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MACAO ONE ACCOUNT: GOV'T ADDS NEW FEATURE ALLOWING RESIDENTS TO BOOK APPOINTMENTS FOR THREE TYPES OF PUBLIC SERVICES IN HENGQIN P2

COURT: TSI ATTRIBUTES HIGHER COMPENSATION TO FORMER PEARL HORIZON BUYER P2

RESTAURANT RECEIPTS PLUMMET AS THE SECTOR STRUGGLES AGAINST COMPETITION FROM ZHUHAI, WHICH ATTRACTS LOCAL DINERS WITH LOWER PRICES P4



China's Commerce Ministry yesterday accused the European Union of making unreasonable demands in its investigation into imports of Chinese electric vehicles before announcing it was raising tariffs by as much as 38%. Ministry spokesman He Yadong said the European side had demanded excessive amounts of information from Chinese automakers and then unfairly accused the Chinese companies of failing to cooperate.



Philippine Vice President Sara Duterte (pictured center) is resigning from her posts of education secretary and head of an anti-insurgency body, as her whirlwind alliance with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. unraveled over key differences, including efforts to arrest a religious leader accused of child abuses and Manila's handling of escalating territorial disputes with Beijing. Duterte will remain the vice president. Her resignation from the other posts she had in Marcos' Cabinet was accepted by the president and takes effect July 19.



South Korea said yesterday that it would consider sending arms to Ukraine, a major policy change suggested after Russia and North Korea rattled the region and beyond by signing a pact to come to each other's defense in the event of war. The comments from a senior presidential official came hours after North Korea's state media released the details of the agreement, which observers said could mark the strongest connection between Moscow and Pyongyang since the end of the Cold War.

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MACAO ONE ACCOUNT

GOV'T ENHANCES APPOINTMENT SERVICES FOR MAINLAND CHINA DOCUMENTS

NADIA SHAW

THE Macao One Account system has added a new feature allowing residents to book appointments for three types of public services in the Hengqin Cooperation Zone: driving licenses, residence permits, and exit-entry permits. This feature was made available as of yesterday (June 20).

Currently, the system offers booking services for 36 government departments, covering 692 services, including 10 services related to Hengqin government services. The Administrative Office stated that, in addition to the seven services introduced last year, the system now offers 10 categories of services for Macau residents in the Hengqin Cooperation Zone, covering most of the common government services used by Macau residents.

The Hengqin Government Services Center has also added self-service machines for issuing identification documents and travel documents, allowing Macau residents living in Hengqin to obtain these documents without returning to Macau.

The director of the Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP), Ng Wai Han, emphasized that the Macau go-



vernment will continue to cooperate with the Cooperation Zone to extend more electronic government services to the area, aiming to meet the needs of Macau residents and promote the integration of Macau and Hengqin residents.

SELF-SERVICE CENTER OFFERINGS EXPANSION

Macau's government has introduced new self-service pickup services, streamlining processes for residents. The service

is now available at six 24-hour self-service centers across Macau, as of June 20.

The "Smart Locker" service allows residents to apply for designated public services, select the nearest "Smart Locker" pickup point, and generate a code to scan and pick up their items in person or being limited by office hours.

The self-service center aims to ease the process for citizens and businesses alike, allowing

them to apply for identification documents and other services electronically. This move is part of the government's efforts to promote digital services.

FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR DIGITAL SERVICES

Macau's government has released a five-year plan for digital services, which includes the development of self-service stations. The plan aims to enhance the overall digital experience for citizens and businesses, making

it easier for them to access government services.

The initial phase of the service includes services for identity verification documents, such as proof of identity, and registration services in government departments.

ELECTRONIC SELF-SERVICE SALES BOOST

In a move to enhance the convenience of purchasing government-issued products such as books and magazines, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense have been supporting the availability of these items in various regions since January 2021.

The "vending machines" now feature a larger screen to provide more detailed product information. The sales ratio for the period between 2020 and 2023 stood at 13%, but it has seen a significant increase to 20% in the first five months of 2024.

This sales increase indicates a growing demand for electronic self-service stations. The public has also provided valuable feedback, which has led to efforts to expand the sales base and standardize the service in the region. As a result, the sales rate at the 24-hour service center has increased. Currently, the sales rate at this center stands at 11%.

COURTS

TSI attributes higher compensation to former Pearl Horizon buyer

RENATO MARQUES

THE Court of Second Instance (TSI) has ruled in favor of a former Pearl Horizon buyer, granting him a higher amount in compensation for damages caused by the non-construction of the residential development.

In the ruling, the collective of judges decided to increase the amount to be paid by the Polytex Import and Export Company, the



former owner of the project, as they found the initial compensation amount

determined by a lower court to be too low.

In the initial case, the

Court of First Instance (TJB) ruled that Polytex must pay compensation of

MOP4 million.

The case dates back to 2011 when Polytex signed a contract to sell an apartment in Pearl Horizon to a woman for HKD5,668,000.

The company explained later that, in reality, the woman only paid HKD4,534,400, as she was granted a 20% discount.

In 2015, this buyer transferred her contractual position to the final buyer for HKD7,670,000.

The final buyer is seeking higher compensation from the company, as he obtained a loan to purchase the contractual rights, spending an additional HKD242,000 in interest between 2015 and 2018.

After the TJB's decision

to award MOP4 million in compensation, both the buyer and Polytex have appealed to the TSI.

Upon review, the TSI concluded that the fair amount of compensation should be the actual amount paid for the first buyer plus interest for eight years, calculated based on an average annual interest rate of 3.5%, arriving at the final amount of HKD5,690,000.

According to the information provided by the Office of the President of the Court of Final Appeal (TUI), once again, none of the parties have agreed with TSI's ruling, and both have appealed the decision to the TUI.

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ENVIRONMENT

DSPA to install public electric car charging stations by year end

STAFF REPORTER

THE Macau government is moving forward with plans to install public electric car charging stations in the city's urban areas by the second half of 2024, according to Raymond Tam, director of the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA).

"We hope that they will be used in the second half of the year," Tam said in an interview yesterday on the sidelines of the Macao Green Hotel Award Ceremony.

"We are now doing some coordination work, and we estimate that two or three of the six locations will be used as soon as possible."

The charging stations will be located near tourist areas, a departure from the typical placement in parking lots, Tam explained. This is in response to public feedback regarding the inconvenience of existing charging infrastructure.

"For electric car users, it will be easier to park in the public areas and have them charged immediately," Tam said. "We hope to test this mode and see what the response is."

The DSPA is working closely with the Public Works Bureau and Housing Bureau to identify suitable locations and address any power supply issues.

Tam noted that the initiative will be rolled out in phases, be-



Raymond Tam, director of the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA)

ginning with easier projects.

"We will not push them all out at once," he said. "But the election points, some preliminary plans, we and the Public Works Bureau and Housing Bureau and the electric car charging station are all being prepared together."

The move is part of Macau's broader efforts to promote sustainable transportation and reduce carbon emissions. Tam highlighted the hotel industry's support in this initiative, noting an increase in the number of hotels participating in the government's environmental protection programs.

"I can see that the industry is very supportive of the event," Tam said. "Under the guidance of

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, the hotel industry continues to reduce carbon emissions, waste, and energy consumption."

As Macau continues to position itself as a green tourist destination, the introduction of public electric car charging stations is a significant step towards creating a more sustainable and eco-friendly city.

HOTELS EARN ENVIRONMENTAL RECOGNITION

The DSPA presented 15 hotels with prizes at the Macao Green Hotel Award Ceremony yesterday for their efforts.

The award, which is valid for

three years, has encouraged the industry to adopt green measures supporting carbon neutrality goals since 2007.

Of the 54 previous winners, almost 70% conducted carbon audits. All implement recycling measures including paper, plastics, aluminum and batteries. The winners have collectively recycled about 72,000 tons of waste, equivalent to 18,050 bus loads. Over 70% of hotels also recycle food waste, with some using dedicated machines for this purpose. The winners have continued to add electric vehicle chargers, with around 300 spaces now available, some of which are open to the public.

54 SUSPECTED ILLEGAL WORKERS CAUGHT IN MAY

In a joint operation, the Public Security Police Force and the Labour Affairs Bureau intercepted 54 suspected illegal workers in May. The authorities conducted 396 inspections at construction sites, private buildings, commercial establishments, and industrial facilities. This crackdown aims to address the issue of illegal employment and ensure compliance with local labor laws. The operation highlights the government's commitment to maintaining a regulated workforce and protecting the rights of both employers and employees. The authorities pledged it will continue to monitor the situation and take appropriate actions to address any violations uncovered.

DSAL TO CO-HOST THREE JOB MATCHING EVENTS

The Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) and the Macau Federation of Trade Unions will jointly organize three industry-specific job-matching events next week, offering a total of 345 job openings. Online registration will begin today. On June 27, the "Life Retail Industry Job Matching" event will be held at the Macau Federation of Trade Unions Building in Sai Van, providing 188 job openings. On June 28, the "Hotel Industry Job Matching" event at the Grand Lisboa Hotel will provide 106 job openings, including front desk staff, uniformed staff, and customer service-training officers. Additionally, the "Pre-employment Training Program" offers 1,065 job openings, with applications closing on June 28.

UM PLANS TO OPEN NEW HENGQIN CAMPUS IN 2028

The University of Macau (UM) is preparing to establish a new campus in Hengqin. Slated to commence operations in 2028, the new campus is expected to significantly expand UM's scope, recruiting an additional 8,000 students, including 4,000 graduate students, as well as 500 new faculty members. "According to national deployment and special zone planning, UM must further improve the number and breadth of disciplines on offer," said UM president Yonghua Song. "The development of technology skills, big health, and modern finance should be promoted, and the new campus in Hengqin will help us address these needs."

Macau becomes Asia's second most expensive city for construction

STAFF REPORTER

MACAU has become the second most expensive city in Asia to build in, driven by a 3.5% inflation rate that is set to further increase construction costs, a new report reveals.

According to a report by UK-based property consultancy, Turner & Townsend, at USD4,269 per square meter, Macau's building costs are nearly five times higher than those in Beijing. Hong Kong remains the most expensive city in Asia for construction, ranking 9th globally at



USD4,500 per square meter.

Globally, Macau ranks 12th, with New York topping the list at

USD5,723 per square meter across the 91 cities surveyed. Mainland Chinese cities like Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Shanghai, and

Beijing were towards the cheaper end of the global rankings, ahead of Indian and Kenyan cities.

The report attributed

Macau's high costs to its construction industry's limited capacity and the territory's economic slowdown, which has dampened investor confidence. In contrast, mainland China's abundant labor force has kept costs low, typically ranging between USD893.9 and USD909.5 per square meter.

"An economic slowdown in China and global trends towards nearshoring are reshaping the Asian market and opening up new opportunities for emerging economies," the report noted.

The rebalancing of China's economic dominance and manufacturing sector is a major factor, with the country's GDP growth expected to slow to 4.6% in 2024 from 5.2% in 2023, according to the IMF.

AUTHORITIES ISSUE HEAT WARNING, URGE TAKING PRECAUTIONS

The Health Bureau (SSM) is calling on the public to take preventive measures against the effects of hyperthermia as the region experiences high temperatures. The Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) has issued a yellow hot weather warning, indicating that the hot weather is expected to continue in the coming days. In a press release, the SSM explained that under intense heat, the human body will naturally increase sweating and breathing as a physiological adjustment to reduce body temperature.

IAS TO IMPROVE CENTRAL REGISTRATION SYSTEM FOR DRUG ABUSERS

The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) has announced its plans to improve the central registration system for drug abusers. This includes seeking input from academic institutions to improve the system's filing process and to clarify the definition of drug abuse. The goal is to finalize a comprehensive report by the end of this year and move forward with the next phase of the project. IAS revealed that over 80% of drug users reported using drugs either at home or in hotels last year, adding there has been a rise in drug abuse among Macau residents in the mainland and Hong Kong.

30% OF MACAU NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD FLATS HAVE BEEN SOLD

Sales of residential apartments at the Macau New Neighbourhood (MNN) development in Hengqin have been robust, according to Huang Yujie, the director of the Hengqin Livelihood Affairs Bureau. Recently, Huang revealed that more than 1,200 flats have been sold since sales began on November 28 last year. This equates to roughly 30% of the 4,000 or so units that are available. The official also disclosed that over 350 parking spaces had been purchased. These latest figures come just over a month after Macau Urban Renewal Limited (MUR), the developer of MNN, announced that a quarter of the apartments had been sold as of March 6.

WONG KIT CHENG ADVOCATES FOR PERMANENT MATERNITY SUBSIDIES

HOWARD TONG

LAWMAKER Wong Kit Cheng has praised the government's recent decision to extend the maternity leave compensation subsidy scheme, expressing hopes to see it converted into a permanent subsidy.

"The continuation of relevant subsidy measures with retroactive effect reflects support and emphasis on family development and dual-career women, while also considering Macau's true economic environment," said Wong.

The vice-chairman of the Women's Federation expressed hope that the authorities will take the lead in coordinating consensus within the Social Council, expedite the introduction of relevant plans, and propose to make temporary measures permanent.

Since the SAR government amended the Labor Relations Act in 2020, increasing maternity leave from 56 days to 70 days



and providing maternity leave compensation subsidies to eligible local female employees, these measures have played a positive role in encouraging enterprises to actively implement family-friendly measures.

The lawmaker observed that the birth rate in Macau has dropped significantly in recent years, and fertility-related surveys conducted by the Women's Federation have found that residents

are eager for more family-friendly measures to foster a more conducive environment for childbirth.

While the new subsidy plans are temporary, Wong emphasized that the subsidies approved during the transition period in the past three years totaled only around MOP14.3 million, with an average annual cost of less than MOP5 million, which accounted for a very small portion of the government's annual expenditure.

She hopes that the feasibility of converting it to a permanent subsidy can be examined and used as a reference to promote other family-friendly measures, such as accelerating research on amending the Labor Relations Law to extend maternity leave and increasing social security birth allowances. Such measures are hoped to provide more support for the sustainable development of families in Macau.

STATS

Restaurant receipts plummet nearly 12% in April

STAFF REPORTER

Local restaurant receipts plunged 11.8% in April 2024 compared to the same month the previous year, according to data released by the Statistics and Census Service of Macau (DSEC).

In comparison to March 2024, restaurant receipts decreased 7.5%, with Chinese restaurants seeing a 13.9% drop while Japanese and Korean eateries rose 2.1%. DSEC noted the "high base of comparison" as tourism related to the Easter holiday period occurred in April 2023 rather than in March.

Western restaurants were hit especially hard, seeing receipts tumble nearly 23% year-over-year.

The dining sector has struggled against competition from Zhuhai, China, which attracts local diners with lower prices, a greater variety of offerings, and ease of access from Macau. A recent



consumer survey found Zhuhai scored higher for dining out than Macau.

Retail sales also declined, decreasing 12.4% month-over-month and 32.3% from the previous year in April. The local food and beverage industry is encouraging small and medium businesses to set up shop in gaming resorts and has called on the govern-

ment and concessionaires to reduce rental fees.

Fong Kin Fu of the United Association of Food and Beverage Merchants of Macao told Macao Daily that community restaurants saw increased patronage after casino resorts stopped providing free food, according to the Chinese-language newspaper.

GOV'T EXPLORES EXPANSION OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES AHEAD OF 2025 NATIONAL GAMES

HOWARD TONG

AS Macau prepares to host the 2025 National Games, local officials are highlighting the growing role of volunteer services in the city.

Luís Gomes, deputy director of the Sports Bureau and deputy secretary-general of the National Games Macau Organizing Committee, has highlighted that the event will be a significant milestone for the development of sports in Macau.

In preparation, Gomes, speaking at the TDM Forum recently, shared that volunteer recruitment began in February 2023 and has received strong support from civil society organizations and universities. So far, nearly 10,000 people have signed up and over 30 training and practical activities have been conducted.

He described the volunteers as publicity ambassadors who could play a role in promoting the development of Macau, and that these training activities ensure that volunteers know and understand Macau's history and culture so that they can present it to future visitors. They can also let the world know about Macau's "golden business card."

Meanwhile, Fan Ka Wa from the Unitary Police Service (SPU) also discussed the role of civil defense volunteers. These volunteers provide support and help with civil defense education and publicity.

The SPU has recruited 217 civil defense volunteers this year, with the latest round expected to be completed in early July.

Fan said these civil defense volunteers are not categorized as official civil defence workers who are often tasked with post-disaster recovery work that is organized by the government, but rather serve as auxiliary support in case of bad weather or when a state of civil defense is declared.

MDT EXCLUSIVE

Cape Verde gov't wishing to 'turn the page' on Macau Legend project

RENATO MARQUES

THE government of Cape Verde wishes to turn the page and close the Macau Legend Development Ltd (MLD) chapter as fast as possible, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Business Promotion and Digital Economy, Olavo Correia, told the Times in an exclusive interview.

This concerns the abandonment by MLD of the development of a casino resort at the Praia da Gamboa and Santa Maria Islet at Cidade da Praia.

The Times previously reported that MLD's subsidiary companies in Cape Verde had long been in a state of non-fulfillment regarding their contracts for the project.

When questioned by the Times about statements aired in May this year with the local broadcaster RTC, where he said that the government of Cape Verde intended to revoke MLD's license and that negotiations were underway



Cape Verde's Deputy Prime Minister, Olavo Correia

to reach an amicable agreement, Correia explained that these statements were referring to the extended period that the Cape Verde government gave to MLD to propose a solution.

"We gave MLD additional time to present us with a credible pro-

posal for completing the project," Correia said, explaining why he previously mentioned that the negotiations with MLD should conclude within two months.

Still, the government official reaffirmed that the door is not yet completely closed with MLD

and that the Cape Verdian government is still waiting for the company to present a feasible solution before reclaiming the assets.

"The contract can be terminated at any time. We have given additional time based on good faith for MLD to directly or indirectly

demonstrate their ability to complete the project. That deadline is running out," the Deputy Prime Minister said. He refuted the idea that the contract between the Cape Verde government and MLD has already been terminated, as the Times reported, based on a letter signed by the chairman and CEO of Cabo Verde TradeInvest (Investment and Export Promotion Agency of Cabo Verde Islands), José Manuel Almada Dias, dated September 7, 2023.

Correia confirmed that, to his knowledge, there are no legal or judicial proceedings related to this matter.

On whether the Cape Verde government has quantified the losses caused by MLD's breach of contract, as mentioned in the September 7, 2023 letter, Correia said, "Allow me not to advance the values for the time being, taking into account the phase we are in."

The government official also confirmed previous statements of Prime Minister Ulisses Correia e Silva that said that the government would reverse the concession and initiate procedures for the project to be repurposed, attributing the assets to a different company to complete the project and bring it to operation.

"Our legal teams are currently working on this matter," Correia added.

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"Mal Viver" (Bad Living)



"Co"

Macau to showcase Portuguese cinema's best in

NADIA SHAW

AUDIENCES in Macau are in for a treat as the Portuguese Film Agency and CAC Association collaborate to present

the crème de la crème of Portuguese cinematography at the 6th Portuguese Cinema Showcase in Macau (Mostra do Cinema Português em Macau).

A selection of modern Portuguese films will be shown to

audiences in Macau from the June 28 to 30 at the Dr. Stanley Ho Auditorium of the Consulate General of Portugal in Macau and Hong Kong.

Whether you're a seasoned cinephile or a curious newcomer, the three-day showcase promises to take audiences from Macau and Hong Kong on a cinematic journey. Admission to the event is free of charge and all films will be subtitled in Chinese and English.

The Times spoke to Margarida Moz, the curator of the event. Her role has been instrumental in presenting the best of Portuguese cinema in Macau for the past few years.

Moz expressed her delight in bringing these projects to the city where she once lived, highlighting the significance of this connection. She seeks

to promote the exchange of cultural experiences between Portuguese and Ma-

cau, whilst also promoting Portuguese cinema within and outside the Portuguese community.

Her meticulous approach has led to successful showcases at both the China and Portuguese-speaking Countries Film Festival and the Portuguese Cinema Showcase in Macau for several years now. She works closely with directors, having a deep understanding of their work. And Moz often presents the films herself and facilitates interactions between the audience and the filmmakers.

Her aim is for event attendees to "experience the unique storytelling and cinematic style of Portuguese filmmakers." Moz wants audiences to enjoy the intentionality of watching films in a cinema, "because when you're at home, you kind of pause the film, and go get some chips, or someone calls you, so you stop the film a bit, you answer the call. We all do that - I do that - but when you're in the cinema, you're taken by the film, and you disconnect from the outside world. You're in the dark, and you become part of the film in a more physical way than if you were watching it on a computer or at home. So, by having this experience, you're thinking about it and you're really watching it."

She emphasizes the importance of bringing debut presentations to Macau, ensuring that the films are diverse and representative of the current state of Portuguese cinema. "We were keen not to repeat films that had been previously screened in Macau at the Macau Documentary Film Festival,

where we have had Portuguese films before. We wanted all these films to be absolute premieres in Macau."

WHAT AUDIENCES CAN EXPECT

The event's diverse film lineup ranges from thought provoking shorts to visually stunning feature films. The event acts as a glimpse into the artistic vision of Portuguese directors. "Audiences can look forward to a diverse program that highlights the best of modern Portuguese cinema," said Moz.

The cinema showcase will feature the latest films by renowned Portuguese director João Canijo. Names like Samuel Barbosa, Jorge Jácome, Daniel Soares and others will also grace the screens of Macau at this year's event.

A diverse range of cinematic masterpieces will be shown, including the award-winning mirror films "Mal Viver/Viver Mal" [Bad Living/Living Bad] that captivated audiences at the Berlin Film Festival, as well as the critically acclaimed "Shrooms" that recently triumphed at the Hong Kong Film Festival.

AWARD WINNING FILMS

On the first day of the festival, "Mal Viver" - Bad Living, directed by João Canijo, will be screened on June 28 at 7 p.m. This film draws inspiration from the plays of Strindberg and films of Rivette, telling the story of five women who run an old hotel in the North of Portugal. The second film, "Viver Mal" - Living Bad, will be shown on the second day, June

SCREENING SCHEDULES

June 28 | 7 p.m.

Bad Living (127') by João Canijo
Berlinale, 2023 - Silver Bear; Sophia Awards of the Portuguese Film Academy, 2024.

June 29 | 5 p.m.

The Shift (9') by Laura Carreira
Venice Film Festival, 2020

Blue Has No Dimensions (20') by Ágata de Pinho
2022 Rotterdam International Film Festival, 2022

Becoming Male in the Middle Ages (22') by Isadora Neves Marques
Rotterdam International Film Festival, 2022 - Tiger for Best Short Film

Adrian's Tears (18') by Miguel Moraes Cabral
IndieLisboa - International Film Festival, 2023

Water Hazard (23') by Alexander David Festival
Rotterdam International Film Festival, 2024

June 29 | 7 p.m.

Living Bad (125') by João Canijo
Berlinale, 2023

June 30 | 5 p.m.

Nocturne for a forest (16') by Catarina Vasconcelos
Locarno International Film Festival, 2023

Corte (28') by Afonso Rapazote, Bernardo Rapazote
Cannes Festival, 2020

Morning Shadows (12') by Rita Cruchinho Neves
IndieLisboa - International Film Festival, 2023

Please Make it Work (14') by Daniel Soares
Locarno International Film Festival, 2022

Shrooms (18') by Jorge Jácome
Toronto Film Festival, 2023

2024 Hong Kong International Film Festival - Best Short Film Award

June 30 | 7 p.m.

Around Rocha's Table (93') by Samuel Barbosa
Locarno International Film Festival, 2021



Margarida Moz



"Viver Mal" (Living Bad)

upcoming screening

29 at 7 p.m. These ambitious cinematic projects showcase Canijo's mastery of storytelling, weaving together complex narratives and characters.

"Mal Viver is the central film of the duo that mirrors it, Viver Mal." The second film, Viver Mal (Living Bad) is set in the same location, but from the viewpoint of the guests. Both films were shot over a 12-week period during Portugal's second lockdown period in early 2021.

Moz described Mal Viver as having "received widespread acclaim," including a Silver Bear Award at the Berlin Film Festival, noting it has been commercially successful too. The films also received the "Best Film" award at the Sophia Awards of the Portuguese Film Academy.

These achievements are a testament to the film's universal appeal. The film's themes of "family, love, and identity are relatable to audiences everywhere," said Moz. It is a must-see for anyone who has ever experienced the complexities of human relationships. The event curator emphasized the film's universal appeal, stating, "It is a cinematic experience that transcends cultural and linguistic barriers."

The film's use of sound and music masterfully crafts an immersive atmosphere; drawing the viewer into the narrative and making them feel like they are part of the story. Moz highlights the "very experiential" nature of the mirror films, which she believes will captivate audiences in Macau. The performances, too, have received widespread acclaim, with critics praising the "outstanding" per-

formances of the actors, each bringing their unique energy to their roles.

THE RESILIENCE OF THE FILM INDUSTRY

The cinema showcase event serves as a gateway for audiences to explore the rich tapestry of Portuguese filmmaking, displaying the industry's resilience and creativity in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The works on show this year reflect the unique cultural and societal influences that have shaped their storytelling. "Films in the Portuguese cinema are typically not very commercial when compared to Hollywood or Bollywood. It's always a more niche experience, giving the films a more intimate feeling," said Moz.

In the post-Covid era, Moz described the Portuguese film industry as having "undergone a remarkable transformation," adapting to the challenges posed by the pandemic. While the global health crisis disrupted traditional distribution channels, it also sparked a renewed sense of innovation and experimentation. Filmmakers have embraced new storytelling techniques, delving deeper into the human experience and exploring themes that resonate with audiences in a post-pandemic world.

The films featured at the exhibition are a testament to this creative resurgence. "Portuguese filmmakers look forward to presenting their work and engaging audiences in Macau and Hong Kong," said Moz.

The screening is one of the highlights of the Day of Portugal, which is celebrated in Macau in the month of June.

IMMIGRATION

EU to implement new border control affecting SARs travelers

THE European Union (EU) is set to implement two new border control measures over the next 12 months, which will affect travelers from Macau and Hong Kong.

The European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) will require travellers from 60 visa-exempt territories, including Macau, to obtain permission before visiting 30 European countries. This authorization will be valid for up to 90 days in any 180-day period.

Meanwhile, the Entry/Exit System (EES) will collect biometric information and record travel document details, date and place of entry and departure from a European country for all non-EU nationals.

The exact dates for these changes have yet to be announced. It is expected that

ETIAS will go into force in the first half of next year, with a transition period and a grace period to follow. And the EES is expected to take effect from this autumn.

Applicants will need to provide personal information such as name, date and place of birth, nationality, home address, parents' first names, email address, phone number, travel document details, education level and occupation, as well as details of criminal convictions. Information about planned stays, previous travel to war or conflict zones, and any recent decisions requiring departure from a country will also be required before entering the Schengen Area.

The change was prompted as ETIAS aims to detect security, irregular migration, or health risks posed by visa-

-exempt travelers, ensuring a safer and more secure travel experience. EES, on the other hand, focuses on preventing document fraud and strengthening control at the EU external border by monitoring traveler movements and detecting overstaying.

Travellers should be vigilant about fraudulent application channels, as there are at least 106 unofficial websites claiming to facilitate ETIAS applications. Only one official website exists for ETIAS applications.

ETIAS is a different system from obtaining a visa, which requires a longer procedure involving consulates. ETIAS is quick and can be applied for online, with an authorization costing 7 euros (MOP60) for most applicants but waived for those under 18 or over 70. **NS**



STUDY

MACAU CASINOS' HIGHER MINIMUM WAGES HEIGHTENING LEVELS OF DEBT

NADIA SHAW

A recent study by scholars from universities in Macau and the mainland has shed light on the stark differences in the characteristics and struggles of gamblers across three regions: the mainland, Hong Kong and Macau.

The analysis was based on data collected from gambling helpline callers between 2015 and 2021. The study titled "Characteristics of Gambling Helpline Callers in Macao: A Regional Comparison," as cited in an Asia Gaming Brief report, revealed that Macau gamblers seeking help face more severe debt issues compared to those in other regions.

Published in the Journal of Gambling Studies, scholars from the Macao Polytechnic University, the School of Tourism Management at Macao University of Science and Technology, and Guangzhou Xinhua University, found that 32.7% of Macau helpline callers indicated debts exceeding MOP200,000 – which is more than double the proportion in other regions.



This points to a more severe debt situation among help-seekers in Macau. The high minimum wagers at Macau's table games, typically MOP120- 514 per hand, contributes to this heightened level of debt with some increasing to MOP1,000 during holidays or weekends.

The study surveyed 943 gamblers seeking assistance through local helplines – with the majority originating from Macau. The results indicate that 72.9% of callers were in debt, with slightly over 40% owing less than MOP200,000,

9% owing more than MOP1 million, and 7% owing between MOP500,001 and MOP1 million.

The comparison between the data from the three regions uncovered a higher proportion of Macau and mainland callers' gambling problems involved casino table gambling, while Hong Kong callers reported problems with sports betting. The study also found that the average length of gambling problems was slightly over seven years.

The disparity in gambling jurisdictions is a significant factor in

the differences observed. Mainlanders need to travel to Macau to gamble legally in a casino, resulting in similar gambling problems to Macau callers. Hong Kong callers, on the other hand, reported problems with sports betting due to the legal availability of horse racing and soccer betting in the region.

The study highlights the need for a more tailored approach to Macau's helpline services, where the referral rate is relatively low. Referrals are essential for further treatment and improving gam-

bling issues, but they are primarily conducted via face-to-face counseling, which is not helpful for non-local help seekers.

The high rate of debt among mainland callers to gambling helplines stresses the need for financial counseling and support services beyond Macau. Researchers have noted that the prevalence of suicidal thoughts is alarming, demanding swift and evidence-based interventions to address the issue.

"Counseling organizations should prioritize the development and implementation of evidence-based strategies for suicide prevention. This may involve training counselors to recognize and respond to suicidal ideation and establishing clear protocols for risk assessment and subsequent actions," the report said.

The study suggests the establishment of cross-border collaboration in monitoring and managing cross-border gambling activities and sharing information on effective treatment and prevention strategies.

As the gambling industry continues to evolve, it is crucial that policymakers and treatment providers work together to develop effective strategies for preventing and treating gambling problems, particularly among vulnerable populations such as young individuals and students.

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Luxury sales are flattening amid a self-inflicted creativity crisis and price hikes, study finds

COLLEEN BARRY, MILAN

THE post-pandemic surge in global sales of luxury handbags, shoes and apparel is set to stall this year amid a creativity crisis and price hikes as brands shift focus to the biggest spending customers, a new study by the Bain consultancy said earlier this week.

Bain is forecasting flat worldwide luxury sales in 2024 following a slight first-quarter dip, according to the study commissioned by the Altgamma association. The consultancy cited political uncertainty during a presidential election year in the United States as well as economic uncertainty in China that has brought on a phenomenon of "luxury shaming."

Beyond socioeconomic factors and rising geopolitical tensions, the slowdown is also partly "self-inflicted," said Bain partner Claudia D'Arpizio.

She cited a "creativity crisis," in the sector, as a number of major fashion houses are transitioning creative directors, and a new focus on the super-wealthy customers, at the expense of the aspirational middle class and Gen-Z youngsters who fueled growth before the pandemic.

"There is a lack of clarity for many of these brands. They are making attempts to regain focus. It is five, six brands under turn-around, big ones. This is not helping the overall excitement," D'Arpizio told The Associated Press. "This is a supply-driven industry. When you



have the brands really in tune with customer needs, it usually reacts quickly."

She said some "tweaks" are needed on strategy and price points, adding that "you can't grow without the middle class and younger generations."

Among major fashion houses, Gucci and Moschino have made

runway debuts of their new creative directions, while the first Valentino collection by the new creative director hits the runway in September. Chanel has the position to fill after the incumbent resigned earlier this month.

While inflation is one element of price hikes, D'Arpizio said brands are also refocusing on the estimated

6 million to 8 million consumers at the top of the pyramid as they search for better profit margins. At the same time, there has been less rejuvenation in the offerings.

Steep price increases for items that don't show significant innovation, and feel like something they have seen before, leaves customers "upset and puzzled."

Flat global luxury sales forecasts follow a pent-up post-pandemic spending surge that pushed sales during the 2021-23 period up 24% over 2019 levels.

Last year, sales of personal luxury goods grew by 4% to 362 billion euros (about \$388 billion) from 349 euros in 2022, due largely to a resurgence of U.S. and Asian tourism to Europe fueling purchases. Add in luxury travel, fine art, cars and yachts, the vast global luxury market expanded to 1.5 trillion euros last year — highlighting a trend toward experiences over tangible goods.

Japan is a bright spot as the return of foreign tourists with the yen at the lowest level to the U.S. dollar in 20 years, while Europe continues strong trends due to tourist spending and an increase in local consumption, especially in French and Italian cities. **MDT/AP**

TECH

OpenAI founder Sutskever sets up new AI company devoted to 'safe superintelligence'

ILYA Sutskever, one of the founders of OpenAI who was involved in a failed effort to push out CEO Sam Altman, said he's starting a safety-focused artificial intelligence company.

Sutskever, a respected AI researcher who left the ChatGPT maker last month, said in a social media post

Wednesday that he's created Safe Superintelligence Inc. with two co-founders. The company's only goal and focus is safely developing "superintelligence" - a reference to AI systems that are smarter than humans.

The company vowed not to be distracted by "management overhead or pro-

duct cycles," and under its business model, work on safety and security would be "insulated from short-term commercial pressures," Sutskever and his co-founders Daniel Gross and Daniel Levy said in a prepared statement.

The three said Safe Superintelligence is an Ame-

rican company with roots in Palo Alto, California, and Tel Aviv, "where we have deep roots and the ability to recruit top technical talent."

Sutskever was part of a group that made an unsuccessful attempt last year to oust Altman. The boardroom shakeup, which Su-

tskever later said he regretted, also led to a period of internal turmoil centered on whether leaders at OpenAI were prioritizing business opportunities over AI safety.

At OpenAI, Sutskever jointly led a team focused on safely developing better-than-human AI known

as artificial general intelligence, or AGI. When he left OpenAI, he said that he had plans for a "very personally meaningful" project, but offered no details.

Sutskever said that it was his choice to leave OpenAI.

Days after his departure, his team co-leader Jan Leike also resigned and leveled criticism at OpenAI for letting safety "take a backseat to shiny products." OpenAI later announced the formation of a safety and security committee, but it's been filled mainly with company insiders. **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

MGM welcomes top synchronized swimmers



MGM is hosting the "MGM Artistic Swimming Elite Extravaganza & Macao Open Synchronized Swimming Competition 2024" from today until June 23.

This year, three renom-

ned synchronized swimming teams from Beijing, Jiangsu, and Sichuan will grace Macao with "water ballet" performances. The event is co-organized by MGM and the

Swimming Association of Macao, China, and supported by the Sports Bureau. The competition will also feature 200 young athletes from across China and the Greater Bay Area competing in the open competition.

MGM is also hosting a "Synchronized Swimming Master Class" to help the young athletes learn directly from the national-level professionals. This event aims to enrich Macao's "tourism + sports" offerings and elevate public enthusiasm for sports in the city, the gaming operator said in a statement.

Hacken Lee to return to The Londoner Arena



Hacken Lee, a award-winning Cantopop icon, will return to The Londoner Arena to perform two concerts entitled 'Hacken Lee Symphonic Live in Londoner with Macao Orchestra' on Sept. 21 and 22,

2024.

This is the second time Lee has teamed up with the Macao Orchestra to present concerts at The Londoner Arena, following a successful series of four concerts of

the same name at the same venue from Sept. 29 to Oct. 2 last year.

Lee has staged numerous sold-out shows over the past year, including seven concerts with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra at the Hong Kong Coliseum, and overseas ventures in Reno, Las Vegas and Atlantic City in the United States.

Earlier this year, he took the concert to Foshan, Shantou, Beijing, Ningbo, Guangzhou, Suzhou and Chengdu in mainland China, as well as Singapore, all of which attracted large numbers of fans.

Online and phone ticketing will go on sale at 12 p.m. on June 26.

ANALYSIS
BY LEANDA LEE, MDT

ANGELA Leong's suggestion for Macau to become an eco-tourism destination (The Times June 13) has power to create a vibrant and liveable city. It is not sufficient to promote Macau as an eco-tourism destination based upon stand-alone places, tours or exhibiting natural species from the commons. It will require an integration of systems across the GBA to nurture a Macau that truly lives up to that moniker.

Eco-tourism is environment-friendly tourism, but in this case, the term environment is broader than commonly understood. Engagement in economic, ecological and socio-cultural activities by visitors gives a fuller understanding of its scope, otherwise known as Community Conscious Travel. This form of tourism provides protection of the balance between resident quality of life, traveller experience, and the environment within which tourist activity occurs.

The conundrum is how to

maintain the local economic ecology without destroying the unique nature of Macau's socio-cultural, SME-facing economic and ecological experience.

An unfortunate current by-product of growing integration in the GBA exists partly due to the considerable ease of access across borders for the general populations of Hong Kong and Macau. It is exemplified in the closures of many local small businesses around the Red Market and northern neighbourhood areas of Macau. These businesses are the lifeblood of the interactions that make Macau such a special destination. Visitors do not wish to experience a city that lacks genuine local experiences. They want to encounter local residents interacting with each other and visitors alike within the broad range of environments and ecologies that constitute the real Macau. Should residents routinely seek better deals at Gongbei markets, Sam's Club and Costco, stopping for a weekend RMB42 hot-pot on the way and then relying on Taobao for most everything else, our

SYSTEMS THINKING: SHIFTING P

streets will become devoid of community life – a huge loss to the socio-cultural integrity of Macau's eco-system. This risks streets becoming a theme park of almond biscuit makers, Portuguese tart sellers, pork-jerky shops, pork-bun and curried fish-ball stalls, while little authentic local trade occurs. This might prove entertaining and provide visitors with requisite souvenirs, but it will not deliver the deep socio-cultural elements of eco-tourism.

Sustainable economic development in Macau will require a process of transition as GBA integration progresses. To do so requires a comprehensive vision of what is achievable, and an in-depth understanding based upon robust research as to what will excite our target markets. And then, to act decisively, consistently and holistically in a staged process over time.

Should the vision be one based upon eco-tourism, then we have a viable pathway to link all elements that create a hearty Macau story. Firstly, however, the measurement of success of communities tends to lopsidedly focus on measures of the market economy, as is seen in government policy announcements. We tend to discount the critical role of the household and the commons which are embedded into society. In turn, society is embedded into place: those built and natural environments that support the economy and society. Each element supports and is supported by other elements that constitute a sustainable "Embedded Economy".

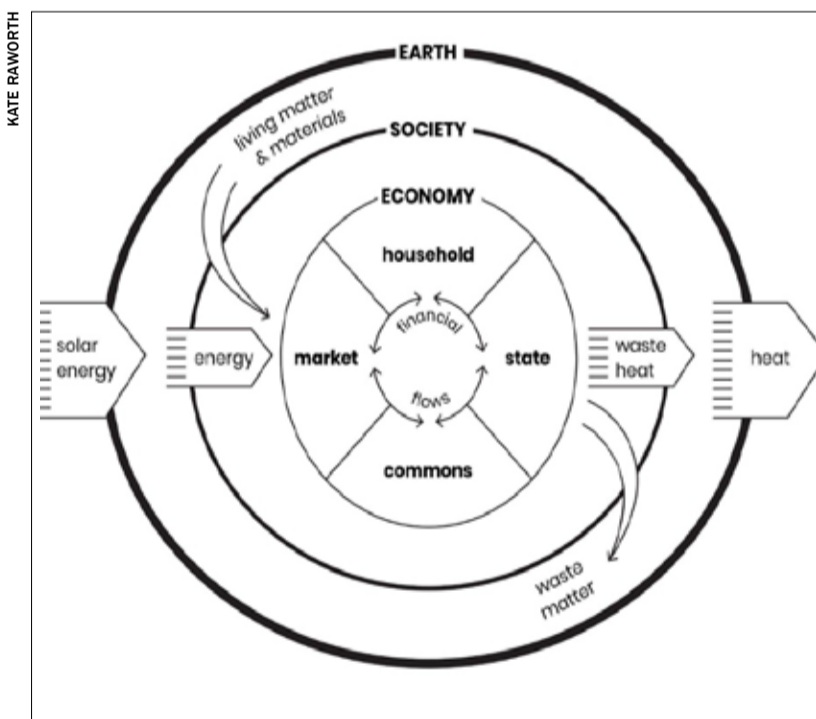
This is the broader ecosystem that may showcase the whole of Macau as an eco-tourism destination, should Macau choose that pathway.

Let us take the role of the household as part of this Embedded Economy ecosystem, as defined under an eco-tourism destination model. What is it about Macau families, their behaviours, histories and the values held by them that may spark interest and determine what we are happy to share with our visitors? Not just in museums, but how Macau people interact with and value the streets, marketplaces, trails, our natural and

man-made environments. For example, there is a little-known wisdom preserved by elders of our community of the seasonal comings and goings of natural medicines, herbal teas and food found among vegetation on our hills. Or, family recipes created for specific species of fish preferred in our markets. The protection and promotion of local ways are assets that build community and prosperity – we can showcase to the



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The Embedded Economy: what we depend on to provide our needs

GBA launches first full-schedule China-Europe freight train

ON THE AGENDA

THE Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area on Wednesday launched its first full-time schedule China-Europe freight train, aiming to enhance logistical efficiency in trade exchanges between this key Chinese economic region and inland Europe, Chinese media reported.

According to China Central Television (CCTV), the X8120 China-Europe freight train em-

barked on its maiden journey from Guangzhou International Port early Wednesday morning. The train, laden with a diverse array of goods such as air conditioners, coffee machine accessories, and eggbeaters, is set for Warsaw, the capital of Poland.

The concept of a full-time schedule China-Europe freight train entails a train service that adheres to a fixed timetable, ensuring regular and predetermined departure times, routes,

and stops.

This structured schedule contrasts with previous freight train services, which operated on more flexible timetables, leading to variable travel times and logistical uncertainties.

The X8120 train, destined for Warsaw, will now depart Guangzhou International Port every Wednesday, passing through the Erenhot land port in northern China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

Covering a total distance of

approximately 11,200 kilometers, the journey is anticipated to take 16 days. This new schedule is expected to reduce transportation time by about 30 percent compared to earlier services, providing a significant boost to trade efficiency.

Historically, the China-Europe freight train service has been pivotal in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which aims to enhance global trade routes and infrastructure. The BRI has facilitated the development of

numerous rail links between China and various European countries, promoting economic cooperation and reducing reliance on maritime shipping routes.

The introduction of the full-schedule train service is expected to further integrate the Greater Bay Area into the global logistics network, offering more reliable and faster transportation options for businesses and fostering stronger economic ties between China and Europe.

PARTS CHANGES THE WHOLE



Artistic rendition of the 11 cities of GBA

world these Local Futures. The state can also drive vibrant interaction between community and visitor engagement. The reserve of government-safeguarded land in Macau is an example of a potential eco-tourism asset which may promise to deliver all three economic, ecological and socio-cultural activities. While these plots sit idle waiting for more permanent allocation of use (The Times June 14), they could be temporarily converted into urban farming centres, even for just one growing season: They would be places for people to gather,

learn, upskill, educate others, produce fresh food preferred by local residents and provide further community and visitor amenity whilst encouraging a renewed appreciation for what sustains life and how waste is used in a circular economy. These sorts of locally grown productive joint community and state initiatives have proven successful across the world, providing a multitude of wellbeing benefits to local residents. They also nudge a population to value the circular nature of life-giving human and economic activity, and to demand environmentally protective decisions from all players in the economy. Such an embedded economy is truly conducive to being an eco-tourist hub with larger aspirations than simply exhibiting

local wetlands. An Embedded Economy model is a useful way to grasp the concept that when any one element in the model or system is changed, it shifts the whole. Should there be an articulated and clear vision as to what the whole looks like – a clear and crisp story – then when each element is changed, removed or added, it can be assessed against how it will contribute to a realisation of the whole, whether that be eco-tourism or another story. Should integration into the GBA shift the vibrancy of our SME retail trade or other elements in Macau, a vision for an alternative story – another integrated and whole system - may guide what is to be done with our built, communal, human and natural assets.



A panoramic view of Nansha Jiaomen River in Guangzhou, South China's Guangdong province

GBA WHAT'S ON



Zhuhai

SHE'S THEMED AFTERNOON TEA

InterContinental Zhuhai collaborated with the handmade original designer brand She's to curate an exquisite afternoon tea experience titled "Blooming Spring".

Date: March 1 - June 30, 2024 Venue: InterContinental Zhuhai
Address No. 1 Qinglv South Road, Xiangzhou Phone

Hong Kong

CELEBRATING THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON

The Art Museum of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) presents the exhibition "Celebrating the Year of the Dragon", which will run from 2 February to 31 July 2024. Members of the public are welcome to visit. The exhibition features over 50 objects from the Museum's collection, including jades, oracle bones, metal, ceramics, stone carvings, textiles, scholars' stationery and rubbings. Exhibit highlights include a Western Han Dynasty turquoise seal that inspired the Museum's emblem, an annular white jade box with a dragon design dated from the Five Dynasties to the Northern Song, as well as a dragon brush-holder created by the legendary ceramic designer Tang Ying (1682-1756). 2024 is the Year of the Dragon, according to the Chinese zodiac. For almost 8,000 years, the mythological beast has garnered immense reverence and admiration from people. Contrary to common understanding, rather than constant and unchanging, the image of the dragon has evolved arbitrarily, as recorded in literature. Celebrating the year of this powerful creature, the Art Museum presents this exhibition to explore the iconography of the dragon in ancient Chinese art against the socio-cultural contexts of different times.



Date: February 2 - July 31, 2024 Venue: Name The Chinese University of Hong Kong Art Museum Address The Chinese University of Hong Kong Boulevard

Foshan

CORRESPONDING SPACE BY KISHIO SUGA



The exhibition encompasses the artist's creations spanning over half a century, from the early 1970s to the present day, featuring over seventy groups of works. The art museum's unique curved galleries, bathed in wandering sunlight, lend an ever-changing texture to the pieces. Within the folds of space and time, meanings both dissolve and emerge, creating a dynamic interplay between

objects and their surroundings.

Date: April 6 - June 24, 2024 Venue: Boxes Art Museum Address Shunfeng Mountain Park, Shunde District, Foshan City

PREMIER LI'S VISIT

Malaysian leader Anwar says China a 'true friend' and not to be feared

MALAYSIAN Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim yesterday rejected the notion that China's dominance is to be feared, calling China a "true friend" at the end of Premier Li Qiang's visit to mark 50 years of diplomatic ties between their countries.

While the leaders raised some contentious bilateral issues, Anwar said they discussed them as "equal partners, as trusted friends." He didn't give details but likely referred to the prickly issue of overlapping territorial claims in the South China Sea.

"People say, well, Malaysia is a growing economy. Don't let China abuse its privilege and extort from the country. I said no. To the contrary, we want to benefit from one another, we want to learn from one another and we want to profit from this engagement," Anwar told some 200 business leaders at a luncheon attended by Li.

Anwar said he rebuked the "incessant propaganda that we should cast aspersions and fear the dominance of China economically, militarily, technologically."

"We do not. We in Malaysia,

AP PHOTO



Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim speak during a business luncheon with China's Premier Li Qiang at a hotel in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, yesterday

having a neutral stance, have the resolve to work with all countries and with China," he said. "We see Premier Li Qiang as a friend that would work together with us."

Li, the first Chinese premier to visit Malaysia since 2015, flew in for a three-day visit on Tuesday on the last leg of a regional tour. Li, China's No. 2 leader after President Xi Jinping, was also the first Chinese premier to visit New Zealand and then Australia in seven years.

The two leaders on Wednesday agreed that China and other claimant countries in Southeast Asia should tackle the South China Sea dispute "independently and properly" through dialogue and cooperation, and via bilateral settlement.

No details were given but the statement came amid concerns the dispute could escalate tensions between the U.S. and China. The U.S. renewed a warning Tuesday that

it is obligated to defend treaty ally Philippines, after Chinese forces seized two Philippine boats delivering food and supplies to a military outpost in a disputed shoal and injured several Filipino navy personnel.

Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan all dispute Beijing's claims to almost the entire South China Sea. Malaysia's government prefers diplomatic channels and rarely criticizes Bei-

jing publicly, even though Chinese coast guard ships have sailed near Malaysia's waters. This is partly to protect economic ties as China has been Malaysia's top trading partner since 2009. Bilateral trade surged to \$98.8 billion last year, accounting for 17% of Malaysia's global trade.

At the luncheon, Li urged businesses to expand cooperation in emerging fields such as green development, digital economy and artificial intelligence.

"The journey of China and Malaysia over the past 50 years... is like an expedition where two people have joined hands and waded through mountains and rivers, and won a milestone full of achievements. It also marks the official beginning of the next journey full of hope," Li said.

Li was given a red carpet ceremonial send-off and an honor guard as he departed for home later Thursday.

The two countries renewed a five-year trade and economic cooperation pact on Wednesday and inked a rash of pacts to cooperate in various sectors.

The Trade Ministry said 11 more memorandum of understandings were signed between Malaysian and Chinese entities yesterday that could bring in potential investment of 13.2 billion ringgit (\$2.8 billion). These included proposed collaborations in high value-added sector such as oil and gas, energy, education, agriculture, automotive and utility services, it said in a statement. **MDT/AP**

DISPUTED SEA

Philippines demands China return rifles and pay for boat damage after hostilities

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

THE Philippine military chief demanded Wednesday that China return several rifles and equipment seized by the Chinese coast guard in a disputed shoal and pay for damages in an assault he likened to an act of piracy in the South China Sea.

Chinese personnel on board more than eight motorboats repeatedly rammed then boarded the two Philippine navy inflatable boats Monday to prevent Filipino navy personnel from transferring food and other supplies including firearms to a Philippine territorial outpost in Second Thomas Shoal, which is also claimed by Beijing, according to Philippine officials.

After a scuffle and repeated collisions, the Chinese seized the boats and damaged them with machetes,

knives and hammers. They also seized eight M4 rifles, which were packed in cases, navigation equipment and other supplies and wounded a number of Filipino navy personnel, including one who lost his right thumb, two Philippine security officials told The Associated on Tuesday.

The two officials spoke on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to discuss the sensitive conflict publicly.

Video and photographs issued by the Philippine military Wednesday night show the chaotic faceoff at the shoal, with Chinese personnel onboard boats brandishing knives, axe and sticks while surrounding two Philippine navy supply boats beside Manila's ship outpost. Sirens blare constantly as both sides yell at each other and the Chinese smash the Philippine navy

AP PHOTO



In this photo provided by Armed Forces of the Philippines, Chinese Coast Guard hold knives and machetes as they approach Philippine troops on a resupply mission in the Second Thomas Shoal at the disputed sea earlier this week

boat with a pole and grab what appears to be a bag with a stick.

Pictures show a damaged Philippine navy boat with its side floaters slashed and deflated and another boat with its windshields

and navigational screens shattered. A man displays a damaged cellphone.

"We are demanding that the Chinese return our rifles and our equipment and we're also demanding that they pay for the damage

they caused," Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr., head of the Philippine armed forces, said in a news conference in western Palawan province, where he pinned a medal on the wounded navy officer.

"They boarded our boa-

ts illegally and seized our equipment," Brawner said. "They're now like pirates with this kind of actions."

Armed with long knives and machetes, the Chinese coast guard personnel tried to beat the unarmed Filipinos, who resisted with their bare hands by parrying the blows and pushing back the Chinese, Brawner said. "Our objective is also to prevent war."

Some of the Chinese pointed their knives at the Filipino navy personnel, he said.

China blamed the Philippines for the confrontation, saying the Filipino personnel "trespassed" into the shoal in defiance of its warnings.

"This is the direct cause of the incident," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said in Beijing. "The Chinese coast guard at the scene has taken professional law-enforcement measures with restraint aimed at stopping the illegal supply mission by the Philippine vessels and no direct measures were taken against the Philippine personnel." **MDT/AP**

INDONESIA

Thousands of refugees have spent years awaiting resettlement. Their future is unclear

DITA ALANGKARA & EDNA TARIGAN, TANJUNGPINANG

MORWAN Mohammad walks down an old hotel corridor on Batam Island in northwestern Indonesia before entering a 6-square-meter room that has been home to him and his growing family for the past eight years.

Mohammad, who fled war in Sudan, is one of hundreds of refugees living in community housing on the island while waiting for resettlement in a third country.

Hotel Kolekta, a former tourist hotel, was converted in 2015 into a temporary shelter that today houses 228 refugees from conflict-torn nations including Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan and elsewhere. The island, just south of Singapore, has a population of 1.2 million people.

Indonesia, despite having a long history of accepting refugees, is not a signatory to the U.N. Refugee Convention of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol, and the government does not allow refugees and asylum-seekers to work.

Many had fled to Indonesia as a jumping-off point hoping to eventually reach Australia by boat, but are now stuck in what feels like an endless limbo.

Mohammad and his wife arrived in Jakarta nine years ago after traveling from his hometown Nyala to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and onward to the sprawling Southeast



Nagad Daoud Abdallah, right, and Majdah Ishag, both from Sudan, sit on a bed in Ishag's room at a hotel turned into a shelter for refugees in Batam, an island in northwestern Indonesia

Asian archipelago, where their first stop was the U.N. refugee agency office in the capital.

"We did not know where to go — just looking for a safe place to live. The most important thing was to get out of Sudan to avoid war," he said.

They made their way to Batam in 2016, believing it would be easier to travel from there to a third country for resettlement.

All three of Mohammad's children were born in Indonesia and he does not know where his family will ultimately settle. He says he wants to have a normal life, working and earning money so he can support himself without relying on others for assistance.

"We left our country, our family.

We miss our family members. But life here is also too hard for us because for eight years we are not working, not doing good activities. Just sleep, wake up, eat, repeat," he said.

Hotel Kolekta is administered by the Tanjungpinang Central Immigration Detention Center on nearby Bintan Island. That three-story detention facility, with its barred windows and fading paint, is home to dozens of detainees facing similarly uncertain futures, including whether they will ever return to their homelands, but in conditions that more closely resemble a prison.

Two Palestinian men have languished there for over a year, unable to return home due to the on-

going war in Gaza. Four Burmese fishermen are stranded because they cannot afford to pay for their onward travel.

Those held in the detention center typically violated Indonesia's immigration regulations, while those living in Hotel Kolekta and other community housing entered the country legally seeking safe haven.

On Batam Island, Majdah Ishag, a 36-year-old Sudanese woman, has been living in the hotel for eight years after leaving home in search of a better life in Indonesia for her family. Her daily needs are met but she worries about the future and doesn't want her five children to spend their entire lives in Hotel Kolekta.

"I hope I can find work and resettlement," she said.

The UNHCR office in Indonesia says that nearly one-third of the 12,295 people registered with organization are children who have limited access to education and health services.

Rahima Farhangdost is one of 5,732 refugees from Afghanistan stranded in Indonesia. She lives in Bogor, 60 kilometers (37 miles) from Jakarta, and has been in Indonesia since August 2014 after the Taliban banned her from working as a nurse and teacher in her hometown in the country's southeast.

For five years, she received money from a cousin in Afghanistan, but that relative died in conflict and she has since had to receive monthly financial support from UNHCR.

"I heard the process is faster and that after two or three years, we could get resettlement. So that's why I came to Indonesia. But it's been a very, very long time — 10 years now. I really regret it. I would prefer to die in Afghanistan, and not have come to Indonesia," she said.

UNHCR Indonesia says more than 12,000 individuals from 40 countries in the country are listed as refugees under Indonesian law, most of them from Afghanistan.

Ann Maymann, a UNHCR representative in Indonesia, said: "Resettlement is not speedy ... because it is not the UNHCR who decides. We cannot decide that a refugee will go to this country."

Maymann said refugees under the current system cannot be assured of a better future in Indonesia, especially those who will not be resettled.

"That is exactly why we need to work on improving the conditions for the refugees while they are in Indonesia, because resettlement cannot be the only solution. Because it is not the only solution. Because not all will be resettled," Maymann said. **MDT/AP**

DIPLOMACY

Japan, New Zealand agree on intel sharing pact amid growing regional security concerns

MARI YAMAGUCHI, TOKYO

JAPAN and New Zealand agreed earlier this week in principle on an intelligence sharing pact as their leaders shared concerns over the increasingly challenging security environment in the region, including closer ties between Russia and North Korea.

In a joint statement, Pri-

me Minister Fumio Kishida and his New Zealand counterpart Christopher Luxon expressed concern about rising tension in the South China Sea, where China has become increasingly assertive in pressing its territorial claims.

Kishida and Luxon "welcomed the agreement in principle of an information security agreement" to facilitate classified information sharing, accor-

ding to the statement released by Japan's Foreign Ministry.

The two leaders also agreed to accelerate talks toward signing a pact that would allow the two countries' forces to share logistical support and supplies during bilateral training and other operations.

Under Japan's 2022 national security strategy the country has been accelerating military buildup

and expanding defense partnerships amid threats from China, North Korea and Russia.

Kishida and Luxon condemned "in the strongest possible terms" the increasing military cooperation between North Korea and Russia, including the North's shipment to Russia of ballistic missiles used against Ukraine, the joint statement said. **MDT/AP**



New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, left, and Japan Prime Minister Fumio Kishida shake hands prior to their bilateral meeting at Kishida's office in Tokyo



Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, and Vietnamese President To Lam embrace during an official welcome ceremony at the Presidential Palace, in Hanoi, yesterday

Putin signs deals with Vietnam in bid to shore up ties in Asia

ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL,
HANOI

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin signed a series of deals with his Vietnamese counterpart To Lam yesterday, during a state visit that comes as Moscow is seeking to bolster ties in Asia to offset growing international isolation over its military actions in Ukraine.

The two signed agreements to further cooperation on education, science and technology, oil and gas exploration and health. They also agreed to work on a roadmap for a nuclear science and technology center in Vietnam.

Following the talks, Putin said that the two countries share an interest in “developing a reliable security architecture” in the Asia-Pacific Region based on not using force and peacefully settling disputes with no room for “closed military-political blocs.”

Vietnam’s new President To Lam congratulated Putin on his re-election and praised Russia’s “domestic political stability.”

Putin arrived in Hanoi early yesterday morning from North Korea, where he and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un signed an agreement that pledges mutual aid in the event of war. The strategic pact that could mark the strongest connection between Moscow and Pyongyang since the end of the Cold War comes as both face escalating standoffs with the West.

Putin drove to Vietnam’s Presidential Palace yesterday afternoon, where he was greeted by

school children waving Russian and Vietnamese flags. There, he shook hands with and embraced Lam before a bilateral meeting and a joint briefing to the media.

He met Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh later in the afternoon and is also scheduled to meet Communist Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong — Vietnam’s most powerful politician — and parliamentary chief Tran Thanh Man.

Russia is keen to maintain “close and effective cooperation” in energy, industry, technology, education, security and trade, said Russian Ambassador to Vietnam Gennady S. Bezdetko on Wednesday, according to Vietnamese official media.

The trip has resulted in a sharp rebuke from the U.S. Embassy in the country.

Much has changed since Putin’s last visit to Vietnam in 2017. Russia now faces a raft of U.S.-led sanctions for its invasion of Ukraine. In 2023, the International Criminal Court in Hague issued an arrest warrant for Putin for war crimes. The Kremlin rejected it as “null and void,” stressing that Moscow doesn’t recognize the court’s jurisdiction.

Putin’s recent visits to China and now North Korea and Vietnam are attempts to “break the international isolation,” said Nguyen Khac Giang, an analyst at Singapore’s ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.

The U.S. and its allies have expressed growing concerns over a possible arms arrangement in which Pyongyang provides Moscow with badly needed mu-

nitions for its use in Ukraine, in exchange for economic assistance and technology transfers that could enhance the threat posed by Kim’s nuclear weapons and missile program.

Both countries deny accusations of weapons transfers, which would violate multiple U.N. Security Council sanctions that Russia previously endorsed.

Meanwhile, Russia is important to Vietnam for two reasons, Giang said: It is the biggest supplier of military equipment to the Southeast Asian nation, and Russian oil exploration technologies help maintain its sovereignty claims in the contested South China Sea.

“Russia is signaling that it is not isolated in Asia despite the Ukraine war, and Vietnam is reinforcing a key traditional relationship even as it also diversifies ties with newer partners,” said Prashanth Parameswaran, a fellow with the Wilson Center’s Asia Program.

It is unlikely that Vietnam will supply significant quantities of weapons to Russia, because that would risk progress the country has made with NATO members on military equipment, particularly the U.S., which has donated naval patrol vessels and is in talks to supply aircraft, said Ridzwan Rahmat, a Singapore-based analyst with the defense intelligence company Janes.

“There is progress that you wouldn’t have imagined just 10 years ago,” he said. “So I would imagine Vietnam wouldn’t want to take a risk, inviting the wrath of Western countries by

supplying the Russians.”

Hanoi and Moscow have had diplomatic relations since 1950, and this year marks 30 years of a treaty establishing “friendly relations” between Vietnam and Russia.

Evidence of this long relationship and its influence can be seen in Vietnamese cities like the capital, where the many Soviet-style apartment blocks are now dwarfed by skyscrapers and a statue of Vladimir Lenin, the founder of the Soviet Union, stands in a park where kids skateboard every evening. Many of the Communist Party’s top leadership in Vietnam studied in Soviet universities, including party chief Trong.

In an article written for Nhan Dan, the official newspaper of Vietnam’s Communist Party, Putin vowed to deepen the ties between Moscow and Hanoi and hailed Vietnam as a “strong supporter of a fair world order based on international law, on the principles of equality of all states and non-interference in their domestic affairs.”

He also thanked “Vietnamese friends for their balanced position on the Ukrainian crisis,” in the article released by the Kremlin.

Given Putin’s international isolation, Vietnam is doing the Russian leader a “huge favor and may expect favors in return,” wrote Andrew Golezinski, the Australian ambassador to Vietnam, on social media platform X. He said that it would have been hard for Vietnam to decline the visit since Putin was already in Asia and Vietnam has historical ties with the former Soviet Republic, but said that it was unlikely that the two would be strategic partners again. “Vietnam will always act in Vietnam’s interests and not anyone else’s,” he wrote.

Vietnam’s pragmatic policy of “bamboo diplomacy” — a phrase coined by Trong referring to the plant’s flexibility, bending but not breaking in the shifting headwinds of global geopolitics — is being increasingly tested.

A manufacturing powerhouse and an increasingly important player in global supply chains, Vietnam played host to both U.S. President Joe Biden and the leader of rival China, Xi Jinping, in 2023.

Vietnam has remained neutral on Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. But neutrality is getting trickier, with the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi criticizing Putin’s visit, saying that “no country should give Putin a platform to promote his war of aggression and otherwise allow him to normalize his atrocities.” If Putin is allowed to travel freely it “could normalize Russia’s blatant violations of international law,” the statement said. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1945 US TROOPS TAKE OKINAWA



The Japanese island of Okinawa has finally fallen to the Americans after a long and bloody battle.

The island, situated 340 miles (550km) south of the Japanese mainland, will now provide the Americans with an invaluable air and naval base from which to launch a sustained and forceful attack on the mainland.

It is estimated more than 90,000 Japanese troops were killed in the 82-day conflict.

America also suffered heavy losses - at this stage 6,990 servicemen have been reported killed or missing and 25,598 wounded.

In a statement issued today US Fleet Admiral Chester W Nimitz said: “After 82 days of fighting the battle of Okinawa has been won.”

“Organised resistance ceased on June 21. Enemy garrisons in two small pockets are being mopped up.”

The Japanese fought a desperate battle until the bitter end with many hiding out in caves on the southern-most tip of the island.

As the US forces closed in many threw themselves off 150ft (45.7m) cliffs or waded into the sea to drown rather than be taken prisoner.

More than 4,000 Japanese have so far been captured.

The conflict began on 1 April, when America’s newly-formed 10th Army, led by Lieutenant-General Simon Bolivar Buckner, landed on Okinawa’s western coast.

By 21 April most of the island had been taken by US troops but a stalemate developed in the south around Okinawa’s capital city, Naha.

The Japanese were able to secure a strong defensive position in the rugged, cave-riddled terrain and it took several weeks to finally win the battle.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The Japanese commander-in-chief on Okinawa, Lieutenant-General Ushijima Mitsuru, committed suicide on 22 June.

Okinawa was the last great amphibious campaign of the war.

America sent 170,000 troops and 1,213 warships and British forces also took part.

The island was defended by nearly 100,000 Japanese troops.

Lt-Gen Ushijima relied on mass kamikaze attacks as his main line of defence against the initial assault. More than 2,000 attacks were launched during the conflict.

The allies suffered unprecedented losses with 36 warships and landing craft being sunk, 763 aircraft lost and more than 12,500 servicemen killed.

Only 7,400 Japanese troops survived the conflict to become prisoners of war.

America returned Okinawa to Japan in 1972.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
A domestic agenda takes precedence this month, with the Sun in Cancer. Enjoy the results from home improvement projects to Increase family comfort.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Discover valuable solutions. Write and express your ideas over the next four weeks, with the Sun in Cancer. Connect the dots. Profit from your research.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Launch lucrative projects, with the Sun in Cancer for a month. Develop a new income stream. Energize existing sources and connections. Discuss profitable possibilities.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You're energized for leadership and action, with the Sun in your sign. Make the most of it. Take charge for the results you want.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You can get especially productive in private under the Cancer Sun. The next month favors following through and completing old projects. Make fun plans.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Social participation grows your venture. You have extra team support over the next four weeks, with the Sun in Cancer. It's party time.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Smile for the cameras. Accept interesting assignments to advance your career and professional status over the next month, with the Sun in Cancer.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Explore valuable possibilities and new terrain, with the Sun in Cancer this month favoring travel, study and research. Investigate potential solutions. Enjoy an adventure.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Develop your valuable talents and skills. Grow profitable ventures with your partner over the month, with the Sun in Cancer. Share the load and rewards.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Listen to intuition to realize romantic dreams. With the Sun in Cancer for a month, energize collaborative efforts. Compromise and negotiate. Fall in love again.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Balance a busy work schedule with time for yourself for a month under the Cancer Sun. Energize physical practices for growing strength and health.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
The next four weeks especially favor fun and romance, with the Sun in Cancer. Advance a passion project. Charm and be charmed by someone sweet.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

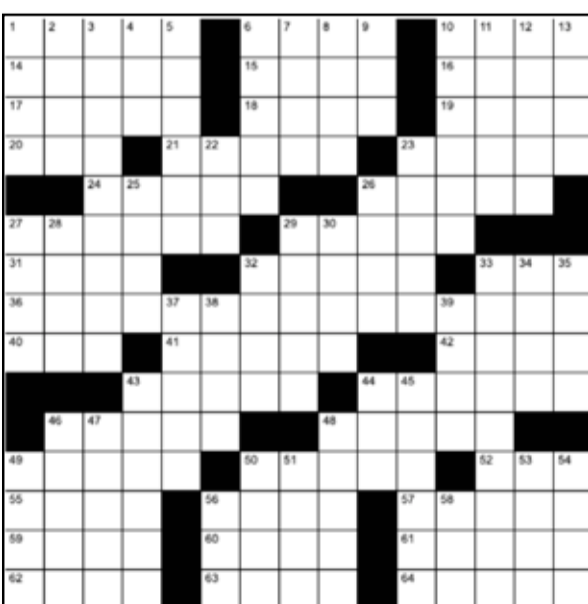
	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	23	30	rain
Changchun	19	31	cloudy
Chengdu	23	30	rain
Chongqing	24	27	rain
Fuzhou	26	36	cloudy
Guangzhou	28	35	cloudy
Guiyang	20	27	rain
Haikou	27	36	cloudy
Hangzhou	24	33	thunderstorms
Harbin	18	22	rain
Hefei	24	31	rain
Nanjing	24	30	rain
Shanghai	24	31	rain
Taipei	25	31	rain
Wuhan	25	33	rain
Hong Kong	30	33	showers
WORLD			
Moscow	13	22	sunny
Frankfurt	14	22	rain
Paris	14	22	showers
London	14	23	cloudy
New York	24	34	sunny

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- End of ___; 6- Impudence; 10- Respecting; 14- Adored; 15- Career golfers; 16- Take ___ Train; 17- Muse of poetry; 18- LAX guesstimates; 19- Talk wildly; 20- Tree syrup; 21- More pleasant; 23- Green citrus fruits; 24- Leaves out; 26- Bowling alley button; 27- Take into custody; 29- Shoot randomly; 31- Later!; 32- Raccoon relative; 33- Actress Zadora; 36- In spite of; 40- Parisian season; 41- Racket; 42- Italian wine city; 43- Gravy, for one; 44- Bird of prey; 46- Had in mind; 48- "West Side Story" song; 49- Mellow Mel; 50- Govt. security; 52- Asian occasion; 55- Racetrack fence; 56- Implement; 57- One of the Judds; 59- To ___ (just so); 60- Architectural pier; 61- The cruelest month?; 62- Attention getter; 63- Pinot ___ (wine); 64- Fashion;

DOWN 1- Some are pale; 2- Nick Charles's wife; 3- Dissipate; 4- No longer working (abbr.); 5- Hunk; 6- Eyeglasses, for short; 7- Jocular Johnson; 8- Fly; 9- Leaky tire sound; 10- In danger; 11- Disgrace; 12- Doctrine; 13- Wild ones are snare; 22- "The Addams Family" cousin; 23- Bolshevik leader; 25- Siamese sound; 26- Moreno of "West Side Story"; 27- Complexion woe; 28- Public disturbance; 29- Sheriff's band; 30- Not punctual; 32- Stylish; 33- Pertaining to fish; 34- A big fan of; 35- Not "fer"; 37- Foolish; 38- Promote; 39- Mustachioed artist; 43- Young salmon; 44- Blubber; 45- Places of contest; 46- Castle water pits; 47- Great Lakes tribesmen; 48- Wisdom tooth, e.g.; 49- Ensnare; 50- Up ___ good; 51- Denier's words; 53- Runner Zatopek; 54- Scramble piece; 56- Process leather; 58- Suitable;

Yesterday's solution



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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

AD



Germany's Jamal Musiala, third left, scores the opening goal during a Group A match between Germany and Hungary at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Stuttgart, Germany

EURO 2024 | REVIEW

MORE MUSIALA MAGIC SEES GERMANY BEAT HUNGARY AND REACH KNOCKOUT STAGE

DANIELLA MATAR,
STUTTGART

GERMANY 2, HUNGARY 0

JAMAL Musiala is lighting up the European Championship and showing just why his teammates think

the 21-year-old forward can go on to become one of the best players in the world.

Musiala scored his second goal of the tournament on Wednesday to help Germany beat Hungary 2-0 and book its spot

in the knockout stage.

"For me it's incredible to play with him, he can do the unexpected in every single situation," Germany captain Iker Gündoan said. "Maybe he's the most important one at the moment for us and at such a young

age as well.

"And, I love him. He's such a complete player and such a nice guy as well. Very humble. And if he keeps doing his thing, the way he's doing right now, he can be one of the best."

Musiala opened the scoring in the 22nd minute with a goal that was furiously protested by Hungary. Gündoan had set that up and got on the scoresheet himself in the second half.

Musiala had netted Germany's second goal in the 5-1 opening victory over Scotland on Friday to kick off Euro 2024. Hungary lost 3-1 to Switzerland on Saturday and now faces an uphill challenge to advance.

"He did brilliant in both games," Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann said. "Not only the two goals, I think every situation or offensive proposition is pretty tough for the opponent to defend.

"I think it's important for him not to deal with the pressure, just to deal with his capability to solve any offensive one-on-one situations ... He should not think about the pressure, because he's brilliant in just playing soccer."

Hungary plays Scotland in the final Group A match on Sunday, when Nagelsmann's team takes on Switzerland.

Germany is definitely into the next round at least as a best third-place team. It will be confirmed in the top two if Scotland fails to beat Switzerland later We-

dnesday.

Hungary was unbeaten in its previous three matches against Germany and it put up a good fight against the host nation in Stuttgart.

Coach Marco Rossi said his players paid the price for what he felt was unbalanced refereeing.

"Throughout my career, first as player and then as coach, I have never looked for alibis," Rossi said. "But what the referee did tonight ... I think even the Germans saw that he used two different measurements.

"Germany would have still won, it's stronger and it would have won, but the referee was the worst on the field."

Rossi's side started aggressively and stunned Germany by almost taking the lead inside 20 seconds.

Goalkeeper Manuel Neuer had to be quick off his line to slide to the ball to stop Roland Sallai.

The noise level ramped up every time Musiala had the ball and the Stuttgart-born forward opened the scoring in chaotic fashion.

Musiala tried to set up Gündoan but Hungary defender Willi Orbán got to the ball first. However, he stumbled — following what Hungary protested was a shove by Gündoan — and as shotstopper Péter Gulácsi tried to help him, Gündoan poked it on to Musiala, who smashed it into the net with the goalkeeper still on the ground.

"I was quite surprised that the Hungarian player and his teammates were angry about it," Gündoan said. "I played in the Premier League for seven years and if you gave that in the Premier League as a foul I think everyone would have been laughing on the floor."

Hungary almost leveled immediately but Neuer did brilliantly to parry Dominik Szoboszlai's free kick and then keep out a follow-up with his foot. The crowd celebrated the save almost as loudly as it had done the goal.

The loud home fans thought Musiala had doubled his tally at the end of the half but his shot was deflected, hitting the side netting and making it ripple so that even Nagelsmann appeared to think it had gone in.

Germany was seemingly in control in the second half and did get a second in the 68th minute when Maximilian Mittelstädt rolled the ball across from the left and Gündoan drove it into the bottom right corner.

MDT/AP

SCOREBOARD

Germany	5	1	Scotland
Hungary	1	3	Switzerland
Spain	3	0	Croatia
Italy	2	1	Albania
Poland	1	2	Netherlands
Slovenia	1	1	Denmark
Serbia	0	1	England
Romania	3	0	Ukraine
Belgium	0	1	Slovakia
Austria	0	1	France
Turkey	3	1	Georgia
Portugal	2	1	Czech Republic
Croatia	2	2	Albania
Germany	2	0	Hungary
Scotland	1	1	Switzerland
Slovenia	1	1	Serbia
Denmark	1	1	England



BENFICAMACAU ACADEMY
澳門賓菲加體育學校



FOOTBALL | BASKETBALL | DAILY TRAININGS



Slovakia players celebrate after teammate Slovakia's Ivan Schranz scored the opening goal during the Group E match between Belgium and Slovakia at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Frankfurt, Germany, Monday

EURO 2024

Slovakia takes on Ukraine after two surprise results

JAMES ELLINGWORTH, DUESSELDORF

SLOVAKIA faces Ukraine today in Duesseldorf in their second Group E match at the European Championship. Slovakia is second to Romania on goal difference, and

Ukraine is last. Romania and Belgium play on Saturday. Kickoff is tonight at 9 p.m. (Macau time).

Here's what to know about the match:

MATCH FACTS

— Slovakia is riding high after surprising Belgium 1-0

but needed two video reviews to overturn Belgium goals. One was deemed offside and a sensor in the ball detected a handball on the second.

— Another win would qualify Slovakia for the knockout stages of a major tournament for the first time since Euro 2016.

— Ukraine had a shock 3-0 loss to Romania which included costly errors from Real Madrid goalkeeper Andriy Lunin. Another loss could mean elimination for Ukraine, which was a quarterfinalist at the 2021 European Championship.

— Ukraine came to Euro 2024 hoping to inspire people at home in its first tournament since Russia invaded in 2022. The players apologized to their fans for the Romania loss.

TEAM NEWS

— One option for Ukraine coach Serhiy Rebrov could be to replace 34-year-old captain Taras Stepanenko with the 22-year-old Volodymyr Brazhko in defensive midfield. Brazhko debuted for the team only in March as Ukraine qualified for Euro 2024 through the playoffs.

BY THE NUMBERS

— The average age of Slovakia's starting lineup in the win over Belgium was over 30 as the team relied on the experience of two 37-year-olds, defender Peter Pekarik and Ju-

raj Kucka, and the 35-year-old goalkeeper Martin Dubravka. Ukraine's players against Romania were on average four and a half years younger.

— The teams have a fairly even record, with three wins for Slovakia, two for Ukraine and three draws. Slovakia won their last game 4-1 in 2018.

— A second win would make history for Slovakia, which has never won more than one game in any tournament it's played as an independent nation. As part of Czechoslovakia, it did win the 1976 European Championship, though.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

— "We were considered to be the favorites on paper (against Romania) but it didn't work out that way. We still have two matches and we can fix the situation." — Ukraine forward Artem Dovbyk.

— "Ukraine has wonderful, young, talented players. They have a good system, they're strong on the ball. ... We must play to the best of our abilities to be able to beat them." — Slovakia defender David Hancko. **MDT/AP**

UPCOMING GAMES

	Date	Time	Home	Away	ODDS
Fri	Jun 21	21:00	Slovakia	Ukraine	H 3.81, D 3.45, A 2.15
Sat	Jun 22	00:00	Poland	Austria	H 3.75, D 3.55, A 2.2
		03:00	Netherlands	France	H 2.2, D 3.45, A 3.9

ODDSCHECKER.COM

EURO 2024 | SUIT UP

Spalletti: Italy prepared to 'scuff up beautiful suits' against Spain

ITALY coach Luciano Spalletti says his players may have to scuff up their beautiful suits when they take on Spain in their European Championship match yesterday.

Both teams made winning starts to Euro 2024 and their clash in Gelsenkirchen could determine which tops Group B, which also includes Croatia and Albania. Italy is the defending champion.

Spalletti said Wednesday that his team wears Giorgio Armani suits and sees no reason to change, that it will stay true to its identity against Spain, one of the tournament favorites.

"We need to show that same desire to try and



dominate proceedings, to test ourselves against one of the best footballing philosophies in world football. When we go off the pitch, we need to make sure that we have no regrets," Spalletti said. "It will certainly be a challenge. But we'll go out there in our Sunday best. And we'll be

willing to actually scuff up our beautiful suits if required."

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente made reference to Spalletti's "beautiful suit" comments in his own news conference later Wednesday.

"I think we are ready to play in the mud if we have to," he said. "We

can play anywhere — on the pitch, off the pitch, we are ready for everything. We know the kind of competitors they are."

It will be the fifth consecutive tournament at which the old rivals have tussled, with each winning two of the previous meetings. **MDT/AP**

EFA FINES ALBANIA, SERBIA \$10,700 EACH FOR NATIONALIST FAN BANNERS AT EURO 2024 GAMES

UEF A fined the Albanian and Serbian soccer federations 10,000 euros (\$10,700) each on Wednesday for fans displaying banners with nationalist maps at European Championship games.

Each federation was charged with "transmitting provocative messages not fit for a sports event" because they are responsible for the conduct of their fans at stadiums.

Albania fans displayed a banner with a map of their country extending its borders into the territory of neighboring countries. It was shown during

the 2-1 loss against Italy on Saturday in Dortmund.

Serbia fans' banner included the independent territory of Kosovo and a slogan "No Surrender" at a 1-0 loss against England in Gelsenkirchen.

UEFA also opened a separate investigation into alleged discrimination by Serbia fans. The Kosovo soccer federation filed a formal complaint with UEFA.

The Albanian federation was fined a further 27,375 euros (\$29,400) for fans lighting flares and fireworks, throwing beer cups and a fan who went on the field.

MDT/AP

DRIVE IN

IN 'THE BIKERIDERS,' THE BIRTH OF A SUBCULTURE ON TWO WHEELS

JAKE COYLE, FILM WRITER

STILL images have been a source of wonder and mythology in the films of Jeff Nichols.

"Mud," Nichols' Twain-soaked Mississippi fable, seemed derived from the magical sight of a boat held aloft by a tree. "Loving," about a '60s interracial marriage, took inspiration from tender Life magazine photographs taken of the real-life couple. Nichols' latest, "The Bikeriders," is based on photographer Danny Lyon's 1968 book of the same name, for which he spent four years with a Chicago motorcycle club.

It's not hard to see what Nichols saw in Lyon's black-and-white stills. There's the stylish raw materials — the chrome bikes, the slicked back hair, the black leather jackets. But there's also a just emerging anti-authoritarian, easy-riding spirit and camaraderie. Like the central figures of "Loving," they are classically drawn outsiders who encapsulate something glorious and uneasy about freedom in America.



This image released by Focus Features shows Jodie Comer, left, and Austin Butler in a scene from "The Bikeriders"

In the exhilarating first half of "The Bikeriders," which opens in theaters Friday, Nichols is less compelled to build a narrative around his bike gang, the Vandals (based on the Outlaws) than summoning an intoxicating atmosphere reminiscent of those old photographs. "The Bikeriders" eventually becomes saddled with heavier plot mechanics — you can almost sense his riders growing weary from having to strap narrative devices onto their

bikes. The movie wants to ride, but it's not sure how much story to pack for the trip. But this is a vivid dramatization of the birth of an American subculture.

The framing device Nichols settles on is Lyon, himself, played by Mike Faist, who's conducting interviews for his book. His conversations with a woman named Kathy (Jodie Comer) bookend and sporadically narrate the movie.

Kathy, also based on a real

person, seems at first an unlikely spokesperson for the gang. She speaks with a thick Illinois accent (an actorly distraction throughout) and has no affection for motorcycle riders. But one night at a bar, she sees Benny (Austin Butler) across the smokey room and, even if she doesn't admit it at that moment, falls for him. Again, it's not hard to see why. Butler is by now well removed from Elvis Presley but the suppleness with which he can sink into mid-cen-

tury America is no less apparent. Benny drives Kathy home, parks his bike outside the place and patiently waits for her boyfriend to skip town.

Nichols, a devotee of films like "Hud" and "Cool Hand Luke," is a filmmaker who works very consciously within classic American idioms. In Butler he has his James Dean, making Tom Hardy his Marlon Brando. Hardy plays Johnny, Benny's best pal and the one who starts up and presides over the Vandals. (The "whaddya got" clip of Brando from "The Wild One" is even briefly seen on a small TV in "The Bikeriders.")

The Vandals, as a club, start about as simply as kids might call a tree house to order. They're a bunch of guys who like riding motorcycles and like talking about them. Simple as that. But men come like moths to a flame, attracted by the tough lifestyle, the cool jackets with patches and a way out of mainstream America. Among them are Cal (Boyd Holbrook), Cockroach (Emory Cohen), Funny Sonny (Norman Reedus) and Zipco (Michael Shannon). **MDT/AP**

"The Bikeriders," a Focus Features release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for language throughout, violence, some drug use and brief sexuality.

Running time: 116 minutes. ★★★★★

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C&C RECEIVED THE 1ST SILVER
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IN MACAU (2023)



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

Exploring culinary delights at the Gastronomy Fest

THE "International Cities of Gastronomy Fest, Macao" welcomes the public at Macau Fisherman's Wharf until June 23.

As one of the three major highlights, the "City of Gastronomy Showcase" brings together chefs from 26 Creative Cities of Gastronomy from worldwide across Asia, Europe, Africa, Oceania, South and North Americas, to conduct 60 sessions of culinary showcase.

Free sampling of delicacies from nine Cities of Gastronomy in South and North Americas

The "City of Gastronomy Showcase" is staging six to seven sessions from 3:30 p.m. to about 10 p.m. daily until this Sunday.

Coming from Cities of Gastronomy from different countries and regions, the chefs take turn to manifest culinary arts and share their culinary skills and knowledge at the "City of Gastronomy Showcase".

Nine Cities of Gastronomy from South and North Americas including Arequipa (Peru), Belém (Brazil), Florianópolis (Brazil), Paraty (Brazil), Cochabamba (Bolivia), Mérida (Mexico), Portoviejo (Ecuador), San Antonio (USA) and Tucson (USA) present 18 sessions of culinary showcase imbued with unique flavors at the Main Stage along Legend Boulevard of Macau Fisherman's Wharf during the event.

Seafood, braised meat and dessert in a symphony of tastes from South and North Americas

Coming all the way from South and North Americas, chefs prepare signature dishes teeming with authentic tastes from their cities, including Peruvian Ceviche, Jewels of the Amazon, Noah's Ark Underwater, Valley (Llama meat), Cochinita Pibil, Seafood Tonga, Quesa Birria with Blue Corn Tortilla and Sonoran Heirloom Garden Salad, among others.



TASTE OF EDESIA

Taste of India

IRENE SAM, MDT

THOSE who are crazy about Indian cuisine should know about Chef Justin Paul. He was the senior chef of The Golden Peacock at The Venetian in Macau which closed during the pandemic and never reopened. Back in the days, The Golden Peacock was one of the top fine dining spot for

Indian cuisine in Asia, winning a one-star rating from the coveted Michelin Award eight years in a row.

Now that the pandemic is over, Chef Justin is head of a newly opened restaurant, **Justindia**. At the casual and cosy dining venue, guests can expect the same level of cuisine delivered at The Golden Peacock in the past, but a little bit more affordable.

For every dish, Chef Justin Paul weds classic taste profile of Indian cuisine with refined presentation, creating a signature menu that's unlike anything. This dishes are as ingenious as the country that shapes his culinary journeys. Highlights include prawns, fish, seafood and curries. Chosa khaas makhani, organic chicken with tomato, honey and fenugreek, is not to be missed.

At Justindia, every dish is a work of art, crafted with passion and precision. Ingredients are hand-picked, organically sourced from all over the world. The result is Indian dishes with immaculate attention to detail.



Summer scent

THIS season, **Diptyque** is relaunching its enchanting limited Summer Collection, which captures the essence of a Mediterranean summer, packed with new limited edition items and summer essentials. One can immerse in a sun-drenched interlude where salty ocean spray mingles with scents from blooming landscapes, and light dances across whitewashed walls.

Rounding out the collection is Diptyque's first-

ever summer valise offering a ten-day experience to anticipate and extend your holiday. Nestled in the compartments are ten surprises selected from Diptyque's summer favourites, including personal fragrances, home fragrances, and summer care products, all presented in travel-friendly formats.

At the heart of this range lies the reintroduction of the Ilio fragrance, an enthralling summer-time

vision that celebrates the natural environment of the Mediterranean through an unconventional prickly pear. Ilio unfolds to reveal a floral, fruity bouquet, shaded with subtle notes of iris and jasmine. This signature scent is showcased across an eau de toilette, a hair mist, and for the first time, a refreshing face and body mist, freshening up and recharge your body and mind.

Bringing together delicate notes of geranium with a subtle spick undertone of lemongrass, Diptyque's very first summer essential

body mist is an indispensable companion that also serves as the perfect defense against mosquitoes, allowing one to effortlessly enjoying the warm summer evenings.

The range's crowning touch is the iconic citronnelle (lemongrass) candle, available in both classic and the giant-sized, extra large formats, as well as a set of three small candles featuring Citronelle (Lemongrass), Cryprès (Cypress), and Figuier (Fig Tree), creating a perfect summer trio capturing the essence of the Mediterranean. IS



OPINION

Le Mans 2024

Sérgio de Almeida Correia



75 YEARS INTO THE 22ND CENTURY

1. Special note in the 2024 Le Mans edition for the presence of children. There were more children than ever, and they were happy. Motorsport, especially the ACO, has been particularly sensitive to children's causes, whether training future drivers, attracting potential fans, or supporting the disadvantaged. The Hypercoeur Challenge pavilion raised funds to operate on 24 children with heart problems. Notable was a group of children in Il Covo, at the Iron Dames team hospitality center, during a press conference by Rhael Frey, Sarah Bovin, and Michelle Gating, as part of the "Every Dream Matters" project.

This project "combines education and technology, involving children in the creative process of the car's livery to create a unique design that captures the essence of childhood imagination." To fulfill this project, drivers engaged with children from an elementary school, answering their questions, visiting the school, sharing "Women Driven by Dreams," and encouraging students "to envision and draw their own dreams for the future."

2. Hydrogen, previously prioritized by the FIA, is clearly the technology of the future, given its development and safety advancements, making it the clean fuel of tomorrow.

The Hydrogen Village was a success. The ACO authorized the Solution F Project to hold a press conference featuring Éric Boudot, president of GCK, and Steve Saleen, who won Le Mans in 2010. Saleen announced that, as a result of the partnership with GCK, the hydrogen combustion engine vehicle will be unveiled before the end of the season and, once homologated, will take to the tracks and roads.

The French manufacturer, a pioneer in the transition to electric and hydrogen vehicles, will supply the twin-turbo V6 engine for Saleen's future supercars. Solution F found ways to "drastically reduce the air intake temperature, necessary for good hydrogen combustion. The engine has water injectors to prevent abnormal hydrogen combustion in the cylinders."

These solutions were validated on the Solution F test bench and tested on various circuits.

The Foenix H2, developed from a 6.2-liter V8 petrol engine, fully hydrogen-powered, with water injection and a six-speed gearbox, delivers 450 kW, around 612 HP. It maintains the sound of a gasoline engine but emits no carbon dioxide, only a negligible amount of nitrogen. Foenix 2 is revolutionary but not alone. Other manufacturers are committed to hydrogen and eliminating fossil fuels.

Toyota, after 30 years of research, aims for carbon neutrality in Europe by 2024. Bosch showcased its Ligier JS2 RH2, a twin-turbo V6 engine, dual clutch, with a top speed of 290 km/h. Alpine presented the Alpenglow Hy4, developing 340 HP with a 2L 4-cylinder hydrogen engine. The collaboration between ACO and ProjectH24 revealed the MissionH24EVO, designed for pure performance: 1300 kg, top speed of 320 km/h, emitting zero CO2, with a Symbio hydrogen fuel cell, two tanks, an 872 HP electric motor, and a 400 kW lithium battery.

Saleen emphasized that it's only a matter of time before homologation. Components like airbags must be included for series production. Hydrogen technology is new, safe, clean, and even the French firemen were present. The commitment is unavoidable. The millions invested are beginning to bear fruit. Hydrogen will soon make electric vehicles obsolete.

3. The dreams of Desiré Wilson, Lella Lombardi, and Michèle Mouton are being realized in motorsport. Each year, more women are involved in various areas of motorsport.

Women are driving at the top level, in charge of competitive scuderia like in the Hypercars, working as mechanics, doing what was once reserved for men, as specialized journalists, in key ACO organization posts, driving the navettes, or the little trains transporting thousands around the circuit. Women were everywhere.

And this was good. Always with a smile, things went smoothly.

A Swiss museum yesterday pulled down five paintings, including a van Gogh and a Monet, after the foundation that owns them called for a deeper look at their origins following new U.S. guidelines on how to handle artworks once confiscated by the Nazis.

The Foundation E.G. Bührle Collection, which owns the works formerly shown at the Kunsthaus Zürich museum, said it was looking to reach a "fair and equitable solution" with the legal successors of the former owners, who were not identified.

The foundation's board called for a new assessment of the works

under new "best practices" published by the U.S. State Department in March on how to deal with Nazi-confiscated art, as an upgrade to principles adopted in 1998.

The works include the oil paintings "Jardin de Monet à Giverny" by Claude Monet from 1895, and "Der alte Turm" by Vincent van Gogh, of 1884.

A sixth painting, Edouard Manet's "La Sultane," was also considered as "a case deserving particular attention," the foundation said in a statement last Friday.



Dr. Francisco Lopera, left, of the University of Antioquia, a neurologist who has spent decades caring for a large Colombian family plagued by early-in-life Alzheimer's, confers with fellow researcher Yakeel Quiroz of Massachusetts General Hospital

COLOMBIAN FAMILY'S GENES OFFER NEW CLUE TO DELAYING ONSET OF ALZHEIMER'S

LAURAN NEERGAARD, WASHINGTON

SCIENTISTS studying a family plagued by early-in-life Alzheimer's found some carry a genetic oddity that delays their initial symptoms by five years.

The finding points to novel ways of fighting the mind-robbing disease — if researchers can unravel how a single copy of that very rare gene variant offers at least a little protection.

"It opens new avenues," said neuropsychologist Yakeel Quiroz of Massachusetts General Hospital, who helped lead the study published Wednesday. "There are definitely opportunities to copy or mimic the effects."

The first hint of this genetic protection came a few years ago. Researchers were studying a huge family in Colombia that shares a devastating inherited form of Alzheimer's when they discovered one woman who escaped her genetic fate. Aliria Piedrahita de Villagas should have developed Alzheimer's symptoms in her 40s but instead made it to her 70s before suffering even mild cognitive trouble.

The big clue: She also harbored something incredibly rare, two copies of an unrelated gene named APOE3 that had a mutation dubbed Christchurch. That odd gene pair appeared to shield her, staving off her

genetic predisposition for Alzheimer's.

Quiroz's team then tested more than 1,000 extended family members, and identified 27 who carry a single copy of that Christchurch variant.

But would one copy be enough to offer any protection? Those Christchurch carriers on average showed their first signs of cognitive trouble at age 52, five years later than their relatives, concluded a collaboration that includes Mass General Brigham researchers and Colombia's University of Antioquia.

The findings, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, are encouraging, said Dr. Eliezer Masliah of the National Institute on Aging.

"It gives you a lot of comfort that modifying one of the copies could be really helpful," at least in helping to delay the disease, he said.

Already some very early work is beginning to explore if certain treatments might induce the protective mutation, he added.

More than 6 million Americans, and an estimated 55 million people worldwide, have Alzheimer's. Less than 1% of cases are like the Colombian family's, caused by a gene passed through generations that triggers the disease at unusually young ages.

Alzheimer's usually is a disease of people over age

65 and while simply getting older is the main risk, the APOE gene has long been known to play some role. It comes in three main varieties. Carrying one copy of the notorious APOE4 gene increases the risk -- and recent research found that having two copies of APOE4 can actually cause Alzheimer's in seniors. Another variety, APOE2, seems to reduce the risk while APOE3 has long been considered neutral.

Then came discovery of the Christchurch variant's seemingly protective role.

Silent changes in the brain precede Alzheimer's symptoms by at least two decades -- including buildup of a sticky protein called amyloid that, once it reaches certain levels, appears to trigger tangles of another protein, called tau, that kill brain cells. Earlier research has suggested something about the Christchurch variant impedes that tau transition.

Wednesday's study included brain scans from two people with a single Christchurch copy and autopsy analysis of four others who'd died. Quiroz cautioned there's still a lot to learn about how the rare variant affects the underlying Alzheimer's process — including whether it affects the common old-age type — but said tau and inflammation are among the suspects. **MDT/AP**



Lebanon's Hezbollah has new weapons and intelligence capabilities that could help it target more critical positions deeper inside Israel in case of an all-out war, the militant group's leader warned on Wednesday. Hassan Nasrallah's comments came as the monthslong cross-border conflict simmering between Hezbollah and Israel appears to be reaching a boiling point, and a day after a top U.S. envoy met Lebanese officials in his latest attempt to ease tensions.



NATO member Romania's top defense body said yesterday that the country will donate a Patriot missile system to neighboring Ukraine to help Kyiv in the war with Russia as Moscow's forces continue to bombard civilian areas and energy infrastructure. The office of Romanian President Klaus Iohannis (pictured), who chaired the Supreme Council of National Defense meeting in Bucharest, said the decision was made in close coordination with allies and is conditional on Romania obtaining a similar or equivalent system.



France President Emmanuel Macron joined several African leaders yesterday to kick off a planned \$1 billion project to accelerate the rollout of vaccines in Africa, after the coronavirus pandemic exposed gaping inequalities in access to them. The launch of the African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator, which will provide financial incentives to vaccine manufacturers, offered a momentary break for Macron from domestic political concerns as a legislative election looms on June 30 and July 7.