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# Times

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“THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’”

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**41 FIRMS FROM THE SAR ARE ATTENDING THE CHINA INTERNATIONAL IMPORT EXPO IN SHANGHAI, AN INCREASE OF 17% COMPARED WITH LAST YEAR**

P3

**HONG KONG TEAMS UP WITH GUANGDONG, MACAU TO WOO GLOBAL TALENTS**

P4

**SUPPORTERS CELEBRATE OPENING OF GAY GAMES IN HONG KONG, FIRST IN ASIA**

P12



AP PHOTO



**Japan's** prime minister boarded a Philippine patrol ship on Saturday in a symbolic show of support as Tokyo shores up regional alliances to counter China's assertiveness in maritime disputes with its neighbors. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's visit to the Japanese-built BRP Teresa Magbanua, which was docked at the Manila harbor, capped his two-day visit to Manila. He held talks with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Friday to strengthen defense ties amid their countries' shared concern over China's behavior.

AP PHOTO



**Afghan** farmers have lost income of more than \$1 billion from opium sales after the Taliban outlawed poppy cultivation, according to a report from the U.N. drugs agency published yesterday. Afghanistan was the world's biggest opium producer and a major source for heroin in Europe and Asia when the Taliban seized power in August 2021. They pledged to wipe out the country's drug cultivation industry and imposed a formal ban in April 2022, dealing a heavy blow to hundreds of thousands of farmers and day laborers who relied on proceeds from the crop to survive.

**Abu Dhabi** Tense negotiations at the final meeting on a climate-related loss and damages fund — an international fund to help poor countries hit hard by a warming planet — ended Saturday in Abu Dhabi, with participants agreeing that the World Bank would temporarily host the fund for the next four years. The United States and several developing countries expressed disappointment in the draft agreement, which will be sent for global leaders to sign at the COP28 climate conference, which begins in Dubai later this month.

More on backpage

# SMARTER IDS

**ExCo proposes new ID card design to strengthen security features; gov't to go paperless in its funded enterprises**

P2



**NURSERY TO CLOSE OVER INFANT DEATH PROBE**

P3



**NATIONAL STUDENT (YOUTH) GAMES LOCAL SWIMMER WINS FIRST GOLD**

P3

### ALCOHOL CONTROL LAW BEGINS

The Alcohol Control Law commenced yesterday, with convenience stores and supermarkets displaying signs dividing alcoholic beverages from non-alcoholic beverage areas. Some non-alcoholic beverages were also marked with alcohol concentrations below 1.2%. The law is aimed at reducing potential risks or harms associated with the consumption of alcohol by minors. According to Regime of Prevention and Control of Underage Alcohol Consumption, advertisements for drinks with an alcohol concentration of more than 1.2% should carry warnings "excessive drinking of alcoholic beverages is harmful to health" and the "sale or supply of alcoholic beverages to anyone under the age of 18 is prohibited."

### MACAU TO HOST FIRST FORUM ON TIMBER INDUSTRY

The Global Legal and Sustainable Timber Forum 2023 will be held from Nov. 21 to 22 to increase networking, collaboration and business exchange among timber industry stakeholders. The forum will also tackle promoting sustainable forest management, creating legal and sustainable wood product supply chains, facilitating the legal and sustainable use and trade of wood products in a stable market. The forum is expected to attract around 500 participants from wood enterprises and trading companies, industrial and business associations and governments.

### SMG RECEIVES 8 REPORTS OF TREMORS AFTER JIANGMEN'S EARTHQUAKE

Meteorological and Geophysics Bureau (SMG) has received eight reports from local residents who felt earth tremors Saturday as a magnitude 4.3 earthquake struck the city of Jiangmen at 7:24 p.m. The epicentre was located 136 kilometers west of Macau. Hong Kong Observatory, meanwhile, announced it had received more than 100 reports of minor shaking.

# RESIDENTS TO SEE NEW ID DESIGN

ANTHONY LAM

A new ID card design is the core of a proposed amendment to the ID card Executive Regulations, the Executive Council (ExCo) announced over the weekend.

The government's reason for a new design is that the current design has been in use for 10 years since first being issued in 2013. Updating the system is crucial to the security of the card, the government added. Both software and hardware, as well as the card's encryption technologies and security features will be updated.

The change of design is necessary to facilitate the upgrades, the ExCo explained. The overall design will follow the current version of the card, although the location of some details will be changed.

The name of the card will be moved from the back to the front, while the full official name of the city and the country will appear on the back. The city's emblem will be relocated to the top-center of the back side.

The bearer's height, the card's first issuance date and the birthplace code will be removed from the face of the card but can be accessed digitally through a card reader.

Meanwhile, digital applications will be permitted.

Security features such as color-printed window, tactile features and color ultraviolet printing will be introduced.

The newly designed ID will be available by application from Dec. 15, but existing cards may continue



being used until they expire.

### ONE-GOVERNANCE

The ExCo has also announced a bill concerning e-governance.

Changes in four areas are proposed in the bill. The government will strive to go paperless in correspondence between the Executive and the Judiciary as well as govern-

ment-funded enterprises.

Digital documents and their paper counterparts will have equal authority, including public notices.

Should the bill be made into law, residents will be allowed to submit documents digitally. Notifications from the government, meanwhile, will also be sent digitally and considered viewed after three days of

successful delivery.

The probative force of digital documents and data will be clarified to cope with public services. Digital registration and notarization will be more widely available.

Tax charges for the issuance of testimonials or documentations will also be updated to address proposals in the bill.

### RESTRUCTURING OF SMG ANNOUNCED

Currently, the bureau has a structure consisting of four divisions and five clusters. It will be restructured to two departments and six divisions.

The two departments will be responsible for meteorology and warnings, as well as geophysics, supervision and planning. Each will lead two divisions. The remaining two divisions will be directly under the bureau director.

The restructuring will commence Dec. 1.

On April 1, 2024, a new law governing elevation equipment will be enacted. A supplementary set of Executive Regulations will be enacted on the same day, the ExCo announced.

The Regulations stipulate technical guidelines on such equipment in terms of installation, maintenance, inspection and type test. It also stipulates the quality certifications required for the planning and application for inspections of such equipment. The issuance body of type test certifications is also clarified.

# Bank teller alerts account owner of scam

A bank teller has persuaded an account owner to stop a suspicious transfer to a suspected scammer.

According to a report by local media Macao Daily News who cited the Judiciary Police (PJ), a female local university student in her twenties received a call from a stranger last Tuesday. The caller claimed to be the police in Shanghai and was able to recite the student's name and ID number. The caller claimed the student was involved in a serious crime in mainland China, before requesting a video call and that screen sharing be conducted.



During the video call, a presumably fake uniformed police officer presented a working pass and an arrest warrant for the student. The officer started interrogations and requested

confidentiality. Out of fear, the student turned on online banking services and provided the man her account number and authorization codes. She then transfer-

red MOP170,000 into her account, which was later transferred elsewhere.

On Friday, the student was ordered to deposit more money, so she took cash from her mother that she stored at home - MOP800,000 - to a bank in Northern District.

The bank teller, however, discovered a number of suspicious transfers made by the student. Asked the reason for the deposit, the student could not explain clearly because she was trying to hide the reason. Later, the teller managed to stop her from making the deposit, before contacting

her family and the police.

Following investigations, the police confirmed the student had fallen victim to a scam.

The police thanked the bank teller for being vigilant and helpful. Meanwhile, this case is an example of the effectiveness of co-operation between the PJ and local banks to stop suspicious transfers.

The police has also reminded the public to be vigilant against phone scams and to not fully believe incoming number displays as incoming numbers can be fabricated by computer apps. AL

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# Nursery to close after infant death

ANTHONY LAM

**F**OLLOWING the death of an infant at the facility on Oct. 19, the Fong Chong (Taipa) Nursery has suddenly announced its closure after Dec. 31, although investigations into the incident are still ongoing.

On Oct. 19, an infant reportedly became unconscious while napping at the facility. The infant was pronounced dead at the public hospital later the same day. The incident is currently being investigated by the Judiciary Police (PJ).

According to a report by local media All About Macau, the nursery notified its service users through text messages. It said that the management felt "extreme sadness and regret." The message further said that "following a review and after multiple considerations, the nursery has decided to cease operations after Dec. 31."

Describing the decision as "difficult," the nursery claims



that it is not evading responsibility or trying to put an end to the incident saying, "on the contrary, people will be held accountable."

In a statement issued on the prospective closure of the nursery, the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) pledged that it would pro-

vide necessary assistance to affected families. It noted that about 70 infants use the services at the nursery, while 340 seats are available across Taipa. It recommends affected families seek information on [www.child-care.ias.gov.mo](http://www.child-care.ias.gov.mo) or call 8399 7783 during office hours.

It added that it would "seriously follow up developments on the incident" at the nursery.

After the passing of the infant, at least two lawmakers – José Pereira Coutinho and Ron Lam – suggested the installation of video surveillance systems at local nurseries.

The installation of such systems in local public venues is subject to the views of the Personal Data Protection Office, who had earlier commented that such systems in napping and activity rooms of nurseries were inappropriate due to personal privacy concerns.

On social media, users were not satisfied with the sudden announcement of the closure of the nursery, with most calling the operators and the decision irresponsible.

A social media user wondered how some of these infants would cope with two changes in their environment in six months, as they will relocate to a new nursery after this year-end and then to a kindergarten in the summer.

## NEARLY 4,000 PARTICIPANTS IN GP FUN RUN

The 70th Macau Grand Prix Celebration - Guia Circuit Fun Run had nearly 4,000 participants yesterday, with the event being the second running of the Guia Circuit Fun Run after it was held for the first time in 2018. The event saw participants take to the 6.2 km Guia Circuit and run past Mandarin Bend and Lisboa Bend, and race along the Guia Hill section of the track. Wang Kun completed the 6.2 km race with a time of 19:42, while in the women's category, Chio Tong Tong was the first athlete to cross the finish line in 24:20.

## UM HOLDS SMART CITY TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

The 3rd Macao Conference on Smart City Technologies gathered over 100 experts and scholars from home and abroad to explore key strategies, pioneering theories, crucial technologies and practical applications for smart city development. Organized by the State Key Laboratory of Internet of Things for Smart City of the University of Macau (UM), the conference covers five technical tracks in the field of smart city, namely sensing and communications, AI and big data, smart energy, intelligent transportation and urban public safety and disaster prevention. It comprises keynotes, talks, industrial and poster sessions, as well as a newly added panel discussion.

## MACAU NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD SEES OVER 3,500 VISITS

The Macau New Neighbourhood (MNN) has recorded over 3,500 visits from Nov. 1 to 3. Currently on display are 11 show flats, including two-bedroom and three-bedroom modified and unmodified show flats. MNN offers about 4,000 fitted-out residential units for Macau residents to purchase. Among the residential units, 80% are two-bedroom flats with a gross floor area measuring about 88 square meters and 20% are three-bedroom flats with a gross floor area measuring about 118 square meters.

## NON-RESIDENT DEPOSITS ROSE TO MOP337.8B

Resident deposits slightly increased 0.5% from the preceding month to MOP706.7 billion while non-resident deposits rose 3.5% to MOP337.8 billion, according to data from the Monetary Authority of Macao. Public sector deposits with the banking sector grew 0.4% to MOP212.4 billion. As a result, total deposits in the banking sector increased 1.3% from a month earlier to MOP1,256.9 billion. Total loans to the private sector fell 1.1% from a month earlier to MOP1,125.8 billion.

## SPORTS

# Young swimmer wins first gold at NSYG

**S**WIMMER Chen Pui Lam won her first gold medal in the women's 50 m breaststroke event Saturday at the 1st National Student (Youth) Games (NSYG) in Guangxi, China.

The golden accolade is also the first for the Macau delegation in the Games.

Chen finished the race in 31.62 seconds. The events at the Games are separated into school and open categories, with Chen participating in the latter.



Chen Pui Lam

Earlier in the same open category women's 100-meter breaststroke event, the swimmer finished fifth in the

The swimmer is an emerging star who broke the Macau record for women's 50-meter breaststroke with her performance in the Asian Games that ended last month.

Meanwhile, the swimming, the cycling, the track and field teams have finished their competitions in the open category of this Games.

Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong was at the Games as part of the

Macau delegation. She congratulated Chen and presented the medal at the venue. She thanked both athletes and coaches for their achievements at the Games.

The NSYG is jointly organized by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, the General Administration of Sport of China and the Communist Youth League of China and undertaken by the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. AL

## MORE MACAU FIRMS ATTEND CIIE IN SHANGHAI THIS YEAR

STAFF REPORTER

**A** total of 41 firms from the SAR are attending the China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai scheduled for Nov. 5-10, an increase of 17% compared with last year.

SAR Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng led a delegation to Shanghai

Saturday to attend the sixth CIIE.

Nearly 50 Macau entrepreneurs left for Shanghai Saturday as members of the delegation participating in the CIIE this year. This is the sixth year in a row that Macau has organized local enterprises for the event, according to the government.

At this year's expo,

two pavilions will showcase food and beverages made in Macau and Portuguese-speaking countries (PSCs) as well as professional services, such as accounting and taxation, provided by Macau and PSCs.

The Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute has said the number of Macau enterprises it had or-

ganized to attend the CIIE in previous years was over 200, making the expo an important channel for Macau enterprises to explore mainland and even overseas markets.

This year's CIIE fully resumes offline activities, and is expected to welcome guests from 154 countries, regions, and international or-

ganizations. So far, 69 countries and three international organizations have confirmed their participation in the Country Exhibition.

Over 3,400 exhibitors and nearly 410,000 professional visitors have registered for the event, with a record number of Global Fortune 500 companies and industry leaders in attendance.

GBA

# HONG KONG TEAMS UP WITH GUANGDONG, MACAU TO WOO GLOBAL TALENTS

**I**n its drive to attract global talents to the city, Hong Kong is stepping up collaboration with its neighbors, with new deals signed to facilitate human resources cooperation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).

The Hong Kong government signed a cooperation agreement on talent evaluation with south China's Guangdong Province and Macau last week, which is expected to facilitate recognition of certificates in the GBA, making it easier for cross-regional employment for talents.

"Talent is the top driving force for development, and Hong Kong knows it for sure," said Chris Sun, secretary for labor and welfare of the HKSAR government, pointing to numerous policies rolled out by the HKSAR government in the past year to attract global talents.

In his latest Policy Address, HKSAR Chief Executive John Lee revealed further measures to woo companies and talents to the global financial center. The policies included easier access for foreign staff of companies registered in



Hong Kong to enter the Chinese mainland as well as a planned "Global Talent Summit" next year to push joint efforts from the GBA in attracting global talents.

"We want to expand and ac-

celerate talent flow in the Greater Bay Area, which has great potential to become a global talent hub," Sun said.

With the development of emerging industries and modern

service industries in the GBA, the demand for high-end talents will increase significantly, and Hong Kong needs to work closely with mainland cities to cope with the possible talent shortages, said

Benjamin Wong, co-chairperson of China and International Human Resource Management Committee of the Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management.

Sun said Hong Kong could share its international experience with the other cities in the GBA while the mainland cities could share with Hong Kong its market potential and development needs.

"The cooperation is win-win," he said.

At the end of this month, the second National Conference on the Development of Human Resources Services will take place in Shenzhen. To promote the event and facilitate human resources industry exchanges, Du Minqi, head of the human resources and social security department of Guangdong Province, led a team to Hong Kong this week.

"We hope the professional service agencies in Hong Kong can take an active part in the upcoming conference in Shenzhen and provide more high-quality jobs for young people in the GBA," Du said. **MDT/XINHUA**

AD

## Obituary

### Mr. Charles Lo King Chiu 1944 - 2023

Charles Lo, aged 82, passed away at the Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital on 7th October, 2023.

He is survived by his wife Teresa, three children Pearl, Gabriela and Carlos, and four grandchildren Joel, Jasmine, Kiyo and Ibi. A caring husband, a loving father and grandfather and an all-round amazing friend.

Charles was the President of the Sports and Olympic Committee of Macau, China, Golf Association of Macau and Automobile General Association Macao-China. He also served as the Chairman of the General Assembly of Macau International Airport (CAM) since 2010.

Over the last two decades, his commitment and dedicated support to the sports development in Macau and within the region not only earned him the respect and reputation amongst his peers, but also led him to the appointment as the Chair of the Media Committee at the Olympic Council of Asia.

He will be greatly missed by his family, friends and colleagues in Macau, Hong Kong and all over the world.

Funeral service will be held on 20th November 2023 (Monday), commence at 5:00pm and finish at 9:30pm.

The following day, 21st November 2023 (Tuesday), reception will start at 9:00am. After a Buddhist ritual, encoffining ceremony will be held at 11:30am, followed by the funeral procession at 12:00 noon and cremation service at Cape Collinson Crematorium.

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# North Korean art sells in China despite UN sanctions over nuclear program

DAKE KANG, BEIJING

**F**OR sale at a recent Beijing art exposition was a painting with an asking price of \$2,460 that depicted the snow-capped Mount Paektu, the mythical birthplace of the Korean people.

A portrait of a prim young lady in bright brushstrokes was being sold for \$5,190. For buyers on a budget, there were colorful landscapes being offered for less than \$100.

The dealer hawking the art made no effort to disguise who produced the pieces, despite stiff U.N. sanctions prohibiting the sale of such goods: "They were painted over there," the dealer said, "in North Korea."

The dealer, who had salt-and-pepper hair and refused to divulge his name, was a representative of an art gallery that trumpets itself as China's premier seller of North Korean art. The gallery, The Paintings Say Arirang, also operates a studio for North Korean artists in the outskirts of Beijing.

Housed in a fenced and heavily surveilled compound, the North Koreans paint glorified, idyllic visions of life back home. For the right price, the Arirang studio says, the artists will render "exquisite" portraits at "unimaginable prices."

The gallery's existence and conspicuous sales tactics, experts say, highlight

China's lax enforcement of U.N. sanctions targeting North Korea to stymie Pyongyang's nuclear program. A. The U.N. has sanctioned a long list of North Korean goods, including arms, coal and art. The U.N. has also sought to block North Koreans from working overseas in the hopes of preventing North Korea from garnishing the wages of such laborers to fund its nuclear program. U.N. report in March singled out Arirang for selling North Korean art in apparent violation of sanctions.

The U.N. reported that Arirang did not respond to requests for information.

Arirang was not hard for the U.N. to find. That's because the gallery is actively seeking to tap a niche audience drawn to the unique, socialist realist style of North Korean artists.

Arirang was founded by Jin Zhe, an ethnic Korean and art lover born in China near the North Korean border, according to posts written by Jin on Arirang's website. The son of a prominent painter, Jin spent years at a Chinese state-run radio station before a trip to Pyongyang instilled a taste for North Korean art. Jin, Arirang's director, couldn't be reached for comment.

An Arirang employee told The AP by phone that the studio was in operation and offered a tour of the com-

plex. She also said the studio was selling customized portraits by its North Korean artists. The employee, a woman identifying herself as surnamed Shen, changed her story a few days later, saying the base wasn't in operation because "business is bad."

When AP journalists visited the "painting base," guards turned them away.

In lengthy posts on Chinese chat application WeChat, the art gallery expounds at length on the beauty rendered by North Korean artists because they are free from the fetters of the "market economy."

"They do not compare who is richer than the other, but simply focus on pure aesthetics," Arirang wrote on WeChat. "They regard the pursuit of art as a mission of spiritual civilization," not vulgar commodification.

Such art is exceptionally valuable, Arirang said, "because of its superb realistic skills, high-cost performance, high collection value and other advantages."

In most countries, art is seen as a form of self-expression. But in North Korea it is strictly regulated. Artists work directly for North Korea's propaganda authorities, and their mission is to create art glorifying the state and its socialist, nationalist ideology.

Their work also provides income for the North Korean state. **MDT/AP**



## Barrier installation schedule of the Grand Prix

"The 70<sup>th</sup> Macau Grand Prix" will be held from 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of November. Due to the event barriers will be installed and traffic will be suspended in the locations of the streets below starting from 8<sup>th</sup> November. These barriers will be progressively removed upon the conclusion of the racing on the 19<sup>th</sup> November and until the morning of the 20<sup>th</sup> November. The Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee asks for the understanding of motorists and residents and appeals for the respect of temporary traffic signage and instructions of Traffic Authorities.

Date	Barrier Installation Time	Road	Location
8 <sup>th</sup> November (Wednesday)	15:00	Av. da Amizade	Exit of World Trade center (Removed on 12 <sup>th</sup> Nov, reinstalled on 15 <sup>th</sup> Nov)
			Exit of Amizade building (Removed on 12 <sup>th</sup> Nov, reinstalled on 15 <sup>th</sup> Nov)
		Est. de Cacilhas	Depósito de Pólvora (Ramp)
		Est. D. Maria II	Entrance and Exit of the garage at Communications Museum
		Rua dos Pescadores	Entrance and Exit of Macao Water
9 <sup>th</sup> November (Thursday)	10:00	Av. da Amizade	Entrance and Exit of the garage at Jubilee Court Building (Next to petrol station)
		Est. de Cacilhas	Entrance and Exit of the garage at Cheng Pak Kok Building
	15:00	Est. dos Parses	Exit of the garage at the Monetary Authority of Macao
		Av. da Amizade	Junction of the crossing point from Rua de Nagasaki to Av. da Amizade (Next to Jardim San On Building) (Removed on 12 <sup>th</sup> Nov, reinstalled on 15 <sup>th</sup> Nov)
10 <sup>th</sup> November (Friday)	10:00	Av. da Amizade	Entrance and Exit of Car Workshop (Next to Communications Museum) (Removed on 12 <sup>th</sup> Nov, reinstalled on 15 <sup>th</sup> Nov)
			Junction of the crossing point from Amizade Bridge to Av. da Amizade (Removed on 12 <sup>th</sup> Nov, reinstalled on 15 <sup>th</sup> Nov)

ECONOMY

# Premier Li seeks to bolster his country's economic outlook at the Shanghai export fair

**C**HINESE Premier Li Qiang yesterday pledged to continue deepening reforms, expand free trade zones and relax market access for foreign investment while seeking to generate excitement around a largely lackluster economy.

Li made the remarks when delivering a keynote speech at the opening of the 6th China International Import Expo in Shanghai, seeking to draw thousands of foreign businesses shopping for Chinese products and looking to expand trade and investment with the world's second-largest economy.

China's economy expanded at a 4.9% annual pace between July-September, beating analysts' forecasts of about 4.5%, official data show. But that was much slower than the 6.3% annual growth rate of the previous quarter.

The Chinese government has adopted various policies to help the economy; raising spending on building ports and other infrastructure, cutting interest rates and easing curbs on home-buying. But economists say wider reforms are needed to address long-term problems that are stifling growth.



China's Premier Li Qiang, left, greets Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese during the China International Import Expo opening session in Shanghai, China, yesterday

The expo between Nov. 5-10 is an annual event launched by President Xi Jinping in 2018 with the theme of promoting China's image as being in favor of free trade.

"We will further relax market access ... protecting the rights and

interests of foreign investment in accordance with the law, and continue to create a market-oriented, legal, and international business environment," Li said at the opening.

Foreign businesses have com-

plained of a worsening investment environment in China, particularly with the passage of new legislation that could deem the possession of standard economic forecasts as being a form of espionage. American businesses have said current conditions make it almost impossible to invest in China without taking on significant risks.

This year's expo brought Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, currently paying an official visit to China which is largely focused on restoring trade links blocked for years due to economic and political tensions.

From the outset of his prime ministership, Albanese had demanded that China immediately lift what he described as "unjustified" official and unofficial trade barriers costing Australian exporters 20 billion Australian dollars (\$13 billion) a year.

Those barriers have since been substantially reduced and now cost around AU\$2 billion (\$1.3 billion).

"The fact that it is the first visit in seven years to our major trading partner is a very positive step and I look forward to constructive discussions and dialogue with the president and the premier during

my visit to Shanghai and Beijing," Albanese said prior to his departure on Saturday.

At a luncheon in Shanghai on Sunday, Albanese said he was planning to discuss joint approaches to climate change, challenges to agriculture and cooperation in the arts, and said, despite its ups and downs, the relationship continued to be "based on respect, maturity, and mutual benefit."

"Australia will cooperate where we can, disagree where we must and engage in our national interest," Albanese said. "Dialogue with China is vital to helping secure peace, prosperity and security in our region and globally, and to navigate the challenges and opportunities our region will face this century."

More than 200 Australian companies are being represented at the Shanghai fair.

Albanese has signaled that Australia won't back China's bid to join the free trade agreement known as the 12-nation Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, or the CPTPP, saying China did not live up to the proposed standards. He has also said he would protest a lack of transparency in China's treatment of a detained Australian democracy blogger Yang Hengjun when meeting with President Xi Jinping in Beijing.

Despite that, Li said China would continue to "actively pursue the accession to the CPTPP and the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement and negotiate for the conclusion of more high standard free trade agreements." **MDT/AP**

RELIGION

# Head of China's state-backed Catholic church will visit Hong Kong as ties with Vatican are strained

KANIS LEUNG, HONG KONG

**T**HE leader of China's Communist Party-sponsored version of the Catholic church will visit Hong Kong this month at the invitation of the city's pope-appointed Roman Catholic cardinal, fostering dialogue as China-Vatican relations remain strained.

Joseph Li, the state-appointed archbishop of Beijing, will take a five-day trip to Hong Kong starting Nov. 14 at the invitation of the city's newly appointed cardinal Stephen Chow, according to a statement from the Hong Kong diocese.

Chow made the invita-

tion during his landmark trip to Beijing in April — the first visit to the Chinese capital by the city's bishop in nearly three decades — in a symbolic gesture that experts said could strengthen the fragile relationship between China and the Vatican.

During Li's visit, he will meet with Chow and "different diocesan offices to promote exchanges and interactions between the two dioceses," the statement said, without elaborating.

Asked Saturday about the significance of Li's visit, Chow said it was "important that we are connected. ... everything starts with a humanity first, not by struc-

ture, not by policy, but human connection."

"With that connection, we can walk together, we can talk about how to strengthen the structure, how to make some policy, even in terms of policy in the long term, (and) how would that help us to witness for the love of God. Now, I'm not saying this as a very abstract thing. Love is really the remedy for a lot of problems in the world today," Chow said.

As a cardinal, Chow said his job is to foster better communication between the sides.

"Sometimes, they're really just misunderstandings" arising from one's

own assumptions, he said.

Beijing and the Vatican severed diplomatic ties in 1951 following the Communist Party's rise to power and the expulsion of foreign priests. Since the break in ties, Catholics in China have been divided between those who belong to an official, state-sanctioned church and those in an underground church loyal to the pope. The Vatican recognizes members of both as Catholics but claims the exclusive right to choose bishops.

The Vatican and China signed an accord in 2018 over the thorny issue of bishop nominations, but Beijing has violated it. Most

recently Pope Francis was forced to accept the unilateral appointment of a new bishop of Shanghai.

Francis in September insisted that the Vatican's relations with China were going well but said work must still be done to show Beijing that the Catholic Church isn't beholden to a foreign power.

The 2018 agreement has been harshly criticized by Hong Kong Cardinal Joseph Zen, who was detained in May last year on suspicion of colluding with foreign forces under a Beijing-imposed national security law that jailed or silenced many activists. He was released on bail and has yet to be for-

mally charged, but he and five others were fined in a separate case last November for failing to register a now-defunct fund set up to help arrested protesters.

However, Zen was present at a Thanksgiving Mass on Saturday afternoon at which Chow presided in his role as bishop and received congratulations and best wishes from all members of the Hong Kong Catholic community, including those of Indian, Indonesian, Philippine, American and European origin.

Chow pledged to be a servant of all 401,000 Catholics, who make up roughly 16% of the territory's population.

There was no immediate word on a possible visit by Li from the Communist Party-controlled Catholic Patriotic Association, which formally represents the estimated 10 million Catholics on the mainland. **MDT/AP**

PHILIPPINES

# Radio anchor fatally shot while on Facebook livestream watched by followers

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

A radio anchor was fatally shot by a man inside his southern Philippine station yesterday in a brazen attack that was witnessed by people watching the program live on Facebook.

The gunman gained entry into the home-based radio station of provincial news broadcaster Juan Jumalon by pretending to be a listener. He then shot him twice during a live morning broadcast in Calamba town in Misamis Occidental province, police said.

The attacker snatched the victim's gold necklace before fleeing with a companion, who waited outside Jumalon's house, onboard a motorcycle, police said. An investigation was underway to identify the gunman and establish if the attack was work-related.

The Philippines has long been regarded as one of the most dangerous places for journalists in the world.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. strongly condemned the shooting and said he ordered the national police to track down, arrest and prosecute the killers.

"Attacks on journalists will not be tolerated in our democracy and

those who threaten the freedom of the press will face the full consequences of their actions," Marcos said in a statement.

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, a press freedom watchdog, said Jumalon was the 199th journalist to be killed in the country since 1986, when democracy returned after a "People Power" uprising toppled dictator Ferdinand Marcos, the father of the current president, and forced him and his family into U.S. exile.

"The attack is even more condemnable since it happened at Jumalon's own home, which also served as the radio station," the watchdog said.

A video of the attack shows the bespectacled Jumalon, 57, pausing and looking upward at something away from the camera before two shots rang out. He slumped back bloodied in his chair as a background music played on. He was pronounced dead on the way to a hospital.

The attacker was not seen on the Facebook livestream but police said they were checking if security cameras installed in the house and at his neighbors recorded anything.

In 2009, members of a powerful political clan and their associates

AP PHOTO



Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

gunned down 58 people, including 32 media workers, in a brazen execution-style attack in southern Maguindanao province. It was the deadliest single attack on journalists in recent history.

While the mass killing was later linked to a violent electoral rivalry common in many rural areas, it also showcased the threats faced by journalists in the Philippines. A surfeit of unlicensed guns and pri-

vate armies controlled by powerful clans and weak law enforcement in rural regions are among the security concerns journalists face in the poverty-stricken Southeast Asian country. **MDT/AP**

## North Korea is closing some diplomatic missions in what may be a sign of its economic troubles

AP PHOTO



HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL

**N**ORTH Korea confirmed Friday that it's closing some of its diplomatic missions abroad, a move that rival South Korea suspects is likely the latest sign of the North's economic troubles amid persistent international sanctions.

Earlier in the week, the South Korean government said North Korea was moving to close its embassies in Uganda, Angola and Spain, as well as a consulate in Hong Kong, because the sanctions have made it extremely difficult for them to continue purported illegal activities abroad to earn money for their operating expenses.

According to South Korean government data,

North Korea has diplomatic relations with more than 150 countries but operates just around 50 diplomatic posts abroad.

The North Korean Foreign Ministry said Friday that it is "either closing or newly opening diplomatic missions in other countries" in line with unspecified changes in the international environment and the North's external policy.

South Korean officials couldn't immediately confirm if North Korea is truly opening new diplomatic missions abroad.

In comments posted on the North Korean ministry's website, an unidentified spokesperson said it's normal for sovereign states to relocate their diplomatic forces

abroad in pursuit of national interests. They said North Korea will continue to take "necessary diplomatic measures" for the sake of its long-term external ties, but didn't elaborate.

North Korean diplomats abroad have been tied to cases of alleged smuggling of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, gold bars, ivory and rhino horns, as well as money laundering and other illicit activities, to fund their operating costs and transmit badly needed foreign currency back home.

But South Korea's Unification Ministry said Tuesday that the North decided to close some diplomatic missions because they faced difficulties earning foreign currency

due to the international sanctions imposed over its nuclear and missile tests.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry said Thursday that North Korea may close additional diplomatic missions.

North Korean state media said Monday that its ambassadors to Angola and Uganda paid "farewell" visits to those countries' leaders the previous week. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said Wednesday that China respects North Korea's decision to close its consulate general in Hong Kong.

In recent years, North Korea's fragile economy was badly hit by pandemic-related restrictions, sanctions and its own mismanagement. But monitoring groups say there are no signs of a humanitarian crisis or a social chaos that could threaten the absolute rule by leader Kim Jong Un. **MDT/AP**

ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

# Blinken meets Palestinian leader in West Bank, stepping up Mideast diplomacy as Gaza war escalates

MATTHEW LEE, RAMALLAH

**U**.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken brought his frenetic Mideast diplomatic push on the Israel-Hamas war to the occupied West Bank yesterday, meeting with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in his latest bid to ease civilian suffering in the Gaza Strip and begin to sketch out a post-conflict scenario for the territory.

Blinken traveled to Ramallah for his previously unannounced visit in an armored motorcade and under tight security just hours after Israeli warplanes struck a refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, killing at least 40 people and wounding dozens, health officials said. Despite the secrecy and the State Department refusing to confirm the trip until after Blinken had physically left the West Bank, protests erupted against his visit and U.S. support for Israel as word of his arrival leaked.

Aside from pleasantries, neither man spoke as they greeted each other in front of cameras and the meeting ended without any public comment. It was not immediately clear if the lack of words indicated the meeting had gone poorly.

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said Blinken reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to the delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance and resumption of essential services in Gaza and made clear that Palestinians must not be forcibly displaced.

Blinken and Abbas discussed efforts to restore calm and stability in the West Bank, including the need to stop extremist violence against Palestinians and hold those accountable responsible, Miller said, in reference to violence being committed by Israeli settlers.

The meeting with Abbas, whose Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority has not



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken waves as he boards his plane to depart after meetings, amid the conflict between Israel and Hamas, in Amman, Jordan, yesterday

been a factor in Gaza since Hamas took it over by force in 2007, came at the start of Blinken's third day of an intense Middle East tour – his second since the war began with a surprise Hamas attack on Israel on Oct. 7. Blinken had visited Israel and met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday before decamping to Jordan for meetings with senior Arab officials on Saturday.

At each stop, Blinken has offered firm U.S. support for Israel's right to defend itself but also stressed that it must adhere to the laws of war, protect civilians and increase humanitarian aid supplies to Gaza. To do that, as well as to ease the flow of foreigners fleeing Gaza, he has made the case that Israel should implement rolling humanitarian pauses to its airstrikes and ground operations, something that Netanyahu has thus far flatly rejected.

U.S. officials believe that Netanyahu may soften his opposition if he can be convinced that it is in Israel's strategic interests to ease the plight of Palestinian civilians in Gaza. The soaring death toll has sparked growing in-

ternational anger, with tens of thousands from Washington to Berlin taking to the streets over the weekend to demand an immediate cease-fire.

The Arab foreign ministers that Blinken met with on Saturday in Amman – from Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates – issued the same demand.

But Blinken said the U.S. would not push for one.

"It is our view now that a cease-fire would simply leave Hamas in place, able to regroup and repeat what it did on Oct. 7," he said. Instead he said that temporary humanitarian pauses in fighting would be critical to protecting civilians, getting aid in and getting foreign nationals out "while still enabling Israel to achieve its objective, the defeat of Hamas."

Arab officials said it was far too soon to discuss one of Blinken's main agenda items, Gaza's postwar future. Stopping the killing and restoring steady humanitarian aid are immediate that must be addressed first, they said.

"How can we even entertain what will happen next?"

said Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman al-Safadi. "We need to get our priorities straight."

Arab states are resisting American suggestions that they play a larger role in resolving crisis, expressing outrage at the civilian toll of the Israeli military operations but believing Gaza to be a problem largely of Israel's own making.

But U.S. officials believe Arab backing, no matter how modest, will be critical to efforts to ease the worsening conditions in Gaza and lay the groundwork for what would replace Hamas as the territory's governing authority, if and when Israel succeeds in eradicating the group.

Still ideas on Gaza's future governance are few and far between. Blinken and other U.S. officials are offering a vague outline that it might include a combination of a revitalized Palestinian Authority along with international organizations and potentially a peacekeeping force. U.S. officials acknowledge these ideas have been met with a distinct lack of enthusiasm. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1999 AUSTRALIA REJECTS REPUBLIC



Australians have rejected a proposal to break ties with the British monarchy and become a republic.

In the landmark referendum to decide whether Australia would replace Queen Elizabeth with a president, the "no" votes led 54.87% to 45.13% in the final count.

All six states voted against the proposal. Victoria by the narrowest margin of 50.16% to 49.84%.

Any change needed the backing of an overall majority of the country's 12 million voters as well as a majority of the states.

The result was greeted by wild cheering at a monarchist campaign rally in Sydney's Darling Harbour, where 200 people popped champagne corks in celebration.

Prime Minister John Howard said the Australian people had clearly rejected the republic proposal.

"The government will now turn its attentions to those things which directly affect the lives of Australians," he said.

But opposition leader Kim Beazley promised to keep the republic issue alive.

"The referendum was quite clearly lost because of the way it was set up, setting up one form of republic against the other," he said.

"Nothing will ever kill off the republican movement. Nothing will kill it until it succeeds."

Under the republican proposal, a president would have been elected by members of both houses of parliament, and not in a direct election.

A widespread distrust of politicians – as much as strong pro-monarchist sentiment – was seen as fuelling the rejection of a republic.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

During her first visit to Australia after the referendum – in March 2000 – the Queen hinted in a speech that the time might come when Australians would vote to replace her as head of state.

"Whatever the future may bring, my lasting respect and deep affection for Australia and Australians everywhere will remain as strong as ever," she said.

In June 2001 the Australian Republican Movement revealed plans to resurrect their campaign for the Queen to be replaced as head of state.

The Commonwealth, comprising countries formerly in the British Empire, has 54 members from Africa, Asia, the Pacific region and the Caribbean.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**



**ARIES**

**Mar. 21-Apr. 19**

You may be fortunate while traveling. Make decisions about your professional objectives. You may be emotional if you allow your lover to take advantage of your good nature.



**TAURUS**

**Apr. 20-May. 20**

Be honest if you wish to solve the problem. Matters pertaining to your home environment will be favorable if you are direct. Develop some of your good ideas.



**GEMINI**

**May. 21-Jun. 21**

Deal with the needs of children. You can form new partnerships, but don't move too quickly; things may not be as they appear. You need to do something energetic and different.



**CANCER**

**Jun. 22-Jul. 22**

Chances are they are jealous. Your ability to converse with charm will entice someone you may have had an interest in for some time now. Don't get into heated discussions.



**LEO**

**Jul. 23-Aug. 22**

Try to iron out any friction over money with your mate or conflicts could prevail. If you can't get ahead in the company you're with, perhaps it's time to move on.



**VIRGO**

**Aug. 23-Sep. 22**

Plan a nice evening for two. Helping children may be rewarding and challenging. You can enjoy social events and meet new potential mates; however, avoid being lavish.



**LIBRA**

**Sep. 23-Oct. 22**

Take a long look at your present direction and consider your professional options. Your mate will appreciate your honesty. Your knowledge and good sense will help more than you think.



**SCORPIO**

**Oct. 23-Nov. 21**

Concentrate on your career and on making money. You're eager to learn. Travel will be in your best interest. Overindulgence could lead to problems with digestion.



**SAGITTARIUS**

**Nov. 22-Dec. 21**

Your childlike quality may get you into big trouble today if you neglect your responsibilities. Self-deception about relationships is a problem.



**CAPRICORN**

**Dec. 22-Jan. 19**

Sudden disruptions will cause upset and a change of routine in your home environment. Those you work with may have little consideration for the underdog.



**AQUARIUS**

**Jan. 20-Feb. 18**

Someone you work with may be emotional. Sports, physical fitness programs, exercise in general will make you feel better and show some pretty quick results.



**PISCES**

**Feb. 19-Mar. 20**

Don't use the interstate as a racetrack. Beware of someone who is trying to make you look bad. Get busy. You may want to make drastic changes concerning your personal partner.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

**EASY**

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

**EASY+**

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

**MEDIUM**

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

**HARD**

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

**WEATHER**

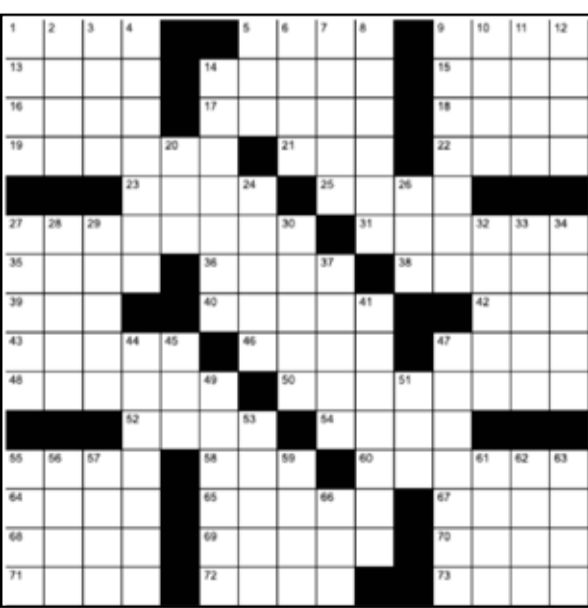
	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	5	11	cloudy
Changchun	0	1	snow
Chengdu	11	21	fine
Chongqing	16	21	cloudy
Fuzhou	22	30	cloudy
Guangzhou	20	27	cloudy
Guiyang	13	20	cloudy
Haikou	24	27	rain
Hangzhou	17	18	overcast
Harbin	-3	-2	snow
Hefei	9	16	fine
Nanjing	13	15	cloudy
Shanghai	12	18	overcast
Taipei	22	28	cloudy
Wuhan	7	19	fine
Hong Kong	22	28	overcast
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	8	11	rain
Frankfurt	8	12	rain
Paris	7	14	showers
London	6	13	overcast
New York	11	14	overcast

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Pierce portrait; 5- Croat, e.g.; 9- Fit snugly; 13- Reddish-brown gem; 14- Plant life; 15- Peter Fonda title role; 16- Capital of the Ukraine; 17- Song part; 18- Fork feature; 19- Bassett or Lansbury; 21- Conductor \_\_\_-Pekka Salonen; 22- Members of the Felidae family; 23- Portnoy's creator; 25- Gas burner or Sicilian volcano; 27- Reservoir for sewage; 31- Less strict; 35- Initial stake in a hand of poker; 36- Apartment; 38- Dweebish; 39- Opponent; 40- Tending to a definite end; 42- Arab instrument; 43- Opt; 46- Numbers to crunch; 47- Some time ago; 48- Loose-fitting skirtlike garment; 50- Antiseptic agent; 52- Flower part; 54- Paris pronoun; 55- Blind as \_\_\_; 58- Fannie \_\_\_; 60- Medical; 64- Bridges of Hollywood; 65- Prefix with red; 67- What's \_\_\_ you?; 68- Ray of light; 69- \_\_\_ your life!; 70- Encounter; 71- Church recess; 72- Not \_\_\_ many words; 73- Salinger girl;

DOWN 1- \_\_\_ silly question...; 2- Stretched out; 3- Remnant; 4- Unfavorable; 5- Foxy; 6- Learning; 7- Emerge; 8- Give up the occupancy of; 9- Lunatic; 10- Charles Lamb's pen name; 11- Dispatched; 12- Driving aids; 14- Downright; 20- Cut (off); 24- Sharpener; 26- Photographer Goldin; 27- Sidewalk eateries; 28- \_\_\_ Gay; 29- Guide; 30- New Hampshire's state flower; 32- Golf clubs; 33- Draw out; 34- U-Haul competitor; 37- Name; 41- Southeasternmost hill of Rome; 44- Ensemble; 45- Big bang producer; 47- Former; 49- Third sign of the zodiac; 51- Like; 53- Massenet opera; 55- Benny, Björn, Anni-Frid, and Agnetha; 56- Page; 57- Small batteries; 59- News; 61- Hwys.; 62- Bit of gossip; 63- Pigeon coop; 66- Aussie hopper;

**Thursday's solution**



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

**Nam Long (Old Taipa)**  
 HKD 10,200/mth 1 2 beds 1 bath

**Coloane Village**  
 HKD 9,950/mth 1 bed 1 bath

AD

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Houston Court (Coloane)  
1 bed 1 bath  
824 ft<sup>2</sup> | HKD9,950/mth



VA FAT (Taipa Village)  
2 bed 1 bath  
830 ft<sup>2</sup> | HKD3,980,000



Coloane Hellene Garden  
3 bed 2 bath  
1,663 ft<sup>2</sup> | HKD11,800/mth



Supreme Flower City (Taipa)  
4 bed 3 bath 1 car park  
2,060 ft<sup>2</sup> | HKD22,000/mth



Nam Long (Old Taipa)  
2 bed 1 bath  
645 ft<sup>2</sup> | HKD10,200/mth



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# Ukrainian war veterans with amputated limbs find freedom in the practice of jiu-jitsu

HANNA ARHIROVA  
& VASILISA STEPANENKO

**N**ERVOUS ahead of their first jiu-jitsu championship, the war veterans gathered in a group to share jokes and help each other tie the belts of their kimonos. Many of them had suffered severe battlefield injuries requiring amputations.

Now they were assembled to perform in the "para jiu jitsu" category at the Ukrainian national competition before hundreds of spectators on amphitheater-style benches in one of Kyiv's sports complexes.

More than 20,000 people in Ukraine have lost limbs because of injuries since the start of Russia's brutal war there, many of them soldiers. A handful of them have dealt with their psychological trauma by practicing a form of Brazilian jiu-jitsu.

"This gives us freedom. We don't feel like we're lacking anything," said Artem Kuzmich, who started practicing jiu-jitsu classes after losing a leg on the



Ukrainian war veterans with amputated limbs perform at the Ukrainian national competition of jiu jitsu in Kyiv, Ukraine, last week

battlefield in 2019.

Kuzmich is Belorussian and voluntarily joined the Ukrainian army to fight Russian aggression in Eastern Ukraine starting in 2014. Now, he mentors soldiers who have recently suffered similar injuries and find salvation in jiu-jitsu.

Much of the martial art of jiu-jitsu involves moves and holds aimed at using an opponent's own force against them.

It's a sport that can easily be adapted for people who have had amputations, with no prosthetics needed, Kuzmich said.

"We work with what we have

and can achieve victories with what life has left us," he said.

The tournament — on a recent weekend — commenced with the Ukrainian anthem, expressions of gratitude to the nation's defenders, and a minute of silence in remembrance of those who perished on the battlefield.

Five out of the six athletes competing in the "para jiu-jitsu" category began their training at the TMS Hub, a safe space for veterans in Kyiv that also offers psychological rehabilitation for veterans. They opened their first jiu-jitsu practice area two months ago.

TMS Hub offers free practice of jiu-jitsu primarily to veterans of the Russian-Ukrainian war who have suffered the loss of a limb through combat. The program is aimed at providing them with a community of people with a similar experience, to help with their psychological rehabilitation.

"Being among their peers is more comfortable for them," explained Serhii Pohosyan, co-founder of TMS Hub.

Just two months into training, five veterans at the TMS Hub gym were ready for the national competition.

One of them was 26-year-old Vasyl Oksyntiuk, who lost both of his legs when a shell hit his car near Bakhmut last December during intense battles for the city.

Before his match, he carefully removed both of his prosthetics and left them outside the competition area. He was dressed in a kimono, with short hair and a black mustache. With a determined gaze, he relied on both of his arms as he made his way to center of the mat to meet his opponent.

"You feel completely different; you forget that you're lacking something," Oksyntiuk said.

He volunteered to go to war in February when Russia invaded Ukraine. "In the Constitution and in the heart, it's written to protect your loved ones, your family, and your home. When the enemies came, something had to be done about it," he said. **MDT/AP**



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**OPINION**

**China Daily**  
 Editorial, China Daily

**CHINA'S AI INITIATIVE SERVES COMMON GOOD**

Talking with British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at the end of the world's first AI Safety Summit held at Bletchley Park on Nov 1-2, US entrepreneur Elon Musk thanked him for inviting China, saying "If they're not participants, it's pointless."

The same view was expressed by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace President Mariano-Florentino Cuellar, who stressed that China's participation makes the summit a truly global dialogue. Many other experts also said China's presence at such meetings is essential.

Data from the World Intellectual Property Organization show Chinese institutions applied for as many as 29,863 AI-related patents last year, accounting for more than 40 percent of the world's total. As such, politicians, entrepreneurs and organization with even the basic knowledge of artificial intelligence cannot afford to keep China away from any global AI summit, let alone turn it into a biased discussion as some scatterbrained Western politicians tried to do before the Bletchley Park meeting.

More than through technological achievements, China has contributed to AI development with its governance philosophy, which is embodied in its people-centric Global Initiative for Artificial Intelligence Governance that was proposed in October.

The initiative calls on AI product and service providers to respect the recipient countries' sovereignty and jurisdiction, prevent the abuse of AI by extremist and/or terrorist groups, and requires all players, major ones in particular, to be cautious while developing AI in the military sector.

All countries, irrespective of their size, development status and political system, enjoying the right to develop and use AI is an essential part of China's initiative. And its spirit is similar to the newly issued Bletchley Declaration that affirmed "the need for the safe development of AI and for the transformative opportunities of AI to be used for good and for all, in an inclusive manner in our countries and globally".

The fact that the first AI summit was held at Bletchley Park is of historical significance, for the place was a British government cryptological center during World War II where Alan Turing and other agents of the Ultra intelligence project decoded Germany's secret messages, most notably those that were encrypted with the German "Enigma" and "Tunny" cipher machines. Many experts say the code breakers at Bletchley Park, 80 kilometers northwest of London, by playing a big role in defeating the common enemy, may have shortened the war by as much as two years.

Now almost eight decades later, countries have to deal with the haunting threats of ethnic, religious and sectarian violence, rising white supremacists and marauding right-wing forces, which in some ways are fueled by AI. So it's time for experts to use one of the world's most advanced technologies, that is, AI, to defeat these common enemies again.

**GERMAN POLICE ADVISE TRAVELERS TO AVOID HAMBURG AIRPORT DUE TO HOSTAGE SITUATION**

**THE BUZZ**

German police advised travelers yesterday not to use Hamburg airport due to a hostage situation.

The airport in the northern part of the city has been closed to passengers and flights canceled since Saturday night when an armed man broke through an airport gate with his vehicle and fired twice into the air with a weapon, according to German news agency dpa. Authorities also said the man's wife had previously contacted them about a child abduction.

Police said that the 35-year-old man had his 4-year-old daughter

inside the car whom he had reportedly taken by force from the mother in a possible custody battle.

A psychologist has been negotiating with the man for hours and there was no indication other people could be harmed since all passengers had evacuated the airport, police said.

Hundreds of people whose flights couldn't depart on Saturday night because of the situation were put up at hotels close by. Arriving planes were either rerouted to other German airports or canceled.



AP PHOTO

**SUPPORTERS CELEBRATE OPENING OF GAY GAMES IN HONG KONG, FIRST IN ASIA**

**KANIS LEUNG, HONG KONG**

SCORES of athletes celebrated the opening of the Gay Games in Hong Kong on Saturday despite opposition from anti-LGBTQ lawmakers, marking the first time the international sporting event to be held in Asia.

Nearly 2,400 participants from about 45 territories, including Britain, the United States, and Australia, will compete in a variety of games, from tennis and swimming to culturally rich activities like dragon boat racing and mahjong in the nine-day event.

The games are being held concurrently in the Mexican city of Guadalajara featuring many of the same events, a first for the competition that was first held in San Francisco in 1982.

Following the procession of athletes, a series of performances followed, highlighting Hong Kong's Chinese culture, but also incorporating modern dance, musical theater and lion dancers.

LGBTQ+ activism is a rare spot that is still making considerable progress in Hong Kong under a government crackdown on its civil society following the 2019 pro-democracy protests. The games foster hopes for a wider inclusion of se-

xual minorities in the Asian financial hub after court wins last month over housing and inheritance rights for same-sex couples married overseas.

The city is also moving toward a framework for recognizing same-sex partnerships following a landmark ruling in September.

But the city's LGBTQ+ development is uneven. There is no law against discrimination based on sexual orientation and same-sex marriage is not recognized. While there is growing social acceptance for sexual minorities, especially among the younger generation, a portion of the local society remains conservative.

Several pro-establishment lawmakers, including Junius Ho, have publicly opposed the event, which runs from Friday to the following Saturday.

Ho asked Chief Executive John Lee to beware of "bad ideologies" infiltrating Hong Kong and acts of "soft resistance," according to a letter he posted on Facebook on Friday. He agreed with other critics who argued that the games advocate for legalizing same-sex marriage, a move they claimed breaches a national security law Beijing imposed on the former British colony following the protests.

Earlier this week, prominent pro-establishment politician Regina Ip, a leading member of the Executive Council, Hong Kong's Cabinet, faced criticism from gay rights skeptics for her support for the games.

Ip, a stalwart of the establishment and long a target of liberal politicians, attended the opening ceremony and delivered a welcoming address, saying "history is being created today." Hong Kong, she said, is proud to be the first Asian city to host the Gay Games, adding that showed the financial center's commitment to place itself "in the forefront of the world's most open and liberal cities."

Ip also cheered that the two largest contingents came from Hong Kong and mainland China. Gay rights and expression in China have proceeded only in fits and starts in the face of a highly authoritarian, conservative and patriarchal regime.

"Equal opportunity and non-discrimination are highly treasured by our government and our people," Ip said, citing court rulings upholding legal rights for LGBTQ+ people and the establishment of a legal framework for same-sex partnerships.

The first Gay Games were first held in San Francisco in 1982. MDT/AP



AP PHOTO

**Iran** Thousands of Iranians gathered on the streets Saturday to mark the anniversary of the 1979 takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, chanting "Death to America" and "Death to Israel." They condemned Washington's support of Israel as it strikes the Gaza Strip in its war against Hamas. The rally came as the Israel-Hamas war entered its fourth week. People assembled outside the former U.S. Embassy in Tehran, with some burning American and Israeli flags.



AP PHOTO

**Russia** on Saturday unveiled a sprawling exposition highlighting the nation's accomplishments, which will run through the months leading to the presidential election in which Vladimir Putin is widely expected to seek a new term. Putin issued a decree in March to hold the exposition and some observers have seen it as aimed at creating an ideological framework for his reelection. News reports had suggested he might use the opening to announce his candidacy for the March election, but his spokesman later said he would not attend the event.



AP PHOTO

**Estonia** will allow Taiwan to open a nondiplomatic representative office of Taipei in the Baltic country to boost economic and cultural ties with the self-governing island but pledged to stick with the "One China" policy in political relations. The government of Estonia, a member of the European Union and NATO, revised its approach to Taiwan at a Cabinet meeting on Nov. 2 while discussing the country's China policy. Foreign Minister Margus Tsahkna (pictured) told local media outlets last week.