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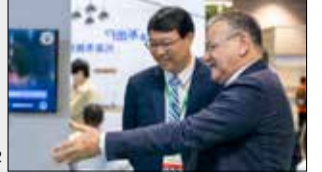
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**TRINDADE AT MIECF: MACAU READY FOR 'AI-DRIVEN PROCESSES AND SERVICES'**

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AP PHOTO



**Philippines** President Marcos Jr. said yesterday that his government would take action against what he called dangerous attacks by the Chinese coast guard and suspected militia ships in the disputed South China Sea, saying "Filipinos do not yield." He did not provide details of the actions his government "We seek no conflict with any nation," Marcos wrote on X, formerly Twitter, but said the Philippines would not be "cowed into silence."

AP PHOTO



**Gaza Strip** Talks have restarted aimed at bringing top Israeli officials to Washington to discuss potential military operations in Gaza, after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (pictured) canceled a planned visit this week because he was angry about the U.S. vote on a U.N. cease-fire resolution, the White House said. "So we're now working with them to find a convenient date that's obviously going to work for both sides," said press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre. No date has been finalized yet.

AP PHOTO

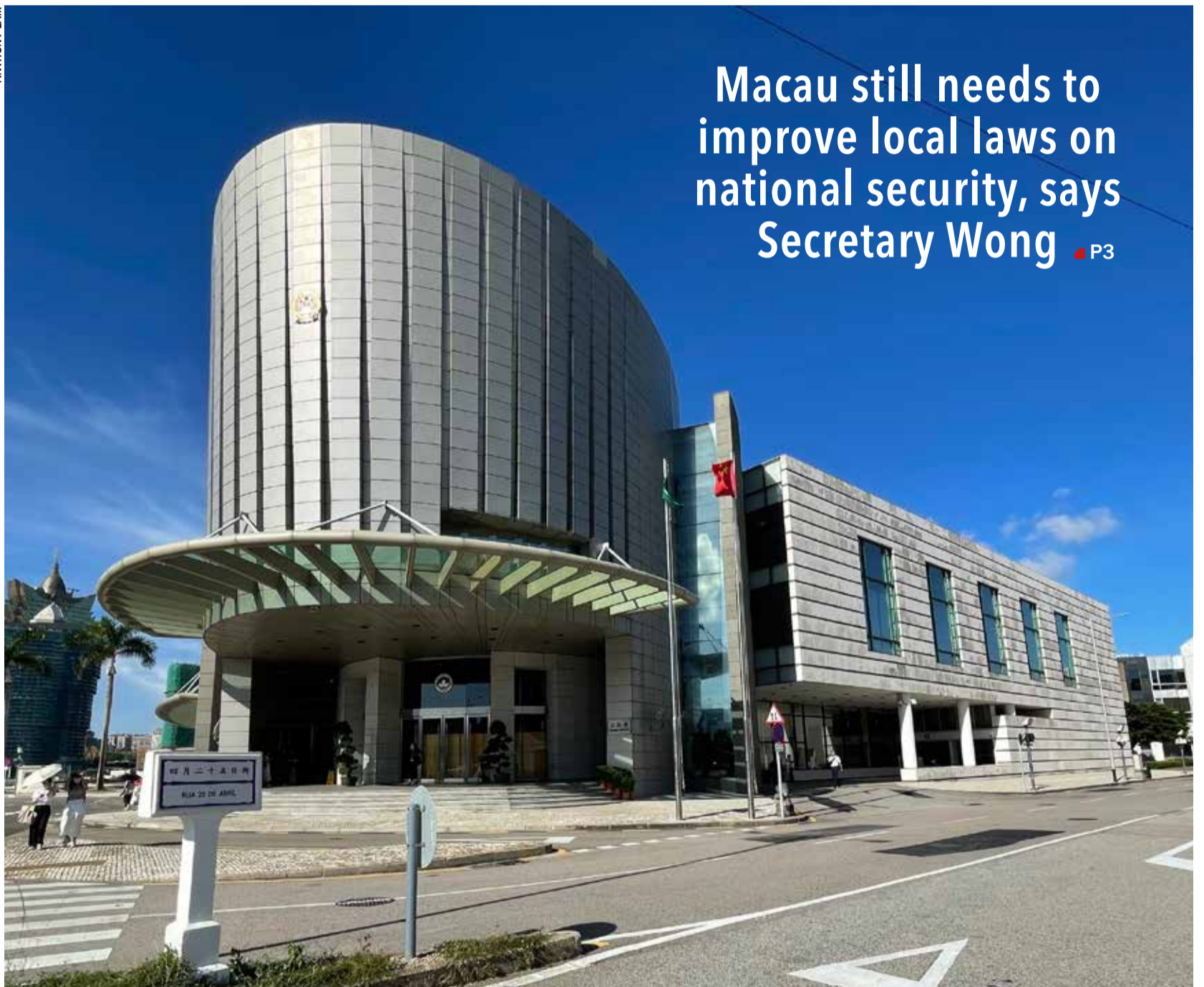


**USA** A fundraiser for President Joe Biden in New York City that also stars Barack Obama and Bill Clinton is raising a whopping \$25 million, setting a record for the biggest haul for a political event, his campaign said. The eye-popping amount was a major show of Democratic support for Biden at a time of persistently low poll numbers. The president will test the power of the campaign cash as he faces off with presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, who has already proved with his 2016 win over Democrat Hillary Clinton that he didn't need to raise the most money to seize the presidency.

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# PATRIOTIC ACT

ANTHONY LAM



Macau still needs to improve local laws on national security, says Secretary Wong P3

## THE LAST RACE

Macau horse racing era comes to an end upon the last race meeting tomorrow

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## TASTE OF EDESIA



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2024MIECF

# CESL ASIA: MACAU READY FOR AI-DRIVEN PROCESSES AND SERVICES

LYNZY VALLES

**M**ACAU is ready for further implementation of technology such as AI-driven processes and services, according to António Trindade, CEO of local energy and environment firm CESL Asia.

The firm is once again participating at the Macao International Environmental Cooperation Forum and Exhibition (MIECF), which commenced yesterday, promoting its AI facility management solution.

The solution “optimizes resource utilization and streamlines operational processes.”

Speaking to the Times, Trindade said Macau is well suited for this implementation.

“Macao is actually quite a good place to implement AI because Macau’s economy runs 24 hours a day and is quite sophisticated. However, as it is so small, there is a lot of demand that cannot be met by the limited resources,” he said.

The environmental expert noted that both the government and private sector previously relied on quick “build and discard” solutions.

However, expectations have changed globally, with a greater focus on sustainability, quality of life, and waste reduction.

“Now the world is different, and there are big changes in focus



as well as big economies,” said Trindade.

“We are now making significant changes because of artificial intelligence. These systems are entirely new. You now have to do things differently, and better,” he added.

Meanwhile, he noted that AI-driven management systems can extend a facility’s usable life well beyond initial expectations of se-

ven to 10 years through increased efficiency, predictive capability, and the ability to easily adapt to changing needs. These capabilities support sustainable resource use and improve outcomes.

The Macau government has long partnered with different global institutions to create a smart city.

According to the SAR’s Five-Year Development Plan, which

kicked off in 2016, Macau aims to expedite smart city development and facilitate the integration of industries with the internet.

With the current evolution of technologies – particularly AI – Trindade believes that “Macao is well positioned to implement smart city goals through continued development.”

Although such transformation does not come overnight, the city

already has access to management systems, which can aid further technological development for stakeholders.

“The processing system itself has to be relevant for its intended purpose. The people who use the data must be equipped to utilize the data effectively, as well as having the flexibility to use alternatives and make decisions for deploying potential solutions,” said Trindade.

“Macao has great potential to do this because of its sector focus on gaming and non-gaming industries, and this allows it to make these contributions for the development of the Greater Bay Area,” he added.

CESL Asia is working to leverage IT and technology expertise to enhance operations, facility management, and other areas needed to ensure buildings function as intended, including at the pre-operation design and construction phases.

The group said it has introduced quality control and health and safety IT systems to manage things like site access and safety.

In 2023, CESL Asia formalized a significant agreement with EREN Group, which currently holds about MOP15 billion in equity investment across 18 ventures focused on innovative climate tech. This joint venture will have exclusivity to promote Accenta, an AI technology. According to the group, this will enhance services provided by CESL Asia’s subsidiary – Focus – with a solution that improves users’ comfort while reducing energy, labor, and lifecycle costs of the facilities managed by the firm.

2024MIECF

# MOP109 billion ‘green bond’ for sale in Macau

ANTHONY LAM

**A**S of end-February, the city has seen green bonds reaching the value of MOP108.8 billion available in Macau, a 40% increase year-over-year, head of the local banks association said yesterday.

Yesterday saw the opening of the 2024 Macao International Environmental Co-operation Forum & Exhibition (MIECF) at the Cotai Expo. An event named

Green Business Opportunities and Cooperation Day was held, at which Ip Sio Kai, head of the Macau Association of Banks, made these comments.

He added that the association will continue to increase its support for the role of finance in green and low-carbon transformation, leverage its advantages in internal and external connectivity, and deepen cooperation in the field of green finance in the Greater

Bay Area.

This year, it will take the lead in establishing a China-Portugal Green Financial Connectivity Working Group to provide GBA, Portugal and even the EU with extensive exchanges opportunities.

Keynote speaker Sun Shouliang, director of the General Affairs Department of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, suggested strengthening demonstrations and leadership to

promote in-depth cooperation within the framework of the GBA Ecological Environmental Protection Cooperation and Exchange Mechanism.

He also suggested working together to promote the development of the ecological and environmental protection industry and continuously injecting new ideas into the GBA development. Moreover, the construction of a “beautiful Macau” should be promo-

ted. Schools, enterprises and communities should be encouraged to promote the concept of ecological culture and green development.

Meanwhile, at the opening ceremony of the MIECF, director of Environmental Protection Tam Wai Man said during his speech that he hopes participants can master forward-looking and innovative environmental protection, and explore green business

opportunities through a series of high-profile thematic conferences, green forums, project promotion meetings and green matching arrangements at the expo.

He added that climate change has become a major international issue today, and that achieving the “double carbon” goal is a long-term and extensive task. In the future, the SAR government will use the Macau Long-term Carbon Reduction Strategy as a guide to systematically advance carbon reduction work and “work with all local residents to build a green and low-carbon city.”

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**Times**

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# Macau still needs to improve local laws on national security: Wong

RENATO MARQUES

**M**ACAUI is still a long way from having laws that adequately safeguard national security, according to Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak.

Wong was speaking to the media on the sidelines of a meeting of the Second Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly.

The Secretary said that the "Law for the Safeguarding National Security," also called "National Security Law," establishes the basis and essential matters to protect national security in Macau. The law was amended last year, but that there is

still a lot of work to be done in the future to improve and more explicitly detail the laws governing this matter.

He also congratulated the neighboring region of Hong Kong for enacting new regulations on national security, but emphasized that the two regions have different realities, so the applicable laws should also reflect this difference.

Wong further explained that in the future, national security laws should also address matters such as education, and television and radio broadcasting as well as publishing.

Adjustments to the rules should also address the civil service sector, he added.



## FOUR NEW FUNCTIONS ON SSM HEALTH CHECK E-PLATFORM

Four new functions have been added to the Health Bureau's (SSM) health check-up booking e-platform to further expand the scope of services available. The change took effect at 10 a.m. yesterday and allows users to book medical check-ups on the platform for varied purposes such as recruitment (both public and private services), license applications, and residence applications at care facilities. The new functions are available on the government One Account app, the SSM app and the SSM website.

## SSM LAUNCHES NEW PLATFORM FOR TRAINING OF MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

Health Bureau (SSM), Pharmaceutical Administration Bureau (ISAF) and the Medical Professional Committee have jointly established a new e-platform to more easily facilitate Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for medical practitioners. The e-platform allows 18 types of medical practitioners licensed by SSM to track and register their CPD activities, as well as access and query the list of legitimate activity operators and sign up for training. Future development phases will allow operators to seek approval for their activities and offer e-learning opportunities.

## STATS

# Cases of domestic violence totaled 40 in 2023

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE number of reported domestic violence cases in Macau totaled 40 last year, according to the annual report on the topic from the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS).

The figure represents an increase of one case when compared with 2022 (+2.6%).

Most of the cases (26) involved domestic violence against a spouse, with vic-



tims comprising two males and 24 females.

Eleven cases against

children were also recorded during 2023, as well as three other cases of violence

within the household against other family members.

More than half of all violent acts recorded were physical (23), while another eight cases were related to psychological violence. Five of the cases involved sexual abuse and four involved multiple offenses such as physical, psychological, and other threats.

According to IAS, the central registration sys-

tem to record suspected cases of domestic violence (the source of this data) was created to collect and analyze data on domestic violence. It allows analysis of characteristics and trends with the aim of supporting prevention and intervention efforts.

Additionally, the IAS remarked that the system also allows the bureau to easily track potential victims and provide them with rapid support.

## IAS INTRODUCES APPLICATION TO MONITOR ELDERLY MOVEMENT AND PREVENT SOLITARY DEATHS

**T**O address the growing number of senior citizens passing away alone at home, the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) will introduce a new mobile application to track their movements.

According to IAS, this app will monitor the activity levels of registered individuals and automatically alert authorities if no activity is detected for a specified period, signaling a potential need for assistance.

According to the latest report, a total of 74 people aged 60 or above had been found deceased in their residences last year. Some cases went

unnoticed for an extended period due to the individuals living alone without regular interaction or visits.

This concerning trend, coupled with the increasing attention from the local community, has convinced the bureau to launch an app that monitors users' movements by tracking their step count.

The app is scheduled to launch in the fourth quarter of this year and will initially undergo a trial period in an elderly housing estate before becoming publicly available for all elderly individuals in Macau. **RM**

## PROPERTY

# ASSOCIATION SEEKS MORE GOV'T SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLING SECTOR

STAFF REPORTER

**T**HE head of the Macau Real Estate Development Association called on the government to further support the struggling property sector by loosening market restrictions.

Peter Lok, the head of the Macau Real Estate Development Association, acknowledged the "correct" decision to suspend five subsidized housing projects due to weak demand, noting that the projects offered limited assistance and that the outlook remained poor.

The vacancy rate of commercial properties has worsened and market confidence is low, according to Lok.

Lok urged complete elimination of restrictions implemented to combat speculation. He argued this

would not necessarily lead to higher prices, citing Hong Kong's recent move without a corresponding price surge. He has previously said such curbs are outdated as public housing supply exceeds demand, and banks should be permitted to freely set loan-to-value ratios, which are currently capped at 70%.

Association leaders joined Lok's call to reinstate the residency investment program to boost the market. The government halted the five projects totalling 5,400 units due to new lower income limits, which reduced applicant numbers. Transport Secretary Raimundo Arrais do Rosário said that with no timetable set for improved demand, regular public housing applications will not be accepted for now.

## HIGH OFFICIAL MEETING FOR FORUM MACAO HELD

The High Official Meeting for the Sixth Ministerial Meeting of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (Macao) was recently held in Macau. Representatives from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, as well as ambassadors to China from Portuguese-speaking countries and officials at the Forum's Secretariat attended. The meeting was presided over by the secretary-general of the Forum, Ji Xianzheng. The main topic of the meeting was to prepare for the upcoming Ministerial Meeting, and included detailed discussions on the event's agenda and logistics.

### KA-HO PRISON WILL BE CONCLUDED IN FIRST HALF

The new prison in Ka-Ho is due to conclude all works within the first half (1H) of this year, the Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak said on the sidelines of the Legislative Assembly Second Standing Committee meeting. Wong noted that the new prison is currently undergoing final works and testing before opening. It is expected that the transfer of inmates from the Coloane Prison will take place in September, a process that should take one or two days only. Wong noted that due to safety measures, transfer procedures are expected to cause minor disruptions in the area.

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AT 2.8%

Macau's unemployment rates remained stable for the period of December 2023 to February 2024, compared to the previous period of November 2023 to January 2024, where the underemployment rate experienced a modest decline. The general unemployment rate and the unemployment rate of local residents both held steady at 2.2% and 2.8% respectively, according to the latest data released by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). The total labor force in Macau during this period was reported to be 379,000, with a labor force participation rate of 67.7%.

### CROSS-BORDER TRAFFIC SEES 29% Y-O-Y GROWTH

Cross-border vehicular traffic in February witnessed a significant year-on-year growth of 28.5%, with a total of 634,119 trips, according to data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). Light passenger car trips rose by 30.6% to 602,276 trips, with notable increases seen in trips made under the "Northbound Travel for Macao Vehicles" policy (321.6% increase) and Macau vehicle trips to and from Hong Kong (94.7% increase). In the first two months of 2024, cross-border vehicular traffic experienced a significant year-on-year leap of 48.0%, reaching 1.37 million trips.



## MACAU HORSE RACING ERA COMES TO AN END

STAFF REPORTER

**T**OMORROW is the last race meeting at the Taipa hippodrome.

The era of horse racing in Macau is coming to an end after over 30 years of operation by the Macau Jockey Club (MJC), leaving trainers and owners sadly reminiscing about the glory days.

The government will terminate the club's license on April 1, citing financial difficulties and failure to meet societal needs.

Racing was established in 1989 under Portuguese rule and boomed in the 1990s under the leadership of casino tycoon Stanley Ho. However, declining attendance and significant financial losses in recent years took their toll on the industry.

The termination comes as a surprise to many in the racing community, given the less than three months' notice between the January announcement and last races.

Trainers like Joe Lau, who has dedicated his career to the sport in Macau, feels a sense of loss about the end of this chapter.

For three decades, Lau has tied his racehorse training career to the rising and falling fortunes of the Macau Jockey Club, but in a few days it will all be over.

As cited in an AFP report, Lau recalled the glory days but stated he now feels "depressed" about the end of this era.

"(It's) like you felt the whole house on fire, and it shouldn't happen this way," Lau told the media outlet.

"In the late 1990s we were flying, we had 1,200 horses," said Geoff Allendorf, another long-time trainer in the city.

"At the present time we've got 200. That says a story in itself," he added.

Allendorf considers the closure to have ended with an abrupt announcement, lamenting the impact on the trainers, jockeys, and club employees.

Data from the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) shows that there are approximately 254 local workers and over 300 non-resident workers currently at the MJC.

There are also concerns about securing new homes for the over 200 horses currently stabled at club facilities by the 2025 deadline.

"Everybody's still in shock. It will really hit home once we close

down," Allendorf said.

Meanwhile, the group of horse owners have been demanding reasonable compensation from the MCJ for their losses, since the announcement of the closure.

Financial records show declining fortunes, with revenues falling from USD64 million in 2017 to just USD24 million in 2022.

The MJC's budget shortfalls are part of why the government sees it as no longer viable.

Back in November, the group initiated a 30% reduction in horse betting prize money due to low turnover in recent years.

The mutually agreed decision to end the MJC contract was "realistic," the Secretary for Administration and Justice, André Cheong, previously said.

Meanwhile, the MJC said the company will "keep the facilities operating for the use of club members" between the end of the races (March 31, 2024) and the final handing of the facilities to the government one year later.

Meanwhile, local animal welfare group Anima Macau believes the club has outlived its purpose.

President Zoe Tang notes contract renewals have focused on outside business interests rather than animal welfare compliance. Anima Macau wants horse racing brought to a close, similar to the end of historic dog racing.

With the termination date now set for April 1, Macau's long horse racing legacy spanning three decades under the Jockey Club will come to a close.

Trainers, owners and animal advocates have differing views, but the government decree marks the end of this chapter for the sport in this region.

## GD-MO partnership key to timely announcement of nuclear incidents: Security chief

**A** partnership platform between Macau SAR and Guangdong Province has been key to the timely release of any nuclear incidents in the neighboring province, stated Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak.

Macau was the host of a recent nuclear emergency meeting that saw the participation of a delegation from the Guangdong government, the Unitary Police Service (SPU) announced in a statement.

The Guangdong delegation was led by Zhang Shaokang, Director of the Guangdong Provincial Nuclear Emergency Committee and Vice Governor of the Provincial People's Government. Wong led the meeting on the Macau side.



During his introduction at the meeting, Wong said that the Guangdong and Macao Cooperation Consensus on Nuclear Accident Emergency Res-

ponse at Guangdong Nuclear Power Plants – signed in 2018 – allows the SAR government to promptly release accurate information about Guangdong's

nuclear incidents to Macau residents. In Wong's opinion, it will help to "effectively eliminate Macau people's doubts about nuclear power safety, maintain social stability and enable the people to consciously guard against nuclear safety risks."

It is also expected that both parties will continue to deepen cooperation, strengthen communication, continue to promote the cultivation of nuclear safety culture and continuously improve awareness of nuclear risks and emergency response capabilities. In response, Zhang said that Guangdong-Macao cooperation has achieved remarkable results in information notification,

technical exchanges, and public opinion response, achieving the expected goals of cooperation and exchange and making important contributions to maintaining the economic and social stability of the Greater Bay Area.

He also hopes to further strengthen exchanges with Macau, improve the official information release mechanism, strengthen technical exchanges, business training, visits and study, and more, so as to deepen nuclear emergency cooperation between Guangdong and Macau and jointly promote the continuous improvement of the nuclear emergency capabilities of both parties. **AL**

GRAND PRIX

# GBA GT Cup to continue to hold qualification races for Macau this year

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE growing number of interested racers taking part in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) GT Cup for the GT4 specification vehicles will continue to push to have this series this year, once again, through a series of qualifying races for the local GP that will take place in November.

Although the qualifying races are not new in this category, as they happened last year, it indicates a continued interest in this category in addition to the celebratory 70th-anniversary edition.

Although there is not yet an entry list for the races that will take place over two weekends in May and July this year, more racers will likely join the field. Among these in particular are local and Hong Kong racers, now that the former RoadSports Challenge category has been merged into one single category in the Macau Touring Car Series.

It is clear that the local Automobile Association wishes to revive and develop the category after finally stabilizing the regulations under the GT4 category.

As the Times previously reported, the GBA GT Cup has passed several rapid and almost yearly transformations in the past. This created instability which discouraged racers and teams from investing in the series.

GT4 cars will race on May 10-12 and July 5-7 in a total of four races (15 laps each) to be held at the Zhuzhou International Circuit in the Hunan Province. It will be the first time local/regional races use this circuit.

Last year, the category listed only 18 entries at the start of the qualifying races, but three of them ended up not taking part in any of the racing events. This reduced the category to just 15, being the minimum number needed to run the series according to the sports regulations. Later, two new entries joined the last round before the



Macau GP.

Initially launched in 2019 as a formal GT4 category race with a field of 27 cars, the category began to lose entrants, reducing to 21 in 2020 and 20 in 2021.

Last year, the category managed to gather 28 cars by putting together two similar categories,

adding some 10 GTC category cars to the 18 GT4 listed.

Racing on the first weekend of the celebratory edition of the local GP, the GBA GT Cup (GT4) has attracted an initial 25 racers, from which only 19 have reached the final race.

Although the competition

holds the name of GBA GT Cup, racers are not restricted to the cities and regions that comprise the GBA, with others also able to participate. This has happened in the past with several racers from Taiwan, other regions of China, and even the UK and New Zealand.

AD

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CRIME

# TWO WOMEN FALL VICTIM TO PHONE SCAMS

ANTHONY LAM

**T**WO women have fallen victim to phone scams, resulting in financial loss and coercion to conceal themselves in Zhuhai to assist in further fraudulent activities, the Judiciary Police (PJ) disclosed.

However, as of yesterday, no suspects have been arrested.

On Mar. 4, a local university reported to the police that a mainland student at the university had gone missing. The police were told that the student had contacted her family before going missing. She told her family that she was having an emergency and urged her family not to contact her.

Preliminary investigations confirmed that the victim had departed Macau for mainland China. The local police requested assistance from their mainland counterparts, who found the victim in a hotel in Zhuhai on the



same night.

The mainland police later confirmed that the victim was seeking funds for scammers. The hotel was the hiding spot designated by the scammers. The victim did not lose any money.

On Mar. 25, another local resident reported a case to the police. The complainant told the police that their daughter, who went to school in Guangzhou, had lost contact with them. The complainant believed that she had fallen

victim to a scam.

Before ceasing contact, the victim requested RMB300,000 from her parents, saying that she needed the money to study abroad. That afternoon, the bank informed the complainant that RMB200,000 had been wired out from the victim's account.

Police investigations discovered that the victim had returned to Macau for a brief stay, before returning to the mainland and disappearing.

The mainland police fou-

nd the victim in a hotel in Zhuhai the same night. The victim reported sending RMB200,000 to the fraudsters, and was about to send another sum when she was discovered.

The local police reiterated that no law enforcement authority will request a Macau resident to testify as a witness outside of Macau, or conceal themselves in a hotel room. Video interrogation is also not standard practice, the police added.

STATS

# MACAU AIRPORT REPORTS PROFITS AS PASSENGER TRAFFIC RETURNS

STAFF REPORTER

**T**HE city's airport reported nearly MOP1.19 billion in revenue for the 2023 fiscal year, up 179.8% from the previous year amid the travel and economic rebound.

Data from the Macau International Airport Company Limited (CAM) shows that the group generated an income of MOP220 million, marking the airport's return to profitability after three years of pandemic losses.

In 2023, Macau International Airport welcomed 5.15 million passengers and handled over 42,500 flights, representing 54% and 55% of pre-pandemic 2019 levels respectively. Cargo volume increased 24% to 63,800 tons.

Business aviation flights more than doubled to 923 movements.

CAM said cost controls and prudent cash management helped drive profit recovery. Air traffic has continued rebounding in 2024, with January-March passenger numbers up 75% from the same period in 2019. Cargo and flight movements also outpaced 2019 levels.

To accommodate growth, shareholders approved an MOP850 million capital raise to start the airport's expansion project in late 2024. Infrastructure and technology upgrades increased efficiency. CAM also pursued new airlines and routes from cities including Beijing, Phnom Penh and Seoul.

AD

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AUTOMAKERS

# China's latest EV is a 'connected' car from smart electronics maker Xiaomi

KEN MORITSUGU BEIJING

**X**IAOMI, a well-known maker of smart consumer electronics in China, is joining the country's booming but crowded market for electric cars.

The tech company will start taking orders for the SU7, a sporty four-door sedan, following a launch event with founder Lei Jun in Beijing yesterday evening. Analysts think it will be priced in the 300,000 yuan (\$40,000) range.

Government subsidies have helped make China the world's largest market for electric vehicles, and a bevy of new makers are locked in fierce competition. Most of the industry's sales have been domestic, but Chinese makers are pushing into overseas markets with lower-priced models, posing a potential challenge to European, Japanese and American auto giants.

Lei is not bashful about that challenge, saying at an unveiling of the SU7 in December that Beijing-based Xiaomi aims to become one of the world's top five automakers in the next 15 to 20 years.

"I believe that one day, Xiaomi EVs will be a familiar sight on roads around the world," he was quoted as saying in a company news release.

Xiaomi, founded in 2010, is entering an overcrowded market that analysts expect will undergo a shakeout in coming years, with weaker startups falling by the wayside.

The combined share of EVs



AP PHOTO

Visitors to the Xiaomi Automobile flagship store look at the Xiaomi SU7 electric car on display in Beijing, this week

and hybrids in China's auto sales is likely to reach 42% to 45% this year, up from 36% in 2023, according to Fitch Ratings. But the agency said in a December report that the competition could put pressure on automakers' short-term market share and profitability.

Known for its affordable smartphones, smart TVs and other devices, Xiaomi aims to capitalize on that technology by connecting its cars with its phones and home appliances in what it calls a "Hu-

man x Car x Home" ecosystem.

Tu Le, the founder of the Sino Auto Insights consultancy, said that Xiaomi is trying to close the loop by adding transportation to a product mix already integrated into its customers' personal and professional lives.

"The ability to seamlessly be a continuous part of someone's life is the holy grail for tech companies," he said in an emailed response. "You probably don't know anyone in Beijing that doesn't have at least one Xiaomi

product, be it a mobile phone, computer, TV, (air) purifier, or tablet."

As a newcomer to automaking, the company is making an educated guess that it can design and develop a car that will sell, he said. Given the sluggish Chinese economy and an ongoing EV price war, he predicted it would take a year or two to see if Xiaomi can adapt to correct any missteps and succeed.

"They are a technology company, so that's their advantage

but they need to reconcile that with drinking through a fire hose to learn how to be a tech company that builds cars," Le said.

CreditSights, a financial research firm, said it expects Xiaomi's EV division to sell 60,000 vehicles in its first year and lose money for its first two years because of high marketing and promotion costs.

Chinese automakers trying to expand abroad face political headwinds.

The EU is investigating Chinese subsidies to determine if they give made-in-China EVs an unfair market advantage overseas. The U.S. announced an investigation last month into Chinese-made connected cars that it says could gather sensitive information about their drivers.

"China is determined to dominate the future of the auto market, including by using unfair practices," President Joe Biden said when the U.S. investigation was announced. "China's policies could flood our market with its vehicles, posing risks to our national security. I'm not going to let that happen on my watch."

China pushed back this week, filing a World Trade Organization complaint that alleges that U.S. subsidies for electric vehicles discriminate against Chinese products.

The U.S. Defense Department put Xiaomi on a blacklist in 2021 over alleged links to China's military, but removed it a few months later after the company denied the links and sued the U.S. government. **MDT/AP**

## CORPORATE BITS

### Sands China donates MOP1 million to local NGOs for responsible gaming support



Sands China Ltd. recently donated MOP1 million to five local nongovernmental organisations to support their 2024 responsible gaming efforts.

Sands China's donations

help support various responsible gaming efforts of the NGOs, including parent-child responsible gaming and financial management activities, roadshows, workshops, trainin-

gs, sharing sessions, and responsible gaming promotional videos and quiz games.

"It is our pleasure to donate to Macau's local organisations again this year to aid them in their responsible gaming work in the community, and we hope the financial support contributes to the sustainable development of the industry," said Andy Kobel, Sands China's senior vice president of casino operations.

"We extend our gratitude to the local organisations and to members of our responsible gaming team who work with them throughout the year, as we look ahead to another successful year of cooperation."

### City of Dreams opens new upscale steakhouse



Melco Resorts & Entertainment has debuted The Tasting Room – Prime Steak & Grill, a new premium steakhouse at its integrated resort City of Dreams. The restaurant, which the gaming operator describes as an "international gas-

tronomical destination," had its grand opening recently. It offers guests a variety of high-end cuts of meat and creative dishes.

The Tasting Room specializes in American Wagyu beef that has been both dry-aged

and wet-aged as well as top-tier Black Angus steaks that are charcoal grilled using wood from red oak trees in Georgia to impart a delicate smoky flavor, according to a statement issued by the gaming operator.

Signature dishes include a 1,200-gram thick-cut T-bone steak from Brandt Farms and a grain-fed ribeye from St. Helen's Farms in the Northwestern U.S. Diners can sample options like prime beef tartare, sizzling lump crab cakes, and lobster bisque.

The restaurant features a unique Spanish charcoal oven that reaches up to 350 degrees Celsius, stated by Melco to impart authentic smoky flavors.

TRADE

# CHINA LIFTS HEAVY TARIFFS ON AUSTRALIAN WINE AS TIES IMPROVE

ZEN SOO & KEIRAN SMITH,  
HONG KONG

AP PHOTO



CHINA yesterday said it will lift tariffs placed on Australian wine over three years ago, in a sign of improving ties between the two countries.

China's Ministry of Commerce said the decision will take effect today.

China imposed tariffs on Australian wine in 2020 during a diplomatic feud over Australia's support for a global inquiry into the origins of COVID-19. The duties on Australian wine skyrocketed above 200%.

Australian wine producers took a heavy hit from the tariffs, as China was Australia's top wine export destination.

The Australian government welcomed the decision, saying in a statement that the tariffs were lifted at a "critical time for the Australian wine industry."

He Yadong, a spokesperson for China's Ministry of Commerce, said China and Australia are "each other's important trade partners."

"We are willing to work with Australia to resolve each other's concerns through dialogue and jointly promote the stable and healthy development of bilateral economic and trade relations," He said.

The trade in 2019, before the tariffs were in place, was worth 1.1 billion Australian dollars (\$710 million) a year to the local economy.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the level of trade would likely increase when restrictions were scrapped.

"We reckon that the resumption of trade, which we think is imminent, will see an even higher amount because that's what we've seen with other products that have been resumed," he said during a visit to a winery located in Australia's Hunter Valley wine

region yesterday before the lifting of tariffs was announced.

"China wants good high-quality wine and Australia produces it."

China imposed a raft of sanctions on Australian goods in 2020 during the most recent nadir in the bilateral relationship. It is estimated that the tariffs cost the Australian economy 20 billion Australian dollars (\$13 billion).

The trade barriers were widely

regarded as punishment for the previous Australian government passing laws that ban covert foreign interference in domestic politics, for barring Chinese-owned telecommunications giant Huawei from rolling out Australia's 5G network due to security concerns and for calling for an independent investigation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

China was also angered by Australia's deepening security ties with the United States, notably the AUKUS agreement that also includes Britain and will provide Australia with submarines powered by U.S. nuclear technology.

Most of the tariffs have since been lifted as the relationship thawed. Relations have steadily improved after the change in the Australian government, with Albanese visiting Beijing last November.

In April, Australia suspended a complaint to the WTO in a bid to reopen the Chinese market to Australian barley, which was one of the products targeted by the tariffs, in what was widely seen as an attempt by the new Australian government to repair relations with Beijing.

The Australian government also halted another WTO dispute with China over sanctions on Australian wine in exchange for China's review of the tariffs. **MDT/AP**

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





BOAO FORUM

# Top Chinese official says green, high tech development key to spur economy

TIAN MACLEOD JI, BOAO

**C**HINA is committed to reforms that will upgrade the technological level of its largely manufacturing-based economy and exploit green technologies expected to drive around \$1.4 trillion in annual revenues, a senior Communist Party official said yesterday.

"We sincerely welcome all countries to board the express train of China's development and join hands to realize world modernization featuring peaceful development, mutually beneficial cooperation and common prosperity," Zhao Leiji, who heads China's congress and sits on the party's all-powerful Politburo Standing Committee, was quoted as telling business people and other leaders attending the Boao Forum for Asia.

The gathering in Boao, held on China's island province of Hainan on the South China Sea, is the latest venue for efforts by Beijing to reassure foreign investors rattled by policies that have raised uncertainties for foreign businesses, geopolitical tensions, and an eco-



Pan Gongsheng, Governor of People's Bank of China, speaks at a sub forum ahead of the annual Boao Forum on Hainan island

nomical slowdown.

Zhao told the forum that China's economy will be good in the long term, the Foreign Ministry cited him as saying.

"The fundamentals have not changed," he was quoted as saying.

China is the world's second largest economy after the U.S.

and has excelled in areas such as electric vehicles, solar and wind power, and high-speed trains. But it remains heavily dependent on highly-polluting coal to power its industries.

The government has set a goal for this year of China's energy consumption per unit of GDP by 2.5% as part of its efforts to reduce car-

bon emissions and transition to a greener economy.

"We are speeding up efforts to promote green and low-carbon economic and social development, and will strive to peak carbon dioxide emissions by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060," said Zhao, who ranks third in the party hierarchy and has a strong background in managing state industries that make up about a quarter of the economy and help maintain the party's overwhelming influence over economic, political and cultural life.

China's leaders have set an ambitious target of around 5% economic growth this year despite a slowdown that has been accentuated by troubles in the property sector and the lingering effects of strict anti-virus measures during the pandemic that disrupted travel, logistics, manufacturing and other industries.

Zhao also touched on geopolitical topics, saying, "China calls on all countries to transcend the old mentality of bloc confrontation and zero-sum games and practice genuine multilateralism to jointly

build an open world economy."

That reflects Communist Party leader-for-life Xi Jinping's aspirations to make China a leading player in international affairs by challenging the power and credibility of the U.S. and its Western allies.

China has backed Russia and is seen as a threat by various of its neighbors in East Asia.

But its top leaders have also reiterated China's intention to keep its economy open for business. On Wednesday, Xi met with American business leaders in Beijing and emphasized mutually beneficial economic ties, despite U.S. tariffs on imports from China and efforts to cut off access to advanced and sensitive technologies, especially those with military applications.

"Sino-U.S. relations are one of the most important bilateral relations in the world. Whether China and the United States cooperate or confront each other has a bearing on the well-being of the two peoples and the future and destiny of mankind," Xi was cited as saying by China's official Xinhua News Agency. **MDT/AP**

## Yellen says Beijing's rapid buildout of its green energy industry 'distorts global prices'

**TREASURY** Secretary Janet Yellen called out China's ramped-up production in solar energy, electric vehicles and lithium-ion batteries, calling it unfair competition that "distorts global prices" and "hurts American firms and workers, as well as firms and workers around the world."

Yellen, who is planning her second trip to China as Treasury secretary, said yesterday [Macau time] in Georgia that she will convey her belief to her Chinese counterparts that Beijing's increased production of green energy also poses risks "to productivity and growth in the Chinese economy."

"I will press my Chinese counterparts to take necessary steps to address this issue."

China is the dominant



U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen

player in batteries for electric vehicles and has a rapidly expanding auto industry that could challenge the world's established carmakers as it goes global. The International Energy Agency, a Paris-based inter-

governmental group, notes that in 2023 China accounted for around 60% of global electric car sales.

Yellen delivered remarks at Suniva — a solar cell manufacturing facility in Norcross, Georgia. The plant

closed in 2017 in large part due to cheap imports flooding the market, according to Treasury. It is reopening, in part, because of incentives provided by the Democrats' Inflation Reduction Act, which provides tax incentives for green energy manufacturing.

The firm's history is something of a warning on the impact of oversaturation of markets by Chinese products — and a marker of the state of U.S.-China economic relations, which are strained due to investment prohibitions, espionage concerns and other issues.

China this week filed a World Trade Organization complaint against the U.S. over what it says are discriminatory requirements for electric vehicle subsidies. **MDT/AP**

### DIRE STRAIT

## US DELEGATION PLEDGES CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR TAIWAN

**A**bipartisan U.S. congressional delegation pledged continued support for Taiwan yesterday, days after Congress approved \$300 million in military aid for the self-governed island that's claimed by China.

Congress also approved \$400 million on Saturday to counter the Chinese government's influence in the region, as part of its Defense Appropriations Act.

The United States, like most nations, doesn't recognize Taiwan as a country. However, it is bound by U.S. laws to ensure the island can defend itself and considers all threats to Taiwan as a matter of "grave concern."

The delegation led by Republican Congressman Jack Bergman,

who chairs the House Intelligence and Special Operations Subcommittee, sought to reassure Taiwan's leadership of continued support.

"We will continue to assure our colleagues that the strategic relationship is key for the future security of the region," Bergman said during a meeting with Taiwanese leader Tsai Ing-wen.

"This includes a strong Taiwan maritime strategy and how we can work together on shared goals to counter China on their increasingly aggressive actions in the region," he said.

Tsai thanked the Biden administration and Congress for helping to bolster Taiwan's self-defense. **MDT/AP**

## INDIA

# Ukraine FM arrives in New Delhi to boost ties with India, a historical ally of Russia

**U**KRAINE'S foreign minister arrived in New Delhi yesterday for a two-day visit to boost bilateral ties and cooperation with India, which considers Russia a time-tested ally from the Cold War-era.

Dmytro Kuleba will meet with his Indian counterpart Subrahmanyam Jaishankar on Friday, as well as the deputy national security advisor, according to India's Foreign Ministry. Today [Macau time], Kuleba will pay his respects to Indian independence leader Mahatma Gandhi at the Rajghat memorial site.

His visit comes a week after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin, whom India has so far avoided criticizing over the war in Ukraine. Instead, New Delhi has stressed the need for diplomacy and dialogue on ending the war and has expressed its willingness to contribute to peace efforts.

On March 20, Modi posted on social media platform X, formerly Twitter, to say he had expressed to Zelenskyy "India's consistent support for all efforts for peace and bringing in an early end to the



Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba

ongoing conflict," adding that the country will continue to provide humanitarian assistance.

This came after Modi spoke to Putin to congratulate him on his re-election as president. According to a statement from India's

Foreign Ministry, the two leaders agreed to further strengthen their relationship, while Modi reiterated that dialogue and peace was the best way forward for the Russia-Ukraine war.

Under Modi, India has promo-

ted itself as a rising global player who can mediate between the West and Russia on the war in Ukraine.

In his phone call with Modi last week, Zelenskyy said he encouraged India to participate in the Pea-

ce Summit that Switzerland has offered to organize.

"Ukraine is interested in strengthening our trade and economic ties with India, particularly in agricultural exports, aviation cooperation, and pharmaceutical and industrial product trade," the Ukrainian president said in a post on X.

At the United Nations, New Delhi has refrained from voting against Moscow, and has ramped up its purchases of Russian oil at discounted prices following the invasion.

Meanwhile, India has stepped up its engagements with Western powers like the United States and the European Union. New Delhi has been trying to reduce its dependence on Moscow for arms and technology because of disruptions in supplies due to the war. India is also part of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or Quad, along with the U.S., Australia and Japan.

On a visit last year, Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister Emine Dzhaparova urged India to play a bigger role in helping end Russia's invasion, saying Kyiv would "welcome any effort that is directed at resolving the war." **MDT/AP**

## AUSTRALIA

# Olympic officials move to support 2032 Brisbane Games

**A**FTER weeks of uncertainty about billion-dollar stadium projects for the 2032 Brisbane Olympics, the IOC and local organizers moved to present the games more positively.

Plans for a \$2 billion rebuild of the storied Gabba cricket stadium as an Olympics centerpiece were dropped this month after the expected price spiraled. Australia's most influential Olympic official, John Coates, had called the stadium issues in Brisbane's home state Queensland damaging to the Olympics brand.

Queensland Premier Steven Miles, who faces state elections in October, had asked for a review of Olympic venue construction and prefers renovating an existing rugby stadium for the opening and closing ceremonies.

Reports that Queensland had explored getting out of

its commitment to host the Olympics was dismissed as "fake news" last week by International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach.

It led to IOC and local organizing officials being asked yesterday [Macau time] — after their annual review of preparations — how Queensland could be made to fall in love again with the games.

"I'm not seeing a change in that feeling," insisted Kirsty Coventry, the IOC executive board member overseeing the Brisbane project, adding that 8½ years out from the games "is the time for changes to happen."

Coventry and Andrew Liveris, president of the Brisbane 2032 organizing committee, spoke repeatedly of following "due diligence" and adapting to the needs and wishes of local people

and public authorities.

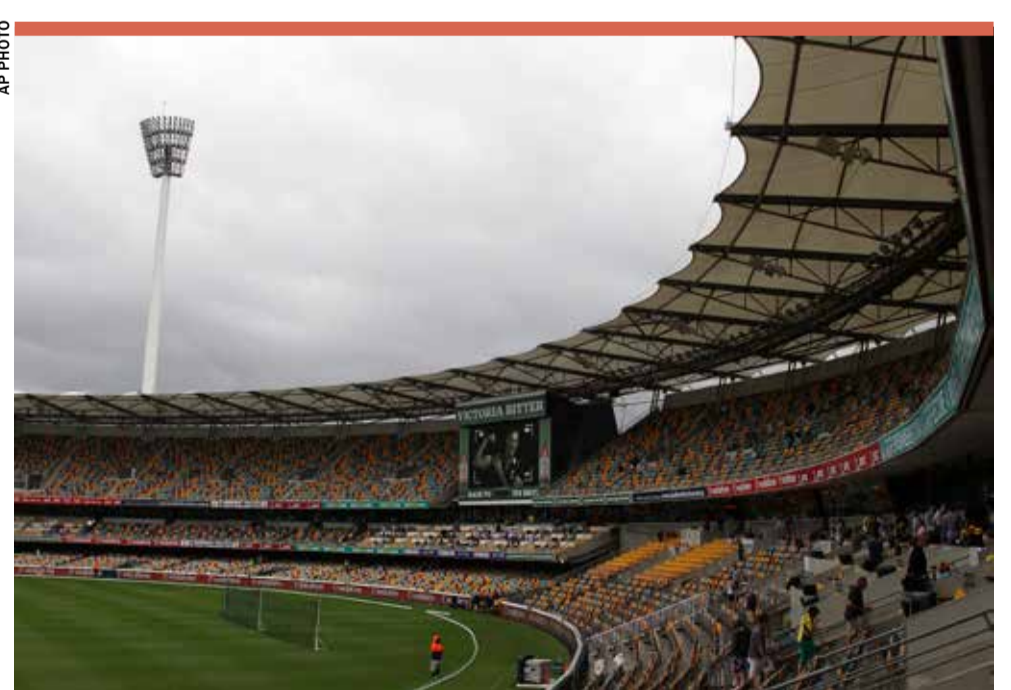
"Right now, state government has given us venues and we are going to work on that," Liveris said in an online news conference.

Coventry, a two-time Olympic gold medalist in swimming for Zimbabwe, said an IOC priority was athletes and ensuring "fields of play are world standard."

"It is obviously again dependent on what the people in the communities want, how the region is growing," she said. "That is not something we as the IOC will dictate. That is where we listen."

Stadium issues and curbing costs have become the biggest challenge for Brisbane almost three years since the Olympics were awarded in 2021 fully 11 years ahead of the opening ceremony.

Brisbane was the first



Summer Games host picked in a new process to put a preferred candidate into exclusive, fast-track talks without facing a rival bidder in a vote. The IOC aimed to cut the cost of campaigning and building

venues, and also avoid the kind of vote-buying scandals that tainted the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics and 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

However, the Brisbane win was seen to have lacked transparency and rewarded

a key IOC ally, its vice president Coates.

"The giving and awarding of Brisbane up until now have actually been very good," Coventry said, "and been very good learning experiences." **MDT/AP**

USA | INTERVIEW

# James Taylor on his tour, the possibility of new music and his legacy

MARIA SHERMAN,  
MDT/AP MUSIC WRITER

**H**E'S gone to Carolina in his mind and on tour for much of 2024.

Not long after his 76th birthday, James Taylor & His All-Star Band will take their show on the road in the United States, hitting 24 cities for 31 shows in five months.

Over Zoom from his studio in western Massachusetts, Taylor tells The Associated Press "It's been September since the last time I've been out." That, he says, is "a long time for me."

The tour kicks off in Los Angeles at the Hollywood Bowl on May 29 and ends at Wolf Trap Filene Center in Vienna, Virginia, on Sept. 15.

The tour hits Salt Lake City; Morrison, Colorado; Kansas City, Missouri; St. Louis; Highland Park, Illinois; Noblesville, Indiana; Nashville, Tennessee; North Little Rock, Arkansas; Thackerville, Oklahoma; Clarkston, Michigan; Darien Center, New York; Syracuse, New York; Bethel Woods, New York; Bangor, Maine; Gilford, New Hampshire; Lenox, Massachusetts; Philadelphia; Wantagh, New York; Saratoga Springs, New York; Bridgeport, Connecticut; Burgettstown, Pennsylvania, and Boston.

**- Before the continental U.S. tour, you're headed to Japan, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii. What keeps it interesting?**

**TAYLOR:** The audience, always. The event itself has never failed to supply the motivation and the energy that is required. You know, it's very compelling to go a great distance and to find a crowd of people that have bought tickets to come see me and the band play again.

Over time, it's something you learn to do, to keep your strength up, keep your health... also, I don't do more than a couple of shows in a row without a day off. I'll do more than that if I'm in one town, but generally speaking, we pace ourselves now.

**- That's good advice.**

**TAYLOR:** I definitely burned myself out a few times.

**- You're performing at Tanglewood, in your home state of Massachusetts, 50 years since you first performed there. What significance does it hold?**

**TAYLOR:** I was trying to figure out whether or not it was 50 years

AP PHOTO



or 50 shows that I've been playing at Tanglewood, and it turns out it's both. 1974 was the first time I played there. It averages out to one a year, although at one point we skipped a whole decade.

We had an episode where one of my crew members, in a fit of pique, drove a truck across the Tanglewood lawn and made a mess of it. He was told he had to get the truck off the lawn because it had been raining and it was making an imprint on it. As we were breaking down after the show, he was driving out there to unload the mixing board and stuff. But he put it in reverse, stomped the accelerator and tore a great trough, a great furrow in the Tanglewood lawn. And they never asked me back. It was only when (my wife) Kim came along and resurrected my reputation that I was allowed to come back.

It's been a great privilege... It's turned out to be a great thing for me, to play Tanglewood every year.

**- Does an anniversary like that — 50 years — allow you to reflect on your career?**

**TAYLOR:** This is the time of life when you feel like you ought

to get in touch with a lawyer and make a will. You see, the older generation, the people that were your friends and mentors, sort of checking out one by one. It is a time when you feel as though things are being summed up a little bit and you start thinking about, the whole thing as a totality. You know, a line from one of my songs, "Copperline," is "I'm only living 'til the end of the week," and I think that really does describe me.

But, you know, it is a period of time when you look back and see the whole thing, it's important not to internalize that idea of being a big deal. It's important to focus on what it is that you do — and that thing as a craft that allows you to have your place in the world.

**- What has that allowed you to learn?**

**TAYLOR:** As time goes by, I think it's wrong for people to judge other people and even to evaluate them, and yet it's something we constantly do, and we can't avoid it. But we should mitigate it by knowing that when we judge someone, we've got it wrong. They know who they are, and not we. But, of course, in a

million ways, all day long, we evaluate ourselves and other people and it's complicated. It's not up to me determine what my ultimate position in popular culture turns out to be 50 years from now.

**- That's a value judgment, too.**

**TAYLOR:** I see people selling the rights to their catalogs. That baby boom generation musical expression, which happened between '62 and 1980, that sort of 20 years of amazing activity that happened, I was in the center of it and actually got my start in London with the Beatles. So, I had a real sense of this generational phenomenon that the music that I was part of, was a big feature in the landscape and we were communicating to each other. We invented a kind of music there. It was predicted by rhythm and blues and folk music. And those two resurgences sort of fueled it and supplied it. It was big.

You see those people now, being in my sort of age group generally, selling the rights to their catalogs and sort of evaluating what their life's output was worth. You know, David Bowie's went for like 250 million. I think (Bob) Dylan... got like 300 million...

(Bruce) Springsteen is said to have gotten more than that, like half a billion or something. It's sort of like monopoly money.

**- What do you hope people take away from your live show, and are you working on a new album?**

**TAYLOR:** I feel like I've got another one in me — sounds like an egg — but I'm writing a little bit.

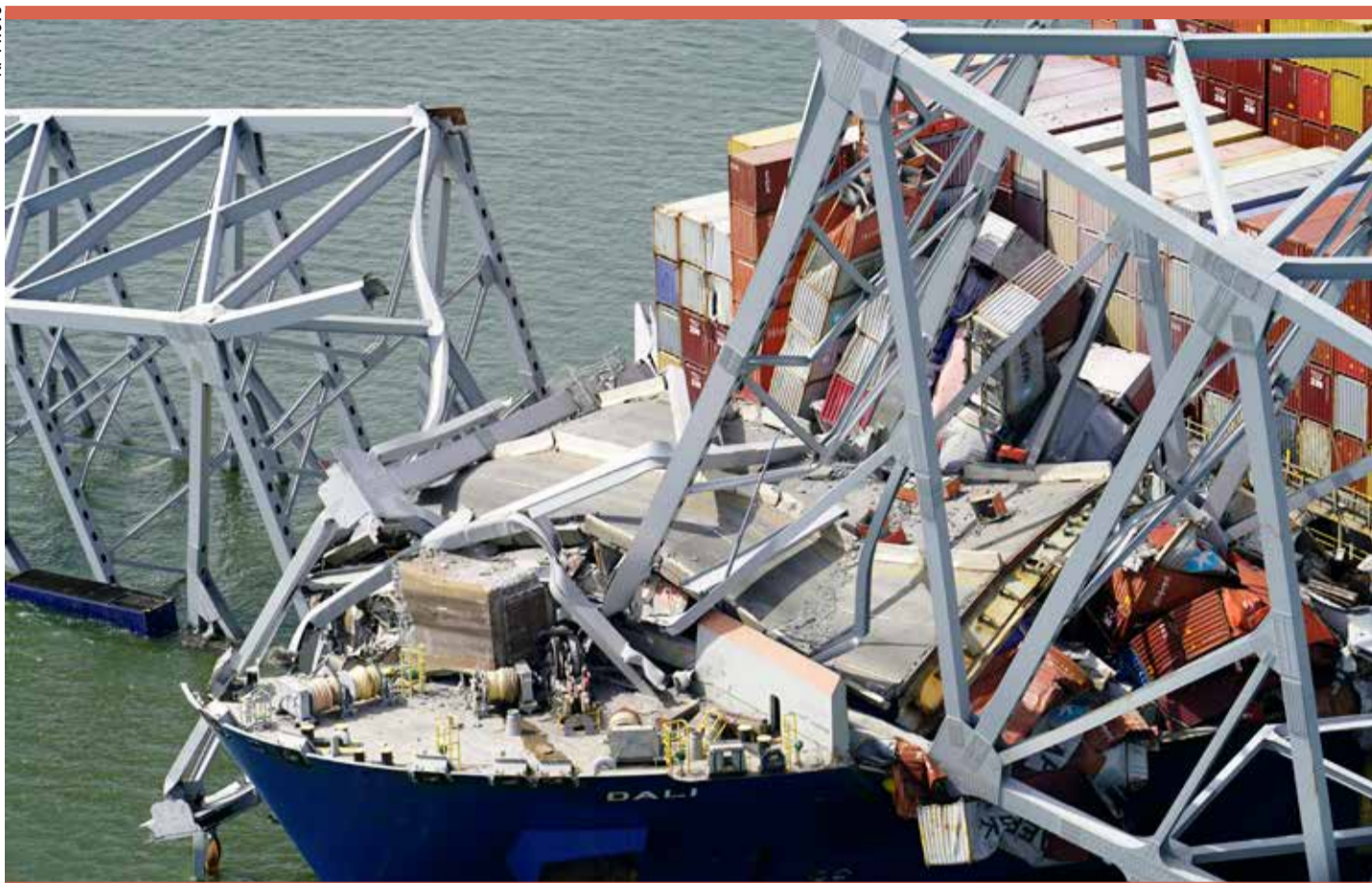
And as to what I hope people take away from live performances, I hope they take away a sense of connection. You know, live music — the thing that I'm so attached to about it, why I can't let it go — is that there's something (that) happens when people come together for a couple of hours for two or three hours and have a sort of collective experience.

It's indescribable. You prepare for it, but when it happens, it's spontaneous and, in a way, unique. I love it when that happens, and it does most nights.

**- Give us a call if you consider selling your catalog.**

**TAYLOR:** If someone comes sniffing around, I'll get in touch.

AP PHOTO



## USA | MONSTERS OF THE OCEAN

# CARGO SHIP HAD ENGINE MAINTENANCE IN PORT BEFORE IT COLLIDED WITH BALTIMORE BRIDGE, OFFICIALS SAY

**T**he cargo ship that lost power and crashed into a bridge in Baltimore underwent "routine engine maintenance" in port beforehand, the U.S. Coast Guard said yesterday [Macau time], as divers recovered the bodies of two of six workers who plunged into the water when it collapsed. The others were presumed dead, and officials said search efforts had been exhausted.

Investigators began collecting evidence from the vessel a day after it struck the Francis Scott Key Bridge.

Here's what to know about the cargo ship Dali that crashed into Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge, causing it to collapse and leaving six bridge construction workers presumed dead.

### MONSTERS OF THE OCEAN

If stood upright, the Dali would reach almost to the top of the Eiffel Tower in Paris or about two-thirds of the way up the Empire State Building in New York.

It can carry the equivalent of almost 10,000 standard-sized metal shipping containers, and at the time of the accident was carrying nearly 4,700 containers. But while those figures are impressi-

ve, the Dali pales in comparison to the world's largest container ships, which can carry more than 24,000 containers. There are environmental and economic advantages to operating giant container ships, but their sheer size and weight make them difficult to maneuver and stop — especially when something goes wrong.

Dali length: 300 meters. Weight: 95,000 tons when empty.

Capacity: 10,000 6-meter containers.

### MAYDAY CALL SAVES LIVES

The ship shares a name with one of history's most celebrated artists, Spanish surrealist painter Salvador Dali.

Built by South Korea's Hyundai Heavy Industries, one of the world's largest shipbuilders, the Dali was launched in late 2014. It's owned by Grace Ocean Private Ltd, flies a Singapore flag and is powered by diesel engines.

Danish shipping giant Maersk had chartered the Dali for a planned trip from Baltimore to Sri Lanka, but the ship didn't get far, with the crew sending a mayday call early Tuesday saying they had lost power and had

no control of the steering system. Minutes later, the ship rammed one of the bridge's columns, causing the entire structure to collapse within seconds.

The ship was moving at about 8 knots, or 9 mph (15 kph). The mayday gave just enough time for authorities to stop bridge traffic and likely prevent more deaths, but not enough time to clear the construction crew that was filling potholes on the bridge. Divers on Wednesday recovered the bodies of two of the workers.

All of the nearly two dozen crew members from the Dali were accounted for after the accident, with one taken to a hospital with minor injuries.

### PASSED PREVIOUS INSPECTIONS

The Dali passed a June 2023 inspection in Chile. A faulty pressure gauge for the fuel heaters was identified but fixed before the vessel left the port, according to authorities. The Dali was then inspected in September by the U.S. Coast Guard in New York, and no problems were found. Before it left Baltimore, the ship underwent routine engine maintenance, ac-

ording to the Coast Guard.

Federal and state officials say the crash appears to be an accident.

The Coast Guard has downloaded the voyage data recorder and sent it to the National Transportation Safety Board, which is building a timeline of what led to the crash, and a preliminary report is expected in the coming weeks. Singapore also plans to carry out its own investigation, which it says will be to identify lessons for the future rather than determine liability.

### WHAT'S NEXT

In addition to trying to clear the channel floor of the bridge debris, officials will need to assess the damage to the Dali and make sure it doesn't leak fuel or sink. Investigators found damage to at least 13 containers on the ship.

The Dali will then likely be towed back to the port and the cargo offloaded.

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg says it's too early to say how long it will take to reopen the Port of Baltimore or replace the destroyed bridge. He noted it initially took five years to build the bridge. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1971 CALLEY GUILTY OF MY LAI MASSACRE



Lieutenant William Calley has been found guilty of murder at a court martial for his part in the My Lai massacre which claimed the lives of 500 South Vietnamese civilians.

The 27-year-old commander could receive the death penalty or life imprisonment after the massacre which saw US soldiers open fire on civilians in My Lai and neighbouring villages in central Vietnam in March 1968.

Lieutenant Calley was in charge of Charlie Company, a unit of the American Division's 11th Infantry Brigade, who were on a mission to root out the communist 48th Viet Cong Battalion fighters.

The Viet Cong were not in the village and instead more than 500 unarmed civilians were brutally killed in an unprovoked attack by US troops.

Lieutenant Calley will be sentenced in the next few days after the verdict was announced at Fort Benning, Georgia today.

The jury of six army officers spent 13 days weighing up evidence from a four month trial.

They rejected his claim he was merely following orders in a military chain of command instilled in him since joining the army.

Lieutenant Calley faced four charges:

- the murder of at least 30 "oriental human beings" at a junction of two trails
- killing 70 others in a ditch
- shooting a man who approached him with his hands raised begging for mercy
- killing a child running from the ditch where the 70 died.

He was found guilty on the first three charges, although the number of the first was slashed from 30 to one because of conflicting evidence, and the death toll in the second charge was reduced to 20.

The final charge was reduced to assault with intent to kill a child of which he was found guilty.

Three of Lieutenant Calley's senior officers will be tried on charges arising from the massacre, two men junior to him have already been tried and acquitted and charges against 19 others have been dropped.

Charges came after the army commissioned an investigation into the cover-up of the massacre which became known as the Peers inquiry.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The massacre came to light a year after it happened after investigative media reports.

The crimes included murders, rape, sodomy, maiming and assault of civilians.

The Peers inquiry recommended charges should be brought against 28 officers and two non-commissioned officers involved in the concealment of the massacre.

Lieutenant Calley was the only one to be convicted and he was sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labour.

Within three days he was out of prison, pending appeal, on the personal instructions of President Richard Nixon.

He spent the next three years under house arrest at Fort Benning in Georgia.

Freed on bail in 1974 his sentence was then cut to 10 years but he was paroled later that year after completing one third of his sentence.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

<p><b>ARIES</b> Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Consider financial options with a shared challenge. Stick to the budget. Avoid buying stuff you don't need. Stay practical. You can get what's needed.</p>	<p><b>TAURUS</b> Apr. 20-May. 20 Lead with your heart. Collaborate to manage the impact of recent changes. Avoid risk or fuss. Do something fun together. Realize shared dreams.</p>
<p><b>GEMINI</b> May. 21-Jun. 21 Slow for physical obstacles. Avoid accidents or mistakes. Maintain your healthy practices. Do the work nobody sees. Nature, art and music feed your spirit.</p>	<p><b>CANCER</b> Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Romantic obstacles confront. Love finds a way. Teach another to appreciate something you like. Keep your agreements. Wait patiently. You're especially attractive now.</p>
<p><b>LEO</b> Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Make domestic improvements for efficiency, durability and ease. Nurture your family around a challenge with love. Make repairs. Beautify home spaces.</p>	<p><b>VIRGO</b> Aug. 23-Sep. 22 Keep your cool despite temporary overwhelm. Patiently listen. Everyone won't like everything. Keep your objective in mind, and share persuasively. Express a possibility.</p>
<p><b>LIBRA</b> Sep. 23-Oct. 22 Take advantage of lucrative conditions. Adapt budgets around unexpected changes. Keep generating positive cash flow. Put love into your work and it pays off.</p>	<p><b>SCORPIO</b> Oct. 23-Nov. 21 Guard special time for yourself. Patiently let negative thoughts pass. Write gratitudes to discover them. Personal dreams come true with consistent action.</p>
<p><b>SAGITTARIUS</b> Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Keep a low profile. Fix something you've been neglecting before it breaks. Especially nurture your health and wellness. Rest, review plans and recharge.</p>	<p><b>CAPRICORN</b> Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Steadily advance a shared vision. Set your goals high. Things may not go as planned. Express your affection and appreciation for your team.</p>
<p><b>AQUARIUS</b> Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Focus on professional priorities. Adapt your project around a surprise. Take action behind the scenes. Important people are watching. A dreamy prize beckons.</p>	<p><b>PISCES</b> Feb. 19-Mar. 20 Try new flavors and concepts. Not every experiment produces a winner. Heed recommendations and warnings. Study, research and investigate your subject.</p>

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

**WEATHER**

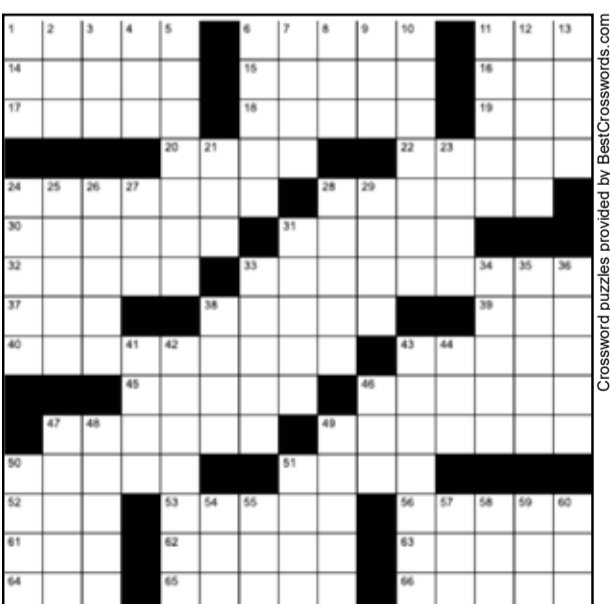
	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	6	20	cloudy
Changchun	-2	7	fine
Chengdu	12	27	fine
Chongqing	13	31	fine
Fuzhou	15	27	overcast
Guangzhou	21	29	showers
Guiyang	12	22	cloudy
Haikou	24	29	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	11	27	fine
Harbin	-3	5	cloudy
Hefei	11	29	fine
Nanjing	12	26	fine
Shanghai	11	25	fine
Taipei	19	24	overcast
Wuhan	13	28	fine
Hong Kong	24	26	rain
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	4	8	rain
Frankfurt	7	13	rain
Paris	8	14	rain
London	6	13	rain
New York	4	13	windy

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Big name in foil; 6- Clip wool; 11- Health resort; 14- Hospital rooms; 15- Baseball manager Joe; 16- Actress Dawber; 17- Chopin composition; 18- Author Jong; 19- Spud bud; 20- Dec. holiday; 22- Speed demon; 24- Slow; 28- Deadly fly; 30- Straight; 31- Rice-; 32- In base 8; 33- Made cheerful; 37- HBO alternative; 38- You \_\_\_ mouthfull; 39- Paddle; 40- Impressive; 43- Martini garnish; 45- French school; 46- Shuts; 47- Drowsy; 49- Sorrow; 50- Necklace fastener; 51- Stable staple; 52- Metal container used for frying; 53- Little bits; 56- Wave-related; 61- Polished off; 62- Fabric; 63- Deep black; 64- Puncture sound; 65- Nairobi's nation; 66- Pee Wee of the Dodgers;

DOWN 1- Wow; 2- Back muscle, briefly; 3- French vineyard; 4- Like 1 and 3, e.g.; 5- Neuter; 6- Great bargain; 7- \_\_\_ d'oeuvres; 8- "\_\_\_ tu" (Verdi aria); 9- Circle segment; 10- Hindmost part; 11- Glasses, briefly; 12- Check endorser; 13- From the U.S.; 21- Disfigure; 23- Play to \_\_\_ (draw); 24- Glaze; 25- Nouveau \_\_\_; 26- Composer Bruckner; 27- Narc's org.; 28- Wall Street transaction; 29- Scotch partner; 31- Animated; 33- Merrily; 34- Racket; 35- Gutter site; 36- Attire; 38- Red sign; 41- Recognizes; 42- Tool to break solid water; 43- Elderly person; 44- Chilling Chaney; 46- Siamese, calico, or tabby; 47- Mattress supports; 48- Bowling alley divisions; 49- Figure skater Cohen; 50- Tax experts: Abbr.; 51- Like Cheerios; 54- Grand \_\_\_ Opry; 55- Imperial unit of weight; 57- May \_\_\_ of service?; 58- Buck's mate; 59- Ques. response; 60- Caustic chemical;

**Yesterday's solution**



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

**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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<p><b>Va Fat</b> HKD 3,780,000 2 bed 1 bath</p>	<p><b>Tou Un</b> HKD 2,980,000 1 bed 1 bath</p>	<p><b>Jade Garden</b> HKD 11,880,000 4 bed 3 bath</p>
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## The Art of Giving

Lurdes de Sousa \*



### THE GEN Z PHILANTHROPISTS

**T**HE 1985 Live Aid concert, organized by Bob Geldof, was the steppingstone for celebrity engagement in Climate Show-biz, with an estimated 1.5 billion television viewers. The concert raised millions of dollars for famine relief in Ethiopia wrought by a year of drought, the first ever instance of climate philanthropy in showbiz. That year, Quincy Jones' "We are the world" anthem by USA for Africa, shaped a whole generation of millennials (born between 1981-1996 and known for their social consciousness) and inspired them to change the world for the better. As one of the most educated generations, millennials were intrinsically influenced by the new celebrity philanthropists. Yet, advocacy is difficult to shape and effective outcomes take generations.

Where are we now with the Gen Z generation (born 1997 to early 2010s), who are now entering young adulthood? Often characterized as highly socially and politically aware, more progressive and liberal than previous generations, Gen Zs care about issues such as climate change, racial and gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights.

As a mother of two Gen Zs, I took my children to a Coldplay concert (or, rather, they took me) during the band's Asia tour. I could not figure out what attracted my Gen Zs to Coldplay so much, aside from the great music, which I also loved. There we were, seated in a stadium packed with 60,000 attendees with our recycled wristbands, which illuminated the crowd for the duration of the entire concert. Before the band took the stage, a video showcased the environmental initiatives our tickets supported, including reforestation, ocean cleanup, carbon capture, solar power, green and clean technology, wildlife conservation, support for environmental organizations, and more. It was a powerful lesson in sustainability and inclusivity.

This was reinforced by a statement from the band on its website: "You have helped charge the show batteries on the power bikes and kinetic dance floors; brought refillable water bottles; returned the LED wristbands after the show. And, just by doing this, you have had a tree planted and helped a range of environment organizations like the Ocean Cleanup and ClientEarth."

The numbers on the website speak volumes: a 47% reduction in direct CO2e emission compared to the previous show tour; 5 million trees planted across 17 countries and 21 planting projects; 1 solar-powered interceptor deployed via the Ocean Cleanup with 158 tonnes of waste and 13 tonnes of ocean-bound plastic removed since the start of the tour; an 86% average return rate of reusable, plant-based wristbands (with Japan boasting an impressive record of 97%); 15kWh of power generated on average per show via in-venue solar installations, kinetic dance floors and power bikes – which is enough to power the C-stage performance each night and provide the crew with phone, laptop and tool-charging stations; 95% of shows with free refill stations for fans; 553 tCO2e saved by purchasing sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) for flights and more.

That's how far we have come in terms of empowerment and responsibility from the 1985 Live Aid concert.

We enjoyed the show. When the band left and the stadium waited for the encore, the sound of 1967 Louis Armstrong introductory notes of "What a Wonderful World" played:

Yes, I think to myself  
What a wonderful world  
Oh yeah!

It really touched my heart. Because it was not just a throwback to the 80s Live Aid concert, it took me further back to the 60s – my parents' generation, the Baby Boomers (1946-1964). Or perhaps even further back if we look to ancient Haudenosaunee philosophy.

Me, mother of two Gen Zs. Me, a member of the generation that is likely most responsible for polluting the planet because we were never consciously educated to think that, when we came back from the supermarket with our plastic bag, this would come with a dramatic price to pay for our children.

If there is climate politics, climate diplomacy, climate activism, and climate business, there is also climate show-biz, which Coldplay epitomizes with their talent and messaging. Generational theory suggests that the era in which a person was born affects the development of their worldview and value systems, which are shaped by the events of their lives.

Gen Z are the most positively empowered generation and inclined towards the art of giving, as trust-based philanthropy is gaining popularity among a generation of high-net-worth donors. They are the philanthropists of tomorrow with their skills, engagement in multiple causes such as climate change, sustainability, inclusivity. What a wonderful world this will be.

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Macau Daily Times is the official media partner of the Associação Internacional de Filantropia (Macau).

AP PHOTO



Sydney Sweeney (center) in a scene from the film "Immaculate" (Neon)

### DRIVE IN

# THINGS GET SCARY FOR SYDNEY SWEENEY IN A CREEPY ITALIAN CONVENT

LINDSEY BAHR,  
MDT/AP FILM WRITER

**I**T'S not your imagination: Sydney Sweeney is everywhere. In the past four months, she's been in a romantic comedy that turned into a sleeper hit, a superhero movie that didn't and, as of this weekend, a bloody horror. Results have varied, quality-wise, but for someone the culture seems to want to (unfairly) pigeonhole as a specific type, she is really blowing through movie genres in record time.

She also happened to produce the horror, "Immaculate," in which she plays a young American nun, Cecilia, who's decided to join an Italian convent. Her character found God after a near-death experience at a young age and, after her parish closes, she gets a lifeline to go abroad and help tend to older, dying nuns. The prettiness of the new surroundings is just a front, of course, and she starts to discover some sinister happenings within the ancient walls.

"Immaculate" is a project that Sweeney originally auditioned for a decade ago, when she was 16. If anything, it is a great showcase for Sweeney's range (she gets to go from somewhat meek to primal scream) and is full of interesting visuals, beautiful costumes and accomplished makeup work showing all manner of bloody, mangled

faces and limbs. But it's also a movie that does not seem as sure of itself or the point it's trying to make.

It's not hard to make a remote Italian convent creepy, or say something provocative and interesting about organized religion — quite a few horrors have succeeded here in the past. But "Immaculate" is not even confident enough to let us experience this place exclusively through Cecilia. No, it opens with a nightmarish prologue to give us a tease of what's in store for our innocent heroine, like it's a straight-to-streaming film that doesn't want you to click onto something else. Being a theatrical release, however, you have to imagine that ticket buyers are going to give the movie the benefit of the doubt and not flee 15 minutes into an 89-minute run.

Or perhaps horror audiences want as much carnage and jump scares as possible — if that is the case, this should be satisfying enough. There are plenty of comically squeaky doors and close-ups of a terrified face wandering around corners in the dark by only candlelight. And the finale is fiery and violent and gruesome as well, with a very silly and perhaps unearned explanation of everything that's been happening. At least it's wrapped up, I guess?

But it also doesn't stand up to much interrogation. Take, for example, its use of subtitles. Cecilia doesn't

yet understand Italian so is beholden to bilingual nuns to translate — which they don't do entirely accurately or faithfully. Later, when she's being interrogated by the cardinal (Giorgio Colangeli), we the audience are not privy to any subtitles and have to rely on Father Sal (Álvaro Morte) to translate. Are we to take him at his word when everyone else has proven to be unreliable? Again, why not just trust us to be in Cecilia's shoes throughout?

This script, written by Andrew Lobel and directed by Michael Mohan, does not seem to really care much about Cecilia and what makes her tick beyond that one story from her childhood. The main nuance she gets is through Sweeney's performance, which shows us that she does have a spark and the personality to rebel. There were some lofty ideas behind "Immaculate" that seem undeserved (about bodily autonomy and such) and she gets several memorable movie star moments, but I want more for Sweeney than whatever this adds up to. She has the chops (a reminder to watch Tina Satter's great film "Reality"), she just needs the material.

"Immaculate," a Neon release in theaters Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "some language, nudity, grisly images, strong violent content." Running time: 89 minutes. ★★☆☆

tTUNES

# NCT Dream try to pin down a vibe in latest EP

**WHEN** is a good dream not a great dream? When you don't remember it in the morning.

When is a good album not a great album? When it's bold, but not bold enough and commercial, but not commercial enough.

NCT Dream's fifth EP, "DREAM( )SCAPE," (pronounced "dream escape") explores the beats of a cool, imaginary urban landscape. But it comes in and out of focus through a combination of tempo changes, innovative sounds (smoothie slurp anyone?) and catchy yet somehow forgettable hooks.

It's a mysterious quandary for the ages: one second you get into it with both feet, but the minute the song's over, it's gone into musical ether.

Overall, the dynamic six-track record "DREAM( )SCAPE" offers a variety of styles. "UNKNOWN," is a middling, smooth electronic pop tune. It wisely moves on to the kinetic "BOX," a catchy, swagger-heavy beast with an unusual scratchy industrial sound.

"Carat Cake" is a fun pun on the run from a specific genre — it's angling for a bit of a trap cred wrapped in a fast-paced electro sound with the silly yet endearing chorus "Wow, wow wow wow/That's a Carat Cake." Try dislodging that from the subconscious.

Opener "icantfeelanything" is the epic-sounding song of the EP with its deep bass interludes. But then "Smoothie" comes along with its chirpy tempo-changing lanes and fun production; while "Breathing" is a fast-paced yet relaxing ballad.

With plenty of certified bops under their belt, the South Korean septet make the best of the material, vocally. But only fans will stick around for this pleasant-enough offering. **CRISTINA JALERU, MDT/AP**



"DREAM( )SCAPE" by NCT Dream (SM Entertainment)



TASTE OF EDESIA

# Tastes of Japan

IRENE SAM, MDT

**T**HIS spring season, MGM offers an exclusive taste of Japan for all gastronomic enthusiasts. The collaborations at MGM MACAU features delights from Tokyo's acclaimed Edomae sushi house Hakkoku, and Hakata's renowned tonkotsu ramen from Hide-Chan in Kyushu.

Hiroyuki Sato, the owner and sushi master of one of Tokyo's most sought-after Edomae sushi house, Hakkoku, was here in Macau two weeks ago at MGM, joining forces with his protégé, Manato Ueno, Chef de Cuisine of **SUSHIDAN at Rossio**, for a limited omakase pop-up experience. Decked out in hinoki (Japanese cypress) tabletop and wall linings in the fashion of traditional sushi houses, the interior of SUSHIDAN is juxtaposed with a contemporary design of stone wall and sleek marble countertop adjacent to the mere 11 seats available. This is the playground where Chef Manato and Chef Sato

showcased the art of perfecting balance among traditions, taste and visual appetite through honed craftsmanship, from fish-aging and curing techniques, selecting appropriate grains of rice through the seasons, to curating formula of vinegar to best complement the rice and fish.

As one of the youngest sushi chefs to have garnered a Michelin star in Japan, Chef Sato expanded his culinary vision in 2018 and 2020 by opening his own Edomae sushi restaurants Hakkoku and SUSHIDAN respectively in Tokyo. And In 2022, he opened the first overseas branch of SUSHIDAN, known as SUSHIDAN at Rossio in MGM MACAU.

Sato is known for his signature Akazu seasoned Shari (sushi rice), which is blended with different types of aged red vinegars that complement the umami of the top-quality seasonal Neta (seafood topping). Chef Sato's finest craftsmanship of Edomae sushi is also reflected in his fish-aging and curing skills that elicit the distinc-

tive flavor of every piece of sushi with the perfect balance. MDT was especially impressed with the exquisite Tuna Hand Roll and Chawanmushi.

If one has missed the sushi experience, there is also a ramen experience at Rossio to try before April 7th. The Michelin Bib Gourmand recommended Hide-Chan Ramen from Fukuoka of Kyushu makes its first debut in Macau, with founder Hideto Kawahara presenting his signature tonkotsu pork bone ramen which have captivated Japan and the world.

Born into a family of the top three ramen restaurants in Kyushu, for over 30 years, Kawahara-san has been upholding the traditional craftsmanship as a ramen artisan and injecting innovations. Hide-Chan's broth is meticulously prepared by simmering over 40 kg of pork bones from the collagen-rich rear leg cuts for at least 10 hours daily with utmost precision, with strict control on acid-alkaline balance and purification. Its secret recipe and pursuit of perfection sets off a new wave of Kyushu's tonkotsu ramen with ultimate flavor fusion. In addition to its signature ramen options, Chef Kawahara also presents an exclusive ramen for the first time at Macau's pop-up.

**OPINION**

**The Conversation**

Aaron Gale, West Virginia University



**WHERE DID CHRISTIAN BELIEFS ABOUT JESUS' RESURRECTION COME FROM?**

As Easter approaches, Christians around the world begin to focus on two of the central tenets of their faith: the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

Other charismatic Jewish teachers or miracle workers were active in Judea around the same time, approximately 2,000 years ago. What set Jesus apart was his followers' belief in his resurrection. For believers, this was not only a miracle, but a sign that Jesus was the long-awaited Jewish messiah, sent to save the people of Israel from their oppressors.

But was the idea of a resurrection itself a unique belief in first-century Israel?

One of the earliest written Jewish references to resurrection in the Bible is found in the Book of Isaiah, which discusses a future era, perhaps a time of final judgment, in which the dead would rise and be subject to God's ultimate justice. "Your dead shall live; their corpses shall rise," Isaiah prophesies.

There were several competing Jewish sects at the time of Jesus' life. The most prominent and influential, the Pharisees, further integrated the concept of resurrection into Jewish thought. According to the first-century historian Josephus, the Pharisees believed that the soul was immortal and could be reunited with a resurrected body – ideas that would likely have made the idea of Jesus rising from the dead more acceptable to the Jews of his time.

Within a few centuries, the rabbis began to fuse together the earlier biblical references to bodily resurrection with the later ideas of the Pharisees.

By the 500s C.E. or so, the rabbis further elaborated upon the concept. The Talmud, the most important collection of authoritative writings on Jewish law apart from the Bible itself, notes that one who does not believe in resurrection has no share in the "Olam Haba," the "World to Come."

The fact that the first followers of Jesus were Jews likely contributed to the concept of resurrection becoming ingrained into Christian thought. Yet the Christian understanding of resurrection was taken to an unprecedented degree in the decades following Jesus' death.

According to Matthew's Gospel, Jesus, a Jew from Galilee, entered Jerusalem in the days before Passover. He was accused of sedition against the Roman authorities – and likely other charges, such as blasphemy – largely because he was causing a disturbance among the Jews getting ready to celebrate the holiday. At the time, Passover was a pilgrimage festival in which tens of thousands of Jews would travel to Jerusalem.

After being betrayed by one of his followers, Judas, Jesus was arrested, hastily put on trial and sentenced to be crucified. The Roman authorities wished to uphold the pax Romana, or Roman peace. They feared that unrest amid a major festival could lead to a rebellion, especially given the accusation that at least some of Jesus' followers believed him to be the "King of the Jews, as was recorded later in Matthew's and Mark's Gospels.

According to the Gospels, Jesus was put to death on what is now Good Friday, and rose again on the third day – which today is celebrated as Easter Sunday.

Jesus' early followers believed not only that he had been resurrected, but that he was the long-awaited Jewish messiah, who had fulfilled earlier Jewish prophecies.

The grander meaning of the resurrection, which is recorded in all four canonical Gospels, remains clear for many of the approximately 2 billion Christians around the world: They believe that Jesus triumphed over death, which serves as a cornerstone foundation of the Christian faith.

[Abridged]

Former crypto mogul Sam Bankman-Fried, facing the potential of decades in prison, waited to hear his fate today [Macau time] as a sentencing proceeding began in a New York court to assess the penalty for his role in the 2022 collapse of FTX, once one of the world's most popular platforms for trading digital currency.

Bankman-Fried, 32, was convicted in November of fraud and conspiracy — a dramatic fall from a year earlier when he and his companies seemed to be riding a crest of success that resulted in a Super Bowl advertisement and celebrity endorsements from stars like quarterback Tom Brady and comedian Larry David.

A jury found that Bankman-Fried illegally used money from FTX depositors to cover his lavish spending, which authorities said included buying luxury properties in the Caribbean, flying on private jets, making outsized charitable donations and contributions to political candidates and paying bribes to Chinese officials.

Prosecutors recommended a prison sentence of 40 to 50 years. "The defendant victimized tens of thousands of people and companies, across several continents, over a period of multiple years..." prosecutors told Judge Lewis A. Kaplan in a court filing.

AP PHOTO



**A \$15 TOLL TO DRIVE INTO PART OF MANHATTAN HAS BEEN APPROVED – A FIRST FOR US CITIES**

**CEDAR ATTANASIO, NEW YORK**

**N**EW York is on track to become the first U.S. city with congestion tolls on drivers entering its central business district after transit officials approved a \$15 fee for most motorists headed to the busiest part of Manhattan.

Members of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority board yesterday [Macau time] voted to greenlight the congestion pricing plan, expected to go into effect in June. The board approved only minor changes to a plan presented to the public months ago, and brushed off requests for exceptions by dozens of groups of commuters.

The vote authorizes a \$15 toll on most commuter passenger vehicles that drive into Manhattan south of 60th Street, a zone that's south of Central Park, during daytime hours. Tolls are higher for larger vehicles, and lower for late-night entries into the city, as well as for motorcycles.

Supporters of the new tolls say it will push more people to use public transport, reduce congestion to speed up public buses and emergency vehicles, reduce

pollution, and raise money needed to improve the subway system. Opponents say the fees are a burden on workers and will increase the prices of staple goods that are driven to the city by truck.

To enter Manhattan, commuters from other states and boroughs already pay around \$15 in bridge and tunnel tolls — and the congestion fee will come on top of that. Daily parking costs already run \$25 to \$50 in the congestion zone, which includes a dozen neighborhoods in Manhattan that are south of 60th street.

New York's plan has drawn lawsuits from small business owners and the state of New Jersey which demand more thorough environmental assessments before the plan moves forward. In court documents, state officials argue the plan will cost its commuters millions but won't fund improvements in New Jersey transit agencies, even as it funds public transit in New York and Connecticut.

The state Legislature approved the tolls in 2019, mandating that the program should raise \$1 billion per year to fund public subway and bus systems for the city's 4

million daily riders. It also established the boundaries of the zone, which covers the busiest part of the city, and scaled back early proposals to include the area up to 86th Street. The pandemic and lack of federal regulation stalled the project.

Tolls will vary based on the time of day and the size of the vehicle, ranging from \$1.75 for motorcycles crossing overnight to \$36 for sightseeing buses and trucks with trailers during the day. The overnight period runs from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. on weekdays, and from 9 p.m. to 9 a.m. on weekends.

Visitors without E-ZPasses — a device that collects toll information remotely — will pay more. And as on bridges, license plate readers are expected to identify other drivers, so that they can be billed by mail.

Taxis will charge passengers \$1.25 per trip that touches the zone, while app-based rides will charge \$2.50.

If the plan survives those legal challenges, New York will become the first U.S. city to implement a congestion pricing scheme. Such schemes have been implemented in London, Stockholm, Milan and Singapore. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



**Slovakia** Protesters in Slovakia formed a human chain around the country's public television and radio building yesterday [Macau time] in anger over a takeover plan by the government whose populist, pro-Russia prime minister recently labeled several private media outlets his enemies. The takeover plan was drafted by Culture Minister Martina Šimkovičová, who represents an ultra-nationalist member party of the coalition government and has worked for an internet television outlet known for spreading disinformation.

**Congo** Security in Congo's mineral-rich east has deteriorated since recent elections, with a rebel group allegedly linked to neighboring Rwanda making "significant advances and expanding its territory," the U.N. special envoy for the conflict-wracked African nation said yesterday [Macau time]. Bintou Keita told the U.N. Security Council this has created "an even more disastrous humanitarian situation, with internal displacement reaching unparalleled numbers."

AP PHOTO



**Music** Taylor Swift's father will not be charged over a paparazzi photographer's claim that Scott Swift assaulted him on the Sydney waterfront hours after the pop star's Australian tour ended last month. Taylor Swift's representatives responded by accusing members of the media of aggression during the interaction. More than 600,000 fans saw the Australian leg of her Eras Tour at seven Australian stadium concerts.

**HOLIDAY TIMES**

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holiday. The Times will be back on the stands on Thursday April 4. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times.