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NEWS

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A MUST STUDY HAS FOUND THAT 85.5% OF TOURISTS VISITING MACAU'S HISTORICAL CENTER EXPRESS FAVORABLE OPINIONS ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE

▲ P3

PUBLIC WORKS: GOV'T JUSTIFIES FLYOVER BETWEEN NEW URBAN ZONES WITH PUBLIC INTEREST

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PARTY PLENUM: CHINA COMMITS TO ATTRACTING TOP TALENT TO MACAU, HONG KONG

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China Heavy rains in China caused severe flash floods and a bridge collapse in Sichuan province, killing 10 and leaving 29 missing. Shaanxi province saw a bridge collapse that claimed 15 lives. These events highlight concerns about China's infrastructure amid increasingly extreme weather due to climate change, stressing the need for better disaster preparedness.



N.Korea-Belarus Belarus' Foreign Minister, Maxim Ryzhenkov, is visiting North Korea to discuss trilateral cooperation with Russia. The visit aims to bolster relations amidst global isolation of Belarus, North Korea, and Russia. Recent alliances and defense pacts are influencing global politics, reflecting how these nations are navigating their international relationships under sanctions and scrutiny.



Israel yesterday has ordered the evacuation of a humanitarian zone in Gaza to target Hamas militants amidst ongoing conflict. Over 38,900 lives have been lost since the fighting began. Airstrikes and military actions continue to worsen the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, with international mediation seeking a cease-fire to address the escalating impact on civilians.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is traveling to Washington amid President Biden's withdrawal from the 2024 race. Netanyahu's visit includes a speech to Congress and meetings with U.S. officials to discuss Israel's role as a key ally and seek continued support amidst ongoing conflicts and shifting U.S. political dynamics impacting bilateral relations.

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JOE CALLED IT QUILTS

Joe Biden's withdrawal from the US presidential election injects uncertainty into wars, trade disputes, and other foreign policy challenges - while Harris fights for endorsement ▲ P7, 8



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TOURISM
HOTEL CENTRAL OPENS, GOV'T PUSHING FOR BUDGET ACCOMMODATION TO DIVERSIFY THE SECTOR

▲ P2

42% OF EMPLOYERS FAIL TO PAY SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTIONS

As of July 21, approximately 11,000 employers have not met their social security contribution obligations for the second quarter, according to the Social Security Fund. This accounts for 42% of total employer payables, prompting officials to urge immediate action. Those who delay payments will incur late fees and may face fines or revocation of employment permits. Beneficiaries of the system can also make contributions through online methods, but overdue payments must be settled within two months to avoid further complications.

OVER 30,000 RESIDENTS REGISTER TO USE THE MACAU-HK BORDER CROSSING VIA QR CODES

Over 30,000 local residents are now able to use the Macau-HK border crossing via QR code. Launched on Friday, the encrypted QR code can be used to complete automated immigration clearance at Hong Kong's e-channels, without the need to present a physical ID card. This will save those eligible to use the system the hassle of presenting physical documentation. The move is the latest in a series of measures aimed at facilitating cross-border movement between the two cities.

CAMPAIGN PERIOD FOR ELECTORAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ON JULY 27

The Chief Executive Electoral Affairs Committee has announced that candidates from different sectors or subsectors will be able to utilize the auditorium in the basement of the Public Administration Building for campaign sessions during the election campaign period for the election of members of the committee. The campaign period will commence at midnight on July 27 and conclude at midnight on August 9. Candidates will have access to the venue on July 28, Aug. 3 and Aug. 4 for their campaign sessions as per the schedule.

GAMING REVENUES AT MOP12.8B: JP MORGAN

Data from investment bank JP Morgan shows that gaming revenues totaled 12.75 billion patacas in the first 21 days of July. The bank continues to uphold its monthly projection of 18.5 billion patacas. This indicates that the daily execution rate in the third week of July remained consistent at 635 million patacas, significantly surpassing the 550 million patacas recorded in the first week of the month. Following the lowest revenue month of the year in June, with earnings of 17.6 billion patacas, the gaming market is experiencing moderate – though not exceptional – demand in July.

HOSPITALITY

HOTEL CENTRAL OPENS, GOV'T PUSHING FOR BUDGET ACCOMMODATION TO DIVERSIFY TOURISM SECTOR

NADIA SHAW

THE Lek Hang Group celebrated the grand opening of Hotel Central, a historic landmark on the Macau Peninsula, with a ceremony attended by prominent government and cultural figures. Originally opened in 1928, the hotel has undergone extensive renovations, revitalizing its status as a symbol of Macau's cultural heritage.

The opening ceremony featured notable guests, including Ho Hau Wah, vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO). Simon Sio Chong Meng, founder and chairman of the Lek Hang Group, led the tour of the newly refurbished hotel, showcasing its historical significance and modern amenities.

In his address, Sio emphasized the importance of preserving Macau's historic city center. "The hope is that Hotel Central, with its rich historical roots and prime central location, will serve as a bridge connecting the various revitalized areas," he stated.

The hotel features 114 guest rooms, each designed to reflect different decades from the



1920s to the 1940s, catering to visitors seeking a nostalgic experience.

The hotel has been accessible to the public since May on a trial basis, according to Sio, boasting an occupancy rate of over 90% in June.

Sio expressed his optimism that the hotel's occupancy rate would exceed 90% during the summer holidays. Additionally, he highlighted the hotel's interest in collaborating with like-minded business partners to enhance the services provided to guests.

The revitalization of Hotel Central is part of a broader initiative by the Macau government to enhance tourism by diversifying accommodation options.

The MGTO is actively promoting a more balanced distribution of hotel types, aiming

to improve the overall visitor experience throughout the city.

Speaking on the sidelines of the hotel opening, Fernandes highlighted the dominance of three-, four-, and five-star hotels in Macau's hospitality landscape. She advocates for the expansion of budget accommodation options in the region to diversify the tourist demographic and invigorate the city's older districts.

Fernandes stressed the need for budget-friendly hotels to attract a wider range of travelers, particularly as the city continues to recover from the pandemic's impact on tourism. "The rise in affordable accommodation, particularly in the Old Town, is crucial for attracting tourists to explore various districts," she noted.

In response to media inquiries about the impact of new

customs facilitation measures between Hong Kong and Macau, Fernandes reported a robust recovery in visitor numbers from Hong Kong, reaching nearly pre-pandemic levels.

Fernandes described Hotel Central as a catalyst for drawing more foot traffic to the Central District, further supporting local businesses and tourism initiatives. With the right support and infrastructure, budget accommodation could play a pivotal role in shaping the future of Macau's tourism landscape.

Hotel Central's rich history includes its status as Macau's first skyscraper and its role as a cultural hub. Originally opened as the Hotel Presidente, it was renamed in 1932. After decades of decline, the Lek Hang Group purchased the property in 2016, investing over 400 million patacas in renovations.

Ho Iat Seng undergoes 'minor surgery'

CHIEF Executive Ho Iat Seng underwent a "minor surgical procedure" and is reportedly recovering well, Journal Tribuna de Macau reported, citing an anonymous source.

Another source close to Ho emphasized that he aims to gather

his strength for the next term.

During the weekend, the Government Information Bureau announced that Ho underwent a routine medical examination during his leave, and is receiving necessary diagnostic and therapeutic care, although

specific details were not disclosed.

The city's top official has extended his holiday for an additional 10 days and is now scheduled to return on July 29. This extension follows a previous leave period that was extended from July 4 to July 19. Prior to these

extensions, Ho was on annual leave from June 21 to July 3.

This marks the second extension of his holiday, bringing his total days off to 39 until his proposed return. During his absence, Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong will con-

tinue to act as Chief Executive.

Having taken office on December 20, 2019, Ho navigated his leadership through the challenges of the pandemic. Despite this health setback, he intends to announce his re-election bid in mid-August. NS

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PUBLIC WORKS

Gov't justifies flyover between new urban zones with public interest

RENATO MARQUES

THE government has responded to recent criticisms over the construction of the flyover linking Zones A and B of the new landfills at the Outer Harbor area.

In a joint statement, the Land and Urban Construction Bureau, the Public Works Bureau, the Transport Bureau, and the Cultural Affairs Bureau, have justified the construction of the flyover on the grounds of public interest.

The bureaus noted that "several ideas were put forward in the past regarding the project, and the different departments and services of the Macau government have considered them in an integrated manner, in terms of urban planning, landscape protection, construction price, construction time and social impact, to select a solution that can balance all aspects."

Recently, several public voices, including architects, lawmakers, and urban planners, have expressed the opinion that



the construction of the flyover would significantly impact the landscape and harm the visibility of the Guia Lighthouse, a UNESCO heritage listed monu-

ment subject to special rules.

Some of these voices are calling for the abandonment of the flyover project, which is already ongoing, and the return

to the original idea of building a tunnel instead.

In the statement issued yesterday, the government noted that when considering the cons-

truction method of the road tunnel, the government paid special attention to the impact that this construction project would have and difficulties related to the location itself.

"First, when designing the link as a tunnel, a longer area should be reserved for a steep incline. Based on the available area of the project, this would make the demolition of the existing leisure area near the Kun Iam Statue and excavation of adjacent roads unavoidable," the government noted. "Second, due to the lack of space, the tunnel exit in Zone B can only be built near the Kun Iam Statue. This will weaken the function of connecting the access points of Zones A and B of the new landfills and the NAPE area in terms of transport use."

The government also noted that the construction cost of a tunnel is much higher than that of a flyover and requires more specialized equipment and skills, in addition to requiring significantly more time.

Taking these factors into account, the government decided to build the flyover. Information about the project was previously published on several public forums.

The departments added that in moving forward with the project, they will continue to seek the most appropriate design solutions to meet the public interests in a balanced manner.

MUST STUDY

Majority of tourists appreciate Macau's historical center

RENATO MARQUES

AN academic study conducted by researchers from the Faculty of Humanities and Arts of the University of Science and Technology (MUST), in collaboration with a researcher from the School of Landscape Architecture, Jiyang College of Zhejiang A&F University, has found that a large majority (85.45%) of the tourists visiting Macau's historical center have positive comments about it, while negative sentiments represent 5.76%.

The study, titled "Visual Analysis of Social Media Data on Experiences at a World Heritage Tourist Destination: Historic Centre of Macau," analyzed the frequency of the words used by netizens to describe their experiences in Macau.

The study found that the image of the Historic Centre of Macau as a tourist destination comprises



four primary dimensions: cultural (16.02%), landscape (30.85%), emotional (16.97%), and local (36.16%). Tourists report perceiving the Historic Centre of Macau as a "blend of dynamism and tranquility, tradition, and modernity."

In their emotional evaluations, the Historic Centre of Macau, was evaluated primarily positively as a tourist destination.

Negative sentiments were said to result from

recurring themes about overcrowding, high prices, a lack of interactive experiences at attractions, excessive commercialization, and insufficient public rest facilities.

Researchers noted that the findings "offer valuable directives for the future planning and development of tourism in Macau, a city recognized for its World Heritage status."

The study concluded that the thematic image of the Historic Centre of

Macao is considered to be authentic, romantic, and commercialized.

The study employed Python 3.12.3 software to scrape web text data between January 1, 2020, and June 30, 2023, concentrating on core keywords such as the Historic Centre of Macao, Ruins of St. Paul's, and Senado Square. Data collection focused on mainstream travel websites, including Ctrip and Mafengwo, the researchers explained in the methodo-

logy section.

The researchers also justified the choice of Ctrip and Mafengwo Tourism Network for data collection, noting that the first is "China's leading mobile transaction platform for travel bookings" and was selected due to its expansive market share and diverse traveler demographics, while the second is a "prominent online tourism review community in China, chosen for its comprehensive travel information and broad user base."

A total of 3,855 valid text data points were collected and optimized for this analysis.

The study acknowledged methodological limitations, including the fact that the analysis was focused only on data collected from Ctrip and Mafengwo, "neglecting other platforms such as Xiaohongshu, Weibo, Douyin, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Tri-

pAdvisor, which could offer more diverse textual data for future studies."

Another limitation noted by the authors that could improve the quality of future studies was the lack of incorporation of image and video content from sources such as video bloggers to further enrich the results of the textual analysis. The authors also noted that the study's timeframe could potentially introduce bias, as Macau was under severe restrictive measures due to the Covid-19 pandemic during most of the period under analysis.

Despite these limitations, the researchers noted that analyzing tourist reviews offers valuable insights into tourist cities. They reaffirmed that "by understanding tourist needs and expectations, cities can enhance tourism facilities, enhance service quality, and strengthen tourist satisfaction."



GAMING

LAO COURT DISREGARDS RESULTS FROM INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION SEATED IN MACAU

RENATO MARQUES

THE Vientiane Capital People's Court of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Laos) has rejected the results of a lengthy process of international arbitration which, in February this year, awarded compensation of around USD175 million (MOP1.41 billion) to the claimant, the Macau-based firm Sanum Investments Ltd (Sanum), over a commercial dispute in Laos.

The dispute centered on allegations of contractual breaches and conflicts over the terms of engagement between the two parties.

It was between the Macau-based firm and a Laos-based gaming and banking group (ST Groups Ltd, ST Vegas Co. Ltd, and Sithat Xaysoulivong) that developed Savan Vegas and a slot club in Vientiane at the border with Thailand.

After the decision from the tribunal appointed by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), which has an office in Macau, Sanum requested the Vientiane Capital People's Court (Commercial Chamber), decide the recognition of the foreign arbitral award in Laos.

The court has jurisdiction as provided in Article 52 of 2010 Amended Law on Economic Dispute Resolution, Articles 363 and 364 of the 2012 Amended Law on Civil Procedure of Lao PDR, as well as the Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards (Arbitral Tribunal) (New York Convention), June 10, 1958, to which both Laos and Macau are parties.

The procedure related to the enforcement of the international dispute resolution center's (arbitration center) decision because the respondents have their assets in Laos.

In an unprecedented decision, the Judges of the Vientiane Capital People's Court, after hearing from

the Laotian legal representative, rejected the decision.

The court claimed the dispute had already been decided by Lao courts in the past and that the "decisions and judgments were final."

The ST Group and its representatives said the request from the Sanum side was "groundless and the Arbitral Award of the International Arbitration Centre of the ICC, Macau, China PRC No. 25100/PIA/XZG, dated 16 October 2023, violated social security and public order, territory, [and was] contrary to the laws and the Constitution of Lao PDR."

The court said the decision reached by the ICC Tribunal, which is located in Macau and based on the rules set by the New York Convention, of which Laos is also part, "contravene[s] the laws and the Constitution of Lao PDR."

Its final decision was that the request from the Macau company's legal representatives for the execution of the ruling of the ICC were not "reasonable enough" and ordered the request to be dismissed in whole.

The ruling not only contradicts the decision of the ICC and its conventions but also potentially jeopardizes the position of Laos in attracting or securing foreign investment because the local courts seem to be claiming the decisions of international bodies do not apply to their jurisdiction and only the decisions of Laotian courts are valid.

This would be a breach by Laos towards Macau of an international convention to which both countries subscribe.

As the Times has previously reported, the ICC decision was a significant milestone for Macau becoming an important place for international arbitration dispute cases.

It also marked a significant moment in the application of

Macau's revised arbitration law of 2019, under which this case was decided.

THE EXPERT OPINION

American lawyer Gary B. Born was asked about the refusal of recognition of an arbitral award under the 1958 United Nations Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards (New York Convention).

Born is the chair of the International Arbitration and International Litigation practices at the international law firm Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP and the author of commentaries, casebooks, and other works on international arbitration and litigation.

He said he was asked to address the following: "Whether the [Laos] Court had basis under Article V(1) (a) of the New York Convention to refuse recognition of the Award for the invalidity of the arbitration agreement under the law of Lao PDR," or "Whether the [Laos] Court had basis under Article V(2) (b) of the New York Convention to refuse recognition of the Award on the basis of the public policy of Lao PDR."

"In addressing these issues, I reach the following conclusions," Born noted.

First, Article V(1)(a) of the New York Convention requires the application of the law of the arbitration agreement in determining the validity of that agreement, in this case, the law of Macau (see Section IIA below)."

"In my opinion, the ICC Tribunal correctly held that the Arbitration Agreement is valid under Macau law."

"Second, the New York Convention imposes strict international limits on the application of the public policy exception under Article V(2)(b) of the New York Convention, which exclude principles of res judicata (see Section

II.B below)."

"It is well-settled that the New York Convention imposes a presumptive mandatory obligation to recognize international arbitral awards," said Born.

"The text of the New York Convention clearly imposes a mandatory rule requiring contracting states to recognize and enforce foreign and non-domestic awards, except only upon a showing that one of the exceptions under Article V applies."

"Article III provides that '[e]ach contracting state shall recognize arbitral awards as binding' and enforce awards in accordance with the Convention and its national procedural rules."

"Article V provides that 'recognition and enforcement of the award may be refused ...only if' one of the specified exceptions applies."

Born noted that "In its judgment, the [Laos] Court acknowledged that the Arbitration Agreement – contained in Clause 2(10) of the Master Agreement – entitled any one of the parties to re-submit a dispute to international arbitration even 'after mediation and decisions made by Lao courts, if one of the parties is unsatisfied with the results of the case proceedings.'"

"However, according to the Court, such agreement 'is an invalid agreement in accordance with the 2012 Amended Law on Civil Procedure of Lao PDR,' as well as the 'Constitution of Lao PDR' because the underlying disputes 'concerning the Master Agreement dated 30 May 2007, and Joint Venture Agreement for Slot Club at Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge, Thanaleng Border, dated 4 October 2008' were already settled and decided by the courts of Lao PDR," a fact that the same expert noted was "contrary to the express provisions of the New York Convention."

Born concluded that for the reasons mentioned and others, related to the justification given by the Laos court making use of the local law and not the Macau law, where the ICC Arbitration is located, "the [Laotian] Court erred in applying the law of Lao PDR in determining the validity of the Arbitration Agreement and in refusing to recognize the Award on the grounds that the Arbitration Agreement was invalid under the law of Lao PDR."

GOOD ARBITRATION VS BAD LEGAL SYSTEM

While the arbitration panel that delivered the unanimous decision on the merits in favor of Sanum against the ST Group and its affiliates comprised a trio of internationally renowned arbitrators with extensive expertise drawn from diverse legal traditions and jurisdictions, the enforcement of the ICC decision seems to clash with Laos' singular legal system, the decisions of which have been the subject of many comments in the past.

According to academic research published by the University of Melbourne in the "Southeast Asian Legal Research Guide: Introduction to Lao PDR & its Legal System," the "Laotian legal system is not determined by a democratic parliament or by legal precedent but by the arbitrary rule of Laos' single party. The main source of law is legislation. There are two types of legislation: legislation of general application and legislation of specific application."

Nicholas C Auclair in "Civil Liberties and Human Rights" has extensively researched Laos in an article titled "A country study: Laos."

He noted "Laos' criminal justice system is controlled by the party and the government. There are few legal restraints on government actions, including arrests, which are often arbitrary in nature."

Auclair noted nonetheless that "there is a system for prosecuting criminal behavior. Common crimes are evaluated at the local village level. More serious cases, especially politically sensitive ones, are referred to higher authorities. Tribunals operate at district and provincial levels with judges appointed by the government."

The co-arbitrators on the Macau tribunal included Robert H. Smit, V.K. Rajah SC, and Vera van Houtte, who presided.

Since Laos has also signed several bilateral investment treaties (BITs) with other jurisdictions, including China, this type of agreement between the two countries regarding the promotion and protection of investments from respective countries in each other's territory might be used, in this case, to a court action this time against Laos for failing to protect such interests included in the BITs provisions.



PARTY PLENUM

China commits to attracting top talent to Macau, Hong Kong

VICTORIA CHAN

BEIJING has announced its commitment to supporting Hong Kong and Macau in their efforts to become top talent hubs. This decision was reached during the recent high-level meeting of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in Beijing last week.

The comprehensive 60-paragraph decision, focused on advancing reforms and driving Chinese-style modernization, was approved during the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party.

At the third plenum, the session highlighted the importance of Macau and Hong Kong as the committee emphasized the need for China to enhance its "opening up" strategy by leveraging

the benefits of the 'One country, two systems' framework to strengthen and elevate Hong Kong's global standing in finance, maritime trade.

Among the key focus areas is the pursuit of a high-standard opening up to the world, which includes consolidating Macau's status as an international hub for high-caliber talent.

We will support Hong Kong and Macau to become an international top talent hub, while also perfecting Hong Kong and Macau's roles in the country's external liberalization process," it said. "We will support the deepening of cooperation within the Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau Greater Bay Area and step up the convergence of rules and mechanisms."

The resolution aims to leverage the institutional strengths of the 'One country, two systems'

policy to further integrate Macau into the country's broader opening-up efforts.

The resolution also emphasized the need to improve any relevant mechanisms that would facilitate the two regions playing a greater role in China's opening to the outside world.

The decision also highlights the need to "improve relevant institutions and policies to promote economic and cultural exchanges and cooperation across the Taiwan Strait and advance integrated cross-strait development."

Furthermore, the plan emphasizes the importance of developing "diverse forms of democracy at all levels and ensuring that the principle of the people running the country is manifested in concrete and visible ways in all aspects of China's political and social activities."

CRIME

Alleged casino investment fraud leads to arrest in Cotai

VICTORIA CHAN

IN a case of alleged fraud, a 35-year-old mainland resident has been detained by authorities in the Cotai district. The victim, a middle-aged man, claims to have lost over RMB3 million in an alleged casino investment scheme, the Judiciary Police announced yesterday.

According to the investigation, the case began in October 2019 when a fugitive suspect and a detained suspect falsely claimed to the victim that they had opened a casino in Cotai. They allegedly promised the victim that if they invested money in the casino, they would receive 24% annual dividends.

The suspects went so far as to take the victim to the casino on multiple occasions between 2019 and 2020, convincing the victim that the investment would be profitable. However, the victim had no formal investment docu-

ments and was never informed of the specific casino they were investing in.

During this period, the victim transferred a total of RMB3 million through mainland bank accounts to the mainland bank account designated by the fugitive suspect. Despite the victim's repeated attempts to access the promised dividends, they were unable to do so and did not recover their investment principal.

In an attempt to regain the victim's trust, one of the suspects signed a loan of RMB3 million over to the victim. However, the victim still did not receive any dividends or recover the initial investment.

On July 20, the victim confronted the suspect at a casino in Cotai, leading to a dispute over the money and debt. Casino security guards and authorities intervened and, after a comprehensive investigation, found strong indications that the suspect had committed a criminal act of fraud.



VICTORIA CHAN

CORPORATE BITS

Wynn to host international sake events



Wynn Macau and Wynn Palace will provide a platform for sake enthusiasts when

they host a series of events for the International Wine Challenge in early August.

The four-day celebration of Japanese rice wine will include a masterclass led by a renowned sake expert, as well as tastings that allow participants to directly compare award-winning sakes. Held since 1984, the IWC's annual sake competition introduces sake connoisseurs to styles from across Japan.

This year's event in Macau provides an exclusive opportunity to experience the spectrum of sake offerings.

Two of Wynn's Michelin-starred restaurants will also participate, as their chefs craft special tasting menus designed to showcase food pairings for various sake types.

St. Regis bar celebrates prestigious Asia's 50 Best Bars ranking



The St. Regis Bar, located within The St. Regis Macao, secured the No. 22 ranking on Asia's 50 Best Bars list for 2024,

becoming the lone bar in Macau to receive the honor. "We are thrilled and humbled by this recognition," said Frank Sanders,

multi-property vice president of The St. Regis Macao and Sheraton Grand Macao. "Our commitment to excellence and intimate settings have truly set us apart."

Asia's 50 Best Bars recognizes the continent's top bars as voted by over 200 drinks experts spanning 14 countries. The St. Regis Bar excels through guest bartender shifts, complemented by live jazz alongside innovative cocktail programs.

The bar offers artisan libations paying homage to the city, including popular selections like the Macau egg tart cocktail, representing the territory's signature snack.

FINANCE

Central bank cuts interest rates, moving to put more pep into the economy

ELAINE KURTENBACH

CHINA'S central bank cut key interest rates in a surprise move yesterday aimed at injecting new life into its ailing property sector, while the ruling Communist Party released details of a top-level meeting focused on strategies for revving up the slowing economy.

The People's Bank of China cut the five-year loan prime rate, which is a benchmark for mortgages, by 10 basis points to 3.85% from 3.95%. The one-year loan prime rate, or LPR, was reduced to 3.35% from 3.45%.

The expanded summary of the party's plenum last week included ambitious targets for accomplishing leader Xi Jinping's goal of making China a "high-standard socialist market economy in all respects" by 2035.

The lengthy document, 50 pages in English, promises to beef up social welfare such as pensions, improve the tax system and protect private property rights. Rural migrants should have the same access to public services as long-term city dwellers, it says.

It also pledges equal market access and support for private enterprises and state-owned



companies and establishing better "international coordination" of economic policies.

The document released Sunday was more detailed than a communique released after the party meeting ended last week. But the actual reforms and laws it outlined in what amounts to a policy roadmap will come much later.

"We think these measures, if well implemented promptly, should help improve resource allocation, contain financial risks, unleash some growth po-

tential, and underpin investors' confidence, while the actual implementation and policy clarity and sustainability will be the key," UBS economists Nina Zhang and Tao Wang said in a report.

The world's second-largest economy has struggled to regain momentum since the COVID-19 pandemic, and a slump in the property market has been a major hindrance. Economic growth fell to 4.7% in the last quarter, but remained at the government's target rate of about 5% for the first half of the year.

The housing market cooled after regulators cracked down on excessive borrowing by developers, unleashing a chain reaction that has pulled sales and prices lower and hit many other parts of the economy, such as construction, building materials and home appliances.

Regulators have been fine tuning policy as pressures have mounted in the economy and markets. Investors appear to be hungry for more aggressive action: Yesterday, the Shanghai Composite index was down 1%

even after the People's Bank of China announced several moves to relieve pressure on banks and property developers.

The central bank also reduced collateral requirements for its medium-term lending facility for banks. It said that was intended to ease pressure on the bond market.

The PBOC also reduced the interest rate on its purchases of securities from commercial banks through bidding, with a promise to sell them back in the future. The rate on 7-day "reverse repos" was cut to 1.7% from 1.8% to help put more cash into the banking system, it said.

Chinese markets had a mixed reaction, with Hong Kong's Hang Seng jumping 0.8% on buying of heavyweight technology shares on expectations that policies favoring advanced technology and innovation will favor sectors like electric vehicles, computer chips and new materials.

Video games maker Tencent rose 2.4% while e-commerce giants Alibaba and JD.com rose 1.1% and 1.2%, respectively.

But many property developers' shares languished. Country Garden dropped 5.7%, Hongkong Land Holdings fell 3.2% and China Vanke fell 3%. **MDT/AP**

CRIME

A PhD student at a top Chinese university publicly accuses her supervisor of sexual harassment

A female PhD student at one of China's top universities took social media by storm after accusing her academic supervisor of sexual harassment and said he threatened to stop her from attaining her doctorate for refusing his advances. Her school said Monday it launched an investigation.

The woman, who identified herself as Wang Di and said she studied at Renmin University of China's School of Liberal Arts, posted Sunday a 59-minute video, in which she briefly held up an identification card on the Chinese social media platform Weibo and talked about how she was abused.

Wearing a mask, she claimed the professor, an ex-vice dean and a former

Communist Party representative at the school, physically and verbally abused her. She also said for more than two years, he assigned her many unpaid tasks, scolded her, and threatened that she would not graduate after she rejected him.

Wang Di shared a screenshot showing messages between her and the said professor in which he asked they meet at his office for a discussion on May 21, 2022. She also uploaded some audio clips which she said were evidence of the harassment. In one, a man could be heard trying to kiss a woman who kept saying: "No, no, teacher."

"At this moment, I can no longer endure it and



have nowhere to retreat, so I am speaking out," she wrote. Her post drew 1.73 million likes as of early afternoon, with many users

leaving comments in support of the student who demanded the professor be legally punished and a new supervisor be appointed for her. She also said she was willing to be held legally responsible for her accusations against the professor.

The Associated Press could not independently verify the recordings and Wang's claim.

Renmin University said yesterday it took the online complaint seriously and had set up a task force to investigate the allegations, adding it has zero tolerance toward any teacher's ethical misconduct and pledging to announce the probe results in days.

The professor has not immediately responded to the AP's request for comment.

In China, public accusations of sexual harassment

have become rare in recent years following a brief uptick because of the #MeToo movement.

In June, a Chinese journalist who promoted women's rights as part of the nascent #MeToo movement was sentenced to five years in prison on charges of incitement to subvert state authority, according to her supporters.

In one of the most high-profile cases, former Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai also disappeared from the public eye after accusing former high-level official Zhang Gaoli of sexual assault in 2021. Her accusation was quickly scrubbed from the internet and discussion of it remains heavily censored. **MDT/AP**

ANALYSIS

Biden's withdrawal injects uncertainty into wars, trade disputes, other foreign policy challenges

ISABEL DEBRE

JOE Biden's withdrawal from the U.S. presidential race injects greater uncertainty into the world at a time when Western leaders are grappling with wars in Ukraine and Gaza, a more assertive China in Asia and the rise of the far right in Europe.

During a five-decade career in politics, Biden developed extensive personal relationships with multiple foreign leaders that none of the potential replacements on the Democratic ticket can match. After his announcement, messages of support and gratitude for his years of service poured in from near and far.

The scope of foreign policy challenges facing the next U.S. president makes clear how consequential what happens in Washington is for the rest of the planet.

ISRAEL

With Vice President Kamala Harris being eyed as a potential replacement for Biden, Israelis yesterday [Macau time] scrambled to understand what her candidacy would mean for their country as it confronts increasing global isolation over its military campaign against Hamas.

Israel's left-wing Haaretz daily newspaper ran a story scrutinizing Harris' record of support for Israel, pointing to her reputation as Biden's "bad cop" who has vocally admonished Israel for its offensive in Gaza. In recent months, she has gone further than Biden in calling for a cease-fire, denouncing Israel's invasion of Rafah and expressing horror over the civilian death toll in Gaza.

"With Biden leaving, Israel has lost perhaps the last Zionist president," said Alon Pinkas, a former Israeli consul general in New York. "A new Democratic candidate will upend the dynamic."

Biden's staunch defense of Israel since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack has its roots in his half-century of support for the country as a senator, vice president, then president. Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant thanked Biden for his "unwavering support of Israel over the years."

"Your steadfast backing, especially during the war, has been invaluable," Gallant wrote on social media platform X.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog praised Biden as a "symbol of the unbreakable bond between our two peoples" and a "true ally of the Jewish people." There was no im-



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer (left) looks on as U.S. President Joe Biden speaks, where he introduced Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during an event at the NATO Summit earlier this month

mediate reaction from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, an ally of former President Donald Trump whose history of cordial relations with Biden has come under strain during the Israel-Hamas war.

UKRAINE

Any Democratic candidate would likely continue Biden's legacy of staunch military support for Ukraine. But frustration with the Biden administration has grown in Ukraine and Europe over the slow pace of U.S. aid and restrictions on the use of Western weapons.

"Most Europeans realize that Ukraine is increasingly going to be their burden," said Sudha David-Wilp, director of the Berlin office of the German Marshall Fund, a research institute. "Everyone is trying to get ready for all the possible outcomes."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on X that he respected the "tough but strong decision" by Biden to drop out of the campaign, and he thanked Biden for his help "in preventing (Russian President Vladimir) Putin from occupying our country."

Trump has promised to end Russia's war on Ukraine in one day if he is elected—a prospect that has raised fears in Ukraine that Russia might be allowed to keep the territory it occupies.

Trump's vice presidential pick, Ohio Sen. JD Vance, is among Congress' most vocal opponents of U.S. aid for Ukraine and has further raised the stakes for Kyiv.

Russia, meanwhile, dismissed the importance of the race, insisting that no matter what happened,

Moscow would press on in Ukraine.

"That's it for Biden," Dmitry Medvedev, deputy head of Russia's Security Council chaired by President Vladimir Putin, said on the Telegram messaging app. "The goals of the special military operation will be achieved," he added, using the Kremlin's term for the war in Ukraine.

CHINA

In recent months, both Biden and Trump have tried to show voters who can best stand up to Beijing's growing military strength and belligerence and protect U.S. businesses and workers from low-priced Chinese imports. Biden has hiked tariffs on electric vehicles from China, and Trump has promised to implement tariffs of 60% on all Chinese products.

Trump's "America First" doctrine exacerbated tensions with Beijing. But disputes with the geopolitical rival and economic colossus over wars, trade, technology and security continued into Biden's term.

China's official reaction to the U.S. presidential race has been careful.

"The U.S. elections are U.S. internal politics. I have no comment on this," said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning.

The official Xinhua news agency treated the story of Biden's decision as relatively minor. The editor of the party-run Global Times newspaper, Hu Xijin, downplayed the impact of Biden's withdrawal.

"Whoever becomes the presidential candidate of the Democratic Party may be the same," he wrote on X.

IRAN

With Iran's proxies across the Middle East increasingly entangled in the Israel-Hamas war, the U.S. confronts a region in disarray.

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis struck Tel Aviv for the first time last week, prompting retaliatory Israeli strikes inside war-torn Yemen. Simmering tensions and cross-border attacks between Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group and the Israeli military have raised fears of an all-out regional conflagration.

Hamas, which also receives support from Iran, continues to fight Israel even nine months into a war that has killed 38,000 Palestinians and displaced over 80% of Gaza's population.

The U.S. and its allies have accused Iran of expanding its nuclear program and enriching uranium to an unprecedented 60% level, near-weapons-grade levels.

After then-President Trump in 2018 withdrew from Tehran's landmark nuclear deal with world powers, Biden said he wanted to reverse his predecessor's hawkish anti-Iran stance. But the Biden administration has maintained severe economic sanctions against Iran and overseen failed attempts to renegotiate the agreement.

The sudden death of Ebrahim Raisi — the supreme leader's hard-line protege — in a helicopter crash vaulted a new reformist to the presidency in Iran, generating new opportunities and risks.

EUROPE AND NATO

Many Europeans were happy to see Trump go after his years of disparaging the European Union and

undermining NATO. Trump's seemingly dismissive attitude toward European allies in last month's presidential debate did nothing to assuage those concerns.

Biden, on the other hand, has supported close American relations with bloc leaders.

That closeness was on stark display after Biden's decision to bow out of the race. Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk called his choice "probably the most difficult one in your life." The newly installed British prime minister, Keir Starmer, said he respected Biden's "decision based on what he believes is in the best interests of the American people."

There was also an outpouring of affection from Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris, who called Biden a "proud American with an Irish soul."

The question of whether NATO can maintain its momentum in supporting Ukraine and checking the ambitions of other authoritarian states hangs in the balance of this presidential election, analysts say.

"They don't want to see Donald Trump as president. So there's quite a bit of relief but also quite a bit of nervousness" about Biden's decision to drop out, said Jeremy Shapiro, research director of the European Council on Foreign Relations.

MEXICO

The close relationship between Mexico and the U.S. has been marked in recent years by disagreements over trade, energy and climate change. Since President Andrés Manuel López Obrador took power in 2018, both countries have found common ground on issue of migration — with Mexico making it more difficult for migrants to cross its country to the U.S. border and the U.S. not pressing on other issues.

The López Obrador administration kept that policy while Trump was president and continued it into Biden's term.

On Friday, Mexico's president called Trump "a friend" and said he would write to him to warn him against pledging to close the border or blaming migrants for bringing drugs into the United States.

"I am going to prove to him that migrants don't carry drugs to the United States," he said, adding that "closing the border won't solve anything, and anyway, it can't be done."

MDT/AP

USA | BIDEN'S LEGACY

Far-reaching accomplishments that didn't translate into political support

JOSH BOAK, WASHINGTON

SITTING in the Oval Office behind the iconic Resolute desk in 2022, an animated President Joe Biden described the challenge of leading a psychologically traumatized nation.

The United States had endured a life-altering pandemic. There was a jarring burst of inflation and now global conflict with Russia invading Ukraine, as well as the persistent threat to democracy he felt Donald Trump posed.

How could Biden possibly heal that collective trauma?

"Be confident," he said emphatically in an interview with The Associated Press. "Be confident. Because I am confident."

But in the ensuing two years, the confidence Biden hoped to instill steadily waned. And when the 81-year-old Democratic president showed his age in a disastrous debate in June against Trump, he lost the benefit of the doubt as well. That triggered a series of events that led him yesterday [Macau time] to step down as his party's nominee for the November's election.

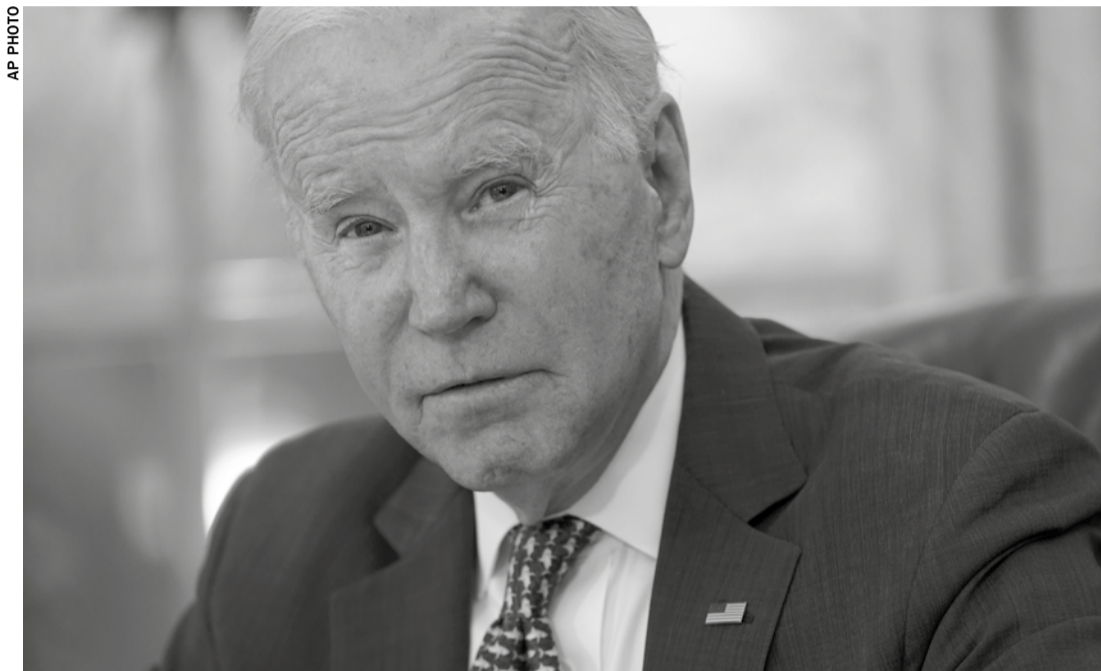
Democrats, who had been united in their resolve to prevent another Trump term, suddenly fractured. And Republicans, beset by chaos in Congress and the former president's criminal conviction, improbably coalesced in defiant unity.

Biden never figured out how to inspire the world's most powerful country to believe in itself, let alone in him.

He lost the confidence of supporters in the 90-minute debate with Trump, even if pride initially prompted him to override the fears of lawmakers, party elders and donors who were nudging him to drop out. Then Trump survived an assassination attempt in Pennsylvania and, as if on cue, pumped his fist in strength. Biden, while campaigning in Las Vegas, tested positive for the coronavirus Wednesday and retreated to his Delaware beach home to recover.

The events over the course of three weeks led to an exit Biden never wanted, but one that Democrats felt they needed to maximize their chance of winning in November's elections.

Biden seems to have badly misread the breadth of his su-



pport. While many Democrats had deep admiration for the president personally, they did not have the same affection for him politically.

Rice University historian Douglas Brinkley said Biden arrived as a reprieve from a nation exhausted by Trump and the pandemic.

"He was a perfect person for that moment," said Brinkley, noting Biden proved in era of polarization that bipartisan lawmaking was still possible.

Yet, there was never a "Joe Biden Democrat" like there was a "Reagan Republican." He did not have adoring, movement-style followers as did Barack Obama or John F. Kennedy. He was not a generational candidate like Bill Clinton. The only barrier-breaking dimension to his election was the fact that he was the oldest person ever elected president.

His first run for the White House, in the 1988 cycle, ended with self-inflicted wounds stemming from plagiarism, and he didn't make it to the first nominating contest. In 2008, he dropped out after the Iowa caucuses, where he won less than 1% of the vote. In 2016, Obama counseled his vice president not to run. A Biden victory in 2020 seemed implausible, when he finished fourth in Iowa and fifth in New Hampshire before a dramatic rebound in South Carolina that propelled him to the nomination and the White House.

David Axelrod, a former senior adviser to Obama who also worked closely with Biden, said that history would treat Biden

kinder than voters had, not just because of his legislative achievements but because in 2020 he defeated Trump.

"His legacy is significant beyond all his many accomplishments," Axelrod said. "He will always be the man who stepped up and defeated a president who placed himself above our democracy."

But Biden could not avoid his age. And when he showed frailty in his steps and his speech, there was no foundation of supporters that could stand by him to stop calls for him to step aside.

It was a humbling end to a half-century career in politics, yet hardly reflective of the full legacy of his time in the White House.

In March of 2021, Biden launched \$1.9 trillion in pandemic aid, creating a series of new programs that temporarily halved child poverty, halted evictions and contributed to the addition of 15.7 million jobs. But inflation began to rise shortly thereafter as Biden's approval rating as measured by the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research fell from 61% to 39% as of June.

He followed up with a series of executive actions to unsnarl global supply chains and a \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure package that not only replaced aging infrastructure but improved internet access and prepared communities to withstand the damages from climate change.

In 2022, Biden and his fellow Democrats followed up with two measures that reinvigorated

the future of U.S. manufacturing.

The CHIPS and Science Act provided \$52 billion to build factories and create institutions to make computer chips domestically, ensuring that the U.S. would have access to the most advanced semiconductors needed to power economic growth and maintain national security. There was also the Inflation Reduction Act, which provided incentives to shift away from fossil fuels and enabled Medicare to negotiate drug prices.

Biden also sought to compete more aggressively with China, rebuild alliances such as NATO and completed the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan that resulted in the death of 13 U.S. service members.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in early 2022 worsened inflation as Trump and other Republicans questioned the value of military aid to the Ukrainians. Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023 attack in Israel sparked a war that showed divisions within the Democratic party about whether the United States should continue to support Israel as tens of thousands of Palestinians died in months of counterattacks. The president was also criticized over illegal border crossings at the southern border with Mexico.

Yet it was the size of the stakes and the fear of a Biden loss that prevailed, resulting in a bet by Democrats that the tasks he began could best be completed by a younger generation.

"History will be kinder to him than voters were at the end," Axelrod said. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1995 BRITISH FORCES SENT TO SARAJEVO



Britain has sent 1,200 troops to relieve the besieged Bosnian capital, Sarajevo.

Bosnian Serbs have controlled access to Sarajevo for three years, killing dozens of people along the 11-mile Mount Igman trail - the only route into and out of the city.

The international mobilisation - Task Force Alpha - has been underway for several weeks but it has been speeded up after two French peacekeepers were killed in the safe haven yesterday.

A UN spokesman has described the mission as a "turning point".

British Defence Secretary Michael Portillo told the BBC, "There is no shift in any sense from peacekeeping to war fighting."

"We wish to provide protection to peacekeepers who are trying to save lives," he explained.

It is the first time the Rapid Reaction Force - set up in May to protect UN peacekeepers - has been deployed and it is the biggest Anglo-French combined operation since the Suez Crisis in 1956.

British forces from the Devon and Dorset regiment join 500 French Foreign Legionnaires based on top of Mount Igman overlooking Sarajevo to the south.

The 720 soldiers of the Devon and Dorsets will secure the route around the capital in 50 Warrior armoured personnel carriers. [...]

More precise details of the mission are still being discussed by Western leaders, who met in London two days ago to oppose Serb aggression.

UN spokesperson Alexander Ivanko said of the task force: "They will fire whenever the UN is under attack. Not just if they are fired on on the Igman route but anywhere in the city."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Sarajevo was one of six UN designated safe havens in Bosnia to protect Muslim communities.

By July 1995 Serbian forces were attacking all of these enclaves and Western efforts proved unable to prevent a large loss of life. In the first half of the month the safe-havens of Zepa and Srebrenica were lost to Serbian control, causing humiliation to the Western allies and large scale human rights atrocities.

The UN finally gave in to American pressure to launch Nato air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs at the end of August after a Serbian mortar killed 38 people in Sarajevo. In December 1995 the Muslim, Serb and Croat warring factions returned to the negotiating table and eventually brought an end to the Bosnian conflict at Dayton, Ohio.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Love is in the air. The next month, with the Sun in Leo, favors fun and romance. You're especially creative. Pursue your passions.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 Strengthen your base. For the next four weeks, under the Leo Sun, family comes first. Focus on household improvement and raising levels of domestic bliss.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 Begin a 30-day networking and communication phase. You're especially brilliant and creative this month, with the Sun in Leo. Write, connect and express.

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Profit through collaboration under the Leo Sun. You can make lots of money over the next four weeks. Work together and find what's needed.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 You're coming into your own. Over four weeks, Leo sunlight shines on your accomplishments and personal projects. Amplify something close to your heart.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Get into a contemplative phase. Consider plans, past, present and future. Imagine potential and invent possibilities. Lay the groundwork for your next adventures.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Teamwork can move mountains. Collaborate for common cause under the Leo Sun. Get public this month. Benefit from social connections. Have fun with friends.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Focus on professional priorities this month. Energize bold ambitions and creative ideas. Your status and influence are on the rise. Make big goals.

SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 Travel beckons. Enjoy a four-week travel, study and exploration phase. The Leo Sun shines on a fascinating adventure. Connect, communicate and share discoveries.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Work together to share the load and the benefits. The next four weeks could get especially lucrative. Support each other for extra power.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 Fall in love all over again. The Sun in Leo favors connection and collaboration. The next month is all about partnerships. Grow together.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Nurture yourself for high physical performance. You're energized by the Leo Sun. For the next four weeks, prioritize your work, fitness and health.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	26	34	cloudy
Changchun	22	29	thunderstorms
Chengdu	24	32	rain
Chongqing	31	40	fine
Fuzhou	28	38	cloudy
Guangzhou	25	33	showers
Guiyang	22	31	cloudy
Haikou	25	33	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	29	40	fine
Harbin	22	27	rain
Hefei	26	37	fine
Nanjing	29	38	cloudy
Shanghai	29	36	cloudy
Taipei	26	31	rain
Wuhan	28	38	overcast
Hong Kong	29	33	showers
WORLD			
Moscow	14	24	cloudy
Frankfurt	15	26	thunderstorms
Paris	15	24	cloudy
London	16	24	cloudy
New York	23	29	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Perspire; 6- Tortilla topped with cheese; 11- The Altar; 14- ___ Haute; 15- Smells; 16- Triple ___; 17- "Who's there?" reply; 18- Vigneron; 20- Queue after Q; 21- Streetcar; 23- Corpulent; 24- Like untended yards; 26- Furthermore; 28- North African desert; 30- Baseball commissioner Bud; 31- Out of whack; 32- Informs; 33- Salty sauce; 36- Prefix with conference; 37- Soup server; 38- Moon goddess; 39- Legal conclusion?; 40- Unconscious states; 41- Brooklyn's ___ Island; 42- Fabric woven from flax yarns; 43- Girl in a Beach Boys song; 44- Books of maps; 47- Spacious; 48- Publish; 49- Cat call; 50- Highly respectful way of addressing a man; 53- Carnival; 56- Thaw before takeoff; 58- Org. that banned DDT; 59- Actor Christopher; 60- Finished, terminated; 61- Conspiration org.; 62- Identified; 63- Orchestra section;

DOWN 1- Use a swizzle stick; 2- Dampens; 3- Of times past; 4- Upper limb; 5- Seesaws; 6- Forget it!; 7- Take ___ view of; 8- Chile ___ carne; 9- Charlemagne's realm; Abbr.; 10- Subtle absorption; 11- Invited; 12- Actress Witherspoon; 13- Farm measures; 19- You're making ___ mistake!; 22- Old vitamin bottle abbr.; 25- Alleviate; 26- Ringing instruments; 27- Fashion mag; 28- Fill up; 29- Iowa city; 30- Four-door; 32- Domesticates; 33- Pleasant aspect; 34- Like a line, briefly; 35- Divine Secrets of the ___ Sisterhood; 37- Solitary; 38- Apparatus for weaving; 40- Tank; 41- Thick fish soup; 42- Highway division; 43- Kanga's kid; 44- ___-ski; 45- Snares; 46- Turkish money; 47- Marry again; 49- Relocate; 51- Frosted; 52- Cincinnati team; 54- Neptune's domain; 55- Skirt stitching; 57- U-turn from WSW;

Yesterday's solution

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

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WATER POLO

HALLOCK LOOKING FOR ELUSIVE OLYMPIC MEDAL WITH US MEN'S WATER POLO TEAM

JAY COHEN, WALNUT (CALIF.)

BEN Hallock won in high school in Southern California. He won in college at Stanford. He won as a professional at Pro Recco, one of the top water polo clubs in the world.

Hallock has won everywhere he has played except for the Olympics. And the 6-foot-6 center desperately wants to check that box this summer.

"I'd throw every single medal away that I have now for a medal in Paris," Hallock said. "Without a doubt."

Paris has just about arrived for Hallock and a U.S. men's team looking for the program's first medal since it won silver in 2008. The U.S. faces Italy on the first day of men's group play on Sunday.

To get back on the podium, to somehow stay in contention into the final days of the grueling tournament, the U.S. is going to need more from the talented Hallock than it has



U.S. Men's Olympic Water Polo team captain center Ben Hallock trains for the 2024 Paris Olympics at Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut, California

ever seen before. And perhaps more importantly, more from Hallock's teammates.

"I mean I think it just always goes back to details," said Hallock, 26. "I've played the sport for a long time, and the small details, especially when

the Games are only every four years, they'll keep you up longer at night. They'll haunt you a little bit more. So just thinking about the little details and what we can do differently, how we can make up that difference."

Hallock was just 18 when he made his Olympic debut in 2016 in Rio de Janeiro. He played sparingly as the U.S. finished a disappointing 10th.

After taking a redshirt year to train with the national team, Hallock started playing for Stanford when he got back from Brazil. He won two consecutive Cutino Awards — water polo's version of the Heisman Trophy — and helped lead the Cardinal to the 2019 NCAA title.

When COVID-19 disrupted the U.S. training schedule in California and pushed back the start of the Tokyo Olympics, Hallock was part of a sizeable contingent of American players who joined professional teams in Europe. He has won three Champions League titles with Pro Recco in Northern Italy.

By the time Hallock got to his second Olympics in Tokyo, he was a different player than he was in Rio. He scored 12 times while repeatedly drawing

exclusions and causing all sorts of matchup issues.

"He's definitely one of the best centers in the world. ... You see it every day in the water," U.S. attacker Max Irving said. "I mean you talk to the guys on our team, even talk to some Italian guys who he's playing with at Pro Recco, and they all say it: The guy's the real deal."

Johnny Hooper, an American attacker who played with Hallock in high school at Harvard-Westlake, said the U.S. captain has been working on every aspect of his game for years. Hallock, he said, "never took a shortcut in every fundamental thing that you could be good at in water polo."

"In terms of center play, he has every single ability on a nine or 10 level," Hooper said. "He can play left-handed. He can play right-handed. He has the best legs in the game. He can turn. He can step out. He can pass. He can shoot." **MDT/AP**

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IN MACAU (2023)



OLYMPICS

Athletes are as excited as regular visitors to be tourists in Paris during the games

HOWARD FENDRICH & EDDIE PELLIS, PARIS

PARIS is a popular destination for vacations, of course. The food and drink. The art and history. The landmarks. And so on.

The city itself will be one of the protagonists of the 2024 Olympic Games — which is why the Eiffel Tower and Seine River are featured just as prominently as gymnast Simone Biles or swimmer Katie Ledecky in NBC's ads promoting its TV coverage — and the athletes heading to France, not to mention their friends and family, have been drawing up lengthy to-do lists of the various tastes they want to try and the sights they want to see.

"I'm excited to just explore and just take in everything Paris has to offer, because me and my friends, we look at things and we get inspired,"

said breaker Jeffrey Louis, aka b-boy Jeffro. "We're looking at the structure of buildings and we're like, 'Oh, that's tight! We could do this; we could do that with this.' We look at fashion and we're like, 'OK, what can we pull from and what can we add to our crew?'" So there's a lot of things that we want to try and just explore."

Some are eager to ride to the top of Gustave Eiffel's creation from the 1880s, maybe even dine at its restaurant. The Louvre Museum, with its Mona Lisa, Venus de Milo and so much more, is high on many lists. Alas, so is Notre Dame Cathedral, but its restoration after a 2019 fire will not be completed until well after the Summer Games, which open on Friday.

"Such a big city. A beautiful city," diver Andrew Capobianco said.

Can't forget all of the stuff to sample and sip.

The crepes. ("Eat as many



crepes as you can if you're in Paris," track and field Paralympian Noelle Malkamaki said.) The espressos. ("I'm a big coffee guy; a coffee connoisseur," 3x3 basketball player Dylan Travis said.) The croissants, baguettes and other baked goods. ("Looking forward to macaroons, pastries, bread," sitting volleyball Paralympian Nicky Nieves said.)

The cheese, or, "fromages" — from Comte to Camembert, Roquefort to Brie. The escargots ("It kind of tastes like chicken," artistic swimmer Daniella Ramirez said.) The steaks. The mousse. The crème brûlée. The wines — from the Loire Valley or Bordeaux or, of course, Champagne.

There are those, such as breaker Sunny Choi ("After the

Games," she said with a smile, "I will be eating everything") or rower Michelle Sechser, who know they'll need to set those sorts of culinary delights aside until the last part of their stay.

Can't load up on all of that fun stuff too early.

"We do have weight-class restrictions; we have to weigh in two hours before a race," Sechser said. "So after racing's done, I'm most excited to get out and explore the Parisian food and really enjoy some French meals."

Canoe/kayak star Evy Leibfarth, the first American woman to qualify in three whitewater events at an Olympics, looks at the situation from a different perspective.

"If I'm going to be thinking about my croissant the whole time I'm paddling, I may as well just eat it, you know? It's all about balance," said the 20-year-old from North Carolina. **MDT/AP**

AD



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OPINION

China Daily
Editorial, China Daily

COUNTRY WILL
OPEN DOOR WIDER

The Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Further Deepening Reform Comprehensively to Advance Chinese Modernization approved by the third plenary session of the 20th CPC Central Committee upon its conclusion in Beijing on Thursday sends a clear message that China will not give up eating for fear of choking.

Some in the West are trying to substantiate their countries' China-containment strategy by hyping up the lie that China is shutting its door on the world. But the rise of external uncertainties and risks has not affected China's confidence and determination to advance high-standard opening-up. As the Resolution makes clear, adhering to opening-up remains China's basic national policy. Reform and opening-up complement each other and are the two sides to China's development coin.

As set out in the Resolution, the opening-up efforts will now focus on expanding institutional opening-up, foreign trade system reform, foreign investment and outbound investment management, optimizing the regional opening-up layout, and improving and promoting high-quality joint construction of the Belt and Road mechanism, with relevant policies, action plans and measures to be made and implemented.

To attract foreign investment, China will actively connect with international high-standard economic and trade rules, realize the interoperability of rules, regulations, management and standards in the fields of property rights protection, industrial subsidies, environmental standards, labor protection, government procurement, e-commerce and finance, establish an efficient, convenient and safe cross-border data flow mechanism, and create a transparent, stable and predictable institutional environment.

Recently, the country has implemented a unilateral visa-free policy for some countries, which has been widely welcomed and achieved good results. It will further improve the convenient systems for residence, medical care and payment for business and tourism personnel coming to China.

China will implement the "zero" requirement for measures on foreign investment access in the manufacturing sector as soon as possible, expand the catalog of industries encouraging foreign investment, and reasonably reduce the negative list for foreign investment access. It will further expand the opening-up of the service industry, fully implement the negative list of cross-border service trade, and promote orderly opening-up in the fields of telecommunications, the internet, education, culture, and medical care. It will also accelerate the development of offshore trade.

At the same time, China will effectively protect the national treatment and legitimate rights and interests of foreign-funded enterprises. It will take concrete measures to support the development of domestic and foreign-funded enterprises equally and protect the national treatment of foreign-funded enterprises in terms of factor acquisition, qualification licensing, standard setting and government procurement, etc.

At present, economic globalization is facing huge challenges. To maintain the security and stability of the global economic order and industry supply chains, governments and enterprises should oppose unilateralism and protectionism. China is still a fertile ground for investment from all countries, and will continue to improve its market-oriented, rule-of-law, and internationalized first-class business environment.

Neither the country's pursuit of high-quality development nor its cultivation of the new quality productive forces can be divorced from the country's high-standard opening-up to the world. Not to mention the building of the community with a shared future for mankind.

The country is willing to share with foreign-funded enterprises the huge opportunities for it to develop new quality productive forces and promote Chinese-style modernization. In the process of further integrating into the world system, China is also committed to promoting global economic governance reform, and sharing its development opportunities with countries around the world to create a better future.

Opening-up has been a defining feature of China's rapid development and it remains a hallmark of Chinese modernization, despite any allegations to the contrary.

HOLLYWOOD REACTS TO JOE BIDEN
EXITING THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE

THE
BUZZ

Hollywood was quick to react to the news that President Joe Biden was ending his bid for reelection and endorsing Vice President Kamala Harris.

Barbra Streisand, a Democratic supporter, wrote on X that "we should be grateful for his upholding of our democracy." While many paid tribute to Biden's presidency, others wondered about the future.

Cher wrote on X that she was "tortured" because she doesn't believe the Democrats could win without Biden. She said it was time to think "way outside the box" and proposed a split ticket.

In recent weeks, several high-profile Hollywood names had begun calling for Biden to exit the race. Just weeks after headlining a record-

-breaking fundraiser for the president's reelection campaign, George Clooney wrote a New York Times opinion piece calling for Biden to end his bid.

Clooney argued that the party should pick a new nominee, saying the process would be "messy" but "wake up" voters in the party's favor.

Others who attended or participated in the starry fundraiser in Los Angeles included Julia Roberts, Streisand, Jimmy Kimmel, former President Barack Obama, Jack Black, Sheryl Lee Ralph, Kathryn Hahn and Jason Bateman.

Ralph posted a photo of herself and Harris writing "President Biden has endorsed Kamala Harris!"



Stephen Hemingway Adams (right) a great-grandson of Ernest Hemingway, speaks with 2023 Hemingway Look-Alike Contest winner Gerrit Marshall at Sloppy Joe's Bar in Key West

ERNEST HEMINGWAY FANS
CELEBRATE THE AUTHOR'S
125TH BIRTHDAY

DAVID FISCHER,
KEY WEST

ERNEST Hemingway spent the 1930s in Key West, Florida, and more than six decades after his death, fans, scholars and relatives continue to congregate on the island city to celebrate the author's award-winning novels and adventure-filled life.

Hemingway Days started in 1981 with a short-story competition and a look-alike contest. This year's celebration concluded Sunday (yesterday, Macau time) on the 125th anniversary of Hemingway's birth on July 21, 1899.

As a novelist, short-story writer and journalist, Hemingway's spot in the pantheon of American literature is undeniable and his legacy permeates the culture and character of Key West.

Hemingway's great-grandson, Stephen Hemingway Adams, was born nearly three decades after Hemingway died. Adams said working with his grandfather, Patrick Hemingway, who was Ernest Hemingway's second son, helped him gain a deeper understanding of his famous ancestor.

"I got to work with my granddad, and we put out

a book called 'Dear Papa,' which was all of the letters between Ernest and my grandfather," Adams said.

The difference between the public perception and the documented reality of Hemingway can be fuzzy. He loved big-game fishing in the Caribbean and hunting in Africa. He loved bullfighting, baseball, boxing and barhopping. But he also was a serious artist who won Pulitzer and Nobel prizes. He put so much of his life experiences into his writing that it can be tricky to separate the man from the myth.

Adams said he's fine with some people loving the adventurer more than the writer.

"I think it's a split, and I think that's what's fun," Adams said of the throngs of look-alikes who visit Key West every year.

The Key West that Hemingway first visited in 1928 was a rustic fishing village, not a bustling tourist destination. Hemingway and his second wife, Pauline, had only planned a brief stop to pick up a car during their move from Paris to Arkansas, where Pauline's family lived. But the car wasn't ready and they had to wait several weeks.

Hemingway quickly made friends with local business owners and fishermen.

"He doesn't come here to act like a recluse and just write," Convertito said. "He's out at the bars all the time. He's out fishing with people. He's interacting in boxing matches."

Convertito pointed out that Hemingway was in his 30s for most of the time he lived in Key West, not the white-bearded "Papa Hemingway" most look-alike contestants emulate. "A Farewell to Arms" was finished shortly after he began visiting Key West and that book's reception, along with his coverage of the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s, increased his fame.

Much of Hemingway's time in Key West was devoted to big-game fishing with friends. Convertito said Hemingway began to pioneer new techniques after getting his own boat, the Pilar, in 1934.

"He was desperate to land a fully intact marlin," Convertito said.

The slow process of reeling in a trophy fish left them vulnerable to sharks, similar to the giant marlin caught in Hemingway's 1952 novel, "The Old Man and the Sea." MDT/AP



USA Delta Air Lines is facing major disruptions after a software update failure led to over 3,500 flight cancellations. The airline is working to restore services while Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg calls for timely refunds and customer support. This incident underscores the vulnerability of airline systems and the challenges of managing large-scale operational failures.



UK At the Farnborough International Air Show, yesterday, Boeing has scaled back its participation due to safety and manufacturing issues. Unlike Airbus, which is showcasing new jets, Boeing focuses on addressing regulatory concerns and production challenges. The company's subdued presence reflects its current struggles and the need to resolve internal issues while maintaining market position.



Greenland Veteran anti-whaling activist Paul Watson was arrested yesterday in Greenland on a Japanese international warrant. He faces potential extradition related to past anti-whaling activities in the Antarctic. This arrest highlights ongoing international conflicts over whaling and legal ramifications for activists challenging national policies and conservation practices on a global scale.



Germany An 18-year-old died after being struck by lightning on Germany's Zugspitze, the highest peak. The storm also injured seven others, including a family sheltering under a tree. This incident highlights the dangers of severe weather and the need for caution during storms, especially in exposed and mountainous areas prone to sudden weather changes.