



N.º 4338

TUESDAY
26 Sep 2023

T. 27°/ 32°

Air Quality Moderate

“THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’”

MOP 8.00
HKD 10.00

2305 4271

THE MACAU NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD PROJECT FOR MACAU BUYERS WILL STRIVE FOR A MINIMUM LOAN-TO-VALUE RATIO OF 80% FOR RESIDENTIAL UNITS

P3

591 ONLINE, PHONE SCAMS RECORDED BY PJ IN 1H, MOP95 MILLION IN LOSSES

P4

THAILAND RECEIVES FIRST CHINESE VISITORS UNDER NEW VISA-FREE POLICY

P6



AP PHOTO



Syria U.S.-backed Kurdish-led forces imposed a curfew after clashes erupted again yesterday in eastern Syria, where their fighters had battled for weeks with rival Arab militiamen, Syrian media and activists reported. The fighting in a region where hundreds of American troops are deployed has pointed to dangerous seams in a coalition that has kept on a lid on the defeated Islamic State group for years.

AP PHOTO



Ukraine A Russian drone and missile strike near Odesa damaged infrastructure, a grain silo and an abandoned hotel and injured one person in the Black Sea port city as attacks elsewhere in Ukraine killed five civilians and wounded 13 in the past day, Ukrainian officials said yesterday. Ukraine's air force reported downing all Russian drones launched overnight, but one of 12 Kalibr missiles and two P-800 Oniks cruise missiles apparently made it past air defenses the day after the war in Ukraine entered its 20th month.

AP PHOTO



Armenia Thousands streamed out of Nagorno-Karabakh after the Azerbaijani military reclaimed full control of the breakaway region while Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited Azerbaijan yesterday in a show of support to its ally. The Azerbaijani military routed Armenian forces in a 24-hour blitz last week, forcing the separatist authorities to agree to lay down weapons and start talks on Nagorno-Karabakh's "reintegration" into Azerbaijan after three decades of separatist rule.

More on backpage

GOLDEN FIGURES

MGM eyes record-breaking figures in upcoming Golden Week as investment continues in arts and culture amid clientele shift – as Iwan Dietschi told the Times



LYNZY VALLES

HANGZHOU ASIAN GAMES

MACAU MARTIAL ARTS ATHLETE LI YI SECURES GOLD MEDAL

XINHUA



P3

EVENTS

FIRST PEDESTRIANIZED 'HAPPINESS STREET' TO OPEN FRIDAY

P3

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

MGM EYES RECORD BREAKING FIGURES IN UPCOMING GOLDEN WEEK AS INVESTMENT CONTINUES IN ARTS AND CULTURE

LYNZY VALLES

MGM Macau has its focus on art and culture after promising the government to help diversify the local economy by investing in non-gambling attractions.

The company has announced new plans to expand its space to achieve this at its two properties in town, doubling down on investments.

With the sustained growth in the casino and tourism sector, the gaming operator anticipates robust bookings and increased foot traffic in the upcoming Golden Week.

"We have been in a very good position since the reopening and we're doing extremely well. I think the trend will continue to strengthen," said Iwan Dietschi, senior vice president of hospitality at MGM Macau.

"We're on the right track to establishing a reputation for the extraordinary here in Macau," he added.

Speaking at a recent opening of a high-end jewelry exhibition at MGM Macau, the executive has expressed optimism for the hospitality sector, adding the upcoming seven-day holidays are set to break post-pandemic records as it is the first holiday of its kind in four years where customers can attend without restrictions.

Local tourism authorities are forecasting an average of 100,000 visitors a day during the upcoming National Day Golden Week, with hotel occupancy rate projected to reach 90%.



Catarina Lio and Iwan Dietschi

jected to reach 90%.

"We are very confident that we can bring the extraordinary to Macau," he added.

Meanwhile Catarina Lio, senior vice president of Brand Marketing for the gaming operator, added that with the development of the market, the trend now among tourists is to "look for a different type of experience."

"The market [has changed] a lot. It has certainly changed compared to 10 years before. People are coming and they really want to create their own individual experience," said Lio.

In terms of meetings, concerts and shows, Lio is confident with what the gaming operator can offer.

Following the revamp scheduled to conclude in the third

"We're on the right track to establishing a reputation for the extraordinary here in Macau

IWAN DIETSCHI
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF HOSPITALITY AT MGM MACAU

quarter of next year, Lio believes the gaming operator is poised to create the ideal environment and meet evolving market needs.

60,000 square feet of space at MGM Macau is currently under transformation into a completely novel multimedia space for meetings, incentives and conferences. The revamped area will be capable of hosting performances, fashion shows and art exhibitions, among other events of a similar scale.

CLIENTELE SHIFT

Recent research from travel agency giant Ctrip shows that Macau was among the most popular destinations for Chinese outbound travel.

While this trend is predicted to last, there is also a change in demographics.

Just recently, Pansy Ho, chairperson and executive director of MGM China Holdings Limited, spoke at a tourism expo and observed that visitors are increas-

gly coming for shopping, diverse dining experiences and other forms of entertainment – unlike in the past where the primary reason for visiting was gambling.

When asked by the Times about MGM's readiness to accommodate such clientele amid this shift, Dietschi remarked, "We understand that obviously the demographics change, and we have a lot of opportunities. There are things that MGM have done already to attract certain types of clientele."

"We've had the opportunity to position ourselves as the hotel catering for a wide audience. Everything that we do has a clear purpose and targets certain clientele - we're aiming for the crème de la crème," he added.

Macau has endured some of the world's strictest anti-virus controls for nearly three years, and a relaxation of border restrictions after China rolled back its "zero-Covid" strategy was widely expected to boost its tourism-driven economy.

Government data shows that visitor arrivals in Macau totaled 17.63 million in the first eight months of 2023, representing a surge of over 360% compared to the same period last year.

Whether the city is able to sustain such growth remains a question, as after the upcoming Golden Week, the next Chinese holidays will be the Lunar New Year.

Gaming analysts have already lowered expectations for September, following post-pandemic record highs in gaming and in tourist arrivals achieved in August.

BUCCELLATI EXHIBITION OPENS AT MGM MACAU

THE Buccellati exhibition titled "Timeless Beauty with Century-Old Craftsmanship" was inaugurated at MGM Macau, which provides Macau and the whole Greater Bay Area consumers with a firsthand experience of Buccellati's unique Italian style and extraordinary craftsmanship.

This exhibition showcases the craftsmanship that Buccellati is renowned

for, while it marks the first appearance of the "Capri" collection in Asia, alongside the classic collections of "Macri", "Opera Tulle", "Hawaii", and more.

A live demonstration of the conventional Rigato carving technique by Buccellati artisans is also featured.

Andrea Buccellati said, "By opening the boutique at MGM MACAU and un-

veiling the Buccellati art appreciation exhibition, we hope to provide Macau and the whole Greater Bay Area consumers with a firsthand experience of Buccellati's unique Italian style and extraordinary craftsmanship."

In addition to the brand's iconic jewelry collections such as Opera Tulle, Macri, and Tulle, the boutique will also display the popular

Macri and Tulle watch collections, as well as selected pieces from the brand's new Mosaico high jewelry collection unveiled during this year's Paris Haute Couture Week.

The "Timeless Beauty with Century-Old Craftsmanship" art appreciation exhibition by Buccellati is held at the Grande Praça in MGM Macau from September 24 to October 8. LV



Pansy Ho and Andrea Buccellati

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

REACHING OUT!

+25,000

Like us on facebook.com/mdtimes



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

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

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

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

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

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

Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com

For subscription and general issues:

general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

ANTHONY LAM

LOCAL martial arts athlete Li Yi yesterday secured a gold medal in the Changquan event at the Asian Games in Hangzhou, China.

The medal is the first gold received by a Macau athlete in this year's Games, and the third in Macau's history.

In a post-match interview with local media outlet Happy Macao – Macau Sports Channel, Lei openly expressed her joy and excitement. Getting a gold medal is extraordinarily difficult, the athlete said, "because each athlete only has a chance at the final." She suggested that complete concentration is vital to winning the match.

The preparatory period was tough, she said, adding that she has faced significant stress. "I didn't sleep well for about half-a-year," she told the media. "[There was a period where] whenever I imagined the match scenes, my heart would pound fast. I even went to the hospital to check that I was all right."

She added that she became so nervous during the preparatory period but was happy that she

Martial arts athlete Li Yi secures gold medal at Asian Games

saw it through.

Looking ahead, Lei said that although her Asian Games journey began positively, her training will be ongoing as "there are two other matches coming up."

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng issued a statement to congratulate the athlete on her achievement, expressing his delight in Li Yi promoting Chinese sportsmanship and bringing honor to the Macau Special Administrative Region (SAR).

"On behalf of the SAR government and the people in Macau, I hereby express the most resounding congratulations to Li Yi, the team of coaches and the SAR Sport Delegation," Ho said. "I also warmly greet and encourage all members of the SAR Sport Delegation who are bravely striving for positive results at the Asian Games."

XINHUA



FIRST PEDESTRIANIZED 'HAPPINESS STREET' TO OPEN THIS FRIDAY

THE iconic Rua da Felicidade, colloquially known as "Happiness Street", in central Macau will be pedestrianized this Friday despite concerns over the rapid implementation of the project.

The idea was first announced during a Cultural Development Committee plenary meeting and subsequent press conference on July 25.

Officially referred to as Rua da Felicidade and colloquially called 'Happiness Street' by English speakers due to its meaning in Portuguese, the popular street among tourists has undergone a transformation prior to the project's commencement. The pedestrianization will also be extended to Travessa do Mastro, Travessa do Aterro Novo, Rua do Matapau and Travessa de Ho Lo Quai.

Friday will serve as a pilot phase for the project, with the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) expressing hopes that the pedestrianization will eventually become permanent.

At the press conference in July, director of Culture Leong Wai Man was asked if the project will create additional pressure on traffic near the pedestrianized streets and alleys. The cul-



ture official expressed confidence that it would not, citing Transport Bureau (DSAT) data.

The DSAT had announced the permanent closure of the opening from Avenida de Amizade to the Sewage Treatment Plant on June 22, citing its previous analysis in support of the viability of such a closure. However, the permanent closure only lasted for around 14 hours.

Less than a month after the project's initial contemplation, the exact date for the pilot trial – September 29 – was announced.

This Friday, building façades and the neighborhood surroundings will be decorated for the event. Motor traffic will be barred on the streets and alleys from 11am on Friday to 1am on Saturday. Pop-up exhibitions and performances will also be staged.

Two neighborhood leaders told local media outlet Macao Daily News that businesses in the neighborhood "are ready to embrace the new event," and they believe that the project "shall bring in more visitors and hence customers." **AL**

HOUSING

MACAU NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD AIMS TO ACHIEVE 80% MORTGAGE RATIO AT LEAST

THE Macau New Neighbourhood (MNN) project for Macau buyers will strive for a minimum loan-to-value ratio of 80% for residential units, Macau Urban Renewal Limited (MUR) said in a statement.

According to the statement, the project "has entered the key stage of inspection, as landscaping and road works are currently being carried out."

It is expected that the project will pass inspection this month, the company added.

The project is located on Zhuhai's Hengqin and is designed to cater to Macau residents.

The MUR stated that it had collected opinions

from Macau residents regarding their motivation and interest in owning units at the MNN project. The MUR said that the data was collected "through multiple platforms including online and offline."

With 88% of respondents expressing the need for mortgage arrangements, the MUR underlined that it has been actively engaging with relevant financial institutions to propose a maximum loan-to-value ratio of at least 80% for MNN residential units for Macau residents.

Respondents also raised concerns about essential amenities within the project, so the MUR pledged to attract more catering brands to the 5,000 sqm.

commercial space, and prepare for the inclusion of education facilities.

An online application platform will launch soon. A shuttle bus service between Hengqin Border and the MNN project will also be in operation. Over 4,000 parking spaces have also been built, and the MUR hopes to offer full furnishing options when the units are sold.

In accordance with the laws and policies, completed homes can be put up for sale once the relevant departments in Hengqin have completed the necessary reporting and registration processes, which are part of the approval process, the MUR explained. **AL**



CRIME

591 ONLINE, PHONE SCAMS RECORDED IN 1H, MOP95 MILLION IN LOSSES

RENATO MARQUES

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) has recorded a total of 591 online and phone scams during the first half (1H) of this year, resulting in losses totaling about MOP95 million, the PJ disclosed to local broadcaster TDM.

According to the data collected by the PJ, there were 155 reports of phone scams and 436 reports of online scams between January and June.

PJ also noted that a large number of the cases involved scammers impersonating government department officials including the police, customs, and other judicial authorities from Macau or the mainland.

According to the Head of the Anti-Fraud Coordination Center of the PJ, Cheong Un Hong, in an interview with TDM, there were recent reports of even more concerning cases. In these cases, the



victims were manipulated to contribute more broadly to the scam and involve additional victims.

In some instances, victims were asked to print fake detention orders and to deliver them to people who were being targeted by the crime ring, becoming accomplices to the crime.

According to the PJ, victims said that they were pressured to

carry out such tasks as part of scam investigations and to avoid being implicated in alleged offences initially attributed to them by individuals posing as mainland authorities.

The most recent online fraud cause, as reported yesterday by the Times, involved 28 individuals who were involved in a scam related to online investments by a group of people that included five local insurance agents.

According to PJ, online investment frauds currently surpass all other types of fraud in terms of financial impact.

This has been attributed not only to the lack of knowledge among the general population, but also the apprehension felt by both locals and non-locals regarding mainland authorities. In consequence, victims are readily persuaded to comply with the demands of fraudsters unquestioningly.

HOTEL ESTORIL MURAL BEING REMOVED, IC PLEDGES FUTURE DISPLAY AT NEW LIBRARY

THE mural on the façade of the former Hotel Estoril building is being removed, with the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) pledging to display it permanently at the new Central Library.

The mural's relocation was announced following confirmation of the design for the new library.

The mural is now covered by bamboo scaffolding and camouflage.

According to a statement from the IC, "a series of inspection, sampling and tests" are being conducted on the mural. It will be completely removed and restored once a suitable method is determined.

The IC said that the mural will be inspected with thermal imaging, surface temperature and humidity checks and other techniques, while the overall condition of the mosaic mural will be inspected

and recorded in detail.


Further examination will be conducted to determine the craftsmanship of the mural to establish a suitable method for restoration.

Moreover, it promised that the mural will be displayed indoors at the new library to "better function as a link between the past and the future."

The same statement noted that the mural is at least 60 years old, rendering it fragile and in poor condition as a consequence of sustaining weathering over time. In addition, the mosaic mural is missing substantial areas in its upper, left, and lower sections, while cracks and missing tiles are seen in other parts.

Previously, advocates had attempted to convince the government to restore the mural on site to foster a better connection between the public and the work. **AL**

AD

 澳門國際機場專營股份有限公司 -Soc. do Aeroporto Internacional de Macau S.A.R.L. Macau International Airport Co. Ltd.	
Open Tender Notice	
1. Company:	CAM – Macau International Airport Co. Ltd.
2. Scope of Services:	Provision of Management and Maintenance Services of the Installation, Systems and Equipment owned by Macau International Airport Co. Ltd Pavements and Associated Systems (RFP/E&M/02/23)
3. Request for Tender Document:	The interested Bidders shall call the Senior Secretary of the Engineering and Maintenance Branch (E&M) of the Airport Operations Department of CAM at (853) 88982386 and collect the tender document at the following location until 27 September 2023 before 13:00 (Macau Local Time). <u>Location for collecting the tender document</u> CAM – Macau International Airport Co. Ltd. Macau International Airport Engineering and Maintenance Branch E&M Building 1st Floor, Office 41019 Taipa, Macau For any enquiry regarding the Tender Procedure, please reach our Engineering and Maintenance Branch at (853) 88982386.
4. Location for Submission of Proposals:	CAM – Macau International Airport Co. Ltd. Av. De Wai Long CAM Office Building, 4 th Floor Reception Taipa, Macau Attention: Mr. Chu Tan Neng – Executive Director
5. Tender closing time and date:	At 12:00 (noon) on 25 October 2023 (Macau Local Time)
CAM reserves the right to reject any Proposal in whole or in part without stating any reason.	

TIS HOSTS UNIVERSITY FAIR WITH 92 UNIVERSITIES REPRESENTED

RENATO MARQUES

THE International School of Macao (TIS) yesterday hosted its annual University Fair, marking the 12th consecutive year of the event. This year's fair featured a total of 92 well-known universities from around the world, and represents the resumption of the event in-person after three years of disruption due to Covid-19-related restrictions.

The event attracted over 500 attendees, including students from local high schools and other schools in the Greater Bay Area.

At the start of the event, the TIS High School Vice-Principal, Ryan Connolly delivered a speech emphasizing the fair's importance in providing students with comprehensive and essential information to support their higher education aspirations.

The event also allows students to gain insights into university application procedures, degree course information, scholarship applications, visa information, details on campus life, and other critical aspects relevant to applying to their preferred universities.

This year's fair showcased universities from the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Spain, France, and Switzerland, as well as the mainland, Hong Kong and Macau. Among the participating institutions were more than a dozen of the world's top 100 universities, such as the University of Toronto, the Arts University Bournemouth, the University of Sydney, and Bard College in the United States.

Macau universities were also among the represented institutions.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

WYNN has been persistently introducing global sports events to Macao in support of the SAR Government's "tourism +" policy and is dedicated to contributing to the city's economic diversification. By hosting various sports tournaments and exchange activities, Wynn hopes to deepen cross-industry cooperation and support the introduction of more international sports events to Macao. Wynn also continues to provide uplifting sports training opportunities for local young people in a bid to develop a sports industrial chain with local characteristics.

SNOOKER MASTERS GATHERS WORLD ELITE PLAYERS TO PROMOTE MACAO AS A CITY OF GLOBAL SPORTS EVENTS

Wynn Resorts (Macau) S.A. is proud to present the "2023 Macau Snooker Masters" to be held in Wynn Palace's Meeting Rooms from December 25 to 29 with the support of the Sports Bureau of the Macao SAR, overseen by StarMac Entertainment & Production Limited, and co-organized by the Macao Billiards General Association and Sailing Up Sports. Eight world elite snooker players will compete in this event for the championship prize money of GBP 150,000. The competitors are none other than Ronnie O'Sullivan, a seven-time World Snooker Championship winner; Ding Jun Hui, the first Asian player to top the world snooker ranking; Marco Fu, a Hong Kong player recognized as a Global Outstanding Chinese Youth; Judd Trump; Jack Lisowski; Mark Williams; Kyren Wilson; and Si Jia Hui.

The "Snooker Masters" underscores Wynn's commitment to introducing and hosting more top-tier sports events in Macao to further cultivate a sports industry infused with local characteristics. In addition to inviting local residents and international tourists to experience the culture and appeal of Macao as a city of global sports events, which realizes the integrated development of tourism and leisure sports industries, the event also enriches the city as a World Center of Tourism and Leisure and enhances its international image.

3X3 WORLD TOUR AND GREATER BAY AREA TOURNAMENT HELD IN MACAO TO ELEVATE SPORTS INDUSTRY

To support the development of signature sports events with regional characteristics, boost the diversification of Macao's sports tourism and strengthen sports exchange in the Greater Bay Area, this year Wynn will once again sponsor the '3x3 Greater Bay Area Basketball Tournament' jointly organized by the Sports Bureau and StarMac Entertainment & Production Limited. The tournament this year will only take place in Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hengqin and Macao with the finals to be staged

Wynn Organizes International Sports Events to Bolster Macao's Development of "Sports + Tourism"



Five world elite snooker players discussing their preparation for the competition at the press conference



World Snooker Championship winner Ronnie O'Sullivan showcasing his world-class skills

at the World Heritage attraction Ruins of St. Paul's between 25 and 29 October, definitely showcasing the vitality and excitement of street basketball toward residents and tourists.

In addition, Wynn has title sponsored the FIBA 3X3 World Tour Macau Masters 2023 held once again in Wynn Palace. This master tournament was organized by the Sports Bureau of the Macao SAR and StarMac Entertainment & Production Limited, co-organized by the Macao-China Basketball Association and Absolute 3X3 Basketball Ltd., and title-sponsored by Wynn Resorts (Macau) S.A. As a

world-level 3x3 basketball tournament initiated by FIBA (International Basketball Federation) and the pinnacle event with the highest-ranking points in the network of FIBA tournaments, the FIBA 3X3 World Tour always attracts attention from media and basketball professionals worldwide. Through hosting the tournament, the organizers hope to strengthen international sports and cultural exchange and introduce worldwide spectators to the vibrant atmosphere of sports events and the rich array of sports elements in Macao, thus further propelling the growth of the local sports industry.

The two-day tournament featured heated games among 14 top-class basketball teams from around the world and reached a crescendo with Ub Huishan NE being crowned champion. The event was complemented with the professional Slam Dunk Contest and the Three-Point Shootout, where former NBA legend Stephon Marbury and former CBA player Ma Jian were invited to rally the crowd and spice up the atmosphere. Wynn hopes to create tourism synergy and attract overseas visitors to join the event and go sightseeing in Macao, thus propelling the development model of sports tourism.

Wynn specially arranged two school outreach activities at Colégio Diocesano de São José 6ª and Hou Kong Middle School, where members from the two top teams Marseille FRA and Ub Huishan NE SRB gave one-on-one guidance and played 3x3 friendly matches with the students. Moreover, the students were also given an introduction to the history and international tournament rules of 3x3 basketball, helping them gain a better understanding of this exciting sport. With the support of the Macao China Physical Teacher Association, Wynn arranged for students from Keang Peng Middle School and Sacred Heart Canosian College (English Session) to take outdoor sports classes at the competition venue at Wynn Palace and enjoy an unusual sports experience, in a bid to promote sport for all and propel the growth of the sports industry.

Wynn even went on to organize lively community outreach activities with games and demonstrations hosted by Meng Duo, the famed basketball player known as the "Wade of China," a former captain of the Chinese men's basketball national team and a CBA basketball player for 15 years, and FeicaiFC, a basketball KOL with 5 million subscribers. Members from Macau Special Olympics and The Salvation Army (Macao) were also invited to participate in the interactive outreach session and experience the passion and excitement of 3x3 basketball together with the players and members of the public, promoting public engagement in 3x3 basketball and social inclusion.



Piotr Grabowski crowned champion in the Slam Dunk Contest



World professional player giving one-on-one coaching to students



14 top basketball teams from around the world locked in energetic competition

TOURISM

THAILAND RECEIVES THE FIRST CHINESE VISITORS UNDER A NEW VISA-FREE POLICY

JINTAMAS SAKSORNCHAI, BANGKOK

TOP Thai officials welcomed hundreds of Chinese tourists at Bangkok's international airport yesterday, the first day of a new visa-free entry program that officials say will boost the country's tourism industry that was badly damaged by the coronavirus pandemic.

Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin handed out gifts and posed for pictures as his tourism minister and other VIPs greeted about 300 travelers from Shanghai. The surprised tourists were entertained by Thai traditional dancers and drummers inside the arrivals area at Suvarnabhumi Airport.

"We are confident that this policy will greatly boost the economy," Srettha told reporters. He said that the government plans to promote Thailand's smaller cities as destinations for Chinese tourists to encourage them to stay longer and spend more.

Addressing safety concerns among tourists, Srettha said it was the top priority of the authorities. There have been reports and rumors widely circulating on Chinese social media about fraud and kidnapping in Thailand.



AP PHOTO

A tourist from Shanghai, who identified himself only as Dai, said he was impressed with the "very lively" welcome ceremony at the airport, though he noted that the immigration officer who checked his passport did not immediately know about the temporary visa exemption policy. He said he plans to stay for two weeks and visit other cities besides Bangkok, including Chiang Mai and Phuket.

Peng Chunyu and Wan Yi, who arrived on the same flight, said it was a great policy for Thailand to allow visa-free entry for Chinese. The process was "very smooth," said Peng. The two will stay for nine days and said they look forward to seeing Bangkok's Grand Palace, Wat Arun temple and Chinatown.

The visa exemption, which also applies to visitors from the Central Asian nation of Kazakhstan, will be effective until Feb. 29. Tourism Minister Sudawan Wangsuphakkijkosol said there has been about a 30% surge in accommodation and flight bookings since the policy was announced.

China more than a decade ago became a major source of tourists to Thailand, with almost 11 million visitors in 2019, accounting for 27.6% of all arrivals that year before the pandemic devastated the tourist market.

The government proposed the visa exemption measure due to concern that the number of Chinese tourists might be lower than expected this year because of strict visa requirements. The target number of arrivals from China had been revised from 5 million to 3 million after a report from the state Tourism Authority of Thailand that around 1.4 million Chinese tourists came in the first six months.

Tourism Authority Director Thapanee Kiapthaibool said Monday that the authorities were confident the number of Chinese arrivals could hit 4 million-to-5 million after the visa-free program was introduced.

Thailand's economy slumped during the pandemic as its huge tourism industry virtually collapsed. The country received about 40 million visitors in 2019, and the government estimated they spent 1.9 trillion baht (\$53.2 billion) — an amount that plummeted by more than 99% by 2021, according to data from the Ministry of Tourism and Sports.

Chai Wacharonke, a spokesperson for the prime minister, earlier said that Thailand received 15 million international visitors in the first seven months. He said the government aims to draw 28 million tourists and generate 1.4 trillion baht (\$39.2 billion) in revenue in 2023.

The new restaurant encapsulates the essence of Jiangnan cuisine, infused with contemporary elements to reinvent classics to new heights.

Crafted by Executive Chef Wilson Fam, whose culinary expertise facilitates his creativity, signature dishes from Jiangsu and Zhejiang cuisine are the main highlight of the restaurant, supported by notable courses from Sichuan and Guangdong.

Highlighting exposure and experience throughout his culinary career of more than 20 years, Chef Fam is no stranger to the vast diversity of regional Chinese cuisines including Sichuan, Cantonese, Huaiyang, Jiangsu and Zhejiang. He continues to creatively infuse Western contemporary techniques into his Chinese cuisine.

TRADE

EU COMMISSIONER CALLS FOR MORE BALANCED TRADE WITH CHINA

THE European Union's trade commissioner called for a more balanced economic relationship with China yesterday, noting an EU trade deficit of nearly 400 billion euros (\$425 billion), while also warning that China's position on the war in Ukraine could endanger its relationship with Europe.

Valdis Dombrovskis, in a speech at China's prestigious Tsinghua University, said that the EU and China face significant political and economic headwinds that could cause them to drift apart.

"The strongest, yet not the only, headwind is Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and how China positions itself on this issue," he said.

Dombrovskis spoke before high-level economic and trade talks with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng. EU leaders have expressed concern about the bloc's growing trade deficit with China, which reached 396 billion euros last year. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen recently announced an investigation into Chinese subsidies to electric vehicle makers, saying a flood of cheaper Chinese cars is distorting the European market.

The Chinese government has called the investigation a protectionist act aimed at

distorting the supply chain. Dombrovskis, in his Tsinghua address, said the probe would follow well-established rules and be done in consultation with Chinese authorities and stakeholders.

The EU trade commissioner urged China to address the lack of reciprocity in the economic relationship, saying "the figures speak for themselves."

He said that China has created a more politicized business environment to protect its national security and development interests, resulting in less transparency, unequal access to procurement, and discriminatory standards and security requirements.

Dombrovskis cited as examples a new foreign relations law and an updated anti-espionage law that has European companies struggling to understand their compliance obligations.

"Their ambiguity allows too much room for interpretation," he said about the laws, adding they deter new investment in China.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said that China provides a market-oriented, law-based business environment for foreign companies.

"As long as the companies are operating in accordance with the law, they don't have to worry," he said. **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

The Mews at The Londoner opens



The Londoner Macao has announced the opening of The Mews, a Thai restaurant led by the creative chef Nongnuch "Nuch" Sae-eiw. Originally from Bangkok, Chef Nuch has worked for

Michelin starred and award-winning restaurants in Thailand.

"After months of preparation, I am so excited for diners to come and experience The Mews. The dishes

are in keeping with my philosophy of being true to my Thai heritage, while embracing my style which is imaginative and contemporary with high attention to detail," said Chef Nuch.

Tom Connolly, senior vice president of Food and Beverage Operations, Sands China Ltd., said, "The Mews is the latest addition to the outstanding selection of restaurants at The Londoner Macao and we believe that a restaurant offering Thai cuisine is a perfect complement to the other cuisines on offer. Chef Nuch and her team are presenting a refined menu that stays true to the flavours of Thailand, yet is also contemporary and innovative."

Wynn Palace presents new Jiangnan cuisine restaurant



Wynn Palace Cotai presents Lakeview Palace, the resort's brand new dining Jiangnan cuisine establishment, set to open on September 28.

The new restaurant encapsulates the essence of Jiang-

nan cuisine, infused with contemporary elements to reinvent classics to new heights.

Crafted by Executive Chef Wilson Fam, whose culinary expertise facilitates his crea-

tivity, signature dishes from Jiangsu and Zhejiang cuisine are the main highlight of the restaurant, supported by notable courses from Sichuan and Guangdong.

Highlighting exposure and experience throughout his culinary career of more than 20 years, Chef Fam is no stranger to the vast diversity of regional Chinese cuisines including Sichuan, Cantonese, Huaiyang, Jiangsu and Zhejiang. He continues to creatively infuse Western contemporary techniques into his Chinese cuisine.

With Chef Fam's ingenuity and innovation, guests can anticipate a new series of reinvented Jiangnan cuisine.

SOUTH CHINA SEA

Philippines vows to remove floating barrier placed by China's coast guard at a disputed lagoon

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

PHILIPPINE officials vowed yesterday to remove a floating barrier placed by China's coast guard to prevent Filipino fishing boats from entering a disputed lagoon in the South China Sea.

They said the 300-meter-long barrier at the entrance to the lagoon at Scarborough Shoal is "illegal and illegitimate." Chinese coast guard vessels laid the barrier, held up by buoys, on Friday as a Philippine government fisheries vessel approached. More than 50 Philippine fishing boats were outside the shoal at the time, the Philippine coast guard said.

"We condemn the installation of floating barriers by the Chinese coast guard," Philippine National Security Adviser Eduardo Ano said. "The placement by the People's Republic of China of a barrier violates the traditional fishing rights of our fishermen."

Ano said in a statement that the Philippines "will take all appropriate actions to cause the removal of the barriers and to protect the rights of our fishermen in the area." He did not elaborate.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said the shoal and its adjacent waters are "China's inherent territory," where Beijing "has indispu-



A Chinese coast guard ship approaches a Philippine supply boat (left) as it heads towards Second Thomas Shoal, locally known as Ayungin Shoal, at the disputed South China Sea, last Friday

table sovereignty."

A Philippine government fisheries vessel "trespassed into the waters" without China's permission on Sept. 22, Wang said, and "attempted to intrude into the lagoon" of the shoal. "China's coast guard took the necessary measures to stop and warn off the ship in accordance with the law, which was professional and with restraint," he added.

It's the latest flare-up in long-simmering territorial disputes in the busy and resource-rich wa-

terway, most of which is claimed by China. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei are involved with China in the conflicts, which have long been regarded as a potential Asian flashpoint and a delicate fault line in the U.S.-China rivalry in the region.

Washington lays no claim to the sea passageway, a major global trade route, but U.S. Navy ships and fighter jets have carried out patrols for decades to challenge China's expansive claims and promote freedom of

navigation and overflight. China has told the U.S. to stop meddling in what it says is a purely Asian dispute.

The Chinese barrier denies Filipinos access to the rich fishing lagoon surrounded by underwater coral outcrops, Philippine coast guard spokesperson Commodore Jay Tarriela said.

He said China's coast guard installs the removable barrier when Philippine fishing boats show up in large numbers near the shoal.

"It's an illegal and illegitimate action coming from the People's Republic of China," Tarriela told reporters. "Definitely it affects our food security."

A Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources ship which anchored off Scarborough on Friday and at least 54 Filipino fishing boats were ordered by four Chinese coast guard ships by radio to leave the territory, saying the Filipinos were breaching Chinese and international law. The Philippine fisheries ship insisted in its radio response that it was on a routine patrol in Philippine waters, Tarriela said.

The Philippines says Scarborough Shoal lies within its exclusive economic zone, a 200-nautical mile stretch of water where coastal states have exclusive rights to fish and other resources.

Those rights were upheld by a 2016 arbitration decision set up under the 1982 U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, Ano said.

China refused to participate in the arbitration sought by the Philippines in 2013, a year after a tense standoff between Chinese and Philippine ships at Scarborough. Beijing refused to recognize the 2016 arbitration ruling and continues to defy it.

The 2012 standoff ended with Chinese ships seizing and surrounding the atoll.

Chinese coast guard ships have also blocked Philippine government vessels delivering supplies and personnel to Philippine-occupied Second Thomas Shoal, resulting in near-collisions that the Philippine government has condemned and protested.

Washington has said it's obligated to defend the Philippines, its oldest treaty ally in Asia, if Filipino forces, ships and aircraft come under attack, including in the South China Sea. **MDT/AP**

HONG KONG

The chairman of city's leading journalist group found guilty of obstructing a police officer



THE chairman of Hong Kong's leading journalist group was found guilty of obstructing a police officer yesterday in a court case that sparked concerns about the city's declining press freedom.

Ronson Chan, chairman of the Hong Kong Journalists Association and a journalist of online news outlet Channel C, was arrested last September while he was on his way to a reporting assignment. He was accused of refusing to show the plainclothes officer his identity card upon request.

Chan's arrest fuelled concerns about the erosion of media freedom in Hong Kong after Beijing imposed a national security law to crush dissent following the city's massive pro-democracy protests in 2019.

Magistrate Leung Ka-kie yesterday ruled that Chan had deliberately obstructed the officer from carrying out her duty and failed to take out his identity card in a timely manner. He kept asking the officer questions "recklessly," she said.

He will be sentenced later and could face a maximum penalty of two years in prison.

Speaking to reporters before the hearing, Chan said he was calm.

"No matter how the outcome is, it's not the end of the day," he said.

In the crackdown following the 2019 protests, two vocal media outlets — Apple Daily and Stand News — have been forced to shut down and some of their top managers have been prosecuted. Two former top editors at Stand

News, where Chan used to work, were tried for sedition. A verdict is scheduled for November.

Pro-Beijing media outlets have attacked the association and Chan, calling the professional group an anti-China political tool in their reports.

Hong Kong, once seen as a bastion of media freedom in Asia, ranked 140th out of 180 countries and territories in Reporters Without Borders' latest World Press Freedom Index. The organization said the city saw an "unprecedented setback" since 2020, when the security law was imposed.

But Beijing and Hong Kong authorities said the law helped bring stability back to the city following the anti-government protests in 2019. **MDT/AP**

SOUTH PACIFIC

US establishes diplomatic ties with two island-nations as Biden hosts Pacific leaders

AAMER MADHANI,
WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Joe Biden is set to establish diplomatic relations today [Macau time] with two South Pacific nations, the Cook Islands and Niue, as his administration aims to show to Pacific Island leaders that it is committed to increasing American presence in the region.

The announcement comes as Biden prepares to welcome leaders to Washington for a two-day U.S.-Pacific Island Forum Summit expected to focus heavily on the impact of climate change.

Biden has put a premium on improving ties in the Pacific amid rising U.S. concern about China's growing military and economic influence. Plans for the diplomatic move were confirmed by two senior administration officials who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity before the formal announcement.

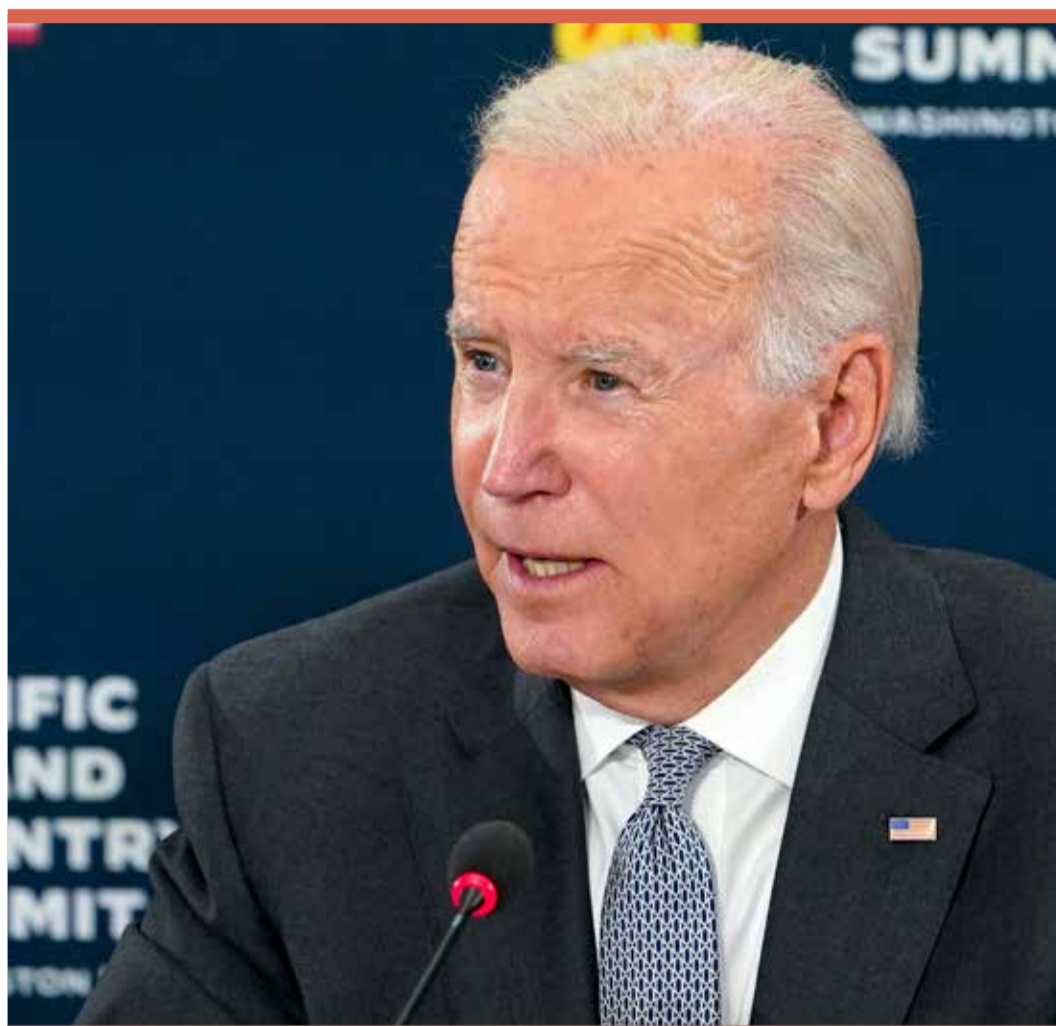
White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Biden would use the summit to strengthen "ties with the Pacific Islands and discuss how we address complex global challenges, like tackling the existential threat of climate change, advancing economic growth, and promoting sustainable development."

Some of the leaders attended an NFL game in Baltimore on Sunday and later planned to visit a U.S. Coast Guard cutter in the city's harbor for a briefing on combating illegal fishing and other maritime issues.

Pacific Island leaders have been critical of rich countries for not doing enough to control climate change despite being responsible for much of the problem, and for profiting from loans provided to vulnerable nations to mitigate the effects.

At last year's summit, the White House unveiled its Pacific strategy, an outline of its plan to assist the region's leaders on pressing issues like climate change, mariti-

AP PHOTO



me security and protecting the region from overfishing. The administration pledged the U.S. would add \$810 million in new aid for Pacific Island nations over the next decade, including \$130 million on efforts to stymie the impacts of climate change.

The forum includes Australia, the Cook Islands, Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Biden will welcome the leaders to the White House on Monday morning for talks and a working lunch. They also will meet on Monday with Biden's special envoy on climate, John Kerry, for talks focused on climate change. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.N. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield will host the leaders at the State Department for a dinner.

Kerry and Samantha Power, administrator of the U.S. Agency for Internatio-

nal Development, will host the leaders on Tuesday for climate talks with members of the philanthropic community. The leaders also plan to meet with members of Congress. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen will host a roundtable with the leaders and members of the business community.

Power last month travelled to Fiji to open a new USAID mission that will manage agency programs in nine Pacific Island countries: Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau. The U.S. this year has opened embassies in Solomon Islands and Tonga, and is on track to open an embassy in Vanuatu early next year.

The White House said most members of the 18-member forum were dispatching their top elected official or foreign minister to the summit.

But the administration was "very disappointed" that Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogava-

re, who was in New York last week for the U.N. General Assembly, opted not to stick around for the White House summit, according to an administration official. The Solomon Islands last year signed a security pact with China.

Prime Minister Meltek Sato Kilman Livtuvanu of Vanuatu also is expected to miss the summit. He was elected by lawmakers earlier this month to replace Ishmael Kalsakau, who lost a no-confidence vote in parliament.

Biden earlier this year had to cut short a planned visit to the Indo-Pacific, scrapping what was to be a historic stop in Papua New Guinea, as well as a visit to Australia for a gathering with fellow leaders of the so-called Quad partnership so he could focus on debt limit talks in Washington. He would have been the first sitting U.S. president to visit Papua New Guinea.

The U.S. president is set to honor Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese with a state visit next month. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1984 UK AND CHINA AGREE HONG KONG HANDOVER



Britain and China have finalised an agreement which will end more than 150 years of UK rule in Hong Kong.

The proposal - which will hand control of the colony to China in 1997 - creates an "island of capitalism" within a communist state.

In a ceremony at the Great Hall of People in Beijing the document was initialled by the UK ambassador to China, Sir Richard Evans, and the head of the Chinese negotiating team, Zhou Nan.

The British Government has been asked to give its approval to the treaty which ends two years of hard bargaining between the countries.

Under the accord, the Chinese authorities have agreed Hong Kong will maintain a high degree of local autonomy and keep power over its social, economic and legal systems.

But China will gain control of the city's defence and foreign affairs.

Britain, which has controlled the island of Hong Kong almost uninterrupted since 1842, has also persuaded the Chinese to leave the colony untouched for 50 years and provide a plan for its future.

'Blueprint'

Sir Richard said the joint declaration was "the practical embodiment of the imaginative concept of one country, two systems".

The Governor of the island, Sir Edward Youde, flew straight back from the ceremony to address a special meeting of the Hong Kong Legislative Council about the agreement.

"It constitutes a blueprint for a new stage in Hong Kong's development - as such I commend it to this council and to the community at large," he said.

The British Government has set up an assessment office to gauge the public response to the White Paper.

But although the people of Hong Kong can technically reject the proposals, the declaration makes it clear any other agreement may not go so far to protect their interests.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The agreement was finally signed in December 1984.

Control of the colony was handed over to the Chinese at midnight on 1 July 1997 after a spectacular ceremony.

Prince Charles and Chris Patten - the twenty-eighth and final governor of Hong Kong - left the island on the Royal Yacht Britannia.

They left a population with mixed feelings about the incoming regime and Hong Kong's Democratic Party already protesting against what it saw as the loss of democracy.

The Provisional Legislative Council, led by Tung Chee-hwa and picked by Beijing, was sworn in almost immediately after the handover, replacing the previous elected body.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 You can meet a new romantic partner or secure the love connection you already have by going out and entertaining yourself. Get together with people who stimulate you mentally.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 Don't second guess yourself, just go to it. You must avoid gossip and focus on what you have to do. Take the time to sort out your personal papers and double-check your financial investments.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 Romance appears. You can come up with future trends in creative fields. Deception regarding joint finances or investments will cause upsets between family members.

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Make plans to do something special with the one you love. You will be ready to jump on anyone who gets in the way of your progress today.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 You can complete any projects efficiently, especially if you put the effort in yourself. Personal problems may be hanging over your head but don't confront the situation.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 You really can't do anything to change matters today. Sign up for courses or join fitness clubs. Travel will promote romantic connections.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Do not be surprised if your partner doesn't understand your needs. Some of the best opportunities will crop up if you keep an open mind. You will tend to overeat today.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 You will reap the benefits if you put money into upgrading your residence. Your confidence will stabilize your position. You need to spend time with friends and family.

SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Direct your energy into physical exertion. Residential moves will be favorable. This is not the time to lend or borrow money or possessions. Misunderstandings could cause confusion and upset.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Loans will be attainable and legal matters easily taken care of. Uncertain changes regarding your personal life are evident. Find an outlet for any mounting frustration.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Don't get upset. You will be able to make favorable changes in your living quarters. Your involvement in groups will be favorable for meeting new and exciting individuals.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Social events should be the highlight of your day. Travel should be on your agenda. You would be wise to socialize with as many people as possible.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

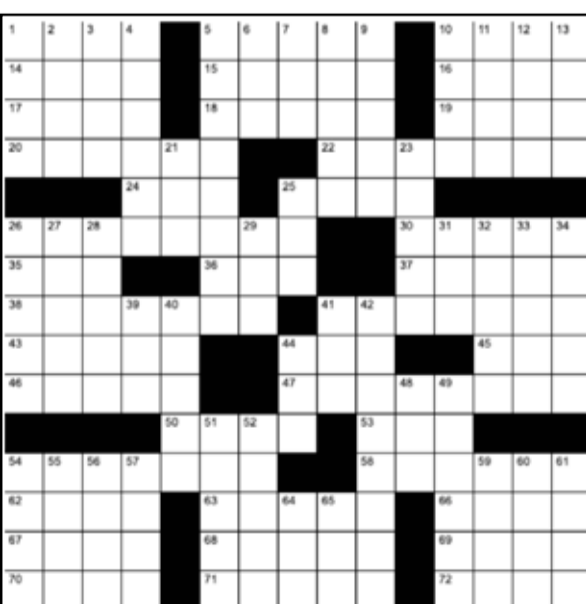
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	15	26	cloudy
Changchun	13	24	cloudy
Chengdu	18	22	overcast
Chongqing	20	24	overcast
Fuzhou	26	34	cloudy
Guangzhou	25	35	cloudy
Guiyang	20	28	cloudy
Haikou	24	28	rain
Hangzhou	23	31	cloudy
Harbin	14	22	cloudy
Hefei	18	25	overcast
Nanjing	20	27	cloudy
Shanghai	25	30	rain
Taipei	25	30	fine
Wuhan	20	28	cloudy
Hong Kong	28	32	fine
WORLD			
Moscow	7	19	overcast
Frankfurt	10	24	overcast
Paris	13	26	clear
London	12	23	rain
New York	12	17	rain

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Molecular component; 5- Remain; 10- Low in pitch; 14- Meadow mouse; 15- Sophia of the screen; 16- Official records; 17- Mild oath; 18- Representative; 19- Gusto; 20- Roe of sturgeon; 22- Convulsion; 24- Dot follower; 25- Submarine; 26- Medieval church; 30- Every other person, approximately; 35- Before; 36- Actor Beatty; 37- Coeur d'... ID; 38- Dizzying sensation; 41- Authorization; 43- Taken in; 44- Are we there ___?; 45- Tool of a fisherman; 46- Atty-to-be exams; 47- Furniture wood; 50- Charles Lamb's nom de plume; 53- Pasture used for grazing; 54- Premier player; 58- Establishes; 62- So long!; 63- Angry with; 66- Traditional passed-down knowledge; 67- National competitor; 68- Maker of Pong; 69- Victor's cry; 70- Change the decor; 71- Museum piece; 72- Lump of earth;

DOWN 1- Opposite of sans; 2- Garment of ancient Rome; 3- Norwegian saint; 4- Famed Florentine family; 5- Frightening; 6- Peat source; 7- Rage; 8- Compact; 9- Computer key; 10- Folk singer Joan; 11- Rights org.; 12- Toronto paper; 13- All there; 21- "You've got mail" co.; 23- Herbert Hoover, for one; 25- Taken in; 26- Miter joint; 27- Zones; 28- Simmons rival; 29- Boardroom bigwig; 31- On in years; 32- Funny Anne; 33- Composer Bruckner; 34- Wanting; 39- Hanoi holiday; 40- Atlas feature; 41- Give ___ break!; 42- Physically active; 44- Peruvian singer Sumac; 48- Done, to Donne; 49- Irish tongue; 51- Truman's birthplace; 52- Beside oneself; 54- Rent-___; 55- As it happens; 56- Put down; 57- Indifferent; 59- Monk's hood; 60- Small combo; 61- Convey; 64- Indian dish; 65- Uris hero;



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



It's prime time to BUY & RENT!

jml property

CONTACT US & SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY!

hello@jmlproperty.com
 www.jmlproperty.com

f jmlmacau @jmlproperty

Va Fat
 HKD 3,980,000 2 bed 1 bath

Nam Long (Old Taipa)
 HKD 9,500/mth 1 2 beds 1 bath

Coloane Village
 HKD 10,500/mth 1 bed 1 bath

AD

AP PHOTO



Fashion designer and owner of the Marco Simone Golf Club Lavinia Biagiotti Cigna

GOLF, FASHION AND ARCHEOLOGY

A LOOK INSIDE THE WALLS OF THE 11TH-CENTURY MARCO SIMONE CASTLE

ANDREW DAMPF, GUIDONIA MONTECELIO

FIRST came the castle. Then the golf course.

The nearly 300,000 fans descending on the Marco Simone club for the Ryder Cup this week will be able to see the 11th-century castle with the same name from various points of the course — it's wedged between the sixth and eighth holes and has a big Italian flag waving from its tower — but they won't be able to visit it.

That's because it's the private residence of fashion designer Lavinia Biagiotti Cigna, who owns and runs the golf club.

Biagiotti Cigna's parents bought the castle in 1978 — the year she was born — and then decided to build the surrounding golf course.

While the golf course recently underwent an 11 million euro (\$12 million) complete restyling in order to host the sport's biggest team event, keeping up a 1,000-year-old castle is a job that never ends.

"I don't really feel like I own this place. I really feel I'm taking care of this place," Biagiotti Cigna said in a recent

interview with The Associated Press inside the castle walls. "That's the attitude I have. So I really have to make a lot of maintenance because there are layers and layers of history."

The castle, which is accessed by passing through a series of three different security gates, contains about 50 rooms, many of which feature Renaissance-era frescoes. It was named Marco Simone for the son of a 15th-century owner, Simone dei Tebaldi, who oversaw a massive restoration after centuries of invasions.

Astronomer Galileo Galilei once lived in the castle, and there are remains of prehistoric fossils that date back 300,000 years in the dungeon.

A second-floor office is the room that holds the most sentimental value to Biagiotti Cigna.

"This was my mom's original studio where she created most of her collections," Biagiotti Cigna said as she sat in front of a portrait of her late mother. "She was making sketches sitting right here where I am right now. I used to do my homework in that corner right there. This is really the place where everything began."

Biagiotti Cigna's grandmother, Delia, started the fashion house in the 1960s as a dress-maker.

"Unfortunately, she lost her father when she was only 14, and that was 1928. So she started to work to support the family," Biagiotti Cigna said. "She was one of the very first women to become a manager in 1950s Rome."

In 1964, Delia Soldaini Biagiotti became famous when she designed the uniforms for Alitalia's cabin crew.

Laura Biagiotti, Delia's daughter and Lavinia's mother, was studying archeology in college when the family business started expanding. So she shifted her focus to fashion and eventually developed Laura Biagiotti into an international brand.

"She was the first Italian designer ever to hold a fashion show in China, in 1988 — that was really early," Biagiotti Cigna said of her mother. "And I'm the third generation. It's great to carry on this legacy. It's an Italian story with three leading women."

So perhaps it's not surprising that Biagiotti Cigna hired a female superintendent — a rarity in the golf world — to

oversee her course. Lara Arias, a 33-year-old Spaniard, is breaking a gender barrier for the sport's biggest team event.

"There was so much energy here in the Renaissance and I really feel that the Ryder Cup is a new renaissance for Marco Simone," Biagiotti Cigna said.

Not everything has gone smoothly, though.

Laura Biagiotti died in 2017, thrusting Biagiotti Cigna not only into a leadership role at the fashion house but also for the Ryder Cup — just as the family was dealing with getting the necessary work permits to finish the course redesign — no small task considering Italy's often befuddling bureaucracy.

Then came the pandemic, which pushed the Ryder Cup back from 2022 to 2023, and a change in the captaincy with Henrik Stenson replaced by Luke Donald after Stenson joined the Saudi-backed LIV Golf tour.

"It was not a smooth journey," Biagiotti Cigna said. "It took a lot of effort to get through all of this. ... And now we're almost there."

All the while, Biagiotti Cigna has also been running her fashion house, which is still

named Laura Biagiotti for her mother. The fashion house is located in a building next to the castle grounds.

"We do women's fashion accessories, home collections, kids collections and fragrances," she said. "I work with about 50 people there."

One other building that Biagiotti Cigna has been working on lately is a first-century Roman villa adjacent to the 10th hole that was discovered during the original course's construction.

"It has some beautiful mosaics in what was like a private spa," Biagiotti Cigna said. "It took us about four years to dig it up and restore it. ... It tells a lot about the story of people who lived here literally 2,000 years ago."

The Roman villa, as well as the fashion house, will be closed to the public during the Ryder Cup.

"We cannot handle having so many visitors — 300,000 people is a little too complicated to handle," Biagiotti Cigna said. "But right after the Ryder Cup, visitors who come and play Marco Simone, by booking in advance, will be able to visit the fashion house as well."

"There are so many cultural reasons to play Marco Simone," she added. "(After) the Ryder Cup there will be an opportunity to embrace a new experience of golf, culture, fashion, food and archeology."

MDT/AP

ASIAN GAMES

South Korea breezes through first day of League of Legends competition in esports

DAVID RISING, HANGZHOU

SOUTH Korea's League of Legends team breezed through its first day of esports competition yesterday at the Asian Games, bolstered by a strong performance by top player Lee Sang-hyeok.

Lee, better known in the online gaming world as "Faker," and his four teammates beat Hong Kong to open the day and then dispatched Kazakhstan in a one-sided match that lasted only about 17 minutes in an esports where tournament games are often double that.

"Today's games went really well, just as we had anticipated," the 27-year-old Lee said.

As the global games market continues to boom in numbers of players and revenue, esports takes its place this year at the Asian Games as a competition sport for the first time and so far it has been an audience favorite.

League of Legends is one of the most popular games, where two



South Korean esports player Lee Sang-hyeok, better known in the online gaming world as "Faker"

teams of five powerful champions face each other in a bid to destroy the other's base.

Lee locked in the champion Yone for the game against Kazakhstan.

For the South Korean players, there's more at stake than just national pride — the country exempts any men from compulsory military service if they win

gold medals at the Asian Games.

Lee said he had recovered from hand and arm pain that had sidelined him earlier in the year.

"I feel much better now. I don't need any more treatment," he said. "I don't think the injuries will have a significant impact on the games."

With the two wins, South Korea advances to play Saudi Arabia in

the quarterfinals on Wednesday. Vietnam will meet India after wins over Japan and the Palestinian team.

South Korea and China are the favorites in the League of Legends competition, and Hong Kong player Chau Shu Tak said he cursed when he saw that his team had drawn a match with South Korea to open the tournament.

"They're very powerful players here," said the 19-year-old Chau, who plays under the name YSKM — You Should Know Me.

Lee, known by many as the League of Legends GOAT — Greatest Of All Time — is a celebrity in game-crazy China and he was greeted by more than 100 fans as he arrived at Hangzhou airport last week.

There was no way for them to see him play in person on the opening day of League of Legends competition, however, as the main arena in Hangzhou's purpose-built esports stadium hosted the semifinals of Arena of Valor, Asian Games Version, also known

as Honor of Kings.

Malaysia's team beat Vietnam in the opening game of that competition, played in the 4,500 seat hall where competitors sit at terminals in the center and spectators can follow along on big-screens overhead. China beat Thailand in the afternoon game.

That means Vietnam and Thailand face each other for the bronze medal match today, and Malaysia and China will contend for gold.

Those will be the first medals awarded for esports.

For the opening rounds of League of Legends, the teams played in the lower level of the arena, in small rooms with only officials present.

They brought in their own keyboards and mice, and sat at gaming chairs at long tables facing the opposing team, communicating to one another through headsets.

Media were able to watch through a video link to the room. **MDT/AP**

AD

律師事務所



C&C
LAWYERS
& NOTARIES
SINCE 1996



合夥人 PARTNERS:

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

大律師 ASSOCIATES:

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

大律師 ASSOCIATES:

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

實習律師 TRAINEE LAWYERS:

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

法律專家及外地註冊律師

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

法律專家 JURISTS:

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

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

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



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



OPINION

Business Views

Shuli Ren, Bloomberg



**HONG KONG'S
 BILLIONAIRE DEBT KINGS
 ARE LOSING THEIR MOJO**

The tide is turning for Hong Kong's tycoon families. All of a sudden, the younger generation has to work a lot harder to convince banks and investors that their money is safe, and their pet projects are savvy.

Among them, Adrian Cheng, a Harvard-educated third-generation heir, and Richard Li, "superman" Li Ka-shing's second son, are the most audacious. At New World Development Co., Cheng has been building out his K11-branded commercial projects, betting that those in Hong Kong and wealthy parts of mainland China appreciate and will pay for artistic and innovative designs. Across the street, Li's insurance business has been expanding into Southeast Asia, with the belief that consumers will want financial protection once they become middle class. Both endeavors have cost billions of dollars, and have been fueled with debt.

For years, financing was easy. New World Development is not rated by any of the big three agencies, even though it has about \$9 billion of bonds outstanding.

Meanwhile, Li's FWD Group Holdings Ltd. has a track record of prioritizing business expansions over bondholder interests. In May 2022, it decided not to call a zero-coupon \$750 million perpetual note issued by a subsidiary that operates in southeast Asia, citing corporate reorganization and an impending initial public listing. Since then, Li has postponed FWD's Hong Kong IPO twice, leaving bond investors in the dark as to when they will get their money back.

Hong Kong's finance world is changing, however. Rising interest rates mean tycoons have to juice up the yield to make a hedge fund's carry trade work. In addition, many of the banks' private-wealth clients are not as rich as before, after being burned by Chinese developers' dollar-bond defaults. They have turned cautious and skittish.

Already, cracks are appearing. Last week, FWD pulled a 10-year \$325 million bond offering. It was a bit of an embarrassment for Li. Not only was the deal size small, it was the holding company's first issuance as an investment-grade entity. Moody's Investors Service had assigned FWD a Baa2 rating in late August.

The contention was the pricing. FWD had offered to pay 290 basis points above the Treasury yield. But investors clamored for more spread over the bonds of Hong Kong-listed AIA Group Ltd., a profitable insurer with much stronger market presence across Asia.

If an aborted bond deal was merely a hiccup, New World's response to social media allegations that it was seeking private financing at 11% to 12% interest was epic. In late August, to halt a selloff in its bonds, the builder had to release an announcement on the Hong Kong stock exchange, denouncing such "untrue and unfounded statements." As I marveled last week, when was the last time a tycoon family had to come out defending itself against little-known short sellers?

It is a buyer's market now. Increasingly, these dynasties have to calm investors by pledging financial support for their flagship businesses.

This is the lay of the land: Hong Kong's money world is now asking for higher risk premium from its tycoons. The earlier the city's debt kings come to terms with this, the better. It's time they turn on the charm. [Abridged]

Courtesy Bloomberg

President Xi Jinping has urged east China's Zhejiang Province to strive toward writing a new chapter in advancing Chinese modernization.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks during his inspection of Zhejiang from Sept. 20 to 21.

According to a Xinhua dispatch yesterday, Xi called on the province to focus on building a demonstration zone for common prosperity and turning itself into a key example showcasing the strengths of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era.

During his trip, Xi visited cities including Jinhua and Shaoxing, where

he inspected places including the countryside, a trade market, an exhibition hall and a culture park.

On his way back to Beijing, Xi also visited cities and villages in Shandong Province.

On the morning of Sept. 20, Xi inspected Lizu Village in Jinhua. There, he was delighted to learn that the annual per capita income of the village had reached 52,000 yuan (about USD7,250).

Lizu Village "has achieved solid progress in promoting common prosperity," Xi noted, expressing hopes that the village will make further efforts and achieve more results in advancing rural revitalization, Xinhua reported yesterday.

AP PHOTO



HAWAII

**RESIDENTS PREPARE TO
 RETURN TO SITES OF
 HOMES DEMOLISHED IN
 LAHAINA WILDFIRE**

**JENNIFER SINCO
 KELLEHER, HONOLULU**

FROM just outside the burn zone in Lahaina, Jes Claydon can see the ruins of the rental home where she lived for 13 years and raised three children. Little remains recognizable beyond the jars of sea glass that stood outside the front door.

Today [Macau time], officials are expected to begin lifting restrictions on entry to the area, and Claydon hopes to collect those jars and any other mementos she might find.

"I want the freedom to just be there and absorb what happened," Claydon said. "Whatever I might find, even if it's just those jars of sea glass, I'm looking forward to taking it. ... It's a piece of home."

Authorities will begin allowing the first residents and property owners to return to their properties in the burn zone, many for the first time since it was demolished nearly seven weeks ago, on Aug. 8, by the deadliest U.S. wildfire in more than a century.

The prospect of returning has stirred strong emotions in residents who fled in vehicles or on foot

as the wind-whipped flames raced across Lahaina, the historic capital of the former Hawaiian kingdom, and overcame people stuck in traffic trying to escape.

Some survivors jumped over a sea wall and sheltered in the waves as hot black smoke blotted out the sun. The wildfire killed at least 97 people and destroyed more than 2,000 buildings, most of them homes.

Claydon's home was a single-story cinderblock house painted a reddish-tan, similar to the red dirt in Lahaina. She can see the property from a National Guard blockade that has kept unauthorized people out of the burn zone. A few of the walls are still standing, and some green lawn remains, she said.

Authorities have divided the burned area into 17 zones and dozens of sub-zones. Residents or property owners of the first to be cleared for reentry—known as Zone 1C, along Kaniau Road in the north part of Lahaina—will be allowed to return on supervised visits Monday and Tuesday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Those eligible could pick up passes from Friday to Sunday in advance.

Darryl Oliveira, interim

administrator of the Maui Emergency Management Agency, said officials also want to ensure that they have the space and privacy to reflect or grieve as they see fit.

"They anticipate some people will only want to go for a very short period of time, a few minutes to say goodbye in a way to their property," Hawaii Gov. Josh Green said last week. "Others may want to stay several hours. They're going to be very accommodating."

Those returning will be provided water, shade, washing stations, portable toilets, medical and mental health care, and transportation assistance if needed. Nonprofit groups are also offering personal protective equipment, including masks and coveralls. Officials have warned ash could contain asbestos, lead, arsenic or other toxins.

While some residents, like Claydon, might be eager to find jewelry, photographs or other tokens of their life before the fire, officials are urging them not to sift through the ashes for fear of raising toxic dust that could endanger them or their neighbors downwind.

MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Germany A statue of a deceased German cardinal was removed from its perch outside Essen Cathedral yesterday, days after allegations of sexual abuse decades ago became public. The accusations against Cardinal Franz Hengsbach, who died in 1991, added to a long-running scandal over abuse by clergy that has shaken the German church. Last week, the Essen diocese said there were suspicions that Hengsbach may have abused a 16-year-old girl in the 1950s when he was an auxiliary bishop.

AP PHOTO



UK The head of London's police force is calling for increased legal protections for officers who use force in the line of duty after more than 100 officers refused to carry guns to protest murder charges filed against one of their colleagues. The revolt by specially trained firearms officers has raised concerns about the Metropolitan Police Service's ability to respond to some incidents, and the military has agreed to provide backup for counterterrorism operations.

AP PHOTO



Denmark's Lego said yesterday that it remains committed to its quest to find sustainable materials to reduce carbon emissions, even after an experiment by the world's largest toymaker to use recycled bottles did not work. Lego said it has "decided not to progress" with making its trademark colorful bricks from recycled plastic bottles made of polyethylene terephthalate, known as PET, and after more than two years of testing "found the material didn't reduce carbon emissions."