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**PORTUGAL'S CONSULATE IS 'CLOSELY MONITORING' REPORTS REGARDING RESTRICTIONS ON ITS NATIONALS APPLYING FOR RESIDENCY**

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**MIMF: STAND-BY TICKETS FOR JOE HISAISHI SHOWS TO GO ON SALE**

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**THE ASIAN GAMES: LARGER THAN THE OLYMPICS**

P9



AP PHOTO



**South Korea** In a surprise outcome, South Korea's opposition-controlled parliament yesterday voted to pass a motion submitted by the government that allows the potential arrest of the country's leading opposition figure, Lee Jae-myung, who faces a widening investigation over corruption allegations. Lawmakers voted 149-136 in favor of lifting Lee's immunity to arrest, reflecting growing divisions within the opposition Democratic Party over his legal problems as the country approaches a general election.

AP PHOTO



**India** halted all visa services for citizens of Canada and told it to reduce its diplomatic staffing yesterday as a rift widened between the countries after Canada's leader said India may have been involved in the killing of a Canadian citizen. Ties between Ottawa and New Delhi, key strategic partners in security and trade, have plunged to their lowest point in years after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau this week said there were "credible allegations" of Indian involvement in the assassination of a Sikh separatist leader on its soil.

AP PHOTO



**Iranian** President Ebrahim Raisi said that relations with the United States can move forward if the Biden administration demonstrates it wants to return to the 2015 nuclear deal, and a first step should be easing sanctions. He told a news conference that the Americans have reached out through several channels "saying they wish to have a dialogue, but we do believe that it must be accompanied by action." Action on sanctions can be "a solid foundation for continuing" discussions, he said.

More on backpage



RENATO MARQUES

# 'BIG SEVEN' RESHAPES OLD CITY QUARTERS

Another Big Six, Melco, joins the government's program to revitalize historic urban areas with the kick-off of the revitalization of Mount Fortress

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**TOURISM FORUM**  
**PANSY HO HOPES EVENT WILL ATTRACT FOREIGN INVESTMENT AMID TOURISM BOOST**

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# MELCO PARTNERS WITH IC ON REVITALIZATION OF PIERS 23-25 AND MOUNT FORTRESS

RENATO MARQUES

**L**OCAL gaming concessionaire Melco Resorts (Macau) S.A. will partner with the government on the revitalization project of Piers 23-25 and Mount Fortress. The project initially only included the old Piers 23 and 25, located at Inner Harbour, but now also includes Mount Fortress, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Elsie Ao Ieong revealed yesterday at a press conference held at the Macao Cultural Center.

As part of the press conference held to unveil the revitalization of the Barra area around D. Carlos I Dock, the Secretary noted that after negotiation and talks between the government and the six gaming concessionaires, Melco was selected to collaborate in the revitalization of the Inner Harbour area, namely Piers 23 and 25. Melco will also support the revitalization of the Mount Fortress and surrounding areas with the aim to enhance visitor comfort and appeal.

Regarding Piers 23 and 25, the renovations will be conducted in two phases. The first phase invol-

ves securing the buildings and reconstructing their main structures. This will be undertaken by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), according to the president of IC, Deland Leong.

She revealed that this is the only phase where the budget and timeline are tentative, similar to the Barra area project where no definitive budget or timeline for execution was proposed.

Leong specified that IC's responsibilities in this phase entail an estimated budget of approximately 12 million patacas, with an expected completion date in the third quarter (Q3) of the next year.

Following this, Melco should be able to commence developing its 'Conservation-Revitalization-Symbiosis' plan.

This initiative aims to sustainably integrate cultural, creative, artistic, and gastronomic elements to achieve the desired "symbiosis," the director of Innovation and Public Relations of Melco, Jennifer Lai, further explained.

Among the proposed enhan-

cements for the buildings and connecting area is the creation of a cafe-style space with a terrace, to allow tourists to capture photographs throughout the day. This will be complemented with a bookstore, souvenir shops, and other elements that aim to establish an 'Inner Harbour Bazaar' area linking the Piers to the surrounding areas, such as Rua de 5 de Outubro and Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro.

## This initiative aims to sustainably integrate cultural, creative, artistic, and gastronomic elements

The IC views the area as advantageous due to its rich cultural space, directly and indirectly interconnecting with the Historical Center and the Piers. Both were built around the late 1940s and early 1950s to support the expansion of maritime cargo trading between Macau and Hong Kong (Pier 23 - Iao Tac) and the trans-

port of cargo and passenger between Macau and Jiangmen (Pier 25 - U Vo Fat Kei).

The revitalization project aims to create a new attraction that encourages tourists and locals to visit the area more often.

### LACK OF COTAI REVITALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

In response to media questions, the president and executive director of Melco, Lawrence Ho, said that the preference for Melco to collaborate in the Inner Harbour area revitalization was mostly due to the fact that the company's properties of the company are all located in Cotai and do not directly spatially relate to any of the zones included in the government large-scale project.

"We think it's a great idea to revitalize this area, starting from Pier 16 and moving along until where we are (Pier 23 and 25). These are areas that are all either included in the UNESCO heritage sites or have touristic potential. We are happy to

work with the government on those areas because at the end of the day, our resorts are located in Cotai, which only started some years ago so there is no revitalization needed to be done there. That's the primary consideration," Ho said.

While there is no concrete budget or timeframe for the project's conclusion, Ho said this was largely because the plan was still preliminary and "because it will be a long-term project that will continue in the future."

He remarked, "What I can say is that Melco will spare no efforts to revitalize the area."

### ADDRESSING FLOODING IN THE AREA A GOAL

The media also questioned the government on the fact that the area of Piers 23 and 25 is well known for flooding during high tides, storm surges during typhoons, and heavy rain.

The chief of the Department of Port Management from the Marine and Water Bureau, Chu Chan Wai, said that addressing flood concerns is another goal of the revitalization of Piers 23 and 25. The project will include efforts to revamp the buildings and structures to be more resistant and functional in the event of flooding, he said, with flood control being one of the project's areas of focus.

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# Revitalization of Mount Fortress kicks off

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) revealed yesterday that in addition to Piers 23 and 25, gaming concessionaire Melco Resorts (Macau) S.A.'s revitalization project will now also include the area of the Mount Fortress on the skirts of the Ruins of Saint Paul's.

Referred to as the 'Utilization plan for the areas surrounding Mount Fortress,' this expansion of the Inner Harbour revitalization plan will come into immediate effect and commence next week, according to the IC.

"During the first phase, the IC and Melco will organize musical performances and Food and Beverage (F&B) stalls at the Mount

Fortress Garden during the Mid-Autumn Festival (starting from September 29)," the president of IC, Deland Leong said. These new entertainment offerings will complement the two concerts organized by the IC, set to take place in front of the Façade of the Mater Dei monument.

This will be the first public event as part of Melco and IC's

efforts to revitalize the historical areas.

Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Elsie Ao Ieong, added that the Mount Fortress area is quite large and has historically been underutilized. Ao Ieong added that the enlivenment of the area will not be restricted to festivals and special occasions, but will occur on an ongoing basis and feature various elements to make the space more comfortable and appealing for both visitors and locals. The aim is to encourage more frequent visits to the space and the Macau Museum, which is currently the sole attraction of the Mount Fortress area.

The Secretary mentioned the potential introduction of other attractions such as portrait drawings and street performances, which may be extended to surrounding areas as additional attractions.

Director of Innovation and Public Relations at Melco, Jennifer Lai, explained that apart from food and beverage options and performances, Melco is installing a light show and other attractions available for those visiting during the evening.

This marks another change for the venue, which historically has been closed to public visits from 7 p.m.

## BEIJING ISSUES RMB5B OF TREASURY BONDS IN MACAU

China's Ministry of Finance has issued RMB5 billion of yuan-denominated bond in the SAR. The bonds are offered to institutional investors at a tenor of two years for RMB4 billion yuan, and a tenor of five years for RMB1 billion yuan. This is the first issuance of its kind in Macau. Subscriptions have exceeded RMB10 billion in total. To date, the ministry has issued 10 billion yuan worth of yuan-denominated bonds in Macau.

## ANT GROUP INTRODUCES MPAY TO A+CHINA

Ant Group announced the integration of seven new leading e-wallets and payment applications from Asia into the "Alipay+-in-China" (A+China) Program, according to the press release of Ant Group. Users of mPay (Macau), Hipay (Mongolia), Changi Pay (Singapore), OCBC (Singapore), Naver Pay (South Korea), Toss Pay (South Korea) and TrueMoney (Thailand) will be able to use their familiar home e-wallets on their mobile devices. This expansion brings the total count of overseas e-wallets accepted in the Chinese mainland to 10.

AD

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GTEF2023

# PANSY HO HOPES FORUM WILL ATTRACT FOREIGN INVESTMENTS AMID GLOBAL TOURISM BOOST

ANTHONY LAM

**A**MID the return of the Global Tourism Economy Forum (GTEF), it is hoped that consensus will be sought, GTEF vice chairman and secretary-general Pansy Ho said yesterday during her keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the 10th GTEF.

Ho expressed her hopes that this GTEF will seek consensus and elevate tourism to a higher level.

She highlighted that despite all the time that has passed, the forum has strived to maintain open-mindedness and inclusiveness, saying that "it has been integral to finding common ground."

She also expressed hope that the GTEF would enable both the Special Administrative Region of Macau and the People's Republic of China to attract foreign investment and visitors while fostering global tourism.

Starting her speech with a reflection on the history of the forum, Ho recapped that 11 years ago, when China managed to attract large numbers of visitors at the inaugural GTEF, she knew "the forum was heading towards a right direction," adding that the forum had effectively connected Chinese non-governmental economic entities with the world.

She also thanked the Macau government for its ongoing support of the GTEF, as well as Italy



and Shanghai for accepting the invitation to be the forum's partner country and the featured city respectively.

During her keynote speech, Daniela Garnero Santanchè, Minister of Tourism of Italy, said that in 2024, the China-Italy Culture and Tourism Year campaign would return after a two-year hiatus. The previous campaign was impacted by travel restrictions. Notably, next year also marks the 700th anniversary of Marco Polo's death.

The minister highlighted a 520% year-on-year increase in Chinese tourist arrivals in Italy in 2023, with a trend for younger travelers. She emphasized that many tourists have chosen to visit Italy because of its luxury experiences and goods. Indeed, the consump-

tion of luxury goods accounts for 25% of all tourist expenditures. She sees the GTEF as a good opportunity to promote Italy further.

Moreover, vice mayor Liu Duo of Shanghai emphasized the close collaboration between Macau and Shanghai, as exemplified by the 2021 Macao Week marketing campaign held in 2021 in Shanghai, which had attracted over four million visitors. She believes that Macau and Shanghai will continue to work together to enhance the quality of tourism.

She also noted that Shanghai has several theme parks planned, including Lego Land and other projects.

At the same session, Edmund Ho, vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese Peo-

ple's Political Consultative Conference and Forum Chairman, believed that more opportunities would be created at the forum between China and Italy, and suggested that Shanghai can also leverage the forum as a platform to showcase its aptitude to participating guests and professionals to promote the development of high-quality culture and tourism on a global scale.

Reiterating Macau's strategic location and position, Ho pledged that the forum would continue with the "1+4" development direction set by the local government and contribute to the city's diversification efforts.

Secretary for Economy and Finance and GTEF executive chairman Lei Wai Nong extended a welcome on behalf of the city to

all forum participants. He described this year's forum as a "remarkable meaning" as the world is now on the path to full recovery.

He said that this GTEF serves as a stage to showcase the fruits of Macau's orderly resumption and its capacities as the "Best Convention City (in Asia)" to industry practitioners and stakeholders.

He added that the forum is on track to becoming a prestigious high-end international convention, functioning as an intersection of "dual circulation" for the tourism industry as part of the country's 14th Five-Year Plan. In doing so, it has an important contribution to the country's opening up and advancing high-quality development, as well as the broader development of the national and global tourism economy.

BIR MATTERS

## Consulate paying 'great attention' to restrictions on Portuguese residency applications

STAFF REPORTER

**T**HE Portuguese Consulate General in Macau and Hong Kong is closely monitoring reports regarding restrictions on Portuguese nationals applying for Macau residency.

While on a visit to Macau, Nuno Fazenda, Secretary of State for Tourism, Commerce and Services of Portugal, assured the press that the Consulate has been "following the topic for some time. It is a topic that deserves attention," as reported by *Jornal Tribuna de Macau*.

The assurance comes after Portuguese state



agency Lusa reported that Macau is not accepting new residence applica-

tions from Portuguese nationals based on the "exercise of specialized

technical functions," and is only considering applications based on family

connections or previous ties to the territory.

Fazenda stated that appropriate solutions will be considered to address to the issue.

The new guidelines dated from early August, to which the Lusa had access, depart from the practice established shortly after the 1999 handover to China.

Between April 2003 and November 2021, residence applications from Portuguese nationals were equated to residence applications from Chinese citizens. However, this changed with the new legislation, as cited in the report.

"For now, based on the information we have, any new applications for residence made by Portuguese citizens via the Immigration Services, through the Public Security Police, are only accepted based on the grounds of 'family connections' and a 'previous connection to the Macau SAR,'" lawyer Pedro Meireles told Lusa.

"Residence requests from Portuguese nationals are no longer expressly mentioned (in law no. 16/2021 and in administrative regulation no. 38/2021)."

Speaking at a recent press conference, Consul General Alexandre Leitão, said, "As the Secretary of State said, the matter is not new. It is something we have known about for some time now. We have contacted the authorities, held meetings, and expressed our opinions on the matter."

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# STAND-BY TICKETS FOR JOE HISAISHI SHOWS TO GO ON SALE

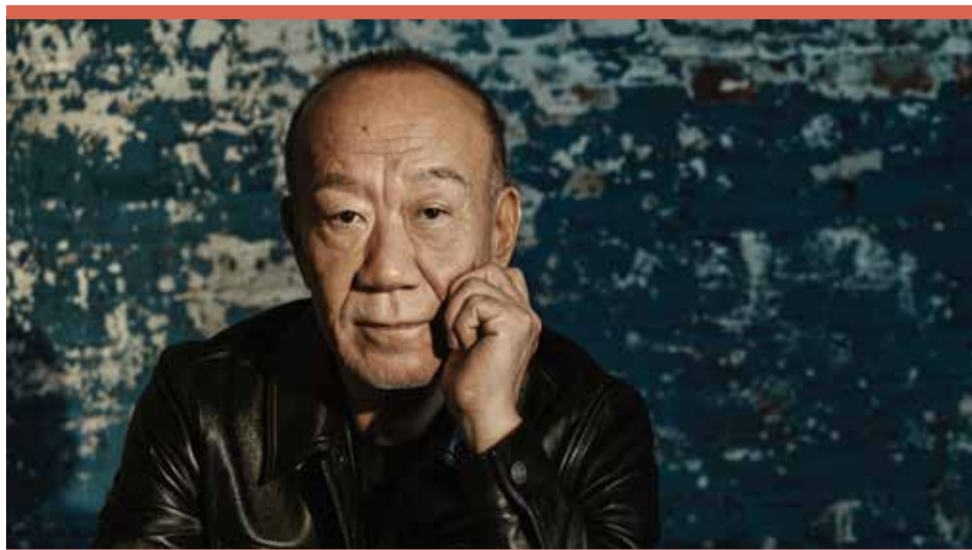
ANTHONY LAM

**T**HE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has announced that stand-by tickets for Joe Hisaishi's local concerts will go on sale from Sept. 23.

In an attempt to combat ticket scalping, the IC previously announced that ticketing and admission with identity verification will be imposed on Joe Hisaishi's shows in Macau.

Knowing his popularity amount local people, the IC has employed a raffle system for the shows' box office. Only raffle winners will be able to buy tickets to the shows.

Those who have not won ticket purchase rights in the first ticket raffle round can check the results of the second-round raffle from 3 p.m. tomorrow. Purchase right winners will also be



notified by text message that same day.

Winners can purchase their tickets between 3 p.m. this Saturday and 11:59pm on September 27.

The shows have attracted nearly 70,000 registrants for the ticket raffle.

The IC also announced that tickets to Joe Hisaishi's

shows in Macau are non-transferrable but may be refunded before Oct. 13.

Also, ticket validation will commence from 6 p.m. on each show date. One-off entry validations will be issued to prevent ticket transfers after the shows commence.

In response to concerns

that some ticket holders may not be able to attend the shows, the IC has established a refund mechanism specifically for this series of shows.

Vacant seats resulting from refunds will be made available for purchase according to the stand-by ranking.

PUBLIC WORKS

# SECOND PHASE OF OVERPASS LINKS FROM AREIA PRETA TO ZONE A TENDER LAUNCHED

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE government has launched a new public tender for the construction of the second phase of the overpass that will link the Areia Preta area to Zone A of the new landfills, passing over the Amizade roundabout.

Although separate, the new overpass is part of the same project that previously constructed the main overpass opened to the traffic at the end of 2022. This aims to reduce traffic jams at the roundabout that links major traffic areas such as the Areia Preta residential district, the Border Gate, the Macau Port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge as well as the Amizade Bridge to Taipa.

After the building of the overpasses classified as A and C, the tender now aims


to build overpass B which is to be located closer to the land plot of the former Pearl Horizon at the Avenida do Nordeste.


This new branch of the existing overpass will be 750 meters long and, after being built, will provide one single lane of traffic in the direction of Zone A to Areia Preta.

The conditions for the tender set a maximum of 550 working days for the conclusion of the works, with five milestones setting a series of works to be included in each period.

There is no base price for the tender and the criteria to evaluate the best proposal include the price (50%), the execution time (30%), the experience of the bidder and the quality of previous works (20%). Bids will be admitted until Oct. 24 at 5 p.m.

AD

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<b>4. Location for Submission of Proposals:</b>	CAM – Macau International Airport Co. Ltd. Av. De Wai Long CAM Office Building, 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Reception Taipa, Macau Attention: Mr. Chu Tan Neng – Executive Director
<b>5. Tender closing time and date:</b>	<b>At 12:00 (noon) on 25 October 2023</b> (Macau Local Time)
<b>CAM reserves the right to reject any Proposal in whole or in part without stating any reason.</b>	

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<b>5. Tender closing time and date:</b>	<b>At 12:00 (noon) on 20 October 2023</b> (Macau Local Time)
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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

GAMING

# MGM Resorts computers back up after 10 days

KEN RITTER, LAS VEGAS

**M**GM Resorts brought to an end a 10-day computer shutdown prompted by efforts to shield from a cyberattack data including hotel reservations and credit card processing, the casino giant said yesterday [Macau time], as analysts and academics measured the effects of the event.

"We are pleased that all of our hotels and casinos are operating normally," the Las Vegas-based company posted on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter. It reported last week that the attack was detected Sept. 10.

Rival casino owner Caesars Entertainment also disclosed last week to federal regulators that it was hit by a cyberattack Sept. 7. It said that its casino and online operations were not disrupted but it could not guarantee that personal information about tens of millions of customers, including driver's licenses and Social Security numbers of loyalty rewards members, had not been compro-



mised.

Caesars, based in Reno, is widely reported to have paid \$15 million of a \$30 million ransom sought by a group called Scattered Spider for a promise to secure the data.

Gregory Moody, professor and director of the cybersecurity program at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, pointed to quoted estimates that the computer shutdown cost the company up to \$8 million per day, which could

put the cumulative effect at \$80 million. But Moody also noted that MGM Resorts reports annual revenues above \$14 billion, which would mean it averages at least \$270 million in revenues per week.

The company reported yesterday that systems handling resort services, dining, entertainment, pools and spas were operational and its website and app were taking dining and spa reservations while the company worked

to restore hotel booking and loyalty reward functions.

"MGM Resorts properties in Las Vegas and throughout the country are back to normal operations," spokesman Brian Ahern told The Associated Press. MGM also has properties in Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York and Ohio.

FBI spokeswoman Sandra Breault in Las Vegas declined to comment and referred to a previous statement by the agency saying an investigation was ongoing.

Experts said the attacks exposed critical cybersecurity weaknesses at MGM and Caesars and shattered an image of casino invulnerability.

"At this point, all casinos should be moving to the highest defensive posture possible and taking active measures to verify the integrity of their systems and environment, and reviewing — if not activating — their incident response processes," said Christopher Budd, a director of threat

research at cybersecurity firm Sophos X-Ops. "There's been attacks against multiple casinos, and it's possible we'll see more."

Caesars stock traded Wednesday at \$50.17 per share, up 36 cents for the day. MGM shares were at \$38.77, down 43 cents. Both companies are expected to disclose effects of the attacks in quarterly reports next month to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The attack on MGM also has been attributed to Scattered Spider, a group of English-speakers also sometimes known as Øktapus operating under a Russia-based operation called ALPHV or BlackCat.

"But there are a lot of conflicting reports," said David Richardson, an executive at cybersecurity firm Lookout. "You have Scattered Spider claiming that they've done both in various forums, and ALPHV, saying that Scattered Spider wasn't involved with the other. But there's a lot of technical evidence that shows that there's a relationship between the two."

MDT/AP

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hotel the largest Andaz property in the world, it is also home to some exciting culinary venues. With Chef André Lai leading the kitchen team and Shobit Shetty behind the bar, you will be led on an inspired adventure where every sight, sound and taste is designed to reveal the real Macau.

**Andaz Kitchen – all-day-dining amidst a bustling atmosphere**

Son of an accomplished chef, André's passion for the culinary arts began at a young age. The vibrant blend of Chinese and Portuguese cultures that shaped his upbringing also defined his cooking style. The Macau food story, as told by Chef André, is

rich with influences from Macanese, Portuguese and Chinese cuisines. The interiors of this all-day dining restaurant are inspired by old Macau shophouses. Inside the open kitchen, amidst the bustling action, you will find the visually striking feature wall "Layers of Tradition", made up of a curated collection of blue-and-white ceramic plates with hand-painted motifs commonly seen in Macau.

**Andaz Bar – a taste of Macau in a glass**

The talented Shobit Shetty—who has worked in one of "Asia's 50 Best Bars"—is your mixologist and storyteller. Inspired by what he has seen, heard and tasted in Macau, he presents a creative array of cocktails that reflects the multicultural aspect of the city.

Also on the Andaz Bar menu are beers by a local Macau brewery and a selection of sophisticated finger bites. Splashes of teal and orange dominate this open and inviting space, with design touches that pay homage to Macau's distinctive European-style architecture.

Clockwise from the top:  
Macanese "Minchee";  
Cured Hamachi;  
Kung Pao Chicken; Piri-Piri Chicken;  
Mediterranean Style Grilled Octopus

DIPLOMACY

# Bashar Assad arrives in China on first visit since the beginning of Syria conflict

**S**YRIAN President Bashar Assad arrived in China yesterday on his first visit to the country since the start of Syria's 12-year conflict during which Beijing has been one of his main backers.

China's foreign ministry said Assad would attend the opening ceremony of the Asian Games, an international sports event beginning Saturday in the eastern city of Hangzhou.

Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said Assad's visit to China would "further deepen political mutual trust and cooperation in various fields between the two countries and push bilateral relations to a new level."

China and Syria have "a tradition of profound friendship," she said, which has "maintained a healthy and stable development" over the years.

Assad and President Xi Jinping were set to meet for "in-depth talks" on a range of issues, Mao added.

Assad landed in Hangzhou yesterday, according to Chinese state broadcaster CCTV.

Xi was expected to arrive there today and hold a banquet and other bilateral activities with Assad and other heads of state



Syrian President Bashar Assad

and government attending the games from countries friendly to China, including Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni, Kuwait's crown prince Sheikh Meshal Al Ahmed Al Jaber and Nepali Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, according to China's foreign ministry.

China has been expanding its

reach in the Middle East after mediating a deal in March between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and it continues to support Assad in the Syrian conflict, which has killed half a million people and left large parts of the nation in ruins.

China could play a major role in the future in Syria's reconstruction, which is expected to

cost tens of billions of dollars. Syria last year joined China's Belt and Road Initiative in which Beijing expands its influence in developing regions through infrastructure projects.

Assad's office said earlier that the Syrian leader was invited by Xi and would bring with him a high-ranking Syrian delegation.

Syria's worsening economic crisis has led to protests in government-held parts of the country. Syria blames the crisis on Western sanctions and U.S.-backed Kurdish-led fighters who control the country's largest oil fields in the east near the border with Iraq.

Diplomatic contacts between Syria and other Arab countries have intensified following the Feb. 6, earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria killing more than 50,000 people, including over 6,000 in Syria.

Assad flew to Saudi Arabia in May where he attended the Arab League summit days after Syria's membership was reinstated in the 22-member league.

Since Syria's conflict began in March 2011 with pro-democracy protests and later turned into a civil war, Iran and Russia have helped Assad regain control of much of the country.

China has used its veto power at the U.N. eight times to stop resolutions against Assad's government, the latest in July 2020.

Assad's last and only visit to China was in 2004, a year after the U.S.-led invasion of neighboring Iraq and at a time when Washington was putting pressure on Syria. **MDT/AP**

HONG KONG

# Jimmy Lai's son fears media mogul may die in detention while awaiting trial

**T**HE son of jailed Hong Kong media mogul and prominent pro-democracy activist Jimmy Lai said this week he did not want to see his father die in detention, as his lawyers raised the prospect that his long-delayed trial may be pushed back indefinitely.

Sebastien Lai also slammed the U.K. government for its "shameful" lack of action in helping his father, who is a British national.

Jimmy Lai, the 75-year-old founder of the now-defunct pro-democracy newspaper Apple Daily, has been in detention since he was arrested in 2020 under a sweeping national security law imposed by Beijing. The Hong Kong businessman faces up to life in prison if convicted. He has



already been sentenced to five years and nine months in a separate case.

His trial was originally set to begin last December, but it has been de-

layed several times by judges. It is now due to start on Dec. 18.

His son Sebastien Lai, 28, and his lawyers have described the case as a "show trial." They suggested that Hong Kong authorities may delay the trial date further not only because they have a weak case, but also because there is no benefit to them for Lai to air his views during a public hearing that's expected to last two to three months.

Sebastien Lai, who has been travelling to the U.S., U.K., and the United Nations to lobby international leaders to help his father, criticized Britain's government Wednesday for its muted language in condemning his father's lengthy detention.

He also called the U.K. approach to China incoherent because while some government officials are speaking out against Beijing's human rights record, others maintain it's paramount to keep China on side as a trade partner.

"If they are willing to sacrifice human rights for trade I think it's a big miss-  
step," Lai told reporters.

"I don't want to see my father die in jail. He's 75, he's in prison, he does risk just dying. It is very worrying," he added.

Caoilfhionn Gallagher, a London-based rights lawyer who is leading the Lais' international legal team, said Foreign Secretary James Cleverly and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak have declined to meet with Sebastien Lai despite repeated requests.

"We're seeing very mixed messaging from the government as a whole," she said. "We think there's an element of the U.K. government speaking out of both sides of its mouth — on the one hand it says something about Jimmy Lai's case, and throws us some breadcrumbs, and on the other hand they take that away by pushing the message that it's business as usual." **MDT/AP**



THE ASIAN GAMES

# Larger than the Olympics and with an array of regional and global sports

STEPHEN WADE

**T**HE Asian Games are an attention grabber. For starters, they involve more participants than the Summer Olympics. Organizers say more than 12,000 will be entered when the opening ceremony takes place Saturday in the eastern Chinese city of Hangzhou. This is more than the 10,500 expected for next year's Paris Olympics.

The giant numbers are partly due to the staggering array of events with many regional specialties, sports, and games you won't find in the Olympics. And there's also cricket, which appears headed to the Olympics as soon as 2028 in Los Angeles, and certainly for 2032 in Brisbane, Australia.

And there's squash, which has tried several times for Olympic recognition.

The regional fare includes dragon boat racing, sepak takraw — sometimes called "kick volleyball" — wushu, a Chinese martial art, and kabaddi, a popular contact sport on the Indian subcontinent. There is also the non-Olympic martial art of ju-jitsu, and kurash, a form of wrestling popular in central Asia.

To this, add a long list of what organizers call "mind sports" from bridge to chess to xiangqi (Chinese chess) to esports.

Of course, there are the old standbys seen in every Olympics



Volunteers hold country signs during team welcoming ceremony at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, yesterday

like track and field, swimming, or volleyball — and the usual grandiose opening and closing ceremonies. Nine sports will offer qualification spots for the Olympics — archery, artistic swimming, boxing, breaking, hockey, modern pentathlon, sailing, tennis, and water polo.

However, most of the 481 events offer a chance for smaller delegations to win medals, which is often impossible at the Olympics.

China won almost 300 overall medals at the last Asian Games in Indonesia in 2018. At the bottom of the table, Syria and Nepal won a lone medal each. Bhutan and Bangladesh were among nine delegations that didn't win any.

China will dominate the medal table as it has for the last 40

years, followed by Japan and South Korea — Asia's other powers. The vast region stretches from Lebanon on the Mediterranean, through central Asia and the Indian subcontinent, to North Korea with organizers saying 45 nations or territories are entered.

Organizers have said 191 participants from North Korea will be on hand. North Korea closed its border early in 2020 after the COVID-19 pandemic and skipped the Tokyo Olympics, which were delayed a year until 2021. The Asian Games were also pushed back a year from 2022 because of the pandemic.

According to South Korea's Unification Ministry, the last time North Korean athletes appeared in an international sports com-

petition was January 2020, when North Korea competed in the Asian Football Confederation's under-23 soccer championship.

If you like political intrigue, there may be plenty of it.

The self-governing island of Taiwan will be on hand in China, which claims the democracy as a breakaway province that it has vowed to reclaim it. Known as the Republic of China, the island is officially listed as Chinese Taipei in the Olympics and Asian Games and marches under a white flag adorned with the Olympics rings. Its red, blue and white flag is in not allowed.

Taiwan, with only 23.5 million, is a relative sports power in the region and finished seventh in the overall medal standings in Indonesia.

The games also begin amid an open power struggle between International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach and Kuwait's Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, a long-time IOC member who is often described as the "kingmaker" who helped Bach win the IOC presidency in Buenos Aires in 2013.

The Switzerland-based IOC openly intervened in July to invalidate the presidential election of the Olympic Council of Asia. It has also suspended Sheikh Ahmad from the IOC.

The election was ostensibly won by Kuwait's Sheikh Talal Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the younger brother of Sheikh

Ahmad. The elder sheikh is the former 30-year president of the OCA, an organization that was created by his father.

The IOC says it will continue to recognize Randhir Singh of India as interim president of the OCA until new elections are held. Bach will attend the opening ceremony in Hangzhou and is sure to have talks with Singh.

The biggest event of the games might be a possible India vs. Pakistan gold-medal game in men's cricket on Oct. 7, which would be one of the most-watched global sports events all year. It comes just as cricket's world cup is also underway.

China will again dominate diving, and several of China's top swimmers — fresh from the world championships two months ago in Fukuoka, Japan — will shine. The field in gymnastics is weakened since the world championships in Antwerp, Belgium, clash with the Asian Games.

The biggest winner at the Asian Games might be South Korea esports star Lee Sang-hyeok, who is also known as "Faker." If he wins gold he will be granted an exemption from military service.

Tottenham Hotspur soccer forward Son Heung-min also bypassed a 21-month military stint because of a government exemption when South Korea won the gold medal in soccer at the 2018 games in Indonesia — although Son still had to do three months of basic training. MDT/AP

SINGAPORE

# Police uncover more gold bars, watches from money laundering scheme

**S**INGAPORE police uncovered more luxury watches, gold bars and other assets from a massive money laundering scheme that was busted last month, they said, bringing the total amount of assets seized or frozen to 2.4 billion Singapore dollars (\$1.75 billion).

The police had launched further operations related to a group of foreign nationals suspected to be involved in laundering the proceeds of their organized criminal activities, including scams and online gambling, police said in a

statement this week.

The latest action followed multiple other raids across the city-state last month that saw properties, vehicles, luxury goods and gold bars worth SG\$1 billion (\$731 million) seized or frozen. Nine men and a woman from Cyprus, Turkey, China, Cambodia and Vanuatu have been charged in court.

The case has cast a shadow on Singapore's status as a financial hub known for its low crime and clean image.

The latest operations

saw additional assets seized or frozen, with the total estimate growing to SG\$2.4 billion (\$1.75 billion), police said. This included bank accounts with a total estimated value of more than SG\$1.127 billion (\$824 million) and cash of more than SG\$76 million (\$55 million).

Police also seized 68 gold bars, 294 luxury bags, 164 luxury watches, 546 pieces of jewelry, 204 electronic devices and cryptocurrencies worth over SG\$38 million (\$28 million). The statement said prohibition

of disposal orders were been issued against more than 110 properties and 62 vehicles with a total estimated value of more than SG\$1.24 billion (\$906 million), as well as bottles of liquor, wine and multiple ornaments.

"Investigations are ongoing," the statement added.

The Monetary Authority of Singapore said Wednesday that financial institutions had filed suspicious transaction reports such as suspicious fund flows, dubious documentation



of the source of wealth or funds, and inconsistencies or evasiveness in information provided to them.

It warned that it would take firm action against

financial institutions that breach requirements or have inadequate controls against money laundering and on countering the financing of terrorism. MDT/AP

THAILAND

# KING'S ESTRANGED SON URGES OPEN DISCUSSION OF MONARCHY, IN REJECTION OF ANTI-DEFAMATION LAW

JINTAMAS SAKSORNCHAI,  
BANGKOK

**A**N estranged son of Thailand's King who has spent almost all his adult life away from his homeland has unexpectedly gone public with his belief that open discussions about the country's monarchy should be allowed, in a rejection of a harsh royal anti-defamation law.

Vacharaesorn Vivacharawongse, one of the king's five sons, posted his opinion on Facebook after attending a photo exhibition in New York about people who have been charged under the law, Article 112 of Thailand's Criminal Code. The so-called lese majeste law makes insulting the monarch, his immediate family and the regent punishable by up to 15 years in prison per offense.

"I love and cherish the monarchy, but I believe it is better to know than not knowing. Every person has their own opinion based on their own experiences. Not



Vacharaesorn Vivacharawongse prays during a religious ceremony at Yannawa temple in Bangkok

listening to them doesn't make their viewpoints or opinions disappear," wrote Vacharaesorn, who works at a law firm in New York. "It's another story whether you agree or disagree with them. Talk

to each other with reason." The law is highly controversial, not only because of its tough penalties but also because anyone, not just the royal family, can file complaints about alleged viola-

tions with police.

Supporters of the law say the monarchy is the bedrock of Thai identity and should be untouchable.

Vacharaesorn is one of four sons that King Maha Vajiralongkorn had with his second wife, Sujarinee Vivacharawongse, a former actress. In 1996 the then-crown prince divorced Sujarinee, who moved abroad with her children. Their youngest daughter was taken back by the royal family and given the title Princess Sirivannavari Nariratana, but the four sons remain estranged and do not have any formal royal titles.

Vacharaesorn, 42, who had long been out of the public eye, drew major attention in August when he made a brief surprise return to Thailand, where he visited a charity organization and several Buddhist temples to participate in prayers and offerings. Before departing, he told reporters that he wishes Thailand will be "a country full of hope" and that Thai people will "respect one another, listen to

one another, no matter who we are."

His statement about Article 112 was posted after photos circulated online of him attending the exhibition at Columbia University on Monday with its organizer, Pavin Chachavalpongpun, a Thai academic and caustic critic of royalist Thai society who lives in exile. Pavin's Thai passport was canceled in 2014 by a military government and he now is an associate professor at Kyoto University's Center for Southeast Asian Studies.

Royalists' unyielding objections to reform of the monarchy were highlighted after Thailand's May's elections, in which the progressive Move Forward Party won the most seats but was denied power by Parliament. Conservative members of the military-installed Senate voted jointly with the House to block party leader Pita Limjaroenrat from becoming prime minister, citing the party's call for a mild reform of the lese majeste law.

On Wednesday, the Supreme Court gave a former lawmaker from the disbanded Future Forward Party, the predecessor of the Move Forward Party, a lifetime ban on political activity over several Facebook posts about the monarchy that it deemed a serious ethical violation of her duty as a lawmaker. **MDT/AP**

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MIDEAST

# Saudi prince says 'every day we get closer' to normalization with Israel

**S**AUDI Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said in a rare interview with Fox News yesterday [Macau time] that negotiations over Israel means the prospects of normalized relations between both countries "get closer" every day, but that treatment of Palestinians remains a "very important" issue to be resolved.

Saudi Arabia is discussing a major agreement with the United States to normalize relations with Israel in exchange for a U.S. defense pact and aid in developing its own civilian nuclear program. The Saudis have said any deal would require major progress toward the creation of a Palestinian state, which is a hard sell for the most religious and nationalist government in Israel's history.

"For us, the Palestinian issue is very important. We need to solve that part," Saudi Arabia's de facto leader, widely known as MbS, said on "Special Report with Bret Baier" in an interview conducted in English, adding that there had



been "good negotiations" so far. "We got to see where we go," the prince said. "We hope that will reach a place, that it will ease the

life of the Palestinians, get Israel as a player in the Middle East."

He also denied reports that the talks had been suspended, saying

"every day, we get closer."

The interview aired shortly after President Joe Biden met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu while both were in New York for the meeting of the U.N. General Assembly. Biden raised concerns about the far-right Israeli government's treatment of the Palestinians and urged Netanyahu to take steps to improve conditions in the West Bank at a time of heightened violence in the occupied territory.

Netanyahu's office said the meeting "mostly dealt with ways to establish an historic peace agreement between Israel and Saudi Arabia, which could greatly advance an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and facilitate the establishment of an economic corridor to link Asia, the Middle East and Europe."

Asked during the interview about working with someone as conservative as Netanyahu, Prince Mohammed said: "If we have a breakthrough, reaching a deal that gives the Palestinians

their needs and (making) the region calm, we've got to work with whoever's there."

National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told reporters before the interview was shown that it was best for the leaders of Israel and Saudi Arabia "to speak to how close they think they are, and where they think they are" in the process.

"Obviously, we encourage normalization. We think it's good not just for Israel and Saudi Arabia, we think it's good for the whole region," Kirby said.

Prince Mohammed was also questioned about the possibility of Iran eventually building a nuclear weapon and said "we are concerned of any country getting a nuclear weapon" and that that if Iran were to get one, Saudi Arabia will seek to do the same: "We will have to get one." That has worried nuclear nonproliferation experts, who say the U.S. granting the kingdom the ability to enrich uranium itself could fuel a regional arms race.

Prince Mohammed has given very few interviews to Western media outlets, particularly since the 2018 killing of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi dissident and Washington Post columnist, in an operation by Saudi agents that U.S. intelligence says was likely approved by the prince. The prince has denied any involvement. MDT/AP

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MIDEAST

# US GENERAL WORRIES ABOUT POSSIBLE RUSSIA-IRAN 'COOPERATION AND COLLUSION'

JON GAMBRELL,  
ABU DHABI

IRAN'S supplying of bomb-carrying drones to Russia could see Moscow help Tehran's program become more lethal, raising risks across the wider Middle East, the top U.S. Air Force commander in the Middle East said yesterday [Macau time].

Lt. Gen. Alexis Grynkeiwich, the head of U.S. Air Force Central, described the danger potentially posed by Russia's "cooperation and collusion" with Iran as extending from the airspace over Syria, while Tehran threatens commercial ships in the waters of the Persian Gulf.

American pilots have already faced what they describe as more aggressive maneuvers from Russian pilots in Syria, while a new deployment of U.S. air power has been sent to protect commercial shipping in the Gulf's key Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of all the world's oil passes.

"I am concerned about the growing relationship between Russia and Iran and the drones being supplied to Russia," Grynkeiwich told journalists during a news conference at the U.S. Embassy in Abu Dhabi. "Who would have ever thought that the Russian Federation would need to go to Iran for military capabilities, and yet we're there. That means that Russia actually owes Iran something. I'm concerned about the level of collaboration that might happen."

Iran's mission to the United Nations and the Russian Embassy in Washington did not respond to a request for comment.

Tehran has offered conflicting explanations about the drones Russia has used to target Ukraine during its war on the country, at times denying arming Moscow while also saying it provided some before the war on Ukraine began. Western nations, Ukraine and experts who have forensically examined the drones link them back to Iran and say their vast number deployed on the battlefield show a constant resupplying by Tehran.

Grynkeiwich said he was worried that Russian upgra-



Lt. Gen. Alexis Grynkeiwich, the head of U.S. Air Force Central, speaks at a news conference at the U.S. Embassy in Abu Dhabi

des to Iran's drone technology could "backcast" to Tehran, making those bomb-carrying devices even more dangerous. And by Russia owing Iran for the munitions, it could return the favor by dialing up the pressure on American pilots who still fly over Syria and Iraq as part of a mission to target the remnants of the Islamic State group.

"There could be some amount of cooperation and collusion between Russia and Iran that's playing out here in Syria. We'll see where that goes," Grynkeiwich said. "It is something that we watch very closely. That burgeoning relationship is of a military concern to me."

Meanwhile, Russian pilots over recent months have been aggressive in flying close to both manned F-35 fighter jets and drones over Syria. The Air Force publicly showed a Russian pilot dumping fuel on a drone and trying to set it alight with flares.

But Grynkeiwich described some of that behavior as dialing back in recent weeks.

"I'm not attributing causality to the fact that we called them out, but by showing the unprofessional nature of their behavior since that time, they do still intercept our MQ-9 (drones) from time to time, but it is in a much safer manner," he said. "I would still characterize it as unprofessional because it is not in accordance with established rules that we have where we stay certain distances apart, but it

is safe at this time."

The U.S. and Russia still operate what America calls a "deconfliction line" to make sure their aircraft don't run into each other or come too close. Grynkeiwich described 90% of the calls as routine, though 10% can involve issues where the countries vigorously dispute each others' actions over Syria, which still remains mired in its yearslong war.

"You do get into some heated exchanges," Grynkeiwich said. "Those exchanges, while heated, are always professional between the two sides."

Meanwhile in Syria, Grynkeiwich said that "hundreds" of fighters from the Russian mercenary group Wagner still operate in the country, even after their leader Yevgeny Prigozhin died in a mysterious, fiery plane crash following his march on Moscow challenging Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"We have seen, as you might expect, some tension between those forces and the Russian forces that are there," Grynkeiwich said. "For the most part, it appears that they have come to some sort of an agreement ... (and) they'll continue to operate together to meet the objectives of the Russian Federation there in Syria."

In recent weeks, a major deployment of U.S. sailors and Marines, alongside F-35s, F-16s and other military aircraft, has been underway in the Persian Gulf region over

concerns about Iran targeting shipping. The Pentagon also is considering a plan to put U.S. troops on board commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz.

Grynkeiwich said that flexible deployment likely would remain for some time, backed up by the extensive network of bases America enjoys across the region.

"Part of our approach here in the Middle East was to be able to surge forces into the region when the threat warrants," he said. "It is an enduring commitment here to the region. We are not going anywhere."

But there has been growing concern, as the Biden administration entered office, about deploying too many forces into the Middle East after the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq when Washington sees a growing threat in China and Russia. Asked about the mission to counter the Islamic State group, Grynkeiwich said he could see it potentially winding down.

"We're kind of at the last phase of the operation where we're trying to set conditions now for normalizing relationships that will allow pressure to remain on ISIS, but not to have to have a full task force," Grynkeiwich said, using an acronym for the extremist group. "When exactly that transition happens, it's really not mine to say but I think within the next few years we certainly will see adjustments to how things play out." MDT/AP

## this day in history

### 1980 WAR BREAKS OUT BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ



Three weeks of border clashes between Iran and Iraq appear to have finally erupted into all-out war.

Iraq has bombed several Iranian air and military supply bases, including Tehran's international airport.

The rise in hostilities comes after Iraq tore up a 1975 border agreement with Iran over sovereignty of the Shatt al-Arab waterway.

The southern end of the river forms part of the border between the two countries, leading into the Gulf, and is a vital supply line for oil to the West.

Iraqi and Iranian ships exchanged fire in the disputed estuary yesterday and Iraq claimed to have sunk eight Iranian patrol boats.

Iranian reports say Iraqi forces shelled the Iranian naval base of Khorramshahr, 20 miles (32kms) south of Abadan, and site of the world's largest oil refinery. There are also reports of ground forces advancing into surrounding Iranian territory.

Iraqi officials say Iranian guns hit Iraqi economic installations in the Shatt al-Arab waterway. Some reports say they fired at an Iraqi oil reservoir in the Basra area in southern Iraq and set it on fire.

Iraq has announced the call-up of all army, police, public security and customs reservists.

It is also reported to have moved bombers and transport aircraft into neighbouring Jordan.

Western diplomats believe Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is seeking to take advantage of the post-revolution turmoil in Iran to seize control of the waterway and other territory handed over to Tehran as part of the 1975 agreement.

In return Iran agreed to end support for a Kurdish rebellion in northern Iraq.

President Hussein also appears intent on destroying the new Islamic leader, Ayatollah Khomeini's, grip on Iran and the majority Shia Muslim population amid fears they may arouse discontent among Iraq's Shia majority community.

A senior member of the Iraqi government, Tariq Aziz, is in Moscow for talks in what appears to be a move to seek for more arms. [...]

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The Iran/Iraq war lasted eight years, despite the limited military capabilities of the two sides.

The two superpowers, the USA and the USSR, declared neutrality. The USA, under President Jimmy Carter was committed to keeping the oil supply route open. The Soviets had paid to arm Iraq but shared a common border with Iran. Iraq's superior military equipment initially gave it the upper hand in the fighting, but Iran fought back and even advanced to occupy some Iraqi territory in 1984 and 1986.

Both sides eventually agreed to the terms of a United Nations ceasefire in August 1988. Official reports say more than 400,000 were killed and 750,000 wounded.

In 1990 Iran and Iraq restored diplomatic relations. In 2005 the Iraq's transitional Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafaari visited Iran at the start of what was seen as a new era of co-operation between the two countries.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**



**ARIES**

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You're best to avoid disputes. You need to spend some time pampering yourself. You may be sensitive concerning friends and their situations. You might not accomplish all that you want to at home today.



**TAURUS**

Apr. 20-May. 20

Be careful not to consume too many spicy foods, or minor health problems could put you out of commission for the day. You could experience unusual circumstances and meet eccentric individuals.



**GEMINI**

May. 21-Jun. 21

Try to ease any disappointment by making amends. You can help sort out problems that friends are facing. You will find their philosophies worth exploring.



**CANCER**

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Moves will be hectic but favorable in the end. Don't be too pushy or demanding, or you may find yourself all alone. Problems with gas, oil, or water in your home may disrupt your routine.



**LEO**

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You could be misinterpreted if you're not careful. You need to take a break with the ones you love. You can change your living arrangements. This could be a serious relationship.



**VIRGO**

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

You will benefit by taking care of other people's concerns. Be careful not to push your luck or take too much for granted when dealing on either a personal or professional level.



**LIBRA**

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Your mind will be wandering to exotic destinations. Use discrimination and play hard to get. Chances to express your ideas and beliefs can bring popularity as long as you're not arrogant.



**SCORPIO**

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Make plans to attend group discussions or get together with friends who like to talk as much as you do. A friendship might suffer if money becomes an issue. Be careful how you deal with colleagues.



**SAGITTARIUS**

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

This is not the time to lend or borrow money or possessions. Uncertainties regarding your love life will surface if you have neglected your mate. Don't put limitations on yourself.



**CAPRICORN**

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

If you take on too much, you will find yourself in martyrdom. Your concern with older family members and those less fortunate than yourself will only add to your attractiveness.



**AQUARIUS**

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Creative educational pursuits will payoff. Not everyone will be pleased with your plans. You are in a high cycle where travel, education, and creative endeavors are concerned.



**PISCES**

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Attend to things that you should have done yesterday. Contracts will not be as lucrative as you think. Get back into a routine that promises a better looking, more aware individual.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

**EASY**

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

**EASY+**

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

**MEDIUM**

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

**HARD**

			4			8	6	
2					3			
			7					
			8	2		6		
3					1			
6	4		9					
8							3	1

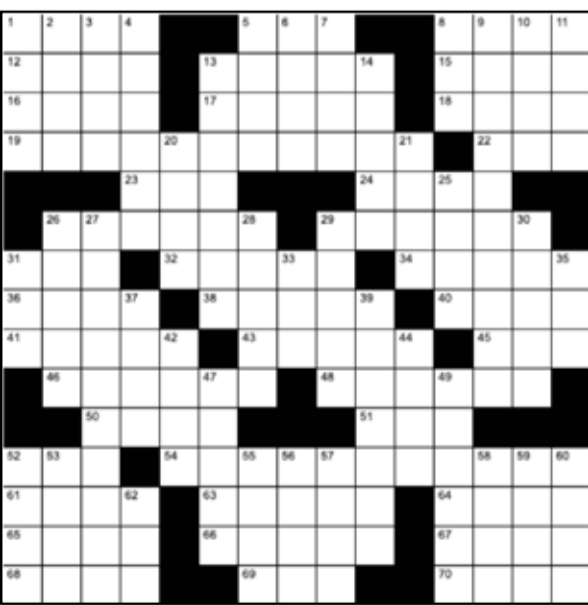
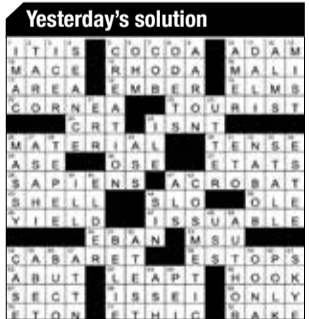
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	16	27	fine
Changchun	12	20	cloudy
Chengdu	19	24	showers
Chongqing	20	26	rain
Fuzhou	26	33	cloudy
Guangzhou	24	33	thunderstorms
Guiyang	18	27	fine
Haikou	25	32	cloudy
Hangzhou	21	26	rain
Harbin	9	17	fine
Hefei	19	25	overcast
Nanjing	19	24	overcast
Shanghai	21	24	rain
Taipei	25	31	cloudy
Wuhan	18	24	overcast
Hong Kong	28	32	overcast
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	13	25	overcast
Frankfurt	9	20	overcast
Paris	11	18	rain
London	8	17	rain
New York	15	22	overcast

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Highland hillside; 5- Neptune's domain; 8- Atop; 12- You \_\_\_?; 13- Punctuation mark; 15- Battleship shade; 16- Ratio words; 17- Bay window; 18- Table d'\_\_\_; 19- Presides over a meeting; 22- L.A. clock setting; 23- Tofu base; 24- In this place; 26- Set upon; 29- Metamorphosed limestone; 31- Clean air org.; 32- New Brunswick neighbor; 34- Fuel transport; 36- Exile isle; 38- Govt. security; 40- Delhi wrap; 41- Honkers; 43- At the bottom of the barrel; 45- Vardalos of "My Big Fat Greek Wedding"; 46- Places of contest; 48- Revolve; 50- Depilatory brand; 51- 1980's movie starring Bo Derek and Dudley Moore; 52- Dr.'s org.; 54- Variety; 61- Device for securing; 63- Apple centers; 64- Israeli round dance; 65- Vogue rival; 66- At right angles to a ship's length; 67- K-6; 68- Paradise lost; 69- Religious sch.; 70- Boy or man;

DOWN 1- \_\_\_-a-brac; 2- Like some decisions; 3- Architectural pier; 4- Altruist's opposite; 5- Miffed; 6- Islamic ruler; 7- City on the Skunk; 8- How revolting!; 9- Fuel; 10- Cereal grain; 11- Russian no; 13- Mimic; 14- Luau greeting; 20- Travel far and wide; 21- Emperor of Rome 54-68; 25- Diamond stats; 26- Cop \_\_\_; 27- House of worship; 28- Varieties; 29- Unit just above a yard; 30- Strange and mysterious; 31- Hosp. readout; 33- Hide-hair connector; 35- Inlet; 37- In the Black?; 39- Conceit; 42- Oklahoma city; 44- Pace; 47- Betel palm; 49- Hymn; 52- "Hard \_\_\_!" (sailor's yell); 53- Shape; 55- Weeps; 56- Manitoba native; 57- Quantity of paper; 58- Kansas city; 59- Hurler Hershiser; 60- Appoint; 62- Barbie's beau;



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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AD

ADVERTORIAL

# GREAT TIMES

Experience the most Authentic Outdoor German Oktoberfest this October at MGM



“Oktoberfest Macau at MGM 2023” is set to return and rock the town again in October at MGM COTAI! Get ready to raise your “das boot” beer stein, say “Cheers, Macau!” and indulge yourself in various festivities at the annual party. The party will take place at the 1/F Roof Terrace of MGM COTAI, promising 12 consecutive days of authentic German festive celebrations.

The outdoor event features all the signature Oktoberfest experiences, beneath the classic open-air giant marquee adorned with traditional Bavarian decorations and tableware, guests can savor the genuine German Oktoberfest brew Löwenbräu and enjoy a scrumptious selection of German delicacies, including pork knuckle, roast chicken, pretzels and more. To further elevate the festive atmosphere, the renowned Högl Fun Band from Munich will be performing the audience’s favorite theme song and the captivating classics on stage, along with beer girls dressed in traditional costumes for adding an authentic touch to the party.



Get ready to immerse yourself in the true spirit of Oktoberfest, as MGM brings you the most authentic German festive experience in Macau from October 12 – 23. There will be an exclusive “Family Day” session on October 15, in which parents and kids can have fun together at the outdoor party with non-alcoholic drink options and fun-filled games.



Tickets are limited. Secure yours now at [mgm.mo](http://mgm.mo) and for inquires please call (853) 8802 2666.



AP PHOTO



Eve Hewson (left) and Orén Kinlan in a scene from “Flora and Son”

DRIVE IN

## A STAR-MAKING TURN FOR EVE HEWSON IN THE FEEL-GOOD ‘FLORA AND SON’

JAKE COYLE,  
MDT/AP FILM WRITER

JOHN Carney, the Irish filmmaker of “Once,” “Sing Street” and “Begin Again,” makes the movie version of “three chords and the truth.”

His films, unabashedly earnest, feel-good movies for cynical times, are lo-fi musicals that tell simple stories, charmingly. There are love interests, usually. But the abiding romance is for music. His films are the sort that would be easier to dismiss as “sentimental” if his central belief — in the redemptive power of music — didn’t happen to be kinda true.

The song remains much the same in Carney’s latest charmer, “Flora and Son,” starring Eve Hewson as a working-class single mother in Dublin who takes up guitar lessons. Flora’s initial instinct when she snags a beat-up acoustic guitar out of a dumpster, is

to give it to her troubled 14-year-old son, Max (Orén Kinlan) as a day-late birthday present. Max, though, is nonplussed.

“You expect me to turn into Ed (expletive) Sheeran?” he says.

Their life together in a small apartment is far from harmonious. Their interactions are caustic and cruel. Flora, who we first meet dancing at a nightclub and going home with a man she immediately regrets, isn’t shy about her disinterest in parenting. Max, meanwhile, is close to getting kicked out of school.

These are problems that, perhaps, take more than a six string to solve. But Carney, who wrote and directed the film, has a way of not hitting the cornball notes too hard and mixing in enough humor to keep the saccharine tones from overpowering.

Pondering her sad state of affairs, Flora finds new resolve. “This

can’t be my story,” she says, like a good protagonist. “This can’t be my narrative.” She flips around on YouTube looking for guitar lessons before settling on Jeff (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), a laid-back instructor in Southern California who she’s immediately attracted to.

Their lessons over Zoom are intimate; Carney sometimes enhances the effect by transporting Jeff into Flora’s kitchen. They talk James Blunt and Joni Mitchell. Jeff shares one of his own songs, which Flora bluntly critiques and then helps shape into a lovely duet. (Carney and Gary Clark penned the film’s songs.) Outside of the frame, their interactions have some irony. Hewson, the daughter of Bono, was probably born with chops.

The movie proceeds with the satisfying structure of a song: verse, chorus, bridge. Flora’s ex-husband, Ian (Jack Reynor), doubts

her commitment. But Flora proves adept at her new hobby, which fosters a newfound connection with her son.

Hewson has been a standout in the TV series “The Knick” and “Bad Sisters,” but she can be verifiably called a movie star after “Flora and Son.” Her character isn’t miles off ones we’ve seen many times, but Hewson’s confident, charismatic leading performance has enough grit and spunk to light up the screen. Nepo baby or not, she’s a total star.

“Flora and Son,” like a B-side to Carney’s earlier hits, may sound a little like a tune you’ve heard before. But it’s sung with enough heart to have even the coldest cynic humming.

“Flora and Son,” an Apple TV+ release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for language throughout, sexual references and brief drug use. Running time: 97 minutes. ★★★



TASTE OF EDESIA

# Journey to France

IRENE SAM, MDT

**R**ECENTLY, the Ritz-Carlton Café hosted a special culinary event, bringing together two renowned chefs for a night of innovative French fine dining. The dinner featured a four-hand collaboration between Jesse Zhao, Chef de Cuisine at The Ritz-Carlton Café, and guest chef Yao Chiang of L'Atelier par Yao in Taichung City, Taiwan. Having worked in Michelin-starred restaurants including Restaurant Frenchie in Paris, The Clove Club in London and Gastrologik in Sweden, Chef Yao, a Taiwanese native, is known for his unique sensibility that seamlessly combines classic French techniques with Eastern influences, incorporating a Zen-like simplicity in the flavor and presentation of each refined plate. His namesake restaurant, L'Atelier par Yao, brings contemporary French cuisine infused with Asian elements, and made its debut in Michelin Guide Taiwan last year as a Michelin Selected Restaurant.

Chef Yao brought his signature fusion flair to The Ritz-Carlton, Macau — a Michelin Selected Restaurant since 2017 — with help from The Ritz-Carlton Café's acclaimed helmer Chef Zhao, together creating an unforgettable culinary adventure that began at The Ritz-

-Carlton Bar & Lounge. There, guests were treated with Maison Mumm RSRV 4.5 Champagne and delectable canapés such as Dashi Meringue, Foie Gras, Granny Smith Apple by Chef Zhao, and Bacalhau with Lanyu Dried Taiwanese Flying Fish, Makaoy Pepper by Chef Yao.

The main event, taking place at The Ritz-Carlton, Café, was a delectable six-course meal with expertly curated wine pairings from Aaron Liew, sommelier at L'Atelier par Yao. Boasting a blend of quintessential French flavors, premium ingredients and creative finesse, it highlighted Taiwanese culinary heritage while paying homage to European traditions. The Yilan Sanxing Scallion Pancake and Taichung Night Market Corn Soup were nods to Taiwan's vibrant street food culture, the Chilled Maine Lobster and Keelung Chikura brought luxury seafood to the fore, while the Beef Bourguignon reimagined this decadent French staple with an unexpected twist. Finally, the Caramelized Pear served as a sweet coda to the evening. Putting a Taiwanese spin on French haute cuisine, the menu — first-of-its-kind at The Ritz-Carlton, Macau — provided a unique fusion experience to the guests and shined a light on the extraordinary skill and creativity of the new generation of culinary talent in Asia.



**OPINION**

**China Daily**  
 Xinhua Commentary

**'NEW PRODUCTIVE FORCES'  
 A WINNING FORMULA FOR  
 CHINA'S FUTURE**

As global observers eagerly await China's next move in fueling its future development, one phrase, in particular, seems to be on everybody's lips - "new productive forces." But what does it mean?

First put forward by President Xi Jinping during his inspection tour earlier this month to northeast China, the country's old industrial base, it refers to a new form of productive forces derived from continuous sci-tech breakthroughs and innovation that drive strategic emerging industries and future industries in a more intelligent information era.

During the 18th to early 20th centuries, the Western world made rapid progress through an industrial revolution, globalization, sci-tech revolution and industrial transformation, as China struggled to keep pace.

Since the founding of New China, the leadership has attached great importance to science and technology - a primary productive force and a key, strategic component of China's development.

Today, at a critical stage of economic transformation and industrial upgrading, China faces internal and external challenges concerning economic growth and future development. Amid its modernization drive focused on high-quality growth, where will the country find the initial impetus?

Herein lies the importance of the "new productive forces." They represent a winning formula for the world's second-largest economy, bidding farewell to the heavy resource input and massive energy consumption of their earlier iterations.

As for advancing sci-tech innovation, vital for China's high-quality development, the country has put in place systematic planning and provides industry players a sound environment for innovation.

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics show that China's total expenditure on research and development (R&D) grew by 10.1 percent year on year to over 3 trillion yuan (about 411 billion U.S. dollars) in 2022, with 84 percent of this growth coming from enterprises. The country also tops the world in the total number of R&D personnel. Its total of papers published in the most influential journals across various disciplines ranked first worldwide for the first time last year, surpassing that of the United States, according to the Institute of Scientific and Technical Information of China.

Joining the ranks of the world's innovators, China moved up to the 11th spot in the Global Innovation Index 2022 released by the World Intellectual Property Organization, marking an impressive climb of 23 places from its 2012 ranking.

With increasing investment in science and technology, strengthened legal protection of intellectual property rights, and a pro-innovation environment, China has made strides in core technologies in key fields and boosted emerging strategic industries.

Yet for all the technological progress, humans remain the primary factor behind productive forces. Forming new productive forces will optimize and upgrade human resources as China's talent dividend is in the making.

New industries brought by new technologies are the latest engines driving the current global economy, where we can find new productive forces. These key engines, including lithium batteries, photovoltaic power and new energy vehicles, were themselves once called "industries of the future."

Given that China faces a tech blockade from the United States, which is keen to maintain its hegemony, developing new productive forces can also be seen as an effective move to foil the politicized plot to squeeze and stymie China's high-tech sector development and bully China's hi-tech businesses, especially in a world of rising protectionism and trade fragmentation.

China cannot develop in isolation from the rest of the world, nor can the world maintain development, prosperity and stability without China. New productive forces will undoubtedly drive China's long-term development toward national rejuvenation, while boosting the modernization of other countries in the process.

**RUPERT MURDOCH, WHOSE FOX NEWS MADE HIM A  
 FORCE IN AMERICAN POLITICS, IS STEPPING DOWN**

**THE  
 BUZZ**

Rupert Murdoch, the 92-year-old Australian media magnate whose creation of Fox News made him a force in American politics, is stepping down as leader of both Fox's parent company and his News Corp. media holdings.

Fox said yesterday that Murdoch would become chairman emeritus of both companies, effective at board meetings in November. His son, Lachlan, will become News Corp. chairman and continue as chief executive officer of Fox Corp.

Lachlan Murdoch said that "we are grateful that he will serve as chairman emeritus and know he will continue to provide valued counsel to both companies."

Besides Fox News, Murdoch started the Fox broadcast network, the first to successfully challenge the Big Three of ABC, CBS and NBC, with shows like "The Simpsons." He is owner of The Wall Street Journal and the New York Post.

He slimmed down his corporate holdings with the 2019 sale of many entertainment assets to the Walt Disney Co. These included film production, rights to the Marvel comics, National Geographic and the cable network FX.

Fox News Channel has profoundly influenced television and the nation's politics since its start in 1996, making Murdoch a hero to some and pariah to others.



**UNGA BRIEFING**

**PERMANENT OBSERVERS,  
 MORE SECURITY COUNCIL  
 AND WHAT ELSE IS GOING  
 ON AT THE UN**

**I**T'S Day 3 of the U.N. General Assembly high-level meeting that brings world leaders together at U.N. headquarters in New York. Here are the highlights of what happened Wednesday at the U.N. and what to keep an eye today [Macau time]. Follow our live updates to keep up with developments all week.

**WHAT HAPPENED AT  
 THE UN GENERAL  
 ASSEMBLY ON DAY 2**

— All eyes were on the Security Council's meeting on Ukraine for possible fireworks when Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov crossed paths. But then they didn't.

— At the Climate Ambition Summit, U.S. climate envoy John Kerry wasn't permitted to speak. But at least one American was: California Gov. Gavin Newsom.

— On the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly, U.S. President Joe Biden held highly anticipated bilateral meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

— With two days of speeches

under the General Debate's belt, is any one specific storyline emerging?

— Speech count: 40

**WHAT TO EXPECT  
 ON DAY 3**

— Key speeches: Rashad al-Alimi, head of Yemen's internationally recognized government; Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe; Kenyan President William Ruto; China's vice president Han Zheng; Abdel-Fattah Burhan, Sudan's military leader and chair of its ruling Sovereign Council.

— Burhan's speech comes on the heels of last week's resignation of the U.N. envoy in Sudan, Volker Perthes. At least 5,000 people have been killed and more than 12,000 others wounded since simmering tensions between Burhan's military forces and the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support Forces exploded into open warfare, according to Perthes, who said the actual casualty toll is likely much higher.

— We'll hear from two of the three permanent observers invited to speak to the General Assembly: the European Union, represented by Charles Michel, and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. Last year,

Abbas had the longest speech of the week.

— The U.N. Security Council is also scheduled to meet on two topics. On the agenda: a continuance of the meeting on Ukraine, as well as a separate meeting on Nagorno-Karabakh.

— A few hundred miles away, U.S. President Joe Biden and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will meet at the White House. Zelenskyy is also expected on Capitol Hill.

— The General Debate will reach its halfway mark by the end of Thursday, increasing the likelihood we'll start to see some exercises of the right of reply.

**QUOTABLE**

"It is a relationship of equals."

— Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, characterizing his country's dynamic with the United States during a meeting with U.S. President Joe Biden on workers' rights.

**NUMBER OF THE DAY**

22 billion: Metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions the world has to cut in the next seven years to reach the climate-fighting goal, per Sultan Al Jaber, who will run the upcoming MDT/AP



**Russian** missiles and artillery pounded cities across Ukraine yesterday, sparking fires, killing at least three people and trapping others under the rubble of destroyed buildings, authorities said. The early-morning wave of missile strikes on what's known as the International Day of Peace was Russia's largest in over a month, and came as world leaders meet at United Nations General Assembly in New York. In a speech there, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy denounced Russia as "a terrorist state."



**Poland's** prime minister said his country is no longer sending arms to Ukraine, a comment that appeared aimed at pressuring Kyiv and put Poland's status as a major source of military equipment in doubt as a trade dispute between the neighboring states escalates. Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said in an interview that Poland is no longer transferring weapons to Ukraine. He made the comment as his populist party faces pressure from a far-right party in a national election on Oct. 15.



**Congo's** president wants the world's second largest United Nations peacekeeping force to move up its departure from the country, starting this December, saying it has failed to rein in conflicts in the country's east. President Felix-Antoine Tshisekedi in an address to the annual United Nations gathering of world leaders on Wednesday accused the 17,000-strong peacekeeping mission of being unable to confront the conflicts in eastern Congo that are "tearing apart" the central African nation.