates, who stepped down as Microsoft chairman in 2014, said on Twitter yesterday [Macau time] that he would meet partners who have worked with his charitable foundation. However, Gates is revered in China as an entrepreneur, giving Chinese leaders a chance to show their interest in foreign business by publicizing any meetings with him.

CEOs of global companies including Elon Musk of Tesla Ltd. and Apple Inc.'s Tim Cook have visited China this year and met Premier Li Qiang, the top economic official, and Cabinet ministers following the end of anti-virus controls that blocked most international travel.

"I'm excited to visit with partners who have been working on global health and development challenges with @gatesfoundation for more than 15 years," Gates wrote on Twitter. He gave no details.

The ruling party is trying to revive foreign interest in China's slowing economy and reassure companies that have been rattled by anti-monopoly and data-security crackdowns, raids on consulting firms, tension with Washington and pressure to align their plans with official development goals. MDT/AP

ECONOMY

Factory, consumer activity weakens in May, youth unemployment rises

JOE MCDONALD, BEIJING

CHINA'S consumer and factory activity weakened in May and record-breaking unemployment among young people in cities rose as an economic rebound following the end of anti-virus controls slowed.

Surveys found 20.8% of potential workers in cities aged 16-24 were unemployed, up from April's previous record of 20.4%, the government reported yesterday.

China's economic activity rebounded after the ruling Communist Party in

December lifted controls that cut off access to major cities for weeks at a time and blocked most international travel. But consumers, uneasy about possible job losses, returned to shops and restaurants less quickly than expected.

"The foundation for the economic recovery is not yet solid," the National Bureau of Statistics said in a report.

Economic growth accelerated to 4.5% over a year earlier in the three months ending in March from the previous quarter's 2.9%. Growth will have to accelerate in coming quarters

to hit the ruling party's annual target of "around 5%."

"The data published today suggest that the reopening recovery had largely fizzled out by May," Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics said in a report. "The economy appears to have lost some further momentum during the first half of June, too."

Retail sales rose 12.7% over a year earlier, but that was down from April's 18.4%, which was barely half the rate expected by forecasters. Growth in factory output decelerated to 3.5% from the previous month's 5.6% after interest rate

hikes in the United States and Europe to cool inflation depressed demand for Chinese exports.

The youth unemployment figure represents about 6 million jobless people out of a pool of 33 million people aged 16-24 who want to work, according to the NBS spokesman, Fu Linghui.

"The employment pressure of young people is still significant," Fu said. He said there was a mismatch between job seekers and the skills wanted by employers, leading to a "shortage of highly skilled talents."

May exports, reported



earlier, tumbled 7.5% from a year earlier, reversing from the previous month's 8.5% growth and adding to pressure on China's factory workforce. An official survey of manufacturers found production, exports, new orders and employment declined. MDT/AP

AUSTRALIA

LAW CREATED TO STOP RUSSIA FROM BUILDING NEW EMBASSY FOR SECURITY REASONS

ROD MCGUIRK, CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA'S Parliament passed legislation yesterday to prevent Russia from building a new embassy near Parliament House citing threats of espionage and political interference...



has escalated sanctions against Russia since the war began in February 2022.

Australia's growing hostility toward Russia became apparent last year when Australian officials demanded Moscow be held accountable for Russian cybercriminals suspected of hacking the nation's largest health insurer, Medibank...

Albanese said opposition and other lawmakers that are not aligned with the government were briefed on the legislation on Wednesday night and had agreed to pass it through both chambers yesterday.

Within three hours of Albanese publicly announcing the bill, it had become law, passing the House then the Senate. The law is expected to take effect later when it is rubber-stamped by Governor-

-General David Hurley, representing Australia's head of state, King Charles III.

Home Affairs Minister Clare O'Neil was later more specific about the Russian threat while addressing Parliament, saying the "scope for espionage and foreign interference from the site would have been a substantial risk for the nation."

"The action is direct and decisive. We do not have any interest in sugarcoating this message," O'Neil said. "We will not stand for espionage and foreign interference in our country. We will act in the face of danger to our democracy and our citizens and we will do so without any apology to anyone."

Opposition leader Peter Dutton said the Parliament was united against the Russian threat.

"We won't tolerate foreign espionage conducted in a way that is against our national interest. We won't tolerate people seeking to interfere with electoral processes in our country," Dutton told Parliament.

Albanese did not directly

answer when asked if there were also security concerns about the Chinese Embassy across a street from the Russian site.

"We're dealing with this very specifically, and it's based upon very specific advice as well about the nature of the construction that's proposed for this site, about the location of this site, and about the capability that would present in terms of potential interference with activity that occurs in this Parliament House," Albanese said.

The Russian Embassy said it would comment today [Macau time].

The Australian government decided to act after Russia won a Federal Court case last month that prevented its eviction from the site now under construction.

The 99-year lease was canceled by local Canberra authorities on the basis of a lack of construction activity since Russia was given the lease in the diplomatic precinct of Yarralumla in 2008 and plans for the complex of buildings were approved in 2011. MDT/AP

AD

律師事務所



C&C LAWYERS & NOTARIES SINCE 1996



合夥人 PARTNERS:

官樂怡 Rui José da Cunha ° 山度士 Álvaro Rodrigues ° 馬天龍 Nuno Sardinha da Mata ° 趙魯 Zhao Lu °* 馬傑安 João Nogueira Marques

大律師 ASSOCIATES:

- 高文軒 Adelino Correia °
羅善齡 Zelina Rodrigues
馬潔冰 Maria João Marques
陶義德 António Isóo de Azeredo
白穎怡 Iclília Berenguel
冼玲鳳 Mariana Afonso Esteves
馬秀文 Sofia Mendes Martins
飛嘉華 Carlos dos Santos Ferreira °
莫永誠 Rui Velez de Moura
安東尼 António Manuel dos Santos
巴慧雅 Vera Bastos
歐文傑 Miguel Evaristo
陳芷喬 Joana Chan

大律師 ASSOCIATES:

- 顏曉蓉 Teresa Xiaorong Yan
諾瑪莉 Maria Noras
康靜雅 Viviana Hong
梁淑嵐 Ana Leon
黃瀚賢 Frederico Vong
斐彥德 Gonçalo Figueiredo
吳霆鋒 Ng Teng Fong

實習律師 TRAINEE LAWYERS:

- 陳健雄 Eurico Chan
戴博晴 Tai Pok Cheng
吳佩愉 Ng Pui U
陳子健 Kimi Chan

法律專家及外地註冊律師

- JURISTS AND LAWYERS
QUALIFIED IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS:
林思潔 Jessie Lin
羅成軒 José J. Rodrigues
楊詩婷 Si Teng leong

法律專家 JURISTS:

- 張偉鴻 Cheong Wai Hong
伍福賢 Domingos Ng
許栢桓 Rui Fernandes Brás

WWW.CCADVOG.COM
TEL: (853) 2837 2642/ 2837 2623

° 私人公證員 Notary Public * 中國委託公證人 China Appointed Attesting Officer



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



AP PHOTO

WEATHER

India, Pakistan brace for winds, flash flooding as Cyclone Biparjoy makes landfall



AJIT SOLANKI, SIBI ARASU
& MUNIR AHMED, MANDVI

CYCLONE Biparjoy made landfall yesterday evening as a vast swath of western India and neighboring southern Pakistan braced for flash floods, heavy rain and high winds.

Rain pelted the shores and skies darkened along the Arabian Sea, while dust storms hampered evacuation and rescue work on land. Authorities expect conditions to worsen for two or three days as Biparjoy was expected to reach wind speeds gusting up to 140kmph (86mph) before slowing down in India's Gujarat province.

In India's Kutch district, near Jakhau port where the cyclone made landfall, authorities were expecting significant inundations of the area. In Pakistan, Keti Bandar in the country's flood-ravaged southern Sindh province, also lies in Biparjoy's path.

The bazaars and beaches in Mandvi, India, usually a bustling coastal town known for its wooden boat-makers, were deserted yesterday under government shutdown orders. Heavy winds and rains uprooted some trees in the area. Local media reported that a pregnant woman was brought from Shiyalbet island to shore and admitted to a hospital.

Amid dust storms and rain, displaced families were visibly shocked at relief camps in southern Pakistan. One of the evacuees, 82-year-old Bachai Bibi from Badin district in Sindh province, said "I don't know what will happen to my home."

Mohammad Ashraf, 35, said local officials helped him, his wife and three children escape from the Pakistani village of Sheikh in the storm zone.

The World Health Organization said it was supporting Pakistan's efforts to deal with the impact of the cyclone. Pakistan's government and local aid groups delivered free food and clean drinking water to displaced people.

Thousands of people in India were evacuated, bringing the total number of people brought to relief camps there to 100,000. In Pakistan, Lt. Gen. Inam Haider Malik, head of the National Disaster Management Authority, said 73,000 people have been evacuated to safer places so far, and authorities were providing them with shelter and food.

The agency said yesterday the cyclone was packing winds of up to 120 kph (about 75 mph) as it barreled toward Pakistan's Sindh province, the site of one of historic deadly floods last summer. At least 1,739 people were killed and 33 million were displaced

when flooding, partly induced by climate change, inundated the country, causing \$30 billion in damage.

Yesterday morning, authorities said the storm had lost some of its intensity and was expected to have a maximum sustained wind speed of between 115 kph and 125 kph (71 mph to 78 mph), gusting up to 140 kph (87 mph), a slight decrease in predictions from a day earlier.

Gujarat in India was also experiencing heavy rainfall and strong winds. Indian authorities warned that the cyclone, classified as a "very severe cyclonic storm," has the potential to inflict heavy damage.

A storm surge of two-to-three meters (two-to-three yards) above the astronomical tide is likely to inundate low-lying areas in the storm's path. The tides could rise as high as six meters (more than six yards) in some places, the India's Meteorological Department has said.

Gujarat Health Minister Rushikesh Patel told the Press Trust of India news agency that detailed preparations have been made "for post-cyclone work like restoration of electricity infrastructure, mobile networks and other infrastructure."

The government said major religious sites in coastal Gujarat such as the Dwarkadhish tem-

ple in Devbhoomi Dwarka and Somnath temple in Gir Somnath district will remain closed yesterday. Indian railways said 76 trains have been canceled on account of the cyclone.

Because mobile networks would be among the first to be affected once a cyclone hits land, the Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority engaged six ham radio teams across the coastal districts to keep communications going.

"Ham radios don't require any mobile towers, electricity or internet to make calls and we can communicate emergency requirements using the radios. They are really useful during disaster such as this," Kausal Jani, a ham radio operator told PTI news agency.

During 2021's Cyclone Tauk-tae, ham radios proved invaluable as large sections of coastal Gujarat was without electricity for six days.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, tweeted on Wednesday that his government had taken all possible measures to ensure the safety of those at risk in southern Sindh province.

"Preparations have been made to handle any kind of emergency as a result of rains and strong winds in Karachi, while the evacuation of fishermen from the sea and the po-

pulation on the coastal areas is going on rapidly," he said.

Pakistani Climate Minister Sherry Rehman advised against panic and said Karachi, the country's largest city with 20 million people, was safe and would not be where the cyclone makes landfall, as was feared earlier.

Pakistan has so far not asked for assistance from the United Nations, which has said it was monitoring the situation. Local charities and aid agencies in both India and Pakistan were helping.

Experts say climate change is leading to an increase in cyclones in the Arabian Sea region, making preparations for natural disasters all the more urgent. Pakistan is among the top 10 countries most affected by climate change, although the country's contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions is less than 1%.

A 2021 study found that the frequency, duration and intensity of cyclones in the Arabian Sea had increased significantly between 1982 and 2019.

In 1998, a cyclone that hit Gujarat state claimed more than 1,000 lives and caused excessive damage. A cyclone that hit Sindh province and the city of Karachi in 1965 killed more than 10,000 people. **MDT/AP**

MUSLIMS

New pilgrims prepare for Hajj's big return after Covid-19

FARES AKRAM, NINIEK KARMINI & MARIAM FAM

THIS year's Hajj is a landmark: the first full pilgrimage after three years when the COVID-19 pandemic sharply reduced the scale of one of Islam's holiest rites.

Millions of Muslims from around the world will start converging next week on Mecca in Saudi Arabia to begin several days of rituals. For pilgrims, it is the ultimate spiritual moment of their lives, a chance to seek God's forgiveness for their sins and walk in the footsteps of revered prophets like Muhammad.

It's a mass, communal experience, with Muslims of every race and class performing it together as one. It is also deeply personal; each pilgrim brings his or her own yearnings and experiences.

The Associated Press spoke to several pilgrims from across the world as they prepared for their journey.

GAZA

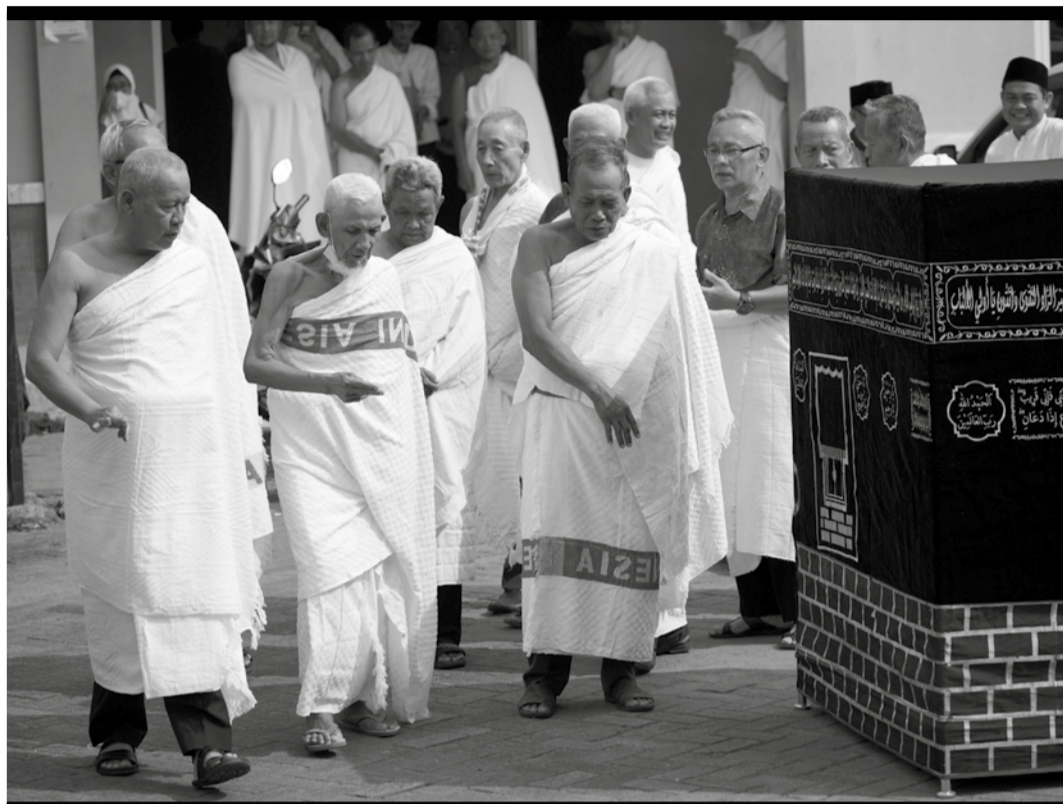
It's been hard, raising 10 children on her own in the Gaza Strip, blockaded on all sides and torn by multiple wars. But Huda Zaqqout says her life feels like a miracle because she is surrounded by her family, including 30 grandchildren.

And now, at 64, she is finally going on Hajj. It just so happens that now, after an easing of Saudi policy, more women pilgrims can participate without a "mahram," or a male relative to escort them. It's serendipitous timing for Zaqqout, who has waited years for this opportunity, and her sons cannot afford the long, arduous trip from Gaza to Mecca.

"Gaza is like a prison. We are locked up from all directions and borders," she said.

Zaqqout registered for Hajj in 2010 but had never been selected. So this year she went on an Umrah, the so-called "lesser pilgrimage" to Mecca that can happen any time.

After she returned home, Zaqqout tuned into the radio broadcast that announced who will be this year's Hajj pilgrims. She cried with joy when her name was announced.



For Gazans, the trip is particularly hard. The tiny Mediterranean coastal territory has been blockaded by Israel and Egypt since 2007, when the militant group Hamas took power. Though pilgrims are allowed to travel, it is a bureaucratic nightmare. Then the bus ride to Cairo Airport takes at least 15 hours and sometimes twice that due to long waits at the border and Egyptian checkpoints in the Sinai.

That hasn't dampened Zaqqout's joy. Her neighbors congratulate her. She watches YouTube videos to learn Hajj rituals and goes to physiotherapy for her feet, which often hurt, knowing she'll be standing and walking a lot.

At her house in Gaza City, her grandchildren throng around her. At one point as she told her story, Zaqqout started to cry; the children hugged her and cried with her.

INDONESIA

At a rural intersection outside Jakarta, 85-year-old Husin bin Nisan stands guard, his hands nimbly signaling for vehicles to stop or proceed. It's a blind curve; approaching traffic can't see what's coming.

Husin is a "Pak Ogah," a type of volunteer traffic warden found across Indonesia. Nearly every day for more than 30 years, he has directed traffic in a poor village called Peusar, living off tips from drivers equivalent to a

few dollars a day.

The whole time, he has been saving coins for his dream. After 15 years of waiting, finally Husin is going on the Hajj.

Husin tearfully recounted the prayer he often repeated: "I beg You, God ... open the way for me to go to Mecca and Medina. Please give Your blessing."

Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, has a staggeringly long line of citizens wanting to go on Hajj; wait times can last decades. It backed up even more when Saudi Arabia barred foreign pilgrims in 2020 and 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, when Hajj reopened but with age restrictions, less than half of Indonesia's quota could attend.

To catch up, Indonesia received from Saudi Arabia an additional 8,000 spots this year, reaching an all-time high of 229,000. Authorities are giving special preference to the elderly. Nearly 67,000 of this year's pilgrims are above 65; the eldest is a 118-year-old woman.

A father of four and grandfather of six, Husin still works every day. Thin, with thick white hair and beard, he walks to his intersection and sometimes stands directing traffic for 12 hours a day.

UNITED STATES

A wave of emotions washed over Saadiha Khaliq as she reflected on the spi-

ritual significance of her upcoming pilgrimage to Mecca, more than 11,000 kilometers (7,000 miles) from her home in the U.S. state of Tennessee.

"It's really this invitation and this honor," said the 41-year-old Pakistani-American engineer, who lives near Nashville. "You just hope that you're worthy of that honor."

Undertaking the pilgrimage has been on Khaliq's mind for several years; she would read and watch videos about Hajj rituals and ask others who had gone about their experiences.

Her religious quest gained urgency during the coronavirus pandemic.

"The pandemic really put things in perspective," she said. "Life is short, and you have limited opportunities to do things that you really want to do."

This year, she applied for places on the Hajj for herself and her parents. While they've been to Mecca before, this will be the first Hajj for all three.

"This is kind of a big, lifelong dream and achievement for them," she said. "I'm just grateful that I get to be part of the whole experience."

Khaliq was born in the United Kingdom. In the 1990s, her family moved to the United States and eventually to Tennessee, where her father is a mathematics professor. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1963 SOVIETS LAUNCH FIRST WOMAN INTO SPACE



A former textile worker from the Soviet Union has become the first woman in space.

Lieutenant Valentina Tereshkova, 26, was the fifth Russian cosmonaut to go into the Earth's orbit when her spaceship Vostok VI was launched at 1230 Moscow time.

Moscow Television broadcast the first pictures of the elated blonde - code-named Seagull - ninety minutes later.

One of the main purposes of her mission is to attempt the first docking manoeuvre with another spaceship.

Colonel Valery Bykovsky was completing his 32nd orbit in the Vostok V - launched two days ago - when Lt Tereshkova hurtled into space from the secret Russian launch pad in Baikonur, central Asia.

At one time the two spacecrafts - which were in radio contact with each other as well as the ground - were only three miles apart, but they are reported to be drifting further apart.

Russian Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev had a radio conversation with the female cosmonaut.

He congratulated her on her achievement and spoke of his "fatherly pride" for her.

By 2000 BST Ms Tereshkova had completed 23 circuits of the globe - one more than the longest-flying US spaceman, Gordon Cooper - at a distance of between 114 miles (183km) and 145 miles (232km) with an average 88.3 minutes for each orbit.

Thousands of jubilant women gathered in Red Square, Moscow, to celebrate the occasion.

A special issue of Soviet newspaper Pravda said Ms Tereshkova had dreamed of going into space as soon as she heard about the first man in space, Colonel Yuri Gagarin, in April 1961.

Ms Tereshkova - an amateur parachutist - joined the space programme last March.

Col Gagarin said she was popular with the other cosmonauts and their wives and described her "kind eyes and good-natured smile".

Russian scientists also hope to analyse the comparative effects of space travel on a man and a woman.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Lt Tereshkova and Col Bykovsky landed safely by parachute two days later in Kazakhstan, several hundred miles from where they had taken off. Ms Tereshkova had completed 49 orbits of the Earth - 1,250,000 miles - in two days, 22 hours and fifty minutes. Mr Bykovsky set a new record for time in space, completing 82 orbits - 2,060,000 miles - in four days, 23 hours and 54 minutes, 25 hours and 32 minutes longer than the previous record holder. Ms Tereshkova was feted by the Soviet leadership and became active in the Communist Party. She never returned to space.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Don't try to get even without having all the facts. You mustn't be so trusting. You need to distance yourself from the situation for a little while first.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
You can look into new jobs but don't count on getting help from someone who may have promised you assistance. Check your project over carefully if you were not the only one contributing to the end result.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
It's a good time to make changes to your living quarters that will give you more space. Don't turn down offers that include sports activities or children.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
If you haven't already, consider starting your own business. You can make money through your own creative efforts. You are best not to confide in anyone right now.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You can make money if you put your mind to it. New friendships will develop through group events. Hassles with in-laws could put a damper on your day.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Communication will be the source of your knowledge and you must be sure to spend time with those who have more experience. Get out and get active.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Some of the best opportunities will crop up if you keep an open mind. Family outings will make you feel secure and happy. Delve into worthwhile causes that will show results if you put in the effort.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Your competitive nature will enable you to win any contest you enter. This will not be the time to give too much to your children. Deception and doubts may surround your involvement with friends and relatives.

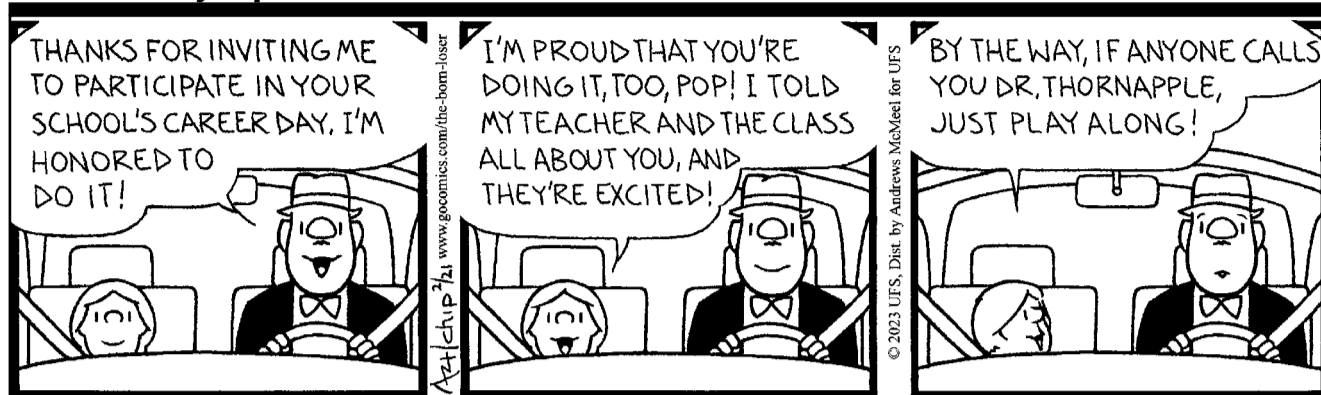
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You may be fortunate while traveling. Spend time getting into physical activities with your lover. Friends or groups that you're affiliated with may want you to contribute more cash than you can really afford.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Opportunities for financial gains through investments and games of chance are likely. Things may not be as harmonious as you would like with colleagues or employers today.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You'll find love and you'll get into tiptop shape at the same time. Family responsibilities are escalating. Your family needs to spend some time with you, too.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Try to do your job and then leave. Escapist tendencies may lead to overindulgence. Problems with your partner could be reaching a high level of concern.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	22	38	fine
Changchun	20	31	cloudy
Chengdu	18	24	overcast
Chongqing	21	25	rain
Fuzhou	22	28	rain
Guangzhou	25	31	rain
Guiyang	18	27	showers
Haikou	26	34	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	21	29	overcast
Harbin	20	32	cloudy
Hefei	22	28	overcast
Nanjing	23	30	cloudy
Shanghai	23	29	rain
Taipei	23	27	rain
Wuhan	24	25	rain
Hong Kong	26	27	thunderstorms
WORLD			
Moscow	15	29	overcast
Frankfurt	13	27	overcast
Paris	17	30	overcast
London	12	27	fine
New York	17	26	rain

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Second letter of the Greek alphabet; 5- The wife of Geraint in Arthurian lore; 9- RR stop; 12- ___ Fox; 13- Urns; 15- Shred; 16- Lo-cal; 17- Once more; 18- Network of nerves; 19- Attractive route; 21- Musical instruments; 23- Make ___ for it; 25- Crikekey; 26- HBO alternative; 29- Othello villain; 31- Volcano, at times; 35- Organ of hearing; 36- Old; 38- Govt. security; 39- Cozy; 41- Duck with soft down; 43- Not false; 44- Mall frequenters; 46- Fuel transport; 48- Radical '60s grp.; 49- Set upon; 51- Hard to hold; 52- Shoebox letters; 53- Mouth part; 55- Unit of currency in Iran and Yemen; 57- Steadfast partisan; 61- Choose by divine election; 65- Caen's river; 66- Live's partner; 68- Lyric poems; 69- Bird feed; 70- Cold mold; 71- You've Made ___ Very Happy; 72- Polo Grounds legend; 73- Greek goddess of youth; 74- Disrespectful back talk;

DOWN 1- OPEC units; 2- Actor Stoltz; 3- Mal de ___; 4- Sports venue; 5- Leave empty; 6- Faultfinder; 7- Golfer Aoki; 8- Thaw before takeoff; 9- Observed; 10- See ya!; 11- Son of Zeus in Greek mythology; 14- Catches; 15- Poseidon's spear; 20- Coloured part of the eye; 22- Engrossed; 24- Marsh of mystery; 26- Outer coat of a seed; 27- French Impressionist; 28- Container for oil or vinegar; 30- Blast from the past; 32- More unfavorable; 33- Piece of music written for a solo instrument; 34- Actress Witherspoon; 37- Conger catcher; 40- Knotty; 42- Confidence; 45- Garbage boat; 47- Tatum's dad; 50- Eucalyptus eater; 54- Newly made; 56- Weaving machines; 57- Just okay; 58- Waste allowance; 59- Work without ___; 60- Record; 62- Brain wave; 63- Scottish loch, home to a monster; 64- General ___ chicken; 67- Corduroy feature;

Yesterday's solution

H	A	T	E	L	O	S	E	S	R	E	N	D	
O	L	I	N	E	K	L	A	T	E	T	R	I	E
Y	E	E	D	A	D	R	E	N	A	L	I	N	E
M	O	V	E	D	O	N	E	C	A	R			
B	O	O	N	E	R	P	R	T	A				
P	E	R	S	O	N	P	I	A	S	E	R	F	
S	T	E	T	S	A	A	R	S	K	E	R		
A	T	L	I	C	Y								
L	E	S	S	S	M	E	L	T	S	L	I	T	
M	E	E	T	P	A	R	E	N	T	E	R	S	
A	N	O	U	T									
C	O	M	P	E	N	S	A	T	E				
E	R	N	E										
S	A	I	D										
K	I	L	L	S									
N	Y	E	T										

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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

有關樓宇廣告及租賃、買賣、查詢請與職員查詢
For more information on advertising laws, please speak to one of our representatives.

RENT

CONTACT US & SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY!

hello@jmlproperty.com
www.jmlproperty.com

jmlmacau jmlproperty

Supreme Flower City
HKD 22,000/mth 4 bed 3 bath

Kok Wui
HKD 7,800/mth 2 bed 1 bath

Jade Garden
HKD 13,988,000 4 beds 3 bath

AD

LA COURSE DU SIÈCLE

God in heaven, Ferrari on earth

SÉRGIO DE ALMEIDA CORREIA,
MDT, LE MANS

THE curtain has fallen on "La Course du Siècle," the 24 Hours of Le Mans 2023, as the Automobile Club de L'Ouest (ACO), its organizer, called it. And once the race is over, it cannot be said that this epithet was an exaggeration.

Those who were at the Sarthe circuit in Le Mans last week and had the privilege of watching the fourth race of the World Endurance Championship (WEC) beheld an unforgettable spectacle, the likes of which had not been seen on the track for a long time. More than that, in this year's 24 Hours of Le Mans, for several reasons, history was made once again.

The victory of a car from the Cavallino Rampante in the overall classification had not taken place since 1965, when a Ferrari 259 won the race. And it was a double victory. Now, 58 years later, history has been made again. It is noteworthy that the house of Fiorano, on the one hand, returned to the biggest category of the WEC endurance

SÉRGIO DE ALMEIDA CORREIA



world championship to win the biggest and most prestigious race in just over a year.

On the other hand, making a car

from scratch adapted to the new regulations, Ferrari, in the words of Antonello Coletta, director of Ferrari Attività Sportive, after homologa-

tion of the 499P, had only five and a half months to prepare the car for competition. The presence in Le Mans was a true miracle, crowned

last Sunday with the victory.

Regardless of the bad luck that befell their direct opponents, which also touched the number 50

AD

DUFFY'S IRISH PUB

FREE
Limo Service
from \$300
(Tues-Sun)

The best of Ireland, Here in Macau!

BROADWAY FOOD STREET, C-G002 - G004, TAIPA, MACAU BROADWAY HOTEL, ROTUNDA DO DIQUE CESTE, TAIPA

@duffysmacau PLEASE CALL US AT: 2884 5212 FOR RESERVATIONS

16

《澳門特寫》
MACAU CLOSER

生活藝術雜誌 LIVING & ARTS MAGAZINE

16TH ANNIVERSARY THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!
十六週年，感謝您們的支持！

現在發售
NOW ON SALE

MACAUCLOSER LIVING & ARTS MAGAZINE

方力鈞
FANG LI JUN

中國當代藝術界方力鈞
和後現代人的自我反思
CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ARTIST
FANG LI JUN AND HIS
SELF-REFLECTION ON HUMAN NATURE

Macau Arts Festival



AF Corse car entrusted to Antonio Fuoco, Miguel Molina, and Nicklas Nielsen, the Italian cars proved to be fast and reliable, which was combined with the bet on Antonio Giovinazzi, the driver dismissed by Alfa Romeo's Formula 1 team, and on GT drivers – Pier Guidi and James Calado won with Daniel Serra, at this track, the 2019 GTE Pro with the Ferrari 488 Evo and the same team – who were already working with the brand. This success began with winning the pole position, was confirmed during the race, and deserves to be applauded for the novelty it brought to the competition.

A NEW CHAPTER

By dethroning Toyota, which succeeded the dominance of the Germans Audi and Porsche, after

seven years, the Centennial race marks a new page in the history of WEC and the Le Mans 24 Hours. The next races, followed by the 6 Hours of Monza, will be decisive in seeing how far the Ferrari 499P can go and if in the next few years another single manufacturer dominates again.

Secondly, it should be noted that the transition from the old LMP1 category cars to the current Hypercars is already a success. This is the Hypercars' third year and the presence of competitors in this category has practically tripled in one year. Whereas before there were five cars (2 Toyota, 2 Glickenhaus and 1 Alpine), in 2021 and 2022, there are now fourteen, seven manufacturers and nine teams. And next year, BMW, Alpine and Lamborghini will join the grid.

Richard Mille, the FIA and the ACO are also to be congratulated for having hit the nail on the head in the transition to the new cars. The reduction in costs, the search for environmental balance where it was lacking in the past, the uncompromising defense of sustainability, and the substantial reduction in the carbon footprint are now unavoidable data that clearly show the path that must be followed, which will continue in the new GT3 cars, which will put an end, amid some criticism, to the current LMGTE Am and LMP2 cars. This will be subject to a limit of up to 100,000 and will use commercial tires.

In sporting terms, the results were excellent due to the greater competitiveness between cars and teams, and there was rivalry for the podium places until the end.

With less than 30 minutes to go, the winning Ferrari entered the pits and for a moment there was suspense about its fate when the car, for a few seconds, was immobilized before it was able to return to the track. The Toyota of Buemi/Hartley/Hirakawa, last year's winners, finished the race less than 1 minute 22 seconds behind car 51t. Meanwhile, in GTE Am, the Iron Dames car lost its place on the podium by 5,312 seconds, which in a 24-hour race is remarkable.

CADILLACS & CHEVROLETS

There were strong results from the North Americans. Although still underwhelming, the third and fourth places in the overall Cadillac of Bamber/Lynn/Westbrook and Bourdais/Van Der Zande/Dixon must be mentioned, as well as the

victory of the Corvette Racing Chevrolet delivered to Catsburg/Keating/Varrone, combined with the good performance of the Hendrick Motorsport Chevrolet Camaro ZL1 Nascar, which fulfilled the objectives: to reach the end and not be last.

As for the victors, the victory of Inter Europol's 34th car in LMP2 should be noted, a category that also gave the first podium to a Luso-Angolan driver - Rui Andrade, Louis Delétrás and Robert Kubica, were impeccable in the Oreca 07-Gibson with the number 41 -, ninth overall, ahead of the Duqueine Team's car entrusted to Jani/Binder/Pino.

From others, like Porsche, given their experience and track record at Le Mans, with four cars at the start, more was expected, but the future started yesterday.

An impressive 325,000 people, with thousands traveling from as far away as Arizona, Japan, and New Zealand, as well as weather conditions, with plenty of sunshine, heat, and some rain on Saturday, bringing chaos to the track for a few moments, and the usual entertainment around the circuit; all contributed to the success.

In a race where tradition and history were always present – the Centennial trophy was brought to the track by the beautiful 1923 Chenard-Walker – the future was projected, doing justice to the motto "Speed, Endurance and Innovation." There is no shortage of guarantees that the WEC is in good health and increasingly popular worldwide.

Let 2024 and the next hundred years come. Until then, Ferrari reigns. Gloria al Commendatore.

BOOK IT

Lisa See's 'Lady Tan's Circle of Women' celebrates a Ming Dynasty physician

SOON after she published her last novel, 2019's "The Island of Sea Women," Lisa See joined much of the rest of the world in seclusion, sheltering at her Los Angeles home to avoid the deadly coronavirus.

Little did the prolific, 68-year-old author realize that would lead directly to one of her most meticulously researched, fascinating and ultimately enjoyable works, "Lady Tan's Circle of Women."

As she paced back and forth past a shelf filled with research books, See saw one on women's health in Imperial China that had sat there unread for 10 years. With nothing better to do, she opened it and learned of a woman named Tan Yunxian, a brilliant but now all but forgotten doc-

tor who at age 50 had published a groundbreaking book in 1511 detailing all of her medical cases to that time.

Immediately, a new novel was being crafted. But unlike earlier See works such as "Shanghai Girls," "Dreams of Joy" or "The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane," which are set in historic but more modern times and in which Western and Asian culture often meet, this one centers strictly on the days of China's Ming Dynasty. But like the others, it is also fiction based on fact.

Told in Lady Tan's voice, her story begins in 1469, when its subject, the precocious 8-year-old member of a young family, is just beginning the traditional and very painful process of female foot binding. In

just seven more years, she is told, she'll be ready for an arranged marriage, one that to her delight turns out to be happy.

Long before that, however, her mother dies at age 28, most likely of a foot-binding infection. She, her brother, nanny and her father's concubine are hustled off to the estate of her wealthy physician grandparents in the prosperous city of Wuxi. There, her grandmother takes a shine to the bright, inquisitive girl and, seeing her interest, begins to teach her medicine.

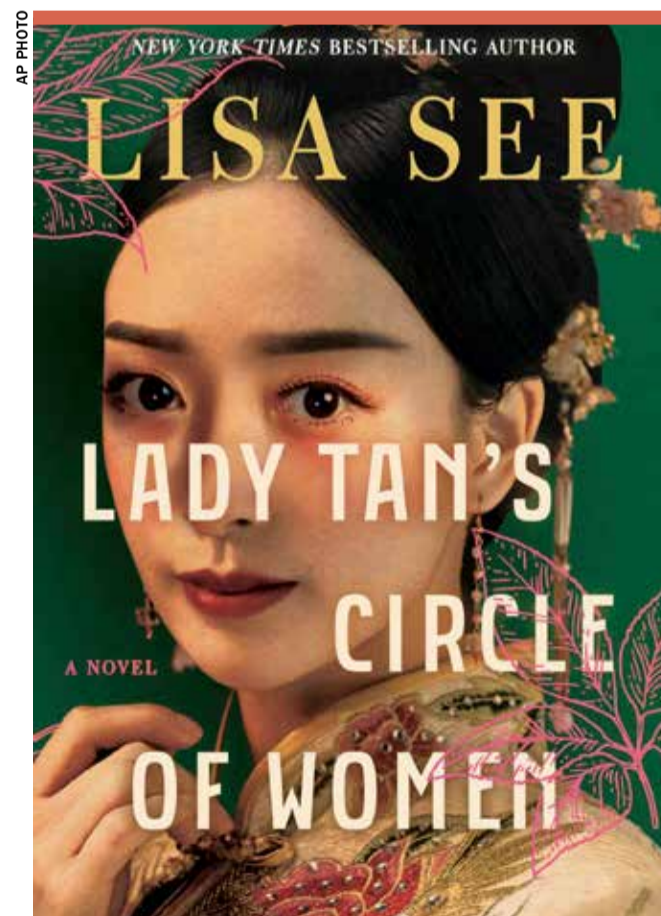
Female patients in many cases could only be treated by a woman doctor, and Lady Tan cares for them all, from peasants to people of means.

As with any See novel, there is plenty of intrigue

as concubines conspire to move their sons into important positions of power or even replace wives with themselves while various sycophants plan poisonings and murder.

As the years pass, Lady Tan develops numerous herbal and other natural remedies for everything from easing menstrual cramps to fighting obesity, injury and other ailments. Many are said to still be in use, saved from obscurity by a nephew who re-published her book nearly 30 years after her death at age 96.

But at its heart, "Lady Tan's Circle of Women" is much more than a story about a pioneering doctor. It's a tale of enduring friendship and the effect it can have both in the moment and centuries afterward.



"Lady Tan's Circle of Women," by Lisa See (Scribner)

"For much of my life I felt alone, but over the years a circle of women came to love me and I came to love each of those women in return," Lady Tan

says as she looks back on life, something she recalls her mother once described to her as "like a sunbeam passing through a crack."
JOHN ROGERS, MDT/AP

OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**JOE BIDEN
 ADMINISTRATION NEEDS
 TO TAKE REAL ACTIONS
 NOT JUST WINDOW
 DRESSING TO MEND TIES**

Apparently, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken discussed the pressing need to “responsibly manage” the Sino-US relationship to “avoid miscalculation and conflict” in their talk by telephone on Wednesday.

Interestingly, unlike previous readouts that have at least mentioned what the other side said or offered a terse description of talks as being “candid”, “open” or “constructive”, the news release both sides published immediately after the phone call only outlined what Qin or Blinken stressed to each other.

Qin, on his part, apparently spoke of “new difficulties and challenges” that have appeared and confronted Sino-US relations since the beginning of the year, noting that it is the US side that should be held accountable for them.

The meeting of the two countries’ leaders in Bali, Indonesia, in November should have paved the way for effectively easing the tensions between the two countries, had the US side implemented their consensus as faithfully as the Chinese side has.

However, be it in the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea, or trade and technology, the United States has not only clung to its China-containment strategy, but also further intensified its military suppression, economic coercion, trade bullying and geopolitical isolation targeting China.

With the Joe Biden administration discarding the US’ long-term strategic ambiguity on the Taiwan question, Beijing has been left with no option but to reevaluate how sincere the administration is when it says it seeks to improve relations given its consistent undermining of China’s sovereignty, security and development interests.

That’s why Qin demanded the US side take concrete actions to respect China’s solemn positions on the Taiwan question and other core concerns, and stop interfering in China’s internal affairs.

Compared to Qin, who touched upon almost all key issues related to the bilateral ties as well as the specific problems and their solutions, Blinken apparently chose to prevaricate by repeating what have become well-worn clichés of the Biden administration, such as expressing the US’ readiness to “use diplomatic engagements to raise areas of concern as well as areas of potential cooperation” and the need for “maintaining open lines of communication”.

The fundamental starting point for an improvement in China-US relations is for the US side to stop hollowing out the otherwise substantial content of bilateral relations with empty promises, gaudy concepts and slick discourses. With Blinken due to make his long-mooted visit to China on Sunday and Monday, the US side should bear in mind that Beijing now only cares about what it does instead of what it says.

Barring any hijacking of his trip by the Washington “balloonists”, Blinken’s long-delayed visit finally looks set to go ahead. But it will be nothing more than window dressing without a commitment to real actions to mend ties.

FRANCE’S MACRON WANTS TO BOOST AI, CALLS FOR RULES THAT DON’T IMPEDE TECH GROWTH

THE BUZZ

French President Emmanuel Macron called Wednesday for boosting the development of artificial intelligence in Europe while putting in place “smart” regulations that don’t impede tech companies’ growth.

Macron, who visited Europe’s biggest startup and tech event Vivattech, said “we’re too far behind in terms of innovation and we’re regulating too slowly.”

He said France and the EU are lagging behind UK and the world’s biggest players, the U.S. and China.

His comments came as lawmakers in Europe signed off Wednesday on the world’s first set of comprehensive rules for artificial intelligence.

It could be years before the rules fully take effect. Three-way negotiations involving EU member states, the Parliament and the European Commission, are still to take place.

Macron praised EU talks as a “good debate” but said that by the time rules are released, “we’ll have regulated on presuppositions and knowledge that are almost already obsolete.”

He added he was “very cautious” about making regulations “too rigid.”

Rapid advances in chatbots like ChatGPT have shown the benefits the emerging technology can bring — and the new perils it poses.



Zhu Yong (right) tries to shield himself from photographers as he leaves Brooklyn Federal court in New York, last month

US JURY TO WEIGH CASE PROSECUTORS CALL PART OF CHINA’S REPATRIATION EFFORT

**JENNIFER PELTZ,
 NEW YORK**

JURORS are expected to start deliberating today [Macau time] in the criminal trial of three men accused of trying to scare a former Chinese official into returning to his homeland.

American private investigator Michael McMahon and Zheng Congying and Zhu Yong, two Chinese nationals living in the U.S., face charges including acting as illegal foreign agents, stalking and conspiracy.

Prosecutors say the scheme reflects China’s nearly decade-old “Operation Fox Hunt,” an initiative “aimed at repatriating people deemed fugitives from justice.”

According to prosecutors, Zhu, Zheng and McMahon carried out different parts of a years-long and “increasingly intrusive effort” to induce former Wuhan city official Xu Jin to return to his homeland, where he and wife Liu Fang are wanted on corruption allegations

that the two deny.

“Xu Jin and Liu Fang were harassed and stalked for years,” Assistant U.S. Attorney Meredith Arfa said in a closing argument yesterday. She maintained that “the overarching scheme” was “directed by the Chinese government.”

China has denied threatening people to coerce them to return. The U.S. and China don’t have an extradition treaty, meaning authorities can’t order people to be sent back.

Zhu, a retiree who also goes by Jason Zhu and Yong Zhu, helped hire McMahon to find Xu and pass along information for the search. McMahon, a private investigator and retired New York City police sergeant, tailed the ex-official, rooted out his New Jersey home address and scoured government databases for information on his family.

Zheng knocked on Xu’s door, circled the home to peer inside and taped up a note telling Xu to submit to imprisonment in

China in order to assure the well-being of his wife and children. Defense lawyer Paul Goldberger said Zheng later made a remorseful attempt to retrieve the missive; prosecutors suggest he just checked to see whether it had been received.

The men didn’t testify, but their lawyers said the three believed they were aiding a private company or individuals, not the Chinese government.

“They are also victims. They are used,” said Zhu’s lawyer, Kevin Tung, told the Brooklyn federal court jury during yesterday’s summations. “They are used by a very sophisticated government.”

McMahon’s lawyer, Lawrence Lustberg, said the sleuth had been “deceived” by Chinese contacts who referred to a “company” as the ultimate client for the work.

Besides the men on trial, eight other people also have been indicted in the case. Three have pleaded guilty; five are believed to be in China. **MDT/AP**



NATO defense ministers gathered yesterday to discuss future relations with Ukraine as Russia’s war on the country thwarts its hopes of joining the world’s biggest security alliance soon. The ministers were also due to take part in a separate meeting at NATO headquarters of the U.S.-led Ukraine Contact Group — the forum Ukraine’s supporters routinely join to try to drum up weapons and ammunition to help Kyiv fight the Russian invasion. The NATO meeting comes just under a month before U.S. President Joe Biden and his counterparts gather for a summit in Lithuania.



Germany An array of climate measures being introduced by the government will bring the country closer but not all the way toward meeting its national goals for cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, officials said. Germany’s Climate Ministry said that measures already in place or soon to become law will reduce emissions by about 900 million metric tons of carbon dioxide for the period from 2022 to 2030 — about 80% of the 1,100 million tons of the planet-warming gas the government is aiming to cut.



Poland Thousands of people demonstrated against the country’s restrictive abortion law after a woman who was five months pregnant died of sepsis, the latest such death since a tightening of the law. The protesters vented their fury against the governing Law and Justice party, or PIS, and doctors who refuse to perform abortions even when a woman’s life is at risk. There have been reported cases of hospitals that refused to terminate pregnancies because of the presence of a fetal heartbeat even when the women were in grave danger.