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**MACAU'S MICE SECTOR IS REBOUNDED STRONGLY, WITH A 30% INCREASE IN EVENTS DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 2024**

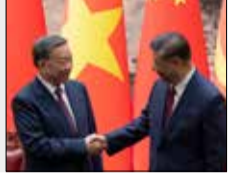
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**CRIME: TWO SUSPECTS ARRESTED FOR BURGLARY AT OCEAN GARDENS**

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**LEADERS OF CHINA AND VIETNAM PLEDGE TO STRENGTHEN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC TIES**

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AP PHOTO



**India** Hundreds of doctors yesterday [Macau time] protested in New Delhi demanding stronger protections for healthcare workers after a colleague was tragically raped and murdered at a hospital. This incident has reignited concerns over the safety of medical staff and the broader issue of violence against women in India.

AP PHOTO



**Japan** The Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, a site honoring Japan's war dead including WWII war criminals, was vandalized yesterday, marking another incident of disrespect towards this controversial historical site. The shrine's symbolism and the reactions it provokes continue to complicate Japan's diplomatic relationships in Asia.

AP PHOTO



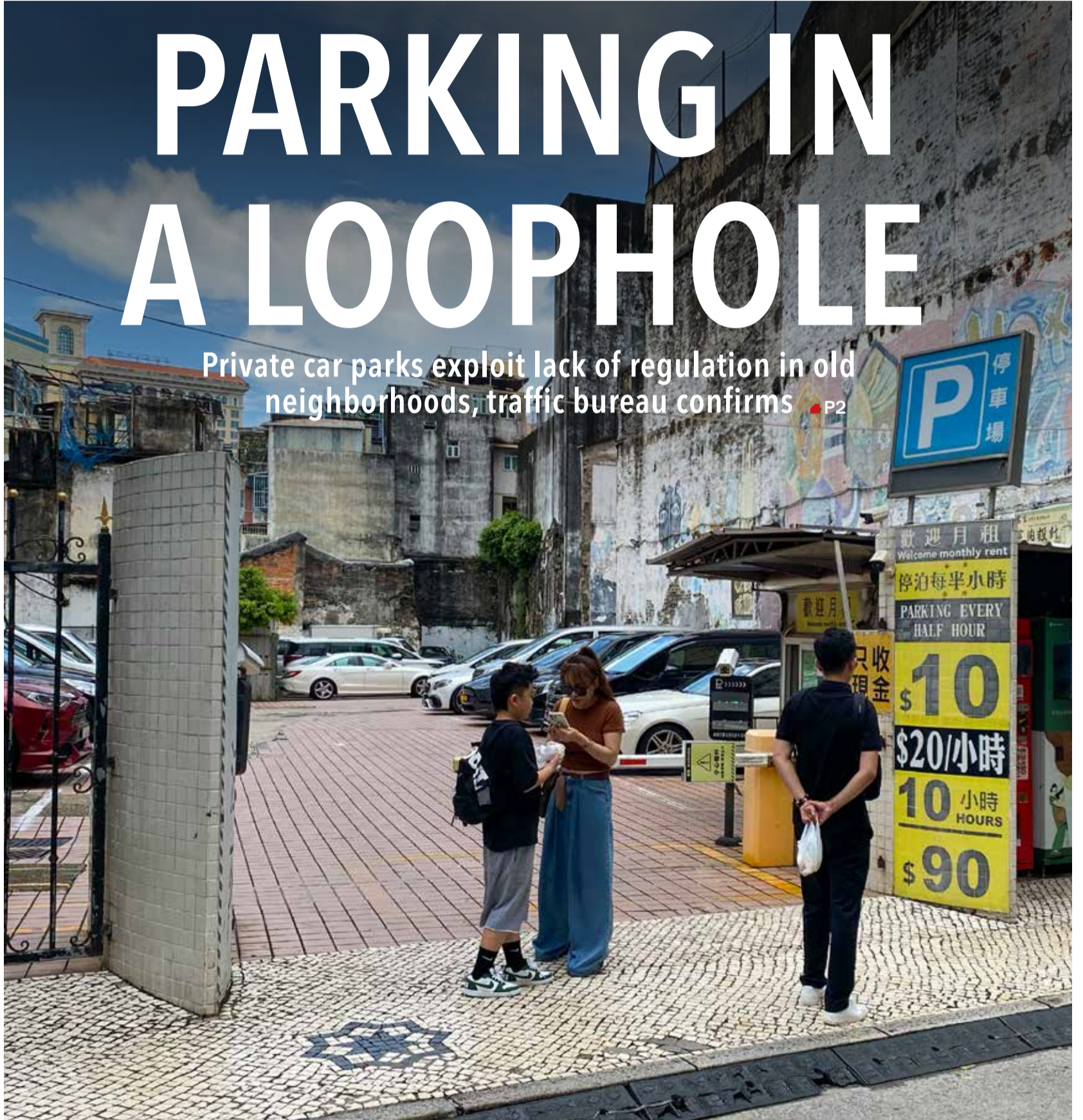
**South Korea** The U.S. and South Korea yesterday commenced significant military drills, emphasizing defensive strategies against North Korea. These exercises, which include both simulations and live drills, aim to bolster readiness amidst the ongoing threats from North Korea, which views these actions as provocative.

AP PHOTO



**Israel-Palestinians** U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken emphasized yesterday [Macau time] that the ongoing negotiations for a cease-fire in Gaza might represent the last opportunity for a significant break in the conflict. As mediators work towards a resolution, Blinken's visit underscores the urgent need for a sustainable peace agreement.

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# PARKING IN A LOOPHOLE

Private car parks exploit lack of regulation in old neighborhoods, traffic bureau confirms P2

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### FINAL LIST OF CE ELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS PUBLISHED

The final list of all the members who will be part of the Chief Executive (CE) Election Committee was published yesterday in the government's official gazette. The full list includes two representatives of the Catholic Church, two representatives of the Buddhist association, one representative from the other Christian denominations, and another from the Taoist group. In addition to these, are 22 representatives of the Legislative Assembly, 12 local delegates to the National People's Congress (NPC), 14 local representatives of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and two representatives of members of municipal institutions. Omitted from the initial list, lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho achieved an eleventh-hour seat in the CE Election Committee via the nomination of fellow lawmaker Vong In Fai, via the delegates of Macau to the NPC.

### RESTAURANT AND RETAIL SALES DOWN IN JUNE BUT OUTLOOK UP IN JULY

Receipts at restaurants and sales at retailers dropped in June compared to the previous month and last year, according to government statistics. Chinese restaurant receipts fell 6.4% month-to-month while Western restaurants rose 11.5%. Several retailers also declined, including watches, clothing and cosmetics. However, motor vehicle retailers increased. Despite June's losses, 42% of restaurants and 35% of retailers expect higher sales in July, according to business outlook indices. Japanese and Korean restaurants and cosmetics retailers were among the most optimistic. The indices were above 50, signaling expectations of better business conditions next month.

### MELCO RESORTS BUYS BACK USD45 MILLION IN SHARES

Melco Resorts & Entertainment has repurchased approximately USD8.33 million shares for nearly \$44.5 million, according to a filing from parent company Melco International Development Limited (0200.HK). This buyback is part of a three-year, \$500 million program initiated in June 2024. The American Depositary Shares (ADS) purchased are equivalent to three ordinary shares each. The company expressed confidence in its long-term growth strategy through this move. In the second quarter of 2024, Melco reported a net profit of \$21.39 million, a significant recovery from a loss of \$23.44 million a year earlier. The buyback program, coupled with positive earnings forecasts, positions Melco favorably for potential stock price appreciation in the near term.

RENATO MARQUES



# PRIVATE CAR PARKS HAVE NO REGULATION, DSAT CONFIRMS

RENATO MARQUES

**T**he many private parking lot facilities in Macau are operating without the need for any licensing or regulations, since there are no rules in Macau regulating private parking, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) confirmed in a response to an inquiry from the Times.

"There are currently no laws in Macau regulating private parking lots," reads DSAT's short written response to the Times.

In the inquiry, the Times asked about how many private parking lot facilities exist currently in Macau, particularly those that are temporary and are located in idle land plots. The Times also asked if any of these facilities possess any type of licensing or are subject to regulations on safety, fees or other aspects.

According to the response, such facilities are not illegal and do not require any licensing, laws, or other rules to be followed.

### LEGAL LOOPHOLE AT THE SERVICE OF LANDHOLDERS

This legal loophole seems to allow anyone in possession

of a land plot, including those owned by the state and undergoing disputes for concession expirations, to use them temporarily as parking lots, which can generate income.

The Times has visited several of these facilities located across the Peninsula, particularly in areas classified as "old neighborhoods," observing a wide range of prices and offers. While some of these facilities have a "gatekeeper" and charge motorists by the hour, other facilities only offer forms of longer-term parking or vehicle storage through monthly or even yearly "passes."

### UNREGULATED AND NON-FIXED PRICES

In general, prices per hour vary between MOP20 and MOP30, depending on the parking and location, while the prices per month can reach several thousand patacas. In some cases, the Times learned that landlords demand payments of a full year in advance so that motorists have access to the keys or cards that provide access to the parking facility.

While using these unregulated facilities motorists

must also bear in mind that there is no form of insurance or safety net in the case of an accident or damages caused to vehicles.

### CONVENIENCE IS KEY

Despite this risk, many motorists opt for this type of facility as they are usually located in convenient areas that are not serviced by regular public parking lots.

Recently, the operations of several large-scale facilities of this kind have been halted due to the government reclaiming the land plots. However, new ones are often immediately created in another area, while projects for building construction are undergoing several bureaucratic and governmental procedures.

### GOV'T CLAIMS THERE IS ENOUGH PARKING

In a debate at the Legislative Assembly held in mid-June this year, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, has refuted several claims that the land plots previously retrieved by the government due to concession expiration are idle or abandoned.

Several lawmakers had proposed that the government temporarily use some of the land plots as parking lots while awaiting development, which can take several years.

However, Rosário said there are currently enough parking spaces in Macau for existing vehicles, adding these land reserves would be unsuitable for use as parking lots, since most of the unassigned land resources are located in Taipa and Coloane, where there is no pressing need to increase parking capacity.

Nonetheless, he acknowledged that to do so could be beneficial, if suitable spaces could be found in the Peninsula, where demand for parking is higher.

On previous occasions, Rosário as well as DSAT director, Kevin Lam, rejected the idea that the government would soon be building more public parking lot facilities, claiming that the current offering is sufficient, while the government intends to limit the growth of the number of private vehicles and favors further development of public transportation instead.

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VISAS

# Over 30,000 China travel permit applications submitted by non-Chinese residents

VICTORIA CHAN

**M**ORE than 30,000 non-Chinese permanent residents of Hong Kong and Macau have submitted applications for mainland China travel permits in just over a month since the new policy took effect, according to the National Immigration Administration (NIA).

"Issuing them with mainland travel permits is a major reform measure to fully and accurately implement the 'One country, two systems' policy, and actively adapt to the new needs and expectations of Hong Kong and Macau society," NIA director Pang Ling said at a press conference yesterday.

The new permits allow holders to travel throughout mainland China as many times as they like within the five-year validity period. They can also stay in the mainland for 90 days each visit.

"Compared with the past entry



and exit with passports, the holders of the permit can, first of all, travel to and from the mainland as many times as they want within the five-year validity period of the permit, such that the ability to 'go whenever you want, [and] go north at any time' has become a reality," Pang said.

Holders have also experienced quick customs clearance on the same day they received their new permits.

Meanwhile, the immigration

authorities said it aims to better serve exchanges between mainland China and Hong Kong and Macau.

"We will continue to explore and enrich the new practices of the 'One country, two systems' policy in the field of entry and exit, better serve and promote exchanges between people from the mainland and Hong Kong and Macau," Pang added.

The immigration authority also said it is continuing to facilitate

travel between the mainland and Hong Kong and Macau by issuing over 23,000 talent visas in recent years. The visa programs implement six categories for science, education, and health professionals in Beijing, Shanghai, and the GBA.

Also, over 312,000 Hong Kong and Macau residents enjoyed reissuing and renewing home entry permits in mainland China, according to data provided by Pang.

Meanwhile, NIA's deputy director, Liu Haitao said the regional entry visa-free policy helps attract more foreign tourists.

"A series of policies have been introduced, including 144-hour visa-free entry for foreign tourist groups from Hong Kong and Macau to Guangdong," Liu said.

The immigration authorities also aim to better serve exchanges between mainland China and Hong Kong and Macau. "We will continue to explore and enrich the new practices of the 'One country,

two systems' policy in the field of entry and exit," Pang added.

China continues to see a rising number of foreign visitors thanks to its series of entry policies.

In the first seven months of this year, the number of foreign visitors to China soared 129.9% year on year to 17.25 million, said Liu.

Meanwhile, a total of 341 million cross-border travels were recorded, up 62.34% from the same period for last year.

The foreign visitors are estimated to boost consumption topping 100 billion yuan in total, with a per capita daily average consumption volume of nearly 3,500 yuan, Liu said.

During the period, 846,000 port visas were issued to foreign nationals who had an urgent need to enter China but did not have enough time to apply for visas at Chinese embassies or consulates abroad. The figure rose 183% year on year.

In the same press conference, authorities revealed that it has resolved over 22,000 cases of various crimes that obstruct national border management since the beginning of this year, resulting in the apprehension of over 39,000 suspects.

Some criminal organizations recruit mainland residents to travel through Hong Kong and Macau to countries in East Asia, Southeast Asia, Europe, Central and South America, highlighting the prevalence of transit smuggling cases, he said.

CRIME

# Student caught running parallel trading scheme

NADIA SHAW

**A**N 18-year-old secondary school student has been arrested for leading a cross-border parallel trading scheme involving registered pig offal valued at approximately MOP 70,000. The student was apprehended during a customs raid at an industrial building near the border gate.

The suspect confessed to customs inspectors that he was paid MOP 100 per hour to operate the distribution point but could not provide a valid business license. He did, however, present an import declaration and quarantine documents.

This illicit trade has raised the issue of significant criminal activity amongst youth and food safety concerns, as the goods were stored at room temperature. Wong Ka Ki, acting chief of the Education and You-

th Development Bureau (DSEDJ), urged students to "think twice before they act to avoid being exploited by criminals," noting that such offenses could incur fines of up to MOP 50,000.

In the first quarter of this year, customs authorities reported 1,123 cases of parallel trading at the Zhuhai border. Local media also highlighted another incident where three secondary school students were caught with 550 USB drives strapped to their legs. Additionally, a separate crackdown in local districts resulted in the seizure of MOP 5.32 million worth of smuggled goods across 100 cases.

The DSEDJ expressed deep concern over students' involvement in parallel trading schemes. The bureau has contacted the student's school and is coordinating with counseling agencies to provide

necessary support and intervention.

Customs authorities have warned that violators will face prosecution under the Foreign Trade Law, with potential fines reaching MOP 50,000. Moreover, seized goods will be declared as property of the MSAR.

In response to these incidents, the bureau is committed to promoting physical and mental health among students. The bureau plans to enhance awareness and education on preventing illegal activities in the upcoming school year.

Students are encouraged to maintain critical thinking skills, avoid making rapid judgments, and carefully consider the consequences of their actions. Those in need of assistance are urged to contact the Educational Counseling and Special Education Center.



## HONG KONG PHOTOGRAPHER RECEIVES AWARDS AT PX3 WITH PHOTOS OF MACAU

**H**ONG Kong photographer Howard Tong has been awarded two honorable mentions in the latest Paris Photo Prize (PX3) international photography competition, featuring images of Macau.

The two photos of last year's edition of the Macau Fireworks Contest and another of the Grand Lisboa Hotel building were part of the photographer's six awards in the same competition, including one silver award and five honorable mentions. Describing himself as a landscape, cityscape, and street photographer, Tong's work has the unique attribute of being taken using mobile phones, one of his main cha-

racteristics and a form of specialization chosen by the photographer.

The two pictures featuring Macau locations and events were awarded in the category of Special/Night Photography and were granted two honorable mentions.

Concurrently, the Macau-based Portuguese photographer Gonçalo Lobo Pinheiro has also received a Silver Award at the same competition in the category of Press/Sports. Pinheiro presented a series of photos from the Volleyball Nations League event held in the neighboring region of Hong Kong last year. **RM**



## COTAI ARENA TO BE COMPLETED BY NOVEMBER

The construction project of Cotai's new 50,000-seat temporary outdoor performance venue is slated to be completed by November. As cited in an information bulletin released by the Public Works bureau, the project contract has a completion date of November. The project, which is expected to take 107 days to complete, has received six bids ranging from MOP84 million to MOP113 million. The bureau later confirmed that the contract cost would be MOP84.78 million. The selected venue will feature a reinforced concrete platform, complementary electromechanical systems, and water drainage facilities, as well as mobile amenities such as restrooms, offices and rest areas.

## DSEDJ WARNS OF HEAVY TRAFFIC FOR NEW SCHOOL YEAR

The beginning of the school year is expected to bring increased traffic in various districts of the city, the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) has warned. In a statement, the DSEDJ asked parents to pay attention to road traffic conditions, as there are usually jams at the beginning of the new academic year. The bureau further noted that it has kept in close dialogue with the Transport Bureau and various schools to aid students who are dealing with delays caused by traffic conditions.

## CENTALINE GIVES OUT 1.2 MONTH BONUSES TO STAFF AMID PROPERTY REVIVAL

In the second quarter of 2024, following the full withdrawal of market restrictions, developers accelerated their sales efforts, leading to a revival in transactions. According to realtor Centaline, the company has achieved results with a total revenue of HKD55 million. This performance has led management to reward staff with bonuses equivalent to 1.2 months' salary, based on quarterly profits. In the second quarter, Macau's real estate market surged, with 1,574 building units and parking spaces sold, totaling MOP9.31 billion. This marks an increase of 63.1% in volume and 95.6% in value compared to the previous quarter.

## NEW TAXI DOCUMENTATION SERVICES NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Yesterday, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) expanded its digital services to enhance convenience for Macau residents. As of 10 a.m. on August 19, four new taxi service processing functions were added to the "One Account" platform, allowing users to manage their taxi-related applications electronically. The newly available services include "Taxi Driver's License - Replacement," "Taxi Driver's License - Renewal," "Taxi Driver's License - Test Application," and "Taxi Driver Specialized Training Course - Application." To access these services, applicants must log into the "One Account" and agree to share their data, being an image of their valid Macau SAR resident identity card from the Identification Bureau.

# FRESH FOOD MARKETS IMPACTED BY UNSTABLE SUMMER WEATHER

VICTORIA CHAN

**R**ESIDENTS and vendors have reported a notable increase in vegetable prices at local markets and stores in recent weeks due to unstable weather and heavy summer rains.

Vendors at Iao Hon Municipal Market say purchase prices have risen 20% to 30% due to the wet conditions. "It's normal during rainy days every year. Vegetable prices are definitely more expensive after the rain, since farmers have to replant their vegetables as many may have rotted," said one merchant, as cited in a TDM report.

Customer observations support this, with one resident noting a 10% price increase, citing the price of choy sum as an example, which has had approximately a 4 patacas difference. Nearby vegetable stores have also seen price hikes, according to residents.

RENATO MARQUES



"Vegetable prices are up about 12 patacas per pound, which is 1 pataca to 2 patacas higher than usual," said one

shopper, who believes the small increase is reasonable given current circumstances.

The manager of one produ-

ce outlet acknowledged prices have risen approximately 30% compared to last year due to drought and floods affecting supply. Demand has subsequently dropped, with purchase volume falling a small amount.

"The prices have definitely increased by a small amount. The gross profit margin of vegetables is low, so they are sold cheaper. Since the prices have increased, the demand will decrease. It's much less compared to last year," the manager explained.

In contrast, fresh fish vendors face different pressures, as catch amounts have declined in recent years regardless of weather. Heavy rain has cut supplies further in the short-term, vendors note, but prices remain steady.

Fishermen hope catch volumes will rebound after the bad weather passes to boost their businesses.

## Song Pek Kei wants gov't to define legal retirement age

RENATO MARQUES

**L**AWMAKER Song Pek Kei is once again insisting that the government clearly define the legal retirement age in Macau.

The lawmaker, who has been raising this matter for at least eight years, again made the call during her recent review of the legislative work of the year.

She noted that senior citizens' access to several benefits, including free medical care, is confusing because there is no legal retirement age in Macau.

She said that "society believes that to request the pension, they must reach legal retirement age," which in Macau creates confusion, as there is no such age defined.

She also said that



at present, since the legal retirement age is not defined, the government should consider expanding free medical care to all residents aged between 60 and 65.

She believes that the new government, after the election of the new Chief Executive in

October, should consider amending the law to explicitly specify the retirement age in Macau.

Although the general rules do not establish a legal retirement age for the whole population, for civil servants, this age has been set to 65 years old.



## COUTINHO CALLS FOR EASING BORDER RESTRICTIONS WITH GUANGDONG

**C**ITING complaints from citizens about limited quotas and long wait times, lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho is urging officials to take steps to facilitate border crossings between the special administrative region and mainland China's Guangdong province.

In a query to the government, Coutinho requested introducing faster and more flexible measures at crossings in light of complaints about "insufficient daily quotas of cars authorized to circulate in Guangdong province," according to a statement. This forces citizens to pay for parking near borders, he said.

"It will be necessary to introduce more flexible and expeditious measures regarding the cross-border flow of vehicles, optimizing and modernizing document control equipment to facilitate border crossing for

residents and tourists," Coutinho stated. He added that exceptions should be made to allow those aged over 65, those aged under 18, couples, and families to travel together.

Coutinho also asked if monthly vehicle quotas to mainland China and rules restricting travel based on license plates could be lifted. He suggested Macau officials ask China for improvements to be implemented to facilitate cross-border traffic and faster document checks through upgraded technology.

The lawmaker's request comes as concerns grow about the efficiency and convenience of travel between Macau and Guangdong, whose close economic and social links are vital to the region. Coutinho argued streamlined border procedures would benefit both residents and visiting tourists. VC



# MICE sector nears pre-pandemic levels

NADIA SHAW

**M**ACAU'S meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions (MICE) sector is rebounding strongly, with a 30% increase in events during the first half of 2024 compared to the previous year. The Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) reported that Macau hosted 702 MICE events from January to June, just 32 events short of the same period in 2019, indicating a remarkable 96% recovery from pre-pandemic levels.

The MICE sector generated approximately MOP2.47 billion in non-gaming revenue, reflecting a 35.8% increase from the first half of 2023 (MOP1.82 billion). Delegates attending these events spent an average of MOP4,992 each, more than double the average spending

of leisure tourists, who spent around MOP2,260.

Looking ahead, the momentum in MICE activities is expected to continue into the second half of the year, which is traditionally the peak season for the industry. An estimated 1,500 events are planned for 2024. Notably, over 70% of the events in the first half of the year focused on trade and management, tourism, information technology, and finance, aligning with the government's strategy for economic diversification.

While overall attendance dropped by 30% year-on-year, the number of exhibitors and trade visitors saw significant increases—nearly 40% and 80% respectively. This surge indicates growing interest from international participants, further enhancing Macau's reputation as a premier destination for global events.



## TOURISM

### SHAANXI-XI'AN-MACAU WEEK CELEBRATES CULINARY RICHNESS

NADIA SHAW

**T**HE "ShaanxiXi'an-Macau Week" kicks off this Thursday, with a vibrant road show that showcases the culinary and cultural richness of Macau. Ahead of the main event, a special food promotion titled "Taste the Secrets of Macau in Xi'an" begins today at the W Hotel Xi'an.

This week-long celebration highlights Macau's recognition as a "City of Food," inviting local residents to explore a variety of Macanese and Portuguese dishes. The promotion features a themed buffet at the W Hotel Xi'an, curated by chefs from Melco Group, who will collaborate with local culinary teams. Guests can look forward to Macanese flavors, including octopus salad, African chicken, and Portuguese egg tarts.

In addition to the food



festivities, direct flights between Xi'an and Macau will resume as of today, enhancing travel opportunities for tourists. This initiative is part of a broader effort to expand the mainland tourist market and position Xi'an as a key destination for individual travelers to Macau.

The road show will run from August 22 to 26 at the Xi'an Qujiangchi Site Park. The five-day event will feature multiple exhibition areas that highlight Macau's

attractions, including its festivals, performing arts, and cultural products. Attendees can enjoy interactive performances and meet Macau's tourism mascot, "Mak Mak."

Additionally, a tourism promotion meeting is scheduled for August 21 to foster collaboration between the tourism industries of Shaanxi and Macau. This meeting aims to enhance business opportunities and attract more visitors to both regions.

MACAO PHOTO AGENCY



## HEALTH

### Cancer center reduces wait times by 50%

VICTORIA CHAN

**T**HE Health Bureau (SSM) has announced a significant reduction in the waiting time for first appointments at the oncology department of the Conde de São Januário Hospital Center, cutting the wait time by 50% to just 1.3 weeks.

In a response to questions from lawmaker Zheng Anting, SSM director Alvis Lo outlined recent improvements.

The number of outpa-

tient oncology clinics has risen from four to six since April, along with new psychology consultation rooms. A resource center served over 5,500 cancer patients and families this year through education and support programs.

Cancer was the cause of nearly a third of Macau's deaths in 2021, according to official data, and the number of new cases and deaths has been increasing year over year. To address the issue, the SSM pledged to "continue training spe-

cialist doctors, including in oncology," with the goal of improving early screening and treatment by 2030.

Zheng had raised concerns over heavy patient volumes straining medical staff. He urged expanding resources, such as recruiting more oncology specialists and improving facilities and equipment.

SSM assured that efforts are underway, stating that their aim is to intensify screening for major cancers to promote early diagnosis and treatment.

## CRIME

### TWO ARRESTED FOR BURGLARY AT OCEAN GARDENS

**T**WO non-residents were arrested over the weekend on suspicion of burglary at Ocean Garden's residential building. A security guard spotted one suspect climbing scaffolding on Saturday and suspected an impending break-in. He promptly alerted the police.

Upon their arrival, authorities found burglary tools and were informed by a resident about the theft of items valued at approximately 21,000 patacas, which included gold jewelry, a pearl necklace, and 5,000 patacas in cash. Both suspects have been taken into custody.

In response to a recent surge in residential robberies, the



Judiciary Police (PJ) issued a warning urging residents to remain vigilant as the bureau confirmed several reports of break-ins.

Investigations revealed that the scaffolding, used for façade repairs, was exploited by criminals to access apartments. The PJ is advising property ma-

agement to increase patrols and encourages residents to report any suspicious activity.

To enhance security, homeowners are urged to install sturdy locks and bolts, secure all doors and windows, and avoid keeping large amounts of cash or valuables at home.



DIPLOMACY

# Leaders of China and Vietnam pledge to strengthen political and economic ties

EMILY WANG FUJIYAMA & SIMINA MISTREANU, BEIJING

**T**HE leaders of China and Vietnam pledged to further their economic ties and gave a nod to their shared communist ideology during the first visit by Vietnam's new president to Beijing yesterday.

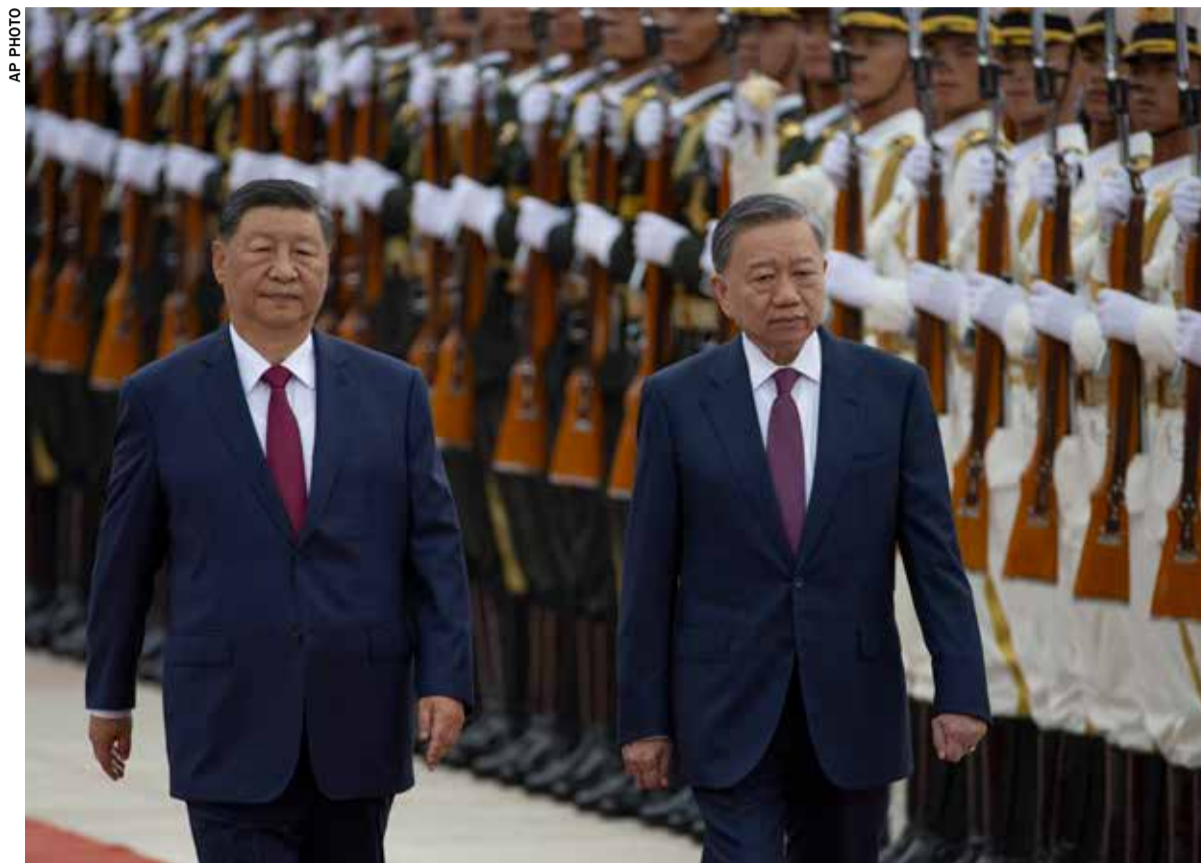
To Lam, who took office in May, made China the destination of his first state visit, signaling the continuing importance the Southeast Asian nation places on its giant neighbor despite ongoing territorial frictions in the South China Sea.

President Xi Jinping and his wife, Peng Li Yuan, hosted a ceremony for Lam and his wife, Ngo Phuong Ly, at Beijing's vast Great Hall of the People, replete with flags, flowers and a marching band.

Xi remarked on the "deep friendship" between Vietnam and China and said Vietnam was a priority for Beijing's "neighborhood diplomacy."

"As two ruling Communist parties in the world today, the two parties of China and Vietnam should ... continue their traditional friendship ... and jointly promote the development of the world's socialist cause," Xi said. "I believe that our road will expand wider as we walk further."

Lam's three-day visit to China comes about two weeks after he was confirmed as general secretary of Vietnam's Communist Party, the country's top political



President Xi Jinping walks next to Vietnam's President To Lam as they pass by the honor guard during a welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, yesterday

position. He succeeded Nguyen Phu Trong, who died last month after 13 years as leader.

Lam told Xi the relationship with China was the top priority of Vietnam's foreign policy.

"As a brother, we always observe every step of China's development, and we are happy for the achievement that the party and the government and the people of China have made under your leadership," Lam said in his opening remarks before mee-

ting with Xi.

The two leaders oversaw the signing of 14 cooperation agreements in areas such as political education, infrastructure, health care and banking. China is Vietnam's largest trading partner, with total bilateral trade of \$172 billion last year.

Lam said Vietnam supported China's claim over self-ruled Taiwan, known as the "One China" principle, and that any issues pertaining to Hong Kong

and the regions of Tibet and Xinjiang constitute China's internal affairs.

Lam is expected to continue his predecessor's strategy of balancing ties with China, the United States, Russia and others.

The U.S. and its ally Japan have been developing closer ties with Vietnam's communist government — America's former foe in the Vietnam War — as they seek partners in a growing economic and strategic rivalry

with China.

When Xi visited Vietnam in December, the two countries announced they would build "a shared future that carries strategic significance." The agreement, which Chinese state media has described as an elevation of ties, was seen as a concession by Vietnam, which had resisted using that wording in the past.

Russian President Vladimir Putin met Lam in Vietnam in June after visiting North Korea on a rare overseas trip for the Russian leader, who has been ostracized by many countries because of the 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Lam began his China trip on Sunday in Guangzhou. He also visited sites in the southern city where Vietnam's former communist leader Ho Chi Minh spent time in the 1920s and '30s.

Although both are one-party communist states, Vietnam and China have sparred repeatedly over territory that both claim in the South China Sea.

A Vietnamese coast guard ship recently took part in joint drills in the Philippines, which has had a series of violent encounters with China over contested territory in the South China Sea.

Still, Vietnam has benefited economically from investment by Chinese manufacturers, which have moved production to the Southeast Asian country in part to skirt U.S. restrictions on solar panels and other exports from China. **MDT/AP**

ESPIONAGE

## Crackdown on illegal data collection

YANG ZEKUN,  
CHINA DAILY

**T**HE Ministry of State Security warned this week against the illegal collection of sensitive data from classified sites using wind measurement towers and related facilities.

On its WeChat account, the ministry said that in recent years, certain companies with backgrounds linked to foreign espionage and intelligence agencies have covertly infiltrated the vicinity of classified sites in China under the guise of constructing wind measurement

towers, using them to illegally collect sensitive data and then transmitting the information abroad.

Wind measurement towers are often equipped with monitoring devices such as anemometers, wind vanes, thermometers and barometers that are used to monitor the atmosphere and make meteorological observations.

In one case, residents of a coastal city reported to national security agencies that a company had illicitly erected a wind measurement tower near a classified facility. After a prompt technical inspec-

tion, investigators found that in addition to collecting meteorological data, the tower's equipment also had the capability to analyze and transmit related data. They concluded that if the data was leaked abroad, it could pose risks to national security.

In another case, following a report from workers at a research base, national security officers inspected a wind measurement tower near the base, revealing that the tower had not been legally registered, had complex data transmission routes and exhibited clear se-

curity risks. The tower was dismantled in accordance with the law.

To safeguard meteorological data security, the China Meteorological Administration, the Ministry of State Security and the National Administration of State Secrets Protection jointly issued the Regulations on Foreign-related Meteorological Detection and Data Management in 2022.

The regulations stipulate that foreign-related meteorological detection stations are not allowed to be located near national defense and military faci-

lities, areas not open to the public, key construction zones and other areas involving national security.

Violations of national security and confidentiality laws, regulations, rules and relevant provisions in foreign-related meteorological detection and data management activities will be dealt with by national security and confidentiality departments. People found to have committed related crimes will be held liable.

On Oct 31, the Ministry of State Security's WeChat account said national security agencies, in conjunction with meteorological and confidentiality departments, conducted a special campaign last year on rectifying foreign-rela-

ted meteorological detection activities nationwide. They investigated more than 10 foreign meteorological equipment agents and inspected more than 3,000 foreign-related meteorological sites.

The authorities also discovered hundreds of illegal foreign-related meteorological detection sites were transmitting meteorological data abroad in real-time. The sites were distributed across more than 20 Chinese provinces.

Some of the illegal sites even received direct funding from foreign governments, with some observation points established near sensitive locations such as military units and defense companies, it said. **CHINA DAILY**



SOUTH CHINA SEA

# Chinese and Philippine ships collide again and countries trade blame

SIMINA MISTREANU &  
JIM GOMEZ, TAIPEI

**C**HINESE and Philippine coast guard ships collided at sea, damaging at least two vessels, in an encounter early yesterday near a new flashpoint in their increasingly alarming confrontations in the disputed South China Sea.

Each blamed the other for the collision near Sabina Shoal, a disputed atoll in the Spratly Islands, where Vietnam and Taiwan also have overlapping claims. There were no reports of injuries.

China's coast guard accused the Philippines of deliberately crashing one of its ships into a Chinese vessel. It said in a statement on its website that two Philippine coast guard ships entered waters near the shoal, ignored a warning from the Chinese coast guard and intentionally collided with one of the Chinese boats at 3:24 a.m.

"The Philippine side is entirely responsible for the collision," spokesperson Gan Yu said. "We warn the Philippine side to immediately stop its infringement and provocation, otherwise it will bear all the consequences arising from that."

Jonathan Malaya, assistant director-general of the Philippine government's National Security Council, accused the Chinese coast guard of falsely saying the Philippine coast guard ships had rammed its vessels.

Video and photographs, including ones taken by journalists from a U.S. TV network who were on board one of the Philippine coast guard ships, showed that the Chinese ships "caused the collisions," Malaya told a news forum in Manila.

The Philippines' National Task Force on the West Philippine Sea said two of the coast guard ships, BRP Bagacay and BRP Cape Engaño, "encountered unlawful and aggressive maneuvers" from Chinese coast guard vessels while en route to Patag and Lawak islands, which are occupied by Filipino forces, in the contested region.

"These dangerous ma-

AP PHOTO



This photo provided by the Philippine Coast Guard, shows damage on the Philippines coast guard vessel BRP Cape Engaño after a collision with a Chinese coast guard ship, yesterday

neuers resulted in collisions, causing structural damage to both Philippine Coast Guard vessels," the statement said.

The task force said the collision between BRP Cape Engaño and one of the Chinese ships created a hole in the deck of the Philippine ship about 12.7 centimeters in size.

About 16 minutes later, the other Philippine ship, BRP Bagacay, was rammed twice on its port and starboard sides by a different Chinese vessel, leading to structural damage, the task force said.

"This is the biggest structural damage we have incurred as a result of the dangerous maneuvers carried out by the Chinese coast guard," Commodore Jay Tarruela of the Philippine coast guard said at the news forum.

The task force said the Philippine coast guard "stands firm in its responsibility to ensure the safety and security of our maritime domain while addressing any threats to our national interests."

Gan, the Chinese coast guard spokesperson, said China claims "indisputable sovereignty" over the Spratly Islands, known in Chinese as the Nansha Islands, including Sabina Shoal and its adjacent waters. The Chinese name for Sabina Shoal is Xianbin Reef.

In a separate statement, he said a Philippine ship that was turned away from Sabina Shoal entered waters near the disputed Second Thomas Shoal, ignoring the

Chinese coast guard's warnings. "The Chinese coast guard took control measures against the Philippine ship in accordance with law and regulation," he added.

China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs also blamed the Philippines for the incident. "Not only did they ignore China's coast guard's warnings, the vessels deliberately collided into Chinese coast guard vessels that were carrying out law enforcement operations in a dangerous manner," ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said at a daily briefing yesterday.

Sabina Shoal, which lies about 140 kilometers west of the Philippines' western island province of Palawan, has become a new flashpoint in the territorial disputes between China and the Philippines.

The Philippine coast guard deployed one of its key patrol ships, the BRP Teresa Magbanua, to Sabina in April after Filipino scientists discovered submerged piles of crushed corals in its shallows that sparked suspicions that China may be preparing to build a structure at the atoll. The Chinese coast guard later deployed a ship to Sabina in a new territorial faceoff.

Sabina is near Philippine-occupied Second Thomas Shoal, which has been the scene of increasingly alarming confrontations between Chinese and Philippine coast guard ships and accompanying vessels since last year.

China and the Philippines reached an agreement last month to prevent fur-

ther confrontations when the Philippines transports replacement sentry forces, along with food and other supplies, to Manila's territorial outpost in Second Thomas Shoal, which has been closely guarded by Chinese coast guard, navy and suspected militia ships.

The Philippine navy transported food and per-

sonnel to Second Thomas Shoal a week after the deal was reached and no incident was reported, sparking hope that tensions in the shoal would ease. But yesterday's incident raises questions about whether the deal will make a difference.

"We are of course disappointed again," Malaya said. "Despite this preliminary understanding, which we hoped was the first page in a new chapter between the Philippines and (Chinese) relations, we have ... another incident."

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao said, "We hope the Philippines will keep its promise, earnestly abide by the preliminary agreement it has reached with China, and not take actions that could complicate the situation so as to work with us to jointly manage and control the maritime situation."

China has been at odds with many other countries in the Asia-Pacific for years over its sweeping maritime claims, including almost all of the South China Sea, a strategic and resource-rich waterway.

Beijing is rapidly expanding its military and has become increasingly assertive in pursuing its territorial claims, giving rise to more frequent confrontations, primarily with the Philippines, though it is also involved in longtime territorial disputes with Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei.

U.S. Ambassador MaryKay Carlson said on the social media platform X that the United States stands with the Philippines "in condemning the China coast guard's dangerous maneuvers near Sabina Shoal that endangered lives and caused damage" to the two Philippine vessels. "We are committed to supporting the rights of our friends, partners, allies under international law," the statement said.

A 2016 arbitration ruling by a United Nations tribunal invalidated Beijing's claims in the South China Sea, but China did not participate in the proceedings and rejected the ruling. **MDT/AP**

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In this footage released by the Ukrainian armed forces, smoke billows in what is said to show the destruction of a key bridge in Russia's Kursk region

PUTIN'S WAR

# Push into Russia's Kursk region is to create a buffer zone: Zelenskyy

**U**KRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said yesterday [Macau time] the daring military incursion into Russia's Kursk region aims to create a buffer zone to prevent further attacks by Moscow across the border.

It was the first time Zelenskyy clearly stated the aim of the operation that began Aug. 6. Previously, he had said the operation aimed to protect communities in the bordering Sumy region from constant shelling.

Zelenskyy said "it is now our primary task in defensive operations overall: to destroy as much Russian war potential as possible and conduct maximum counteroffensive actions. This includes creating a buffer zone on the aggressor's territory -- our operation in the Kursk region," he said in his nightly address.

This weekend, Ukraine destroyed a key bridge in the region and struck a second one nearby, disrupting supply lines as it pressed the incursion, officials said.

Pro-Kremlin military bloggers acknowledged the destruction of the first bridge on the Seim River near the town of Glushkovo will impede deliveries of supplies to Russian forces repelling Ukraine's incursion, although Moscow could still use pontoons and smaller bridges. Ukraine's air force chief, Lt. Gen. Mykola Oleshchuk, on Friday released a video of an airstrike that cut

the bridge in two.

Less than two days later, Ukrainian troops hit a second bridge in Russia, according to Oleshchuk and Russian regional Gov. Alexei Smirnov.

As of Sunday morning, there were no officials giving the exact location of the second bridge attack. But Russian Telegram channels claimed that a second bridge over the Seim, in the village of Zvanoe, had been struck.

According to Russia's Mash news site, the attacks left only one intact bridge in the area. The Associated Press could not immediately verify these claims. If confirmed, the Ukrainian strikes would further complicate Moscow's attempts to replenish its forces and evacuate civilians.

Glushkovo is about 12 kilometers north of the Ukrainian border, and approximately 16 kilometers northwest of the main battle zone in Kursk. Zvanoe is located another 8 kilometers to the northwest.

Kyiv previously has said little about the goals of its push into Russia with tanks and other armored vehicles, the largest attack on the country since World War II, which took the Kremlin by surprise and saw scores of villages and hundreds of prisoners fall into Ukrainian hands.

The Ukrainians drove deep into the region in several directions, facing little resistance and sowing chaos and panic as tens of thousands of civilians fled. Ukraine's Commander in Chief, Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi,

claimed last week that his forces had advanced across 1,000 square kilometers of the region, although it was not possible to independently verify what Ukrainian forces effectively control.

Buffer zones sought by both sides

In his remarks on creating a buffer zone, Zelenskyy said Ukrainian forces "achieved good and much-needed results."

Analysts say that although Ukraine could try to consolidate its gains inside Russia, it would be risky, given Kyiv's limited resources, because its own supply lines extending deep into Kursk would be vulnerable.

The incursion has proven Ukraine's ability to seize the initiative and has boosted its morale, which was sapped by a failed counteroffensive last summer and months of grinding Russian gains in the eastern Donbas region.

For his part, Russian President Vladimir Putin said while visiting China in May that Moscow's offensive that month in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region was aimed at creating a buffer zone there.

That offensive opened a new front and displaced thousands of Ukrainians. The attacks were a response to Ukrainian shelling of Russia's Belgorod region, Putin said.

"I have said publicly that if it continues, we will be forced to create a security zone, a sanitary zone," he said. "That's what we are doing."

Ukraine's move into Kursk resembled its lightning operation from September 2022, led by Syrskyi, in which its forces reclaimed control of the northeastern Kharkiv region after taking advantage of Russian manpower shortages and a lack of field fortifications.

Zelenskyy seeks permission to strike deeper into Russia

On Saturday, Zelenskyy urged Kyiv's allies to lift remaining restrictions on using Western weapons to attack targets deeper in Russia, including in Kursk, saying his troops could deprive Moscow "of any ability to advance and cause destruction" if granted sufficient long-range capabilities.

"It is crucial that our partners remove barriers that hinder us from weakening Russian positions in the way this war demands. ... The bravery of our soldiers and the resilience of our combat brigades compensate for the lack of essential decisions from our partners," Zelenskyy said on the social platform X.

Russia's Foreign Ministry and pro-Kremlin bloggers alleged U.S.-made HIMARS launchers have been used to destroy bridges on the Seim. These claims could not be independently verified.

Ukraine's leaders have repeatedly sought authorization for long-range strikes on Russian air bases and other infrastructure used to pummel Ukraine's energy facilities and other civilian targets, including with retrofitted Soviet-era "glide bombs" attacking Ukraine's industrial east in recent months.

Moscow also appears to have increased attacks on Kyiv, targeting it Sunday with ballistic missiles for a third time this month, according to the head of the municipal military administration. Serhii Popko said in a Telegram post the "almost identical" August strikes on the capital "most likely used" North Korean-supplied KN-23 missiles.

Another attempt to target Kyiv followed at about 7 a.m. Popko said, this time with Iskander cruise missiles. Ukrainian air defenses struck down all the missiles fired in both attacks on the city, he said.

Fears mount for Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant

Elsewhere, the head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency said Saturday the safety situation at the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is deteriorating.

International Atomic Energy Agency head Rafael Grossi urged "maximum restraint from all sides" after an IAEA team at the plant reported an explosive carried by a drone detonated just outside its protected area.

MDT/AP

## this day in history

### 1970 BOBBY MOORE CLEARED OF STEALING



The England soccer captain, Bobby Moore, has been cleared of stealing an emerald bracelet in Colombia.

Moore, who captained England to World Cup victory in 1966, was accused of taking the £600 (\$1,500) bracelet from the Green Fire shop in the Tequendama Hotel, Bogota, last month.

Police and judicial investigators have long indicated that Moore was set up, and today the Bogota Superior Court ruled he should have "unconditional freedom".

The three judges also confirmed a decision made by Judge Pedro Dorado on 28 May that there was no evidence to warrant jailing England's legendary footballer.

On 18 May Mr Moore went into the shop with fellow player Bobby Charlton to find a present for Charlton's wife.

The store owner, Danilo Rojas, and his assistant, Carla Padilla, called the police after the two men had left the shop.

The police arrived and took statements and the footballer denied the allegations.

On 25 May, Mr Moore, was charged and placed under house arrest at the home of a local football official but was freed three days later with conditions, so that he could play in the World Cup in Mexico.

One witness, Alvaro Suarez, said he had seen the bracelet in Moore's pocket.

But today the chief of police, Jaime Ramirez, indicated Mr Moore had been the victim of a frame-up and that Mr Suarez had been paid by Mr Rojas to testify against the England football star. [...]

Rojas and Suarez will be questioned by the judge - but Ms Padilla is believed to have gone to the United States.

The First Secretary at the British Embassy in Bogota, Keith Morris, welcomed the ruling but said the judges had decided a "legal technicality" and that the case was by no means closed.

Bobby Moore was named Footballer of the Year 1963-64 and awarded an OBE 1967.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Bobby Moore retired as a player seven years after the Bogota bracelet incident. He managed Oxford City and Southend United, where he was also a director, and then started up his own sports marketing company. From 1986 to 1990 he was sports editor of the Sunday Sport and then a commentator for London's Capital Radio station until his death in 1993 from cancer. In November 1972 a Colombian judge decided charges against Bobby should be dropped but the case was reopened in 1973. Finally, in December 1975 the Foreign Office wrote to Moore saying the case was closed. Documents released in 2003 by the Public Records Office showed that even the head of the Colombian police believed Moore was innocent and that the prime suspect was in fact an unnamed woman who had touted the bracelet to members of the Colombian underworld.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
**Mar. 21-Apr. 19**  
 One social door closes and another opens with the Full Moon. Adapt with community and team changes over two weeks. Share appreciation and salutations.

**TAURUS**  
**Apr. 20-May. 20**  
 Consider an exciting career opportunity. Make professional changes under this Aquarius Full Moon. Redirect efforts over two weeks toward your talents, passions and purpose.

**GEMINI**  
**May. 21-Jun. 21**  
 Your exploration changes and adapts. The Full Moon illuminates a shift in your educational direction. Experiment with new concepts over the next two weeks.

**CANCER**  
**Jun. 22-Jul. 22**  
 Collaborate for financial growth over the next two weeks following tonight's Full Moon. Shift directions for changing conditions.

**LEO**  
**Jul. 23-Aug. 22**  
 Make adjustments together. Collaborate for shared commitments around changes over two weeks following tonight's Full Moon. Adapt for solutions.

**VIRGO**  
**Aug. 23-Sep. 22**  
 Begin a new physical health, work and fitness phase. Adapt practices for changing conditions over two weeks, illuminated by tonight's Aquarius Full Moon.

**LIBRA**  
**Sep. 23-Oct. 22**  
 Express your heart, imagination and artistry. Tonight's Full Moon shines on a transition. Adapt directions with a romance, passion or creative endeavor.

**SCORPIO**  
**Oct. 23-Nov. 21**  
 Make repairs. Renovate, remodel and tend your garden. Adapt with domestic changes. Nurture your home and family over this two-week Full Moon phase.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
**Nov. 22-Dec. 21**  
 Start another chapter. A two-week Full Moon phase highlights communications, connection and intellectual discovery. Adapt around challenges. Keep channels open.

**CAPRICORN**  
**Dec. 22-Jan. 19**  
 Make a shift around income and finances. Discover profitable opportunities in new directions under this Aquarius Full Moon. Redirect attention toward fresh potential.

**AQUARIUS**  
**Jan. 20-Feb. 18**  
 A challenge reorients you. This Full Moon in your sign illuminates new personal directions. Expand boundaries over two weeks. Develop an inspiring possibility.

**PISCES**  
**Feb. 19-Mar. 20**  
 Review priorities privately. This Full Moon illuminates a two-week introspective phase. Balance old responsibilities with new. Process transitions.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sanson**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	23	29	rain
Changchun	21	27	rain
Chengdu	24	35	cloudy
Chongqing	26	39	fine
Fuzhou	27	33	rain
Guangzhou	25	30	rain
Guiyang	20	32	cloudy
Haikou	25	34	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	27	35	thunderstorms
Harbin	19	27	cloudy
Hefei	24	31	rain
Nanjing	27	31	rain
Shanghai	29	36	rain
Taipei	26	30	rain
Wuhan	26	35	fine
Hong Kong	27	28	thunderstorms
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	13	23	rain
Frankfurt	14	27	overcast
Paris	12	23	rain
London	12	21	overcast
New York	15	24	overcast

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Lieu; 6- Actress Garr; 10- Alan of "M\*A\*S\*H"; 14- Singer LaBelle; 15- Knighted Guinness; 16- Competes; 17- Choir members; 18- Basic unit of heredity; 19- Work without \_\_\_; 20- Shrimp dish; 22- And so forth; 24- Actress Thurman; 26- Area with coin-operated games; 27- A lobe or full type of assault; 31- Miscalculate; 32- Up \_\_\_ (trapped); 33- Chilean pianist Claudio; 36- Women's \_\_\_; 39- Head of France; 40- Brush a horse; 41- Munich mister; 42- Double curve; 43- Small jazz band; 44- Capital of Yemen; 45- La Brea goo; 46- Assembly; 48- Alter; 51- Monetary unit of Japan; 52- Cocks; 54- Tabs; 59- Stuck, after "in"; 60- Stable staple; 62- Shinto temple gateway; 63- Flower holder; 64- Functions; 65- Proprietor; 66- \_\_\_ Three Lives; 67- Dispatched; 68- Actress Witherspoon;

DOWN 1- Body shops?; 2- After-bath powder; 3- Blues singer James; 4- Molecule part; 5- Quarrel; 6- Label; 7- Waiting for the Robert \_\_\_; 8- Oscar de la \_\_\_; 9- Frozen dessert; 10- Hindu incarnation; 11- Covered on the inside; 12- Tractor pioneer John; 13- "The Thin Man" dog; 21- \_\_\_ little teapot...; 23- Light brown; 25- Waker; 27- Destiny; 28- Hwys; 29- Scraps; 30- Originally named; 34- Burgle; 35- Spacious; 36- Director Riefenstahl; 37- Teheran's country; 38- Toot one's own horn; 40- Beautiful; 41- Covering for the head; 43- Pessimist's word; 44- Elected legislator; 45- Sampled; 47- Lamprey; 48- Reef material; 49- Residence; 50- Wipe out; 52- Sitarist Shankar; 53- British submachine gun; 55- Boxer Riddick; 56- Sea eagle; 57- Falsehoods; 58- Your excellency; 61- Fast flier;



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- 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
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- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
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FOOTBALL

# NO GOAL FOR MBAPPÉ IN HIS LA LIGA DEBUT AS MADRID DRAWS AT MALLORCA

TALES AZZONI, MADRID

## MALLORCA 1, REAL MADRID 1

**D**EFENDING champion Real Madrid couldn't manage more than a 1-1 draw at Mallorca in Kylian Mbappé's first Spanish league match yesterday [Macau time].

In his second game with Madrid after debuting midweek, Mbappe failed to break through. The France great had scored in Madrid's 2-0 win against Atalanta in the UEFA Super Cup on Wednesday.

Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti started with the same squad that beat Atalanta, with Rodrygo, Vinicius Junior and Mbappé in attack.

"They change position from time to time," Ancelotti said of Vinicius and Mbappé. "Sometimes Mbappé plays more centrally and sometimes one of the two has to occupy this flank, without a particular plan. It depends on how they feel about it."

It was Rodrygo who put Madrid ahead against Mallorca 13 minutes into the match, but the hosts

equalized with Vedat Muriqi's goal in the 53rd.

"We got off to a good start, taking the lead and then had a chance to get the second goal," Ancelotti said. "We didn't find the balance in the second half. We could have lost as there was no balance at the back. It wasn't a good game. We need to defend better. We're a very attacking team, but defensive balance is a fundamental factor."

Madrid defender Ferland Mendy was sent off deep into second-half stoppage time for a hard foul on Muriqi.

"I don't want to make excuses for anything, but we just need to do better and with a better attitude," Ancelotti said. "We can learn a lot from this match. It's quite clear where our problems could come from."

Rafael Nadal, who is from the island of Mallorca, was among those watching the match at the Son Moix Stadium.

Mallorca's players provided a guard of honor for the Super Cup winners, lining up to applaud the



Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe runs with the ball during a Spanish La Liga soccer match

Madrid team as they entered the field before kickoff.

### SOCIEDAD STUNNED AT HOME

Real Sociedad, which finished sixth last season, was upset 2-1 at home by Rayo Vallecano, which

fought to avoid relegation in the last campaign.

Jorge de Frutos and Sergio Camello scored second-half goals to put Rayo in front, while Sociedad only found the net with Martín Zubimendi's goal deep into

stoppage time.

On Saturday, Robert Lewandowski scored twice to give Barcelona a 2-1 win at Valencia in coach Hansi Flick's Spanish league debut.

Atletico Madrid visits Villarreal today [Macau time]. **MDT/AP**

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IN MACAU (2023)





# GOLF

## Ballester becomes 1st Spaniard to win US Amateur, fending off Iowa's Kent

DAVE CAMPBELL,  
CHASKA (MINN.)

**J**OSE Luis Ballester, a senior-to-be at Arizona State, became the first player from Spain to win the U.S. Amateur, fending off Iowa sophomore Noah Kent 2 up Sunday at Hazeltine in the 36-hole match on his 21st birthday.

Ballester, who was the only player in the top 10 of the world amateur ranking to reach the round of 16, took the lead on the second hole and never trailed. He joined Jon Rahm as the only players from Spain to win a USGA tournament. Rahm, who also played for the Sun Devils, won the U.S. Open in 2021.

"We have many great Spaniards, many great legends," Ballester said. "Being able to add my name into that history is pretty sweet."

Both finalists gained exemptions for the Masters and the U.S. Open next year, and Ballester also got a spot in the British Open.

Ballester trailed at some point in his last three matches before taking control in the grueling final. Wearing a red polo, yellow shorts on loan from Spaniard he beat in the semifinals, Luis Masa-



Jose Luis Ballester reacts after his shot for the 15th hole in Chaska, Minnesota

veu, and black socks to match his country's colors, Ballester went 3 up after four holes on two early birdies. He had a 4-up lead at the lunch break on a vintage 82-degree day with a slight late-summer breeze.

Kent, who entered the week as a long shot at No. 560 in the world amateur ranking, refused to fade on the exhausting final day.

"You don't want to be 4 down going into an 18-hole match, but it's been done before, and I kept telling myself that. Everybody

in my corner kept telling myself that," Kent said. "I fought like crazy out there."

He hit a long putt for eagle on No. 25 — the seventh hole on the course — to move within two. Then after falling behind by four with seven holes to go, the player from Naples, Florida, snapped back to win Nos. 31, 32 and 34 and pull within one.

On the 34th hole, Hazeltine's signature lakeside No. 16, Ballester hit into the thick rough off the tee and, after clipping a tree, lan-

ded in worse shape in the reeds. He wound up with a bogey.

But with his lead down to one, Ballester got back on track to par the final two holes. He nailed the shot off the No. 17 tee within striking range on the green.

"I was juiced. I could feel the adrenaline in my veins, in my forearms," Ballester said.

Kent hit into the bunker off the No. 18 tee, then the rough. His last-chance chip overshot the hole. Once the victory was secured, Ballester began to cry as he thought of friends and family in Spain, including his grandmother who's been ill this summer.

"It was a hard summer back in Spain, so I feel like all those emotions kind of came out," Ballester said.

Wearing a white polo with a Hawkeyes logo, Kent was attempting to become first Iowa player to win the event. The 19-year-old had the clear edge in fan support with dozens in gold Caitlin Clark shirts cheering from the gallery.

"I knew it was going to be like that from yesterday. I kind of liked it a little bit," Ballester said. "When the other guy is feeling it and he's kind of grabbing that momentum and you see all the supporters that are going for him, it can be a litt-

le depressing. So it's important to face it with a nice mindset."

Kent hadn't trailed since the 12th hole of his second round match until Ballester took the early lead. Kent beat 17th-ranked amateur and Big Ten rival Jackson Buchanan of Illinois in their 18-hole semifinal match.

Ballester, who won the European Amateur last year, took a congratulatory call from fellow Spaniard Sergio Garcia after his semifinal win. He shined with the short game all week.

"I think it's in the blood," Ballester said. "It has to be."

Hazeltine, which was designed by Robert Trent Jones and opened in 1962 in what was then mostly farmland and now a suburb filled with lakes and cul-de-sacs about 25 miles southwest of Minneapolis, last hosted the men's amateur in 2006. Since then, the course has seen the PGA Championship (2009), the Ryder Cup (2016) and the Women's PGA Championship (2019). The Ryder Cup is due back in 2029.

The event began Monday with 312 players over two courses, the 130th edition of the tournament that has helped launch many greats of golf into a decorated career on the pro tour. **MDT/AP**

AD

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Cheyenne Mumphrey, MDT/AP Education Writer



**GOT COLD SYMPTOMS? HERE'S WHEN KIDS SHOULD TAKE A SICK DAY FROM SCHOOL**

As schools reopen for another year, they are focused on improving student attendance. But back-to-school is hitting just as COVID-19 cases are increasing, raising the question: When is a child too sick for school?

School absences surged during the pandemic and have yet to recover. In the U.S. alone, nearly 1 in 4 students remains chronically absent, defined as missing 10% or more of the academic year, according to the latest data analyzed by The Associated Press.

One reason for continued high absences: After years of COVID-19 quarantines, parents are more cautious about sending children to school when they might be contagious with an illness.

When a child misses school, even for an excused absence like a sick day, it's harder for them to stay on track academically. So schools and health experts are trying to change the culture around sick days.

During the pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urged people who tested positive for COVID-19 to isolate at home for a set number of days and to quarantine after exposure to the coronavirus. In some settings, people with any mild illness were urged to remain home until symptoms were clear.

Those standards, and the caution behind them, remained for years after schools reopened to in-person instruction. That meant children often missed large portions of school after contracting or being exposed to COVID-19 or other illnesses.

This spring, COVID-19 guidance officially changed. Now, the CDC suggests people treat COVID-19 like other respiratory illnesses, such as the flu and RSV.

If a child has a fever, they should stay home, no matter the illness.

A child can return to school when their fever has been gone for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication. Other symptoms should be improving.

If a child doesn't have a fever, it's OK to send them to class with some signs of illness, including a runny nose, headache or cough, according to schools and the American Academy of Pediatrics. If those symptoms aren't improving or are severe, such as a hacking cough, call your child's doctor.

The guidance around vomiting and diarrhea varies across school districts. Generally, students should remain home until symptoms stop, according to American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines. Older children may be able to manage mild diarrhea at school.

"Unless your student has a fever or threw up in the last 24 hours, you are coming to school. That's what we want," said Abigail Arie, director of student support services in Oakland, California.

Guidance from the Los Angeles Unified School District says students can attend school with mild symptoms such as a runny nose or cold, but should stay home if they have vomiting, diarrhea, severe pain or a fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37 degrees Celsius) or higher.

School districts across the U.S. have similar guidance, including in Texas, Illinois and New York.

The CDC says people should take additional precautions for five days after returning to school or other normal activities.

Masks and social distancing are no longer mandated but are encouraged to prevent disease spread. Experts also recommend plenty of handwashing and taking steps for cleaner air, such as opening a window or running an air purifier.

School districts say parents should keep up-to-date on all health examinations and immunizations for students so they don't miss additional days of school.

**SINTRA OR, A LOOK AT THE CHAOS OF 'OVERTOURISM' IN THE SUMMER OF 2024**

**THE BUZZ**

The doorbell to Martinho de Almada Pimentel's house is hard to find, and he likes it that way. It's a long rope that, when pulled, rings a literal bell on the roof that lets him know someone is outside the mountain-side mansion that his great-grandfather built in 1914 as a monument to privacy.

There's precious little of that for Pimentel during this summer of "overtourism."

Travelers idling in standstill traffic outside the sunwashed walls of Casa do Cipreste sometimes spot the bell and pull the string "because

it's funny," he says. With the windows open, he can smell the car exhaust and hear the "tuk-tuk" of outsized scooters named for the sound they make. And he can sense the frustration of 5,000 visitors a day who are forced to queue around the house on the crawl up single-lane switchbacks to Pena Palace, the onetime retreat of King Ferdinand II.

This is a story of what it means to be visited in 2024, the first year in which global tourism is expected to set records since the coronavirus pandemic brought much of life on Earth to a halt.

Full story on [macaudailytimes.com.mo/buzz](https://macaudailytimes.com.mo/buzz)



In this May 19, 2019 file photo, French actor Alain Delon poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'A Hidden Life' at Cannes

**OBITUARY**

**FRENCH ACTOR AND HEARTTHROB ALAIN DELON DIES AT 88**

**SYLVIE CORBET & THOMAS ADAMSON, PARIS**

Alain Delon, the internationally acclaimed French actor who embodied both the bad guy and the policeman and made hearts throb around the world, died at age 88, French media reported.

With his handsome looks and tender manner, the prolific actor was able to combine toughness with an appealing, vulnerable quality that made him one of France's memorable leading men.

Delon was also a producer. He also appeared in plays, and in later years, in television movies.

French President Emmanuel Macron paid tribute on X to "a French monument."

"Alain Delon has played legendary roles and made the world dream," he wrote. "Melancholic, popular, secretive, he was more than a star."

Delon's children announced the death on Sunday in a statement to the French national news agency Agence France-Presse, a common practice in France. Tributes to Delon immediately started pouring in on social platforms, and all leading French media switched to

full-fledged coverage of his rich career.

Earlier this year, his son Anthony had said his father had been diagnosed with B-cell lymphoma, a type of cancer.

Over the past year, Delon's fragile health condition had been at the heart of a family dispute over his care that gave rise to bitter exchanges through the media among his three children.

At the prime of his career, in the 1960s and 1970s, Delon was sought out by some of the world's top directors, from Luchino Visconti to Joseph Losey.

In his later years, Delon grew disillusioned with the movie industry, saying that money had killed the dream. "Money, commerce and television have wrecked the dream machine," he wrote in a 2003 edition of the newsweekly, *Le Nouvel Observateur*. "My cinema is dead. And me, too."

But he continued to work frequently, appearing in several TV movies in his 70s.

Delon's presence was unforgettable, whether playing morally depraved heroes or romantic leading men. He first drew acclaim in 1960 with "Plein Soleil," directed by René Clément, in which he played a murderer trying

to take on the identity of his victims.

He made several Italian movies, working, most notably with Visconti in the 1961 film "Rocco and His Brothers," in which Delon portrays a self-sacrificing brother intent on helping his sibling. The movie won the Special Jury Prize at the Venice Film Festival.

The 1963 Visconti film "Le Guepard" (The Leopard) starring Delon won the Palme d'Or, the highest honor at the Cannes Film Festival. His other films included Clément's "Is Paris Burning," with a screenplay by Gore Vidal and Francis Ford Coppola among others; "La Piscine" (The Sinners), directed by Jacques Deray; and, in a departure, Losey's "The Assassination of Trotsky" in 1972.

In 1968, Delon began producing movies — 26 of them by 1990 — part of a frenzied and self-assured momentum that he maintained throughout his life.

His confidence was palpable in his statement to *Femme* in 1996, "I like to be loved the way I love myself." This echoed his charismatic screen persona.

French film producer Alain Terzian said Delon was "the last of the giants." **MDT/AP**



**Saudi Arabia** A former Saudi official yesterday accused Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of forging King Salman's signature to initiate the war in Yemen. This allegation adds to the intense scrutiny the Crown Prince faces over his leadership tactics and the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Yemen.



**USA** House Republicans released a report this week from their impeachment inquiry into President Biden, focusing on the financial activities of his son, Hunter Biden. The report accuses the Biden family of corruption but stops short of direct criminal allegations against the President himself.



**America** Hurricane Ernesto, after regaining strength, is causing significant coastal impacts along the U.S. East Coast to Central America. The hurricane has led to at least one confirmed fatality due to rip currents and has necessitated numerous water rescues.



**Colombia** Prince Harry and Meghan concluded their visit to Colombia by engaging with Afro-Colombian leaders and attending a cultural festival. Their visit focused on social and racial issues, highlighting the challenges faced by communities of African descent in the region.