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**THREE MAJOR FOOD DELIVERY PLATFORMS WERE FINED FOR VIOLATING THE PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION LAW, INCLUDING SENDING USER INFO OUTSIDE MACAU**

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**SECURITY SECRETARY ‘NOT HAPPY’ WITH MANNER OF PSP INFORMATION RELEASE**

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**NEW ENGLISH BOOK BY LOCAL RESEARCHERS DOCUMENTS SYMBOLISTIC POET PESSANHA**

▲ P4



**Japan** Tokyo prosecutors said yesterday they have arrested the former vice foreign minister of Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's Cabinet on suspicion of accepting more than 61 million yen (\$414,000) in bribes from a wind power company in return for his promotion of wind power and other favorable treatment. Masatoshi Akimoto, 48, was arrested on suspicion of accepting the bribes, including 30 million yen (\$204,000) in cash at his parliamentary office, from a wind power company executive on several occasions.

AP PHOTO



**British** police hunted across the country yesterday and put ports and airports on alert for a former soldier who escaped from a London prison while awaiting trial on terrorism charges. Opposition politicians demanded to know how Daniel Abed Khalife managed to slip out of medium-security Wandsworth Prison and why he was not being held at a maximum-security facility. Khalife, 21, is accused of planting fake bombs at a military base and of violating Britain's Official Secrets Act.

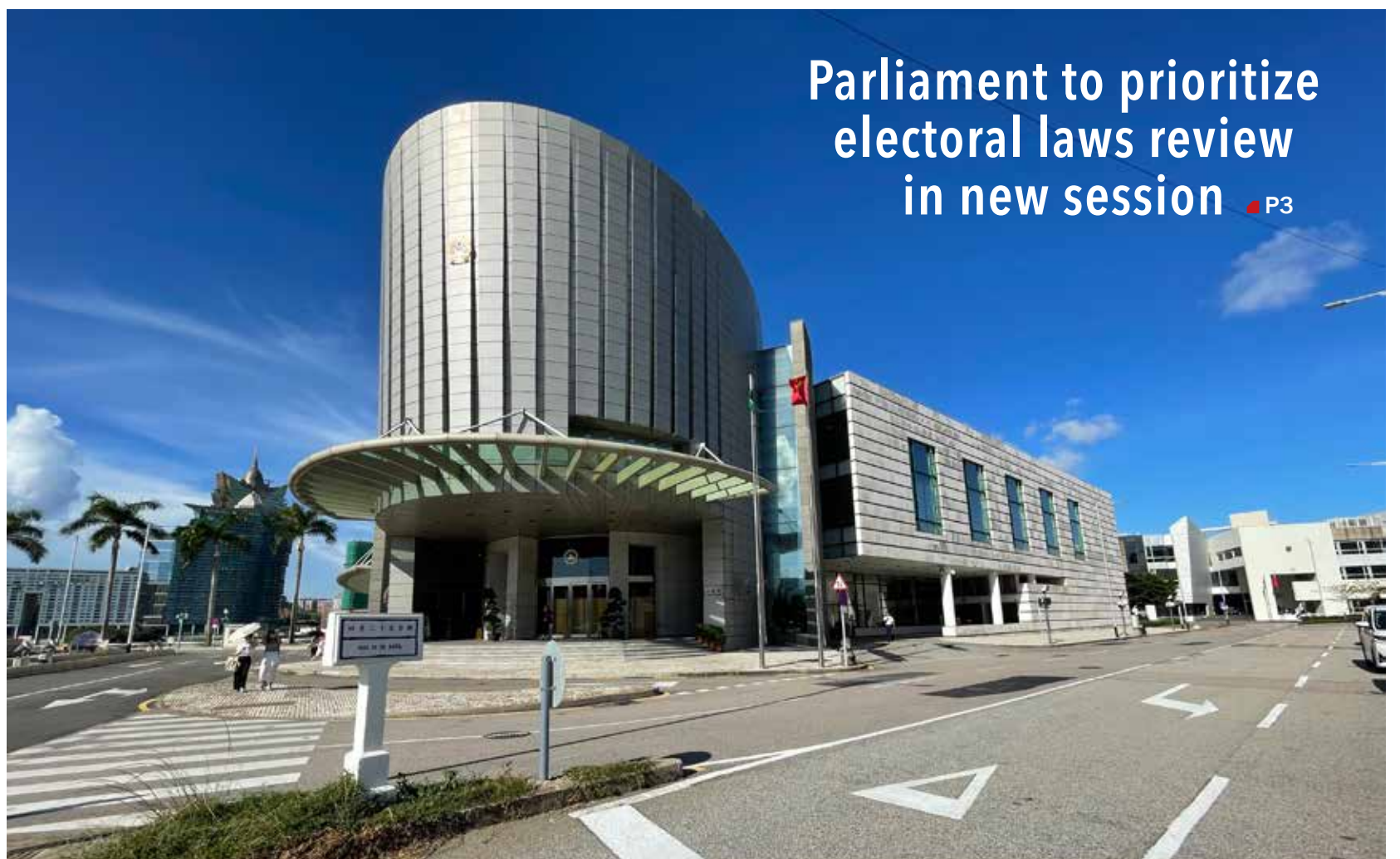
AP PHOTO



**Ukraine** A Russian missile tore through an outdoor market in eastern Ukraine yesterday, killing 17 people and wounding dozens, as U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken returned to the country with more than \$1 billion in new American funding for Ukraine, including military and humanitarian aid. Blinken's fourth visit to the country was overshadowed by the strike in the city of Kostiantynivka, near the front line in the Donetsk region, that turned the marketplace into an inferno.

More on backpage

# LOOKING FOR IDEAL VOTE



**Parliament to prioritize electoral laws review in new session**

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## PROOF OF MACAU

'Prova de Vida' (Proof of Life) exhibition by architect Eduardo Flores offers an insight into Macau's urban landscape of the past 40 years

▲ P2-3



## TASTE OF EDESIA

▲ P15



### MACAO WEEK IN TIANJIN GATHERS 2.16M VISITORS

The second Macao Week of 2023 culminated in Tianjin, attracting nearly 2.16 million spectators on site, according to the Macao Government Tourism Office. Staged for five days, the event also garnered 150 million pageviews for the hashtag #MacaoWeekinTianjin on Weibo. Through the mega roadshow, presentation seminar and gastronomic promotion along with a variety of multichannel online promotions, the event aims to attract mainland visitors to Macau for vacation during the Mid-Autumn Festival, National Day and other holidays, as part of the efforts to reinforce the mainland visitor markets.

### MEASURES ISSUED TO FACILITATE MACAU-BASED PLANNING INSTITUTIONS TO PRACTICE IN HENGQIN

Hengqin recently issued the trial measures for Macau and Hong Kong-based planning institutions and professionals to file their practice in Guangdong-Macao In-depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin. According to the Urban Planning and Construction Bureau of the zone, these measures work to facilitate those planning institutions and professionals to practice in Hengqin, and deepen the exchanges of planning industry in the three regions. These measures will take effect on September 17, appropriately relaxing the filing conditions and scope of practice of those planning institutions and professionals in the zone.

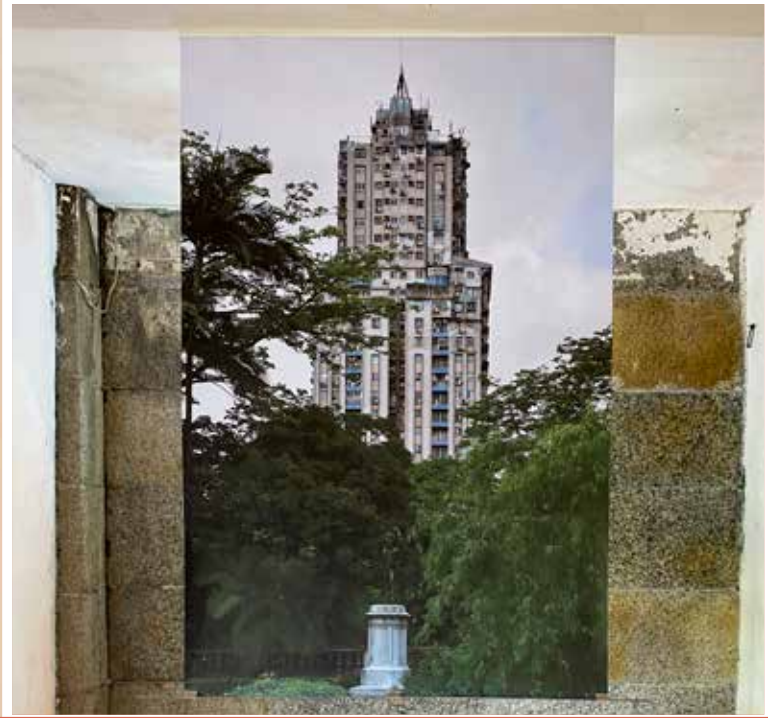
### DSOP RECEIVES 23 BIDS FOR OLD COURT RENOVATION PROJECT

Public Works Bureau (DSOP) received 23 bids, 22 of which were accepted, and one required additional documents for the roof construction of the old court building's transformation into the Court of Final Appeal. Then bids ranged from MOP214 million to MOP256 million, with the total duration ranging from 530 to 550 working days. The renovation project involves two sites, including the former court building and the former Judiciary Police (PJ) headquarters.

### DSAL TO HOLD JOB-MATCHING SESSIONS NEXT WEEKEND

The Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) and the Macau Federation of Trade Unions (MFTU) will collaborate to hold three industry-specific matching sessions on September 14 and 15, providing a total of 248 vacancies. Data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) indicated that the general unemployment rate stands at 2.6%, while the unemployment rate of local residents was 3.3% for May – July 2023. According to DSAL, the job-matching session aims to alleviate the pressure of the different sectors' human resources needs.

RENATO MARQUES



### PROVA DE VIDA

# EDUARDO FLORES OFFERS AN MACAU'S ARCHITECTURE OVER

RENATO MARQUES

**P**ROOF of Life (Prova de Vida) is the title of an exhibition by the architect Eduardo Flores, and aims not only to provide a retrospective over his 40-year career as an architect in Macau but also strives to go beyond that, offering an insight of the local architecture from the 1980s to the present day.

The exhibition shows not only Flores' projects, but many collaborations, unbuilt projects, and ideas, some of which have never progressed beyond a sketch.

In addition to showcasing photographs, drawings, and

other project-related documentation, it also shares stories and thoughts from the author about the projects and the behind-the-scenes of some of the most iconic works in Macau, from buildings and multifunctional venues to overpasses.

"It's an unfiltered display, which means that there are a lot of mistakes and imperfections. It is not just personal in the sense of showcasing only my work, but it also often touches on the works of other architects in Macau, and works for which I have submitted proposals and tendered designs for projects that were eventually built by others,"

the architect said.

In the exhibition, the audience, especially those from younger generations, can gain insights into a Macau they have never experienced. In this way, the audience can develop an understanding of some of the city's existing structures, which reflect the thinking at the time on urban growth.

"It showcases my life in architecture, not just my architectural creations, and that is why the book (available at the exhibition) is also titled – 'A Biography in Architecture,'" Flores remarked.

Inviting the viewers to explore various moments and

architectural developments chronologically, the exhibition is featured at the lower-ground floor level of Casa Garden (Orient Foundation). It includes some indispensable pieces such as the first building designed by the architect in Macau and some of the most emblematic structures like the Cheoc Van Swimming Pool, the Islands Healthcare Center, the overpasses of NAPE, as well as several facilities built for the telecommunications company CTM.

While exploring the different projects on display, the architect admits that not all of them have aged well, with some projects undergoing re-

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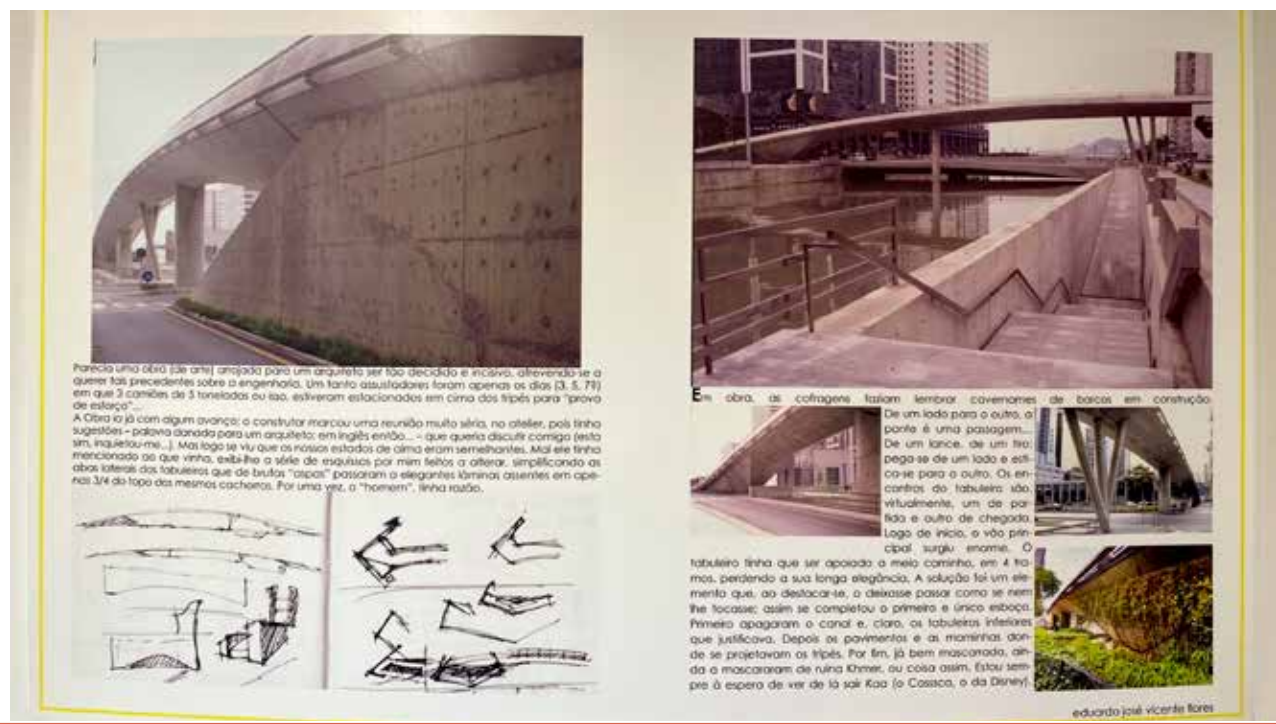
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# INSIGHT INTO THE PAST 40 YEARS

peated change over time and losing their identity and, in some cases their original purpose, in the process.

## CHEOC VAN POOL HAS BEEN 'MISTREATED'

Among the works that endured mistreatment is the swimming pool of Cheoc Van. The author describes the swimming pool as having been "tortured" and "disfigured" in its essence. This is something that the architect views with some sadness but also notes that most people continue to nominate it as their favorite pool facility in Macau, a testament to the enduring appeal of the original design.

"The idea was to make a swimming pool that would cater for people who are not fans of swimming pools, including myself," the author explained. The Cheoc Van pool continues to be one of his most widely recognized works.

## SOME BUILDINGS 'AGE WELL'

On the other hand, there are some buildings that he claims have "aged well" and that "are

now prettier than when they were initially built." Among these, he highlighted the 'Cell Site 2' from CTM, located at Taipa's Hill.

"It's very beautiful now. The way the building connected with nature and the greenery around it is just very beautiful and this makes me very happy. Everything fell in place – the way the concrete aged, the way the humidity set in some areas [...] it resulted in something even better than I expected," he said.

The architect also noted that the aging and the way architectural structures decay is also one of the leitmotifs of the exhibition. Flores sought to communicate the idea that "buildings decay not just through the passage of time but also due to mistreatment." He added, "the architecture and the cities are just like people: they need continuous care, otherwise they are gone."

## THE NAPE CONCRETE 'SCULPTURES'

An enthusiast of concrete as a construction material, Flores takes joy in his work on the over-

passes that link the ZAPE to the NAPE area in central Macau for several reasons.

"Firstly, it was a challenge as an architect to collaborate with engineers. Secondly, I love to work with concrete. There is also a very amusing story about those overpasses. I once got stopped on the street and complimented by a man, who I recognized as one of the great sculptors of Macau. He complimented me for my beautiful sculptures [referring to the overpasses]. This encounter left me floored, as it was a huge compliment."

## BEYOND THE EXHIBITION

Having commenced on Sept. 5, the exhibition will run until Sept. 17. It will feature talks and seminars primarily directed towards architects and urban planners as part of training activities organized by the Architecture, Engineering and Urban Planning Council (CAEU). The first talk was presented on the opening day, and two more are scheduled for Sept. 9 at 3:30 p.m. The final seminar is scheduled for Sept. 15 at 6 p.m.



# Parliament to prioritize electoral laws review in new session

**T**HE review of electoral laws will be placed "at a critical position," President Kou Hoi In of the parliament has underlined.

The second session of the seventh term of the parliament will conclude on Oct. 15, and the body recently released its report on the closed session. No press conference was held for this purpose, unlike Kou's predecessors.

In the report, the president noted that "the Legislative Assembly has been safeguarding the constitutional foundation of the Special Administrative Region and ensuring the effective operation of Executive Dominance. Adhering to the tradition of loving the country and loving Macau, the Assembly will firmly steer its work in the right direction. It will continuously support, cooperate with, and supervise the government's administration in accordance with the law, as well as the government's effective use of the powers conferred by the Basic Law."

Discussing the parliament's agenda for the coming session, Kou emphasized that the re-

view of the electoral laws for the Chief Executive and the parliament will be prioritized "to ensure the power of governance is firmly in the hands of patriots."

In consideration of the legislative procedures required and the imminent selection of the Chief Executive, Kou said that, "the parliament will communicate effectively with the government to foster sincere cooperation, unity, and ensure the quality and efficient conclusion of the legislation under review."

The government has announced that under the proposed tightening of the Electoral Law, a vetting process will be conducted to ensure all candidates have no background demonstrating an 'unpatriotic' mentality or history of such activities. Such decisions are not subject to judicial appeal.

Matters of national security, civil aviation, and gambling will also be crucial in the new session.

Reviewing the current session, the seven lawmakers appointed by the Chief Executive have not submitted written or oral inquiries. **AL**



ANTHONY LAM



Christopher Chu (left) and Maggie Hoi

## NEW ENGLISH BOOK DOCUMENTS PORTUGUESE POET PESSANHA

ANTHONY LAM

**C**AMILO Pessanha, a Portuguese poet who came to Macau at age 27, has become the focus of a book that goes beyond merely praising his poetic achievements but also retells the hu-

man stories of his life.

Christopher Chu and Maggie Pui Man Hoi, who have previously published the book 'Macau's Historical Witnesses' to tell the stories behind 22 locations in Macau, launched their new book about Pessanha at the Sofitel Ma-

cau yesterday.

It all started when they discovered a government document about the poet, Hoi said yesterday. The document was about the poet's work, which inspired the couple to conduct further research on his life, which they discove-

red was very interesting.

For instance, she noted that, Ana Pessanha, the poet's wife, was a feminist when evaluated by today's standards. However, the poet had two mistresses in Macau, the older of which was a retired "flower girl" – a euphe-

mism for a sex worker – and the step daughter of the poet. Hoi also noted that during their research, they discovered that historically, it was common for older sex workers to merely listen to their customers. The couple speculated that this was the reason behind the connection between the self-exiled poet and his first mistress.

When asked if the poet's descendants were contacted for the project, Chu said that they had attempted to make contact via email but did not receive a response.

Chu and Hoi are correct that most existing documentation about Camilo Pessanha – like that relating to all historic Portuguese figures associated with Macau – are written in Portuguese. Despite being one of the two official languages, Portuguese is not widely spoken in the Chinese community, except for certain creolized references such as 'tai-ma-di' for 'tomate' ('tomato' in Portuguese) and 'for-ga' for 'folga' ('day off' in Portuguese).

In fact, the existing Chinese community in Macau may not have the slightest awareness of the poet despite there being a street named after him. Instead, the Chinese community often (if not always) uses another reference for the street – 'Lou Sek Tong.' This is also the reason why they have chosen to write a book on the Portuguese poet, which they reemphasized should not be read as a history book.

The story of Pessanha has been documented before. In 2018, Portuguese filmmaker Rosa Coutinho Cabral was in Macau to shoot her documentary on the poet, entitled 'Pe San Ie,' which is the Romanization of the poet's name in Chinese.

### STATS

## IAS receives 69 requests for assistance for gambling disorder

**T**HE city's central registration system for gambling disorder has received a total of 69 requests for assistance, an increase of nearly 60% when compared to the same period last year.

However, the figure was in line with pre-pandemic levels.

According to the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS), non-Macau residents accounted for 19 cases, representing a 10% increase from 2020 levels.

Cheang Io Tat, director of the Prevention and Treatment of Problem Gambling and Drug Dependence of the IAS, said that the 69 individuals seeking help fell within an

age group between 30 to 49 years old. About 70% of them had moderate or lower levels of gambling dependence.

The official attributed the increase in requests for assistance primarily to the reopening of the border in January this year, as well "effective promotion by the government and all sectors of society, and the greater availability of diversified channels for seeking help," making people more willing to seek assistance.

Cheang pledged that IAS will strengthen publicity and follow-ups to prevent and treat gambling disorders for non-Macau residents starting from the second half of this year

into the next.

The authorities also stated that they have yet to see evidence of gambling becoming better concealed or otherwise on the rise.

In June this year, IAS said that over the past five years, Macau has recorded data showing that less than 3% of young people suffer from gambling disorders.

It added that since 2009, the bureau had conducted annual surveys on the prevention of youth gambling through non-governmental associations. Survey results over the past five years indicated that the proportion of local youths with suspected gambling disorders ranged between 2.2% to 2.9%. LV





# Food delivery platforms fined for violating personal data

STAFF REPORTER

**T**HREE major food delivery platforms in Macau were fined up to MOP60,000 for violating the Personal Data Protection Law, including for the transfer of user information outside Macau, which "has put the legitimate rights and interests of a large number of data subjects at unnecessary risk."

According to a statement issued by the Office for Personal Data Protection (GPDP), the delivery platforms were fined MOP20,000, MOP30,000 and MOP60,000 respectively.

According to the office, when several food delivery platforms process personal data, although they may make different personal data protection commitments or guarantees to users through their contractual terms and conditions, in practice they lack sufficient compliance awareness and fail to carry out satisfac-

RENATO MARQUES



tory personal data protection.

In terms of protection and compliance work, even the

simple procedure of fulfilling notification obligations for automated processing of per-

sonal data in accordance with the provisions of the Personal Data Protection Law has not

been completed as scheduled.

At the same time, the two platforms failed to perform their notification obligations in accordance with the law regarding the transfer of users' personal data to places outside the SAR.

In addition, when the GPDP intervened to request corrections and fulfill the notification obligations, "one of the platforms continued to not discharge its compliance obligations and provided false information when fulfilling the notification obligation, which amounted to misleading the office."

The office pledged to continue to monitor the processing of personal data by various platforms, refer to the regulatory experience of the mainland and international countries, coordinate supervision when appropriate, and do its best to protect the personal data of citizens and tourists.

Meanwhile, as cited in a TDM report, mFood said that it actively cooperates with the relevant compliance obligations under the GPDP, and cooperates during the investigation process. The company also pledged to strictly abide by the law to protect residents' data.

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# SECURITY SECRETARY 'NOT HAPPY' WITH MANNER OF PSP INFORMATION RELEASE

ANTHONY LAM

**B**OTH he and the chief of the Public Security Police Force (PSP) were dissatisfied with recent communications by the authority, stated Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak.

Last week, a private vehicle was observed travelling at high speed in front of Grand Lisboa Hotel, squeezing between a light bus and a seven-seater vehicle and running two red lights before colliding with a greening area at the door of Hotel Lisboa.

The immediate announcement by the PSP, which only spoke of a crash between two vehicles and a bus, drew criticism from the Macau Journalists' Association (AJM) for downplaying the severity of the accident.

Subsequent updates were only released approximately half a day later in response to inquiries from journalists.

The AJM described this approach to information

release unhelpful for journalists seeking to critically assess the severity and newsworthiness of road incidents and accidents.

Days later, footage of a PSP van running a red light was captured by a dashboard camera and went viral on social media. However, the PSP's announcement described the incident as involving a 'private vehicle' and a motorcycle.

At a recent press conference, Wong was asked to comment on the matter. He expressed his intention to "proactively" discuss the matter, adding that the manner of information release for both incidents "comprised a multitude of problems."

He acknowledged that while there are incidents of varying seriousness, information released for more serious incidents must be more detailed, timely and accurate.

The official noted that the police must avoid des-

cribing incidents in a vague or over simplified fashion. Details such as time, location, severity of injury and people involved should be disclosed. The phase of the investigation should also be disclosed, should the incident's cause be unclear.

He underscored that if the incident features children, the elderly, disabled individuals, or law-enforcement personnel or vehicles among those involved or injured, the incident should be considered serious.

Wong also expressed dissatisfaction with the timing of the update, stating that updates should not be delayed until the following day. Promptly announcing the results of investigations is also critical.

"[These criteria] are unquestionable and are my requirement. In fact, the requirement within the PSP is consistent [with mine], but problems have arisen during the handling of these two events," Wong said.

Internal communications within the PSP were also problematic, judging from these two recent cases. Wong revealed that mid-level management failed to promptly report the cases and their details to higher management, admitting that he was not aware of the matters when the incidents occurred.

"This is problematic," he said. "In fact, when severe cases happen, it has always been the practice to inform bureau heads or even the Secretary for Security. Details on the incident, the method of follow-up and the release of information must be conveyed to senior management."

He concluded that the failure to inform senior management of the details "is not acceptable." Announcing details of serious and sudden cases is critical to maintaining social stability and upholding the public's right to information, he added.

GBA

# SHENZHEN TO ALLOW HK, MACAU RESIDENTS PURCHASE COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

STAFF REPORTER

**S**HENZHEN will start allowing residents of Hong Kong and Macau to buy commercial property and business apartments to bolster sales.

A news report issued by China Real Estate News stated that the policy easing was completed in recent days and the relevant government departments will be notified, citing a source in the Housing Provident Fund Management Center of Shenzhen.

Under the eased rules, Hong Kong and Macau residents can purchase commercial properties, including shops, offices and apartments.

SARs' residents "can already sign online to buy, and there is no limit to the number of units," the source said, adding that the southeastern city's regulations on buying residential property are unchanged, as cited in a report issued by Yicai Global.

Currently, residents of Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan can only buy one residence in Shenzhen. But if they plan to buy commercial property in the city, they must first set up a company there and get a business license.

An industry insider in Shenzhen pointed out that commercial real estate projects near the Shenzhen-Hong Kong border checkpoints are expected to benefit from the new policy, since Shenzhen residents are not that interested in owning assets in these areas, according to the report.

And Hong Kong residents could not buy them previously, which weighed on sales in these areas, the person said.



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# Times

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News at hand

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TRADE

# China's exports and imports fall in August as weak global demand keeps its economy under pressure

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

**C**HINA'S exports and imports both fell in August from a year earlier, reflecting tepid global demand that is adding to pressures on its slowing economy.

Customs data released yesterday showed exports for August slumped 8.8% to \$284.87 billion in the fourth straight month of decline. Imports slid 7.3% to \$216.51 billion.

The total trade surplus fell to \$68.36 billion from \$80.6 billion in July.

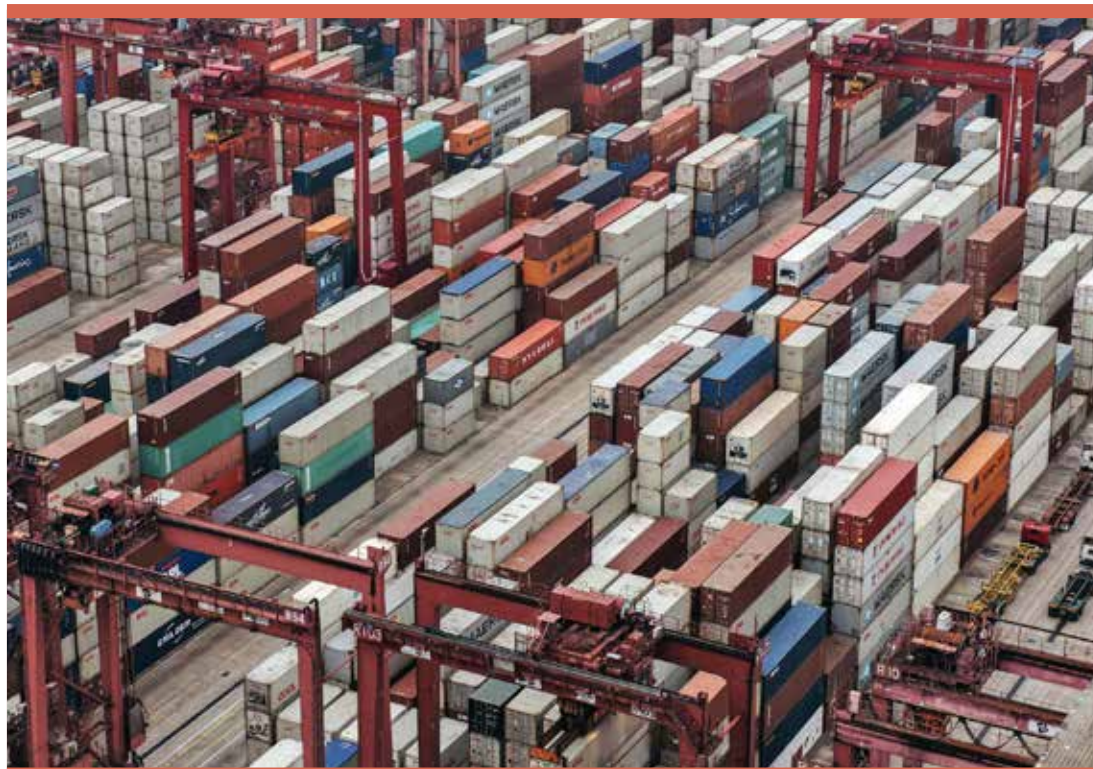
Chinese leaders have in rolled out various policy measures to shore up the economy after the country's rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic fizzled earlier than expected.

The central bank has eased borrowing rules and cut mortgage rates for first-time home buyers while providing some tax relief measures for small businesses.

So far, the authorities have avoided large-scale stimulus spending or broader tax cuts.

Demand for Chinese exports weakened after the Federal Reserve and central banks in Europe and Asia began raising interest rates last year to cool inflation that was at multi-decade highs.

Economists say much of the



MDT ARCHIVE

impact of those rate increases has yet to filter through major Western economies, where consumer spending has remained relatively strong.

"Looking ahead, we expect exports to decline over the coming months before bottoming out toward the end of the year," Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics said in a report.

"Most measures of export orders point to a more substantial pullback in foreign demand than has so far been

reflected in the customs data," he said.

China's trade has been gradually declining for the past two years, though August's drops in export and imports were less severe than in July, when exports fell 14.5% from a year earlier while imports were 12.4% lower.

Politically sensitive exports to the U.S. fell 17.4% from a year earlier to \$45 billion, the customs data showed, while imports of U.S. goods slid 4.9% to nearly \$12 billion.

MANUFACTURING

## A SOUTH KOREAN MAKER OF AUTO SEATING PARTS WILL BUILD A \$35 MILLION FACTORY IN GEORGIA, HIRING 300

**A** South Korean company that makes automotive seating said this week that it plans to build a \$35 million factory in eastern Georgia to supply a new Hyundai Motor Group plant near Savannah.

DAS Corp., which makes metal frames and other parts for automotive seats, said it will hire 300 people to work at the new plant in Metter.

Hannah Mullins, the executive director of the Candler County Industrial Authority, said the DAS factory will take up about 200,000 square feet of space and that the starting pay for workers will be \$20 an hour.

The state will pay to train workers. It also gave \$500,000 last year to help local officials complete a road and a sewer connection in the industrial park where DAS is located. The city of Metter and Candler County are granting 10 years of property tax breaks, for which Mullins could not immediately provide a projected value. DAS could qualify for \$4.5 million in state income tax credits, at \$3,000 per job over five years, as long as workers make at least \$31,300 a year.

DAS is just the latest company to announce that it will supply Hyundai's \$7.5 billion plant to assemble electric vehicles and batteries in Ellabell, near Savannah. The Hyundai plant, which was announced last year, could grow to 8,500 employees and is scheduled to begin producing vehicles in 2025.

Suppliers to the Hyundai plant have pledged to invest \$2.2 billion and to hire nearly 5,300 people. **MDT/AP**

## CORPORATE BITS

### Oktoberfest Macau at MGM taps the keg in October



Oktoberfest Macau at MGM, the annual brand event of MGM, is set to return to the town again in Oc-

tober at MGM Cotai. Held as an outdoor party again this year, Oktoberfest Macau at MGM 2023 pre-

sents a 12-day authentic German bierfest, celebrating the essence of Oktoberfest through traditional German foods, entertainment and decorations.

In the blue-and-white Bavarian patterned beer tent and sitting by traditional long wooden tables, guests can enjoy genuine German Oktoberfest brew Löwenbräu, traditional German food and beverage, and carnival booth games.

In addition, the Högl Fun Band will once again fly over from Munich to host live performances and bring back the staple theme song of Oktoberfest Macau at MGM, "Nei Hou, Macau!".

### Wynn mixologist to present new collection of drinks



Wynn is presenting a new collection of crafted cocktails designed by master mixologist Mariena Mercer

Boarini this September. Mercer Boarini has gained numerous accolades throughout her career, including

Top Bartender in Las Vegas and Top 10 Female Bartenders in the World.

She will soon reveal a new collection of bars and restaurants at Wynn in Macau, commencing with Wing Lei Bar at Wynn Palace as well as Bar Cristal and Cinnebar at Wynn Macau.

Inspired by Wing Lei Bar's jewelry box design, Mercer Boarini has crafted six collectible gemstone cocktails and mocktails – 'Mother of Pearl,' 'Citrine,' 'Ruby,' 'Amber' and more – the first collection of experiential cocktails to debut today.

On September 22, Cinnebar will launch eight creative cocktails and mocktails.



**OPINION**

**China Daily**  
Editorial, China Daily

**US MUST HEED CALL TO TURN SOUTH CHINA SEA INTO SEA OF PEACE, FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION**

The United States conducted a joint naval sail with the Philippines in the South China Sea on Monday, an obvious provocative move considering the tensions between China and the Philippines over the Ren'ai Reef dispute.

A Reuters report citing the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Western Command said it was the first time Manila and Washington have carried out a joint sail in the waters west of Palawan island. Perhaps the joint sail, apart from underscoring the Philippines' military alliance with the US, was also meant to assert its baseless claims over the disputed waters.

The reckless act to hype the maritime dispute coincides with this week's series of meetings in Jakarta, Indonesia, with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations taking center stage. The US, which has for years used the maritime disputes in the South China Sea to interfere in regional affairs, apparently intends to heighten tensions again so it can fish in troubled waters to fulfill its strategic goals.

The farce the US staged with the Philippines is yet another proof of Washington posing the biggest threat to peace and stability in the South China Sea. To cater to its own strategic needs and maintain its global hegemony, the US is turning the sea into a playground for major power competition, totally disregarding the regional countries' quest for peace, stability and development.

In order to address issues of common concern, ASEAN has tried to play down geopolitics in the meetings in Jakarta. Many of the bloc's members have either refused or are reluctant to take sides in the China-US disputes, because they know that doing so would sow the seeds of division in the region.

China and ASEAN are in the middle of negotiations to finalize a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea, which is aimed at maintaining lasting peace and stability in the waters. And the two sides have the wisdom and capacity to resolve their maritime differences and disputes.

The South China Sea is one of the world's busiest waterways with some 100,000 merchant vessels sailing through its waters every year. Any disturbance in the waters will disrupt the free and smooth flow of goods and global supply chains, slowing down the region's development.

Hence, instead of indulging in selfish calculations and stirring up trouble in the South China Sea, the US should play a constructive role in the region, because peace and stability serves its own interest too. It should heed the call of the countries in the region and respect their efforts to turn the South China Sea into a sea of peace, friendship and cooperation.

**DIPLOMACY**

**China sending delegation to N. Korea to celebrate its founding as nations foster their ties**

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

A Chinese delegation led by Vice-Premier Liu Guozhong will visit North Korea to participate in celebrations for its 75th founding anniversary, which is tomorrow, the North's state media said yesterday.

The report came amid speculation that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is preparing to visit Russia soon for a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin that could be focused on advancing talks for North Korean arms sales to refill Russian reserves drained by its war on Ukraine.

Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency said the visit by Liu's delegation comes at the invitation of North Korea's ruling Workers' Party. It didn't specify the events the Chinese officials would be participating or whether they would be meeting Kim.

A U.S. official said Monday that Washington expects Kim to make a trip to Russia within this month to meet Putin as the Kremlin tries to acquire military equipment for use in its war in Ukraine.

According to some U.S. reports, the meeting could ha-



Liu Guozhong, then vice governor of the Heilongjiang provincial government (2012)

ppen as early as next week in the eastern Russian city of Vladivostok, where Putin is expected to attend an annual economic forum that runs from Sunday to Wednesday.

In exchange for providing Russian with artillery shells and other ammunition, North Korea could possibly seek badly needed energy and food aid and advanced weapons technologies, analysts say. There are concerns that potential Russian technology transfers

would increase the threat posed by Kim's growing arsenal of nuclear weapons and missiles that are designed to target the United States and its Asian allies South Korea and Japan.

Amid deepening nuclear tensions with Washington, Seoul and Tokyo, Kim has been trying to boost the visibility of his partnerships with Moscow and Beijing as he seeks to break out of diplomatic isolation and have Pyongyang be a part of a united front against

the United States.

Kim in July invited delegations led by Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Chinese Communist Party Politburo member Li Hongzhong to a huge military parade in Pyongyang where he rolled out his most powerful weapons, including intercontinental ballistic missiles designed to target the U.S. mainland.

A day before the parade, Kim took Shoigu on a tour of a domestic arms exhibition, which demonstrated North Korea's support for Russia's invasion of Ukraine and added to suspicions the North was willing to supply arms to Russia.

Speaking at a summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Wednesday, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol urged all U.N. member states to fulfill their sanctions obligations under existing Security Council resolutions to limit North Korea's nuclear capabilities, which include a ban on arms trade with the country, his office said in a statement. The office did not elaborate whether Yoon specifically called out Russia while expressing those concerns. punishment. MDT

**DIPLOMACY**

**Australia and China open their first high-level dialogue in three years**

Australia and China opened their first high-level dialogue in three years yesterday in a sign of a slight thaw to relations between countries that have clashed on everything from human rights to COVID-19 origins to trade.

"I welcome the recent positive developments in the bilateral relationship, but we know that there is more work to do," said Craig Emerson, the head of the Australian delegation and a former trade minister.

The dialogue being held in Beijing will focus on trade, people-to-people links and security.

China's former Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said the two countries should work together, but added that "We should adhere to the liberalization of trade and jointly oppose the Cold War mentality, bloc confrontation and trade protectionism."

During the freeze in relations with Beijing, Australia formed a nuclear partnership with the U.S. and the United Kingdom that enables Australia to access nuclear-powered submarines.

Australia's current Foreign Minister Penny Wong has sought to stabilize the two coun-

tries' relationship since her party won elections last year.

Yesterday, Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese also met with China's Premier Li Qiang at the sidelines of the ASEAN summit in Indonesia, describing the engagement as positive.

"I told Premier Li that we would continue to cooperate where we can, disagree where we must and engage in our national interest," Albanese said to reporters, adding he would visit China later this year at the invitation of President Xi Jinping.

China's and Australia's re-

lations sank to low depths during the pandemic. The previous Australian government passed laws that ban covert foreign interference in domestic politics, barring Chinese-owned telecommunications giant Huawei from rolling out Australia's 5G network due to security concerns, and for calling for an independent investigation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response, China effectively blocked out Australian barley in 2020 by imposing an 80.5% tariff, widely regarded in Australia as punishment. MDT/AP



MYANMAR

# Journalist gets a 20-year sentence for reporting on cyclone's aftermath, news site says

GRANT PECK, BANGKOK

A court in Myanmar sentenced a photojournalist for an underground news agency to 20 years in prison with hard labor for his coverage of a deadly May cyclone's aftermath, the media organization said.

The sentence given Sai Zaw Thaike, a photographer for the independent online news service Myanmar Now, appeared to be the most severe for any journalist detained since the military overthrew the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021.

The press freedom group Reporters Without Borders said in April that Myanmar is the world's second-biggest jailer of journalists, behind only China.

The country ranks near the bottom of the group's 2023 World Press Freedom Index, placing 176th out of 180 countries.

Myanmar Now, which operates underground, reported that a military tribunal tried, convicted and sentenced Sai Zaw Thaike, 40, during the first court hearing since he was detained in the western state of Rakhine.

The proceedings took place



Sai Zaw Thaike, a photojournalist for the independent news website Myanmar Now, works at his desk in Yangon

inside Insein prison in Yangon, Myanmar's biggest city, where the photographer was jailed after his arrest. The news agency said Sai Zaw Thaike was allowed no family visits and denied legal representation.

"His sentencing is yet another indication that freedom of the press has been completely quashed under the military junta's rule, and shows the hefty price independent journalists

in Myanmar must pay for their professional work," the news site quoted Myanmar Now Editor-in-Chief Swe Win as saying.

The news outlet said Sai Zaw Thaike was arrested on May 23 in Rakhine's capital of Sittwe while recording the damage caused by Cyclone Mocha, the country's most destructive storm in at least a decade. Mocha made landfall near Sittwe just over a week before his arrest and caused widespread

flash floods and power outages.

The storm killed at least 148 people in Rakhine state, many of them members of the persecuted Muslim Rohingya minority living in internal displacement camps, and damaged more than 186,000 buildings.

The news service said he was initially indicted on several charges, including under a statute that falls under the general heading of treason but is sometimes referred to as sedition. Other charges included incitement for allegedly causing fear, spreading false news and agitating against a government employee or the military, which carries a maximum prison term of three years.

He also was charged with online defamation, which is punishable by three years' imprisonment, and with violating a Natural Disaster Management law for allegedly spreading false information about a disaster with the intention of causing public panic, which carries a potential prison term of up to one year.

Myanmar Now said it did not know which charges Wednesday's conviction covered. Details of political trials are generally closely held by the authorities, and Myanmar Now's report could not

be independently confirmed.

The conviction of Sai Zaw Thaike is the latest assault on press freedom and journalists by the country's military-installed government, which has cracked down heavily on independent media.

At least 13 media outlets, including Myanmar Now, have had their media licenses revoked and at least 156 journalists were arrested, about 50 of whom remain detained, according to the local monitoring group Detained Journalists Information. Nearly half of those still in custody have been convicted and sentenced.

At least four media workers have been killed and others were tortured while in detention.

Some of the media outlets ordered closed have continued operating underground without a license, publishing online as their staff members carry on reporting while trying to avoid arrest. Others operate from exile.

The military raided Myanmar Now's office in Yangon a month after the 2021 takeover and some staff members, including chief editor Swe Win, fled criminal charges and went into hiding as authorities had their homes sealed.

Sai Zaw Thaike was the second journalist from Myanmar Now to be arrested. Video journalist Kay Zon Nway was detained while covering an anti-coup protest in Yangon in late February 2021 and released four months later under a broad amnesty.

"We will not waver in our commitment to continue providing news and information to the people of Myanmar, despite the immense challenges we are facing," Swe Win said from exile. **MDT/AP**

JAPAN

# Rocket carrying lunar lander and X-ray telescope to explore origins of universe

JAPAN launched a rocket yesterday carrying an X-ray telescope that will explore the origins of the universe as well as a small lunar lander.

The launch of the HII-A rocket from Tanegashima Space Center in southwestern Japan was shown on live video by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, known as JAXA.

"We have a liftoff," the narrator at JAXA said as the rocket flew up in a burst of smoke then flew over the Pacific.

Thirteen minutes after the launch, the rocket put into orbit around Earth a satellite called the X-Ray Imaging and Spectroscopy

Mission, or XRISM, which will measure the speed and makeup of what lies between galaxies.

That information helps in studying how celestial objects were formed, and hopefully can lead to solving the mystery of how the universe was created, JAXA says.

In cooperation with NASA, JAXA will look at the strength of light at different wavelengths, the temperature of things in space and their shapes and brightness.

David Alexander, director of the Rice Space Institute at Rice University, believes the mission is significant for delivering insight

into the properties of hot plasma, or the superheated matter that makes up much of the universe.

Plasmas have the potential to be used in various ways, including healing wounds, making computer chips and cleaning the environment.

"Understanding the distribution of this hot plasma in space and time, as well as its dynamical motion, will shed light on diverse phenomena such as black holes, the evolution of chemical elements in the universe and the formation of galactic clusters," Alexander said.

Also aboard the latest Japanese rocket is the Smart

Lander for Investigating Moon, or SLIM, a lightweight lunar lander. The Smart Lander won't make lunar orbit for three or four months after the launch and would likely attempt a landing early next year, according to the space agency.

The lander successfully separated from the rocket about 45 minutes after the launch and proceeded on its proper track to eventually land on the moon. JAXA workers applauded and bowed with each other from their observation facility.

JAXA is developing "pinpoint landing technology" to prepare for future lunar probes and landing



An HII-A rocket blasts off from the launch pad at Tanegashima Space Center in Kagoshima, yesterday

on other planets. While landings now tend to be off by about 10 kilometers (6 miles) or more, the Smart Lander is designed to be more precise, within about 100 meters (330 feet) of the

intended target, JAXA official Shinichiro Sakai told reporters ahead of the launch.

That allows the box-shaped gadgetry to find a safer place to land. **MDT/AP**



USA

# Biden administration cancels remaining oil

BECKY BOHRER & MATTHEW JUNEAU, ALASKA

**I**N an aggressive move that angered Republicans, the Biden administration canceled the seven remaining oil and gas leases in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge yesterday [Macau time], overturning sales held in the Trump administration's waning days, and proposed stronger protections against development on vast swaths of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.

The Department of Interior's scrapping of the leases comes after the Biden administration disappointed environmental groups earlier this year by approving the Willow oil project in the petroleum reserve, a massive project by ConocoPhillips Alaska that could produce up to 180,000 barrels of oil a day on Alaska's petroleum-rich North Slope. Protections are proposed for more than 20,000 square miles of land in the reserve in the western Arctic.

Some critics who said the approval of Willow flew in the face of Biden's pledges to address climate change lauded yesterday's announcement. But they said more could be done. Litigation over the approval of the

Willow project is pending. "Alaska is home to many of America's most breathtaking natural wonders and culturally significant areas. As the climate crisis warms the Arctic more than twice as fast as the rest of the world, we have a responsibility to protect this treasured region for all ages," Biden said in a statement.

His actions "meet the urgency of the climate crisis" and will "protect our lands and waters for generations to come," Biden said.

Alaska's Republican governor condemned Biden's moves and threatened to sue. And at least one Democratic lawmaker said the decision could hurt Indigenous communities in an isolated region where oil development is an important economic driver.

Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, who drew criticism for her role in the approval of the Willow project, said that "no one will have rights to drill for oil in one of the most sensitive landscapes on earth."

However, a 2017 law mandates another lease sale by late 2024. Administration officials said they intend to

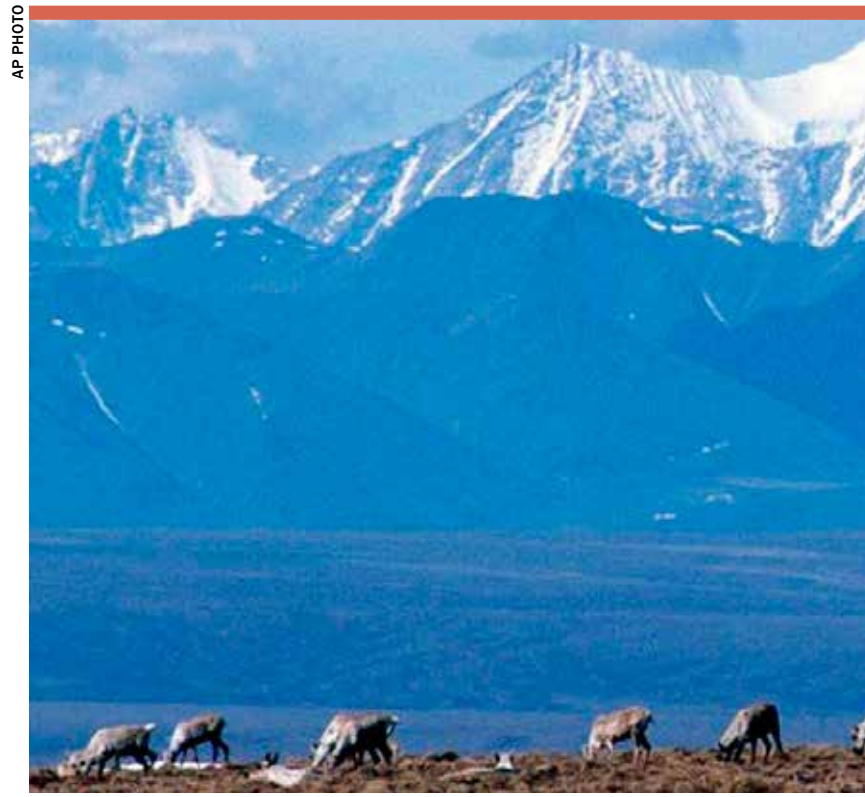
comply with the law. The Biden administration also announced proposed rules aimed at providing stronger protections against new leasing and develop-

**"Alaska is home to many of America's most breathtaking natural wonders and culturally significant areas."**

JOE BIDEN

ment in portions of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska that are designated as special areas for their wildlife, subsistence, scenic or other values. The proposal still must go through public comment. Willow lies within the reserve but was not expected to be affected by the proposed rules.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's 1.5-million-acre coastal plain, which lies along the Beaufort Sea on Alaska's northeastern edge, is seen as



Caribou graze in the Arctic Nat

sacred by the Indigenous Gwich'in because it is where caribou they rely on migrate and come to give birth. The plain is marked by hills, rivers and small lakes and tundra. Migratory birds and caribou pass through

the plain, which provides habitat for wildlife including polar bears and wolves.

Alaska political leaders — including some Democrats — have long pushed to allow oil and gas drilling in

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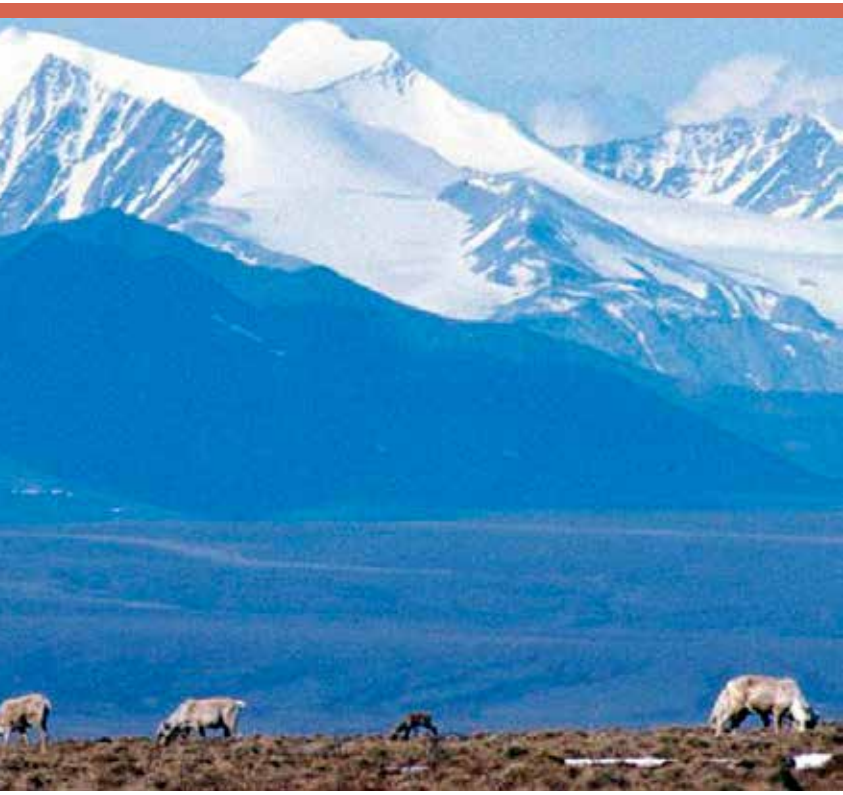


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# Oil and gas leases in Alaska's Arctic Refuge



Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska

to Alaskans with the approval of the Willow Project, and it is some of those same Inupiat North Slope communities who are most impacted by this decision. I will continue to advocate for them and for Alaska's ability to explore and develop our natural resources."

Alaska's congressional delegation in 2017 succeeded in getting language added to a federal tax law that called for the U.S. government to hold two lease sales in the region by late 2024.

Drilling opponents yesterday urged Congress to repeal the leasing provision from the 2017 law and permanently make the coastal plain off limits to drilling.

"It is nearly impossible to overstate the importance of today's announcements for Arctic conservation," said Jamie Williams, president of the Wilderness Society. "Once again, the Arctic Refuge is free of oil leases. Our climate is a bit safer and there is renewed hope for permanently protecting one of the last great wild landscapes in America."

Alaska Republican U.S. Sen. Dan Sullivan denounced Biden's actions

as the latest volley in what he called a "war on Alaska."

Two other leases that were issued as part of the first-of-its-kind sale for the refuge in January 2021 were previously given up by the small companies that held them amid legal wrangling and uncertainty over the drilling program.

After taking office, Biden issued

## Alaska Republican Sen. Dan Sullivan denounced Biden's actions as the latest volley in what he called a "war on Alaska"

an executive order calling for a temporary moratorium on activities related to the leasing program and for the Interior secretary to review the program. Haaland later in 2021 ordered a new environmental review after concluding there were "multiple legal deficiencies" underlying the Trump-era leasing program. Haaland halted activities related to the leasing program pending the new analysis.

A draft environmental review was released Wednesday.

The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority, a state corporation that won seven leases in the 2021 sale, sued over the moratorium. But a federal judge recently found the delay by Interior to conduct a new review was not unreasonable.

The corporation obtained the leases to preserve drilling rights in case oil companies did not come forward. Major oil companies sat out the sale, held after prominent banks had announced they would not finance Arctic oil and gas projects.

Bernadette Demientieff, executive director of the Gwich'in Steering Committee, thanked the administration for the lease cancellation — but issued a warning.

"We know that our sacred land is only temporarily safe from oil and gas development," she said. "We urge the administration and our leaders in Congress to repeal the oil and gas program and permanently protect the Arctic Refuge." MDT/AP

the refuge in part because of its economic impact on Indigenous communities in an area with few other jobs. Many of those same voices pressed Biden to approve the Willow project for the same reason.

"I am deeply frustrated by the reversal of these leases in ANWR," said U.S. Rep. Mary Peltola, a Democrat, using a common shorthand for the refuge. "This administration showed that it is capable of listening

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US-IRAN

# GREEK SHIPPER PLEADS GUILTY TO SMUGGLING IRANIAN CRUDE OIL AND WILL PAY \$2.4 MILLION FINE

JON GAMBRELL, DUBAI

A Greek shipping company has pleaded guilty to smuggling sanctioned Iranian crude oil and agreed to pay a \$2.4 million fine, newly unsealed U.S. court documents seen yesterday by The Associated Press show.

The now-public case against Empire Navigation, which faces three years of probation under the plea agreement, marks the first public acknowledgement by U.S. prosecutors that America seized some 1 million barrels of oil from the tanker Suez Rajan.

The saga surrounding the ship further escalated tensions between Washington and Iran, even as they work toward a trade of billions of dollars in frozen Iranian assets in South Korea for the release of five Iranian Americans held in Tehran. The court filings also shed light on the covert world of Iranian crude oil smuggling in the face of Western sanctions since the collapse of its 2015 nuclear deal — an operation that has only grown in scale over this year.

The U.S. and its allies have been seizing Iranian oil cargoes since 2019. That's led to a series of attacks in the Mideast attributed to the Islamic Republic, as well as ship seizures by Iranian military and paramilitary forces that threaten global shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which 20% of the world's oil passes.

Attention began focusing on the Suez Rajan in February 2022, when the group United Against Nuclear Iran said it suspected the tanker carried oil from Iran's Kharq Island, its main oil distribution terminal in the Persian Gulf. Satellite photos and shipping data analyzed at the time by the AP supported the allegation.

The newly unsealed court documents rely on satellite images, as well as documents, to show that the Suez Rajan sought to mask its loading of Iranian crude oil from one tanker by trying to instead claim the oil came from another.

For months, the ship sat



In this satellite photo provided by Planet Labs PBC, vessels identified as the Virgo (left) and the Suez Rajan, by the advocacy group United Against Nuclear Iran, are seen in the South China Sea, last year

in the South China Sea off the northeast coast of Singapore before suddenly sailing for the Texas coast without explanation. The vessel discharged its cargo to another tanker, which released its oil in Houston in recent days. The court documents seen Thursday confirm the U.S. government seized the oil.

A lawyer for Empire Navigation, Apostolos Tourkantonis, pleaded guilty in April to a single charge of violating the sanctions on Iran. Empire, based in Athens, Greece, did not respond to a request for comment yesterday.

The U.S. Treasury has said Iran's oil smuggling revenue supports the Quds Force, the expeditionary unit of the Revolutionary Guard that operates across the Mideast. The court documents link the Guard to the trade, involving hundreds of vessels that try to mask their movements and can hide their ownership through foreign shell companies.

But the Suez Rajan case was unique at the time of the transfer because it was owned by the Los Angeles-based private equity firm Oaktree Capital Management. That likely gave American prosecutors an edge in pursuing this case. Oaktree, which has repeatedly declined to discuss the case, sold

the vessel fully to Empire in late May.

Mark Wallace, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations under President George W. Bush who heads United Against Nuclear Iran, praised Empire Navigation for agreeing to the plea. He described Iran's oil smuggling as a "mob-like" operation and urged others to abandon the trade.

"They faced down Iranian assassination threats in Greece," Wallace told the AP. "They took the off ramp to leave the mob."

Wallace declined to elaborate, and the U.S. court documents offered no detail on the alleged assassination threat — though prosecutors did cite "security risks to the defendants, the government, as well as the vessel and its crew members" in their application to seal the case from public view in March.

The delay in offloading the Suez Rajan's cargo had become a political issue as well for the Biden administration as the ship had sat for months in the Gulf of Mexico, possibly due to companies being worried about the threat from Iran.

Since the Suez Rajan headed for America, Iran has seized two tankers near the Strait of Hormuz, including

one with cargo for major U.S. oil company Chevron Corp. In July, the top commander of the Revolutionary Guard's naval arm threatened further action against anyone offloading the Suez Rajan, with state media linking the recent seizures to the cargo's fate.

Iran has continued to make threats over the seizure and summoned a Swiss diplomat in Tehran to express its anger. Switzerland has looked after U.S. interests in Iran since the 1979 U.S. Embassy takeover and hostage crisis.

Iran's mission to the United Nations did not respond to a request for comment.

The U.S. Navy has increased its presence steadily in recent weeks in the Mideast, sending the troop-and-aircraft-carrying USS Bataan through the Strait of Hormuz and considering putting armed personnel on commercial ships traveling through the strait to stop Iran from seizing additional ships.

Late Wednesday, the U.S. updated its warning to shippers traveling through the Mideast, saying: "Commercial vessels transiting through the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz and Gulf of Oman continue to be illegally boarded and detained or seized by Iranian forces." MDT/AP

## this day in history

### 1986 PINOCHET SURVIVES REBEL AMBUSH

The president of Chile has escaped an attempt on his life in a fierce attack which killed five of his bodyguards and wounded 11 more.



General Augusto Pinochet's motorcade was ambushed by at least 12 rebel fighters as he made his way back from his country home to the Chilean capital.

The Patriotic Front of Manuel Rodriguez - one of the country's Marxist guerrilla groups - are believed to be behind the attack. None of those involved have yet been captured.

The president has declared a 90-day "state of siege" - which gives him sweeping powers of detention and censorship.

The gunmen fired on the presidential convoy with machine guns, rifles, bazookas and hand grenades.

Despite the ferocity of the assault, the driver of the president's armour-plated Mercedes managed to speed back to the leader's residence at El Melocoton.

General Pinochet - who sustained only minor injuries to his hand during the assassination attempt - described the attack to reporters just hours after the attack.

"My first reaction was to get out of the car, but then I thought of my grandson at my side and I covered his body with mine," he said.

This attempt on the general's life comes at a time of increasing political and civil unrest in the South American country.

Amnesty International have said human rights violations in the country are now at the same level as they were before the bloody 1973 coup which brought General Pinochet to power.

This first attempt on the president's life marks an escalation in the scale of opposition to the 70-year old military leader who recently announced he wanted to remain in power for another 12 years.

But General Pinochet told reporters he did not fear his opponents.

"Try to kill me: I'm a soldier, I'm ready," he said.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Three years after the assassination attempt Augusto Pinochet lost a referendum on whether he should remain in power.

Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin won a presidential election in 1989.

The general stepped down as president in 1990, but remained commander-in-chief of the army.

He retired in 1998 but was arrested in Britain on murder charges at the request of the Spanish Government.

In 2000, the UK Home Secretary ruled the former dictator was unfit to be extradited to Spain and he returned to Chile.

A Chilean court ruled in 2001 he should be tried for human rights abuses, but later suspended the charges, declaring him unfit for trial.

However, in May 2004 the court ordered his immunity be lifted to enable a fresh investigation into human rights abuses.

General Pinochet died aged 91 in Santiago in December 2006.

Despite his human rights record, many Chileans loved him and said he saved the country from Marxism.

But even many loyal supporters abandoned him after it became clear in 2004 that he had stolen about \$27m in secret offshore bank accounts that were under investigation at the time of his death.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Exotic destinations beckon you. Organize your day to avoid any setbacks that might ignite temper flare-ups. Be careful not to exaggerate when interacting with your lover.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20

Don't bother trying to make someone you live with see your point of view. Your dedication and fortitude when dealing with humanitarian groups will enhance your reputation.

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21

You will be up and down emotionally. Your efforts won't go unnoticed; however, someone you work with may get jealous. This could be a serious relationship.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Social events may lead to a romantic interlude. Don't let siblings put pressure on you. Changes at home will be necessary.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Put your energy into behind the scenes activities. Be sure not to burn any bridges. Your emotions have been pulled out of shape and you need to do a little backtracking.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22

A long discussion is in order if you wish to clear the air. It may not be the best day to confront employers or to present your ideas. Don't let any small misunderstandings get in the way.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Stubborn about making changes around your home. Try to include friends and relatives in your activities. Spend some time on yourself.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Trips will be exciting. You might be a tad overindulgent today. Put your energy into learning new skills or picking up valuable information.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Your family needs to spend some time with you, too. Problems with financial investments could make you nervous. Spend some time on yourself.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Your leadership qualities will come in handy. You may want to try your hand at a little creative writing. Don't let your boss get the better of you.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Romance will develop through work. Your attitude could be up and down like a yo-yo. Don't make those you live with feel unloved or unworthy.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Organize your house and be sure to include the whole family in the projects you have set out to do. Regardless of your first reaction, the outcome will be favorable.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

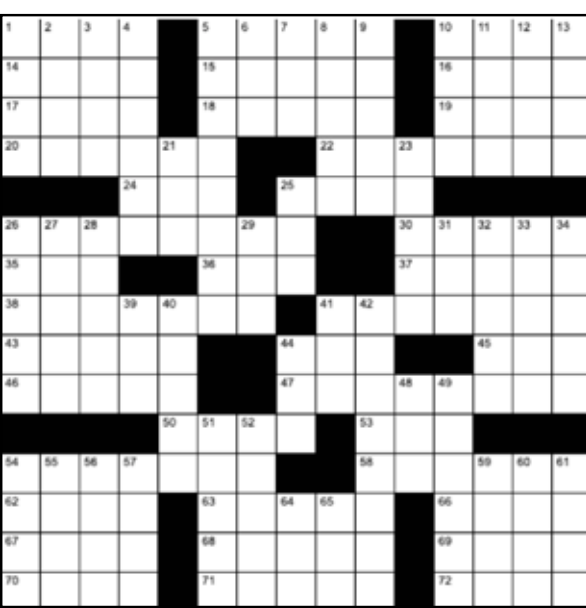
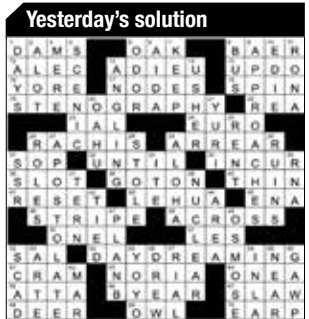
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	23	30	thunderstorms
Changchun	22	26	rain
Chengdu	22	31	cloudy
Chongqing	27	37	fine
Fuzhou	24	31	rain
Guangzhou	24	28	rain
Guiyang	19	28	showers
Haikou	26	33	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	23	31	fine
Harbin	22	24	cloudy
Hefei	22	32	fine
Nanjing	23	32	fine
Shanghai	24	31	fine
Taipei	24	27	cloudy
Wuhan	24	34	fine
Hong Kong	26	28	thunderstorms
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	7	16	overcast
Frankfurt	13	30	fine
Paris	21	36	fine
London	19	31	cloudy
New York	23	31	thunderstorms

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Zwei cubed; 5- Appears; 10- Gusto; 14- Natural balm; 15- Pay for; 16- Utah lily; 17- Actress Sofer; 18- Jack of "The Great Dictator"; 19- River in central Switzerland; 20- Organized massacre; 22- Pure; 24- Attorney's org.; 25- Marries; 26- Counterfeit; 30- Flummoxed; 35- Loss leader?; 36- "\_\_\_ and hers"; 37- Staggers; 38- Sleep; 41- Maintains; 43- Mortise insert; 44- Compass pt.; 45- Get thee \_\_\_ nunnery; 46- Sister of Calliope; 47- Kingdom in SE Asia; 50- Fountain-bottom sight; 53- Calendar abbr.; 54- Protective helmet; 58- Self-supporting structures; 62- Pop singer Brickell; 63- Golden Horde member; 66- Possess; 67- Actual; 68- Delight; 69- Collar type; 70- Being, to Brutus; 71- U-Haul competitor; 72- Penury;

DOWN 1- Over-50 org.; 2- Singer Laine; 3- \_\_\_ Kong; 4- Try to shred; 5- Paunchy; 6- Paleozoic, for one; 7- A mouse; 8- New Brunswick neighbor; 9- Lie; 10- Son of Isaac and Rebekah; 11- Regan's dad; 12- Pearl Mosque city; 13- Christmas; 21- Japanese sash; 23- Former Russian rulers; 25- Basketball Hall of Famer Unseld; 26- Sticky stuff; 27- None of the above; 28- Hot spot; 29- Make haste; 31- Driving aid; 32- Simmons rival; 33- John of England; 34- Syrian president; 39- Small child; 40- Methuselah's father; 41- Blonde shade; 42- Ocean traveler; 44- RR stop; 48- Like some vbs.; 49- Fungus; 51- Western; 52- San Marino surrounder; 54- "You are \_\_\_"; 55- Citrus drinks; 56- Narrow inlets; 57- Remove from text; 59- Detest; 60- Bacchanalian cry; 61- Convey; 64- Tiny amount; 65- Dug in;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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



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DRIVE IN

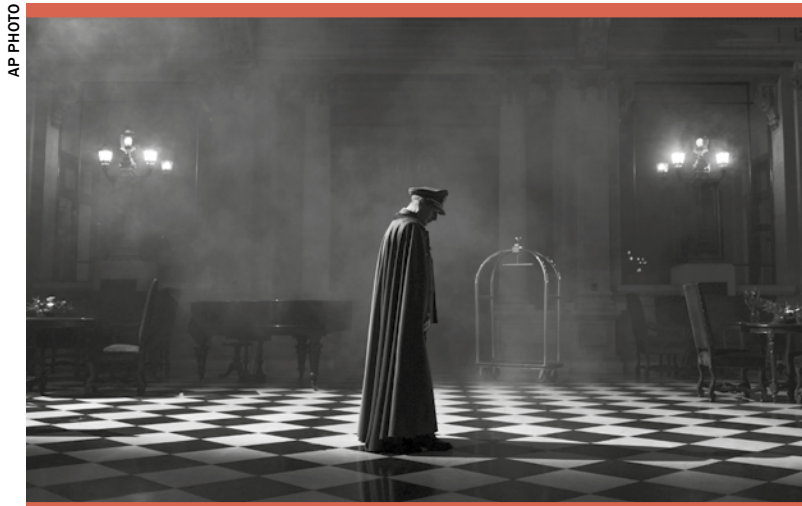
# PINOCHET AS A VAMPIRE IN SURREAL, FRIGHTENING 'EL CONDE'

LINDSEY BAHR,  
MDT/AP FILM WRITER

**T**HE Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet is not dead in Pablo Larraín's "El Conde." He is instead a 250-year-old vampire living in semi-exile and wishing for death in this audacious allegory about history's tendency to repeat itself, shot in sublime, otherworldly black and white.

It is fitting that the film, in theaters Friday and on Netflix Sept. 15, is being released around the 50-year anniversary of the Sept. 11, 1973 coup which brought Pinochet to power for almost 17 years. Pinochet's regime tortured, killed and disappeared 3,065 people in the name of fighting communism, but for some in Chile the legacy is now remembered as not all bad.

Evil ideas, Larraín cautions, have a tendency to live on, to mutate and to infect societies again and again even many years after they're supposedly dispelled and destroyed. Kind of like vampires living in stark, hellish exile as gree-



dy heirs circulate to try to claim what's theirs and keep the money flowing.

Larraín, the 47-year-old filmmaker behind "Spencer," "Jackie" and "No," has always considered himself a political filmmaker and has already gestured at Pinochet in previous films. In "El Conde," which he co-wrote, he uses "the language of satire and political farce" to show the world the true nature of a dictator who

"never faced true justice," he said in his director's statement.

Pinochet stepped down in 1990 after Chileans voted against military rule, only to assume the role of commander-in-chief of the army and, later, the self-created position of lifelong senator until he resigned in 2002. He died in 2006 without being convicted in Chilean courts. That he was not brought to justice is conceived in the film as placing the country in

a kind of eternal limbo, doomed to continue suffering at the hands of the General and his disciples.

Jaime Vadell, who is a vibrant 87, plays Pinochet. He flies around Chile like an evil, aging superman, unsure if he wants to hunt or starve himself of blood and let his clock run out. He is world weary but also prideful; He gets especially aggravated when it's suggested that he's a thief (murder, he was essentially fine with). Alfredo Castro is his devoted butler, who also hungers for blood. And Gloria Münchmeyer is composed and sinister as his string-wielding wife Lucía, trapped with their mid-age, lazy, entitled offspring as a pretty, young accountant/nun (Paula Luchsinger) attempts to take stock of the general's assets but also exorcise him. Her character, who masks her shrewdness with a wide-eyed earnestness is styled and shot with nods to Renée Jeanne Falconetti in "The Passion of Joan of Arc."

"El Conde" is obviously not a history lesson, but information flies at you fast nonetheless. It

could rival "His Girl Friday" in words per minute, which can be challenging to process in subtitles but this is where the Netflix of it all comes in handy – the dialogue is so sharp, you don't want to miss a word. There is also an English-speaking narrator (whose identity will be revealed eventually), giving it a whimsically macabre, storybook feel.

In this fantastical, allegorical nightmare, sense and logic should be the last thing on your mind – especially when engrossed in cinematographer Ed Lachman's ("Carol," "The Virgin Suicides") splendid photography. He apparently shot with a camera made especially for the film (an Arri Alexa Monochrome for anyone interested).

"El Conde" might stretch its gimmicky premise a little past its welcome, but it is an intoxicating, overwhelming and gruesome cinematic experience nonetheless, which would make a fitting double feature with last year's great historical legal thriller "Argentina 1985."

**"El Conde," a Netflix release in theaters Friday and streaming on Sept. 15, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "some graphic nudity, gore, rape, language and sexual content, strong violence." Running time: 110 minutes.**

★★★★

AD

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tUNES

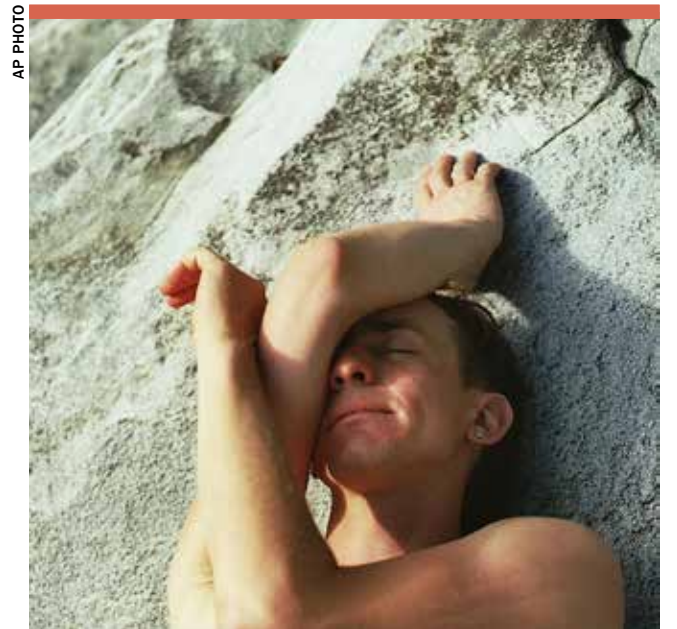
## Big Thief's Buck Meek delivers from high on the ear-friendly album

**B**UCK Meek, the stellar guitarist of Big Thief, is out with his third studio album, "Haunted Mountain." It is a lovely fusion of twang and rock with prime songwriting that works to define the art of caring.

Sure, this is largely love song territory for the troubadour. He sought a bit of solace and wrote the songs in the mountains of Portugal and the Swiss Alps. But it's a deft examination of how the heart grows, and not a breezy travelogue.

The title track is buoyed with hope as Meek sings "All of my life I've been a rounder / Traveling across this green land / But now that I live here on this haunted mountain / I know I'm never coming down."

Surprises abound. The Texas-reared Meek collaborated with filmmakers working on a project about the late Judee Sill, a folk singer-songwriter who died in 1979. Meek was asked to



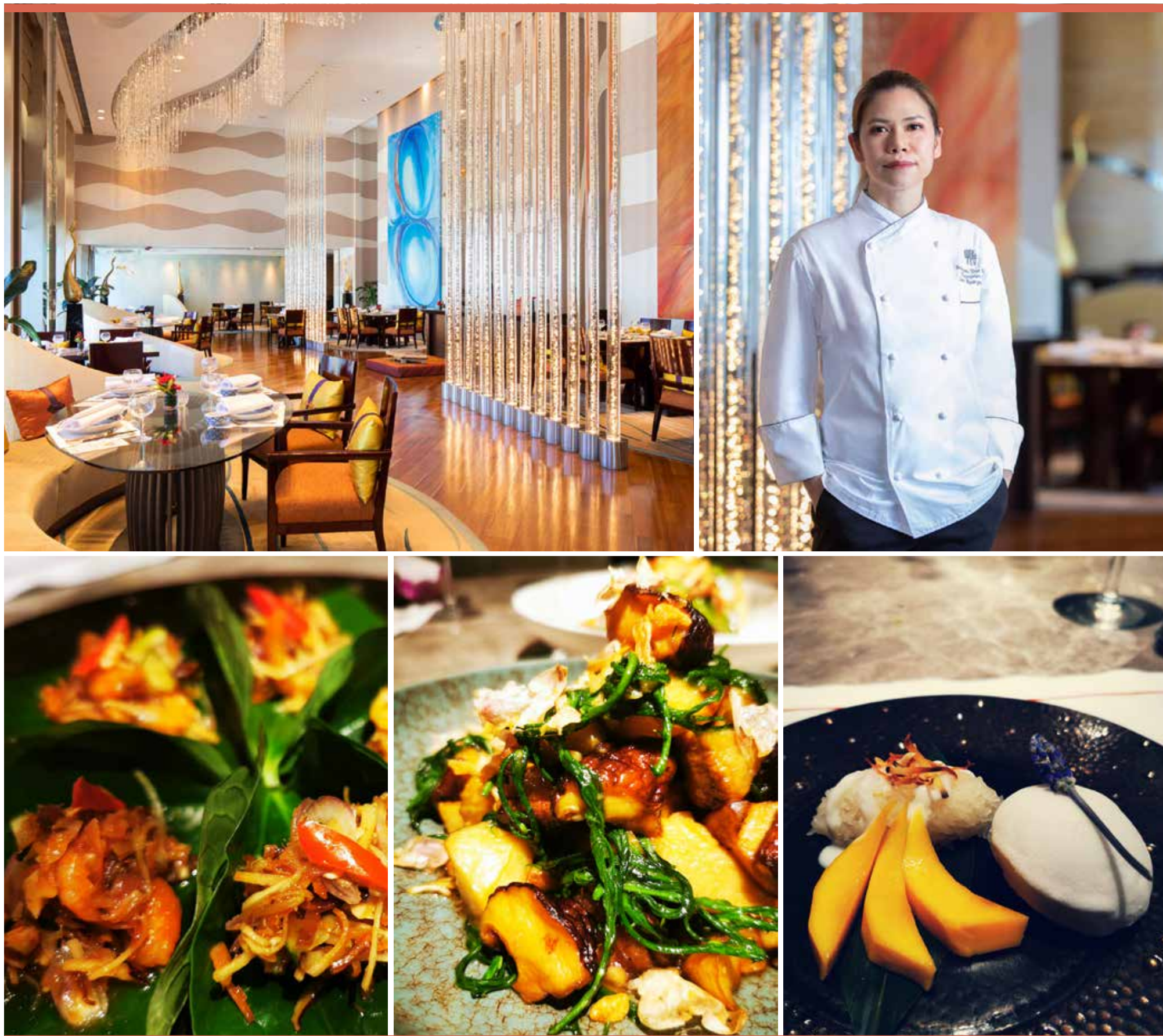
Buck Meek, "Haunted Mountain" (4AD)

put some of her unreleased lyrics to music for the project, and he obliged in fine fashion — released here on "The Rainbow."

"I tried to honor her, to be a vessel for her," Meek said in a press release. It's fitting and it works on the short but sweet track.

In all, "Haunted Mountain" is a jangly collection of country chord structure with moments of electronic swoon, lush reverb and guitars in overdrive. The result is music as inviting and complex as the world-traveled Buck Meek. **RON HARRIS, MDT/AP**





## TASTE OF EDESIA

# Tastes from the land of smiles

IRENE SAM, MDT

**B**ANYAN Tree Macau's signature restaurant, **Saffron**, has been a hit with diners around the world since its opening. Situated on the 31st floor, Saffron boasts breath-taking panoramic views of Cotai, and an elegant, serene and spacious interior. The contemporary and trendy Southeast Asian style interior has high ceilings decorated with crystal chandeliers for a luxurious atmosphere and warm tones that make the space pleasing and welcoming for diners. Recently, to elevate the stan-

dard of Thai cuisine for guests, the hotel has appointed Chef Jan Ruangnukulkit as Executive chef. Born and raised in Thailand, Chef Jan is an award-winning culinary artist owning a talented culinary team recruited from various Michelin starred restaurants.

The menu created by Chef Jan not only captures the essence of Thai cuisine in terms of spices, ingredients, herbs and colour schemes, but also brings out the artistic and creative essence of refined Thai gastronomy. Well versed in cooking methods of French cuisine as well as Thai cuisine, Chef Jan has worked in many

well-known Michelin-starred restaurants, and even led an establishment to win The World's 50 Best Restaurants award. Jan also spent time with a number of celebrity chefs, including three Michelin Stars chef Thomas Keller when she held a position in Le Normandie, the pinnacle of French fine dining in Thailand.

Another turning point of her career came when she joined the opening team of Nahm, a Michelin-starred restaurant in Bangkok, working under David Thompson, one of the best-regarded Australian chefs on the international fine-dining scene. She has la-

ter returned to Nahm and rose through the ranks to become the Head Chef of the Michelin-starred restaurant in 2018. During her extensive career as a chef, Jan has acquired a keen sense of taste, which is reflected in the sophisticated nuances from her dishes.

Family remains a key influence in Chef Jan's cooking. In Saffron latest menu, in addition to focusing on modern Thai dishes, Chef Jan also added home-cooked dishes and unique Thai creations developed by herself, wandering between tradition and innovation. On the menu, Wok-fried Assorted Mushrooms with

Cha-om Thai Acacia is a tasty classic that is simple to prepare, but challenges the chef's cooking skills. The recipe comes from Chef Jan's

mother. This delicious stir-fry dish carefully preserves the freshness of the ingredients and offers smokiness from Cha-om Thai acacia.

The very popular Grilled Wagyu Beef Salad features a generous selection of mouth-watering Wagyu beef slices, in a glorious marriage with fresh Thai fruits, the finest local vegetables and fresh Vietnamese mint leaves. This spicy and tempting salad is a top choice for those eager to enjoy a healthy and nutritious dish. Guided by Chef Jan's vision, the team at Saffron invites guests into an authentic modern Thai cuisine experience marked by rich and exciting Thai flavors.



**OPINION**

**Explainer**

Krutika Pathi, MDT/AP



**EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT THE GLOBAL SOUTH, BUT WHAT IS IT?**

**Indian** Prime Minister Narendra Modi says his country is “becoming the voice of the Global South,” and that at the upcoming Group of 20 meetings being held in New Delhi, that voice will be heard.

At the August summit of the BRICS nations — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — current chair South Africa declared its goal was to “advance the agenda of the Global South.” And ahead of this May’s summit of the Group of Seven wealthy democracies in Hiroshima, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida stressed that the guest nations he had invited reflected the importance of the Global South.

The United Nations, the World Bank, U.S. President Joe Biden — everyone seems to be talking about the Global South these days. But what, exactly, is it?

Despite how it sounds, it’s not really a geographical term. Many countries included in the Global South are in the northern hemisphere, such as India, China and all of those in the northern half of Africa. Australia and New Zealand, both in the southern hemisphere, are not in the Global South.

Most cite the so-called Brandt Line as the border; a squiggle across the globe running from the north of Mexico, across the top of Africa and the Middle East, looping around India and China before dropping down to encompass most of East Asia while avoiding Japan, Australia and New Zealand. The line was proposed by former German Chancellor Willy Brandt in the 1980s as a visual depiction of the north-south divide based upon per-capita GDP.

“The Global South is a geographical, geopolitical, historical and developmental concept, all at the same time — with exceptions,” says Happymon Jacob, founder of the New Delhi-based Council for Strategic and Defense Research.

Most commonly the term refers to the countries belonging to the Group of 77 at the United Nations, which, confusingly, is today actually a coalition of 134 countries. They’re primarily considered developing countries, but also include China — about which there is some debate — and several wealthy Gulf states.

Though the G77 is a group at the U.N., the U.N. itself does not use that as its own definition, according to Rolf Traeger, who is with the U.N.’s trade and development office.

For the U.N., Global South is something of a shortcut to refer to developing countries in general, Traeger said. The U.N. currently lists 181 jurisdictions as developing countries or territories, and 67 jurisdictions as developed, he said.

In January, India’s Modi hosted a virtual “Voice of the Global South Summit.” It only included 125 countries, however, with India’s regional rivals China and Pakistan among the notable absentees.

Some use different criteria, such as whether a country was previously colonized or whether a nation’s per-capita GDP is above \$15,000.

There is also a Global North, though the term is not regularly used. That is defined basically as not the Global South.

The term Global South first appeared in the 1960s, but took time to gain traction.

Following the end of the Cold War, the terms First World, Second World and Third World started to fall out of favor, partly because with the fall of the Soviet Union the Second World ceased to exist, and also because the use of Third World came to be seen as derogatory.

No matter how you define it, the Global South accounts for such a vast majority of the world’s population and broad swath of territory that some argue it’s impossible and misleading to use the label.

[Abridged]

**BIDEN AIMS TO USE G20 SUMMIT AND VIETNAM VISIT TO HIGHLIGHT US AS ALTERNATIVE TO CHINA** **THE BUZZ**

President Joe Biden is looking to demonstrate to the world at the Group of 20 summit in India and during a stop in Vietnam that the United States and its like-minded allies are better economic and security partners than China.

White House officials said Biden, who was set to depart for New Delhi today (Macau time), will use this year’s G20 gathering as an opportunity for the United States to highlight a proposition for developing and middle income countries that would increase the lending power of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund by some \$200 billion.

That is an attempt to offer a significant, albeit smaller, alternative to China’s massive Belt and Road infrastructure initiative.

President Xi Jinping plans to skip the summit, where Premier Li Qiang will represent the country.

Afterward the summit, Biden and Vietnamese General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong will meet in Hanoi and are expected to announce plans to tighten economic cooperation.

Vietnam and China have robust trade relations, but also differences.



AP PHOTO

**WORLD BANK REPORT**

**ONLINE GIG WORK IS GROWING RAPIDLY, BUT WORKERS LACK JOB PROTECTIONS**

**FATIMA HUSSEIN, WASHINGTON**

**O**NLINE gig work is growing globally, particularly in the developing world, creating an important source of employment for women and young people in poorer countries where jobs are scarce, according to a World Bank report released yesterday.

The report estimates the number of global online gig workers at as many as 435 million people and says demand for gig work increased 41% between 2016 and the first quarter of 2023. That boost is generating concern, though, among worker rights advocates about the lack of strong job protections in the gig economy, where people work job to job with little security and few employment rights.

While location-based gig services such as Uber, Lyft and TaskRabbit require labor like moving and delivery, online gig assignments can be largely done at home. Tasks include image tagging, data entry, website design and software development.

For women in the developing world, “there aren’t enough opportunities and they really struggle to get good quality jobs because of

constraints and household responsibilities,” said Namita Datta, lead author of the World Bank report.

She said online gig work provides women and underprivileged youth “a very interesting opportunity to participate in the labor market.” Roughly 90% of low-income countries’ workforce is in the informal sector, according to the report.

Worker advocates stress the precariousness of gig work and the lack of job security, accountability from management and other social protections to workers’ health and retirement.

“The economic conditions in developing countries are different from the U.S., but one thing that is universal is the importance of developing and prioritizing good jobs — with a basic minimum wage and basic labor standards,” said Sharon Block, executive director of Harvard Law School’s Center for Labor and a Just Economy. “There might be different pathways and timelines of getting there, but that’s a universal value.”

The report outlines how social insurance coverage is low among gig workers globally. Roughly half of the surveyed gig workers did not have a retirement plan

and as much as 73% of Venezuelan gig workers and 75% of Nigerians did not have any savings for retirement.

Lindsey Cameron, a management professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, said “because there are so few options available to workers in these developing nations,” online gigs — with or without social protections — were better than no job options for many workers.

“And since workers are economically dependent on this work, and they don’t have any sort of basic protections, that’s what is ultimately exploitive. The odds are always in the platform’s favor, never the workers favor.”

In the United States, gig workers, both online and onsite, represent a growing portion of the workforce and there is ongoing contention about worker rights on these platforms.

A 2021 Pew Research study, the latest available, shows that 16% of U.S. adults have earned money through an online gig platform, and 30% of 18- to 29-year-olds have done so.

The World Bank report was based on surveys across 17 countries, including Egypt, Argentina, Nigeria, Russia and China. **MDT/AP**



AP PHOTO

**USA** A liberal group filed a lawsuit to bar former President Donald Trump from the primary ballot in Colorado, arguing he is ineligible to run for the White House again under a rarely used clause in the U.S. Constitution aimed at candidates who have supported an “insurrection.” The lawsuit, citing the 14th Amendment, is likely the initial step in a legal challenge that seems destined for the U.S. Supreme Court.



AP PHOTO

**Mexico** A Supreme Court decision to end the federal ban on abortion extended a regional trend of increasing access to the procedure, but left in place a patchwork of varying state restrictions. The high court yesterday [Macau time] threw out all federal criminal penalties for abortion, in a ruling that will require the federal public health service to offer the procedure to anyone who requests it. That will mean access for millions of Mexicans since the social security service and other federal institutions provide health care to most people who work in the formal economy.

**Brazil** Flooding from a cyclone in southern Brazil washed away houses, trapped motorists in vehicles and swamped streets in several cities, killing at least 31 people and leaving 2,300 homeless, authorities said. More than 60 cities have been battered since Monday night by the storm, which has been Rio Grande do Sul state’s deadliest.

**Chile** Lined up like soldiers guarding a nation’s treasures, dozens of shelves preserve an archive that gives account of a painful episode in Chile’s history: 47,000 instances of human rights violations during the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. The documents were gathered between 1976 and 1992 by workers of the Vicariate of Solidarity, a human rights organization founded by Chilean Cardinal Raúl Silva Henríquez. Led by social workers, lawyers, archivists and physicians, it provided support to those harmed by the regime.