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THE CONVERSATION P2



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CHINESE ELECTRIC AUTOMOBILE BRAND ZEEKR IS EXPECTED TO EXPAND ITS MARKET IN MACAU AND HK NEXT YEAR, KICKING OFF THREE SHOWROOMS P6

SAR GOV'T 'STRONGLY DISSATISFIED' WITH US REPORT ON MACAU'S TRAFFICKING PREVENTION WORKS P5

CHINA SENDS ITS YOUNGEST-EVER CREW TO SPACE AS IT SEEKS TO PUT ASTRONAUTS ON MOON BEFORE 2030 P9



AP PHOTO



China Stellantis plans to invest about 1.5 billion euros, or about \$1.6 billion, in Leapmotor, a Chinese electric vehicle manufacturer, the companies said. The maker of Jeep and Ram and Leapmotor said in a joint statement that they have formed a strategic partnership and joint venture that aims to expand the Chinese EV maker's sales both inside and outside of China. Stellantis said it expects to benefit from Leapmotor's "tech-first EV ecosystem" in China to meet its own targets for shifting to electric vehicles.

AP PHOTO



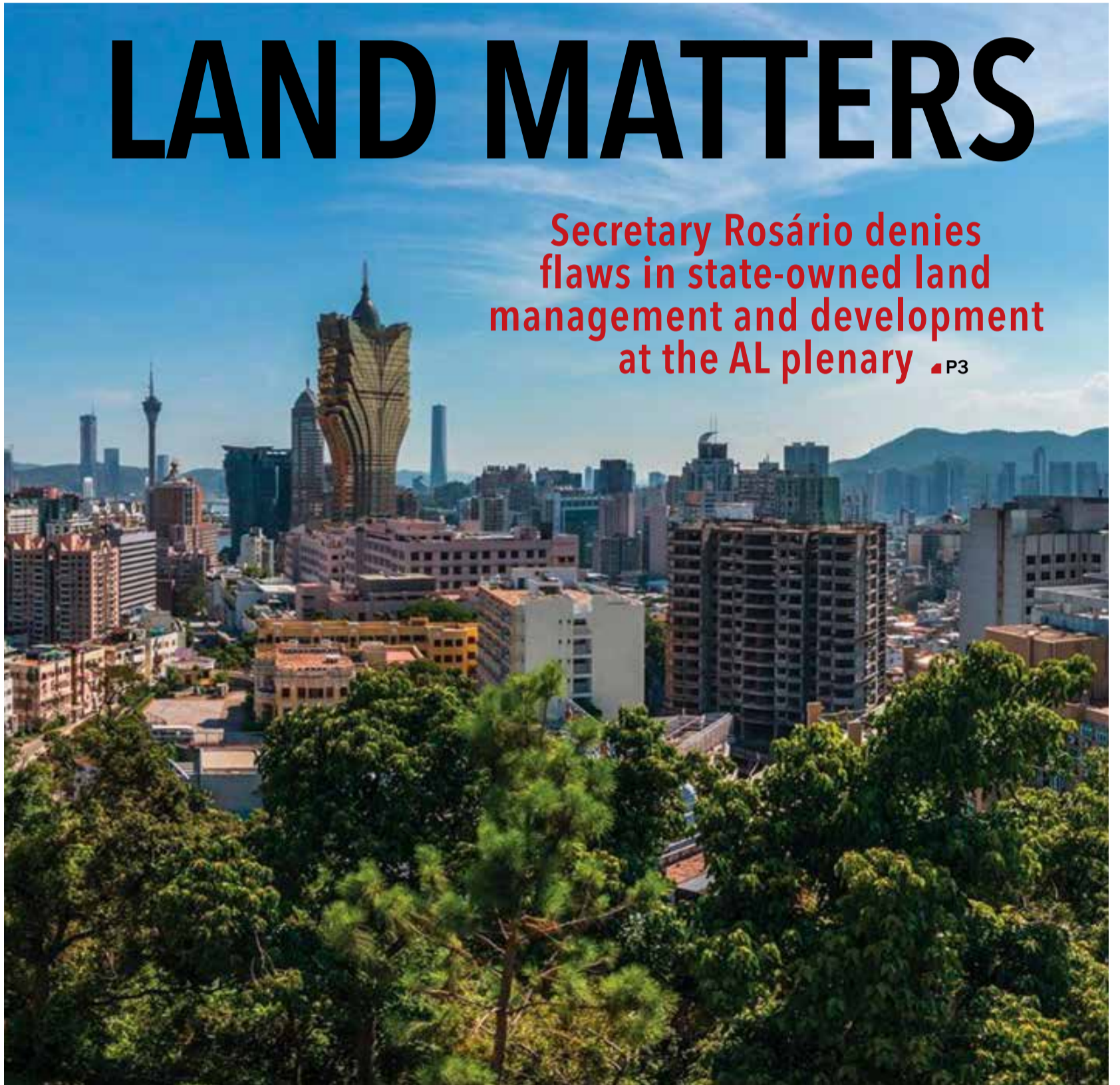
South Korea, the U.S. and Japan strongly condemned what they call North Korea's supply of munitions and military equipment to Russia, saying that such weapons shipments sharply increase the human toll of Russia's war in Ukraine. A joint statement by the top diplomats of South Korea, the U.S. and Japan came days after Russia's foreign minister scoffed saying that Washington has failed to prove the allegation.

AP PHOTO



Germany The European Central Bank is ready to leave interest rates unchanged yesterday for the first time in over a year as the Israel-Hamas war spreads even more gloom over already downbeat prospects for Europe's economy. It would be the bank's first meeting with no change after a torrid pace of 10 straight increases dating to July 2022 that pushed its key rate to a record-high 4%.

More on backpage



EVENTS
LUSOFONIA FESTIVAL OPENS TONIGHT P6



TASTE OF EDESIA P15



Hunter Biden has been charged with making a false claim on a federal firearms application

HOW OFTEN DO YOU LIE?

DECEPTION RESEARCHERS INVESTIGATE HOW THE RECIPIENT AND THE MEDIUM AFFECT TELLING THE TRUTH

CHRISTIAN B. MILLER, WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY

PROMINENT cases of purported lying continue to dominate the news cycle. Hunter Biden was charged with lying on a government form while purchasing a handgun. Republican Representative George Santos allegedly lied in many ways, including to donors through a third party in order to misuse the funds raised. The rapper Offset admitted to lying on Instagram about his wife, Cardi B, being unfaithful.

There are a number of variables that distinguish these cases. One is the audience: the faceless government, particular donors and millions of online followers, respectively. Another is the medium used to convey the alleged lie: on a bureaucratic form, through intermediaries and via social media.

Differences like these lead researchers like me to wonder what factors influence the telling of lies. Does a personal connection increase or decrease the likelihood of sticking to the truth? Are lies more prevalent on text or email than on the phone or in person?

An emerging body of empirical research is trying to answer these questions, and some of the findings are surprising. They hold les-

sons, too - for how to think about the areas of your life where you might be more prone to tell lies, and also about where to be most cautious in trusting what others are saying. As the recent director of The Honesty Project and author of "Honesty: The Philosophy and Psychology of a Neglected Virtue," I am especially interested in whether most people tend to be honest or not.

FIGURING OUT THE FREQUENCY OF LIES

Most research on lying asks participants to self-report their lying behavior, say during the past day or week. (Whether you can trust liars to tell the truth about lying is another question.)

The classic study on lying frequency was conducted by psychologist Bella DePaulo in the mid-1990s. It focused on face-to-face interactions and used a group of student participants and another group of volunteers from the community around the University of Virginia. The community members averaged one lie per day, while the students averaged two lies per day. This result became the benchmark finding in the field of honesty research and helped lead to an assumption among many researchers that lying is commonplace.

But averages do not describe individuals. It could be that each person in the group tells one or two lies per day. But it's also possible that there are some people who lie voraciously and others who lie very rarely.

In an influential 2010 study, this second scenario is indeed what Michigan State University communication researcher Kim Serota and his colleagues found. Out of 1,000 American participants, 59.9% claimed not to have told a single lie in the past 24 hours. Of those who admitted they did lie, most said they'd told very few lies. Participants reported 1,646 lies in total, but half of them came from just 5.3% of the participants.

This general pattern in the data has been replicated several times. Lying tends to be rare, except in the case of a small group of frequent liars.

DOES THE MEDIUM MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Might lying become more frequent under various conditions? What if you don't just consider face-to-face interactions, but introduce some distance by communicating via text, email or the phone?

Research suggests the medium doesn't matter much. For instance, a 2014 study by Northwestern University communication re-

searcher Madeline Smith and her colleagues found that when participants were asked to look at their 30 most recent text messages, 23% said there were no deceptive texts. For the rest of the group, the vast majority said that 10% or fewer of their texts contained lies.

Recent research by David Markowitz at the University of Oregon successfully replicated earlier findings that had compared the rates of lying using different technologies. Are lies more common on text, the phone or on email? Based on survey data from 205 participants, Markowitz found that on average, people told 1.08 lies per day, but once again with the distribution of lies skewed by some frequent liars.

Not only were the percentages fairly low, but the differences between the frequency with which lies were told via different media were not large. Still, it might be surprising to find that, say, lying on video chat was more common than lying face-to-face, with lying on email being least likely.

A couple of factors could be playing a role. Recordability seems to rein in the lies - perhaps knowing that the communication leaves a record raises worries about detection and makes lying less appealing. Synchronicity seems to matter too. Many lies oc-

cur in the heat of the moment, so it makes sense that when there's a delay in communication, as with email, lying would decrease.

DOES THE AUDIENCE CHANGE THINGS?

In addition to the medium, does the intended receiver of a potential lie make any difference?

Initially you might think that people are more inclined to lie to strangers than to friends and family, given the impersonality of the interaction in the one case and the bonds of care and concern in the other. But matters are a bit more complicated.

In her classic work, DePaulo found that people tend to tell what she called "everyday lies" more often to strangers than family members. To use her examples, these are smaller lies like "told her (that) her muffins were the best ever" and "exaggerated how sorry I was to be late." For instance, DePaulo and her colleague Deborah Kashy reported that participants in one of their studies lied less than once per 10 social interactions with spouses and children.

However, when it came to serious lies about things like affairs or injuries, for instance, the pattern flipped. Now, 53% of serious lies were to close partners in the study's community participants, and the proportion jumped up to 72.7% among student volunteers. Perhaps not surprisingly, in these situations people might value not damaging their relationships more than they value the truth. Other data also finds participants tell more lies to friends and family members than to strangers.

INVESTIGATING THE TRUTH ABOUT LIES

It is worth emphasizing that these are all initial findings. Further replication is needed, and cross-cultural studies using non-Western participants are scarce. Additionally, there are many other variables that could be examined, such as age, gender, religion and political affiliation.

When it comes to honesty, though, I find the results, in general, promising. Lying seems to happen rarely for many people, even toward strangers and even via social media and texting. Where people need to be especially discerning, though, is in identifying - and avoiding - the small number of rampant liars out there. If you're one of them yourself, maybe you never realized that you're actually in a small minority.

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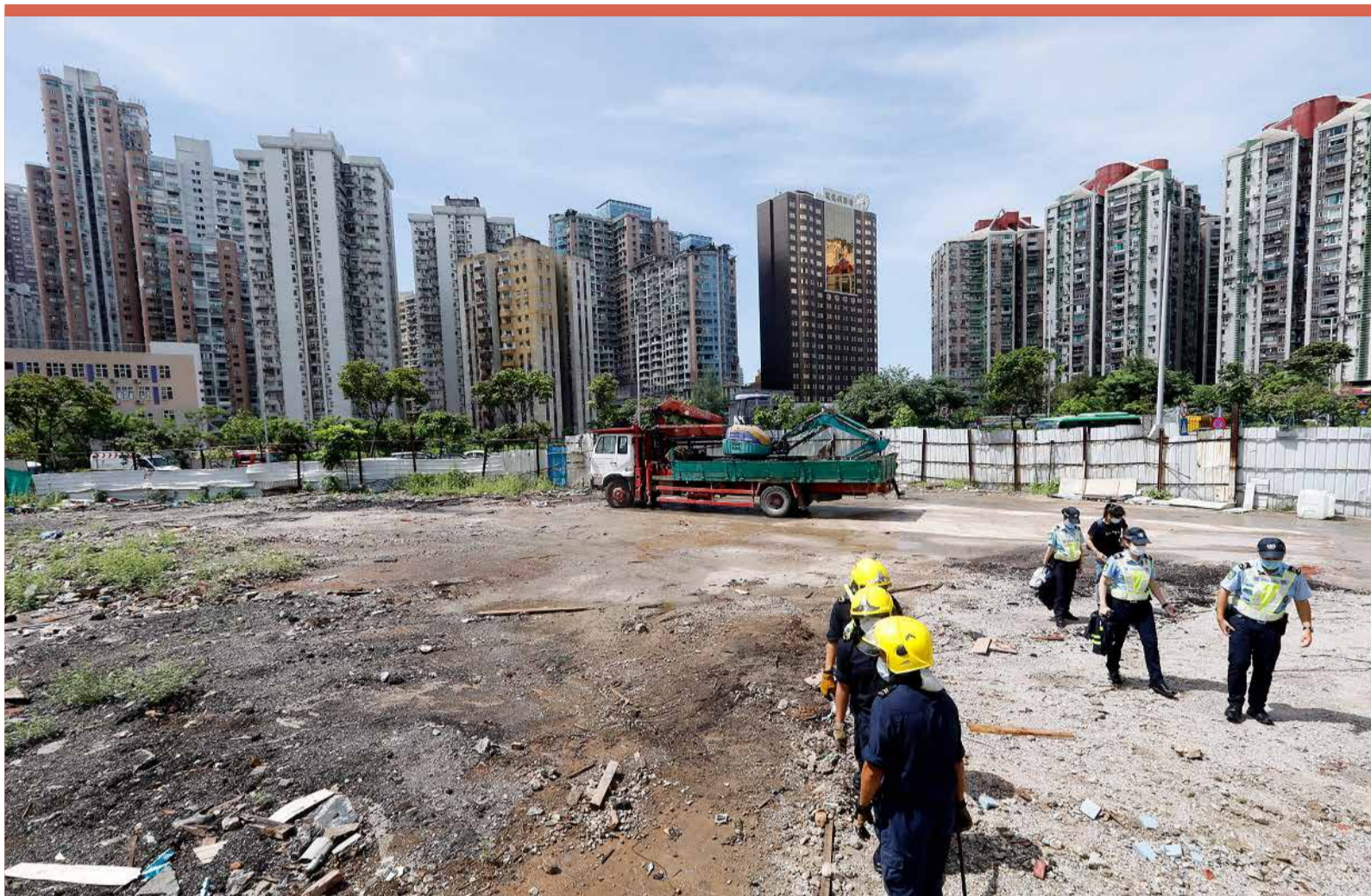
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2,700 VEHICLES WITH UNPAID ROAD TAX

From January to September, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) seized 2,700 cars for unpaid road tax and cancelled their registration. The authorities said that, for the first nine months, nearly 36,000 vehicles were inspected on streets in various districts. In March this year, the DSAT revealed that over 110,000 vehicle owners had not yet paid their annual road tax.

SMG WARNS OF UPCOMING UNSTABLE WEATHER

The Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) said southern China will be affected by upper-air disturbances over the weekend. Showers in Macau are expected to become more frequent with more rainfall and a chance of thunderstorms. A slightly cooler and drier northeast monsoon is expected to affect the area early next week. The lowest temperature will be about 21 degrees Celsius on Monday.

AL PLENARY

Secretary Rosário denies flaws to parliament

ANTHONY LAM

SECRETARY for Transport and Public Works Raimundo do Rosário queried why lawmaker Leong Hong Sai asked about direct designation of land concession yesterday, given existing laws have prohibited this practice for nearly 10 years.

Leong raised several questions about land management and development during yesterday's oral inquiry session, and said that government "was unclear about the procedure used by the government when directly designating land concession."

Before answering the lawmaker's question, Rosário spent a few minutes defending himself. He emphasized that the current land law had been in place for nearly 10 years and does not permit direct designation of land concession.

"I don't understand why the issue of direct designation is still being raised," Rosário said.

"Tomorrow's newspaper headlines are likely to read, 'Lawmaker Leong questions government's messy land designation.' Is this the result you are seeking?"

Rosário recalled that he had been asked similar questions at a previous parliamentary in-

quiry session in April, during which he had emphasized that direct designation of land concession is not lawful.

He felt that the parliament had not been fair to him in respect of government construction projects running behind schedule and over budget. He noted that when the government rectified these problems, similar questions continued to be raised.

On land resource management, the senior official emphasized that in his nearly nine years in office as the secretary, he had treated matters of land management and development with the utmost seriousness among about a dozen topics under his remit.

His branch of government is concerned with areas ranging from urban and public construction to matters of weather, transport and environmental protection.

"Before, we called our land 'government land,' but now it is referred to as 'state-owned land,'" Rosário said. "I don't believe any secretary treats matters relating to state-owned land trivially." He added that if he had done so, he would have lost his job.

State-owned land is also his defense against calls by

lawmakers and the public to convert certain unused land for public leisure facilities. Lawmaker Ron Lam mentioned the Singaporean practice of declaring state-ownership of land via signage, while offering it up for public leisure use, and encouraged the government to follow suit.

While recognizing the merits of this idea, Rosário said that state-owned land must be treated more seriously than other matters.

Some lawmakers held the view that land may be better used to store building products or for waste management, while others were of the view that leaving undeveloped land unattended would cause safety and security concerns.

However, Rosário was concerned that tenants may ultimately come to expect to be able to use the land for such purposes and that the government would be faced with additional questions about where existing land users could relocate their industrial resources when asked to vacate in the future.

Similarly, Rosário was concerned that the public would have similar concerns once the government decided to repurpose or develop land that had been temporarily used for leisure.

Rosário also asked why the business sector had set their sights on state-owned land to ease operational burdens. Instead, he suggested that ordinary business protocols be followed, such as the leasing of dedicated storage spaces.

By way of analogy, the official compared land reserves to an emergency savings account that should only be used when necessary.

Moving on to discuss matters of political transparency, Rosário said that information is publicly available on the websites of the relevant bureaus or departments. He pledged that any information identified as not currently available would be published on the relevant websites as soon as practicable.

In response to Leong's call for systematic improvement to avoid future breaches, Rosário expressed his openness to improvement, noting that appropriate procedures and practices are safeguarded in the Land Law and Urban Planning Law. In addition, as Urban Planning Committee plenaries are publicly accessible and Planning Conditions Graphs are available for public opinion and input 10 days prior to each plenary, the secretary asserted that the system was as transparent as possible.

Leong also asked about repayment of "land debts," referring to land that the government promised developers in exchange for land originally owned by them or that was designated land. Rosário maintained that the issue is extremely complicated, so more time to resolve the debt would be needed.

POLICE ARREST SIX INDIVIDUALS OVER FALSE EMPLOYMENT AND SEX WORK

The Public Security Police investigated cases of false employment, extortion and sex work, arresting six men and women from Hong Kong, Macau and the mainland. Among them, a mainland woman in her 20s paid RMB80,000 to obtain a work permit and engage in prostitution in Macau. Last week, two men and women had an argument near a police station in Taipa. The police officers who attended the scene revealed that the mainland woman was suspected of sex work and was blackmailed by the other party.

THREE VICTIMS OF A MACAU SCAM SYNDICATE BACK HOME

Three Malaysians, victims of human trafficking by a Macau scam syndicate in Peru, were rescued by the South American country's authorities and have returned home safely, according to a report issued Malaysian media outlet Malay Mail. The trio consisted of two women and a man aged between 23 and 25. Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Mohamad Alamin said the three victims were among the 43 Malaysian citizens who were deceived into working for the Macau scam syndicate, and were rescued by Peruvian police on October 7.

AD

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"Regime jurídico da construção urbana" estipula claramente os deveres e responsabilidades dos proprietários

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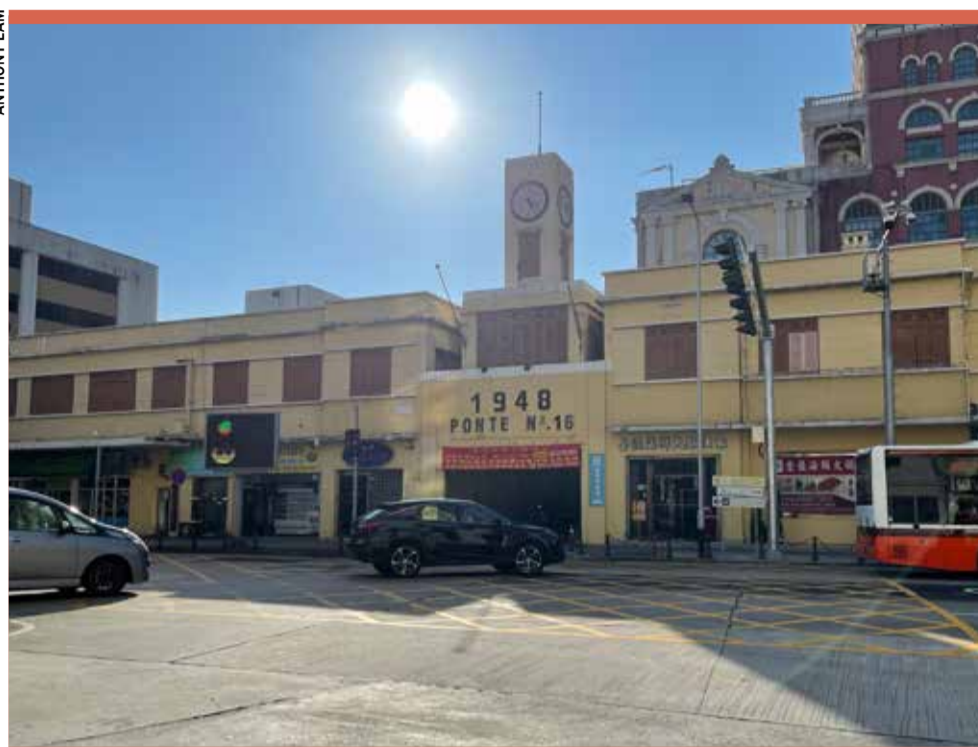
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ANTHONY LAM



AL PLENARY

TRAFFIC DETOUR IN EARLY 2024 AT SAN MA LO, INNER HARBOUR END

ANTHONY LAM

TRAFFIC will be redirected in the first half of 2024 at the Inner Harbour end of San Ma Lo in preparation for the pumping station project, director of Public Works Lam Wai Hou disclosed to parliament yesterday.

Lam attended an oral inquiry session at the parliament yesterday afternoon with his superintendent, Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raimundo do Rosário.

The government has separated the pumping station or flood management work on Inner Harbour into two sections – North and South. Construction on the northern section has concluded successfully, according to the government, while construction on the south section is currently underway.

The two sections are separated by Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro, known as San Ma Lo in Cantonese and English.

Work will be carried out on the Inner Harbour end of San Ma Lo, an arterial thoroughfare in Macau, early next year to facilitate consolidation and connection of the two sections. At that time, traffic will be rerouted.

The current construction on Inner Harbour South has

had a heavy impact on traffic, Lam said, disclosing that a larger section of the motor roads at that location will be altered or blocked off as the project progresses, although the official did not mention an exact date.

The project currently affects about one-third of the entire motor traffic area, Lam added.

In her oral inquiry, lawmaker Wong Kit Cheng asked about adjustments that the government had made so far in the decade-long disaster plan. She requested an explanation of the impact of these adjustments on the actual capacity of these projects to mitigate against disasters.

Citing government announcements that many projects designed to address disasters of the once-in-200-years scale had been halted or terminated, she asked whether existing projects will be able to withstand phenomena of a similar scale.

In response to her questions, Lam assured that all on-going projects are designed with the appropriate safeguards in place and, in addition, the pumping stations are designed to discharge rainwater.

Lawmakers also asked why the government had terminated the construction of a high-altitude re-

servoir, which had been planned to address outages in water supply should local water plants be out of order.

Reiterating that the Coloane and Ka-Ho reservoirs have been expanded, Lam said that the water reserve for Macau is set at 12 days should no external supplies be available. Additionally, the public works official said that the odds of a complete service break-down at water supply facilities are very slim.

He added that plans for an underground water tank at Ponte e Horta Plaza have been scrapped.

Lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho called for the restoration of the plan, citing Singapore as an example. He said that under heavy rainfall conditions, the influx of water is collected by these tanks and gradually released. Such a system would allow time for pipe networks to adjust and accommodate for the inflows efficiently. He added that if flooding problems in Inner Harbour could not be completely resolved, the business sector in the area would fail to thrive.

In response, Lam said that the government did not believe the underground water tanks were essential, given the satisfactory results from the Inner Harbour North pumping station.

SAR gov't 'strongly dissatisfied' with US report on Macau's trafficking prevention works

STAFF REPORTER

THE SAR government issued a statement in response to the United States' earlier report on the need to prevent and combat human trafficking in Macau, criticizing the US for "blatantly and seriously interfering in the internal affairs of the Macau SAR."

The SAR government and security authorities have expressed strong dissatisfaction and firm opposition to the report, noting efforts and achievements made over the years in preventing and combating human trafficking.

"The respective determination by the US was issued without full knowledge of the information, in light of unrealistic data and based on incorrect information about Macau from the so-called Trafficking in Persons Report, published recently,



in an attempt to create confusion in international society," the statement read.

The Office of the Secretary for Security emphasized that the prevention and control of human trafficking crimes in Macau has been effectively carried out with the support of the central government and the coordination of the local government.

In the statement, the Office

states that it has never relied on, sought, or received relevant funding or any form of support from the United States.

"The SAR government will, as always, unwaveringly cooperate with all sectors of Macau to prevent and control human trafficking," the statement read.

According to an earlier report, the US criticized the Macau government for having

"inadequate protection efforts" and maintaining "minimal efforts to prevent trafficking."

"Authorities did not report identifying or providing services to any victims for the fifth consecutive year and the government has never identified labor trafficking victims exploited in Macau," the report read.

The US has placed Macau on Tier 3, a category it reserves for countries and territories whose governments "do not fully comply with the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so."

Further, the report noted that the local government "has not convicted a trafficker since 2019 and has never identified a victim of forced labor exploited in Macau."

According to a statement from the SAR, there have always been low instances of human trafficking in Macau.

IFTM, UNIVERSITY OF SURREY OFFER DUAL MASTERS' PROGRAMME

The Macao Institute for Tourism Studies (IFTM) and United Kingdom's University of Surrey (UOS) announced a new progression agreement for the transition of qualified students from IFTM to UOS, allowing outstanding students to transfer credits and complete an UOS master's degree, while simultaneously completing an IFTM master's degree in as little as two years. As part of this agreement, a scholarship in the form of a fee reduction of 6,000 euros will be applied to all qualified students. In addition, all qualified students can apply for another university-wide scholarship—the International Excellence Award—with a further 5,000 euro fee waiver.

FADO CAMANÉ TO JOIN CHINESE ORCHESTRA FOR CONCERT

The "Camané Concert with the Macau Chinese Orchestra" will take place at the Grand Auditorium of the Macau Cultural Center on Nov. 18 as part of the "5th Encounter in Macao – Arts and Cultural Festival between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries." The Portuguese fado singer Camané joins the Macau Chinese Orchestra in this concert conducted by Yao Shenshen, permanent conductor of the Shanghai Chinese Orchestra. Camané will perform his songs adapted to Chinese musical instruments.

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EVENTS

LUSOFONIA FESTIVAL OPENS TONIGHT

STAFF REPORTER

THE Lusofonia Festival opens today until Sunday, showcasing different types of performances and offerings from Portuguese-speaking countries.

In the 26th festival, the emphasis will be placed on promoting Portuguese culture. At the handicraft shows, citizens and tourists will be able to appreciate and purchase Portuguese tiles and ceramics designed by Portuguese artisan Paulo Reis. At the gastronomy exhibition at Largo da Igreja do Carmo, typical Portuguese dishes prepared by Chef Telmo Gongó are presented for dinner.

Performances will be held on the main stage at the Taipa Amphitheater by the Cape Verdean band Fogo Fogo tonight at 8:30 p.m., while Portuguese singer Carlão will perform on Saturday at 9:30 p.m., and Guinean singer Sambala Canuté will perform on Sunday at 8:30



p.m.. On the secondary stage in Largo do Carmo, light music shows will be performed by local Portuguese-speaking artists.

A cultural exhibition from the 10 Portuguese-speaking communities residing in Macau will showcase exhibitors, music, dance, arts, crafts, traditional costumes, literature, tourist information, and the typical snacks and drinks of

each country and region, namely Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Goa, Daman and Diu, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, East Timor, and the Macanese community.

The Lusofonia Festival started in 1998. Its main objective is to pay homage to the Portuguese-speaking communities residing in the SAR.

AUTOMOBILE

LUXURY VEHICLE BRAND ZEEKR TO EXPAND IN HONG KONG, MACAU IN 2024

STAFF REPORTER

CHINESE premium electric automobile brand Zeekr is expected to expand its market in both the SARs in 2024, kicking off three showrooms in Hong Kong and one in Macau.

Zhejiang Geely Holding Group Co. will start shipping its X sport utility vehicle and 009 minivan in the second half of 2024, a Zeekr representative said, according to Bloomberg.

Hong Kong and Macau will be the first to receive Zeekr's right-hand drive models, with pricing yet to be determined, as cited in the report.

Earlier this year, it was announced that Zeekr plans to launch an all-electric sedan and an SUV this year in the Netherlands and Sweden. Its collabo-

rative group of Chinese and European designers is in Gothenberg, Sweden, adjacent to Volvo Cars, another Geely brand, while its factories are in China.

"Our ambition is to be a key player in electrified mobility in Europe within this decade," said Zeekr CEO Spiros Fotinos, a Toyota and Lexus veteran. With a clear global ambition, the company is looking at opportunities and the right timing for other markets, he said back in May.

Kam Lung Motor Group, Zeekr's distribution partner in south China's Greater Bay Area, will also start selling left-hand drive Zeekr models in Macau in the coming months, well before right-hand drive versions are available, the representative said, as cited in the report.



AD

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Sands China Supplier Spotlight: Macau's First Locally-Produced Gin Brings a Unique Touch to the City's Cuisine

MACAU, one of the hottest tourist destinations in Asia and a UNESCO City of Gastronomy, attracts tourists from all over the world daily. Its lively atmosphere and rich cultural heritage are always a treat for visitors, who can savor the city's famous cuisine and various beverages. However, most of the wine and spirits consumed in Macau come from abroad, with few local options available.

Owl Man Distillery, Macau's first gin producer, was founded by Rebeca McAulay and her husband last October. The idea came during the pandemic shutdown.

"I was born in Brazil and came to Macau to study when I was 17. I fell in love with this city and decided to settle down here after graduation. My husband has been brewing his craft beer for years, and during the pandemic, we decided to take our passion for brewing to the next level by setting up Owl Man Distillery," said McAulay.

Owl Man Distillery officially launched operations in October 2022, offering three sizes of bottled gin: a 500 ml bottle, a 100 ml bottle and a 50 ml bottle for bars, restaurants and hotel rooms. The gin is made using traditional gin distillation methods combined with a Macau twist. "Owl Man" is named after the Putonghua pronunciation of Macau (Ao Men), emphasizing its local origin.

The SME quickly gained recognition for its locally produced gin. The company's unique product offering caught the eye of Sands



China, which reached out to the brewery earlier this year to collaborate on a limited-edition gin for The Londoner Macao.

It was designed to showcase the best of Macau gin-making traditions while adding a contemporary twist. The gin features ingredients such as traditional Chinese herbs and tropical fruits, infused into a neutral gin base. For the design of the bottle, Owl Man proposed several ideas, with Sands China selecting and further developing one which was based on The Londoner Macao's unique elements and the Chinese Zodiac Rabbit design. As a collector's item, the limited-edition

bottle and its design pay tribute to Macau's rich cultural heritage.

As the largest integrated resort operator in Macau, Sands China is always actively seeking local partners to add unique experiences for its guests. This partnership with Owl Man Distillery is an example of their effort to diversify their product offering and showcase the best of Macau.

"We are excited to collaborate with Owl Man Distillery, as their commitment to quality and innovation aligns with our own goals in the integrated resort industry," said Rachel Zheng, Senior Manager of Procurement & Supply Chain at

Sands China.

In recent years, gin has become increasingly popular in mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau, which has led to a rise in the demand for gin among tourists, and therefore Sands China has been actively introducing unique and felicitous wine products to provide more diversified choices for its guests, according to Zheng.

"We are thrilled to collaborate with Sands China, as it allows us to share our craft with a larger audience," said McAulay.

She recalled that collaborating with Sands China has not only improved the gin's quality but also

provided her company with exposure to new printing techniques and packaging design in meeting Sands China's procurement and quality standards. McAulay also mentioned that they have learned from the international purchasing process and have been able to participate in events such as Sands China's Macao Showcase event in Singapore in June, which has helped promote their gin brand.

Currently, Owl Man Distillery has started to solidify its collaboration with Sands China and has been actively exploring opportunities with other hotel operators and large businesses. McAulay added that they are also constantly innovating new products such as cocktails and whisky and plan to expand their production capacity in the future.

Sands China commented that Owl Man Distillery has earned the trust of its customers with its locally produced specialty products and flexible service.

With the recovery in tourist numbers since the opening of the border at the beginning of the year, Sands China expects to work with local suppliers to develop more locally made products with Macau characteristics to meet the needs of tourists, and believes there is room for greater cooperation with Owl Man Distillery in the future. Sands China is committed to promoting the development of local businesses and welcomes new companies and emerging brands to reach out and introduce their services or products to facilitate cooperation.



ANALYSIS

AS WORLD ROILS, US AND CHINA SEEK TO EASE STRAINED TIES, PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE BIDEN-XI SUMMIT

DIDI TANG & MATTHEW LEE,
WASHINGTON

IN the midst of two active and potentially world-changing conflicts in the Middle East and Europe, the U.S. is hoping to find at least a small measure of common ground with China as China's top diplomat visits Washington this week.

Over three days of meetings that begin yesterday, top Biden administration officials, including possibly the president himself, will press Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the importance of China stepping up its role on the world stage if it wants to be considered a responsible major international player.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Biden's national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, are both expected to urge China to play a constructive role in both the Israel-Hamas and Russia-Ukraine wars. Those meetings could set the stage for a summit between President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping next month on the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum leaders gathering in San Francisco.



AP PHOTO

The U.S. has been disappointed with China over its support for Russia in the war against Ukraine and its relative silence on the Middle East. In addition, the world's two largest economies are at odds

on issues such as human rights, climate change, Taiwan, the South China Sea and North Korea.

Still, both sides have expressed a willingness to talk with each other since Blinken canceled a

planned visit to China in February after the shutdown of a Chinese spy balloon over the U.S., which marked a low point in recent relations.

In the months that followed that

crisis, however, Blinken rescheduled his trip and went to China in June. He was followed in quick succession by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, climate envoy John Kerry and Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo.

In addition, Sullivan met with Wang in Malta in mid-September ahead of Blinken's discussions with Chinese Vice President Han Zheng later that month on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in New York. And Blinken spoke just last week with Wang about the Israel-Hamas crisis.

The goal, according to U.S. officials, is to set the stage for another Biden-Xi summit at which the two leaders could explore cooperation or at least easing outright hostility on the most pressing matters of the day.

"Wang Yi's visit will serve as one of the final touchpoints in laying the groundwork" for the Biden-Xi meeting, said Ryan Hass, director of the John L. Thornton China Center at the Brookings Institute, a Washington-based think tank. "Wang's meetings in Washington will set the contours for the topics the two leaders will discuss when they meet in November."

CRIME

AUSTRALIAN POLICE CHARGE SEVEN WITH LAUNDERING HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS FOR CHINESE CRIME SYNDICATE

AUSTRALIAN authorities have charged seven people with helping launder hundreds of millions of dollars for a Chinese crime syndicate.

Police said yesterday the arrests came after a 14-month investigation that involved multiple Australian agencies and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. They said it was the most complex money laundering investigation in the nation's history.

Police said a money remittance chain in Australia with a dozen outlets, the Changjiang Currency Exchange, was being secretly run by the Long River money laundering syndicate.

They said the chain legitimately transferred billions of dollars from regular customers, but hidden among those transactions were illegal transfers of 229 million Australian dollars (\$144 million) in crime proceeds over the past three years.

They said they became suspicious about the company during COVID-19 lockdowns in Sydney.

"While most of Sydney was a ghost town, alarm bells went off among our money laundering investigators when they noticed Changjiang Currency Exchange opened and updated new and existing storefronts in the heart of Sydney," said Stephen Dametto, an assistant commissioner with the Australian Federal Police.

"It was just a gut feeling – it didn't feel right," Dametto said in a statement. "Many international students and tourists had returned home, and there was no apparent business case for Changjiang Currency Exchange to expand."

More than 300 officers on Wednesday conducted 20 raids around the country and seized tens of millions of dollars worth of luxury homes and vehicles.

The four Chinese nationals

and three Australian citizens made their first appearance in a Melbourne court yesterday.

"We allege they lived the high life by eating at Australia's most extravagant restaurants, drinking wine and sake valued in the tens of thousands of dollars, traveling on private jets, driving vehicles purchased for A\$400,000 and living in expensive homes, with one valued at more than A\$10 million," Dametto said.

Police said the syndicate coached its criminal customers on how to create fake business paperwork, such as false invoices and bank statements. They said some of the laundered money came from cyber scams, the trafficking of illicit goods, and violent crimes.

Dametto said the syndicate had even purchased fake passports for A\$200,000 (\$126,000) each in case their members needed to flee the country. **MDT/AP**

ENVIRONMENT

Beijing says it wants to bolster cooperation with US as California

HUIZHONG WU,
BANGKOK

CHINA'S Environment Minister Huang Runqiu said yesterday his country wants to strengthen cooperation with the United States to combat climate change, as he met in Beijing with California Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Newsom is on a weeklong tour of China where he is pushing for climate cooperation. His trip as governor, once considered routine, is drawing attention as it comes after years of heightening tensions between the U.S. and China.

The climate is one of the few issues where the U.S. and China have agreed to work together.

Huang said yesterday that his ministry would continue to carry out



AP PHOTO

California Gov. Gavin Newsom, right, speaks during the Great Wall

agreements under a memorandum of understanding signed last year between China and California "in carbon market investment, climate adaptation, environment law

implementation and human-to-human exchange to strengthen cooperation and have a positive effect on China-US. environmental cooperation."

California has been

MMIT

"It opens the possibility of the world's two largest powers pursuing coordinated efforts to limit escalation or expansion of violence in Ukraine and the Middle East," he said.

Yun Sun, director of the China Program at the Stimson Center, another Washington think tank, said Wang's trip signals that the Xi-Biden summit is almost certain.

"Wang is here to pave the ground for Xi's San Francisco trip. That's the core focus of the trip. It means issues will be negotiated, solutions will be discussed and details will be deliberated and inked," Sun said. "The APEC summit is 20 days away, so time is of essence. His trip means that Xi is coming. Xi's coming means meeting with Biden. The Xi-Biden summit means efforts to stabilize bilateral ties."

Scott Kennedy, senior adviser and trustee chair in Chinese business and economics at the Center

for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said Wang's trip could yield results such as additional direct flights between the two countries, visas for more journalists and even agreements on climate change and resumption of high-level military dialogue.

But while it is important for Wang and the Americans to discuss points of contention in the Indo-Pacific region and elsewhere, Kennedy said it is unlikely the two sides will reach much agreement.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said Wang will "have in-depth exchanges of views" with U.S. officials on a range of issues and "state China's principled position and legitimate concerns" on relations between the two countries.

The Chinese president last came to the U.S. in 2017, when former President Donald Trump hosted him at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida. Biden, who took office in 2021, has yet to host Xi on U.S. soil. The two men last met in Bali, Indonesia, in November 2022, on the sidelines of the Group of 20 meeting of leading rich and developing nations.

Wang's trip is one of a

string of meetings and activities to warm up Xi's visit to the U.S.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom, who is visiting China this week, had a surprise meeting with Xi on Wednesday in Beijing. The Chinese president told the governor that "the achievements of China-U.S. relations have not come easily and should be cherished all the more," according to the official news agency Xinhua.

Earlier this month, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer led a delegation of six senators to China, in the first visit by U.S. lawmakers since 2019. Schumer was also received by Xi, who said the Thucydides Trap is "not inevitable." The Thucydides Trap is a political term for the tendency of major clashes when an emerging power challenges an existing power.

The U.S.-China relationship began to sour in 2018 when the Trump administration slapped hefty tariffs on \$50 billion worth of Chinese goods. It deteriorated further over a range of issues, including rights abuses, the South China Sea, Taiwan, technology and the COVID-19 pandemic. MDT/AP

Both sides spoke about a rise in extreme weather in their countries.

California and China issued a declaration on Wednesday pledging to work together to combat climate change, including in offshore wind, advanced energy storage technologies and zero-emission vehicles, according to the text.

Newsom was greeted in Beijing with a warmth and friendliness rarely seen between U.S. and Chinese officials. On Wednesday, he met with Chinese leader Xi Jinping, as well as other senior leaders including top diplomat Wang Yi and Vice President Han Zheng.

Newsom has highlighted climate as an area where both sides needed to cooperate, as it concerns the survival and future of the human population.

Governors of California, which has an economy larger than most countries, have a long history of climate collaboration with China. MDT/AP

er climate rnia Governor visits



Climate Dialogue held at the Yanqi hotel on the outskirts of Beijing

a leader in regulating air pollution and other climate-related issues, Newsom said in opening remarks.

"But we recognize the limits of subnational leadership. We need more

partners. And I'm here in that light and in that spirit of partnership and also humility, recognizing we don't have all the answers," the California governor said.



A Long March rocket carrying a crew of Chinese astronauts in a Shenzhou-17 spaceship lifts off at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern China, yesterday

SPACE

China sends its youngest-ever crew to space as it seeks to put astronauts on moon before 2030

ANDY WONG,
JIUQUAN SATELLITE
LAUNCH CENTER

CHINA launched its youngest-ever crew for its orbiting space station yesterday as it seeks to put astronauts on the moon before 2030.

The Shenzhou 17 spacecraft lifted off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center on the edge of the Gobi Desert in northwestern China atop a Long March 2-F rocket at 11:14 a.m. (0314 GMT)

According to the China Manned Space Agency, the average age of the three-member crew is the youngest since the launch of the space station construction mission, state broadcaster CCTV earlier reported. Their average age is 38, state media China Daily said.

Beijing is pursuing plans to place astronauts on the moon before the end of the decade amid a rivalry with the U.S. for reaching new milestones in outer space. This reflects the competition for influence between the world's two largest economies in the technology,

military and diplomatic fields.

The trio — Tang Hongbo, Tang Shengjie and Jiang Xinlin — will replace a crew that has been on the station for six months. Tang is a veteran who led a 2021 space mission for three months.

The new crew will conduct experiments in space medicine, space technology and other areas during their mission and will help install and maintain the equipment inside and outside the station, the agency said.

On Wednesday, the agency also announced plans to send a new telescope to probe deep into the universe. CCTV said the telescope would enable surveys and mapping of the sky, but no timeframe was given for the installation.

China has researched the movement of stars and planets for thousands of years while in modern times, it has pushed to become a leader in space exploration and science.

It built its own space station after it was excluded from the International Space Station, largely due to U.S. concerns over the control of the pro-

gram by the People's Liberation Army, the military branch of the ruling Communist Party.

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

American spending, supply chains and capabilities are believed to give it a significant edge over China, at least for now. China has broken out in some areas, however, bringing samples back from the lunar surface for the first time in decades and landing a rover on the less explored far side of the moon.

The U.S., meanwhile, aims to put astronauts back on the lunar surface by the end of 2025 as part of a renewed commitment to crewed missions, aided by private sector players such as SpaceX and Blue Origin.

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



President Joe Biden meets Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in the Oval Office of the White House

AUSTRALIA-US

Biden calls ally 'an anchor to peace and prosperity' during state visit from Albanese

CHRIS MEGERIAN,
WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Joe Biden described Australia as “an anchor to peace and prosperity” while standing alongside Prime Minister Anthony Albanese at the White House yesterday [Macau time], part of a state visit intended to deepen an alliance that’s increasingly viewed as a critical counterweight to China’s influence in the Pacific.

It was the ninth and most high-profile meeting between the two leaders, reflecting their work toward closer ties on climate change, technology and national security. The United States also plans to provide nuclear-powered submarines to Australia in the coming years, part of a collaboration with the United Kingdom.

“We renewed our commitment to defend the values that are at the heart of this alliance,” Biden said. “We continue to stand as one to forge a better future for both of us and all of the region.”

The state visit, only the fourth since Biden took office, came against the backdrop of escalating fighting between Israel and Hamas. Biden began a joint press conference with Albanese by expressing concern about the

violence and calling for renewed dedication toward the eventual creation of a Palestinian state.

“When this crisis is over, there has to be a vision of what comes next,” he said. “And in our view has to be a two-state solution.”

Biden’s remarks also nodded toward the potential for conflict in the the South China Sea, where just days ago Chinese ships blocked and collided with two Philippine vessels.

“I want to be very clear,” Biden said. “The United States’ defense commitment to the Philippines is iron clad.”

Albanese arrived at the White House earlier yesterday as a military band played and 4,000 guests watched from the South Lawn.

Biden said their alliance is characterized by “imagination, ingenuity and innovation,” and they will “race undaunted to a future we know is possible if we work together.”

Albanese said the “soul of our partnership” is “not a pact against a common enemy,” but “a pledge to a common cause.”

The two leaders said they would work together on supporting economic development among Pacific island nations, a key arena as the U.S. seeks the upper hand in the region. They plan to invest in building mari-

time infrastructure and laying undersea cables to strengthen internet connectivity.

They also want to have U.S. companies launch space missions from Australia, and Microsoft announced it would spend \$3 billion on cybersecurity, cloud computing and artificial intelligence there.

The initiatives come on top of a previously announced defense arrangement in which the U.S. is developing nuclear-powered submarines for Australia. The collaboration, which also involves the United Kingdom, is known as AUKUS, an acronym for the three countries’ names.

“State visits are a big deal,” said Charles Edel, a senior adviser and Australia chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. “They’re filled with plenty of pomp and circumstance, but they also serve as an opportunity to take stock of critical relationships and push them further forward.”

The events end with a state dinner in a pavilion erected on the South Lawn of the White House. On the menu will be farro and roasted beet salad, butternut squash soup and sarsaparilla-braised short ribs.

The B-52s, a rock group, were originally scheduled to perform,

but they’ve been replaced by military bands.

“We are now in a time when so many are facing sorrow and pain, so we made a few adjustments to the entertainment portion of the evening,” first lady Jill Biden said.

The scenes of celebration will be juxtaposed with the crisis in the Middle East, where Israel has increased its bombardment of the Gaza Strip in retaliation against Hamas for its Oct. 7 attack. Hundreds of Palestinians were reported killed in a single day, and more bloodshed is expected as Israel prepares a ground invasion of the densely populated territory.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said there’s “no more important time than now” to hold the state visit to demonstrate the strength of the U.S. relationship with Australia.

The outbreak of war “doesn’t stop the work that the president has continued to do, whether it’s these diplomatic conversations, these important bilateral visits, or whether it’s domestic issues right here in this country,” she said.

Biden has previously hosted the leaders of France, South Korea and India for state visits.

This one is something of a consolation prize for Albanese after Biden scrapped his earlier plan to visit Australia in May during

a standoff with House Republicans over the debt ceiling. The decision forced the cancellation of a meeting of the Quad, which includes the U.S., India, Japan and Australia. A quick stopover in Papua New Guinea was postponed as well.

Albanese touched down in the U.S. late Sunday, and he visited Arlington National Cemetery on Monday to commemorate how Americans and Australians have fought alongside each other over the years.

The Bidens welcomed Albanese and his partner, Jodie Haydon, to the White House on Tuesday evening for a private dinner and to exchange gifts.

Albanese is also tending to Australia’s relationship with China. He announced Sunday that he would meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping in November. He will be the first Australian prime minister to visit China in seven years, a reflection of tension between the two countries over trade and security issues.

“It’s in Australia’s interest to have good relations with China,” Albanese told reporters.

Albanese’s meeting with Xi would come just weeks before a potential meeting between Biden and Xi during a gathering of Asian leaders in San Francisco. Beijing has not yet announced whether Xi will attend the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, known as APEC.

China’s top diplomat arrives in Washington today to meet with top U.S. officials, including Secretary of State Antony Blinken and national security adviser Jake Sullivan.

Congressional chaos is another complicating factor for Albanese’s visit. House Republicans finally settled on a new speaker Wednesday, choosing Rep. Mike Johnson of Louisiana. Although the vote ends weeks of disunity, another potential government shutdown looms in November.

For Australia, that means critical issues could be left in limbo. Officials in both countries are hoping to streamline rules on weapons exports to improve defense collaboration.

Biden also wants \$3.4 billion to expand naval production facilities to help provide Australia with nuclear-powered submarines. Sullivan described the proposal as “a key component to making our AUKUS agreement a success.”

Australia plans to buy up to five U.S. submarines and later build its own. It’s the first time in 65 years that the U.S. has shared its nuclear propulsion technology.

John Lee, a Sydney-based senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, said the two countries are straining to make progress on their plans.

“The U.S. and Australia are not on track,” he said of their defense partnership. **MDT/AP**

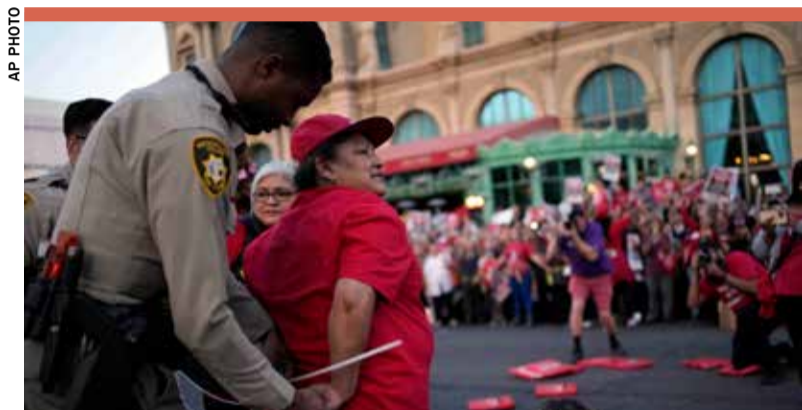
USA

Dozens of union workers arrested on Las Vegas Strip for blocking traffic as thousands rally

RIO YAMAT, LAS VEGAS

THOUSANDS of hotel workers fighting for new union contracts rallied on the Las Vegas Strip yesterday [Macau time], halting rush-hour traffic before dozens were arrested for sitting in the street. The stepped-up labor unrest aimed to draw attention to negotiations with three major casino companies.

Seated in two separate circles, workers in red T-shirts blocked cars in both directions for roughly 30 minutes as the sun sank in the west, casting golden rays across one of the most recognizable stretches of the Strip near the Bellagio fountain, the Eiffel Tower replica and Caesars Palace. Police officers with zip ties eventually started taking protesters into custody, leading them to a white police bus with flashing red and blue lights.



A Las Vegas police officer arrests a member of the Culinary Workers Union along the Strip

Las Vegas police said 58 people were cited for assembling to disturb the peace, a misdemeanor.

"The event was peaceful," Lt. Mark Lourenco said via text message.

The Culinary Workers Union overwhelmingly voted last month to authorize a strike if they don't soon reach agreements with MGM

Resorts International, Caesars Entertainment and Wynn Resorts.

The companies did not immediately respond to emailed requests for comment.

It also comes at the same time casino workers in Michigan, including employees of the MGM Grand Detroit, are on strike.

Leaders of the Culinary

Workers Union said they wanted a show of force ahead of any potential strike.

As the protest began, Kimberly Dopler, a cocktail server at Wynn Las Vegas since it opened in 2005, said she planned to halt traffic.

"I'm hoping that the companies will listen to us and realize that we're not joking. We're ready to walk out," she said.

Two visitors from Missouri, Cindy Hiatt and Michelle Shirley, watched as the rally began. They said they won't return to Las Vegas again during any potential strike by hotel workers.

"The hotels are going to have to realize that they're not going to have people wanting to come to Vegas without these workers," Hiatt said.

A Las Vegas strike deadline has not yet been set as the union and casino companies return to the bargaining table this week. But

Ted Pappageorge, the union's secretary and treasurer, told reporters this month that thousands of workers who keep the Strip's hotel-casinos humming could walk off the job in the coming weeks if the latest round of negotiations aren't productive.

The culinary union is the largest labor union in Nevada with about 60,000 members. Contracts for about 40,000 of them in Las Vegas expired recently, and negotiations have been underway for months over topics such as pay and working conditions.

Bethany Khan, the union's spokesperson, said in an interview after the protest that the union will cover all legal fees for the workers who were arrested, including bail and any costs for legal representation in court.

Kahn said all union members currently receive health insurance and earn about \$26 hourly, including benefits. She declined to say how much the union is seeking in pay raises because "we do not negotiate in public," although the union has said it is asking for "the largest wage increases ever negotiated" in its history.

The union hasn't gone on strike in more than three decades. A walkout would be the latest in a series of high-profile job actions around the country, including walkouts in Hollywood and the auto production lines in Detroit.

MDT/AP

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ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

FEARING AIRSTRIKES, PALESTINIANS IN GAZA DEFY ISRAELI EVACUATION ORDERS

SAMY MAGDY & WAFAA
SHURAF, DEIR AL BALAH

MAHMOUD Shalabi did not evacuate his home in northern Gaza despite the frightful Israeli warnings of a looming, far more brutal assault to come as it presses ahead with its war against the Hamas militant group.

The Palestinian aid worker is among hundreds of thousands who have remained. Others who initially heeded the Israeli warnings to head south have returned to the territory's north, where Israel says it considers all those who stay possible "accomplices" of Hamas.

Shalabi said leaving his home in Beit Lahia didn't make sense considering the relentless bombardment of southern Gaza, where Israel has repeatedly urged the more than 1 million northern residents like him to seek refuge. The overcrowded shelters and shortages of water and food in the south played a part in their decisions, said Shalabi and others who remained.

Risk death at home, or elsewhere in Gaza, they said.

Leaving would be reasonable only if Israel stopped targeting the south, said Shalabi, who works for Medical Aid for Palestinians, a U.K.-based charity providing health services. "It doesn't make sense to me that I should leave my home to go and get killed in a tent in the south of Gaza," he said.

The risks for those staying in the north are likely to rise exponentially in the event of an expected Israeli ground offensive, after two-and-a-half weeks of heavy bombardments have already claimed more than 6,500 lives in Gaza, according to the Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry.

With tens of thousands of troops massed along Israel's border with Gaza, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday [Macau time] Israel was preparing for a ground incursion. He refused to say when it would begin.

Israeli military officials have said they are determined to crush Hamas in res-

AP PHOTO



ponse to its brutal Oct. 7 attack on Israeli border communities, and the focus will be on the north, including Gaza City, where Israel says key Hamas assets, tunnels and bunkers are located.

Some 350,000 Palestinians are still in northern Gaza, according to Israeli estimates. Military officials have repeatedly exhorted Palestinians to move south, but have not said whether the presence of a large number of civilians would be a factor in deciding whether to send in tanks and ground troops.

Israel says it seeks to strike Hamas and doesn't target civilians, but Gaza health officials say many of those killed have been women and children. Those numbers are expected to climb with a ground offensive, which would likely see fierce fighting inside crowded urban areas.

International rights groups have sharply criticized the Israeli evacuation orders, saying they cannot be considered effective warning to civilians, under the rules of international law, because of a lack of realistic options for those fleeing.

"When the evacuation routes are bombed, when people north as well as sou-

th are caught up in hostilities, when the essentials for survival are lacking, and when there are no assurances for return, people are left with nothing but impossible choices," said Lynn Hastings, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator for the Palestinian territories. "Nowhere is safe in Gaza."

Those staying put in the north are bracing for worse to come. They live among the ruins of once bustling neighborhoods while facing dire shortages of fuel, food and water amid looming hospital shutdowns.

Services in the north have deteriorated since Israel's evacuation order prompted at least 700,000 Palestinians to flee south. Most homes have no electricity, water or fuel.

More than 1.4 million Gaza residents are now displaced across the narrow strip, out of a population of 2.3 million, and U.N. shelters are packed at triple their capacity, U.N. agencies say.

In the north, entire neighborhoods have been reduced to rubble.

"Everywhere there is debris, there are destroyed cars, there are destroyed houses. And it's really difficult to get from one location to the other because there is

no fuel," Shalabi said.

He said he walked for two hours to find a bakery still selling bread to feed his family of 10. Shop shelves are empty; residents are living on canned beans, pineapple, corn.

The little fuel still available, often from private stockpiles, is sold for exorbitant prices. Some rent out small water pump motors, demanding 50 shekels (\$12) an hour, a huge amount for the average Gaza resident.

This week Shalabi ran out of cash, and scoured the blocks of dilapidated streets to find a functioning ATM. There were none.

About 50,000 people are sheltering on the grounds of Shifa Hospital, Gaza's largest, in Gaza City. It is overwhelmed by a steady stream of wounded from airstrikes amid warnings that severe shortages of fuel, needed to power generators, could trigger a shutdown. No new fuel has been allowed into Gaza since the Oct. 7 raid.

Still, many Palestinians are choosing to return north, tired of moving from place-to-place under Israeli fire as shelters become overcrowded and unlivable. U.N. monitors estimate 30,000 have returned. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1968 POLICE CLASH WITH ANTI-WAR PROTESTERS



Trouble has flared in Grosvenor Square, London, after an estimated 6,000 marchers faced up to police outside the United States Embassy.

The protesters had broken away from another, bigger, march against US involvement in Vietnam but were confronted by a wall of police.

The breakaway group, led by the Maoist Britain-Vietnam Solidarity Front was almost thwarted by the march organisers who were aware of the plan and feared violence would erupt.

Once in Grosvenor Square the protesters formed a human chain and charged at the police wall but failed to break through and, after three hours of stalemate, they all dispersed.

In the streets surrounding the square fireworks and other missiles were thrown but no injuries were caused and police considered them to be isolated incidents.

The rest of the march, organised by the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC), continued peacefully to Hyde Park.

At Downing Street, Tariq Ali of the VSC, handed in a petition, signed by 75,000 to ask the government to stop supporting the US in its war against Vietnam.

The Home Secretary, James Callaghan, praised the demonstration saying "self-control was shown by the mass of the demonstrators".

He also praised the discipline and restraint shown by police.

"I doubt if this kind of demonstration could have taken place so peacefully in any other part of the world," he said.

Security for the march was high. A thousand-strong team of police was stationed outside the US Embassy and policemen lined the route of the march with back-up following in coaches.

The turnout for the march was around 25,000, half the number predicted by police and organisers.

But, far from being disappointed at the low turnout Mr Ali said: "This is not the end. This is the beginning of the campaign."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Security for the march was high after police were criticised for failing to contain a similar demonstration at the US Embassy in March which ended with over 300 arrests.

The last American troops left Vietnam on 29 March 1973.

The following year there were frequent violations of the peace treaty.

In 1975, fullscale warfare resumed between North and South Vietnam -without American intervention. In 1976 the first elections were held to a National Assembly, finally reuniting North and South.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Pleasure trips will be most enjoyable and should lead to new and lasting friendships. Stay mellow. Don't evade important issues; you may find yourself backed into a corner.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Your ability to communicate with ease will win the hearts of those you are in touch with today. You will have the stamina and the know how to raise your earning power.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Passion is inevitable and commitments can be made during the heat of the night. Your high energy, original ideas, and excellent memory will aid your accomplishments.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Female colleagues may be able to help you get the job done. You are best to listen for the time being. Get involved in jobs that require creative input.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You can win points with both peers and superiors. You can open up to your mate and let them know what you expect out of this relationship. You have the stamina and determination to succeed.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Take a look at investment opportunities. You could be tempted to overspend on unnecessary items. Organize your house and be sure to include the whole family in the projects you have set out to do.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Pleasure trips or friendly get-togethers will be satisfying and intellectually stimulating. You can make the most headway if you put in some overtime.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
A romantic infatuation from your past may surface if you frequent places that you both used to go. You must not let fellow workers take advantage of your fine talents.

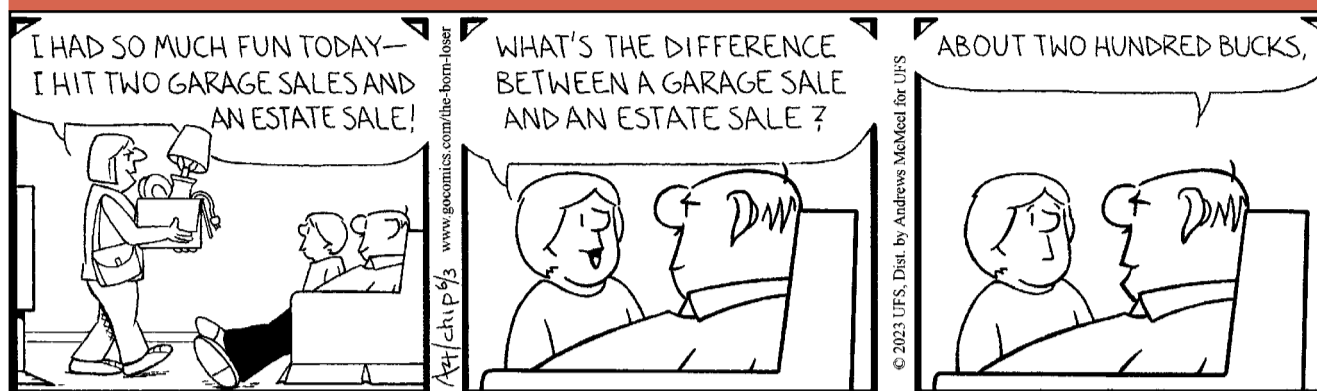
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Do not force your opinions on others the connections will be short lived. Your hard work will payoff; advancement looks positive. Catch up on overdue paperwork.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You can make money through your own creative efforts. You're in the mood to do things such as competitive sports, or perhaps a night on the town.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Don't involve yourself in the emotional problems of those you work with. Get rich quick schemes will not be successful. Don't exhaust yourself or minor health problems will set in.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Finish those changes you've been talking about making to your residence. You may have problems with those you live with. You may be up for some changes in your home.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

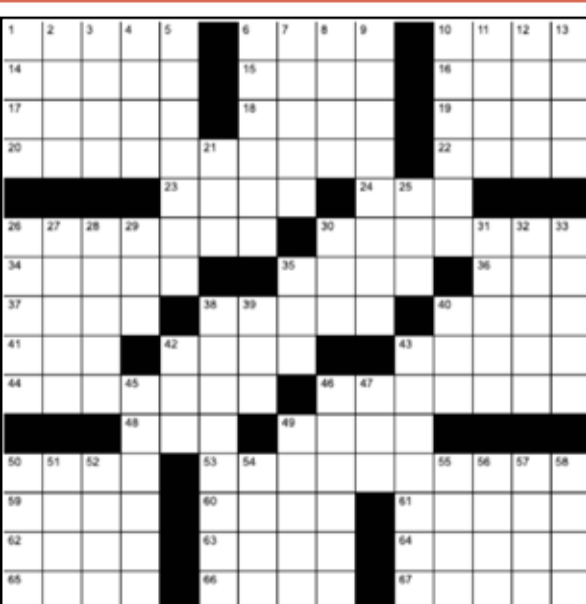
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	6	21	fine
Changchun	-3	12	fine
Chengdu	14	20	cloudy
Chongqing	17	20	rain
Fuzhou	21	24	rain
Guangzhou	22	31	rain
Guiyang	13	15	overcast
Haikou	23	28	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	16	25	overcast
Harbin	-2	11	fine
Hefei	14	24	overcast
Nanjing	16	23	cloudy
Shanghai	18	23	cloudy
Taipei	22	24	rain
Wuhan	17	23	overcast
Hong Kong	25	28	overcast
WORLD			
Moscow	-1	0	snow
Frankfurt	9	12	rain
Paris	11	16	rain
London	10	14	rain
New York	18	26	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Red as ___; 6- Chews the fat; 10- Hole-making tools; 14- Concise; 15- Area of 4840 square yards; 16- Beat to a froth; 17- Worker's reward; 18- Chieftain, usually in Africa; 19- Nimbus; 20- Unfinished; 22- Let's just leave ___ that; 23- Egyptian goddess of fertility; 24- And not; 26- Pertaining to plants; 30- From dawn to dusk; 34- Encompassed about; 35- Says further; 36- Aussie hopper; 37- Room in a casa; 38- Stickum; 40- "Damn Yankees" role; 41- "___ loves you, yeah, yeah, yeah"; 42- Hats; 43- Corruptible; 44- Bread-like item made of Quaker product?; 46- Prayers; 48- Despot Amin; 49- Monetary unit of China; 50- Young salmon; 53- Superficial knowledge; 59- Util. bill; 60- Spanish snack; 61- Dead duck; 62- Monetary unit of Cambodia; 63- Highly excited; 64- Sleep disorder; 65- River to the Ubangi; 66- Greek goddess of victory; 67- Reposes;

DOWN 1- Longfellow's bell town; 2- Pinto or lima; 3- Actor Stoltz; 4- Canadian gas brand; 5- Abounding; 6- Irish tongue; 7- Tops; 8- Londoner, e.g.; 9- Sing for; 10- Spinning; 11- Come again?; 12- Country singer McCann; 13- Primer pet; 21- Letter before omega; 25- Yiddish plights; 26- Ezio Pinza, for one; 27- City on the Missouri; 28- Apartment sign; 29- Gasteyer of "Saturday Night Live"; 30- Banned spray; 31- Home of the Black Bears; 32- Atari founder Bushnell; 33- Scores; 35- Donkey's uncle; 38- Republic in S Asia; 39- Copy; 40- Bandleader Brown; 42- Bounder; 43- Impure acetic acid; 45- Ringlike formation; 46- Interruption; 47- Snitch; 49- Aquatic opossium; 50- Andean country; 51- That's ___!; 52- Spool; 54- Biblical gift bearers; 55- Thick cord; 56- Hosteries; 57- Nair rival; 58- Fat, in France;



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

DRIVE IN

TEEN DREAMS AND ADULT NIGHTMARES IN SOFIA COPPOLA'S 'PRISCILLA'

JAKE COYLE,
MDT/AP FILM WRITER

DREAMILY gazing at the album covers of Elvis Presley was not, statistically speaking, a rare habit among American teen girls in the late 1950s and early '60s.

But for Priscilla Beaulieu, teenage fantasy became a strange and surreal reality. Sofia Coppola's "Priscilla," starring Cailee Spaeny, captures all the dreaminess, the absurdity and, finally, the nightmare of falling in love with Elvis.

Priscilla was just 14 years-old — a 9th grader — when she first met him. It was 1959. She was living in West Germany, where her Air Force officer stepfather was stationed.

Coppola, the writer-director of "The Virgin Suicides," "Lost in Translation" and "Somewhere," has always been innately attuned to the forming identities, swelling desires and intimate revelations of young women. In the story of Priscilla Presley (the film is based on her 1985 memoir, "Elvis and Me"), Coppola has found a tale



Jacob Elordi as Elvis (right) and Cailee Spaeny as Priscilla, in a scene from "Priscilla" (A24)

tailor-made for her delicately perceptive style of filmmaking.

As a movie, "Priscilla" is the diametric opposite of Baz Luhrmann's "Elvis." Where Luhrmann's film was lurid and careening, Coppola's is muted and textured. Her film is a kind of fairy tale that turns claustrophobic and cautionary.

"Priscilla" is, at least at first, quite funny.

Their courtship [flows] in somewhat traditional fashion. Elvis, played with relaxed magnetism by Elordi ("The Kissing Booth," "Saltburn"), is drawn to Priscilla because she reminds him of home; it's clear her purity is part of her appeal to him. It's a long time before they have sex, though her youth remains tacitly problematic. "Wow, she's young," says one woman watching Elvis lead

Priscilla upstairs. "Like a little girl."

Their life together is initially sweet if deranged. Priscilla drifts through a dream world even if Elvis' extremes are glaring to us. His bedroom in Graceland is comically gaudy. "I got this for you," we hear Elvis say kindly, before a handgun is handed over.

No Presley songs play in "Priscilla."

And like they do for Holly in "Badlands," things turn increasingly dark for Priscilla. Elvis treats her like a doll he keeps at home while he goes in and out. "It's either me or a career, baby," he tells her. Coppola, who dedicates the movie to her mother, Eleanor Coppola, has long specialized in gilded cages ("Marie Antoinette," "The Bling Ring"). Graceland turns out to be a prison to Priscilla.

There aren't many false notes in Coppola's richly layered film, handsomely shot by Philippe Le Sourd, with sumptuous production design from Tamara Deverell and fine, toned-down costumes by Stacey Battat.

But "Priscilla" fades where "Elvis" found its footing. When Presley's downturn accelerates in Las Vegas, Luhrmann's movie swelled with tragedy. In the same time period here, Priscilla awakens. Yet it feels underdeveloped, coming too quickly, in a sudden rush — albeit a terrific rush, with Dolly Parton playing.

A constant throughout, though, is Spaeny. This is a deft breakthrough performance perfectly poised between youthful fantasy and adult reality.

"Priscilla," an A24 release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for drug use and some language. Running time: 113 minutes.



AD



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



CHINESE MEDICINE SPA INDULGENCE

WHEN one thinks of Chinese Medicine, the concept of spa indulgence hardly comes to mind. Yet, The Spa at Four Seasons Hotel Macao recently launched a new product line, "001 Skincare London," integrating Chinese medicine with sciences and delightful spa experiences.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, our bodies are interconnected by Three Treasures- Shen (mind and spirit), Qi (energy circuit), and Jing (core essence). By nourishing them, we balance excess or deficiency to realign and enhance optimal health. At Four Seasons, the exclusive treatment of "Medic Brush-Cup and Gua Sha Tension Release" deeply relaxes with dry brush, glide cupping and the microSculpt gua sha technique to lift

and break up deeply knotted myofascial adhesions, relieving stagnated physical and mental tension within the body. Stimulating the Meridians to nurture internal systems, it boosts blood circulation to oxygenate the musculoskeletal system, resetting mobility and flexibility of the muscle tone and alignment.

Massage oil used during treatment is masterfully blended by an experienced therapist according to each individual's needs. Made with Eastern herbs, patented actives and peptides infused with bio-mimetic botanicals and precious essential oils, refined textures and tantalising aroma create biological brain-skin reactions, enhancing efficacy and delivering clinic results through an indulgent journey. IS



TASTE OF EDESIA

Crab Feast

IRENE SAM, MDT

AUTUMN is the perfect time to enjoy hairy crab. This week, Wynn invited Chef Zhang Wan Li from Shanghai's Cheng Long Hang, a renowned hairy crab distributor and restaurant which has held a Michelin one-star rating for four consecutive years, to collaborate with Chef Tam Kwok Fung, the Executive Chef of Wynn Palace's brand-new conceptual Cantonese restaurant, **Chef Tam's Seasons**.

Blending the flavors of the Jiangsu-Zhejiang region with Cantonese cuisine, they offered a fleeting taste of autumn's finest. Established for over 60 years, Cheng Long Hang is a household name among foodies as it runs its own farm to ensure high-quality supply. Specialising in Jiangsu's finest hairy crabs, they meticulously select the best seasonal ingredients and showcase unique flavours of the Yangtze River Delta region. With years of experience in curating crab feasts, Chef Zhang has also served as one of the head chefs curating the Michelin Guide Shanghai gala dinner.

Revered around the world for his award-winning Cantonese cuisine, Executive Chef Tam Kwok Fung has led his restaurants to international honours such as Michelin stars and placement on Asia's 50 Best Restaurants. He was honoured with the "Chef of the Year" award from the Black Pearl Restaurant Guide in 2023. At Chef Tam's Seasons, a brand-new conceptual restaurant inspired by the 24 solar terms of traditional Chinese wisdom, he revitalises Cantonese cuisine by matching global ingredients with contemporary culinary techniques, complete with a food and nourishment philosophy that pays homage to seasonality.

OPINION

China Views

Christopher Bodeen, AP

LOYALTY ABOVE ALL

The removal of China's foreign and defense ministers appears to enforce leader Xi Jinping's demand for total obedience and the elimination of any potential rivals within the ruling Communist Party, analysts say.

State media this week confirmed that former defense minister Gen. Li Shangfu and former foreign minister Qin Gang were "no longer serving in office," but offered no details.

The opacity of China's one-party system creates huge speculation about why the officials left office and whether they will face legal censure. Both Li and Qin were appointed under Xi's watch, indicating they must have undergone close scrutiny, but later faced doubt over their personal behavior or political alliances.

"It's possible to see the reshuffle either as a manifestation of (Xi's) weakness or a sign of his strength. I lean toward the insecurity side of the explanation," said June Teufel Dreyer, an expert on Chinese politics at the University of Miami in the U.S.

Xi is breaking with precedent by taking down his own powerful appointees, further turning the entire Communist Party "into the Xi faction," said Steve Tsang, director of the China Institute at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies.

Almost no information has been offered about the fate of Li and Qin, who was removed from office in July amid speculation of his having violated an unwritten code of ethics that is often used as cover for political infighting.

Li, who became defense minister during a Cabinet reshuffle in March and was dispatched to Moscow on a visit to shore up China's backing of Russia, hasn't been seen since giving a speech on Aug. 29.

There is no indication that the disappearances of Qin and Li signal a change in China's foreign or defense policies, which seek to form alliances in opposition to the liberal democratic world order led by the U.S. and its allies.

Li's ouster was likely based on multiple factors, including an anticorruption investigation linked to the equipment development department dating back to 2017, said Meia Nouwens, a China expert with the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

"This doesn't look good. They are your close allies, you've only just appointed them and now clearly something has happened that isn't positive for them to take such drastic actions and remove them from their positions in what seems like quite a hasty way," Nouwens said.

At the same time, some could see the move as a sign of Xi's strength, she said.

It shows "weakness in his inner circle, but clearly strength in the sense that he ... can take these decisions quite decisively if he so chooses," she said.

Xi has a reputation for valuing loyalty above all and has relentlessly attacked corruption in public and private.

China's political and legal systems remain opaque, fueling lively discussion of possible corruption, personal foibles or fallings-out with other powerful figures leading to the downfall of top officials.

China's ruling party is also struggling to revive an economy that has been severely impacted by draconian "zero COVID" measures, an aging population, high unemployment among college graduates and a movement of many of its wealthiest and best educated to more liberal societies abroad.

With his ideology, known as "Xi Jinping Thought," enshrined in the party constitution and with the abolishment of presidential term limits, Xi has structured the system so that he may stay in power for the rest of his life.

Muslim and Jewish civil rights groups say they've seen large increases in reports of harassment, bias and sometimes physical assaults against members of their communities since the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks.

The Anti-Defamation League and the Center on American-Islamic Relations saw increases in reported instances, many involving violence or threats against protesters at rallies in support of Israel or in support of Palestinians over the last two weeks as war broke out between Israel and Hamas. Other attacks and harassment reported by the groups were directed at random Muslim or Jewish

people in public.

A spokesperson for the Council on American-Islamic Relations said yesterday [Macau time] that the organization's chapters and national office had received 774 reports of bias-related acts between Oct. 7 and Oct. 24. The national headquarters had 110 direct reports during that period, compared to 63 for all of August. The councils leaders believe it's the largest wave of complaints since December 2015, when then-presidential candidate Donald Trump declared his intent to ban Muslim immigration to the U.S. in the wake of the San Bernadino mass shooting that left 14 people dead.



In this image taken from video released by the Androscoggin County Sheriff's Office, an unidentified gunman points a gun while entering Sparetime Recreation in Lewiston, Maine

AT LEAST 16 DEAD IN MAINE MASS KILLING AND POLICE HUNT FOR THE SHOOTER

DAVID SHARP, LEWISTON, MAINE

A man shot and killed at least 16 people at a restaurant and a bowling alley in Lewiston, Maine, and then fled into the night, sparking a massive search by hundreds of officers while frightened residents in multiple communities stayed locked in their homes yesterday under a shelter-in-place advisory.

A police bulletin identified Robert Card, 40, as a person of interest in the attack that sent panicked bowlers scrambling behind pins when shots rang out around 7 p.m. Wednesday (yesterday, Macau time). Card was described as a firearms instructor believed to be in the Army Reserve and assigned to a training facility in Saco, Maine.

The document, circulated to law enforcement officials, said Card had been committed to a mental health facility for two weeks in the summer of 2023. It did not provide details about his treatment or condition but said Card had reported "hearing voices and threats to shoot up" the military base. A telephone number listed for Card in public records was not in

service.

Lewiston Police said in an earlier Facebook post that they were dealing with an active shooter incident at Schemengees Bar and Grille and at Sparetime Recreation, a bowling alley about 4 miles (6.4 kilometers) away. A number of parents and children were at Sparetime as part of a children's bowling league.

Ten-year-old Zoey Lavesque, who was there with her mother, told WMTW-TV she was grazed by a bullet.

"It's scary," she said. "I had never thought I'd grow up and get a bullet in my leg. And it's just like, why? Why do people do this?"

One bowler, who identified himself only as Brandon, said he heard about 10 shots, thinking the first was a balloon popping.

"I had my back turned to the door. And as soon as I turned and saw it was not a balloon — he was holding a weapon — I just booked it," he told The Associated Press.

Brandon said he scrambled down the length of the alley, sliding into the pin area and climbing up to hide in the machinery. He was among a busload of survivors who were driven to a middle school in the

neighboring city of Auburn to be reunited with family and friends.

"I was putting on my bowling shoes when when it started. I've been barefoot for five hours," he said.

The bowling alley is home to traditional tenpin bowling as well as candlepin, a variant of bowling found in New England. It's located about 2 miles north of the Bates College campus, on the outskirts of downtown. The alley has a small bar and is popular for local bowling leagues and children's parties.

Melinda Small, the owner of Legends Sports Bar and Grill, said her staff immediately locked their doors and moved all 25 customers and employees away from the doors after a customer reported hearing about the shooting at the bowling alley less than a quarter-mile away.

After the shooting, police, many armed with rifles, took up positions while the city descended into eerie quiet — punctuated by occasional sirens — as people hunkered down at home. Schools as far away as Kennebunk, an hour from Lewiston, reported closing out of caution yesterday. MDT/AP



French President Emmanuel Macron sought to promote — with little success so far — the creation of an international coalition to fight the armed Palestinian group Hamas, during a two-day trip to the Middle East that started in Israel. Leaders he met with in Israel, the West Bank, Jordan and Egypt didn't publicly address the issue.



USA Republican Mike Johnson (pictured) is the new speaker of the House, but the ally of Donald Trump inherits many of the same political problems that have tormented past GOP leaders, tested their grasp of the gavel and eventually chased them out of office. When the House convenes today it will be a bustle of activity.



USA Donald Trump was abruptly called to the witness stand and then fined \$10,000 after the judge in his civil fraud trial said the former president had violated a gag order. It was the second time in less than a week that Trump was penalized for his out-of-court comments. Before imposing the latest fine, the judge summoned Trump from the defense table to testify about his comment to reporters hours earlier about "a person who's very partisan sitting alongside" the judge.



Mexico A day after Hurricane Otis roared ashore in Acapulco, unleashing massive floods and setting off looting, the resort city of nearly 1 million descended into chaos, leaving residents without electricity or internet service as the toll remained uncertain. The early images and accounts were of extensive devastation, toppled trees and power lines lying in brown floodwaters that in some areas extended for miles.