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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

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THE SOCIAL WELFARE BUREAU HAS REINSTATED FACE MASK REQUIREMENTS FOR AGED CARE HOMES AND REHABILITATION CENTERS

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STRONG EARTHQUAKE SPARKED A TSUNAMI WARNING, LEAVES ONE DEAD

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AP PHOTO



Indonesia's Mount Marapi in West Sumatra province erupted yesterday, spewing white-and-gray ash plumes for more than 3,000 meters into the air, and hot ash clouds blew several miles to the north, according to Indonesia's Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation Center. There were no casualties, said Ahmad Rifandi, an official at the Marapi monitoring post, adding that villagers were advised to stay 3 kilometers from the crater's mouth and be aware of the danger of potential lava.

AP PHOTO



NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg says he has told Turkey's president that "the time has come" to let Sweden become a member of the military alliance. Turkey and Hungary are the only NATO countries that have not yet formally approved Sweden's accession bid. Stoltenberg told The Associated Press that he urged Turkey to finalize the process as he met with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan last week on the sidelines of the COP28 climate summit in Dubai.

AP PHOTO



UN Security Council voted last week to end its political mission of a few hundred people dedicated to ending the civil war in Sudan. Russia abstained from the unanimous vote to end UNITAMS, the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan. The United States' and United Kingdom's ambassadors expressed dismay over the decision to pull out from Sudan but said the move was inevitable, given the Sudanese government's desire to end the mission's presence.

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CRIME

TWO AIR DRUG TRAFFICKING CASES IN TWO DAYS

ANTHONY LAM

TWO cases of drug trafficking via air have been uncovered in two consecutive days, resulting in the arrest of two non-local residents, the Judiciary Police (PJ) has disclosed.

In the first case, which the police announced Dec. 1, a Moroccan woman was arrested for trafficking cocaine pills into Macau.

The suspect, 32, surnamed Wafa, was on her first trip to Macau. She was caught carrying 105 cocaine pills that weighed about 2.3 kg and were valued at MOP7.6 million, concealed in two empty plush toys.

According to the police, Macau served solely as a transit point, and the suspect purportedly intended to reexport the drugs.

Upon her arrest while entering Macau from Singapore on the evening of Nov. 29, the suspect denied trafficking drugs.

The police said irregularities were noticed during routine luggage checks. Upon inspecting her



luggage, the police discovered stitch marks on the two plush toys. Subsequent examination revealed the concealed drugs.

Disavowing knowledge of the content of the plush toys, the suspect said she had collected the luggage from an unknown man in Singapore, following a request from her boyfriend. She was told to fly to Macau after collecting the luggage. Her instructions were to wait for her boyfriend's further

instructions after entering Macau, the police said.

In another case announced a day later, a man from Tunisia was arrested for attempting to smuggle 2.1 kgs of powdered cocaine into Macau for reexport, valued at MOP6.93 million.

The suspect, 42, surnamed Habi, admitted to trafficking illicit narcotics. He was also discovered through regular checks.

At 10:10 p.m. on Dec. 1, the

man was intercepted at the airport while entering Macau from Malaysia. During search and seizure procedures, the police discovered a black plastic bag in his luggage that contained the narcotics.

The man confessed the drugs were collected in Guinea in late November. He was instructed to travel to Macau through Turkey and Malaysia. Had he succeeded, he would have received USD5,000 as remuneration, according to police.

Another case triggered the arrest of two people for alleged theft. A local man was arrested for theft at a residential building and a woman faced accusations of theft in a supermarket, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) disclosed.

The first case was reported by a local resident, who reported the loss of items to the police. The resident said he had placed three bags of food items at the lobby of a residential building near the Border Gate before briefly leaving

the scene. When he returned, the items were nowhere to be found. He reported a loss valued at MOP350.

Following surveillance camera footage, the police arrested a local man in his 60s in the same building on Nov. 27. The suspect admitted to consuming the stolen food items.

Meanwhile, on the evening of Nov. 28, a theft at a supermarket near Camões Garden was reported. At the scene, the police investigated a Filipino woman after consulting the supermarket staff.

The staff reported the woman had behaved suspiciously in the supermarket and was observed placing merchandise into her handbag without proper check out.

Staff confronted the woman and inspected her bag, finding six unpaid items. The stolen goods were packaged food and drink items, with a value of MOP190.

According to the police, the suspect confessed to the theft, citing greed as the motive.

TRANSPORTATION

Provisional bus stop at Ka-Ho canceled due to bus size issues

A provisional bus stop serving the rehabilitation hospital in Ka-Ho has been scrapped as buses operating along the route are too big for the stop, Director of Transport Kelvin Lam revealed in response to queries from lawmaker Ron Lam.

The official said route No 21 was previously rerouted to include a stop at the hospital.

"However, due to increasing demands, buses on the route have been upgraded to larger vehicles, rendering them unable to enter the provisional stop," the transport official explained. As such, the provisional stop was canceled.

To compensate for the discontinued stop, arran-



gements have been made with the bus operator to allow passengers to remain on the bus despite arriving at the Ka-Ho Fuel Oil Terminal terminus stop, allowing them

to alight at the Our Lady of Sorrows Church bus stop to access the rehabilitation hospital.

In response to further questions, the official pledged that further as-

sessments would be undertaken to explore the feasibility of establishing a direct bus route between the rehabilitation hospital in Ka-Ho and the Cotai hospital.

In response to the lawmaker's question regarding bus services connecting the Cotai hospital, which is set to open on Dec. 20, the official said negotiations had already been undertaken with bus operators. The plan involves detouring some existing routes to include the new medical venue. Bus stops and auxiliary facilities will be added nearby and further announcements will be made once details are available, the official said. **AL**

HEALTH

IAS REINSTATES MANDATORY MASK USE AT AGED CARE HOMES

RENATO MARQUES

THE Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) has reinstated face mask requirements for aged care homes and rehabilitation centers.

Effective immediately, IAS has justified the measure by noting "winter and spring are the seasons with high incidence of respiratory infectious diseases in Macau."

The bureau said in a statement that in preparation for upcoming festivals such as the winter solstice, Christmas and New Year, the IAS had consulted the Health Bureau and determined that from Dec. 2 (Saturday), visitors and staff to all aged care, rehabilitation and drug treatment homes in Macau must wear surgical masks

meeting or exceeding specified standards at all times.

"Masks may only be removed when eating, drinking and other necessary situations," according to the IAS.

Furthermore, visitors displaying symptoms of fever, fatigue, or respiratory symptoms such as sore throat, nasal congestion, runny nose, cough, or with positive rapid antigen test results are not allowed to enter medical treatment venues.

The same bureau also noted staff members who develop any of the above symptoms should seek medical treatment immediately and should not return to work if their Covid-19 rapid antigen test result is positive.

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SPORT

Ethiopian runners dominate local Marathon

RENATO MARQUES

ETHIOPIAN runners have showcased exceptional performance at the 42nd Macau International Marathon.

Debela Kebebe led the male section of the 42.2 km race, with a time of 2:14:05. The final meters of the run were highly competitive, with two Kenyan athletes, Kiptoo Kibet and Paul Matekha, as major challengers.

Kebebe crossed the finish line seven seconds ahead of Kibet, with Matekha arriving 17 seconds later.

The fourth and fifth positions were claimed by Chepkok Kibiwott and Kidrop Tonui from Kenya, clocking in at 2:14:30 and 2:14:34 respectively, resulting in the top 5 finishers completing the race within a 30-second window.

Securing third place overall, Matekha was also the first of the non-invited athletes to cross the

finish line, not having been hired by the organizers.

The best result from the local male runners in the full marathon was achieved by Wang Kun with a time of 2:24:45, placing 14th overall. This performance surpassed several invited athletes who failed to match their expected performance. Notably, Wang Zhipeng from China crossed the finish line in 46th position, with a time of 2:58:26 and behind 15 local athletes.

In the fiercely contested female category, Ethiopian athlete Zinashwork Ambi secured first place with a time of 2:33:38, just one second ahead of Kenya's Rodah Tanui. In third place was Tecla Kironko, also from Kenya, finishing 18 seconds after the winner.

Completing the top 5 in the female category were Li Zhixuan (China) and Zinash Lema (Ethiopia).

The best local runner among the women competitors was Chio Tong Tong in 15th position, with a time of 3:11:38.

KENYAN DOMINANCE IN HALF-MARATHON

Kenyan athletes dominated this year's international half marathon, with a very large delegation of runners. Mathew Samperu and James Kahura came first and second respectively. Samperu crossed the finish line with a time of 1:04:00, 44 seconds faster than his compatriot Kahura, who had to fight through the last few meters to maintain position against Cape Verde's Samuel Freire, who placed third some 15 seconds behind Kahura.

In the female category for the half marathon, Ziporah Kingori (1:15:05) and Lucy Ndambuki (1:16:21), also from Kenya, came first and second respectively. Mirroring the male category results, third place in the women's category was also claimed by an athlete from a Portuguese-speaking country, Angolan Ernestina Paulino.

ARCHITECTURAL FORUM TO BE HELD IN INNER HARBOUR

The CURB Center for Architecture and Urban Design will host the conference "Towards a Living Waterfront – Urban Strategies and Conceptual Designs for Macau" Dec. 9, 2023, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., at Ponte 9 – Creative Platform, on Rua das Lorchas, Ponte 9 – 3/F, Macau. The conference will explore the future urban development of Macau under the new Macau Master Plan and under the Greater Bay Area Plan. It is based on in-depth research, master plans and Master theses developed during a six-year collaboration between CURB and the Master of Urban Design at the School of Architecture of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

RUI CUNHA FOUNDATION TO PRESENT HALFTONE PHOTO EXHIBITION

The Halfone Association will open its annual photo exhibition at the Rui Cunha Foundation Gallery at 6:30 p.m. tonight. The exhibition will showcase 30 works – professional and amateur – ranging from documentary photography to artistic pieces across architectural, fashion, street photography, in color or black and white. The exhibition will feature works by some of the bigger names in Macau, such as André Ritchie, António Mil-Homens, António Sotero, Bessa Almeida, Catarina Cortesão Terra, Cecília Ho, David Lopo, Elói Scarva, Francisco Ricarte, Gonçalo Lobo Pinheiro, Hugo Teixeira and Joana Freitas.

LUSOPHONE-MACAU PRODUCTS FAIR OPENS IN HENGQIN

The branded event, "Let's Hang Out - Lusophone and Macao Products Bazaar," was held for the second time in Hengqin this year over the weekend. Like previous events in Macau, the Hengqin event featured products with Chinese and Lusophone characteristics, such as canned food, wines and spirits, coffee, seasonings, bakery and pastries, fragrances and jewelry, as well as cultural and innovative products. To elevate the mood, live performances, art workshops and games were also held. A total of 25 companies participated in the event.



Ron Lam questions delays in review of 'Advertising Law'

RENATO MARQUES

LAWMAKER Ron Lam has raised concerns to the government regarding delays in reviewing and updating the Advertising Law.

In a written inquiry submitted through the

Legislative Assembly (AL), the lawmaker questioned the Secretary for Administration and Justice, André Cheong, asking why Law 7/89/M was absent from the government's legislative agenda.

The lawmaker noted that this is probably one

of the most outdated laws in Macau, not just because it has been in force for 34 years but also because it provides rules and regulations for an area that has undergone drastic changes over recent decades, with the rise of the internet, social media and

related avenues.

Regarding the current law, Lam said, "Most of its content is outdated and cannot keep up with the pace of social and economic development."

He recalled that back in 2015, several government officials acknowledged the need to review the law and announced that it was on the government's agenda for amendment.

"However, eight years later, there is still no explanation from the government on what happened to the bill to adjust and update this law."

He also noted that earlier this year and in response to a spoken inquiry at the AL, Cheong also said that "to protect the rights and interests of consumers, while allowing the industry to clarify rules and promote the healthy development of industry, it was necessary to comprehensively review of the current Advertising Law." An inter-departmental group was established to work on that revision.

Still, Lam notes, the Policy Address for 2024

makes no reference to this project. He fears that it will again be overlooked.

For instance, the lawmaker noted that many current forms of advertising and store signage are not considered under the prevailing law as they did not exist at the time it was enacted. Consequently, shop owners face untold hassles and the risk of fines due to the lack of clarity and absence of updates to the law.

He also noted that no form of public consultation had been announced on the matter. For this reason, he believed the government was not prioritizing amendment and review of this law and that it would potentially not be addressed over the next year.

He also opposed the idea of the authorities prohibiting and penalizing modern advertising methods simply because they were not recognized under the existing law. He advocated instead for authorities to focus their attention on "getting it right" instead of fining already struggling small business owners.

GAMING RECOVERY SLIGHTLY SLOWS IN NOVEMBER TO MOP16.04 BILLION

STAFF REPORTER

MACAU'S gaming revenue reached MOP16.04 billion (\$2 billion) in November. This figure represents a significant 435% increase compared to the same period last year when the city was still under Covid restrictions.

Reported by Macau's Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ), this data shows a noticeable year-on-year increase in growth in the gaming sector.

Despite this substantial annual increase, November's revenue shows a decrease from October 2023's MOP19.5 billion. October's figures had marked a post-pandemic high, indicating that the November revenue, while strong, is lower than the recent peak achieved by the industry.

The revenue for November is also notable as it represents the fourth-largest monthly total of



the year.

This level of income is a significant rise from the MOP3 billion recorded in the same month last year, showing a strong trend of recovery over the year.

Cumulatively, from January to November 2023, Macau's gaming revenue totaled MOP164.5 billion.

This cumulative figure is an important indicator of the sector's performance over the year and demonstrates the scale of re-

covery since the Covid-19 downturn.

As one of the leading gaming destinations in the world, Macau continues to attract millions of visitors per year, with the majority from mainland China and Hong Kong.

After the opening of borders and the lifting of most Covid restrictions in January, the Macau government has been keen to diversify markets beyond greater China. Promotional visits to various countries, particularly in the Southeast region, have been organized albeit with limited success so far.

From January to May, the latest period with sufficient available data, Macau welcomed 9,436,215 visitors, with a significant majority (96.2%) coming from mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The largest numbers of foreign visitors came from the Philippines (89,047) and Indonesia (43,241),

with many being same-day visitors. Other significant contributors to tourist numbers were South Korea (31,877), the United States (21,780) and Thailand (21,598), with a notable portion of these visitors also being day-trippers.

The top 10 list of foreign visitors to Macau also included nationals from Malaysia (20,423), Singapore (18,195), Japan (17,123), India (13,751) and Canada (10,532).

Interestingly, despite historic and cultural ties, only a few Portuguese citizens visited Macau during this period (1,658), with a similarly low number from Brazil (1,580). Additionally, Macau saw a modest number of visitors from Italy (1,848) and the Netherlands (2,049).

From January to October, Macau welcomed 22 million tourists, primarily from the greater China region.

the maximum size, this would mark the biggest-ever syndicated loan in Singapore funded in the local dollar, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

The significant financing endeavor would complement Marina Bay Sands' rebound from the pandemic as Singapore faces an influx of tourists, including those from mainland China.

The terms of the deal may change as deliberations are currently still at a preliminary stage, according to the sources cited by Bloomberg.

WORLD PORTUGUESE NETWORK ESTABLISHES ASIA AND OCEANIA REGIONAL HUB

RENATO MARQUES

THE World Portuguese Network, a non-profit organization founded in 2012 under the patronage of the President of the Portuguese Republic, has recently established an Asia and Oceania Regional Hub for the first time.

The World Portuguese Network, which is represented through the Portuguese Diaspora Council, aims to strengthen relations between Portugal and its diaspora, particularly Portuguese individuals and those of Portuguese descent residing abroad.

"Through their merit and influence, the Council seeks to have its members contribute to the universal affirmation of Portuguese values and culture," the Council said. The Council has the Portuguese president as its honorary president and the Minister of Foreign Affairs as its honorary vice-president.

According to the organization's information, the primary intervention tool of the World Portuguese Network involves a diverse group of influential Portuguese individuals in the fields of economy, science, culture and citizenship. Currently, this network is said to comprise 182 advisors spread across 35 countries on all five continents.

Regarding the creation of the new regional hub, the president of the board of the World Portuguese Network said, "It is with great enthusiasm that I celebrate the formation of the Regional Hub for Asia and Oceania of the Portuguese Diaspora. This initiative will not only strengthen our economic, cultural, scientific, and institutional ties but will also solidify the presence and influence of the Portuguese community in these fast-growing and dynamic regions. I am certain that the future activities developed by this regional hub will allow the global presence of the Portuguese Diaspora Council to be even more robust and collaborative. Congratulations to everyone involved in this significant step towards an increasingly global Portuguese Diaspora."

Singapore, Abu Dhabi, Shanghai, and Macau are also represented among the advisors of the Council, which, according to the official website, has only one member currently in Macau, Carlos Cid Álvares, executive vice-president and CEO of Banco Nacional Ultramarino, S.A. (BNU).

Among the most notable members of this group are Mumbai-based Rahoo Pai Panandiker, Senior Partner and General Manager at the Boston Consulting Group, with extensive experience in government regulation and policies, particularly in the energy sector across various countries such as Spain, Brazil, Portugal, India, Mozambique and the United States.

Also part of this group is Luís Gandara da Silva, Managing Director of Sogrape Asia Pacific, who is currently based in Hong Kong.

Gandara da Silva's main focus is on the Greater China region. In addition to his work in the wine and spirits sector, he was also vice president of the Portuguese Chamber of Commerce in New York for four years.

Paulo Ramos and Pedro Rodeia are two of the members based in Japan. Ramos is president of the board of directors of the Portuguese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan.

He has a professional background in Biotechnology and Enology, having founded the company 1756 - The Portuguese Wine Company, which specializes in exporting wines to Asia.

Rodeia, a Senior Partner and Chairman of McKinsey & Company Japan, is engaged in its banking practice, having served as a member of McKinsey's Global Board of Directors from 2017 to 2023 and as Chairman of the Technology, Knowledge and Capabilities Committee of the Board. He has over 30 years of banking experience in 28 countries, including China, Singapore, Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, India, Hong Kong, USA, Brazil, Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Poland and several countries in Africa.

Singapore, Abu Dhabi, Shanghai, and Macau are also represented among the advisors of the Council, which, according to the official website, has only one member currently in Macau, Carlos Cid Álvares, executive vice-president and CEO of Banco Nacional Ultramarino, S.A. (BNU).

2023 MONTHLY GAMING REVENUE

	2023	2022	Variance
Jan	11,580	6,344	82.50%
Feb	10,324	7,759	33.10%
Mar	12,738	3,672	246.90%
Apr	14,722	2,677	449.90%
May	15,565	3,341	365.90%
Jun	15,207	2,477	513.90%
Jul	16,662	398	4082.90%
Aug	17,213	2,189	686.40%
Sept	14,937	2,962	404.20%
Oct	19,501	3,899	400.20%
Nov	16,043	2,999	435.00%

UNITS: MOP MILLION

GAMING

MBS seeks \$7.5B loan, LVS denies reports

STAFF REPORTER

MARINA Bay Sands (MBS) intends to secure a loan of up to S\$10 billion (\$7.5 billion) as the luxury casino operator seeks to expand its hotel and entertainment business, Bloomberg reported yesterday.

The Las Vegas Sands Corp.-owned resort may start marketing the deal as early as next quarter, according to sources with knowledge of the matter, who asked not to be identified due to the matter's confidentiality. The plan will include the rollover of a delayed draw-down facility, refinancing

of existing loans and new debt.

Las Vegas Sands has denied the report. "We are neither in the market or looking for S\$10 billion in loans," said Ron Reese, senior vice president of global communications for Las Vegas Sands.

If the deal size reaches



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Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme



澳門有禮運動
Campanha de Cortesia de Macau
Macau Courtesy Campaign



MACAO GOVERNMENT TOURISM OFFICE

Merchants accoladed with "Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme" awards for Food & Beverage Sector and Travel Agency Sector in 2023:

Food & Beverage Sector		
Restaurant (hotel)		
Quality Tourism Services Gold Award : THE HUAIYANG GARDEN (THE LONDONER MACAO HOTEL)		
Sustainable Dining Award : URBAN KITCHEN (JW MARRIOTT HOTEL MACAU)		
Community Care Services Award : THE HUAIYANG GARDEN (THE LONDONER MACAO HOTEL)		
Local Feature Award : 456 XANGAI (LISBOA)		
Operational Innovation Award : LAI HEEN (THE RITZ-CARLTON MACAU)		
Quality Tourism Services Merchant Award*		
1. 456 XANGAI (LISBOA)	15. LE BUFFET PARISIAN (THE PARISIAN MACAO)	
2. BRASSERIE PARISIAN (THE PARISIAN MACAO)	16. LOTUS PALACE (THE PARISIAN MACAO)	
3. CHURCHILL'S TABLE (THE LONDONER MACAO HOTEL)	17. MARKET BISTRO (THE PARISIAN MACAO)	
4. COPA (SANDS)	18. MARMELEIRA SEAFOOD RESTAURANT (THE VENETIAN MACAO)	
5. CRYSTAL JADE LA MIAN XIAO LONG BAO (LONDONER)	19. NOODLE SHOP - MOONLIGHT FOOD MARKET (SANDS)	
6. CRYSTAL JADE LA MIAN XIAO LONG BAO (THE PARISIAN MACAO)	20. NORTH (THE VENETIAN MACAO)	
7. EDO JAPANESE RESTAURANT (VENETIAN SHOP)	21. NORTH PALACE (CONRAD MACAO)	
8. EMERALD HOUSE (THE PARISIAN MACAO)	22. PIN YUE XUAN (THE VENETIAN MACAO)	
9. GODIVA (MGM MACAU)	23. PING RESTAURANT (FOUR SEASONS HOTEL MACAU, COTAI STRIP)	
10. GOLDEN COURT (SANDS)	24. RED DRAGON NOODLE RESTAURANT (THE VENETIAN MACAO)	
11. HIRO (THE VENETIAN MACAO)	25. THE HUAIYANG GARDEN (THE LONDONER MACAO HOTEL)	
12. IMPERIAL HOUSE DIM SUM (THE VENETIAN MACAO)	26. THE RITZ-CARLTON CAFÉ (THE RITZ-CARLTON MACAU)	
13. JIANG NAN (THE VENETIAN MACAO)	27. URBAN KITCHEN (JW MARRIOTT HOTEL MACAU)	
14. LAI HEEN (THE RITZ-CARLTON MACAU)		
Restaurant (non-hotel)		
Quality Tourism Services Gold Award : LUGAR DOURADO E ENCANTADOR (ALAMEDA DR. CARLOS D'ASSUMPÇÃO)		
Sustainable Dining Award : DYNASTY HIP SENG SEAFOOD HOT POT RESTAURANT (RUA DE ROMA)		
Community Care Services Award : LUGAR DOURADO E ENCANTADOR (ALAMEDA DR. CARLOS D'ASSUMPÇÃO)		
Local Feature Award : RESTAURANTE LITORAL (TAIPA)		
Operational Innovation Award : SON CHI (RUA FORMOSA)		
Quality Tourism Services Merchant Award*		
1. ALBERGUE 1601 (CALÇADA DA IGREJA DE SÃO LÁZARO)	5. LUGAR DOURADO E ENCANTADOR (ALAMEDA DR. CARLOS D'ASSUMPÇÃO)	8. SON CHI (RUA FORMOSA)
2. CIDADE DE MARISCO JIN YUE XUAN (MACAU FISHERMAN'S WHARF)	6. RESTAURANTE EXITO DO PORTO EXTERIOR (RUA DE CANTÃO)	9. SUSHI MI TEI JAPANESES RESTAURANT (ROTUNDA DE SÃO JOÃO BOSCO)
3. DYNASTY HIP SENG SEAFOOD HOT POT RESTAURANT (RUA DE ROMA)	7. RESTAURANTE LITORAL (TAIPA)	10. WA FONG DIM SUM (TRAVESSA DA BOCA DOS HOLANDESES)
4. GOLD COAST OYSTER & SEAFOOD RESTAURANT (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN)		
Simple Dining Establishment (hotel)		
Quality Tourism Services Excellence Award : EDO JAPANESE (LISBOA)		
Quality Tourism Services Gold Award : EDO JAPANESE (LISBOA)		
Sustainable Dining Award : COMIDA JAPONESA TOEI (THE VENETIAN MACAO)		
Community Care Services Award : TURTLE ESSENCE SHOP (LISBOA)		
Local Feature Award : TURTLE ESSENCE SHOP (LISBOA)		
Operational Innovation Award : EDO JAPANESE (LISBOA)		
Quality Tourism Services Merchant Award*		
1. COMIDA JAPONESA TOEI (THE VENETIAN MACAO)	2. EDO JAPANESE (LISBOA)	3. TURTLE ESSENCE SHOP (LISBOA)
Food and Beverage Establishment		
Quality Tourism Services Gold Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HIP SENG (LOJA DE GREAT CHINA)		
Sustainable Dining Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TOP FUSION (RUA DA RIBEIRA DO PATANE)		
Community Care Services Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HIP SENG (LOJA DE GREAT CHINA)		
Local Feature Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS BOA FORTUNA (AVENIDA DO INFANTE D. HENRIQUE)		
Operational Innovation Award : ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TING MAT MAT (RUA DO GENERAL IVENS FERRAZ)		
Quality Tourism Services Merchant Award*		
1. A COZINHA MARIANA (TERMINAL MARÍTIMO DE PASSAGEIROS DA TAIPA)	30. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS JIANG YUER (RUA DO GENERAL IVENS FERRAZ)	
2. BEING COZINHA (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN, TAIPA)	31. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS KAM LOU (RUA UM DO BAIRRO IAO HON)	
3. BEING COZINHA (RUA DE BRUXELAS)	32. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS KING SHIP (RUA DE ÉVORA, TAIPA)	
4. BEING COZINHA (RUA DE LONDRES)	33. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS LA FAMILIA (RUA DOS CLÉRIGOS)	
5. BEING COZINHA (RUA DE MARQUES DE OLIVEIRA)	34. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS LANEAPERDEEN (RUA DE MARTINHO MONTENEGRO)	
6. CAFÉ HIDEOUT (TRAVESSA LOU FU)	35. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS MIN TIM WO (SOPA DE FITAS E CAFÉ) (AVENIDA 1.º DE MAIO)	
7. CAFÉ TOFF (RUA DA ESPERANÇA)	36. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS MR GUNG DIM SUM (RUA DO VISCONDE PAÇO DE ARCOS)	
8. CASA DE MARISCOS WA FUNG (ESTRADA DE SEAC PAI VAN, COLOANE)	37. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS PEPPER LUNCH (RUA DO CAMPO)	
9. CHINÉS CAFÉ MARCA MACAU (RUA DE MADRID)	38. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS PORTUCAU (TRAVESSA DE S. DOMINGOS)	
10. COZINHA DE MACAU (RUA UM DE IP HENG, COLOANE)	39. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS SON TAI (AVENIDA DO NORDESTE)	
11. EDINBURGH CAFÉ (RUA DE FERREIRA DO AMARAL)	40. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS SUGAR FISH (RUA DA CORDOARIA COLOANE)	
12. ESTABELECIMENTO DE BEBIDAS HÁAGEN DAZS (AVENIDA DA UNIVERSIDADE)	41. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS SUSHI DA FORTUNA (RUA DE PEDRO COUTINHO)	
13. ESTABELECIMENTO DE BEBIDAS HAAGEN DAZS (RUA DO REGEDOR, TAIPA)	42. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TECO (RUA DA PÉROLA ORIENTAL)	
14. ESTABELECIMENTO DE BEBIDAS HAAGEN DAZS (TRAVESSA DO ROQUETE)	43. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TING MAT MAT (RUA DA TRANQUILIDADE)	
15. ESTABELECIMENTO DE BEBIDAS TRÉS SARDINHAS (RUA DE S. ROQUE)	44. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TING MAT MAT (RUA DE MANUEL DE ARRIAGA)	
16. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS "ONE & ONLY CAFE KITCHEN" (AVENIDA DO NORDESTE)	45. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TING MAT MAT (RUA DO GENERAL IVENS FERRAZ)	
17. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS BAO CHI MEI (RUA GOVERNADOR TAMAGNINI BARBOSA, TAIPA)	46. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TOP FUSION (RUA DA RIBEIRA DO PATANE)	
18. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS BOA FORTUNA (AVENIDA DO INFANTE D. HENRIQUE)	47. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS TOP FUSION (RUA DE FRANCISCO XAVIER PEREIRA)	
19. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS CAFÉ SUPER MARIO (AVENIDA PANORÁMICA DO LAGO NAM VAN)	48. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS WA FONG (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN, TAIPA)	
20. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS CHAA (BECO DO ATAI)	49. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS WA FONG (ESTRADA MARGINAL DA AREIA PRETA)	
21. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS CHARMING GOURMET CAFÉ (RUA DE XANGAI)	50. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS WA FONG (RUA FRANCISCO H. FERNANDES)	
22. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HENG TAI KONG UN (WATERFRONT DUET)	51. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS WA FONG (RUA UM DO BAIRRO VÁ TAI)	
23. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HIP SENG (CLÁSSICO) (TRAVESSA DA CALDEIRA)	52. GELADARIA SAM POU (AVENIDA DO GOVERNADOR JAIME SILVÉRIO MARQUES)	
24. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HIP SENG (LOJA DE GREAT CHINA)	53. GELADARIA SAM POU (RUA DE LEÓNIO FERREIRA)	
25. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS HIP SENG (AVENIDA DOS JARDINS DO OCEANO)	54. GELADARIA SAN LOK KAO (RUA DE BRUXELAS)	
26. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS IEONG CHI KAM LOU (AVENIDA DE DEMETRIO CINATTI)	55. LK COMIDAS (AVENIDA DO GENERAL CASTELO BRANCO)	
27. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS IEONG CHI KAM LOU (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN, TAIPA)	56. LOJA DE MARISCO JIN YUE XUAN (AVENIDA DR. SUN YAT SEN, TAIPA)	
28. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS IEONG CHI KAM LOU (RUA NOVA DA AREIA PRETA)	57. TAPAS DE PORTUGAL (RUA DOS CLÉRIGOS)	
29. ESTABELECIMENTO DE COMIDAS JIANG YUER (RUA DE TAI LIN, TAIPA)	58. PIZZAEXPRESS MACAU (AVENIDA DE KWONG TUNG, TAIPA)	
Travel Agency Sector		
Quality Tourism Services Merchant Award*		
1. AGÊNCIA DE VIAGENS E TURISMO LEÃO, LIMITADA (AVENIDA DE HORTA E COSTA)	7. GALAXY TOUR & TRAVEL COMPANY LIMITED (GALAXY)	
2. CENTURY INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AGENCY (RUA DE PEQUIM)	8. GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL TOURIST COMPANY LIMITED (AVENIDA DO DR. RODRIGO RODRIGUES)	
3. CHEONG HENG TRAVEL AGENCY INTERNATIONAL LIMITED (RUA DE PEQUIM)	9. NEW SINTRA TOURS LIMITED (AVENIDA D. JOÃO IV)	
4. CHONG SON INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM AGENCY LIMITED (ALAMEDA DR. CARLOS D'ASSUMPÇÃO)	10. SHUN TAK & CITS TRAVEL SERVICE (MACAO) LIMITED (TERMINAL MARÍTIMO DE PASSAGEIROS DO PORTO EXTERIOR)	
5. EGL TOURS (AVENIDA DA PRAIA GRANDE)	11. TIM MA TRAVEL AGENCY LIMITED (AVENIDA DA AMIZADE)	
6. ENERGY TRAVEL AGENCY LIMITED (TERMINAL MARÍTIMO DE PASSAGEIROS DO PORTO EXTERIOR)	12. WA SENG INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM AGENCY LIMITED (RUA DE PEQUIM)	

The above is the 2023 "Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme" awarded list of new and re-entered merchants. The list of surveillance merchants with renewed awards will be released later through the Macao Government Tourism Office website.

*no particular order

EVERGRANDE

Chinese developer risking liquidation if creditors veto its plan for handling huge debts

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

A Hong Kong court will convene a hearing today on troubled Chinese property developer Evergrande's plans for restructuring its more than \$300 billion in debts and staving off liquidation.

The company, the world's most indebted property developer, ran into trouble when Chinese regulators cracked down on excessive borrowing in the real estate sector.

Last month, the company said Chinese police were investigating Evergrande's chairman, Hui Ka



Yan, for unspecified suspected crimes in the latest obstacle to the company's efforts to resolve its financial woes.

The Hong Kong High Court has postponed the hearing over Evergrande's

potential liquidation several times. Judge Linda Chan said in October that Monday's hearing would be the last before a decision is handed down.

Evergrande could be ordered to liquidate if the

plan is rejected by its creditors.

In September, Evergrande abandoned its initial debt restructuring plan after authorities banned it from issuing new dollar bonds, which was a key part of its plan.

The company first defaulted on its financial obligations in 2021, just over a year after Beijing clamped down on lending to property developers in an effort to cool a property bubble.

Evergrande is one of the biggest developers to have defaulted on its debts. But others including Country Garden, China's largest real estate developer, have also run into trouble, their predicaments rippling through financial systems in and outside China.

The fallout from the property crisis has also affected China's shadow banking industry — institutions which provide financial services similar to banks but which operate outside of banking regulations.

Police are investigating Zhongzhi Enterprise Group, a major shadow bank in China that has lent billions in yuan to property developers, after it said it was insolvent with up to \$64 billion in liabilities.

Real estate drove China's economic boom, but developers borrowed heavily as they turned cities into forests of apartment and office towers. That has helped to push total corporate, government and household debt to the equivalent of more than 300% of annual economic output, unusually high for a middle-income country.

To prevent troubles spilling into the economy from the property sector, Chinese regulators reportedly have drafted a list of 50 developers eligible for financing support, among other measures meant to prop up the industry. **MDT/AP**

Philippines says China has executed two Filipinos convicted of drug trafficking despite appeals

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

CHINA has executed two Filipinos for drug trafficking despite high-level Philippine government appeals to commute their death sentences to life in prison, the Philippine government said Saturday.

The Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila did not identify the two Filipinos, citing the wishes of their families for privacy. It added that it did not announce the Nov. 24 executions until the Philippine government was formally notified by China.

No other details were immediately given by Chinese or Philippine authorities about the executions and the drug trafficking cases.

The DFA said that from the time the two Filipinos were arrested in 2013 until their 2016 convictions by a Chinese court, it provided all possible help, including funding for their legal defense.

"The government of the Republic of the Philippines further exhausted all measures available to appeal to the relevant authorities of the People's Republic of China to commute their sentences to life imprisonment on humanitarian grounds," the DFA said. "There were also high-level political representations in this regard."

"The Chinese government, citing their internal laws, upheld the conviction and the Philippines must respect China's criminal laws and legal processes," the DFA said.

"While the Philippine government will continue to exhaust all possible avenues to assist our overseas nationals, ultimately it is the laws and sovereign decisions of foreign countries, and not the Philippines, which

will prevail in these cases."

The executions came at a difficult point in the relations of China and the Philippines due to escalating territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

The Philippines, through the DFA, has filed more than 100 diplomatic protests over actions by China in the disputed waters since President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. took power in June last year.

The DFA said that while it was saddened by the executions of the Filipinos, their deaths strengthen "the government's resolve to continue our relentless efforts to rid the country of drug syndicates that prey on the vulnerable, including those seeking better lives for themselves and their families."

It renewed a reminder to Filipinos traveling abroad to be vigilant against drug syndicates, which recruit travelers to serve as "drug mules" or couriers, and to refuse to carry any uninspected package from other people.

Two other death penalty cases involving Filipinos are on appeal and under final review in China, DFA spokesperson Teresita Daza said, without elaborating.

One other Filipino, Mary Jabe Veloso, is facing execution in Indonesia after being convicted of drug trafficking. Marcos has said that he has appealed for a commutation of her death sentence or a pardon but it remains to be seen whether that will be granted.

The Philippines is a major global source of labor and Filipino officials have been particularly concerned over the vulnerability of poor Filipinos to being exploited by drug syndicates. **MDT/AP**

AD

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PHILIPPINES

President blames foreign militants for a bombing that killed four Christian worshippers

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

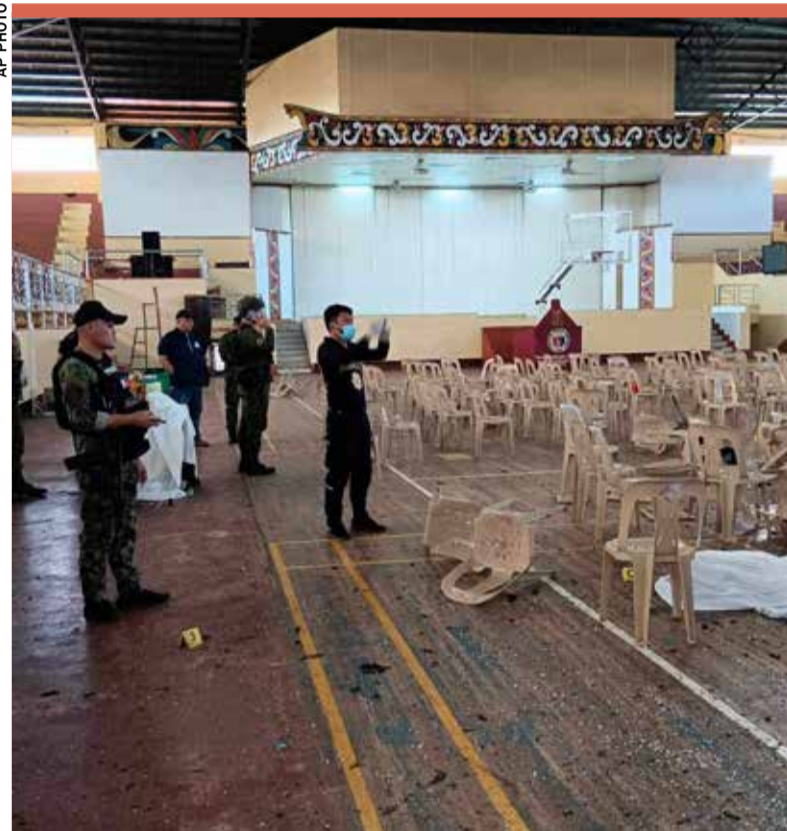
THE Philippine president blamed “foreign terrorists” for a bomb blast that killed four people yesterday, wounded dozens of other Catholic worshippers in the south and sparked a security alarm, including in the capital, Manila, where state forces were put on alert.

The suspected bomb, which the police said was made from a mortar round, went off and hit students and teachers who attended a Mass in a gymnasium at Mindanao State University in southern Marawi city, Taha Mandangan, the security chief of the state-run campus, told The Associated Press by telephone.

Dozens of students and teachers dashed out of the gym and the wounded were taken to hospitals.

Regional military commander Maj. Gen. Gabriel Viray III said four people were killed by the explosion, including three women, and 50 others were brought to two hospitals for treatment.

Six of the wounded were fighting for their lives in a hospital, said Gov. Mamintal Adiong Jr. of the Islamic province of Lanao del Sur, which has Marawi as its capital.



AP PHOTO

In this handout photo provided by the Provincial Government of Lanao Del Sur, law enforcers conduct an investigation at the site of an explosion in Marawi city, yesterday

“I condemn in the strongest possible terms the senseless and most heinous acts perpetrated by foreign terrorists upon the Mindanao State University,” President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said in a statement. “Extremists who wield violence against the inno-

cent will always be regarded as enemies to our society.”

Marcos did not explain why he immediately blamed foreign militants for the high-profile bombing. Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. later told a news conference without elabo-

rating there was a strong indication of a “foreign element” in the bombing.

Military chief of staff Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. said the bomb attack could be retaliation by Muslim militants for a series of battle setbacks.

“We are looking at possible angles,” Brawner said. “It could be a retaliatory attack.”

He cited the killing of 11 suspected Islamic militants in a military offensive backed by airstrikes and artillery fires on Friday near Datu Hoffer town in southern Maguindanao province.

Regional police director Brig. Gen. Allan Nobleza said the slain militants belonged to Dawlah Islamiyah, an armed group that had aligned itself with the Islamic State group and still has a presence in Lanao del Sur province.

Mosque-studded Marawi city came under attack from foreign and local Islamic militants who had associated themselves with the Islamic State group in 2017. The five-month siege left more than 1,100 dead, mostly militants, before it was quelled by Philippine forces backed by airstrikes and surveillance planes deployed by the United States and Australia.

Army troops and police cor-

doned off the university shortly after the bombing and began an investigation, checking security cameras for any indication of who may have been responsible for the attack. Security checkpoints were set up around the city.

Police Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Peralta told reporters that military and police bomb experts found fragments of a 60mm mortar round in the scene of the attack.

Such explosives fashioned from mortar rounds had been used in past attacks by Islamic militants in the country’s south.

The deadly blast set off a security alarm beyond Marawi city as the Christmas season ushered in a period of travel, shopping sprees and traffic jams across the country. Police and other state forces were put under “heightened alert” in metropolitan Manila, security officials said.

The Philippine coast guard said it ordered all its personnel to intensify intelligence gathering, stricter inspections of passenger ferries and the deployment of bomb-sniffing dogs and sea marshals.

“Amid this barbaric act, best public service must prevail,” coast guard chief Admiral Ronnie Gavan said.

The southern Philippines is the homeland of minority Muslims in the predominantly Roman Catholic nation and the scene of decades-old separatist rebellions.

The largest armed insurgent group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, signed a 2014 peace deal with the government, considerably easing decades of fighting. But a number of smaller armed groups rejected the peace pact and press on with bombings and other attacks while evading government offensives. **MDT/AP**

Strong earthquake that sparked a tsunami warning leaves one dead

A powerful earthquake that shook the southern Philippines killed at least one villager and injured several others as thousands scrambled out of their homes in panic and jammed roads to higher grounds after a tsunami warning was issued, officials said yesterday.

The U.S. Geological Survey reported that the quake Saturday night had a magnitude of 7.6 and struck at a depth of 32 kilometers. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said it expected tsunami waves to hit the southern Philippines and parts of Indonesia, Palau and

Malaysia, but later dropped its tsunami warning.

In Japan, authorities issued evacuation orders late Saturday in various parts of Okinawa prefecture, including for the entire coastal area, affecting thousands of people.

A pregnant woman died after she, her husband and daughter were hit by a 15-foot (4.5-meter) concrete wall that collapsed in their neighborhood as the ground shook and prompted them to flee from their house in Tagum city in Davao del Norte province, the city’s disaster-mitigation chief, Sheldon Isidoro, told The

Associated Press.

Her husband and daughter were injured. Two other children and their parents jumped from a second-floor window in panic as their house swayed but were not injured after landing on a grassy lot, said Isidoro, who was at his home when the ground started to shake.

“Initially the swaying was weak. Then it quickly became stronger and I could hardly stand. My perfume bottles fell off a table, pictures on my wall swung and I heard people screaming outside: ‘Get out, get out, earthquake, earthquake!’” Isidoro said.

While he feared the roof of his house would collapse on him, Isidoro said he was more worried that there could be many casualties in Tagum, a city of about 300,000 people, where he had led regular earthquake drills that he thought helped prevent more deaths and injuries.

Hundreds of patients were evacuated from a Tagum hospital but later were escorted back after an inspection showed no major damage to the building, officials said.

Thousands of residents stayed outside their homes for hours in many towns

due to the earthquake and tsunami scare, including in some that were drenched by an overnight downpour, officials said.

Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr told a news conference that authorities were assessing the quake’s impact but initial reports indicated there were no major damages except for two damaged bridges and pockets of power outages. One death was reported with a few injuries, he said.

Teresito Bacolcol, the head of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, told The AP shortly after the quake hit

that his agency advised residents along the coast of Surigao del Sur and Davao Oriental provinces, which were near the epicenter of the undersea quake, to immediately evacuate to higher ground or move farther inland.

Pictures posted on the Facebook account of Hinatuan town in Surigao del Sur province show residents fleeing to higher ground on foot or aboard cars, trucks, motorcycles and tricycle taxis overnight.

Many villagers who fled to evacuation centers returned to their homes yesterday, officials said.

After undertaking inspections, civil aviation officials said there was no major damage in several airports in the south and there was no disruption in flights operations. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



EARTH IS RUNNING A FEVER

UN climate talks are focusing on the contagious effect on human health

JAMEY KEATEN, DUBAI

WITH Planet Earth running a fever, U.N. climate talks focused yesterday on the contagious effects on human health.

Under a brown haze over Dubai, the COP28 summit moved past two days of lofty rhetoric and calls for unity from top leaders to concerns on health issues like the deaths of at least 7 million people globally from air pollution each year and the spread of diseases like cholera and malaria as global warming upends weather systems.

World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said it was high time for the U.N. Conference of Parties on climate to hold its first health day in its 28th edition, saying the threats to health from climate change were “immediate and present.”

“Although the climate crisis is a health crisis, it’s well overdue that 27 COPs have been and gone without a serious discussion of health,” he said. “Undoubtedly, health stands as the most compelling reason for taking climate action.”

After two days of speeches by dozens of presidents, prime ministers, royals and other top leaders — in the background and off-stage — participants

were also turning attention to tough negotiations over the next nine days to push for more agreement on ways to cap global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times.

Saturday capped off with the COP28 presidency announcing that 50 oil and gas companies had agreed to reach near-zero methane emissions and end routine flaring in their operations by 2030. They also pledged to reach “net zero” for their operational emissions by 2050.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said “the promises made clearly fall short of what is required.”

In comments yesterday, Guterres called the methane emissions reductions “a step in the right direction.” But he criticized the net zero pledge for excluding emissions from fossil fuel consumption — where the vast majority of the industry’s greenhouse gases come from — and said the announcement provided no clarity on how the companies planned to reach their goals.

“There must be no room for greenwashing,” he said.

Temperature rises caused by the burning of oil, gas and coal have worsened natural disasters like floods, heat waves and drought, and caused many people to migrate to more temperate zones — in

addition to the negative knock-on effects for human health.

John Kerry, the U.S. climate envoy, said it was “astonishing” to him that it’s taken so long for health to become a centerpiece of the climate discussion.

“Our bodies are ecosystems, and the world is an ecosystem,” Kerry said. “If you poison our land and you poison our water and you poison our air, you poison our bodies.”

He said his daughter Vanessa, who works with Tedros, “repeats to me frequently that we should not measure progress on the climate crisis just by the degrees averted, but by the lives saved.”

A COP28 declaration backed by some 120 countries stressed the link between health and climate change. It made no mention of phasing out planet-warming fossil fuels, but pledged to support efforts to curb health care sector pollution, which accounts for 5% of global emissions, according to the WHO head.

Diarmid Campbell-Lendrum, head of climate and health at WHO, said heat alone has put pressure on the body and led to higher rates of infectious disease.

“Climate change doesn’t need to be on a death certificate for us to be confident that climate change is causing deaths,” Diarmid Campbell-Lendrum, WHO’s head of climate and health, said.

Dubai, the largest city in oil-rich United Arab Emirates, often faces higher levels of air pollution than other places on Earth due to its location — and haze is common. The city sits on the coast of the Persian Gulf, but further inland begins the Empty Quarter, the massive desert that takes up a third of the Arabian Peninsula.

The city’s boom has led to rapid construction, industrial areas and pollution from automobiles, adding to the impacts of sand and particulate churned by the desert winds. Some 3.5 million people now live in Dubai, up from 183,000 less than 50 years ago, and estimates suggest another million commute into the city-state each day for work.

The Dubai government, on its web site devoted to the environment, listed its Air Quality Index level mostly at “good”. Switzerland-based IQAir, a technology company that sells air-quality monitoring products, listed Dubai as the city with the 18th-worst air quality in the world with “moderate” air quality levels as of noon local time on yesterday. It cited high levels of two types of particulate matter in the air, and recommended mask-wearing for “sensitive groups” and a reduction of outdoor exercise. MDT/AP

this day in history

1961 BIRTH CONTROL PILL 'AVAILABLE TO ALL'



Women who wish to have oral contraception will now be able to get it on the National Health Service.

The Health Minister, Enoch Powell, made an announcement in the House of Commons today but did not give any guidelines as to whom the pill should be given.

“It is not for me to indicate to doctors when they should decide for medical reasons to prescribe for their patients,” he said.

However some GPs are in a dilemma over whether they can prescribe the Pill, as it is commonly known, for social as well as medical reasons.

Several companies are busy manufacturing the product in Britain which will cost the NHS just over one shilling a pill - 17s a month.

And some politicians are anxious that the drug could be a huge financial burden on the Treasury which currently spends £90m a year on drugs provided by the health service.

The oral contraceptive is a combination of a synthetic hormones oestrogen and progesterone taken to prevent conception by hampering monthly release of an egg cell from the ovary.

Pills have to be taken regularly in order to work and some physicians are concerned about the effects the drug could have on the body’s delicate balance of hormones.

Sir Charles Dodds, Britain’s leading expert on the drugs contained in the Pill and who heads a research institute at Middlesex Hospital, has said the pills could have long-term side-effects.

He compared a woman’s body with a clock mechanism. “Even if you thoroughly understand the mechanism of a clock, provided it is going well it is very much better to leave it alone. To interfere with it if you do not understand it can be disastrous,” he said.

The Family Planning Association, which runs clinics all over Britain, is still deciding whether or not to give the go-ahead to its physicians to issue the Pill to married women.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The rest of the decade saw a huge demand for what is an extremely effective form of birth control. It remains the most popular reversible contraceptive in the UK and the USA in spite of various health scares since its invention in the early 1950s.

To prevent side-effects produced by combined hormone pills - such as fluid retention, depression, weight gain, and in rare cases thrombosis - progestogen-only pills were developed in the 1980s. They have fewer side-effects than the combined pill but are slightly less efficient.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Try not to take others for granted. Tempers could get out of hand today. Don't be afraid to say what's on your mind. Your outgoing charm and obvious talent will be admired.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 Be discreet and don't present your ideas until you're certain that they're foolproof. You might find it difficult to control your emotions.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 Don't even bother trying to get their approval on the things you want to do. Don't get so wrapped up in being rich that you overlook the fact that your plan may not be as solid as you thought.

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Be sure not to reveal private information to the wrong individuals. Be careful not to reveal private information. Romantic encounters will develop through group activity.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 You will enjoy interaction with others today. Take time to find out if anyone has a better suggestion before you make arrangements for the whole family.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 You can make moves, but they won't be settling. Your emotional partner will push the right buttons today. It's time to reevaluate your motives.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Don't let your mate talk you into going somewhere you'd rather not go. A romantic dinner, followed by a quiet evening with the one who is enticing you, should be most satisfying.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Reevaluate your situation. Things may not be as harmonious as you would like with colleagues or employers today. You will be able to catch up on overdue paper work.

SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Children may be difficult to handle. Listen and formulate your course of action. You will be indecisive. If you try to manipulate emotional situations you will find yourself alienated.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Stop telling others about your problems. You may find that your quick wit and charm will help you in obtaining allies. You may have to take a short trip to visit someone who hasn't been well.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Stress coupled with diet will add to stomach problems. Don't delay; go to your physician or dentist and get to the bottom of the discomfort. Patience will be of utmost importance.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 You can mix business with pleasure to get favorable results. Don't turn down an invitation or a challenge that could enhance your chances of meeting someone special.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-4	8	fine
Changchun	-7	1	fine
Chengdu	7	17	fine
Chongqing	11	15	cloudy
Fuzhou	13	17	rain
Guangzhou	15	23	cloudy
Guiyang	5	11	overcast
Haikou	21	24	rain
Hangzhou	4	11	rain
Harbin	-13	-4	cloudy
Hefei	0	14	cloudy
Nanjing	1	12	cloudy
Shanghai	6	15	rain
Taipei	17	21	rain
Wuhan	3	16	fine
Hong Kong	20	24	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-14	-7	cloudy
Frankfurt	0	1	snow
Paris	6	9	rain
London	4	8	rain
New York	4	12	overcast

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Ran easily; 6- Letter cross-line; 11- IV units; 14- Angry; 15- Hersey's bell town; 16- LBJ's veep; 17- Prescribed amounts; 18- More current; 19- Fair-hiring abbr; 20- Bibliography abbr; 22- Gaze intently; 24- Republic in central Europe; 28- Stimulate; 30- Suffer from a loss; 31- Chap; 32- White-barked poplar tree; 33- Truce; 37- Give one star, say; 38- Peace goddess; 39- Greek goddess of night; 40- Statute; 43- Gettysburg general; 45- Liquid waste component; 46- Lathe operator; 47- Squinting eye; 50- Final course; 51- Seraglio; 52- Nair rival; 53- DDE's command; 54- Brazilian port; 57- "Steel This Book" author Hoffman; 62- DC bigwig; 63- Grassy plain; 64- Lion sounds; 65- Stab; 66- Taken in; 67- Challenges;

DOWN 1- Cover; 2- Metal in Montana's motto; 3- Dance step used in ballet; 4- Hot time in Paris; 5- Merit; 6- Capital of Yemen; 7- Pulitzer-winning biographer Leon; 8- Uncooked; 9- Chemical ending; 10- Abandon; 11- Inexpensive; 12- Task; 13- Luster; 21- Neckwear; 23- Not kosher; 24- Godly love; 25- Living in a city; 26- City in Tuscany; 27- ___ Aviv; 28- Slope; 29- Flexible tube; 31- Designer Geoffrey; 33- El Greco's birthplace; 34- Silly; 35- U-Haul competitor; 36- Apply, as pressure; 38- If ___ be so bold...; 41- Salad veggie; 42- Quiver; 43- Condiment; 44- Hesitant sounds; 46- Peg used on the first in golf; 47- Thorax; 48- Western; 49- Close friend; 50- Fiend; 52- Hawaiian goose; 55- Guido's high note; 56- Back muscle, briefly; 58- Feather scarf; 59- Place for ordering alcoholic drinks; 60- Wrath; 61- Pothook shape;

Friday's solution

M	E	R	E	S	T	E	P	S	S	T
I	R	I	S	H	T	I	R	E	E	E
S	I	N	C	E	A	P	E	R	A	I
O	K	D	R	A	T	S	F	A	R	M
R	E	T	E	R	O	L	L	E	R	
R	O	B	I	N	A	M	E	S	A	K
I	N	I	T	A	R	O	N	S	A	T
E	S	S	E	N	C	E	S	O	V	A
O	I	L	L	I	G	E	N	S	E	
A	M	E	N	S	A	C	E	S		
S	T	A	L	E	R	K	O	H	L	
R	A	F	F	A	D	I	T	O	V	E
A	L	L	I	E	S	T	A	X	I	S
S	E	A	N	H	E	V	E	T	Y	P

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222	Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
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	



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1,663 ft² | HKD11,800/mth



Supreme Flower City (Taipa)
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2,060 ft² | HKD22,000/mth



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FOOTBALL | EURO 2024

A group look at the draw for next year's Euro

GROUP A Germany, Hungary, Scotland, Switzerland

Host Germany had a year to forget in 2023 but can look to 2024 with optimism.

The draw was relatively kind to coach Julian Nagelsmann who, since being hired in September, has overseen two of the team's six losses in 13 friendlies.

Germany's first competitive game since a group stage exit at the 2022 World Cup will be a June 14 tournament opener in Munich against a Scotland. The Scots beat Spain in qualifying but have little tournament track record.

Hungary did test Germany in their Euro 2020 group, taking a two-goal lead in a 2-2 draw, but failed to qualify for the World Cup.

Switzerland is in turmoil and coach Murat Yakin's federation bosses had to give him a vote of confidence midweek just to attend the draw. Yakin has widely reported tense relations with his captain Granit Xhaka.

GROUP B Spain, Albania, Croatia, Italy

It wouldn't be a Euro tournament without Spain vs Italy, winners of three of the past four titles.

Their June 20 game in Gelsenkirchen makes it five straight meetings dating to the Euro 2008 quarterfinals.

Croatia was eliminated from Euro 2020 by Spain's thrilling 5-3 extra-time win in the round of 16, but one of the most resilient teams in soccer has thrived in tough groups at World Cups.

With Real Madrid playmaker Luka Modri still orchestrating the team at age 38, Croatia can never be underestimated.

Albania won its qualifying group ahead of more fancied Poland and the Czech Republic, and was ranked in the draw seedings above Croatia and Italy. The team that will play at just its second major tournament has found inspiration under Brazilian coach Sylvinho.

"Our opponents are used to playing in Euro-

AP PHOTO



pean and World Cup finals," said Sylvinho, the former Arsenal and Barcelona left back.

GROUP C England, Denmark, Slovenia, Serbia

England and France were the standout European teams at the 2022 World Cup and went unbeaten through qualifying.

England also has, in Bayern Munich forward Harry Kane and Real Madrid midfielder Jude Bellingham, two free-scoring and arguably the most in-form players in world soccer.

"They are used to playing in big matches together and individually, so we are excited and all looking forward to the summer," England coach Gareth Southgate said.

Still, a June 16 start against Serbia in Gelsenkirchen will be a test before facing a Denmark team which got seven goals in qualifying from Rasmus Højlund, signed by Manchester United after the club could not get Kane.

Slovenia lost to England 1-0 at its last major tournament, the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, and shapes as the outsider at its first Euro since 2000.

GROUP D France, Austria, Netherlands, (Poland, Estonia, Wales or Finland)

France is soccer's No. 2-ranked team behind Argentina, and the World Cup beaten finalist last year and

champion in 2018.

Still, France fell out of Euro 2020 in the round of 16, against Switzerland, and this group is among the more difficult.

Austria impressed in qualifying yet coach Ralf Rangnick spoke of drawing "probably the most difficult we could get" from draw pots one and three.

France and the Netherlands will meet in their second game, on June 21 in Leipzig. France won 4-0 at home and 2-1 in Amsterdam when they met in the qualifying group.

Another possible bump in the road for France — the Group D winner cannot meet a third-place team from another group in the round. Awaiting them is the runner-up from Group F.

GROUP E Belgium, Romania, Slovakia, (Israel, Iceland, Bosnia-Herzegovina or Ukraine)

Belgium is no longer in its "Golden Generation" era but a team with Thibaut Courtois, Kevin de Bruyne and Romelu Lukaku at its core should still be formidable. Albeit, Courtois and De Bruyne have been out injured since the start of the season.

Winger Jeremy Doku's flourishing on the left wing at Manchester City makes him a more feared prospect than when he was emerging during Euro 2020, where Belgium lost a quarterfinal to Italy.

Belgium's opening games against Slovakia and

Romania add up to a simple start for a top-seeded team.

The fourth group member could be Israel or Ukraine, who are playing in neutral countries with domestic leagues disrupted while their nations are at war. Israel at Euro 2024 would present the biggest

security planning issue for German authorities.

GROUP F Portugal, Turkey, Czech Republic, (Georgia, Luxembourg, Greece or Kazakhstan)

Portugal and Cristiano Ronaldo can be feeling déjà vu here. They faced Turkey

and the Czechs in the group stage of Euro 2008, with co-host Switzerland.

Portugal topped the standings that time and will be fancied to do so again after sweeping through qualifying with a perfect 10 wins and 10 goals from its 38-year-old superstar.

Turkey surprised by winning a qualifying group ahead of Croatia, though has disappointed at the past two Euros when arriving with fashionable predictions of success.

UEFA gifts a tournament entry in the playoffs to the third-tier of member nations and this group is where that team will land: Greece was the Euro 2004 champion and the others would be tournament novices.

Portugal was the Euro 2016 champion, when it also was the late starter in Group F. The Portuguese and Czechs will be the last teams to begin play, when they meet on June 18 in Leipzig. **MDT/AP**



BENFICA MACAU ACADEMY
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FOOTBALL | BASKETBALL | DAILY TRAININGS

OPINION

China Daily
Editorial, China Daily

LEGACY OF KISSINGER
SHOULDN'T BE
SQUANDERED

Former US secretary of state Henry Kissinger, who passed away on Wednesday at the age of 100, will always be remembered for the key role he played in the normalization of Sino-US relations.

The secret trip he made to Beijing in July 1971, at the height of the Cold War, paved the way for the historic visit by then US president Richard Nixon to the Chinese capital in February 1972. "The week that changed the world" helped end more than 20 years of estrangement between China and the United States, and led to the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1979. The following more than four decades of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries, although not always smooth sailing, have reshaped the global geopolitical landscape, contributing to peace, stability and the development of the world.

As a seasoned diplomat with scholarly understanding of Chinese history and culture, Kissinger is heralded in China for his visionary and insightful thinking on Sino-US ties. The role he played in bridging the differences between the two countries — as highlighted by the more than 100 trips he paid to China — made him a trusted messenger for successive leaders of both countries. He last visited China in July, when Sino-US ties were mired in extreme difficulties, and was warmly received by President Xi Jinping, who said "the Chinese people never forget their old friends, and Sino-US relations will always be linked with the name of Henry Kissinger".

In his message of condolence on Kissinger's death on Thursday, Xi acclaimed Kissinger's historic contribution to the normalization of Sino-US ties, which has benefited not only the two nations but also the world.

Kissinger, who understood the sensitivity of the Taiwan question, repeatedly warned against any attempt by Washington to change the basic structure that has "preserved peace between China and the US for 50 years". He said he had supported the one-China policy through eight administrations, cautioning whoever was in the White House not to "by subterfuge or by a gradual process develop something of a 'two-China' solution".

He was worried by the many US politicians trying to play the Taiwan card to contain China's rise, a scenario which, in his view, is against the long-term interests of both China and the US. "Keep in mind that if China and America are in conflict, then the whole world will be divided," he said. To minimize the chance of the two countries sliding into a catastrophic conflict, Kissinger advised the US "to refrain from being heedlessly adversarial and pursue dialogue instead". He urged China and the US to cooperate, because "working together, we can achieve great things, not just for our countries, but also for humanity".

The death of Kissinger is a great loss. What he said and did to help foster a sound and healthy US-China relationship should inspire all those who are working for a better relationship between the two countries. His call for dialogue and cooperation, rather than confrontation and zero-sum competition, should shed light on the course for healthy interactions between the two sides.

ISRAEL WIDENS EVACUATION ORDERS AS IT
SHIFTS ITS OFFENSIVE TO SOUTHERN GAZA

THE
BUZZ

Israel's military yesterday ordered more areas in and around Gaza's second-largest city of Khan Younis to evacuate, as it shifted its offensive to the southern half of the territory where it says many Hamas leaders are hiding.

Heavy bombardments were reported overnight and into yesterday in the area of Khan Younis and the southern city of Rafah, as well as parts of the north that had been the focus of Israel's blistering air and ground campaign.

Many of the territory's 2.3 million people are crammed in the south after Israeli forces ordered civilians to leave the north in the early days of the 2-month-old war.

With the resumption of fighting, hopes receded that another temporary truce could be negotiated. A weeklong cease-fire, which expired Friday, had facilitated the release of dozens of Gaza-held Israeli and foreign hostages and Palestinians imprisoned by Israel.

"We will continue the war until we achieve all its goals, and it's impossible to achieve those goals without the ground operation," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in an address Saturday night.

Yesterday, the Israeli military widened evacuation orders in and around Khan Younis, asking residents of at least five more areas and neighborhoods to leave for their safety.

AP PHOTO



Gene Simmons (left) Tommy Thayer and Paul Stanley of KISS perform during the final night of the "Kiss Farewell Tour"

KISS FAREWELL TO LIVE TOURING

BAND BECOME FIRST
US BAND TO GO
VIRTUAL AND BECOME
DIGITAL AVATARS

MARIA SHERMAN

ON Saturday night (yesterday, Macau time), Kiss closed out the final performance of their "The End of the Road" farewell tour at New York City's famed Madison Square Garden.

But as dedicated fans surely know — they were never going to call it quits. Not really.

During their encore, the band's current lineup — founders Paul Stanley and Gene Simmons as well as guitarist Tommy Thayer and drummer Eric Singer — left the stage to reveal digital avatars of themselves. After the transformation, the virtual Kiss launched into a performance of "God Gave Rock and Roll to You."

The cutting-edge technology was used to tease a new chapter of the rock band: after 50 years of Kiss, the band is now interested in a kind of digital immortality.

The avatars were created by George Lucas' special-effects company, Industrial Light & Magic, in partnership with Pophouse Entertainment Group, the latter of which was co-founded by ABBA's Björn Ulvaeus. The

two companies recently teamed up for the "ABBA Voyage" show in London, in which fans could attend a full concert by the Swedish band — as performed by their digital avatars.

Per Sundin, CEO of Pophouse Entertainment, says this new technology allows Kiss to continue their legacy for "eternity." He says the band wasn't on stage during virtual performance because "that's the key thing," of the future-seeking technology. "Kiss could have a concert in three cities in the same night across three different continents. That's what you could do with this."

In order to create their digital avatars, who are depicted as a kind of superhero version of the band, Kiss performed in motion capture suits.

Experimentation with this kind of technology has become increasingly common in certain sections of the music industry. In October K-pop star Mark Tuan partnered with Soul Machines to create an autonomously automated "digital twin" called "Digital Mark." In doing so, Tuan became the first celebrity to attach their likeness to OpenAI's

GPT integration, artificial intelligence technology that allows fans to engage in one-on-one conversations with Tuan's avatar.

Aespa, the K-pop girl group, frequently perform alongside their digital avatars — the quartet is meant to be viewed as an octet with digital twins. Another girl group, Eternity, is made up entirely of virtual characters — no humans necessary.

"What we've accomplished has been amazing, but it's not enough. The band deserves to live on because the band is bigger than we are," Kiss frontman Paul Stanley said in a roundtable interview. "It's exciting for us to go the next step and see Kiss immortalized."

"We can be forever young and forever iconic by taking us to places we've never dreamed of before," Kiss bassist Gene Simmons added. "The technology is going to make Paul jump higher than he's ever done before."

And for those who couldn't make the Madison Square Garden show — stay tuned, because a Kiss avatar concert may very well be on the way. MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Belarus The International Red Cross last week suspended the Belarusian chapter after its chief stirred international outrage for boasting that it was actively ferrying Ukrainian children from Russian-controlled areas to Belarus. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies halted the membership of the Belarus branch after it refused to oust its leader Dzmitry Shautsou. He is accused of having breached the Red Cross' much-vaunted and much-defended standards of neutrality and integrity. The board of IFRC had given the Belarus Red Cross until Nov. 30 to dismiss him, and said it would suspend the branch if it didn't.

AP PHOTO



Russian President Vladimir Putin last week ordered the country's military to increase the number of troops by nearly 170,000 to a total of 1.32 million, as Moscow's military action in Ukraine continues into its 22nd month. Putin's decree was released by the Kremlin last week and took force immediately. It brings the overall number of Russian military personnel to about 2.2 million, including 1.32 million troops.

AP PHOTO



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says the war with Russia is in a new stage, with winter expected to complicate fighting after a summer counteroffensive that failed to produce desired results due to enduring shortages of weapons and ground forces. Despite setbacks, however, he said Ukraine won't give up. "We have a new phase of war, and that is a fact," Zelenskyy said in an exclusive interview with The Associated Press. "Winter as a whole is a new phase of war."