



iPhone 15 Pro. Capture more than ever before.

iPhone 15 Pro

CTM5G: Fast · Entertaining · Unlimited  
\$468 / 3-Destination Unlimited Data Usage  
Handset Bundle Price \$2,070 up

Note: Customers of the above promotion are bound by the respective service agreement.

CTM

**A MAN WAS APPREHENDED FOR SCAMMING A LOCAL PAWNSHOP FOR THE SUM OF HKD1.5 MILLION THROUGH PAWNING A COUNTERFEIT DESIGNER WATCH**

P4

**GAMING CREDIT BILL EXPECTED FOR FINAL VOTE IN APRIL**

P2

**HONG KONG: NATIONAL SECURITY BILL COMES INTO LAW ON MARCH 23**

P6



AP PHOTO



**Japan** Images taken by miniature drones from deep inside a badly damaged reactor at the Fukushima nuclear plant show displaced control equipment and misshapen materials but leave many questions unanswered, underscoring the daunting task of decommissioning the plant. The 12 photos released by the plant's operator are the first from inside the main structural support called the pedestal in the hardest-hit No. 1 reactor's primary containment vessel, an area directly under the reactor's core.

AP PHOTO



**Myanmar** Military airstrikes killed at least 25 members of the country's Muslim Rohingya minority, including children, local media reported, prompting the U.N. chief to express concerns over the escalating violence. According to the reports, the airstrikes took place early yesterday and targeted the village of Thada, north of Minbya township in Rakhine state. The strikes also left another 25 people wounded.

AP PHOTO



**US** officials stressed yesterday that newly-approved legislation providing billions of dollars in funding for three strategically important Pacific island nations is an important sign of American commitment. The renewal of funds for the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau — known collectively as the Freely Associated States — had been held up for months by broader infighting in Congress over budgetary issues, even though they enjoyed widespread bipartisan support.

More on backpage

# SPORTS HUB

Macau will host the ITTF Singles World Cup for the first time, putting the city on the map of world sports, organizers say, in addition to the growing portfolio of int'l events

P3

RENATO MARQUES



**EDUCATION BUREAU TO START PATRIOTIC CAMP H2**

P4

**GOV'T TO LAUNCH DIGITAL SUPPORT SERVICE FOR 600 SMES**

P2



### MACAU CENTRAL LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION IN TWO PHASES

The construction of the new Macau Central Library at Tap Seac will be implemented in two phases, according to a statement released by the Public Works Bureau. With a maximum period of 450 days to carry out the work, the seven proposals presented in the public tender vary between 69.78 million patacas and 89.98 million patacas. For the first phase, the construction will involve the demolition of the old Hotel Estoril, followed by the construction of the new library's foundations and basements.

### OVER 1,000 VACANCIES AVAILABLE IN USJ CAREER FAIR

The University of Saint Joseph is curating its USJ Career Fair today, aiming to host a platform for students to seek job opportunities and explore their career paths. With the theme "Career Exploration," more than 20 enterprises, companies, and organisations are participating in the fair, offering over 1,000 job vacancies in the areas of banking and finance, education and training, hospitality, human resources, retail, transportation, and social services. Over 600 students will graduate from the university this year. A number of career talks will also be held at the fair.

### INTERNATIONAL PARADE TO REQUIRE TRAFFIC SUSPENSIONS

The Macao International Parade that will be held this Sunday will require road traffic suspensions along its route, the government warned. Road users should be aware of these special arrangements. The parade will start from the Ruins of St Paul's, go downhill to Largo de S. Domingos, Senado Square and the Cathedral, before proceeding towards the Macau Tower through Avenida da Praia Grande. The government noted that parking spots and other traffic suspensions, like detours, are to be implemented. Changes to bus routes and stops will also take place to make way for the parade.

### VEHICLE CIRCULATION TAX PAYMENT PERIOD TO END APR. 2

The payment period for the Vehicle Circulation Tax for 2024 will end on Apr. 2. The government reminds vehicle owners who have not yet paid the tax that they should pay it by the date to avoid additional charges or fines. As of 9 a.m. yesterday, there were over 58,000 vehicles that the tax had not yet been paid on, according to the government. About 85% of all paid taxes, representing over 180,000 vehicles, were settled digitally. The government also recommended those owners who have not yet settled the circulation tax to utilize the One Account app, the Transport Bureau website, and public service e-kiosks, so as to make the payment.

# GOV'T TO LAUNCH DIGITAL SUPPORT SERVICE FOR 600 SMES IN FIRST PHASE

STAFF REPORTER

**T**he government has unveiled a detailed plan for the 2024 SME Digital Support Services in Macau. The plan aims to promote the digital transformation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Macau, specifically in marketing and payment operations. Its goal is to expand remote business channels, reduce operating costs, optimize management, and improve efficiency.

The plan targets 600 SMEs in the retail, catering, life services, wholesale, and manufacturing industries during the first phase. In the first part, enterprises will receive six hours of digital operations training conducted by staff from the Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Center. To participate in the training course, companies are required to send one to two employees.

In the second part, qualified companies receive digital



DSED director Tai Kin Ip

system solutions, valued up to MOP18,000. The companies choose from different plans offered by suppliers and report their selection. The construction costs of the chosen system are then paid directly to the supplier by the center.

The application process involves online registration and uploading required documents, such as a business's latest tax copy, identity docu-

ments, and photos of its premises. After the application period, a lottery is conducted to determine the processing order.

To be eligible for the plan, companies must be legally registered and operated in Macau, have no more than 100 employees, be in proper operating condition, and have physical operating premises in Macau. They should also

have obtained, or be applying for, integrity points from the Macau Consumer Council.

The entire plan consists of registration, training, diagnosis and evaluation, supplier selection, installation, and settlement. There are two application periods which are from May 6 to 26 and Nov. 11 to 29.

### BUDGET FOR SME SUPPORT AT MOP14 MILLION

Director for the Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSED) Tai Kin Ip said that the total budget for digital support services for SMEs stands at MOP14 million. He also said that digital solutions for the catering industry must include self-ordering and self-checkout functions – a major trend now, especially in the mainland. Tai said there are also stores in Macau that facilitate this but hopes that companies can catch up with the current popular methods to provide more convenience for consumers.

# Gaming credit bill expected for final vote in April

ANTHONY LAM

**T**he casino credit bill currently under discussion at a parliamentary committee is expected to undergo its second reading next month, committee president Chan Chak Mo said yesterday.

The bill's updated draft is being studied, following adjustments made by the government.

A major change is that, compared with current practices, casino intermediaries or junkets will no longer be permitted to issue credits or loans, should the bill become law.

On this matter, Chan disclosed that the committee had received signed objection letters



from casino intermediaries, and the letters had been referred to the government for the latter's consideration.

According to Chan, these

intermediaries consider the current practice effective and helpful to the Special Administrative Region in terms of tax income.

Concurrently, the committee is starting to prepare its responses.

Chan said the government had submitted to the committee a written explanation of the major change, and committee members accepted most of it. In addition, some members wondered what credit channels would be legal.

In response to this, Chan cited the bill as stating that only licensed casino operators would be permitted to issue credits in the form of casino chips. Cash credit would not be allowed. An exception, Chan said, would be that intermediaries with contractual obligations to any licensed casino operators would be allowed to issue credits on behalf of those casinos in the form of their chips.

Such cooperation contracts would need to be approved by the Secretary for Economy and Finance before being witnessed by a notarial staff or lawyer.

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

**REACHING OUT!**

+25,000

Like us on facebook.com/mdtimes



MacauDaily 澳門每日時報  
**Times**

DIRECTOR & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com  
ASSISTANT EDITOR Lynzy Valles  
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

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

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

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com  
OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com  
ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84  
Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com  
For subscription and general issues: general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd



# ITTF World Cup to put Macau on the map of world sports

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE Macao International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Singles World Cup will put Macau on the map of world sports, organizers said at yesterday's press conference that launched the event taking place next month.

Representing the title sponsor of the event, Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG), the company director Philip Cheng noted the event as marking "a glamorous addition to Macau's growing portfolio of international sports events" and the possibility of being a "significant driver for the city's sports industry."

Cheng also noted this as the first time that GEG will host a top-tier international table tennis event, putting to good use the Galaxy Arena, a recent addition to GEG's non-gaming venues.

Cheng expressed the hope that the hosting of this event will significantly contribute to further promoting Macau as a "City of Sports" to the world.

Dubbed as a "powerhouse in the world of table tennis" by the Deputy Secretary General of the ITTF, Mounir Bessah, Macau has a chance to prove itself in the week-long event that will have a total of 96 elite players (48 in each gender group).

## THE COMPETITION

Each gender group, including a total of 48 players, will earn coveted spots in the Singles World Cup lineup. 44 of these players will qualify through the Continental Cups or World Ranking, with up to two host association players receiving nominations.

Member Associations can enter up to four players each, exclu-



ding the reigning World Champion and U19 World Champion, who secure automatic qualification.

The tournament is comprised of two stages with the first including players divided into 16 groups of three engaging round-robin battles.

The top-ranked players will head each group while the rest are drawn in using a modified snake system. To keep the competition fair, players from the same association are pitted against different groups, and matches will be comprised of four games (results 4-0, 3-1, or 2-2).

By securing the top spot of the group, players will then advance to the knockout draw of Stage 2. From then on it is every player for themselves in elimination ma-

tches to the best of seven games until the finals.

## TICKETS GO ON SALE THIS FRIDAY

Tickets for the event go on sale this Friday (March 22) through several online platforms as well as the regular Macau Ticketing Network.

Among the novelties in particular is the inclusion of ticket selling through Macau's mCoin platform (mPay).

Other platforms include Cityline Ticketing, Guangxing Chuanxun Macau store, Damai application, and mini program, or the on-site ticket booth during the event.

Tickets have a minimum price of MOP100 and a maximum of MOP1,200 depending on the sea-

ting area and stage of the event. Each person can purchase a maximum of eight tickets per session. Children below 1.20m in height can enter when accompanied by an adult without paying a ticket but they cannot take extra seats.

Macau Student Card holders and residents over the age of 65 enjoy a 20% discount when acquiring tickets but these need to be bought in person at Kong Seng outlets and for the matches held between Apr. 15 and 19 only.

Stage 1 matches are divided into two sessions per day between 9:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. For the knockout matches (Apr. 18 and 19) the first session starts at 11 a.m. and the second at 6 p.m.

Semi-finals will be held on Apr. 20 starting at 6 p.m. and finals on Apr. 21 from 7:30 p.m.

# Hosting the ITTF World Cup shows 'trust' in Macau, ID president says

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE soon-to-be-hosted International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Singles World Cup "shows the trust that international sports authorities have in Macau and the local capacity of hosting large-scale international sports events," the president of the Sports Bureau (ID), Pun Weng Kun said yes-

terday on the sidelines of the press conference that launched the event.

Speaking to the media, Pun noted that it is very flattering that a world federation like ITTF trusts Macau for hosting such an important global event; at the same time, this recognition, "gives local organizers confidence" to continue to do more and better.

After having hosted for

several years the World Table Tennis (WTT) event, Macau is now ready to level up and host one of the most important events in this sport, with the world's finest table tennis talents converging to Macau in less than one month to compete not only for USD1 million (MOP8.1 million) but, as noted by the ITTF Deputy Secretary General, Mounir Bessah,

for the world ranking positioning just before the Olympic Games in Paris this summer.

"As we are in an Olympic year, the performances of the players in the Macao World Cup hold immense weight, directly impacting their world ranking points and, consequently, their standing in the upcoming Paris Olympic Games," Bessah

said during the opening speech at yesterday's press conference, held at the Galaxy International Conference Center.

The locally hosted event will also have the attraction of being the first time that the Table Tennis World Cup presents its new competition format, which Bessah noted to be a kind of "rebirth" of the ITTF World Cup.

Bessah also noted the attribution to Macau of the honors of hosting this year's World Cup as a recognition of the city's recent dedication to the promotion of this sport.

## TOURISM SECTOR GAUGES DAILY TOURISTS TO TOP 100,000 IN EASTER

Members of the tourism industry in Macau indicated that this year's holiday is expected to see not only Hong Kong tourists, but also quite a number of mainland tourists, so the number of tourists during the holiday may grow compared with that of ordinary weekends. The average daily number of tourists may top 100,000. Andy Wu, chairman of Travel Industry Council of Macau (TICM), said the Easter holiday was mainly dominated by Hong Kong tourists in the past, and gauged that the number of tourists visiting Macau could be even higher than that of ordinary weekends, paired with the addition of mainland tourists, since the Easter holiday this year falls on Saturday and Sunday.

## GOV'T PUSHES FOR CASINO OPERATORS TO ENRICH MARITIME TRAVEL OFFERINGS

The government is calling for increased collaboration between casino operators and companies in order to promote maritime tourism. The director of the Marine and Water Bureau, Susana Wong, highlighted that gaming companies are currently engaged in various projects with maritime travel companies, resulting in an expansion of routes, as well as more diverse forms of collaboration. Wong explained that these partnerships mainly revolve around two annual campaigns in the city: the Macao International Fireworks Display Contest, which has been running for 31 years, and the Light Up Macao initiative, launched in 2015.

According to ITTF, the decision to resurrect the ITTF World Cup underscores the vision and dedication to revitalizing the sport's illustrious heritage that is soon (in 2026) reaching its centenary celebrations.

The event will take place over a week from Apr. 15 to 21 and will be hosted at the Galaxy Arena, which besides affording the players and spectators much better conditions will also allow it to cater to a much larger audience than the WTT events hosted at the Tap Seac Multi-sport Pavilion.





## EDUCATION BUREAU TO START PATRIOTIC CAMP H2

ANTHONY LAM

**PATRIOTIC** Education Camp for Form 1 students in Macau will be rolled out in the coming academic year “to strengthen [the] patriotic curriculum in local schools,” director for Education and Youth Development Kong Chi Meng has announced.

In response to a written inquiry by lawmaker Ngan Iek Hang on patriotic education, the education official said his bureau will “take a further step to strengthen elements in patriotic education,” since a disclosure on the camp was imminent.

Another reason the camp is organized is to comply with the Patriotic Education Law of the People's Republic of China, Kong added. The law is not part

of the Appendix III of the Basic Law, which states the national laws enacted in Macau.

Kong said the camp will include tours to neighboring Zhuhai city or the cooperation zone in Hengqin, “so as to increase students’ knowledge in the development of Macau and the country.”

The education bureau has also “coordinated” higher education to established general education courses on the Constitution and the Basic Law “when they review the curricula of their existing Bachelor's Degree programs, or approve those of their [] new programs.”

He also said the University of Macau and the Macau Polytechnic University had operated training programs, study camps, workshops and exchange tours to educate stu-

dents in “the successful implementation of ‘One country, two systems’ in Macau, for them to become patriotic.”

In addition to that, the education official listed other content that focuses on building patriotism among students in local schools. This content falls within subjects such as ethics and civil education, common knowledge and history. Auxiliary materials concerning the Constitution and the Basic Law have also been published in support of patriotic education.

The official said the education bureau is working with a “professional entity or entities” to compile additional auxiliary educational materials titled National Security Education, which will also be used in the coming academic year.

### GAMING

## Wynn emerges as market-share leader in March: Citi

STAFF REPORTER

**WYNN** Macau Ltd, the operator of Wynn Macau and Wynn Palace, emerged as the market-share leader in the March survey, capturing 25% of the observed wager amounts, according to Citigroup.

However, the institution expressed surprise at MGM China Holdings Ltd's estimated 21% share, placing it in third position.

The analysts, as cited in a GGRAsia report, highlighted that the gaming volumes observed at MGM Cotai in March were comparable to those

during the Chinese New Year in 2024, with around HKD1.09 million distributed across 50 players.

They speculated that players were fond of the newly renovated high-limit area at MGM Cotai.

The survey's “player of the month” placed a HKD400,000 bet at the Supreme room at the MGM Macau on the peninsula, as noted by the analysts.

Citigroup said MGM China had introduced two additional baccarat tables with insurance bet options at MGM Macau, where a customer played using an insurance bet at a 10 to 1

payout ratio, resembling the behavior of a financial markets “option trader.”

Surprisingly, Citigroup observed HKD1 million in total premium mass wagers at MGM Cotai for the second consecutive month, despite March not being a Chinese-mainland holiday season.

In terms of operational trends, Citigroup reported that Melco Resorts & Entertainment Ltd transformed its Qi Long club at City of Dreams into a semi-open area, designating the Dragon Palace as the sole members-only premium mass room at the property.

## ‘ANTI-SCAM’ APP TO LAUNCH NEXT MONTH

RENATO MARQUES

**A** new “anti-scam” mobile application (app) is to launch next month, the Office of the Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak announced in the monthly column “Safety and You” published last week on the official website of the Office.

To attempt to tackle the problem, the Security Secretariat is launching in April this year an “anti-fraud mini-program” on WeChat to assist the public in preventing fraud crimes.

The Judiciary Police (PJ) developed the app, which is currently undergoing testing before next month's launch.

The mini-program will operate via WeChat and provide four functions including, Fraud Search, Fraud Reporting Tips, Learning about Fraud and Identifying Fraud Cases.

In general, the mini-program will allow users to enter “suspicious information” such as phone numbers, emails and bank account numbers, that will be analyzed by the app to

assess their fraud risk.

The system compares the data entered against the PJ's database, searching for hits related to previous and known scam cases.

For instance, if a given phone number has been reported to PJ in a scam complaint, this will appear as a scam risk if anyone searches information on it.

It will also allow users to easily report to the PJ new phone numbers, emails, usernames or methods used by people attempting to scam others, contributing to increased information on the same database.

According to statistics collected by the PJ last year, there were 407 cases of phone fraud, 871 cyber scams, and 329 credit card-related frauds over the internet, figures that correspond to an annual increase of 263%, 43% and 89%, respectively.

In January this year, the PJ recorded 42 cases of phone fraud, 77 cyber scams, and 35 credit card-related frauds, indicating these types of crimes continue to increase in Macau.

### CRIME

## MAN ARRESTED FOR ALLEGEDLY SCAMMING PAWNSHOP FOR HKD1.5 MILLION

ANTHONY LAM

**A** man has been apprehended for scamming a local pawnshop for the sum of HKD1.5 million through pawning a counterfeit designer watch, the Judiciary Police (PJ) has announced.

On Mar. 16, the police received a report from a staff member of the pawnshop regarding the case. They then identified and arrested the suspect, a mainland man, 30, surnamed Li and reportedly a salesperson.

Another man, believed to be an accomplice, remains at large, the police added.

On Nov. 23 last year, Li and another man went to the pawnshop, itself located in the NAPE District, with the intention to pawn a designer watch for HKD1.5 million. At that time, Li produced the watch while the other man presented his

own ID documents, for registration purposes. After completing the necessary procedures, the two received the money and left.

In January this year, a staff member of the pawnshop claimed nobody was interested in the watch, so it was sent for official maintenance in Hong Kong. Only then was it confirmed to be a counterfeited product.

Following the report, the police first commissioned professionals to inspect the watch. They confirmed it to be a fake. They also discovered that Li had left Macau after the incident and re-entered in the middle of this month. In light of this, the police deployed a team to track him down; he was due to leave Macau via the local airport, at 6 p.m. on Mar. 17.

The police added that Li did not cooperate with the investigation. A charge of swindling has been pressed against him.





FINANCE

# Bank of Japan ends its negative interest rate policy, opting for its first hike in 17 years

YURI KAGEYAMA, TOKYO

**J**APAN'S central bank raised its benchmark interest rate yesterday for the first time in 17 years, ending a long-standing policy of negative rates meant to boost the economy.

The Bank of Japan's lending rate for overnight borrowing by banks was raised to a range of 0 to 0.1% from minus 0.1% at a policy meeting that confirmed expectations of a shift away from ultra-lax monetary policy.

It was the first rate hike since February 2007. The negative interest rate policy, combined with other measures to inject money into the economy and keep borrowing costs low, "have fulfilled their roles," Bank of Japan Gov. Kazuo Ueda told reporters.

The bank has an inflation target of 2% that it used as a benchmark for whether Japan had finally escaped deflationary ten-



dencies. But it had remained cautious about "normalizing" monetary policy, or ending negative borrowing rates, even after data showed inflation at about that rate in recent months.

Ueda said there was "a positive cycle" of a gradual rise of wages

and prices, while stressing that monetary policy will remain easy for some time.

Although private sector banks and other financial organizations will make their own decisions about rates, he said did not foresee any drastic rises. The central

bank will watch for any big moves in rates, which would cause confusion, he added.

"We made the decision because we foresaw stable and continuous 2% inflation," he added.

Another factor supporting the shift: Japanese companies have announced relatively robust wage hikes for this year's round of negotiations with trade unions.

Wages and profits at companies were improving, the Bank of Japan said, in releasing its latest decision, referring to "anecdotal" accounts as well as data it had gathered lately.

"Japan's economy has recovered moderately," it said.

Market reaction was muted as the decision had been anticipated after Japanese media reports earlier this week. Tokyo's benchmark Nikkei 225 index gained nearly 0.7% yesterday, while the dollar was steady at about 150 yen.

Analysts said the bank likely

won't rush to change its overall easy lending framework and will closely monitor prices.

Harumi Taguchi, principal economist at S&P Global Market Intelligence, said she believes inflation could begin falling below 2% and wage increases may not necessarily lead to robust consumer spending if people choose to save, rather than spend.

"While the bank's decisions will contribute to improving the functioning of financial markets, the impact on the real economy is likely to be limited," according to analysis by S&P Global Market Intelligence.

Ueda had repeatedly said the central bank would review its negative rate and other easing measures if the 2 percent inflation target was met and was accompanied by wage increases.

The Japanese central bank's policy is quite different from those of the U.S. Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank. Both have been moving to lower interest rates after rapidly raising them to clamp down on inflation.

The Bank of Japan has kept borrowing costs extremely low for many years to encourage Japanese consumers and businesses to spend and invest to help sustain stronger economic growth.

Japan recently became the world's fourth biggest economy, slipping behind Germany in terms of its nominal gross domestic product, or GDP. MDT/AP

AD

**仁德** CENTRO MEDICO PEDDER  
仁德醫療中心

*We bring high quality of medical service to Macau*

**General Surgery** : Dr. Fok Manson, Dr. Lai Cheuck Seen Edward, Dr. Lau Wing Kee Peter, Dr. Kwong Man, Dr. Nie Fu Zhong, Dr. U Chong San, Dr. Lei Chin Chong

**Breast Surgery** : Dr. Leong Iat Lun

**Urology** : Dr. Lo Kwong Yin Richard, Dr. Zhao Yun Qiao

**Paediatric Surgery** : Dr. Yeung Chung Kwong

**Paediatrics** : Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

**Obstetrics & Gynaecology** : Dr. Fong Kuan Io

**Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery** : Dr. Lam U Lin

**Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine** : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

**ENT** : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

**Cardiology** : Dr. Jin Chun, Dr. Leong Man Kin

**General Medicine** : Dr. Ng Kam Hong, Dr. Lam Weng Chio

**Dietitian** : Chan Lai U Joey

Avenida da Praia Grande No 599, Edifício Comercial Rodrigues 14 e 15 Andar, em Macau  
T. 2832 2298 / 2832 2229 Website: www.peddermacau.com  
Opening Hours: Mon - Fri 10:00 - 19:00 Sat 10:00 - 14:00 Sun & PH closed

## Concurso de habitação económica de 2023

**Prazo de apresentação das candidaturas até ao dia 27 de Março**

Os residentes podem apresentar a candidatura presencialmente ou por meios electrónicos

**Entrega dos documentos em falta até ao dia 26 de Abril**

Para mais informações, visite a página electrónica temática relativa ao concurso de habitação económica  
<https://www.ihm.gov.mo/pt/he2023>

O candidato pode apresentar a candidatura via online  
<https://www.ihm.gov.mo/pt/he2023>

ou optar por efectuar a marcação prévia online  
<https://booking.ihm.gov.mo>

e depois, apresentar pessoalmente a candidatura na Delegação do Instituto de Habitação  
Rua Sul do Canal dos Patos, Edifício do Bairro da Ilha Verde, r/c K, Macau

Formas de consulta  
☎ 2859 4875 ✉ he\_application@ihm.gov.mo  
☎ 2830 5909 🌐 <https://www.ihm.gov.mo/pt/heapplication-enquiry>



CRIME

# Detention of three teens over gruesome killing of classmate sparks debate

DAKE KANG, BEIJING

**I**N the last recorded moments before the 13-year-old boy's death, surveillance cameras showed him sitting on a scooter, surrounded by three classmates. An hour later, his phone went dead, kicking off a frantic search by relatives.

The following day, police in a village in northern China's Hebei province made a sickening discovery: the boy's body, buried underneath a tarp in an abandoned vegetable greenhouse.

His three teenage classmates have been detained on suspicion of murdering the boy in a case that has riveted China, setting off outrage and frenzied debate over the young age of the suspects and soul-searching about bullying and social responsibility in the Chinese countryside.

Police in Feixiang district of Handan city identified the boy only by his last name, Wang. In a statement Sunday they said the boy had been killed on March 10 and that the suspects were detained the following day. A police investigator told state broadcaster CCTV on Monday that the crime had been premeditated, with the suspects digging out the pit twice, once the day before and again the day of the killing.

Wang's relatives and their attorney said in interviews with Chinese media and in posts on social media that the boy had long been a victim of bullying, and was forced to give money to one of his classmates before he was killed.



A main road in Handan, Hebei province

They said police identified the suspected killers after reviewing the surveillance footage and questioning the classmates.

"He was beaten alive and his body was disfigured beyond recognition," Wang's father wrote on Douyin, a Chinese social media platform. "I hope the government will be fair, open and just, punish them severely, and that the killers will pay with their lives!"

The case will be a test of a change in the law in 2021 that lowered the age at which children could be charged with a crime from 14 to 12 years old.

Wang's father, aunt, and grandmother did not respond to requests for comment. A person answering a phone number listed for their attorney's law firm told The Associated Press to wait

for comment, saying they were swamped with interview requests. A number for the principal of the boy's school rang unanswered, as did numbers for relatives of two of the suspects.

The victim and the suspects are all under the age of 14. Media reports said they were "left-behind" children, a phrase used to describe kids in the countryside often cared for by grandparents because their parents work in faraway cities.

As details of the tragedy emerged last weekend, it renewed concern over the social and psychological welfare of such children, their exposure to violent content online and the ability of the country's social services to care for them. Posts and videos from Wang's relatives garnered millions of views and thousands of comments.

"The attention paid to the mental health of minors in the countryside is too little," said one commenter on Weibo, a Chinese social media platform. "I think this sort of thing could happen again."

Zhang Dongshuo, a defense attorney in Beijing unaffiliated with the case, said that Wang's death is the latest in a series of juvenile murder cases in China that have sparked debate on how old a child should be before being held responsible for a crime.

"Generally speaking, these kinds of cases involving minors are rare," Zhang said. "But recently more and more of these cases have been reported by the media, and it's been triggering discussion in Chinese society over revising the age of criminal responsibility."

In 2019, a 13-year-old boy who confessed to sexually assaulting and murdering a 10-year-old girl avoided criminal charges because Chinese law at the time stipulated that only those over the age of 14 could be held criminally liable. Two years later, the age of criminal responsibility was lowered to 12, but the government mandated that prosecution only take place if approved by the Supreme People's Procuratorate, China's highest prosecuting authority.

Zhang added that the lack of parental guidance for "left behind" children has been a longstanding social issue, but that the question of how they should be raised has not been fully resolved.

"Many people think schools and the government should take responsibility for children's education, but that means if the relevant government departments and schools don't educate them effectively, then it's highly likely this minor is left in an educational vacuum," he said.

A public statement from police asked the public not to spread rumors to protect the victim's privacy and avoid further harm to the boy's family.

His family has signaled they intend to pursue criminal charges. In a video Wang's father posted Monday, he said the sight of his son's body was "crueler than I imagined."

"Your father isn't scared, he is only upset and furious," Wang's father wrote, addressing his son. "Wait for your father to avenge you!" MDT/AP

HONG KONG

# National security bill comes into law on March 23

**H**ONG Kong will enact the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance on Saturday, announced the city's leader John Lee after the city's legislature passed the bill on its third reading yesterday.

Calling it a historic moment for the city that has been overdue for 26 years, eight months and nine days, Lee said it was a glorious mission jointly accomplished by the SAR government and the Legislative Council and a proud

moment that the SAR has made concerted efforts to write history.

Lee said the city has lived up to the expectations of the central government and the trust of the country by fulfilling this historic mission. He will sign the Safeguarding National Security Bill and gazette it on Saturday for promulgation. The government should also report the law to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the nation's top legislature, for the

record, as stipulated in Article 17 of the Basic Law.

The Safeguarding National Security Ordinance, which aims to prevent and punish five types of crimes endangering national security, was approved by lawmakers on its third reading yesterday evening, after passing its second reading and the consideration of the committee of the whole council earlier in the day.

In his speech, he also thanked the lawmakers for



their efficiency, concerted efforts by his team and contributions made by patriotic forces in supporting and advancing the legislation of Article 23 of the Basic Law.

These efforts drew a satisfactory conclusion to an issue that has plagued the city for over 26 years, Lee said.

After the passage of the bill, Hong Kong is able to

effectively safeguard national security and focus on economic development at full speed to create a better, prosperous home, Lee said. CHINA DAILY



SOUTH CHINA SEA

# Blinken to underline 'ironclad' support for Philippines in disputed sea

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

**S**ECRETARY of State Antony Blinken will underscore Washington's "ironclad commitment" to its alliance with the Philippines, as clashes between Chinese and Filipino forces in the disputed South China Sea turn more hostile, the U.S. State Department said.

Blinken, the latest high-level official to visit the U.S. treaty ally, met his Philippine counterpart, Enrique Manalo yesterday, before planned meetings with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and other top officials in Manila.

Next month, President Joe Biden will host Marcos and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in a White House summit amid growing concerns over "increasingly aggressive Chinese actions in the South China Sea and North Korea's nuclear program."

The Chinese coast guard blocked and used water cannons



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken (left) shakes hands with Philippines' Secretary of Foreign Affairs Enrique Manalo at the Sofitel Hotel in Manila, yesterday

against Philippine vessels in a confrontation two weeks ago that slightly injured a Filipino admiral and four of his sailors near the disputed Second Thomas Shoal.

The March 5 faceoff in the high seas also caused two minor collisions between Chinese and Philippine vessels and prompted Manila's Department of Foreign Affairs to summon China's deputy ambassador to convey a protest against the Chinese coast guard's actions, which the Philippines said were unac-

ceptable.

Washington renewed a warning after the hostilities that it is obligated to defend the Philippines if Filipino forces, ships or aircraft come under an armed attack anywhere in the South China Sea.

The Chinese coast guard said that "it took control measures in accordance with the law against Philippine ships that illegally intruded into the waters adjacent to Ren'ai Reef," the name Beijing uses for Second Thomas Shoal.

The Second Thomas Shoal, which is occupied by a small Philippine navy contingent but surrounded by Chinese coast guard ships and other allied vessels, was the site of several tense skirmishes between Chinese and Philippine coast guard ships last year. But Filipino officials said the confrontation earlier this month was particularly serious because of the injuries sustained by its navy personnel and damage to their vessel.

In his meetings with Marcos and Manalo, Blinken will "advance shared economic priorities and underscore the United States' ironclad commitment to the U.S.-Philippine alliance," the State Department said yesterday.

They will "discuss areas to deepen U.S.-Philippine cooperation on a range of bilateral and global issues, including on regional peace and stability, human rights and democracy, economic prosperity" among others, the State Department said.

Outside the presidential palace, dozens of left-wing activists tore a mock U.S. flag in a noisy rally yesterday to oppose Blinken's visit and U.S. involvement in the long-simmering territorial disputes.

Aside from China and the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei also have overlapping claims in the resource-rich and busy waterway, a key global trade route.

Beijing claims almost the entire South China Sea. In the last decade, China has turned barren reefs into seven islands that now serve as missile-protected island bases, including three with runways, that have bolstered its capability to fortify its territorial claims and patrols.

In response, Washington has been strengthening an arc of military alliances and security relationships in the Indo-Pacific, including with the Philippines, Vietnam and other countries at odds with China in the disputed sea. MDT/AP

AD



PRESENTED BY



銀河娛樂集團  
Galaxy Entertainment Group

**BRITCHAM'S  
MEDICINE BALL  
@StarWorld Hotel**

**SAVE THE DATE  
15<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

JEWEL IN THE CROWN:



銀河娛樂集團  
Galaxy Entertainment Group

DIAMOND CROWN:



LOD STOW'S BAKERY  
澳門安德魯餅店

SAPPHIRE CROWN:



MSS RECRUITMENT

PRINCIPAL MEDIA PARTNER:



hello jobs  
哈囉好工網及APP



Times  
www.macaudailytimes.com.mo



AP PHOTO



USA ELECTIONS

# Trump says Jews who vote for Democrats 'hate Israel' and their religion

JILL COLVIN, NEW YORK

**F**ORMER President Donald Trump yesterday [Macau time] charged that Jews who vote for Democrats "hate Israel" and hate "their religion," igniting a firestorm of criticism from the White House and Jewish leaders.

Trump, in an interview, had been asked about Democrats' growing criticism of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over his handling of the war in Gaza as the civilian death toll continues to mount.

"I actually think they hate Israel," Trump responded to his former aide, Sebastian Gorka. "I think they hate Israel. And the Democrat party hates Israel."

Trump, who last week became the Republican Party's presumptive nominee, went on to charge: "Any Jewish person that votes for Democrats hates their religion. They hate everything about Israel and they should be ashamed of themselves because Israel will be destroyed."

The comments sparked immediate backlash from the White House, President Joe Biden's campaign and Jewish leaders. The vast majority of Jewish Americans

identify as Democrats, but Trump has often accused them of disloyalty, perpetuating what critics say is an antisemitic trope.

At the White House, spokesperson Andrew Bates cast the comments as "vile and unhinged Antisemitic rhetoric" without mentioning Trump by name.

"As Antisemitic crimes and acts of hate have increased across the world — among them the deadliest attack committed against the Jewish people since the Holocaust — leaders have an obligation to call hate what it is and bring Americans together against it," he said. "There is no justification for spreading toxic, false stereotypes that threaten fellow citizens. None."

Biden's campaign said, "The only person who should be ashamed here is Donald Trump."

"Trump is going to lose again this November because Americans are sick of his hateful resentment, personal attacks, and extreme agenda," said spokesman James Singer.

Jonathan Greenblatt, who heads the Anti-Defamation League, said, "Accusing Jews of hating their religion because they might vote for a particular party is defamatory & pa-

tently false."

"Serious leaders who care about the historic US-Israel alliance should focus on strengthening, rather than unraveling, bipartisan support for the State of Israel," he wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Trump's comments come as Biden has been facing mounting pressure from the progressive wing of his party over his administration's support for Israel in its retaliatory offensive in Gaza. More than 30,000 Palestinians have been killed since Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, according to the Health Ministry in the Hamas-ruled territory.

While Biden continues to back Israel's right to defend itself, he has increasingly criticized Netanyahu. After his State of the Union speech, he said he needed to have a "come to Jesus" conversation with the Israeli leader. He has also accused Netanyahu of "hurting Israel more than helping Israel," saying, "he must pay more attention to the innocent lives being lost as a consequence of the actions taken."

Trump took particular issue with recent comments from Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, the country's highest-ranking

Jewish official. In a speech last week, Schumer sharply criticized Netanyahu's handling of the war in Gaza, warning that the civilian toll was damaging Israel's standing around the world. He also called for Israel to hold new elections.

While the White House formally distanced itself from Schumer's comments, the Democratic leader and key ally was voicing an opinion increasingly held across Biden's administration.

Schumer — whom Trump accused of being "very anti-Israel now" — responded by accusing Trump of "making highly partisan and hateful rants."

"To make Israel a partisan issue only hurts Israel and the US-Israeli relationship," he wrote on X.

The Pew Research Center reported in 2021 that Jews are "among the most consistently liberal and Democratic groups in the U.S.," with 7 in 10 Jewish adults identifying with or leaning toward the Democratic Party. In 2020, it found that nearly three-quarters of American Jews disapproved of Trump's performance as president, with just 27% rating him positively.

Americans have also increasingly soured on Israel's military operation in Gaza, according to surveys from The Associated Press and the NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. In January, 50% of U.S. adults said the military response from Israel in the Gaza Strip had gone too far, up from 40% in November.

That number was higher among Democrats, 6 in 10 of whom said the same thing in both surveys. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1966 FOOTBALL'S WORLD CUP STOLEN



The football World Cup has been stolen while on exhibition at Central Hall in Westminster, London. The £30,000 solid gold Jules Rimet trophy disappeared while a church service was taking place in another part of the building.

Thieves removed the cup from the "Sport with Stamps" display at the Stampex exhibition, but stamps worth £3m were left behind.

At least two guards were in the hall at the time of the theft. Alsa-Guard, the security firm at the exhibition, was not available for comment.

Delegates from current cup-holders Brazil left the cup in custody of the Federation of International Football Association (Fifa) last week.

The trophy was to be the centre-piece of the World Cup tournament being hosted by Britain later this year.

Vice-chairman of the Football Association Council, Jack Stewart, was reluctant to accept blame for the trophy's disappearance.

But he said: "We are responsible for it in the end because we are the organizing association."

Detectives and forensics experts are investigating the break-in and have appealed for anyone who was in Central Hall to contact Scotland Yard.

Police say a suspicious-looking man was seen in the building at the time of the theft. He is described as being in his early 30s, of average height with thin lips, greased black hair and a possible scar on his face.

The Jules Rimet trophy is named after a French lawyer who was a president of FIFA and initiated the World Cup competition in 1929.

Brazil have been holders of the Cup for the last eight years, after winning both the 1958 and 1962 competitions.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Several days of anxiety and frustration followed the Cup's theft.

Brazil said it was a sacrilege that would never have been committed in Brazil where even its thieves loved football too much.

But the trophy was eventually found by Pickles, a mongrel dog, out for a walk with his owner, on 27 March in south London.

Later that year it was England who won the World Cup, but in 1970 Brazil was allowed to keep the trophy for ever, after winning the competition for the third time.

The replacement trophy remains the prize for the World Cup to this day.

The Jules Rimet cup was stolen again in 1983 - in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It has never been recovered.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES** Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Advance personal passion projects. Grow like a weed, with the Sun in your sign. Achieve dreamy objectives. You're in your element this month.

**TAURUS** Apr. 20-May. 20  
You're especially productive behind closed doors this month. Complete old projects under the Aries Sun. Savor spiritual and natural connection.

**GEMINI** May. 21-Jun. 21  
Network and share with friends and allies. Community connections flower. Get into a four-week social phase, with the Sun in Aries. Teamwork wins.

**CANCER** Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
The next month can get fun at work. The Sun in Aries energizes professional growth. Advance your career. Your status and influence are rising.

**LEO** Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
Get obsessed with a fascinating exploration. Begin a month-long travel and expansion phase. Indulge your curiosity, with the Sun in Aries. Investigate the possibilities.

**VIRGO** Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
Energize a lucrative project. Share financial support with your partner, with the Sun in Aries. Invest for long-term growth together. Make plans and preparations.

**LIBRA** Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
Friendship feeds your spirit. Partnership flowers under the Aries Sun. Work and have fun together with your partner. Share support, laughter and romance.

**SCORPIO** Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
Take care of business. Prioritize health, fitness and vitality, with the Sun in Aries for a month. Reconnect with nature. Energize your work.

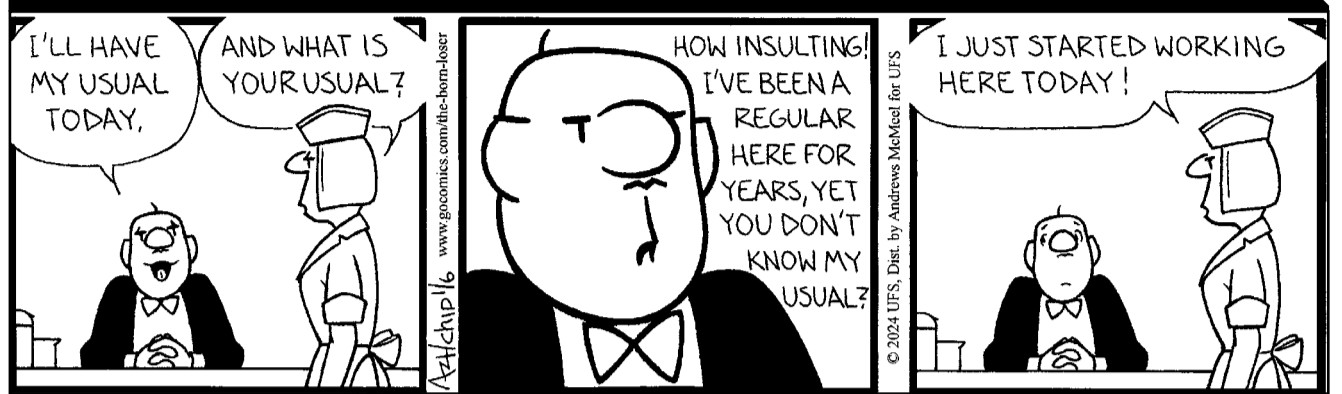
**SAGITTARIUS** Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
You're lucky in love, fun and games, with the Sun in Aries. You're attracted, and attractive. Deepen a connection. Develop passion projects. Get creative.

**CAPRICORN** Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
Prepare treats together. Develop household improvement projects with the Sun in Aries. Domestic chores and delights take precedence.

**AQUARIUS** Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
Studies and research flourish, with the Sun in Aries. Sate your curiosity this month. Indulge your passion for learning. Explore and investigate.

**PISCES** Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
Keep the wheels in motion for a lucrative month, with the Sun in Aries. Energize your cash flow. Make hay while the sun shines. Document discoveries.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sanson**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

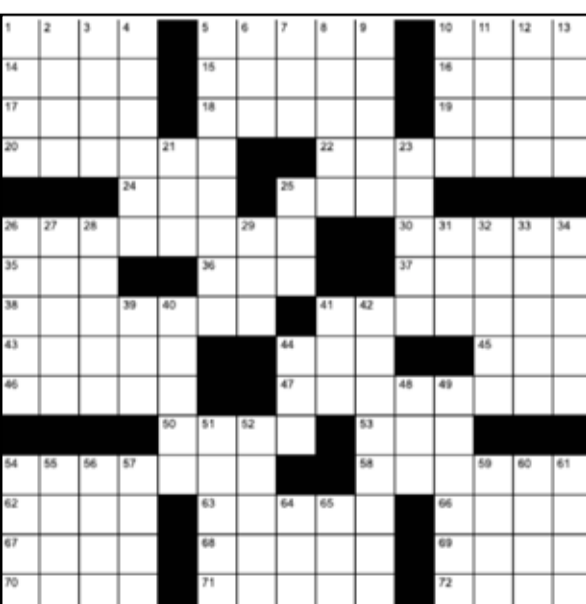
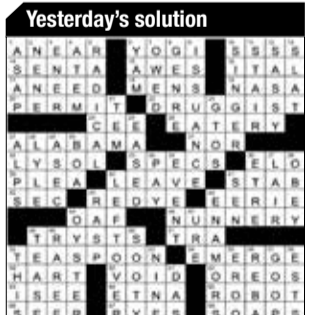
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	3	17	fine
Changchun	-6	5	cloudy
Chengdu	12	21	overcast
Chongqing	13	20	cloudy
Fuzhou	12	22	cloudy
Guangzhou	15	21	rain
Guiyang	8	16	cloudy
Haikou	21	24	rain
Hangzhou	6	18	fine
Harbin	-8	3	fine
Hefei	2	17	cloudy
Nanjing	5	17	fine
Shanghai	7	17	fine
Taipei	13	17	rain
Wuhan	3	19	cloudy
Hong Kong	19	21	overcast
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	-7	4	cloudy
Frankfurt	7	17	cloudy
Paris	8	18	cloudy
London	7	17	rain
New York	1	13	rain

**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS** 1- 500 sheets; 5- Tip off; 10- Hill toy; 14- \_\_\_ extra cost; 15- Less common; 16- Prefix with dynamic; 17- Western pact; 18- Sleeping disorder; 19- Gambling mecca; 20- Sloping letter; 22- Guest; 24- Blond shade; 25- Depend; 26- Repairman; 30- Chart anew; 35- Brian of rock; 36- 401(k) kin; 37- Join forces; 38- Created by humans; 41- Becomes visible; 43- Body of salt water; 44- Legal conclusion?; 45- Manhattan museum, familiarly; 46- Eye sores; 47- Hunger pangs; 50- Formerly, formerly; 53- Sportage maker; 54- Frying pan; 58- Country; 62- Feminine suffix; 63- Wrist bones; 66- Shipping deduction; 67- Withered; 68- Shake like \_\_\_; 69- Legendary singer James; 70- Crystal gazer; 71- Tubular pasta; 72- Take five;

**DOWN** 1- Wife of a rajah; 2- French state; 3- Organization to promote theater; 4- Dough; 5- Spider; 6- Once around the track; 7- West end?; 8- Actor Christopher; 9- Bring up the rear; 10- Rani's wrap; 11- Internet writing system that popularized "pwn3d" and "n00b"; 12- Cube maker Rubik; 13- Entrance; 21- This \_\_\_ test...; 23- Thick sweet liquid; 25- Color TV pioneer; 26- Office notes; 27- Put into law; 28- Brooklyn's \_\_\_ Island; 29- Dander; 31- U-turn from WSW; 32- Orange Bowl site; 33- \_\_\_ Grows in Brooklyn; 34- Nuisances; 39- Ginnie \_\_\_; 40- First name in photography; 41- Sun Devils' sch.; 42- Switchblade; 44- CPR expert; 48- Spy org.; 49- Madman at the tea party; 51- Summary; 52- No longer fresh; 54- Cong. meeting; 55- Joint with a cap; 56- As to; 57- Lewd look; 59- Must've been something \_\_\_; 60- Scraps; 61- Tidy, without fault; 64- Stimp's pal; 65- Metal container used for frying;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

- Emergency calls 999
- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IAM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
- Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
- Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



It's prime time to **BUY & RENT!**

有關樓宇廣告法例查詢詳情請向職員查詢  
For more information on advertising laws, please speak to one of our representatives.

**jml property**

CONTACT US & SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY!

hello@jmlproperty.com  
www.jmlproperty.com

f jmlmacau @jmlproperty

**Va Fat**  
HKD 3,780,000 2 bed 1 bath

**Tou Un**  
HKD 2,980,000 1 bed 1 bath

**Jade Garden**  
HKD 11,880,000 4 bed 3 bath

AD



## HISTORY

# AFTER CONFRONTING THEIR NAZI PAST, GERMANS NOT IMMUNE TO NATIONALISM

KIRSTEN GRIESHABER, BERLIN

WHEN Sabine Thonke joined a recent demonstration in Berlin against Germany's far-right party, it was the first time in years she felt hopeful that the growing power of the extremists in her country could be stopped.

Thonke, 59, had been following the rise of the Alternative for Germany, or AfD, with unease. But when she heard about a plan to deport millions of people, she felt called to action.

"I never thought such inhuman ideas would be gaining popularity in Germany again. I thought we had learned the lessons from our past," Thonke said.

Many Germans believed their country had developed an immunity to nationalism and assertions of racial superiority after confronting the horrors of its Nazi past through education and laws to outlaw persecution.

They were wrong.

If an election were held today, the AfD would be the second largest party, according to polls.

But national polls camouflage an important division: the AfD has disproportionate support in the formerly communist and less prosperous eastern states of Germany.

After the fall of communism in 1989 and the unification of East and West Germany a year later, many people in the five eastern states lost not only their jobs but their collective past, leaving them disoriented and helpless in the capitalist system.

The AfD's rise has been propelled by anger over inflation and, above all, rising immigration. The EU received 1.1 million asylum requests in 2023, the highest number since 2015. Germany got by far the largest number of claims — more than 300,000 — mostly from Syria, Afghanistan and Turkey. The country has also taken in more than a million Ukrainian refugees displaced by Russia's invasion.

Voters in Germany and across Europe are increasingly empowering far-right nationalist parties who promise to restrict immigration and, in some cases, constrain democratic freedoms of religion, of expression, of the right to protest. These forces have bubbled up in France, Italy, the Netherlands and Austria.

## THE LESSONS OF WORLD WAR II

After 1945, West Germans grew up with the guiding principle that there should "never again" be a dictatorship on German soil. West German leaders made visits to Israel and apologized to the coun-

AP PHOTO



People hold up their cell phones as they protest the far-right Alternative for Germany, or AfD party, and right-wing extremism in front of the parliament building in Berlin, last January

tries occupied by the Nazis, while schoolchildren were taken to see concentration camps or Holocaust memorials.

But in the East, a self-declared anti-fascist society, young people were taught that they were only the descendants of the Nazis' victims.

Thonke, who works at Berlin's water utility, grew up in Bavaria, which was part of West Germany before reunification in 1990. She said she did not speak much with her grandparents — the Nazi generation — about what happened during the Third Reich, but learned about Adolf Hitler's rise to power and the Holocaust in school.

Today's far right is using similar tactics, she said, exploiting people's fears to win their trust and their votes.

"I understand that many people are worn out from all these crises — the coronavirus pandemic, the war in Ukraine, the many migrants, inflation — and that they are afraid that things are going to get worse," Thonke said. "But the solutions the AfD offers won't solve any of these problems."

Polls show the AfD as the top party in the eastern states of Saxony and Thuringia, with roughly 35% support in each. Both states have elections this fall, along with the eastern state of Brandenburg, where the AfD is also expected to make strong gains.

The AfD's appeal is particularly strong among men — about two-thirds of its voters are male — and, increasingly, younger voters. In the last state elections in Hesse

and Bavaria in October, AfD made significant gains among voters 24 and younger.

The party is far more internet-savvy than its rivals, making use of social media to get its message out to young people. At the same time, AfD officials often avoid talking to mainstream media reporters and sometimes don't accredit journalists they perceive as too critical to their party conventions.

The party has benefited from voters' deep frustration with Chancellor Olaf Scholz. His government came to power over two years ago with a progressive, modernizing agenda, but now is viewed by many as dysfunctional and incapable.

The AfD's Thuringia branch is particularly radical and was put under official surveillance by the domestic intelligence service four years ago as a "proven right-wing extremist" group.

AfD's Thuringia leader, Bjoern Hoecke, has at various times espoused revisionist views of Germany's Nazi past. In 2018, he called the Holocaust memorial in Berlin a "monument of shame" and called for Germany to make a "180-degree turn" in the way it remembers its past.

"The AfD is a nationalist party, and nationalists want to be proud of their history, and anyone who wants to be very proud of German history must of course minimize, play down, or even deny the shame of the Nazi crimes in order to be able to tell the story of national greatness," said Jens-Christian Wagner, a historian and the head

of the Buchenwald Memorial, a former concentration camp in Thuringia, where the Nazis killed more than 56,000 people.

Attacks on the former concentration camp have stepped up massively in recent months: Wagner says this is because of the "revisionist, antisemitic and racist slogans" promoted by the AfD.

## AWAKE-UP CALL

Since January, a wave of protests against the far right has swept across Germany, triggered by a report that right-wing extremists met to discuss the deportation of millions of immigrants, including some with German citizenship.

AfD members were present at the meeting, along with Martin Sellner, a persuasive young Austrian with neo-Nazi links and convictions for violent extremism.

The meeting, in November, bore an eerie resemblance to the Wannsee Conference, when the Nazis agreed to the so-called "final solution" — the systematic round-ups that led to the murder of 6 million Jews.

Just like in the winter of 1942, when senior Nazi officials met covertly in a villa by a lake outside Berlin, the recent meeting also took place in secrecy at a villa not far from the German capital.

AfD party leaders have sought to distance themselves from the meeting, saying the party had no organizational or financial links to the event, that it wasn't responsible for what was discussed there and members who attended did so in a purely personal capacity.

AfD chief whip in parliament,

Bernd Baumann, complained that his party faces a "devious campaign by politicians and journalists from the ruined left-green class."

"Little private debating clubs are being blown up into secret meetings that are a danger to the public," he said.

Still, week after week, millions of Germans have turned out to protest, attending events with slogans such as "Never Again is Now," "Against Hate" and "Defend Democracy."

Demonstrations in cities such as Berlin, Munich, Hamburg or Duesseldorf, have drawn hundreds of thousands of participants at a time — so many that authorities have had to end some marches early due to safety concerns with overcrowded streets.

People also turned out for protests in smaller towns and even held weekly vigils in their neighborhoods to express their frustration with growing support for far-right populism at the ballot box.

More than 2.4 million people have so far joined the anti-AfD protests which began in mid-January, according to the German interior ministry. The organizers of the demonstrations estimate the more than 3.6 million people have participated.

Among them was Thonke, who went to two pro-democracy rallies in Berlin, relieved that the country was, as she put it, "waking up."

"I no longer have this feeling of powerlessness that I had during the last years while watching the rise and success of the AfD," she said, adding that the government must do more.

"The government needs to find solutions for the migration crisis, otherwise the AfD will continue to exploit this topic for their own purposes and become even more powerful," she said.

Earlier waves of protests against the anti-Islam and anti-immigration movement PEGIDA eventually ran out of steam, although they weren't as large as the anti-AfD movement that is building.

Still, the AfD is riding high. In December, it marked another milestone, when for the first time its candidate won a mayoral election in a midsized town: Pirna, in Saxony.

Now the party is setting its sights on elections for the European Parliament in June. If Thonke and her fellow protesters want to push back the far right, they will have to persuade their compatriots not just to protest, but to turn out in large numbers at the ballot box.

MDT/AP



JENNA FRYER,  
MDT/AP AUTO RACING  
WRITER

ANALYSIS

# F1 needs to take control of the Red Bull drama as Horner accuser files FIA complaint

If Christian Horner had his way, this messy saga over an allegation of misconduct made against him by an employee would be forgotten by now.

He was cleared of wrongdoing by parent company Red Bull ahead of Formula 1's season-opening race last month and Horner has delivered on his "business as usual" promise. Max Verstappen and Sergio Perez have gone 1-2 the first two races for Red Bull, and Horner, alongside his former pop star wife, has celebrated as Verstappen won for the 18th and 19th time in the last 20 races.

Enough is enough about the personal stuff, Horner complained after the second Red Bull rout: "I think it is time now to draw a line under it."

It doesn't seem to be going away.

The investigation into Horner will again be a top topic when F1 this week goes to Melbourne for the Australian Grand Prix. The employee who accused Horner of misconduct has been suspended by parent company Red Bull.

A communications team has now been hired by the employee, The Associated Press has learned. The employee has both exercised the right to appeal Red Bull's clearance of Horner, and as of "end of last week," had filed a formal complaint with F1 governing body FIA, the communications firm confirmed Monday.

The FIA says only that any complaint would go to an independent compliance officer and ethics committee. Those are separate from the FIA, which happens to be currently investigating its own president over two whistleblower complaints. If that seems contradictory, welcome to the party.

F1 and its American owner, Liberty Media Co., have said nothing. Neither has any legal grounds to take any sort of action against Red Bull Racing; F1 says it's up to the FIA.

Only one of Red Bull's sponsors has publicly demanded answers, and Ford Motor Co. found that Red Bull really doesn't care what its fu-

ture engine partner wants to know. The report that cleared Horner of misconduct has allegedly been withheld from anyone who has asked to see it, including stakeholders with millions pegged on the stability and excellence of Red Bull and its competitors.

So on the season has gone, already a Red Bull runaway. Horner hasn't missed a thing, remaining in his role as team principal with former "Spice Girl" wife, Geri Halliwell, by his side in celebratory support.

The easy punchline is wondering if all this drama will warrant, say, a 2-hour Netflix special on "Drive To Survive" but the truth is that serious allegations are being swept under the rug without transparency and almost certainly without the approval of the employee who brought the complaint.

F1 can't be a real sport if something official isn't done to investigate Red Bull, can it?

Red Bull would certainly be under a different level of scrutiny if it operated as a United States team, The NFL or NBA or MLB would all certainly investigate Red Bull and have smothered this a month ago before it became a watershed moment in a test of the entire series. Even if some details were kept private, punishments would not.

The FIA rules required a complaint to be lodged and now, officially, one has been lodged.

Someone has to step up and push this toward resolution, to show leadership of a series that has done nothing but grow in popularity for the past decade-plus. The FIA seems toothless here; it is still stinging from its offseason investigation into the potential sharing of information between Mercedes boss



Red Bull team principal Christian Horner is flanked by his wife Geri Halliwell after the Formula One Saudi Arabian Grand Prix at the Jeddah Corniche Circuit, earlier this month

Toto Wolff, and his wife, Susie, who as head of the F1 Academy is an F1 employee.

The FIA said there had been a complaint; the next day, all nine other teams released identically worded statements denying they'd complained and the FIA quickly closed the investigation. Susie Wolf is still awaiting an apology from the FIA.

This topic has sucked all the air out of the room for F1. Nothing else matters right now, from Lewis Hamilton's final season at Mercedes and the leadership changes at Haas to Michael Andretti's failed bid to join F1 and the FIA's other investigations. All of that is secondary to Red Bull telling everyone to mind their own business.

Someone has to show what kind of business F1 really is by demanding something more out of Red Bull. Be it F1, or the FIA, or every sponsor tied to Red Bull right now, someone needs to clean this up.

Or is everyone just going to take Red Bull's word for it?

AD

**MACAU**  
澳門

**BENFICAMACAU**  
**ACADEMY**  
澳門賓菲加體育學校

**FOOTBALL | BASKETBALL | DAILY TRAININGS**



OPINION

China Daily  
Editorial, China Daily

ISRAEL SHOULD  
NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH

The fierce international criticism of the civilian losses caused by its military campaign in Gaza, the looming uncertainties with the approach of US presidential election, as well as the domestic anger over the Benjamin Netanyahu government's inability to have the hostages held by Hamas released should all spur Tel Aviv to cherish the opportunity of negotiations, albethey indirect, with Hamas in Qatar.

Late last week, Hamas presented a new cease-fire plan to end the conflict in Gaza that includes the release of Israeli captives in exchange for Palestinian prisoners in the hope that it would be a three-phased truce, with each stage lasting 42 days. Although the Netanyahu government called it "unrealistic", it has still sent negotiators to Doha.

That the Joe Biden administration still backs the Netanyahu government suggests that the talks will not be fruitful. Secretary of State Antony Blinken commenting on Israel's proposed Rafah offensive on Friday even said that the US needed to see a "clear and implementable plan", which includes getting civilians "out of harm's way". That has led to speculation that Tel Aviv's approval on Friday of a plan for a ground offensive against Rafah, a city in the south of the Gaza Strip, where at least 1.4 million Palestinian refugees have taken shelter, is just a bluff to give a leverage to its negotiation team in the talks with Hamas, via mediators of Qatar and Egypt, on Monday.

That seems unlikely. Netanyahu told the media that a potential peace agreement with the Palestinians "that makes Israel so weak and unable to defend itself" would "set peace backward and not forward", indicating as long as he is kept in the post bringing back the hostages is only a secondary goal of the on-going offensive, and his objective is to enable Israel to have control over the region where Palestinians live. That's why, after the Oct 7 Hamas attack on Israel, he has repeatedly railed against the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, arguing it would be a reward for "terrorism", though much of the international community endorses the idea as the only lasting solution.

Notably, as reported, some of the issues related to the negotiations will still need to be weighed and approved by Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant. That means the Netanyahu government will hold a wait-and-see attitude on the talks, presenting it with a means to vent off pressure. What it remains open to is not a cease-fire, or peace based on the two-state solution, but how much progress it can make in getting the hostages released, and more importantly the extent to which it can consolidate and fix its gains as future strategic assets of Israel.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz certainly considers a ground offensive against Rafah a distinct possibility. In his statement after meeting with Netanyahu on Sunday, Scholz said pointedly: "Terrorism cannot be stopped by military means alone, political activity is also needed."

Other Western countries, including the Netherlands and Australia, which resumed its support for the United Nations' aid system in Gaza last week, also expressed similar points of view, telling Tel Aviv enough is enough. US Republican Senate leader Chuck Schumer even called for Israel to hold new elections, sparking an angry pushback from Netanyahu's Likud Party, which said Israel "is not a banana republic".

For the Netanyahu government, therefore, the negotiations with Hamas appear to be a window of opportunity to prepare for the implementation of the Rafah campaign, the last strong foothold of Hamas in Gaza, rather than what they should be: an opportunity to find a way to end the conflict and put a stop to the rising death toll and worsening humanitarian crisis there.

SEX TRADE TO SLAVERY: A UN AGENCY  
SAYS CRIMINALS REAP \$236B A YEAR IN PROFITS

THE  
BUZZ

Illegal profits from forced labor worldwide have risen to the "obscene" amount of \$236 billion per year, the U.N. labor agency reported yesterday, with sexual exploitation to blame for three-fourths of the take from a business that deprives migrants of money they can send home, swipes jobs from legal workers, and allows the criminals behind it to dodge taxes.

The International Labor Organization said the tally for 2021, the most recent year covered in the painstaking international study, marked an increase of 37%, or \$64 billion, compared with its last estimate published a decade ago. That's a result of both more people being exploited and more cash generated from each victim, ILO said.

"\$236 billion. This is the obscene level of annual profit generated from forced labor in the world today," the first line of the report's introduction said.

That figure represents earnings "effectively stolen from the pockets of workers" by those who coerce them to work, as well as money taken from remittances of migrants and lost tax revenue for governments.

Forced labor can encourage corruption, strengthen criminal networks and incentivize further exploitation, ILO said.

Its director-general, Gilbert Houngbo, wants international cooperation to fight the racket.



A person lifts a sheet to look at the identity of a body lying on the ground after an overnight shooting in the Petion Ville neighborhood of Port-au-Prince

HAITI

GANGS UNLEASH NEW  
ATTACKS ON UPSCALE  
AREAS IN PORT-AU-  
PRINCE, 12 KILLED

PIERRE-RICHARD  
LUXAMA,  
PORT-AU-PRINCE

GANGS attacked two upscale neighborhoods in Haiti's capital yesterday [Macau time] in a rampage that left at least a dozen people dead in surrounding areas.

Gunmen looted homes in the communities of Laboule and Thomassin before sunrise, forcing residents to flee as some called radio stations pleading for police. The neighborhoods had remained largely peaceful despite a surge in violent gang attacks across Port-au-Prince that began on Feb. 29.

An Associated Press photographer saw the bodies of at least 12 men strewn on the streets of Pétionville, located just below the mountainous communities of Laboule and Thomassin.

Crowds began gathering around the victims. One was lying face up on the street surrounded by a scattered deck of cards and another found face down inside a pick-up truck known as a "tap-tap" that operates as a taxi. A woman at one of the scenes collapsed and had to be held by others after learning that a relative of hers was killed.

"Abuse! This is abuse!" cried out one Haitian man who did not want to be iden-

tified as he raised his arms and stood near one of the victims. "People of Haiti! Wake up!" An ambulance arrived shortly afterward and made its way through Pétionville, collecting the victims.

"We woke up this morning to find bodies in the street in our community of Pétionville," said Douce Titi, who works at the mayor's office. "Ours is not that kind of community. We will start working to remove those bodies before the children start walking by to go to school and the vendors start to arrive."

It was too late for some, though. A relative of one of the victims hugged a young boy close to his chest, with his head turned away from the scene.

The most recent attacks raised concerns that gang violence would not cease despite Prime Minister Ariel Henry announcing nearly a week ago that he would resign once a transitional presidential council is created, a move that gangs had been demanding.

Gangs have long opposed Henry, saying he was never elected by the people as they blame him for deepening poverty, but critics of gangs accuse them of trying to seize power for themselves or for unidentified Haitian politicians.

Also yesterday, Haiti's power company announced that four substations in the capital and elsewhere "were destroyed and rendered completely dysfunctional." As a result, swaths of Port-au-Prince were without power, including the Cite Soleil slum, the Croix-des-Bouquets community and a hospital.

The company said criminals also seized important documents, cables, inverters, batteries and other items.

As gang violence continues unabated, Caribbean leaders have been helping with the creation of a transitional council. It was originally supposed to have seven members with voting powers. But one political party in Haiti rejected the seat they were offered, and another is still squabbling over who should be nominated.

Meanwhile, the deployment of a U.N.-backed Kenyan police force to fight gangs in Haiti has been delayed, with the East African country saying it would wait until the transitional council is established.

In a bid to curb the relentless violence, Haiti's government announced Sunday that it was extending a nighttime curfew through March 20. MDT/AP



US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin vowed Tuesday that the U.S. will continue to support Ukraine's war effort against Russia, even as the U.S. Congress remains stalled over funding to send additional weapons to the front. "The United States will not let Ukraine fail," said Austin, addressing more than 50 defense leaders from Europe and around the world who are meeting at the Ramstein Air Base in Germany. "This coalition will not let Ukraine fail. And the free world will not let Ukraine fail."



Armenia's prime minister said yesterday that the Caucasus nation needs to quickly delimitate the border with neighboring Azerbaijan to avoid a new round of hostilities. Speaking to residents of the village of Voskepar in the Tavush region on border with Azerbaijan, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan warned that Armenia's refusal to delineate the border could trigger a new confrontation.



Vatican Several prominent lawyers have published stinging academic critiques and legal opinions about the Vatican's recently concluded "trial of the century," highlighting violations of basic defense rights and rule of law norms that they warn could have consequences for the Holy See going forward. The opinions cite Pope Francis' role in the trial, since he secretly changed Vatican law four times during the investigation to benefit prosecutors. And they call into question the independence and impartiality of the tribunal since its judges swear obedience to Francis, who can hire and fire them at will.