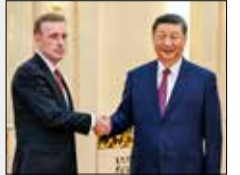




77,000 STUDENTS ANTICIPATED TO RETURN TO SCHOOL ON SEP. 2, WITH A TOTAL OF 88,000 EXPECTED BY SEP. 4, FORCING GOV'T TO ADJUST TRANSPORTATION

TOUR GROUPS ON THE RISE WITH SIGNIFICANT JUMPS FROM KOREA, INDIA

XI MEETS WITH US NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER IN A NEW BID TO IMPROVE TIES



Japan Tropical storm Shanshan, which initially hit as a typhoon yesterday, brought torrential rains to southern Japan, causing three deaths and extensive power outages affecting nearly a quarter million households. The weakened storm continues its northward path, raising concerns about further flooding and landslides.



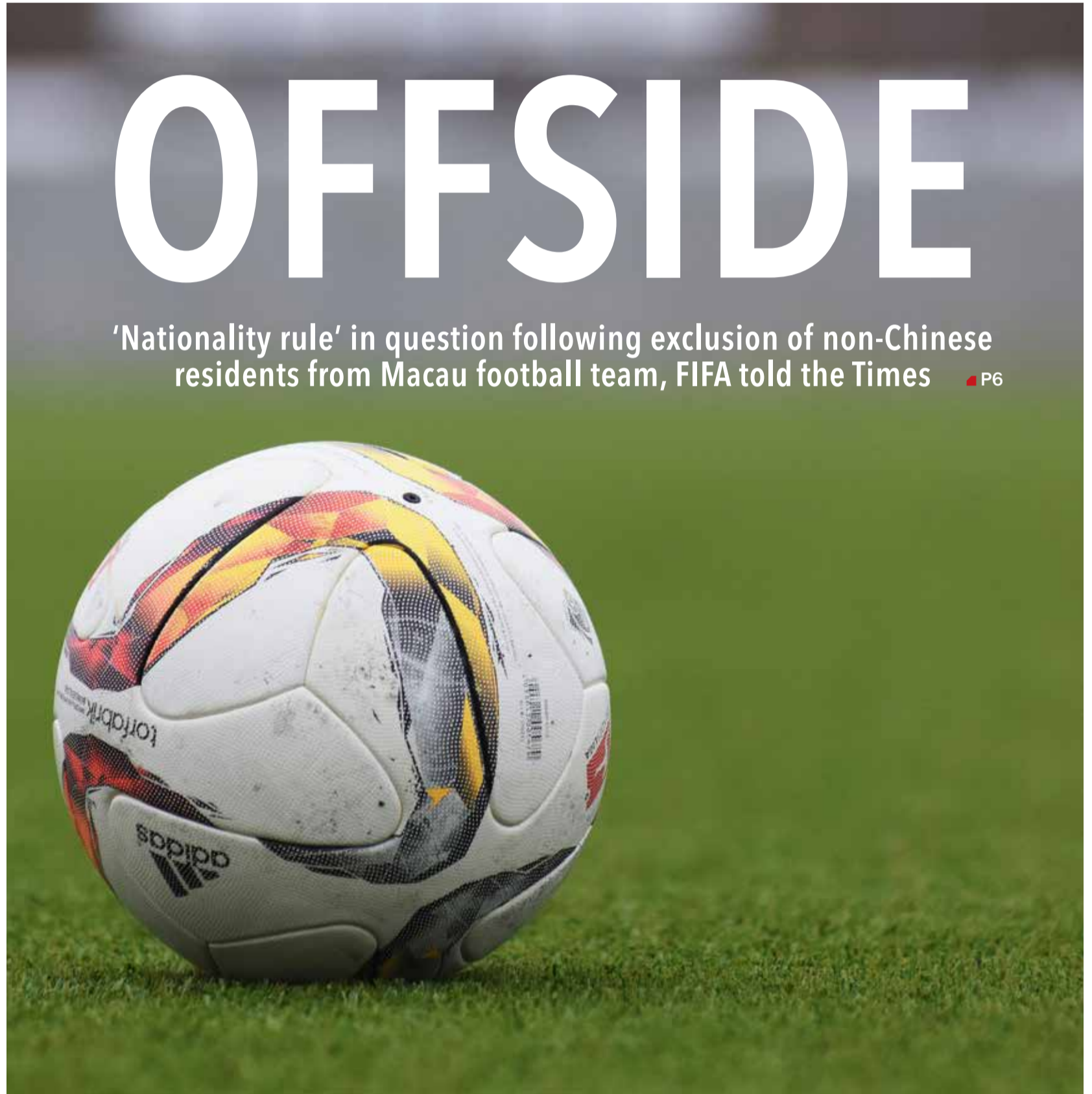
South Korea's Constitutional Court yesterday mandated that the government provide concrete carbon reduction plans through 2049, supporting climate campaigners' demands for stronger measures to manage climate change impacts and adhere to carbon neutrality goals.



Australia A coroner's inquiry yesterday suggested that three Christian extremists, involved in a fatal shooting, might have been influenced by a shared psychiatric disorder, which contributed to the violent incident that ended in the deaths of two police officers.



Australia A post-fight melee erupted Wednesday night when a boxer's brother assaulted the opponent's trainer in the ring. The incident, following a verbal altercation, resulted in a life ban from future boxing events for the aggressor.



OFFSIDE

'Nationality rule' in question following exclusion of non-Chinese residents from Macau football team, FIFA told the Times P6

SHUN TAK REPORT
GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS IMPEDE FULL RECOVERY IN HOSPITALITY SECTOR



DSEDJ REFINES EDUCATION SYSTEM TO FOCUS ON JOB SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

VICTORIA CHAN

AS Macau prepares for the upcoming 2024/2025 academic year, the government's Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) is focused on expanding international partnerships and equipping students with the skills needed for the future.

With over 80,000 students served across 10 higher education institutions and 76 non-tertiary schools, DSEDJ's plan aims to better develop "adequate economic diversification."

A core priority, according to DSEDJ, is to "continuously promote and co-ordinate the development of local higher education institutions in the direction of the key industries and the internationalization of higher education."

The government is fostering



partnerships with international organizations and key industry sectors to improve disciplinary distribution, expand and deepen co-operation in scientific research and education, and actively encourage joint cultivation programs between both local and external institutions.

In addition, the government

continues to support Portuguese language studies to cultivate bilingual talent.

As stated, the government will "reinforce Portuguese language learning in non-higher education with the continuation of the Navigation Scheme in Portuguese Language Learning. This will systematically

enhance students' overall proficiency in Portuguese language learning."

The government also aims to launch joint academic programs in collaboration with Portuguese higher education institutions, so as to support Macau students' pursuit of further studies in Portugal. "This will help to facilitate a holistic development of Chinese-Portuguese bilingual interdisciplinary talents."

In terms of curriculum development, DSEDJ has introduced a newly revised 'Curriculum Framework for Formal Education of Local Education System' and relevant 'Requirements of Basic Academic Attainments.'

"These two introductions will be implemented in an orderly manner, strengthening student learning outcomes, such as in

coding, artificial intelligence, and integrated applied skills.

Educational supports on all fronts will be offered to schools and teaching staff to assist educators in carrying out the curriculum," said the DSEDJ.

Aside from these academic changes, the government has also "actively encourage[d] higher and non-higher education institutions to improve their disaster prevention plans," and has also conducted "regular inspections of campus and dormitory environments as well as the maintenance of fire safety equipment."

Additionally, it supports the efforts of the working group on physical and mental health at school in enriching supplementary materials on mental health, promoting and spreading "the message of positive energy on campus."

EDUCATION

77,000 students set to start school on Monday

AS the new school year approaches, transportation officials are preparing for an influx of students. It is anticipated that around 77,000 students will resume their studies on September 2, with a cumulative total of 88,000 expected by September 4. To accommodate the surge, the government is making changes to public transportation services.

During a recent radio forum, Mok Soi Tou, acting director of the Traffic Management Department of the Transport Bureau (DSAT), outlined proactive measures being taken to ensure smooth transportation for students.

The government has coordinated with

two major bus companies to provide adjusted schedules and enhanced services, including the addition of special routes and the deployment of extra personnel at key bus stations.

Mo urged residents to familiarize themselves with traffic conditions and consider using public transportation to prevent congestion.

He also emphasized the importance of parking legally, urging parents to avoid illegal parking that could disrupt traffic flow near schools.

Wong Chi Wang, a senior officer of the Public Security Police's (PSP) Traffic Department, reiterated the need for strict enforcement against

illegal parking. Designated drop-off and pick-up areas will be established around schools, and inspections will be conducted to ensure safety.

In anticipation of potential traffic challenges, the bureau has established a joint command center to manage emergencies during the first days of school.

Enhanced bus services will include a 25% to 30% increase in frequency during peak hours, with 40 additional buses operating daily in the opening week. Notably, a new special bus route, 2A (2AS), will run between the Area Preta Health Center and Lisboa Hotel during morning peak hours.

TECH

UM AND DIGIT FORCE LAUNCH JOINT LABORATORY TO DRIVE AI INNOVATION

NADIA SHAW

THE University of Macau (UM) and Macau Digit Force Technology Co Ltd recently held a plaque unveiling ceremony for the University of Macau-Digit Force Joint Laboratory of Intelligent Interaction.

This joint laboratory aims to assist various industries in adopting artificial intelligence (AI) to develop new productivity models and accelerate AI technology advancement, according to the university.

"It aims to set an example for industry-academia collaboration in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and foster deeper integration and technological innovation between Macao and the Greater Bay Area," the statement read.

Yonghua Song, rector of UM, highlighted the university's progress in human-computer interaction and AI technologies in recent years. He noted that the partnership with Macau Digit Force and the establishment of the joint laboratory would enhance the development of intelligent interaction technologies and facilitate the effective application of research outcomes for societal benefit.

Liu Zhenfeng, CEO of Macau Digit For-



ce, remarked that many sub-industries have transitioned from analog to digital and are now evolving from the Internet to the Internet of Things. He anticipates the next major shift will be from the Internet of Everything to the Artificial Intelligence of Things.

Through this collaboration, he expressed hope that both organizations would advance the commercialization of large-scale AI models in healthcare, smart elderly care, and other sectors, thereby contributing to the high-tech industry in Macao and the Greater Bay Area.

Founded in 2024, Macau Digit Force focuses on driving technological innovation in smart home devices.

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

REACHING OUT!

+25,000

Like us on facebook.com/mdtimes



MacauDaily 澳門每日時報
Times

DIRECTOR & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF_Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR_Lynzy Valles
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS_Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS_Alex Torrão, Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Emilie Tran, Grace Yu, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Jorge Costa Oliveira, Joseph Cheung, Juliet Risdon, Linda Kennedy, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Sérgio de Almeida Correia, Viviana Seguí DESIGNER_Rebeca Almeida | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS_JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | NEWS AGENCIES_Associated Press, MacauHub, MacaoNews, Xinhua SECRETARY_Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

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

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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

LABOR

Gov't proposes raising termination compensation

VICTORIA CHAN

THE Standing Committee on Social Coordination has convened its third plenary meeting to review the maximum amount of monthly basic compensation used to calculate termination compensation under the Labor Relations Law.

The government suggested raising the cap on the monthly salary used to determine workers' compensation from the current MOP21,000 to MOP21,500. Annually, this change would increase compensation from MOP252,000 to MOP258,000.

Wong Chi Hong, director of the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL), explained that the government's proposal was made after taking into account the overall economic situation from April 2021 to April 2023, the fact that the median monthly salary of employees will remain at MOP20,000, and the development and affordabil-



ty of employers.

He also factored in affordability for employers and that a MOP500 monthly compensation bump would cover over 60% of employees or more than 80% at small and medium companies.

"We have taken into consideration the overall situation, including the overall econo-

mic situation and the median wages in Macau, which remains at around MOP20,000. We have also taken into consideration the employers' affordability. So after a comprehensive of factors, we have decided this time to propose a raise of MOP500," said Wong, as cited in a TDM report.

Meanwhile, the government's

proposal has received mixed reactions from representatives.

Vice president of the Macau Chamber of Commerce, Wong Kuok Seng, did not agree with the relevant adjustments and hoped to maintain the status quo.

He pointed out that many small- and medium-sized enterprises still need the government

to support the community economy through various channels to overcome difficulties, and the relevant adjustments may be difficult to win the sympathy of the industrial and commercial circles, especially small, medium and micro enterprises.

"We feel that amending the law to raise the upper limit of compensation at this time may not gain the resonance of the industrial and commercial community, especially small, medium and micro enterprises. Moreover, after the increase, the coverage rate of workers that will benefit from the measure will only slightly increase," said Wong.

Fong Ka Fai, vice president of the Macau Federation of Trade Unions, recommended that the government enhance its efforts in reviewing the law to better protect the legitimate rights and interests of employees.

"The law states that there should be a review on the labor relations law every two years. As you can see, this review has been taking place for more than four years," he argued.

Further, DSAL head stated that he hopes that the government will submit the text of the bill to amend the Labor Relations Law to the Legislative Assembly as soon as possible, hoping to pass it and implement it as quickly as possible.

AD

A large advertisement for 'The Londoner Macao' featuring a chef in a white shirt and black apron. The chef is looking directly at the camera. The background is a kitchen setting. Text overlay includes: "My Londoner is chasing stars. Michelin Stars.", "BE MY GUEST", a signature, "THE LONDONER MACAO", "LondonerMacao.com", and "#BeMyGuest".

My Londoner is chasing stars. Michelin Stars.

BE MY GUEST

THE LONDONER
MACAO

LondonerMacao.com
#BeMyGuest

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



EVENTS

36th Macao International Music Festival to highlight global talent

THE 36th Macao International Music Festival, themed, "And the Stars Shine," will kick off October. The festival features a selection of distinguished performances, including Leonidas Kavakos with the Apollon Ensemble, the Mariinsky Orchestra, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and a closing concert with Mariza and the Macao Chinese Orchestra.

Leonidas Kavakos will perform Bach's violin concertos with the Apollon Ensemble on Oct. 11 at the Macao Cultural Centre Grand Auditorium. The Mariinsky Orches-

tra, led by Valery Gergiev, returns for performances on Oct. 26 and 27, showcasing works by Prokofiev, Shostakovich, and Rachmaninoff.

The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center will perform on Oct. 27 and 28, featuring pieces by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Mahler. Co-artistic directors Wu Han and David Finckel will also conduct masterclasses on Oct. 27.

The festival concludes on Nov. 4 with Mariza's performance at The Londoner Theatre, blending Western and Chinese musical elements. **LV**

CRIME

ELDERLY VICTIMS DEFRAUDED OF MOP186,000 IN PHONE SCAM

NADIA SHAW

TWO elderly residents in Macau have become victims of a phone scam known as "Guess Who I Am," resulting in a combined loss of MOP186,000. The Judiciary Police (PJ) arrested a 37-year-old man from mainland China, suspected of collecting the funds. Authorities believe additional accomplices remain at large.

The first victim, an elderly woman, received a distressing call on Aug. 28, where a scammer impersonating her son-in-law claimed to need urgent financial assistance after an accident. Believing the caller, she transferred MOP120,000 to an individual posing as a lawyer. When the scammer demanded an additional MOP300,000, she realized she had been deceived and reported the incident to the police.

In a swift response, law enforcement intercepted the suspect while he attempted to withdraw more money. Further investigation revealed that he had also



defrauded an elderly man of MOP66,000 on the same day. The police recovered MOP56,000 in suspected fraud proceeds from the arrested man, who admitted to passing around MOP130,000 to his accomplices.

In a separate incident, two Chinese men in their 30s are suspected of defrauding HKD150,000 from a victim by persuading him to exchange his casino winnings near an entertainment venue in Cotai, Monday. The victim, who had won HKD150,000, was convinced to convert his winnings into RMB142,000. However, the victim's Chinese bank account was subsequently frozen by Chinese police, who claimed the de-

posit was fraudulent.

Police have arrested the perpetrators in both cases and seized a significant amount of evidence related to fraud and money laundering crimes.

These cases have now been handed over to the Public Prosecutions Office for further processing.

The Anti-Fraud Coordination Center of the PJ is urging Macau citizens, especially the elderly, to be cautious when receiving calls from people claiming to be relatives in need of money. They recommend verifying the claims directly with the relative in question and not responding to the perpetrator's requests.

律師事務所



C&C
LAWYERS
& NOTARIES
SINCE 1996



合夥人 PARTNERS:

官樂怡 Rui José da Cunha ° 山度士 Álvaro Rodrigues ° 馬天龍 Nuno Sardinha da Mata ° 趙魯 Zhao Lu °* 馬傑安 João Nogueira Marques

大律師 ASSOCIATES:

高文軒 Adelino Correia °
羅善齡 Zelina Rodrigues
馬潔冰 Maria João Marques
陶義德 António Isóo de Azeredo
白穎怡 Iclília Berenguel
冼玲鳳 Mariana Afonso Esteves
馬秀文 Sofia Mendes Martins
飛嘉華 Carlos dos Santos Ferreira °
莫永誠 Rui Velez de Moura
安東尼 António Manuel dos Santos
巴慧雅 Vera Bastos
歐文傑 Miguel Evaristo
陳芷喬 Joana Chan

大律師 ASSOCIATES:

顏曉蓉 Teresa Xiaorong Yan
諾瑪莉 Maria Noras
康靜雅 Viviana Hong
梁淑嵐 Ana Leon
黃瀚賢 Frederico Vong
斐彥德 Gonçalo Figueiredo
吳霆鋒 Ng Teng Fong

實習律師 TRAINEE LAWYERS:

陳健雄 Eurico Chan
戴博晴 Tai Pok Cheng
吳佩愉 Ng Pui U
陳子健 Kimi Chan

法律專家及外地註冊律師

JURISTS AND LAWYERS
QUALIFIED IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS:
林思潔 Jessie Lin
羅成軒 José J. Rodrigues
楊詩婷 Si Teng leong

法律專家 JURISTS:

張偉鴻 Cheong Wai Hong
伍福賢 Domingos Ng
許栢桓 Rui Fernandes Brás

WWW.CCADVOG.COM
TEL: (853) 2837 2642/ 2837 2623

° 私人公證員 Notary Public * 中國委託公證人 China Appointed Attesting Officer



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



Shun Tak: Geopolitical tensions impede full recovery in hospitality

NADIA SHAW

WHILE the hospitality sector in Hong Kong, Macau, and mainland China is gradually recovering, external factors such as geopolitical tensions and rising operational costs are hindering a full rebound, Shun Tak noted.

In a regulatory filing, Shun Tak Holdings Limited remarked that "throughout the first half of 2024, the occupancy rate improved slightly to 63%."

Shun Tak, a prominent player in the transport, property, and hospitality sectors reported an interim loss of HKD428 million (USD55 million) for the first half of 2024, a slight increase from HKD425 million loss in the same period last year.

Despite the financial setback, the company experienced a significant revenue boost, with figures soaring by 44.6% to HKD2.16 billion.

The firm attributed its losses to ongoing challenges stemming from the Covid-19 pandemic, which have continued to impact its operations since 2022.

The company's hospitality segment, which includes a 51% stake in the Mandarin Oriental Macau, reported a loss of HKD86 million, a stark contrast to a profit of HKD6 million during the first half of



2023. In Macau, key properties include the Grand Coloane Resort, the Mandarin Oriental Macau, and the Artyzen Grand Lapa Macau, along with the Macau Tower Convention & Entertainment Centre.

Operating profit for the first half of 2024 stood at HKD199.7 million, a notable recovery from a loss of HKD116.8 million in the corresponding period last year. The underlying loss, adjusted for unrealized fair value changes on investment properties, was HKD108 million, significantly improved from HKD274 million in the first half of 2023. The basic loss per share was

reported at 14.2 Hong Kong cents, slightly up from 14.1 cents a year ago.

In terms of property performance, Shun Tak capitalized on the relaxation of property curbs in Hong Kong and Macau, selling 65 units in its Nova Grand project in Taipa, which has seen a 92% sales rate as of June 30. The company's property segment reported a profit increase of 62.8% to HKD363 million, showcasing resilience in a challenging market.

The company also highlighted its shopping malls' performances, particularly Nova Mall, which faced challenges due to changing consumer

behaviors post-pandemic, with residents increasingly shopping across the border in Guangdong province. Despite these challenges, Nova Mall maintained an occupancy rate of 84% as of June 30.

Looking ahead, Shun Tak remains cautious about the economic outlook for the latter half of 2024, citing uncertainties from global macroeconomic factors and geopolitical tensions. The company is focusing on leveraging its extensive transport portfolio, including ferry services and shuttle bus operations, to tap into the regional traffic in the GBA.

MGTO SHOWCASES MACAU IN PATA TRAVEL MART

The Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) participated in the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Travel Mart 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand, alongside local travel stakeholders to enhance international visitor markets. A key event highlight was the 2024 PATA Gold Awards, where MGTO, gaming operators Melco and Galaxy were recognized. MGTO received a PATA Gold Award for its Human Capital Development Initiative, recognizing over a decade of collaboration with various organizations to offer free training, qualifications, and support to improve service quality in the city's tourism industry. MGTO director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes led a delegation of 13 representatives from Macau's hotels and travel agencies.

SAM HOU FAI'S CANDIDACY SEEKS TO GATHER 'MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SIGNATURES'

On the first day of the Chief Executive election nomination process yesterday, lawyer Lei Wun Kong, representing Sam Hou Fai, collected the candidacy form. He arrived at the Public Administration Building at 9:44 a.m. to officially initiate the candidacy, which requires at least 66 signatures from Electoral Commission members. In a press statement, Lei emphasized the aim of gathering as many signatures as possible. Sam already declared his intention to run for a sixth term Wednesday. "We will move forward with the candidacy process as swiftly and orderly as possible. At the same time, we will consult with Electoral Commission members per the Electoral Law to gather the maximum number of signatures," he stated.

OFF-DUTY FIREFIGHTER SUSPENDED FOR DRUNK DRIVING

An off-duty firefighter has been suspended for suspected drunk driving and evading responsibility. On August 11, 2023, he was driving a private car on Estr. do Repouso when he collided with 18 motorcycles in a parking area and left the scene without assisting. He was charged with drunk driving and evading responsibility, resulting in a court sentence of three months in prison, along with a one-year and nine-month driving ban. The Fire Services Bureau initiated a disciplinary investigation and issued a suspension order on August 8.

TOURISM

Tour groups on the rise with significant jumps from Korea, India

TOUR groups have seen remarkable growth in Macau, according to the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). In July 2024, inbound package tour visitors surged by 66.1% year-on-year to reach 188,000, with visitors from mainland China increasing by 68.9% to 171,000. International tour visitors also rose by 30.5% to 13,000, with significant jumps from the Republic of Korea (up 152.8% to 5,000) and India (up 712.5% to 2,000).

For the first seven months of 2024, total

inbound package tour visitors hit 1,173,000, a striking 146.0% increase compared to the previous year. Visitors from mainland China accounted for 1,036,000, a 129.6% rise, while international visitors soared by 464.2% to 118,000.

In July, 66,000 residents opted for outbound services through travel agencies, marking a 48.9% increase. The number of residents traveling on package tours jumped 169.7% to 32,000, with 29,000 heading to mainland Chi-

na. Over the first seven months, outbound services purchased by residents rose by 48.5% to 322,000.

The city's hotel sector also expanded, with 144 establishments by the end of July, an increase of 12 year-on-year. Available guest rooms rose by 1.8% to 45,000. While the average occupancy rate dipped slightly to 88.4%, it remains robust, especially in five-star hotels (91.9%). In July, hotel guests totaled 1,227,000, reflecting 98.0% of pre-pandemic levels. LV

LYNZY VALLES



'NATIONALITY RULE' IN QUESTION FOLLOWING EXCLUSION OF NON-CHINESE FROM MACAU FOOTBALL TEAM: FIFA

RENATO MARQUES

AN amendment to the rules regarding eligibility for representative teams, which was adopted by the FIFA Congress on Sep. 18, 2020, is causing all non-Chinese nationals listed to play for the Macau Football Association (MFA) to become ineligible for the team. This information was confirmed to the Times by a FIFA representative based in Beijing.

The changes at issue pertain to the so-called "nationality rule," which FIFA implemented to promote fairness and equal treatment among all stakeholders. The goal is to ensure that players have a genuine connection with the teams they represent and to prevent abuse of the system.

FIFA stated, "In adopting these reforms, FIFA developed the following core principles that underpin its eligibility rules: 'no nationality, no eligibility.' Eligibility must be based on objective criteria (i.e. the player's nationality); all Member Associations (MAs) must be treated equally; there must be a genuine link between the player and the MA they intend to represent; cases of undue severity or hardship should be avoided; abuse (e.g. 'nationality shopping') should be prevented; and the sporting integrity of international competition must be protected."

FIFA also highlighted that these reforms "followed a comprehensive working group process involving delegates from several member associations." This group reviewed the entire regulatory framework and considered submissions from the MAs.

The new rules are also said to result from the "established practices which had developed over the course of more than 20 years of jurisprudence."

In short, the nationality rule essentially means what is stated as the primary criterion for regulating player eligibility: "no nationality, no eligibility," according to FIFA.

As first reported late last week by the Portuguese-language newspaper *Jornal Tribuna de Macau*, this means that four current players, along with one who was set to join the pre-selected squad for the MFA's upcoming Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Asian Cup qualifiers, are now ineligible to play because they are not of Chinese nationality. The players affected include Vitor Almeida, Iuri Capelo, Nicholas Torrão, and Filipe Duarte, as well as a fifth player whom Coach Lázaro Oliveira had considered for the team but who could not be added for the same reason.



FIFA VS MACAU ON NATIONALITY RULES

Although much has been discussed about the new FIFA rules on player eligibility for representative teams, the issue has two sides, with the core problem lying in the rules for acquiring a Macau passport. According to the Identification Services Bureau (DSI), local regulations restrict the eligibility for a Macau passport to "applicants who fulfill all of the following conditions: [be] a permanent resident of the Macau SAR with Chinese nationality [and a] holder of a Macau SAR permanent resident identity card."

The problem with the players stems from their failure to meet FIFA's requirement for Chinese nationality, which can only be obtained under very specific conditions related to ancestry.

FIFA's document on eligibility rules also clarifies in Article 6, paragraph 3, specifically in number 41, which outlines the criteria for representing multiple associations based on nationality. One of these "special cases" involves Macau. According to number 41.3, "Chinese nationality: China PR; Hong Kong; Macau," players holding Chinese nationality are eligible to represent the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, or Macau, based on criteria including whether the player was born in the territory of the relevant association, whether their biological mother or father was born there, whether their grandparents were born there, or whether the player has lived there for at least five years.

Associations also have the option to amend this last criterion by either removing it or extending the time limit.

While FIFA's criteria are indeed

stricter than before, the main issue in the current Macau case revolves around the difficulties players face in acquiring Chinese nationality.

CONSEQUENCES, IMMEDIATELY AND IN THE LONG TERM

To assess the immediate and long-term impact on the local representative team, the Times interviewed an experienced football coach who has worked extensively in Macau's football scene. At the interviewee's request, their identity will remain confidential.

Regarding the current situation, the former coach told the Times, "This issue revolves around the nationality rule, which has seen some changes in recent years. From a coach's perspective, you always aim to have the best possible group of players. However, these new rules provide a clear picture for the future, and I believe we need to quickly learn from this situation."

The same interviewee added, "What I'm emphasizing is that according to this rule, only local players who hold or are eligible for a Macau passport will be able to join the teams from now on. This has become the new baseline and starting point."

He continued, "What the MFA should do is start immediately identifying new talents who meet this profile and begin working with them so that, in a relatively short time, there will be a team ready to represent Macau effectively."

Despite this clear path for the present and future, the professional acknowledged that challenges remain. "It might sound straightforward, but finding and developing new talent is not as simple as it seems. Nevertheless, it is essen-

tial to address this, or there will be no improvement."

When asked about the real impact on the team from not being able to use the players in question, the coach responded, "I don't think it's a major issue. The significance of these players to the team's overall performance is not that great... That's honestly how I feel. Let's consider this from an objective perspective, without personal attachments. Have these players made a significant difference over the years? Has Macau qualified for any rounds or achieved noteworthy performances because of them? I don't believe so, and the results support that. This seems more like an emotional reaction than a reflection of their actual value to the team."

He added, "I am still saddened that we've reached this point. Personally, it feels somewhat disrespectful, but that's just our emotions speaking. Sports performance can be objectively measured, and I believe the Macau team will not suffer due to their absence. We might as well consider this as if they have retired and use their knowledge and experience to train a new generation of players. They certainly have skills and insights that could benefit future players, if they choose to help. However, dwelling on what's lost will not solve any problems."

APPEAL FROM MFA IS TO 'SAVE FACE'

When asked about the MFA's recent statement that they had appealed the decision to exclude the players, the coach remarked that he believes this is merely an attempt to "save face." He added, "They knew there would be criticism for not addressing the problem sooner, which

is not unusual. So, they are making the usual claims that they are doing their best and trying their hardest. I believe the appeal will likely be dismissed, as the rules are quite clear. Granting a special exemption would set a precedent that could lead to other associations seeking similar exceptions."

THE CAMBODIAN EXAMPLE

Expanding on the topic, he referenced the situation in Cambodia.

"Facing a similar issue, the Cambodian Football Association is addressing it by including six new players in their squad for the AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers - Playoff Round. Of these six, three are naturalized players and the other three have Cambodian ancestry. Two of the naturalized players—Yudai Ogawa (Japan), Hikaru Mizuno (Japan), and Mohammed Faez Khan (South Africa)—completed their naturalization process in August and July 2024, with Ogawa's process finishing in October or November of the previous year. The three players with Cambodian ancestry are French-Cambodian Thierry Chantha Bin, New Zealander-Cambodian Lucca Lim (a young talent with great potential), and American-Cambodian Nick Taylor," he detailed. "This demonstrates how other nations quickly adapt to rule changes, unlike in Macau, where the local sports community often suffers due to a lack of timely response and decision-making."

The Times also reached out to the Football Association of Hong Kong, China (HKFA) to inquire if they have faced any issues with FIFA's new rules, given their similar status to Macau. However, no responses were received from HKFA by the time of publication.

GAMING

Claw machine games are Rio de Janeiro's new public enemy

RIO de Janeiro — already notorious for street muggings, corrupt politicians, ruthless militias and Kalashnikov-toting drug traffickers — has a new public enemy: plushies. Or, more specifically, the joystick-controlled claw machines that dispense them.

Yesterday, Rio police carried out 16 search warrants targeting the machines that elicit exhilaration among children and adults alike. But police said the claw machines defraud users who believe scoring stuffed animals to be a test of skill.

In fact, they are games of chance — just like slot machines — and therefore illegal, according to their press office.

Officers seized claw machines, laptops, tablets, cell phones, a firearm and — yes — furry friends. They are investigating whether organized crime groups may be the invisible hand behind the claw because they already run slot machines and a popular lottery known as “Animal Game” across the city. Police in Brazil’s southern Santa Catarina state carried out an additional three search warrants Wednesday as part of the same operation.

It marked the second such police crackdown, following another in May during which officers apprehended 80 machines. Not only were those machines stocked with counterfeit plushies, but subsequent analysis of their programming found winning pulls were permitted only after a set number of attempts, police said in their statement.



AP PHOTO

Facilitating such sporadic, successful snags is an electrical current to the otherwise enfeebled claw so it holds fast to its prize, the statement said.

That programming isn't disclosed to naive users, including children liable to blow their pocket money on what's effectively a crap shoot. Claw machines can be found in Rio's shopping malls, subway stations, supermarkets, arcades and toy stores.

Among Rio's claw aficionados is Alessandra Libonatti, 41, who has played for nearly three decades. She remembers the machines causing a stir when they first appeared in the city; she had only seen them before in movies. These days she tends to play once a

week, whether alone or at the mall with friends who share her “peculiar” hobby.

She likes the low-investment adrenaline rush and, by her own account, she's a talented clawmaster who has honed her techniques to maximize success, from scouting the stuffed animal landscape to precise positioning of the claw. She treasures a manatee with jaguar spots that she pulled in on a trip to the nation's capital with friends.

“When I pass by a machine, I give it a look to see if there's a stuffed animal that makes it worth it to play,” she told The Associated Press. “Because it's not always worth it; sometimes it's clearly a waste of money.” MDT/AP

ADVERTORIAL

GREAT TIMES

Sip and Revel in the Pink with Rosé Revolution Macau 2024

In a realm where the hues of pink evoke a sense of delight, a tantalizing and versatile tasting experience like no other awaits. Rosé Revolution, the biggest and highly anticipated annual rosé wine event in Asia returns for its 10th anniversary at MGM, inviting wine enthusiasts to immerse themselves in a pink-themed party at the Vista, an elegant venue at MGM MACAU overlooking the resort's stunning reflective pool and lush greenery.



Embark on a sensory exploration of over 30 exceptional selections of rosé wine from renowned wine regions around the world. Each sip unfolds a unique tapestry of terroir, style, and flavor profile. The wine tasting experience is complemented by a buffet of delectable canapés, and a DJ live performance that lets guests groove to the hottest beats.



To elevate the party experience, Rosé Revolution Macau 2024 boasts a vibrant pink dress code. Save the date for September 21, a Saturday evening filled with fine wines and great vibes. Gather your friends and secure your spots now with the early bird offer available until September 7 at (853) 8802 3833. Visit mgm.mo for more information.



CORPORATE BITS

Galaxy honored with Gold Award for Youth Empowerment Initiative



Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) received a Gold Award for its Youth Empowerment Initiative at the 2024 Pacific Asia Travel As-

sociation (PATA) Gold Award Ceremony in Bangkok. This recognition highlights GEG's commitment to youth and talent development

through its project, “Nurturing Macau's Future Leaders,” which included nearly 50 activities in 2023 across sports, science and technology, arts and culture, career advancement, and health.

Buddy Lam, GEG's director of Corporate Affairs, accepted the award from PATA officials, marking GEG's third PATA Gold Award for initiatives in Sustainability and Social Responsibility, with previous awards in 2021 and 2023.

Lam emphasized GEG's dedication to cultivating local talent and enhancing their competitiveness. The gaming operator said in a statement that it has played a significant role in developing outstanding talents in various fields, reinforcing its commitment to Macau's sustainable development.

ARGENTINA EYES BUSINESS CONNECTIONS WITH CITIES IN GBA

ANALYSIS

ARGENTINE companies are increasingly seeking to establish business connections with China's largest production hub, driven by the deepening of China's economic reforms and the ongoing opening of its market. For them, the southern province of Guangdong stands out as a significant region for its immense productive and commercial importance.

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, which has been the powerhouse of China's economy for over 35 years, exemplifies this potential. With a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) approaching two trillion dollars—equivalent to four to five times Argentina's GDP—this development zone presents vast opportunities for Argentine businesses.

In light of this potential, Eastern representatives in Argentina recently organized two major events aimed at enhancing bilateral trade relations, CE Noticias Financieras has reported.

The events, "Guangdong Day" and the presentation of the Guangdong Fair, were organized by the Argentine-Chinese Chamber, the Guangdong Representative Office in Argentina (CCPIT Guangdong), the Guangdong Chamber of Commerce in Argentina, ICBC Bank, and the ICBC Foundation. Companies from Córdoba were invited by the Foreign Trade Chamber of Córdoba to participate in a virtual seminar that provided



insights on participating in the 136th edition of the Canton Fair, as well as mechanisms for establishing profitable business contacts.

During "Guangdong Day," held this month in Buenos Aires, numerous Argentine companies and representatives from other Latin American countries gathered to discuss the vast potential of Guangdong province. This event was organized by the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) of Guangdong, the Guangdong Chamber of Commerce in Argentina, the Argentine-Chinese Chamber of Production, Industry, and Commerce (CACPIC), in collaboration with the School of Government of Universidad Austral.

Luo Qiaoyang, the Guangdong Economic and Trade Representative, opened the event by highlighting the importance of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. He emphasized its technological, industrial, and labor advantages, which position it as a global hub for technology and innovation, as well as a business-friendly region.

Luo underscored the significance of the Canton Fair – a biennial event held in April and mid-October – which he described as the pioneering event in China's journey of economic opening. He noted that the fair continues to innovate and remains a key reference point for international trade with China.

Business representatives,

including Mario Trujillo from "In Trade," emphasized China's growing interest in Latin American markets and the development of e-commerce platforms that facilitate faster and more efficient trade. Trujillo highlighted the increasing presence of Latin American companies at the Canton Fair and the expansion of CCPIT offices, which have made it easier for businesses to establish connections with Chinese counterparts.

These events and discussions underscore the strategic importance of Guangdong province for Argentine companies looking to tap into China's vast market, particularly as China's economic reforms and openness continue to create new opportunities for international trade. **MDT/AGENCIES**

ARGENTINA-CHINA TRADE AND INVESTMENT

As per the latest data available (2022), the trade relationship between China and Argentina remains robust, reflecting significant economic interactions between the two nations. Here are some of the main trade statistics, according to the Observatory of Economic Complexity:

TRADE VOLUME:

The total trade volume between China and Argentina in 2022 was substantial, with China continuing to be one of Argentina's most important trading partners. The trade volume was approximately \$24 billion.

Exports from Argentina to China: Argentina's exports to China primarily consist of agricultural products and raw materials. The key exports include soybeans, beef, and wine.

Argentina's exports to China were valued at around \$8-10 billion. Soybeans and soybean products alone accounted for a significant portion of this, making up the bulk of the export value.

IMPORTS FROM CHINA TO ARGENTINA:

Argentina imports a wide range of goods from China, including electronics, machinery, textiles, and manufactured products.

In 2022, Argentina's imports from China were valued at approximately \$14-16 billion, with a strong emphasis on electronics and machinery.

TRADE BALANCE:

Argentina has a trade deficit with China, meaning it imports more from China than it exports. This trade deficit was in the range of \$6-8 billion in 2022.

INVESTMENT:

Beyond trade, China has also been a significant investor in Argentina, particularly in infrastructure, energy, and agriculture sectors. Chinese companies have been involved in various projects, including the construction of dams, railways, and investments in the lithium industry.

LOOKING AT GBA

Chinese group proposes Greater Manila Bay Area

ON THE AGENDA

CHINESE businessmen have proposed the development of a business district around Manila Bay, modeled after the successful Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. This initiative aims to strengthen economic ties and create opportunities in innovation, high technology, new energy, and sustainability for the Philippines, according to Philippine media reports this week.

Jonathan Choi Koon-shum, chairman of the

Chinese General Chamber of Commerce-Hong Kong, suggested establishing a "Greater Bay Area of Cavite, Bataan, and Zambales," with Manila Bay as its focal point. Speaking at the Manila Forum for Philippines-China Relations, Choi expressed the hope that the Philippines would create a similar GBA to stimulate growth in the region.

"This presents an exciting opportunity for the Philippines to leverage the GBA's success and create a dynamic economic zone that fosters in-

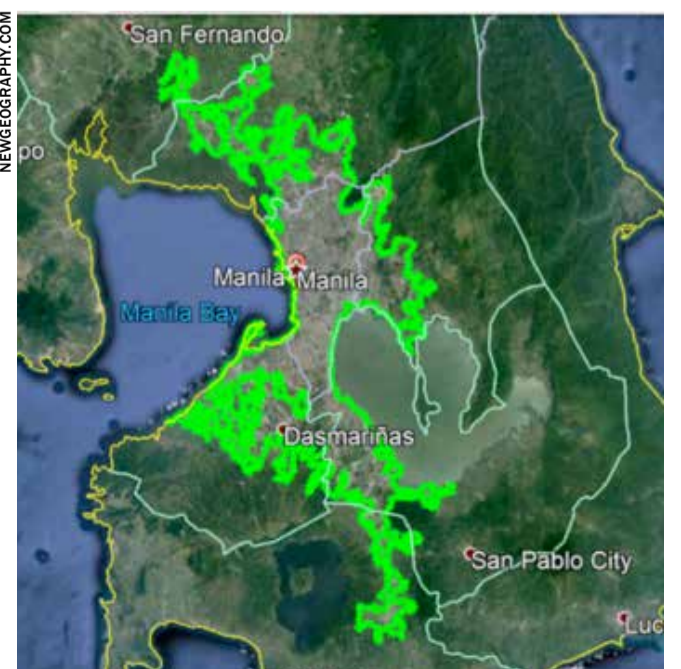
novation, trade, and investment," Choi said. He emphasized the potential for expanding trade, particularly in electronics and textiles, which align with the Philippines' export strengths.

Raul Lambino, chairman of the Association for Philippines-China Understanding, highlighted the significant benefits the Philippines could gain from closer collaboration with China. He noted the potential for millions of Chinese tourists to visit the Philippines, boosting job creation and the economy.

Before the pandemic, China was the top source of international travelers to the Philippines, with over 1.7 million visitors in 2019.

Lambino also pointed out that planned infrastructure projects, such as the Bataan, Cavite, and Manila Bridge, similar to the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, would further enhance connectivity and economic activity.

In 2023, China remained a top trading partner for the Philippines, with bilateral trade exceeding \$40 billion. **MDT**



DIPLOMACY

Xi meets with US national security adviser Jake Sullivan in a bid to improve ties

PRESIDENT Xi Jinping met with U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan yesterday in Beijing, on a visit with the stated aim of keeping communications open between the two powers, as the relationship between China and the United States has become increasingly tense in recent years.

Sullivan, on his first trip to China in his capacity as the main adviser to President Joe Biden on U.S. national security issues, has met with senior Chinese officials including Foreign Minister Wang Yi and a senior general of the Central Military Commission.

China and the U.S. have become increasingly at odds over various issues, starting with a trade war dating back to 2018, and which now encompasses global security matters, such as China's claims over the South China Sea, and industrial policy on things like automobile and solar panel manufacturing.

Both sides said yesterday that they remain committed to managing the relationship. Xi and Biden met in San Francisco last November in an effort to improve ties.

"Although the situations of the two countries and China-U.S. relations have changed greatly, China's goal of being committed to the stable, healthy and sustainable development of China-U.S. relations has not changed," Xi said, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

"President Biden is committed to responsibly managing this consequential relationship to ensure that competition does not veer into conflict or confrontation, and to work together where our interests align," Sullivan said.

Beijing and Washington will also plan for a phone call in the coming weeks between Xi and Biden, the White House said Wednesday. The White House statement said that both sides would keep lines of communication open.

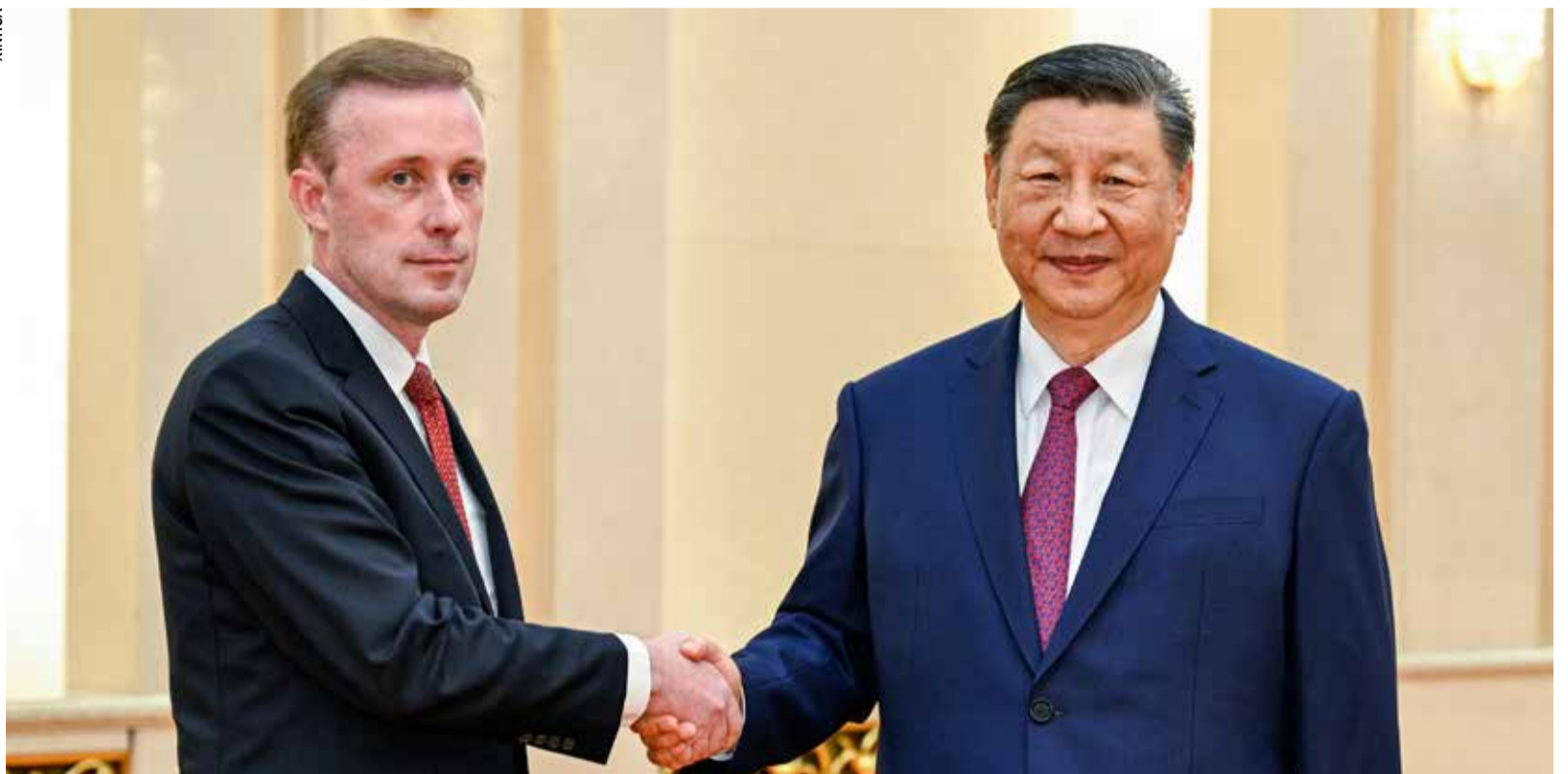
There was no indication that the two leaders might meet in person before Biden leaves the Oval Office.

The White House said the two sides also planned to hold a military theater commander phone call in the near future.

China has rapidly expanded its military, and there are concerns that Taiwan and the South China Sea are becoming flashpoints.

Wang, China's top diplomat, told Sullivan that Taiwan's independence poses the greatest threat to stability in the immediate region. He demanded that the U.S. "stop arming the island but

XINHUA



Xi Jinping meets with White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing

support China's peaceful unification," according to a statement released by the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

The White House statement said Sullivan "underscored the importance of maintaining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait."

Sullivan met with China's vice chairman of the Central Military Commission, Zhang Youxia, yesterday morning (see text on this page).

Beijing also warned Washington "not to support or indulge the Philippines to infringe" upon China's rights and interests in the South China Sea. China and the Philippines have clashed over the Second Thomas Shoal, and lately the Sabina Shoal.

The U.S. military has pushed back against China's claim to virtually the entire South China Sea, saying this week that it would be open to consultations about escorting Philippine ships in the disputed sea amid a spike in hostilities between Beijing and Manila on the issue.

The White House said that Sullivan reaffirmed Washington's commitment to defending its Indo-Pacific allies.

John Podesta, the senior adviser to the president for international climate policy, will travel to China, and Sullivan and Wang discussed "next steps to reduce the flow of illicit synthetic drugs" and "continue repatriation of undocumented migrants," the White House said.

In July, the U.S. Border Patrol made 1,851 arrests of Chinese im-

migrants on the border with Mexico, down from the December high of 5,951.

The two sides also agreed to hold a second round of dialogue over artificial intelligence, the Chinese foreign ministry said.

Sullivan raised continued concerns about China's trade policies and nonmarket economic practices, the White House said.

Wang demanded that the U.S. "stop suppressing China in the areas of trade, economic and te-

chnology," the Chinese foreign ministry said.

By resorting to protectionism, the U.S. would only "hurt the global green development and affect the global economic growth," Wang told Sullivan. MDT/AP

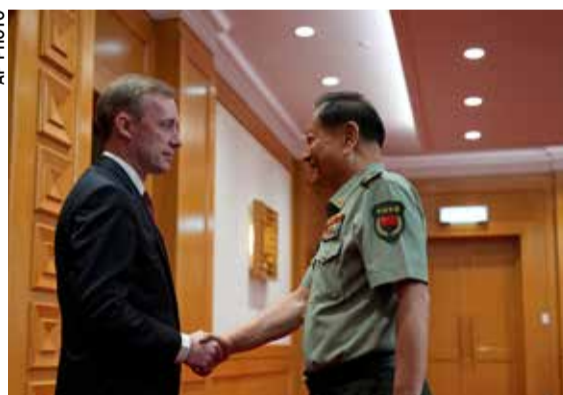
TOP CHINESE GENERAL TELLS SULLIVAN: US MUST STOP COLLUDING WITH TAIWAN

A top Chinese military officer, in a rare meeting with a visiting American official, demanded yesterday that the United States stop "collusion" with Taiwan, the self-governing island that China says must come under its rule.

Gen. Zhang Youxia, one of two vice chairs of the Central Military Commission, told White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan that promoting what China calls the reunification of Taiwan with the mainland is "the mission and responsibility" of the military, according to a statement from China's Defense Ministry.

Sullivan was wrapping up a three-day trip to China, his first as national security adviser and one aimed at maintaining communication to avoid differences over Taiwan and other issues

AP PHOTO



Zhang Youxia, vice chairman of the CPC Central Military Commission greets White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan before a meeting at the Bayi building in Beijing, yesterday

from spiraling into conflict. Both governments are eager to keep relations on an even keel ahead of a change in the U.S. presidency in January.

"Your request to meet with me shows the value you attach to military security and the relationship between our militaries," Zhang said in brief opening remarks.

Sullivan said "it is rare

that we have the opportunity to have this kind of exchange" and underscored "the need for us to responsibly manage US-China relations."

The meeting came one day after the White House said that both countries would plan for a phone call between Chinese President Xi Jinping and President Joe Biden in the coming weeks. There was no in-

dications whether the two leaders might meet in person before Biden leaves the Oval Office.

"China demands that the United States stop military collusion between the U.S. and Taiwan, stop arming Taiwan and stop spreading false narratives about Taiwan," the Chinese Defense Ministry statement said.

A White House statement said the two had "recognized the progress in sustained, regular military-military communications over the past ten months" and noted an agreement announced the previous day to hold a telephone call between commanders at the theater-level in the near future. On Taiwan, the U.S. statement said only that Sullivan had raised the importance of cross-strait peace and stability. MDT/AP

HONG KONG

COURT CONVICTS TWO JOURNALISTS IN A LANDMARK SEDITION CASE

KANIS LEUNG, HONG KONG

A Hong Kong court convicted two former editors of a shuttered news outlet yesterday, in a sedition case that is widely seen as a barometer for the future of media freedom in the city.

Stand News former editor-in-chief Chung Pui-kuen and former acting editor-in-chief Patrick Lam were arrested in December 2021. They pleaded not guilty to the charge of conspiracy to publish and reproduce seditious publications. Their sedition trial was Hong Kong's first involving media since the former British colony returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

Stand News was one of the city's last media outlets that openly criticized the government amid a crackdown on dissent that followed massive pro-democracy protests in 2019.

It was shut down just months after the pro-democracy



Chung Pui-kuen (second left) former chief editor and Patrick Lam (left) former acting editor of the now-defunct media outlet Stand News

Apple Daily tabloid, whose jailed founder Jimmy Lai is fighting collusion charges under a sweeping national security law enacted in 2020.

Chung and Lam were charged under a colonial-era sedition law that has been used increasingly to crush dissidents. They face up to two years in prison and a fine of 5,000 Hong Kong dollars (about \$640) for a

first offense.

Best Pencil (Hong Kong) Ltd., the outlet's holding company, was convicted on the same charge. It had no representatives during the trial, which began in October 2022.

Chung appeared calm after the verdict was handed down, while Lam did not appear in court.

Defense lawyer Audrey Eu

read out a mitigation statement from Lam, who said Stand News reporters sought to run a news outlet with fully independent editorial standards. "The only way for journalists to defend press freedom is reporting," Eu quoted Lam saying.

Dozens of residents and reporters lined up to secure a seat for the hearing, which began an hour late.

The delivery of the verdict was delayed several times for reasons including awaiting the appeal outcome of another landmark sedition case.

Resident Kevin Ng, who was among the first in the line, said he used to be a reader of Stand News and has been following the trial. Ng, 28, said he read less news after its shutdown, feeling the city has lost some critical voices. He said if the editors were found guilty, he would have "complex feelings."

"They reported the truth, they defended press freedom," said Ng, who works in risk ma-

nagement industry.

Judge Kwok Wai-kin found that 11 of the 17 articles in question carried seditious intent, according to a press summary. He noted the intense political atmosphere at the time of their publication, when many residents were dissatisfied with or opposed to the governments of Hong Kong and China.

The articles included stories featuring pro-democracy ex-lawmakers Nathan Law and Ted Hui, who are among a group of overseas-based activists targeted by Hong Kong police bounties. Other articles included interviews with three participants in a primary election organized by the pro-democracy camp in 2020, and commentaries by Law and veteran journalists Allan Au and Chan Pui-man. Chan is also Chung's wife.

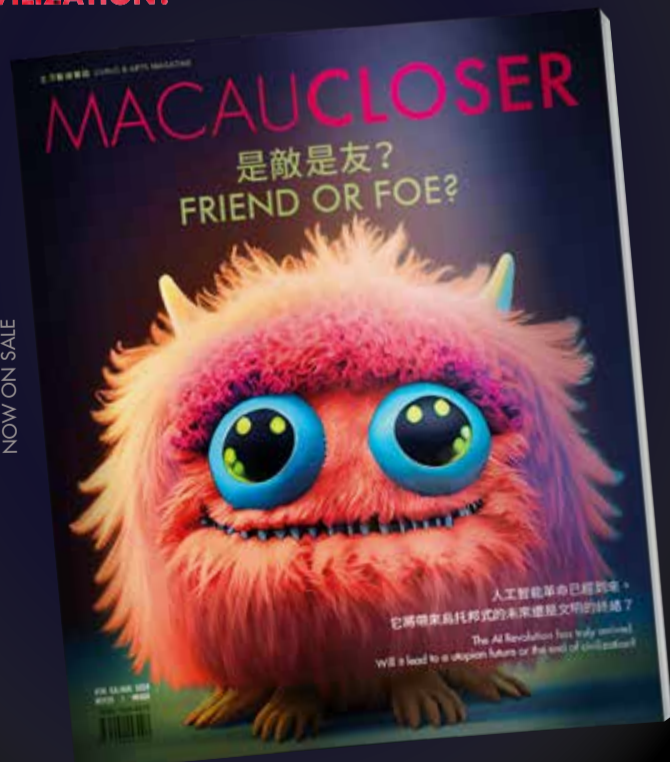
The court ruled that interviews with Law and Hui did not carry seditious intention because they only touched on the political views and the status of the interviewees, the summary said. Two of the interviews with the primary participants were also not seditious due to similar reasons, but the judge deemed a third one had the intent of inciting hatred against the authorities. **MDT/AP**

知得更多，活得更好 KNOW MORE, LIVE BETTER

是敵是友？ FRIEND OR FOE?

人工智能革命已經到來。
它將帶來烏托邦式的未來還是文明的終結？

**THE AI REVOLUTION HAS TRULY ARRIVED.
WILL IT LEAD TO A UTOPIAN FUTURE OR THE
END OF CIVILIZATION?**



WWW.MACAUCLOSER.COM
生活藝術雜誌 LIVING & ARTS MAGAZINE



**ACCURATE, TIMELY &
COMPETITIVE TRANSLATIONS**

Languages:
ENGLISH, CHINESE,
PORTUGUESE, JAPANESE,
KOREAN, SPANISH,
FRENCH, ARABIC,
RUSSIAN

Services
TRANSLATIONS,
PROOFREADING, COPYWRITING,
DATA INPUT, NEWS MONITORING

We translate +10,000 words a day

Email: sales@ktranz.com.mo
Tel: +853 2871 6081/2 Fax: +853 2871 6084

Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR

THAILAND

Court sentences a YouTube chef, who is the son of Spanish actors, to life in prison for murder

SAHATTHAYA KRAIKHUNHOT & GRANT PECK, BANGKOK

A court in Thailand yesterday found Daniel Sancho Bronchalo, a member of a famous Spanish acting family, guilty of premeditated murder and sentenced him to life in prison, in a lurid case that involved the victim being dismembered.

The Koh Samui Provincial Court issued an initial sentence of death for Sancho but commuted it to life imprisonment due to his cooperation during the trial, said Police Col. Paisan Sangthep, deputy commander of the Surat Thani Provincial Police, who attended the hearing.

Sancho, a 30-year-old chef with a YouTube channel, had been charged with the murder of Edwin Arrieta Arteaga, a 44-year-old plastic surgeon from Colombia, when both were vacationing on the Thai holiday island of Koh Pha-ngan in August last year.

The island is famous for its monthly "Full Moon" beach parties, attracting travelers from around the world for all-night raves.

The convicted man is the son of Rodolfo Sancho Aguirre, a prominent Spanish actor, and Silvia Bronchalo, who has also been in acting. Both parents are 49 years old and attended yesterday's court session.

The court also ordered Sancho to pay more than 4.2 million



Spanish actor Rodolfo Sancho, father of Daniel Sancho Bronchalo, talks to reporters arrives at Koh Samui provincial court

baht (\$125,000) in compensation to the victim's family. Lawyers representing the family at the trial had asked for 30 million baht (\$882,000), Spain's EFE news agency reported.

EFE also quoted Sancho's father Rodolfo telling media after the verdict that he intended "to always keep fighting, to keep fighting."

At his trial on the island of Samui, Daniel Sancho had claimed he got into a fight with Arrieta for allegedly trying to sexually assault him. He said that Arrieta fell as they scuffled and hit his head on a bathtub, losing consciousness

and then dying.

He had pleaded not guilty to charges of premeditated murder.

Sancho acknowledged dismembering the victim's body and disposing of the parts on land and at sea. For the charge of concealing or damaging a body, he received a four-month prison sentence, reduced to two months for acknowledging the act, said Paisan.

He had also pleaded not guilty to the charge of destroying another person's documents — the victim's passport — for which he received a two-year prison term.

The elements of the case —

violent death on a holiday island, the celebrity connections and the lurid details — attracted huge coverage in Spanish media. HBO produced a Spanish-language documentary on the events.

The case came to light when trash collectors found what the Bangkok Post newspaper described as a sawed-off pelvis and intestines weighing about 5 kilograms (11 pounds) in a fertilizer sack at a garbage dump.

Shortly after that, Sancho reported to police that Arrieta was missing, and police then gathered evidence linking the two men that led them to detain and inter-

rogate him.

Police established a narrative, claiming to the press that Sancho had confessed to the murder and saying he had planned it because Arrieta threatened to disgrace him and his family by revealing their alleged sexual relationship.

Sancho, through his father and his lawyers, said that was a distorted version of what he told police, and denied having a sexual relationship with Arrieta.

Police obtained surveillance video showing Sancho allegedly purchasing a knife, rubber gloves, garbage bags and cleaning solutions at a convenience store before Arrieta's death, which prosecutors claimed bolstered the charge of premeditated murder.

In his closing statement earlier in his trial, Sancho told the court he regretted his actions, the Spanish newspaper El País reported.

"I am sorry that a life has been lost and that parents have lost a son," Sancho said. "I am sorry that his family was not able to bury him properly. I'm sorry for what I did after the death."

Under certain conditions, Sancho can apply to be repatriated to serve the remainder of his prison term back home after several years of incarceration in Thailand, according to a treaty between Thailand and Spain.

The handful of Spanish nationals in Thai prisons includes another man convicted of premeditated murder and dismembering his victim.

Artur Segarra Princep was convicted of the 2016 killing of fellow Spaniard David Bernat. Police suspected that Segarra robbed the victim, whom he was said to have known. The body was kept in a freezer in Segarra's Bangkok apartment until parts were tossed into Thailand's Chao Phraya River.

His 2017 death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in 2020 by Thailand's King Maha Vajiralongkorn. MDT/AP

Indonesia and Australia sign defense agreement

INDONESIA and Australia signed a defense agreement yesterday that both sides described as a significant upgrade to their military relationship.

Indonesia's president-elect Prabowo Subianto, who also serves as defense minister, signed the Defense Cooperation Agreement with Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles at Indonesia's National Military Academy in Magelang, Central Java province.

Marles said the agreement, whose text has not been published, is "an important piece of internatio-

nal architecture, a treaty-level agreement" but not a military alliance. He added that the two countries plan to hold the largest joint military exercise in their history in November, which will be Australia's largest overseas exercise of the year.

New Australian prime ministers typically make Jakarta one of their first overseas destinations.

Subianto has vowed to continue Indonesia's long-standing policy of non-alignment as president.

"We did it to work together, as neighbors who are in direct contact, to increa-



Subianto and deputy PM Richard Marles, in Magelang

se cooperation to help each other overcome various security threats and promote sustainable peace and stability in the Asia Pacific re-

gion," Subianto said.

Australia's defense ministry said that the agreement will include "enhanced practical cooperation

and interoperability between our defence forces in areas such as maritime security, counter terrorism, humanitarian and disas-

ter relief, logistics support, education and training, as well as across defence industry."

"The defense cooperation agreement between our two nations is the deepest. It's the the most significant defense agreement in the history of our bilateral relationship," Marles said yesterday.

Indonesia's Defense Ministry said that the agreement that would help prevent future security threats in the Asia-Pacific region through collaborative efforts to maintain peace and stability. MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



An election campaign poster of the far-right Alternative for Germany, AfD, showing the top candidate for Thuringia Bjoern Hoecke and the slogans "The East does it" and "Almost forbiddenly good" is displayed at a street in Jena, yesterday

GERMANY

Far-right party aims for wins in two state elections as government flounders

GEIR MOULSON, BERLIN

THE far-right Alternative for Germany could become the strongest party for the first time in two state elections Sunday in eastern Germany, while a months-old party founded by a prominent leftist also hopes to shake up the picture as the national government has squabbled its way to deep unpopularity.

Germany's main opposition conservative party hopes to keep Alternative for Germany at bay in Saxony and Thuringia, home to around 4.1 million and 2.1 million people, respectively. But prospects look grim for the three parties in Chancellor Olaf Scholz's governing coalition, whose constant infighting has added to a flatlining economy and other problems to turn voters off.

Wins for Alternative for Germany, or AfD, would be a potent signal for the party just over a year before the next national election is due. But it would most likely need a coalition partner to govern, and it's highly unlikely anyone else will agree to put it in power. Even so, its strength could make forming new state governments extremely difficult.

PROBLEM IN BERLIN

High ratings for AfD and the new Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance, both at their strongest in Germany's formerly communist east, have been fed in part by discontent with the national government. Scholz's alliance argued throughout the campaign for the

European Parliament election in June and obtained dismal results. The internal hostilities have intensified over a summer plagued by disagreements about the 2025 budget.

Scholz's center-left Social Democrats, the environmentalist Greens and the pro-business Free Democrats were weak in these two states to start with, though the former two parties are the junior partners in both outgoing regional governments. They now risk dropping under the 5% support needed to stay in the state legislatures.

Scholz said recently that "gun smoke from the battlefield" is masking the successes of his government of uneasy allies, which set out to modernize Germany. Justice Minister Marco Buschmann said that the government isn't a "self-help group." One of the Greens' national leaders, Omid Nouripour, described the coalition as a "transitional government."

The mainstream opposition Christian Democratic Union, or CDU, won the European Parliament election. It has led Saxony since German reunification in 1990 and hopes that governor Michael Kretschmer can power it past AfD again, as he did five years ago. In Thuringia, surveys show it trailing AfD, but it hopes to cobble together a governing coalition.

Thuringia's politics are particularly complicated because the Left Party of governor Bodo Ramelow has slumped into electoral insignificance nationally. Wagenknecht, long

one of its best-known figures, left last year to form a new party that is now outperforming it.

MIGRATION, WAR AND PEACE

AfD has tapped into high anti-immigration sentiment in the region, with one campaign poster in Thuringia promising "summer, sun, remigration" and depicting a plane with the logo "Deportation-Hansa."

A national AfD leader, Alice Weidel, assailed both the governing parties and the CDU — which previously ran Germany under Angela Merkel — for their "policy of uncontrolled mass immigration" following last week's knife attack in Solingen in which a suspected extremist from Syria is accused of killing three people.

Wagenknecht's new party, known by its German acronym BSW, combines left-wing economic policy with a migration-skeptic agenda. The CDU also has stepped up pressure on the national government for a tougher stance on migration.

Germany's stance toward Russia's war in Ukraine is also an issue in these eastern states. Berlin is Ukraine's second-biggest weapons supplier after the United States; those weapons deliveries are something both AfD and BSW oppose. An AfD poster combining the German and Russian flags declares that "Peace is Everything!"

Wagenknecht also has assailed a recent decision by the German government and the

U.S. to begin deployments of long-range missiles to Germany in 2026. She has declared that her party will only join state governments that have a "clear position for diplomacy and against the preparation of war."

WHO WILL GOVERN WITH WHOM?

AfD secured its first mayoral and county government posts last year, but the party hasn't yet joined a state government. In June, national co-leader Tino Chrupalla said that "the sun of government responsibility must rise for us in the east."

That doesn't look likely in Saxony and Thuringia, where no other party wants to join it in a coalition. The domestic intelligence agency has AfD's branches in both states under official surveillance as "proven right-wing extremist" groups. Its leader in Thuringia, Björn Höcke, has been convicted of knowingly using a Nazi slogan at political events, but is appealing.

Depending on how badly the national governing parties perform, that could leave the CDU looking for improbable coalition partners. The party has long refused to ally with Ramelow's Left Party, which is descended from East Germany's communist party, but hasn't ruled out working with Wagenknecht's BSW.

The CDU's national leader, Friedrich Merz, told the RND newspaper group that "we can't work with" AfD.

"That would kill the CDU," he said. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1976 NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL ENDS IN RIOT



More than 100 police officers had to be taken to hospital after clashes at the Notting Hill Carnival in west London.

Most were released after treatment but at least 26 have been detained overnight for observation or further treatment.

Around 60 carnival-goers also needed hospital treatment after the clashes which led to the arrest of at least 66 people.

The trouble is believed to have started after police tried to arrest a pickpocket near Portobello Road on the main carnival route.

Several black youths went to the pickpocket's aid and within minutes the disturbance escalated.

The police were attacked with stones and other missiles.

They armed themselves with dustbin lids, milk crates and wire fencing and charged the rioters.

At one stage a group of black youths were seen moving up Westbourne Park road smashing windows.

Gangs of white youths were also said to have been involved in the violence.

One witness, Raymond Hunter, who lives in Westbourne Park Road said he saw a police van set alight.

"The two policemen managed to get out of the van and fled. The gang then turned the van over and set fire to it," Mr Hunter said.

The disturbances effectively put an end to the annual celebration of Caribbean culture.

Police sealed off roads and closed pubs in the area as well as shutting down Ladbroke Grove underground station in an attempt to contain the violence.

In the past, the carnival - now in its 10th year - has been largely peaceful in spite of tensions with police.

A member of the Notting Hill Carnival Development Committee, Selwyn Baptiste, said they had been optimistic after the first day of the festival passed off peacefully.

"We had no reason to suppose it would be any different today. This was supposed to be about fun and love - not violence," Mr Baptiste said.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

In a subsequent trial 17 black youths faced 79 charges.

However, only two were convicted of carnival related offences after the court case which cost a record £250,000.

Sporadic violence continued to mar what is the largest street festival in Europe that began in 1964 with a street party to celebrate Caribbean culture in west London. The 1990s were relatively peaceful - but in 2000 there were two murders during the carnival. The London district of Notting Hill had a history of racial problems.

In 1958 it was the scene of race riots instigated by the fascist British Union whose "Teddy boys" clashed with local black people.

Relations between the black community and police had also been problematic over the years.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Romance, love and passion flower naturally over the next month, with Venus in Libra. Your artistry and creativity surges. Discover extraordinary beauty.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Fill your home with love. Beautification projects are especially satisfying, with Venus in Libra. Get creative. Have fun with color, texture and lighting.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Listen with heart. Indulge your artistic creativity, with Venus in Libra this month. Satisfy your insatiable curiosity. Write, craft and sketch. Record your ideas.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Demand increases for your work. The next month can get especially profitable, with Venus in Libra. Make connections of heart and contribution.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Dress for success. You're especially charismatic, beautiful and attractive, with Venus in your sign for the next month. Try a new haircut or style.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
Create and invent. Dream up inspiring visions, with Venus in Libra for a month. Revel in peace and quiet. Get lost in beauty. Solve curious puzzles.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Teamwork leads to victory. You're especially popular, with Venus in Libra. Connect with friends and allies. Enjoy the public spotlight over the next month.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Take charge. Infuse your work with love. Create beautiful results, with Venus in Libra. Develop interesting opportunities. Advance your agenda for passion and profit.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Discover amazing beauty and treasures, with Venus in Libra for a month. Explore, study and discover new frontiers. Investigate fascinating subjects.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Contribute to rising profit with your partner over the next month. Increase your shared assets, with Venus in Libra. Work together for common gain.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Share support. Nurture each other with kindness. Collaboration flows with ease, with Venus in Libra for a month. Love feeds your heart and spirit.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Your work's in demand, with Venus in Libra. Infuse it with love. Physical action gets results. Express your heart. Nurture yourself with soul food.

The Born Loser by Chip Sanson



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

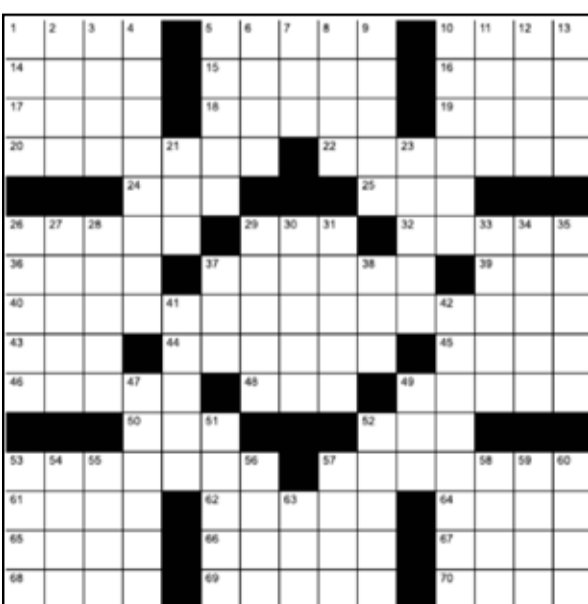
	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	21	33	fine
Changchun	19	25	rain
Chengdu	24	35	rain
Chongqing	31	41	fine
Fuzhou	25	33	rain
Guangzhou	26	33	thunderstorms
Guiyang	21	30	showers
Haikou	26	34	cloudy
Hangzhou	25	34	cloudy
Harbin	19	25	rain
Hefei	25	34	cloudy
Nanjing	26	33	cloudy
Shanghai	27	34	cloudy
Taipei	26	31	cloudy
Wuhan	25	35	fine
Hong Kong	26	30	rain
WORLD			
Moscow	14	27	fine
Frankfurt	18	29	cloudy
Paris	16	22	rain
London	14	23	cloudy
New York	18	29	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- ___-a-brac; 5- Mr. T's former group; 10- Voodoo amulet; 14- "That smarts!"; 15- Tractor pioneer John; 16- Fusses; 17- Singer McEntire; 18- Comic DeGeneres; 19- Roster used to assign duties; 20- Commander in chief of a fleet; 22- Smokers receptacle; 24- Zero; 25- Sigh of satisfaction; 26- Chinese menu phrase; 29- Whopper; 32- Hired parker; 36- Out of port; 37- Colonize; 39- Former Bush spokesman Fleischer; 40- In spite of; 43- Tap output; 44- Sailor; 45- Cleveland's lake; 46- Perfect Sleeper maker; 48- Hi-___; 49- Stair part; 50- Magician's prop; 52- Simpson trial judge; 53- Leads on; 57- To-do lists; 61- Wall Street pessimist; 62- Flat contract; 64- Pressing need; 65- Liberal pursuits; 66- Minimum; 67- Area; 68- Baseball's "Walking Man" Eddie; 69- Yoga posture; 70- Sporting blade;

DOWN 1- Aboriginal rite site; 2- Felt sorry about; 3- SALT subject; 4- Woodcutter power tool; 5- Let's Make ___; 6- Narrate; 7- Moray; 8- Length x width, for a rectangle; 9- The brainy bunch; 10- Stewart of home tips; 11- Smell or fragrance; 12- Spanish dance; 13- Anthem starter; 21- Tractor-trailer; 23- Refugee; 26- Grannies; 27- ___ Mio; 28- Unit just above a yard; 29- "The Merry Widow" composer; 30- "Who's there?" reply; 31- Kett and James; 33- Dens; 34- Bert's roomie; 35- Large cat; 37- Sault ___ Marie; 38- PC linkup; 41- Sir ___ Newton was an English mathematician; 42- Remove charged atoms; 47- Need for liquid; 49- Numbered rd.; 51- I cannot ___ lie; 52- ___ Kick Out of You; 53- Auction site; 54- Emperor after Claudius; 55- Makes lace; 56- Dates; 57- Org.; 58- Fall; 59- Top-flight; 60- Dagger of yore; 63- Battery size;

Yesterday's solution



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

It's prime time to BUY & RENT!

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

jml property
CONTACT US & SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY!
hello@jmlproperty.com
www.jmlproperty.com
jmlmacau jmlproperty

Hoi Wan Retail (Taipa)
HKD 12,980,000

Tou Un (Taipa)
HKD 2,750,000 1 bed 1 bath

Jade Garden (Taipa)
HKD 11,880,000 4 bed 3 bath

DRIVE IN

'THE CROW' REIMAGINED IS STYLISH AND OPERATIC, BUT CANNOT OUTFLY 1994 ORIGINAL

MARK KENNEDY,
MDT/AP
ENTERTAINMENT
WRITER

ONE of the first things you see in the reimagined "The Crow" is the sight of a fallen white horse in a muddy field, bleeding badly after becoming entangled in barbed wire. It's a metaphor, of course, and a clunky one at that — a powerful image that doesn't really fit well and is never explained.

That's a hint that director Rupert Sanders will have a tendency to consistently pick the stylish option over the honest one in this film. In his attempt to give new life to the cult hero of comics and film, he's given us plenty of beauty at the expense of depth or coherence.

The filmmakers have set their tale in a modern, generic Europe and made it very clear



Bill Skarsgård in a scene from "The Crow" (Lionsgate)

that this movie is based on the graphic novel by James O'Barr, but the 1994 film adaptation starring Brandon Lee

hovers over it like, well, a stubborn crow.

Brandon, son of legendary actor and martial artist Bruce Lee, was just

28 when he died after being shot while filming a scene for "The Crow." History seems always to repeat: The new adaptation lands as another on-set death remains in the headlines.

Lee's "The Crow" was finished without him and he never got to see it enter Gen X memory in all its rain-drenched, gothic glory, influencing everything from alternative fashion to "Blade" to Christopher Nolan's "Dark Knight" trilogy.

Bill Skarsgård seizes Lee's role of Eric Draven, a man so in love that he returns from the dead to revenge his and his sweetheart's slayings in what can be best called a sort of supernatural, romantic murderfest. (The tagline, "True love never dies," clumsily rips off Andrew Lloyd Webber's "The Phantom of the Opera.")

William Schneider, who co-wrote the screenplay with Zach Baylin, has given the story a near-operatic facelift, by introducing a devil, a Faustian bargain, blood-on-blood oaths and a godlike guide who monitors the limbo between heaven and hell, which looks like a disused, weed-covered railway station. "Kill the ones who killed you and

you'll get her back," our hero is told.

The first half drags at it sets the table for the steady beat of limbs and necks being detached at the end. Eric and his love, Shelly (played by an uneven FKA Twigs), meet in a rehab prison for wayward youth that is so well lit and appointed that it looks more like an airport lounge where the cappuccinos are \$19 but the Wi-Fi is complimentary.

Eric is a gentle loner — tortured by a past the writers don't bother filling in, who likes to sketch in a book (universal cinema code signaling a sensitive soul) and is heavily tattooed (he's often shirtless). His apartment has rows of mannequins with their heads covered in plastic and his new love calls him "brilliantly broken." He's like a Blink-182 lyric come to life.

Shelly is more complex, but that's because the writers maybe gave up on giving her a real backstory. She has a tattoo that says "Laugh now, cry later," reads serious literature and loves dancing in her underwear. She clearly comes from wealth and has had a falling out with her mom, but has also done an unimaginably horri-

ble thing, which viewers will learn about at the end.

Part of the trouble is that the lead couple cast off very little electricity, offering a love affair that's more teen-like than all-consuming. And this is a story that needs a love capable of transcending death.

There are lots of cool-looking moments — mostly Skarsgård in a trench coat, stomping around the desolate concrete jungle in the rain at night — until "The Crow" builds to one of the better action sequences this year, albeit another one of those heightened showdowns at the opera.

By this time, Eric has donned the Crow's heavy eye and cheek makeup. He adds to this ensemble a katana and an inability to die. As he closes in on his target, mowing down tuxedoed bad guys as arias soar, the group movements on stage are echoed by the furious fighting backstage. A few severed heads might be considered over the top at curtain call, but subtlety isn't being applauded here.

If the original was plot-light but visually delicious, the new one has a better story but suffers from ideas in the films built on its predecessor, stealing a little from "The Matrix," "Joker" and "Kill Bill." Why not create something entirely new?

"The Crow" isn't bad — and it gets better as it goes — but it's an exercise in folly. It cannot escape Lee and the 1994 original even as it builds a more allegorical scaffolding for the smartphone generation. To use that very first metaphor, it's like the trapped white horse — held down by its own painful past, never free to gallop on its own.

"The Crow," a Lionsgate release that hits theaters Friday, is rated R for "strong bloody violence, gore, language, sexuality/nudity and drug use." Running time: 111 minutes.



AD

仁德 CENTRO MEDICO PEDDER
• 仁德醫療中心 •

We bring high quality of medical service to Macau

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

Breast Surgery : Dr. Leong Iat Lun

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

Paediatric Surgery : Dr. Yeung Chung Kwong

Paediatrics : Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

Obstetrics & Gynaecology : Dr. Fong Kuan Io

Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery : Dr. Lam U Lin

Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

ENT : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

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

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

Dietitian : Chan Lai U Joey

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

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



TASTE OF EDESIA

Splashes of Fun

LAST Saturday, **The Grand Coloane Resort** transformed into a sun-soaked, foam-filled oasis as it hosted the Bubbly Bash—the coolest foam pool party in Macau. The party lived up to its billing, delivering an unforgettable day of celebration, fun, and entertainment. MDT joined the festivities kicked off with pool party, and from then on, the resort's pool area was a hub of excitement as partygoers of all ages dove into the sudsy foam and immersed themselves in a range of activities. DJ Luna set the vibe with her electrifying performance in the afternoon, keeping the energy high. Simultaneously, the Mermaid Experience made its first splash in the afternoon. Conducted by All Blue Diving at the resort's outdoor swimming pool, this unique activity allowed guests to try swimming like a mermaid, providing them with a chance to live out their aquatic fantasies in a safe environ-

ment, offering guests not only the joy of the experience but also the opportunity to capture stunning, memorable photos. Following closely, the Stand-up Paddleboard (SUP) Workshop, organized by the Baía do Mar Canoeing Club, allowed guests to learn and experience stand-up paddle-boarding in the calm, inviting waters of the resort's pool. This workshop provided an ideal setting for beginners, offering a relaxed environment than the ocean, ensuring everyone could enjoy the sport at their own pace. As the day transitioned into evening, the event's momentum peaked more attractions. The first was the enchanting Choreographed Mermaid Performance, conducted in three unique sessions throughout the evening. Each performance, themed and styled differently, saw mermaids reeling and diving gracefully into the pool, captivating the audience with their beauty and artistry. IS

TASTE OF EDESIA

Creating Sweet Memories

IRENE SAM, MDT

FOR those who have a sweet tooth and love to take beautiful and creative photos for social media, **Cha Bei** is the place to be. Recently, two world-class pastry masters are presenting an afternoon extravaganza celebrating their Asian roots.

World Pastry Champion 2019 and Enchanté Pâtisserie's Executive Chef and owner Tan Wei Loon collaborates for the first time with Chef Yam Lok Hin,

Silver prize winner in the Valrhona Chocolate Competition, North America. In this year's Constance Festival Culinaire, Chef Hin even took the award for "Best Artistic Piece" and was the "Pierre Hermé Trophy" Runner-up. Through a dazzling array of exquisite treats, they share flavours that take everyone back to their childhood—the fluffy warmth of sweet potato, Grandpa's favorite tea, the comforting sweetness of Chinese sweet soup—all of which get a new interpretation. One

would find the two chefs' signature cakes and an amazing selection of tea, coffee and welcome drinks that pay homage to Hong Kong and Malaysia. MDT finds the red bean drink to stand out as an unusual yet delicious creation.

Together with the culinary team, Chef Hin and Chef Wei Loon have created a 1.3-meter-tall sugar sculpture which will be on display at the establish until early September. Perfect background for a beautiful photo shoot indeed.



tTUNES

SABRINA CARPENTER'S NEW ALBUM IS FLIRTY, FUN AND WHOLLY UNSERIOUS

SAY you can't sleep? Sabrina Carpenter knows. That's that her espresso.

The 25-year-old pop sensation's smash hit of the summer, "Espresso"—with its grammatical mystery of an earworm line, "That's that me espresso"—gave listeners a taste of her newest album, "Short n' Sweet." The former Disney Channel actor's sixth studio album follows an explosive year marked with successes, from ope-

ning for Taylor Swift on her Eras Tour to performing at Coachella.

She's confident, she's radiant, and she'll air out all your dirty laundry in a breakup song if you wrong her.

In the flirty, fun and wholly unserious "Short n' Sweet," Carpenter's soprano vocals take humorous jabs at exes and drop innuendos with an air of cheeky innocence. Sugary songs like "Taste" and "Juno" incorporate

enough NSFW references to have listeners blushing almost as much as the rosy-cheeked singer.

There's a country twang to some tracks, like "Slim Pickins," an acoustic number bemoaning the difficulties of finding a good man and having to settle for a guy who "doesn't even know the difference between 'there,' 'their' and 'they are.'"

Carpenter shows a more vulnerable side with ballads like "Dumb & Poe-

tic" and "Lie to Girls," in which she drops her care-free front to sing unguarded lyrics airing out grievances against an ex.

"Don't think you understand," she sings in "Dumb & Poetic." "Just 'cause you act like one doesn't make you a man."

But it's when pop tracks blend into R&B that Carpenter really shines. Her breathy vocals work so well on such tracks as "Good Graces" and "Don't Smile," reminis-

AP PHOTO



"Short N' Sweet" by Sabrina Carpenter (Island Records)

cent of Ariana Grande or Mariah Carey.

Which direction will she take next? Only Carpenter

knows. Isn't that sweet? Carpenter guesses so. That is, after all, that her espresso.

KIANA DOYLE, MDT/AP

OPINION

The Conversation

Annalisa Bracco, Georgia Institute of Tech.



HOW ATLANTIC NIÑA'S COULD AFFECT HURRICANE SEASON

For months, the North Atlantic Ocean has experienced unusually high surface temperatures. However, recent cooling in both the Atlantic and eastern Pacific might offer some relief, particularly for vulnerable coral reefs. This cooling is attributed to two climate phenomena: La Niña, which occurs in the tropical Pacific, and the less well-known Atlantic Niña. Both can influence the Atlantic hurricane season, though in different ways.

La Niña, a key part of the El Niño–Southern Oscillation, is a well-known climate pattern with global impacts. During La Niña, sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific drop below normal, strengthening easterly trade winds and promoting cooler water upwelling off South America. This cooling affects atmospheric patterns worldwide, often leading to stormier conditions in some areas and drier conditions in others. Notably, La Niña typically weakens wind shear in the Atlantic, which can help hurricanes form and intensify.

In contrast, Atlantic Niña is a smaller-scale phenomenon occurring in the Atlantic Ocean. It usually peaks in July or August and has a shorter duration and more localized effects compared to La Niña. Atlantic Niñas generally have the opposite impact of Atlantic Niños, which can reduce rainfall in Africa's Sahel and increase it in Brazil and nearby regions.

While weaker than La Niña, Atlantic Niña can counteract some of La Niña's effects by weakening summer winds that drive upwelling in the eastern Pacific. This July and August, meteorologists observed signs of an Atlantic Niña developing, marked by unexpectedly weak surface winds and warmer sea surface temperatures earlier in the summer. Simultaneously, eastern Pacific waters were cooling, with La Niña conditions expected by October or November.

Seeing both Niñas simultaneously is rare but not unheard of. This combination is akin to two pendulums swinging in opposite directions. More common pairings include La Niña with Atlantic Niño or El Niño with Atlantic Niña.

An Atlantic Niña might initially seem advantageous for hurricane-prone areas. Cooler waters off Africa can suppress the formation of African easterly waves, which can develop into tropical disturbances or hurricanes. Since tropical storms rely on warm sea surface temperatures for energy, cooling in the tropical Atlantic could reduce this energy, potentially lowering the likelihood of tropical cyclones.

However, NOAA's August outlook for the Atlantic hurricane season remains highly active. This forecast considers multiple factors, including near-record warm sea surface temperatures in the North Atlantic, which can intensify hurricanes. Additionally, the anticipated La Niña in the Pacific is expected to weaken wind shear, further supporting hurricane development. Thus, La Niña's significant effects might overshadow the Atlantic Niña's impacts.

Recent years have seen exceptionally high ocean temperatures globally, and while the two Niñas might provide some localized cooling relief, it may be temporary. The ongoing trend of global warming, driven by rising greenhouse gas emissions, continues to elevate baseline temperatures, potentially fueling more intense hurricanes. [Abridged]

CIA OFFICIAL: SUSPECTS IN FOILED PLOT TO ATTACK TAYLOR SWIFT SHOWS AIMED TO KILL 'TENS OF THOUSANDS'

THE BUZZ

The suspects in the foiled plot to attack Taylor Swift concerts in Vienna earlier this month sought to kill "tens of thousands" of fans before the CIA discovered intelligence that disrupted the planning and led to arrests, the agency's deputy director said.

The CIA notified Austrian authorities of the scheme, which allegedly included links to the Islamic State group. The intelligence and subsequent arrests ultimately led to the cancellation of three sold-out Eras Tour shows, devastating fans who had traveled across the globe to see Swift in concert.

CIA Deputy Director David Cohen addressed the failed plot during

the annual Intelligence and National Security Summit, held this week in Maryland.

"They were plotting to kill a huge number — tens of thousands of people at this concert, including I am sure many Americans — and were quite advanced in this," Cohen said yesterday [Macau time]. "The Austrians were able to make those arrests because the agency and our partners in the intelligence community provided them information about what this ISIS-connected group was planning to do."

Austrian officials said the main suspect, a 19-year-old Austrian man, was inspired by the Islamic State group.

AP PHOTO



VENICE

FESTIVAL GREETS JOLIE AND 'MARIA,' HER FILM ABOUT FAMED OPERA SINGER

LINDSEY BAHR, VENICE

ANGELINA Jolie has played an evil queen, a war correspondent, a hacker, an international spy and a sociopath. She's now adding opera singer to her resume.

It's not just any opera singer either: Jolie stars as the legendary soprano Maria Callas in a new film from Chilean filmmaker Pablo Larraín. "Maria" will have its world premiere in competition at the Venice Film Festival today [Macau time].

Jolie made a grand entrance on the docks of the Hotel Excelsior, on the Lido, posing for photographers in a drapery brown dress with hair long and loose. Later, she'll change for the red carpet premiere.

Larraín, a Venice regular, continues to explore the lives of very famous women with tragic narratives attached to them. In 2016, he came to the festival with his Jackie Kennedy portrait, "Jackie," starring Natalie Portman as the first lady in the af-

termath of her husband's assassination. In 2021 he returned with Kristen Stewart playing Princess Diana as she considered divorce over the Christmas holiday in "Spencer." Both films earned their leads best actress Oscar nominations.

"Maria" is the so-called conclusion to this trilogy of historical women, though Callas may be a bit less known to younger generations who weren't around for the headlines and scandals. Born Maria Kalogeropoulos to Greek parents in New York, the singer made her professional debut in Athens as a 17-year-old.

During her brief life she became one of the greatest opera singers of all time with her unparalleled voice and stage presence. But the accolades also came with the intense scrutiny of her life in the public eye, whether it was her exacting demands and "diva" behavior, her weight or her romantic life. Callas famously had a relationship with shipping

magnate Aristotle Onassis who left her for Jackie Kennedy.

She died in Paris at age 53 after a heart attack.

Larraín told Vanity Fair that Jolie trained for six months to prepare for the role. The singing in the film, which focuses on the final week of her life in 1977, is a blend of actor and the real thing.

Jolie has twice been nominated for acting Oscars. She won for her supporting role in "Girl, Interrupted," and was last nominated for her leading role in Clint Eastwood's "Changeling."

Jolie is expected to depart Venice before her ex-husband Brad Pitt arrives for the premiere of his film "Wolfs" on Sunday. Though legally single since 2019, they are still fighting over issues like custody, finances and a winery in France.

"Maria" is among the 21 features competing for the festival's awards which will be announced on Sept. 7. It was acquired recently by Netflix for distribution. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



Ukraine Yesterday, Russia conducted a heavy aerial attack on Ukraine, launching missiles and drones. Minor damage was reported in Kyiv as Ukrainian defenses intercepted most of the attacks, marking another escalation in the ongoing conflict.

AP PHOTO



France Telegram CEO Pavel Durov yesterday [Macau time] faced preliminary charges in France for failing to prevent criminal activities on his platform. He's accused of allowing child abuse material and drug trafficking, with restrictions imposed on his movement during investigations.

AP PHOTO



Brazil Wildfires across the Amazon yesterday [Macau time] led to severe air pollution, causing respiratory problems among residents. Symptoms include coughing and eye irritation, with the ongoing crisis exacerbated by man-made deforestation and fire management practices.

AP PHOTO



Brazil A Supreme Court justice yesterday [Macau time] issued a 24-hour ultimatum to X, formerly Twitter, demanding the appointment of a legal representative in Brazil or face operational suspension. This order intensifies the ongoing legal and political friction between the platform and Brazilian authorities.

AP PHOTO



USA A Democratic former politician was found guilty of murder yesterday [Macau time] by a Nevada jury that decided he'll serve 20 years to life in prison for killing an investigative journalist who wrote articles critical of his conduct in office two years ago. Robert Telles hung his head, shaking it slightly from side to side, as his verdict was read in Clark County District Court.