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THE HEALTH BUREAU IS RAISING AWARENESS OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AND RESOURCES AS PART OF WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY ACTIVITIES

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UPCOMING IPHONE WILL CATAPULT THE TECH TRENDSETTER INTO THE AGE OF AI

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AP PHOTO



China's Defense Ministry announced yesterday joint naval and air drills with Russia, named "Northern United-2024," to be conducted in the Sea of Japan and the Sea of Okhotsk. The exercises aim to enhance strategic cooperation and address security threats, marking the fifth naval collaboration in the Pacific between the two nations.

AP PHOTO



East Timor Pope Francis arrived yesterday in East Timor, receiving a warm welcome as he acknowledged the country's recovery from a violent struggle for independence and subtly referenced a local bishop's abuse scandal. His visit coincides with the 25th anniversary of the U.N.-backed referendum that led to East Timor's independence from Indonesia. [More on P8](#)

AP PHOTO



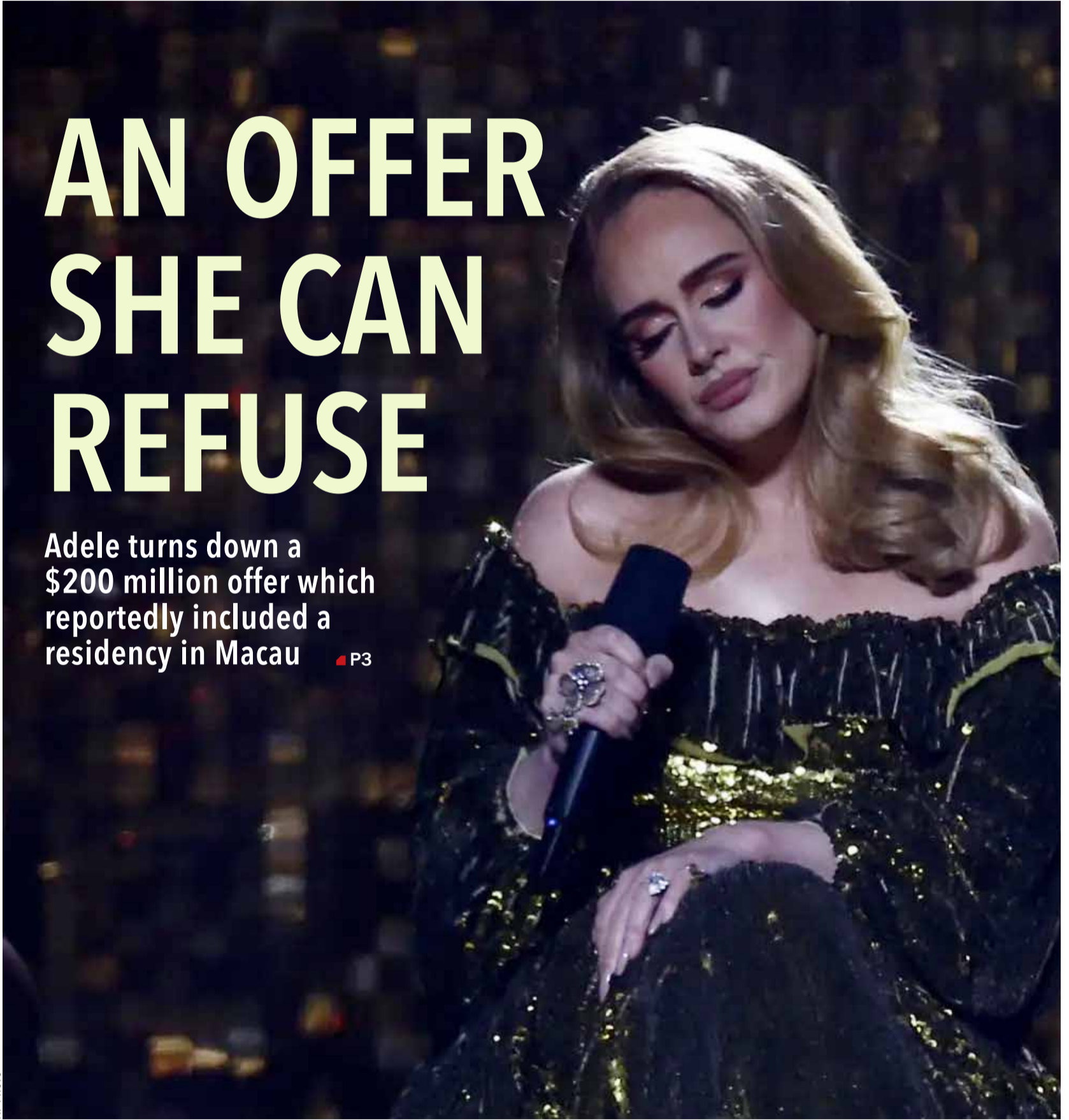
Syria Israeli airstrikes in central Syria have resulted in 14 deaths and over 40 injuries, according to Syrian state media. The strikes targeted various locations including a scientific research center in Maysaf and areas with Iranian military presence, escalating tensions in a region fraught with conflict.

AP PHOTO



Lebanon's former central bank chief Riad Salameh will remain jailed while facing charges of embezzling \$42 million from state funds. His detention follows allegations of extensive financial crimes, contributing to the country's severe economic crisis. Salameh denies the charges, asserting his wealth is legitimate.

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AN OFFER SHE CAN REFUSE

Adele turns down a \$200 million offer which reportedly included a residency in Macau

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AP PHOTO



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HEALTH BUREAU PRIORITIZES MENTAL HEALTH

VICTORIA CHAN

THE Health Bureau is raising awareness of mental health issues and resources as part of World Suicide Prevention Day activities.

The Macau Health Bureau has placed great importance on the mental well-being of its residents, adhering to the principle of "prevention first, proper medical treatment" and the "people-oriented" approach. Under the "Healthy Macau Blueprint," the Bureau has formulated a phased mental health promotion strategy that integrates health concepts into various public policies through cross-departmental collaboration.

This year's World Suicide Prevention Day theme, "Changing the Narrative on Suicide," aims to encourage open discussions about mental health, according to the Health Bureau. By 2030, the agency has set three specific goals and six evaluation indicators to main-



tain the mental health of Macau residents throughout their lives. This includes formulating and implementing relevant

laws and regulations, building a social support network, and educating residents on mental health awareness and self-care.

The government has also established an inter-departmental collaboration mechanism to better address the community's

mental health needs. Frontline services include eight mental health clinics and crisis counseling through Hospital Centre S. Januario's psychiatric department. Community outreach teams follow at-risk patients, and health centers are increasing clinicians' psychiatric training.

Repeated public awareness campaigns emphasize the importance of mental health. Residents are urged to pay attention to their own well-being and support loved ones. While managing stress through exercise or sharing feelings is encouraged, more serious troubles should prompt professional help-seeking behavior without hesitation.

By addressing mental health proactively, Macau can work to build a society of understanding and care for all residents' healthy minds, bodies, and spirits. Continued promotion of prevention and treatment should benefit community wellness.

Two arrested in Macau residential break-in case

VICTORIA CHAN

POLICE have arrested a man and woman from mainland China in connection with a break-in at a second-floor residential unit in Macau.

According to the police report, the incident occurred around 10 p.m. on July 11 when the owner of a second-floor unit in a Macau residential building heard loud noises and discovered a man breaking his window and attempting to enter, according to a police report. When confronted, the man fled to the first floor and escaped.

The owner reported the broken window to police but said no property was taken. Repair costs were esti-



mated at 3,000 patacas. Police then contacted the owner of the first-floor unit who was not home but suspected a robbery. His window also required repairs, costing 1,000 patacas.

Following an investigation, authorities found that the male suspect worked with a female accomplice. They had climbed from ground level to the first-floor unit, broken the window,

then attempted to enter the second-floor home.

Authorities later determined the two individuals - 48-year-old Lei and 45-year-old Tong, both residents of mainland China - worked together. Lei allegedly climbed to the second floor while Tong broke a first-floor window in an attempt to enter the unit, but fled when disturbed.

On September 6, police discovered the

man and woman entering Macau at the Hengqin Port. Police later intercepted and witnessed the pair entering the residential building together while carrying tools such as metal bars, pipes, and screwdrivers. The duo spent time in nearby areas before being seen leaving with the tools, plus masks and goggles, which were believed to be tools for committing crimes, according to the police report.

No robberies had yet been reported from the building. Police have since imposed heavy penalties on Lei and Tong, as the investigation continues into their suspected theft operations targeting Macau residences.



GREENER SOLUTION FOR MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL'S MOONCAKE BOXES

As the Mid-Autumn Festival Approaches, locals can expect to receive an abundance of mooncake boxes. However, the Macao Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA) is encouraging residents to recycle these boxes through their annual "Recycling Mooncake Boxes is Very Easy" campaign.

The initiative, running from September 17th to 29th, aims to promote green and low-carbon living practices among Macau's citizens. The DSPA has set up over 1,000 mooncake box collection points across the city, making it convenient for residents to drop off their used boxes for proper recycling.

The campaign aims to encourage the territory's green living practices and proper waste disposal. Citizens

are asked to empty mooncake boxes before recycling as staff will later collect the boxes. Through its ongoing collaboration with various community partners, the DSPA hopes recycling mooncake boxes will become second nature over the celebrations.

To boost recycling programs, the Alegria Environmental Centre in Taipa's social housing district will also operate temporarily from September 20 at another nearby location with unchanged hours. The expanded network provides recycling services alongside environmental education to foster sustainable behavior among residents. Further details on collection points and recycling support can be found on the DSPA website or WeChat account. VC

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Adele's biggest hit: turning down \$200 million offer

NADIA SHAW

IN a bold decision, global superstar Adele has reportedly turned down a staggering USD200 million offer to extend her world tour, instead choosing to prioritize her family life. The news, first reported by the Daily Mail last week, reveals the singer's commitment to taking a break after her current residency in Las Vegas despite being offered the biggest deal of her career.

Adele, whose net worth is currently estimated at \$220 million, was approached with an enticing proposal which included a long-term residency at a casino in

Macau, China. This offer follows her successful "Weekends with Adele" shows at Caesars Palace, where she has captivated audiences since November 2022.

Despite the financial allure, the singer, who recently concluded her Munich shows, made the announcement to fans, stating, "I will not see you for an incredibly long time." Adele expressed her desire to take a break, saying, "I just need a rest. I have spent the last seven years building a new life for myself and I want to live it now." She still has ten more shows scheduled in Las Vegas, but after that, she plans to take a significant hiatus from performing.

"There have been a lot of offers

but she has turned them all down because she wants to be home with her kid," a source close to the singer revealed. "The Chinese deal put millions of dollars on the table, but she did not want to do it in the end. She's put her child and partner — and herself — first." Adele has opted to focus on her family, including her son Angelo and fiancé Rich Paul. Another source also confirmed that the singer had turned down many offers in favor of spending more time with her family.

The singer, known for her powerful voice and emotive songwriting, has experienced great success since her debut album, "19," in 2008. Her chart-topping hits, including

"Rolling in the Deep," "Someone Like You," "Skyfall," and "Hello," have earned her numerous accolades, including 16 Grammy Awards and an Academy Award.

The Daily Mail source stated that the Macau deal was "far better paid" than the Las Vegas shows, where she earns a reported £500,000 (MOP 5.28 million) per performance. The source also stated that alongside the reported Macau deal, the songstress was also offered a stadium tour of Europe, Asia, and South America, but ultimately turned down all the offers to prioritize her family life.

The Macau Daily Times' sources suggest that Sands China, the operator of several major properties in the region, may have extended an offer to the global superstar, particularly for the Londoner Macao.

The Londoner Macao boasts the 6,000-seat Londoner Arena, designed for concerts, sporting events, and corporate functions. Its adaptable layout, complemented by VIP lounges and private suites, positions it as an ideal venue for a high-profile residency. "Given Adele's previous successful residency at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, a similar offer from Sands China would align with their strategy to attract high-profile entertainment acts," a source who asked not to be named told the Times.

There is also speculation that Galaxy Macau could be in the running to host Adele. With the Galaxy Arena, the largest indoor venue in Macau with capacity to accommodate up to 16,000 guests, the venue offers versatile configurations for concerts and events. Additionally, the Galaxy International Convention Center provides over 40,000 square meters of flexible space, further enhancing its appeal for large-scale entertainment. No official comments from the major gaming operators were received by press time.

As Adele wraps up her final Las Vegas shows, fans are left wondering when she will return to the stage. Will the next chapter of her storied career unfold in Macau? Only time will tell.

PSP HEADQUARTERS RELOCATED

The Public Security Police (PSP) Headquarters has officially relocated to its new building beside the Taipa Ferry Terminal on Estrada da Ponte de Pac On, from September 2024. The phased move includes the main office, which now offers document services on the ground floor, and the Planning and Operations Department on the second floor. Essential contact numbers remain unchanged, including the emergency hotline (999/110/112) and the main office number (853) 2857 3333. The New Port Police Division will continue operations at its original location. Those seeking further information can visit the Public Security Police Force website or contact the department directly.

LUCKY DRAWS FOR E-COUPONS AFTER WEEKDAY SPENDING

The Economic and Technological Development Bureau (DSEDT) has announced a three-month city-wide consumption drive starting early October to boost local small businesses, according to a press release. The scheme will see users enter lucky draws for electronic coupons after making purchases during the week, with the coupons redeemable exclusively on weekends. This follows community concern about the struggles facing many small businesses after hundreds of thousands of residents began traveling north to Zhuhai and Guangdong for shopping and entertainment since the border reopening in 2023. The press release noted the e-coupons will be accepted at over 22,000 small and medium-sized enterprises across the city.

HONGKONGER ARRESTED FOR MAKING FALSE REPORT

A Hong Kong man was arrested in Macau for making a false report after losing money at a casino. Local media in Macau reported that a 43-year-old man from Hong Kong, surnamed Cheung, was taken into custody on suspicion of fabricating a police report. The incident unfolded on the morning of August 31, when Cheung informed the police that he had been swindled out of HK\$100,000 by three men in the casino under the guise of exchanging chips.

CE ELECTION

Sam Hou Fai engages business leaders

CHIEF Executive candidate Sam Hou Fai met with representatives from various industrial and commercial associations on September 9, 2024, to discuss the future of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the region. The meeting, held at the Application Headquarters in Nam Tung Commercial Building, included key officials Lei Wun Kong and Ip Sio Kai.

During the session, nine representatives



from the Federation of Industry and Trade in Central and Southern Districts, along with others from the Northern Macau Zone and Macau Islands, shared insights on enhancing the business environment. They emphasized

the need for transforming each zone into a unique attraction to support local SMEs and proposed establishing a specialized government entity to study economic development in community neighborhoods.

In a separate meeting, Hou Fai's campaign representatives, including Lei Wun Kong and Chan Ka Leong, engaged with Oxfam President Kalina Tsang to discuss support for vulnerable groups in Macau.

Additionally, Hou Fai met with the Macau Youth Development Service Center to address youth development issues, where representatives shared suggestions on employment, housing, and career planning.

Hou Fai expressed gratitude for the feedback, committing to explore ways to optimize Macau's business landscape and promote sustainable economic recovery as the CE election approaches. **NS**

HENGQIN COOPERATION ZONE MEETING ADVANCES ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

THE second meeting of the First Advisory Committee for the Hengqin-Guangzhou-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone was held last week, bringing together 25 members, including notable figures such as Edmund Ho, Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. The meeting aimed to bolster the integration of Macau and Hengqin through discussions on strategic initiatives for economic diversification.

Lei Wai Nong, Macau's Economy and Finance Secretary, highlighted the successful implementation of 21 central government policies that support the Hengqin initiative. He emphasized the importance of these policies in promoting the integrated development of the region, particularly in attracting international resources and talent.

Edmund Ho, who served as the first Chief Executive of the

LYNZY VALLES



Macau Special Administrative Region, urged the committee to focus on achieving high-quality outcomes in the first phase of the cooperation zone's development. He outlined four key areas for improvement: enhancing resource capabilities, fostering talent acquisition, addressing the needs of emerging industries, and ensuring that various stakeholders benefit from the ongoing changes in Shenzhen.

The meeting also addressed plans for the second phase of industrial development in Shenzhen, with the goal of further advancing integrated development between Hengqin and Macau. The committee is optimistic about achieving significant results that will contribute to Macau's moderately diversified economy, moving beyond its traditional reliance on gaming and entertainment. **NS**

Macau, Hong Kong and Guangdong sign cybersecurity pact for Greater Bay Area

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) on cybersecurity collaboration among officials from Hong Kong, Macau and Guangdong Province was signed this week at the opening ceremony of the 2024 China Cybersecurity Week in Nansha. On the occasion, Professor Sun Dong, Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry of Hong Kong, emphasized the close relationship between cybersecurity and the public and he called for vigilance against escalating online threats.

The newly inked MoU seeks to strengthen coordination in technological exchanges, information sharing and emergency response across the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

Tony Wong, Commissioner for Digital Policy of Hong Kong, joined counterparts

from the Cyberspace Administration of Guangdong and Macau's Cybersecurity Commission to formalize the collaboration.

Professor Sun said this will facilitate high-quality development in the region through robust cybersecurity support.

During the week-long event, various activities in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau aim to deepen industry ties, cultivate talent, and boost public awareness.

Professor Sun visited an exhibition highlighting achievements from Hong Kong's cybersecurity cooperation with mainland partners.

He hopes this provides opportunities to strengthen joint defenses and contribute to national cyber strength.

Professor Sun concluded his visit and returned to Hong Kong Sunday afternoon. **VC**

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





Apple's upcoming iPhone will catapult the tech trendsetter into the age of AI

APPLE'S ubiquitous iPhone is about to break new ground with a shift into artificial intelligence that will do everything from smartening up its frequently dim-witted assistant Siri to creating customized emojis on the fly.

The new era will dawn yesterday with the unveiling of the hotly anticipated iPhone 16 in a Cupertino, California, auditorium named after Apple co-founder Steve Jobs, who pulled out the first iPhone in 2007 and waved it like a magic wand while predicting it would reshape society.

Apple has sold billions of iPhones since then, helping to create about \$3 trillion in shareholder wealth. But in the past decade, there have

been mostly minor upgrades from one model to the next — a factor that has caused people to hold off on buying a new iPhone and led to a recent slump in sales of Apple's marquee product.

The iPhone 16 is generating a bigger buzz because it is the first model to be tailored specifically for AI, a technology that is expected to trigger the biggest revolution in the industry since Jobs thrust Apple into the smartphone market 17 years ago.

The advances included in the iPhone 16 could set up Apple to be "the gatekeeper of the consumer AI revolution," Wedbush Securities analyst Dan Ives wrote in a research note. **MDT/AP**



ECONOMY

Japan's is growing, but political uncertainty is among the risks

URI KAGEYAMA, TOKYO

JAPAN'S economy grew at an annual rate of 2.9%, slower than the earlier report for 3.1% growth, in the April-June period, boosted by better wages and spending, revised government data showed yesterday.

That shows clear risks remain, including U.S. economic growth, which greatly affects export-reliant Japan. Political uncertainty in Japan is another risk as the ruling party picks a new leader.

About a dozen candidates are seeking to succeed Prime Minister Fumio Kishida as head of the Liberal Demo-

cratic Party. The winner of its Sept. 27 vote is a near-certainty to be the next prime minister since the party controls parliament.

The world's fourth-largest economy grew 0.7% in the fiscal first quarter, according to the Cabinet Office, rebounding from the contraction in the previous quarter.

Seasonally adjusted real gross domestic product, or GDP, measures the value of a nation's products and services. The annual rate shows how much the economy would have grown or contracted, if the quarterly rate continued for a year.

Monday's GDP data showed domestic demand

grew a robust 3.0% from the previous quarter on the back of healthy household consumption and private sector investments, as well as government investments. Exports grew a booming 6.1%, even better than the earlier reading for 5.9% growth.

Japan's GDP shrank 0.6% in January-March on quarter, after eking out 0.1% growth in October-December last year.

The weakening of Japan's economic clout is a pressing concern for a nation, which the IMF projects will slide into fifth place, after the U.S., China, Germany and India in coming years at the current rate. **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

Sands Resorts Macao wins two MICE awards at M&C Asia Stella Awards 2024



Sands Resorts Macao has been recognized as a top MICE destination, winning two awards at the M&C Asia Stella Awards 2024, held last week. The resort was awarded Best Integrated Resort (MICE), while The Venetian Macao won Best Meetings Hotel (Macao). These accolades highlight Sands Resorts Macao's commitment

to delivering exceptional MICE experiences across Asia. The awards were voted on by readers of M&C Asia and endorsed by industry professionals.

Stephanie Tanpure, Vice President of Sales, Sands China Ltd., expressed her gratitude, saying, "Being acknowledged by industry peers is a gratifying recognition of the significant

contribution Sands Resorts Macao has made to Asia's MICE industry."

Sands Resorts Macao also hosted M&C Asia Connections 2024, organized by Northstar Meetings Group. The event brought together Asia's top MICE suppliers and global buyers through panel discussions, appointments, and site visits.

The event aimed to foster strategic alliances among pre-qualified international buyers and elite suppliers, solidifying Macao's position as a premier MICE destination. Sands Resorts Macao served as both the hotel and venue sponsor for the event.

SJM provides cooling measures for outdoor workers



As Macau temperatures remain high, SJM Resorts is taking steps to protect employees who work outdoors.

In response to the extreme heat, SJM is actively implementing several cooling and safety measures for outdoor staff in alignment with guidelines from Macau's Labour Affairs Bureau. The measures are aimed at ensuring workers' health and well-being.

Each employee stationed at SJM's outdoor shuttle bus stops is being provided with portable fans, sunshade equipment, cooling sleeves and heat-resistant clothing. The company is also supplying staff with water and energy drinks. Additionally, SJM is promoting messages on preventing heatstroke and reminding workers to take precautions in the intense heat.

Reasonable shift rotations have been implemented to allow for adequate rest and minimize the risk of heat exhaustion. The various cooling measures will allow outdoor employees to perform their duties safely in high temperatures.

Team members at the shuttle bus locations expressed gratitude for SJM's efforts, saying the initiatives help them stay comfortable and safe on the job in the extreme heat. The measures demonstrate the casino's emphasis on staff physical and mental health. SJM will continue optimizing safety programs to cope with high weather and create a safe workplace.

ELSIE CHEN, WASHINGTON

BLACK MYTH

Blockbuster Chinese video game sparks debate on sexism

A blockbuster new Chinese video game hailed as a milestone for the country's gaming industry has put an unexpected spotlight on longstanding claims of rampant sexism in China's male-dominated gaming culture.

While some gamers are basking in the runaway success of the action-adventure title "Black Myth: Wukong," others are voicing their complaints about sexism in Chinese gaming and lodging allegations against the game's Shenzhen-based developer, Game Science, that it posted offensive messages online.

Critics posted screenshots of the messages on Chinese social media platform Weibo, with one compilation receiving over 400,000 likes. One of the posts that critics say came from founder Feng Ji uses descriptions of oral sex as a metaphor for the positive responses about the game's promotional video. Other examples include lewd recruiting posters.

AP was not able to independently verify the screenshots, though gamers interviewed reported seeing the posts. Game Science did not respond to an email seeking comment and hasn't publicly commented on the controversy.

The criticism reflects simmering anger among Chinese women in the industry who say they have long been targeted by misogynistic remarks and behavior.

Gender inequality is a global problem in the heavily male-dominated gaming industry. Despite making up almost half of the gamers globally, women made up only about 22% of the gaming industry workforce in 2020, according to Women in



An outdoor promoting the latest blockbuster Chinese video game "Black Myth: Wukong" in Beijing

Games, a United Kingdom-based organization.

Skylar, the only woman on her game engineering team of over 20 people, said her male colleagues often posted sexual jokes in work chat groups. She said when she told offenders to stop, her messages were ignored.

"Offensive jokes are so common and explicit," Skylar, 23, said in a phone interview, speaking on condition she be cited by her English name out of concern for her safety online.

For Jessica Hua, a former video game operation manager, controversy over the game reminded her of the toxic environment she experienced as a woman in the game industry.

"A lot of people think it's just kidding around. But I cannot accept such misogynistic remarks," said Hua. "I take it quite seriously."

"Black Myth: Wukong" is China's first-ever AAA game, a designation for big-budget productions akin to A-list movies. The game made history

when over 2.4 million people played the game simultaneously online, breaking the record for most-played single-player game on Steam, a major online gaming platform. Three days after the game's debut, over 10 million copies had been sold.

Many in the Chinese gaming industry say they regard the game as a point of national pride, promoting Chinese culture and challenging Western dominance in the industry.

"There is no doubt that this is a milestone in the Chinese

gaming industry," said Feng Xu, secretary of the Chengdu Cyber Game Industry Association. "It's exporting authentic Chinese culture by introducing Monkey King to the world."

China, which famously imposed limits on how long kids can play video games and sought to curtail excessive spending on online gaming, has shown full support for "Black Myth." The government of China's northwestern Shanxi province collaborated with the game's developer to promote local tourism. State media have also published a series of articles praising the game.

Feng Xu says he doesn't think the allegations against Game Science would have much impact on the game's success. "Political correctness has nothing to do with the game," he said. "We gamers only play the games, and we only care if the game is good and fun."

Others say it was only a matter of time before addressing sexism in Chinese gaming culture gained more traction.

"Most game creators are men. You can see in a lot of games women are usually unnecessarily sexy and objectified," said Ashley Li, a cultural critic and game enthusiast. "But I think this will gradually change in the future. We need to give it some time." **MDT/AP**

DIPLOMACY

Spanish prime minister visits China during dispute over electric vehicles

SPANISH Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez met with Chinese President Xi Jinping and other top officials yesterday during his second trip to China in a year and a half that comes during a spat over electric cars.

The official Xinhua News Agency reported the meeting at Beijing's Diaoyutai State Guest House but gave no details about what they discussed.



Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, left, and President Xi Jinping, second from right, attend their meeting at Diaoyutai in Beijing, yesterday

The center-left Socialist leader also attended a business forum in

Beijing for Spanish and Chinese companies before traveling to Shan-

ghai later yesterday. Today he is attending more business events and the

inauguration of a Cervantes Institute, a center that promotes Spanish language and culture.

Prior to holding talks and dining with Xi, Sánchez held talks with Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang and the head of the ceremonial legislature, Zhao Leji. Sánchez arrived late Sunday and departs Wednesday.

Sánchez visited China in March 2023 when Spain held the rotating European Union presidency.

Spain was among the EU members that expressed support earlier this year for a 36.7% tariff on Chinese electric vehicles. The Chinese government responded

by launching an investigation into imports of EU pork.

EU exports of pork products to China hit a peak of 7.4 billion euros (\$7.9 billion) in 2020 when Beijing had to turn abroad to satisfy domestic demand after its pig farms were decimated by a swine disease. EU pork exports to China have dropped since then, hitting 2.5 billion euros (\$2.6 billion) last year. Almost half of that total came from Spain.

The tension over pork has not stopped Spain from welcoming the plans of Chinese carmaker Chery to open a plant for electric vehicles in Barcelona. **MDT/AP**

VIETNAM

Flooding sweeps away a bus and a bridge collapses as storm deaths rise to 64

ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL, HANOI

A bridge collapsed and a bus was swept away by flooding yesterday as more rain fell on northern Vietnam from a former typhoon that has caused at least 64 deaths in the Southeast Asian country, state media reported.

Nine people died during the typhoon, which made landfall in Vietnam on Saturday before weakening to a depression, and 50 others died during the consequent floods and landslides. The water levels of several rivers in northern Vietnam were dangerously high.

A passenger bus carrying 20 people was swept into a flooded stream by a landslide in mountainous Cao Bang province Monday morning. Rescuers were deployed but landslides blocked the path to where the incident took place.

In Phu Tho province, rescue operations were continuing after a steel bridge over the engorged Red River collapsed Monday morning. Reports said 10 cars and trucks along with two motorbikes fell into the river. Three people were pulled out of the river and taken to the hospital, but 13 others were missing.

Pham Truong Son, 50, told



VNExpress that he was driving on the bridge on his motorcycle when he heard a loud noise. Before he knew what was happening, he was falling into the river. "I felt like I was drowned to the bottom of the river," Son told the newspaper, adding that he managed to swim and hold on to a drifting banana tree to stay afloat before he was rescued.

Typhoon Yagi was the strongest typhoon to hit Vietnam in decades when it made landfall Saturday with winds up to 149 kph. It weakened to a tropical depression Sunday, but the country's meteorological agency has still warned

the continuing downpours could cause floods and landslides.

On Sunday, a landslide killed six people including an infant and injured nine others in Sa Pa town, a popular trekking base known for its terraced rice fields and mountains. Overall, state media reported 21 deaths and at least 299 people injured from the weekend.

Skies were overcast in the capital, Hanoi, with occasional rain Monday morning as workers cleared the uprooted trees, fallen billboards and toppled electricity poles. Heavy rain continued in northwestern Vietnam and fo-

recasters said it could exceed 40 centimeters (15 inches) in places.

Initially, at least 3 million people were left without electricity in Quang Ninh and Haiphong provinces, and it's unclear how much has been restored.

The two provinces are industrial hubs, housing many factories that export goods including EV maker VinFast and Apple suppliers Pegatron and USI. Factory workers told The Associated Press on Sunday that many industrial parks were inundated and the roofs of many factories had been blown away.

Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh visited Haiphong city on Sunday and approved a package of \$4.62 million to help the port city recover.

Yagi also damaged agricultural land, nearly 116,192 hectares where rice is mostly grown.

Before hitting Vietnam, Yagi caused at least 20 deaths in the Philippines last week and four deaths in southern China.

Chinese authorities said infrastructure losses across the Hainan island province amounted to \$102 million with 57,000 houses collapsed or damaged, power and water outages and roads damaged or impassable due to fallen trees. Yagi made a second landfall in Guangdong, a mainland province neighboring Hainan, on Friday night.

Storms like Typhoon Yagi were "getting stronger due to climate change, primarily because warmer ocean waters provide more energy to fuel the storms, leading to increased wind speeds and heavier rainfall," said Benjamin Horton, director of the Earth Observatory of Singapore.

Typhoon Yagi also swept through Hong Kong and Macau before making landfall in Guangdong. MDT/AP

SOUTH KOREA

Truth commission says it found more evidence of forced adoptions in the 1980s

A South Korean commission found evidence that women were pressured into giving away their infants for foreign adoptions after giving birth at government-funded facilities where thousands of people were confined and enslaved from the 1960s to the 1980s.

The report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission yesterday came years after The Associated Press revealed adoptions from the biggest facility for so-called vagrants, Brothers Home, which shipped children abroad as part of a huge, profit-seeking enterprise that exploited thousands of people trapped within the compound in the port



Ha Kum Chul, one of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's investigators, speaks to the media during a news conference at the commission in Seoul

city of Busan. Thousands of children and adults — many of them grabbed off the streets — were enslaved in such facilities and often raped, beaten or killed in the 1970s and 1980s.

The commission was

launched in December 2020 to review human rights violations linked to the country's past military governments. It had previously found the country's past military governments responsible for atrocities

committed at Brothers. Its latest report is focused on four similar facilities in the cities of Seoul and Daegu and the provinces of South Chungcheong and Gyeonggi. Like Brothers, these facilities were ope-

rated to accommodate government roundups aimed at beautifying the streets.

Ha Kum Chul, one of the commission's investigators, said inmate records show at least 20 adoptions occurred from Daegu's Huimangwon and South Chungcheong province's Cheonseongwon in 1985 and 1986. South Korea sent more than 17,500 children abroad in those two years as its foreign adoption program peaked.

Ha said children taken from inmates at Huimangwon and Cheonseongwon were mostly newborns, who were transferred to two adoption agencies, Holt Children's Services and Eastern Social Welfare Society, which placed them

with families in the United States, Denmark, Norway and Australia. Most of the infants were transferred to the agencies on the day of their birth or the day after, Ha said, indicating that their adoptions were determined pre-birth.

While the facilities' records say some of the women submitted memos expressing their consent to give away their children, other records indicate women were being pressured to do so, Ha said. A 1985 inmate record from Huimangwon flags a 42-year-old inmate with supposed mental health issues for "causing problems" by refusing to relinquish her child. Officials later note that she eventually did.

For Huimangwon, Ha said, the commission was only able to look through its inmate records from 1985 and 1986 and still found 14 adoptions. A further six adoptions were linked to inmates at Cheonseongwon. MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



EAST TIMOR

Activists criticize high cost of Pope Francis' visit to one of the poorest nations

NINIEK KARMINI, DILI

EAST Timor pulled out all stops for Pope Francis' historic visit to one of the world's youngest and poorest countries to the tune of \$12 million, drawing rebuke from activists and human rights organizations in a nation where almost half the population lives in poverty.

The cost for the two-day visit which started yesterday was approved by the government through the Council of Ministers in February, including \$1 million to build an altar for a papal Mass.

Walls were still being dabbed with fresh paint and banners and billboards filled the streets of the seaside capital, Dili, to welcome the pontiff, who earlier visited Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

About 42% of East Timor's population of 1.3 million live below the poverty line, according to the U.N. Development Program. Unemployment is high, job opportunities in the formal sector are generally limited and most people are subsistence farmers with no steady income.

The country's budget for 2023 was \$3.16 billion. The government had earmarked only \$4.7 million to increase food production, said Marino Ferreira, a researcher at Timor Leste Institute for Development Monitoring and Analysis. He said the \$12 million expense for the papal visit "was exaggerating."

The non-governmental

agency, known locally as Lao Hamutuk, has submitted several papers to the government and parliament asking to cut expenditures on ceremonies and prioritize issues that affect people, Ferreira said.

"The governments have ignored the poor in the country," he said.

East Timor has recently faced challenges of high inflation and weather changes that have reduced cereal production, pushing some 364,000 people, or 27% of the population, to experience acute food insecurity from May to September, according to the U.N.'s Food and Agricultural Organization.

East Timor's Minister of State Administration Tomas Cabral, who heads the national organizing committee for the pope's visit, said the \$12 million was excessive but it was also being used for infrastructure development, such as road constructions, renovating churches and other public facilities.

"Don't compare our country with neighboring nations that have proper facilities and infrastructure to host international events or high-ranking state guests," Cabral said. "Here, we have to build it from the scratch."

Cabral said that about \$1.2 million has been allocated for transportation and logistics of people from across the country to welcome the pontiff and attend his Mass on Tuesday.

East Timor views the visit as a prime opportunity to put the world's spotlight on the small

nation with a turbulent path to independence. It's the youngest country in Asia where 97% of the population identify as Catholic.

"The pope's visit is the biggest, the best marketing anyone can aspire to promote the country, to put the country on the tourist map," East Timor's President Jose Ramos-Horta said in an interview with The Associated Press last week.

The highlight of Francis' visit will be a Eucharistic celebration on Tuesday where more than 300,000 faithful are expected, including several thousands living from near the border of Indonesia's West Timor, the western part of the island of Timor.

The papal Mass in Tasitolu, an open field on the coast some 8 kilometers (nearly 5 miles) from downtown Dili, is also causing displeasure. The government has bulldozed about 185 families and confiscated 23 hectares (57 acres) of land for the event. Rights groups accuse the government of not offering any alternatives to poor families.

"The lives of those families are uncertain at the moment, they don't know where to go as they are still there waiting for compensation," said Pedrito Vieira, coordinator of the Land Network, a coalition of NGOs advocating land rights. "Sudden eviction will only give them uncertainty to plan their life."

Cabral said those were settlers and not traditional lan-

downers who were squatting on state land. He said they were given advance notices and time to remove their structures and move out.

"There have been those who have politicized the situation there so that the illegal settlers have refused to move for unclear reasons," Cabral said.

Several violent crackdowns on street vendors ostensibly to ensure order in Dili ahead of Francis' trip also drew outcry among rights activists.

Social media were flooded with angry comments after footage showed dozens of alleged plainclothes police officers with sticks, crowbars and spears destroying vendor stands and goods in one of the paths where the pope's entourage will pass.

Suzana Cardoso, a veteran journalist who recorded the incident last week in Dili's Fatuhada neighborhood, told The Associated Press that she received threats in an attempt to stop her from sharing the video.

Ramos-Horta instructed the police and Dili city administration to arrest those behind the destruction of vendor stands and compensate the traders.

"The government has never been instructed to carry out public order with violence," Ramos-Horta said in a news conference.

"A free and independent press is protected by law in this country," he said. "I appeal to all institutions not to hinder journalists and to respect press freedom." MDT/AP

this day in history

1963 AMERICAN EXPRESS COMES TO BRITAIN



American Express, one of the world's largest banking houses, has opened a credit card service in Britain.

Holders of the cards will be able to use them at nearly 3,000 hotels, restaurants, shops and hire-car agencies in this country and at more than 83,000 establishments abroad. The cards can also be used to obtain travel tickets.

This move by American Express is bound to give a powerful boost to the idea of credit cards in Britain, which have not, so far, spread very far.

Until now, American Express card holders have been able to use their cards in this country, but only if they could settle their accounts in dollars.

There will be an annual fee of £3 12s, but supplementary cards can be obtained at half price for immediate family members. Companies can also apply for cards and issue them to members of staff.

Customers use the card to pay for goods on credit. American Express then issues a monthly bill which covers all outstanding charges on the account.

The Bank of England has given permission for the scheme to go ahead - on condition users do not spend more than £75 on any one item purchased abroad.

American Express Vice President Maxwell Elliot said the people most likely to take up the new card would be managers and sales executives earning £2,000 a year or more.

He rejected suggestions the new scheme would be open to fraud and also said he expected little competition. Diners Club is the only other company operating a similar credit scheme.

Mr Elliot said: "There is only one (competitor) known to me and that covers about 2,000 hotels in this country alone. More than 83,000 establishments around the world now honour the American Express card."

Credit cards have been available in Britain since 1951 when Donald McCullough launched Finders Services after a trip to the United States. It merged with another company, Credit Card Services, to become Diners' Club last year.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Diners Club was the first universal credit card, introduced in the United States in 1950. It became the first major credit card company in Britain in 1962 formed from the merger of Finders Services and Credit Card Facilities. American Express was the next big company to launch into the credit business in 1958. A report in the Financial Times in 1965 said the average Diners Club card holder was 41, male and married with a family, earning well over £3,000 a year as a senior commercial or business executive. Switch and Visa debit cards were introduced in the 1980s. Customers use the cards for payment of goods and the money is directly debited from their account. The cards can also be used to withdraw money from cashpoint machines and they act as cheque guarantee cards. The Credit Card Research Group carried out a survey in 2001 and found there were 62 million credit cards in circulation in the UK, with many people owning more than one.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
 Mar. 21-Apr. 19
 Far horizons entice you out of your comfort zone. Study the latest techniques and ideas. Schedule carefully and allow extra time for traffic.

TAURUS
 Apr. 20-May. 20
 Consider long-term financial goals. Measure current progress. Notice where it's lacking. Plug budgetary leaks. Find clever ways to save and invest.

GEMINI
 May. 21-Jun. 21
 Collaborate to surpass an obstacle with a shared objective. Save more than you spend. Contribute your time and talents. Listen and provide support.

CANCER
 Jun. 22-Jul. 22
 Listen to experts to raise physical performance. Slow to navigate changing conditions. Nurture your health and energy. Eat well. Avoid overindulging.

LEO
 Jul. 23-Aug. 22
 Practice your arts and skills for mastery. Slow for unscheduled changes. Avoid travel or misunderstandings. Prioritize fun with people you love.

VIRGO
 Aug. 23-Sep. 22
 Take care of family necessities. Support each other through a change. Pamper your crew with delicious flavors. Popcorn and a movie would be nice.

LIBRA
 Sep. 23-Oct. 22
 Monitor news from diverse sources for a wider view. Write, express and share your own perspective. Reveal what's underneath. Invite participation.

SCORPIO
 Oct. 23-Nov. 21
 Juggle income and expenses for positive cash flow. Shipping delays or traffic could put a kink in your plans. Stay in communication. Adjust and adapt.

SAGITTARIUS
 Nov. 22-Dec. 21
 You're especially strong and creative. Avoid travel or miscommunication. Advance on a personal project or goal. Learn and develop. Grow skills and talents.

CAPRICORN
 Dec. 22-Jan. 19
 Rest and recuperate. Put stuff away. Allow yourself private time for thinking and planning. Imagine and speculate. Revise long-term plans. Make preparations.

AQUARIUS
 Jan. 20-Feb. 18
 You don't need to start from scratch. Share ideas and resources with your team. Your friends are there for you. Someone has the perfect connection.

PISCES
 Feb. 19-Mar. 20
 Discover tempting professional opportunities. Crazy dreams seem possible. Investigate to find out the bottom line. The truth gets revealed. Determine your best option.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

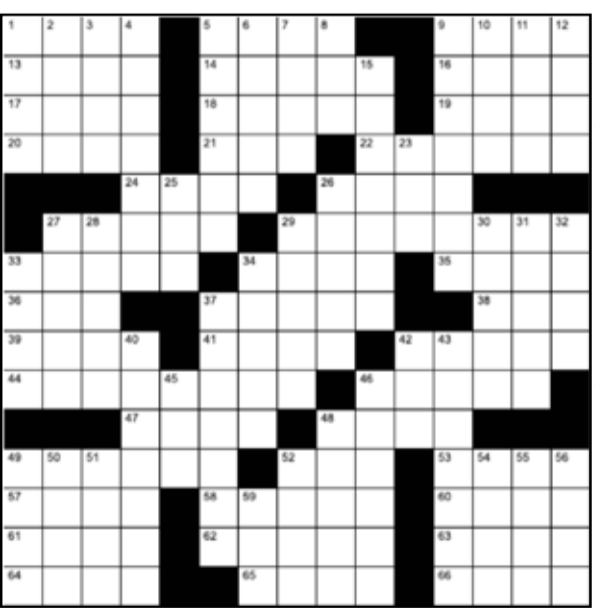
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	21	27	cloudy
Changchun	17	24	fine
Chengdu	23	34	rain
Chongqing	28	37	cloudy
Fuzhou	26	35	cloudy
Guangzhou	25	33	showers
Guiyang	19	27	cloudy
Haikou	26	30	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	26	33	cloudy
Harbin	16	23	fine
Hefei	25	35	cloudy
Nanjing	26	35	cloudy
Shanghai	28	34	rain
Taipei	25	29	rain
Wuhan	26	37	cloudy
Hong Kong	28	33	overcast
WORLD			
Moscow	15	27	cloudy
Frankfurt	13	20	cloudy
Paris	13	19	cloudy
London	7	18	rain
New York	16	27	fine

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Person of action; 5- Hgt.; 9- Put away; 13- Division word; 14- Ventured; 16- Sea-going eagle; 17- ___ extra cost; 18- Binge; 19- Gospel singer Winans; 20- Good earth; 21- Curly letter; 22- Damned; 24- Twiddling one's thumbs; 26- Richard of "Chicago"; 27- Prophets; 29- Oblique; 33- Frighten; 34- Mai ___; 35- Biblical birthright seller; 36- Cigarette ingredient; 37- Unrefined; 38- Dogpatch adjective; 39- First name in jazz; 41- Nerve network; 42- Skin of the upper part of the head; 44- Coin operated talk device?; 46- Wineglass features; 47- Gone by; 48- ___ Crunch; 49- Beliefs; 52- Suffix with ball; 53- Knocks lightly; 57- On the ocean; 58- Words on a Wonderland cake; 60- Applications; 61- The Beatles' "Back in the ___"; 62- Palm fruits; 63- Pi followers; 64- Small children; 65- Type of D.A.; 66- Cravings;

DOWN 1- Clock face; 2- Not deceived by; 3- Sicilian spouter; 4- More spacious; 5- Ford flops; 6- Memory failure; 7- Slips; 8- Flying formation; 9- Give off; 10- Very, in Versailles; 11- Not a second time; 12- Undesirable plant; 15- Die; 23- Caterer's coffeepot; 25- Rap's Dr. ___; 26- Move effortlessly; 27- Milan's La ___; 28- Ahead of time; 29- Pan-fry; 30- Koran religion; 31- Metal spikes; 32- Big swallow; 33- Part of a process; 34- Lott of Mississippi; 37- Traversed; 40- Becomes visible; 42- NASCAR sponsor; 43- 100 years; 45- Covering for the head; 46- Most reasonable; 48- Shows up; 49- Tight; 50- Exxon, once; 51- Hotbed; 52- Ed and Mel of baseball; 54- Wimbledon winner, 1975; 55- Unskilled laborer; 56- Flat sound; 59- Bond rating;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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VA FAT (Taipa Village)
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77.10 m² / 830 ft² | HKD3,980,000



Nam Long (Taipa Village)
2 bed 1 bath
59.92 m² / 645 ft² | HKD3,650,000



Jade Garden (Taipa)
4 bed 3 bath
379.04 m² / 4,080 ft² | HKD 11,880,000



Ocean Garden Cattleya Court (Taipa)
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FOOTBALL

Saudi coach Mancini wants his players getting more time in a Ronaldo-dominated league

JOHN DUERDEN

WHILE the likes of Cristiano Ronaldo and Neymar thrill supporters of Saudi clubs, Roberto Mancini is concerned that his national team players aren't getting enough time in the league to prepare for World Cup qualifying.

Saudi Arabia was among the high-profile Asian teams that struggled in third-round openers last week in continental World Cup qualifying. The Saudis were held 1-1 by Indonesia, the lowest-ranked of the six-teams in Group C. Tuesday is a crucial match against China at Dalian for coach Mancini's team.

"We have had problems capitalizing on opportunities, which have been evident in the last few games," Mancini said.

With most clubs in the Saudi Pro League using their full quota

of 10 foreign imports, Mancini, who left his job as head coach of Italy a year ago to join Saudi Arabia's national team, has complained that local players are not getting enough action.

"Saudi Arabia's national team players must participate as core players with their clubs," Mancini said. "I have 20 players sitting on the bench in local matches."

He said there needed to be greater cooperation between the national team and clubs.

Australia's attempt to qualify for a sixth successive World Cup tournament was damaged by a shocking 1-0 loss to Bahrain at home.

"It's a learning curve for the players. It wasn't our night," Soccerroos coach Graham Arnold said. "You could see physically they were ready for us. These types of things happen in football, it's how you get over it."

Australia faces a relatively



short trip to Jakarta to face a much-improved Indonesia squad that will be supported by 60,000 fans. "We are not afraid of anyone and we are looking forward to the challenge," Indonesia coach Shin Tae-yong said.

The early pacesetters in Group C meet when Bahrain hosts Japan, which opened with a thumping 7-0 win over China.

The 18 teams in the third round of qualification have been divided into three groups of six. The

top two from each automatically qualify for the World Cup. The teams that place third and fourth will advance to a fourth round to compete for two more places.

In Group B, South Korea also started with a disappointing result, a 0-0 draw with the Palestinian team in Seoul. Led by English Premier League stars Son Heung-min and Hwang Hee-chan as well as Paris Saint-Germain's Lee Kang-in, South Korea travels to Muscat to face Oman, which lost 1-0 to Iraq.

Son suggested the poor pitch condition in Seoul was a reason for the result.

"We weren't able to play at a high tempo and I am sure fans were disappointed with that," Son said. "The fact that pitch conditions are better for away matches is a shame, but I also think it's fortunate for us at the same time."

The Palestinians will play Jordan in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as the team is unable to host games at home. Jordan had a 1-1 draw with Kuwait in its opening game and now faces Iraq, the only team in the group to win.

In Group A, United Arab Emirates won 3-1 at Qatar and hosts this week Iran, also with three points already on the board after beating Kyrgyzstan 1-0. Qatar, the 2022 World Cup host has never qualified for the tournament, will take on North Korea. **MDT/AP**

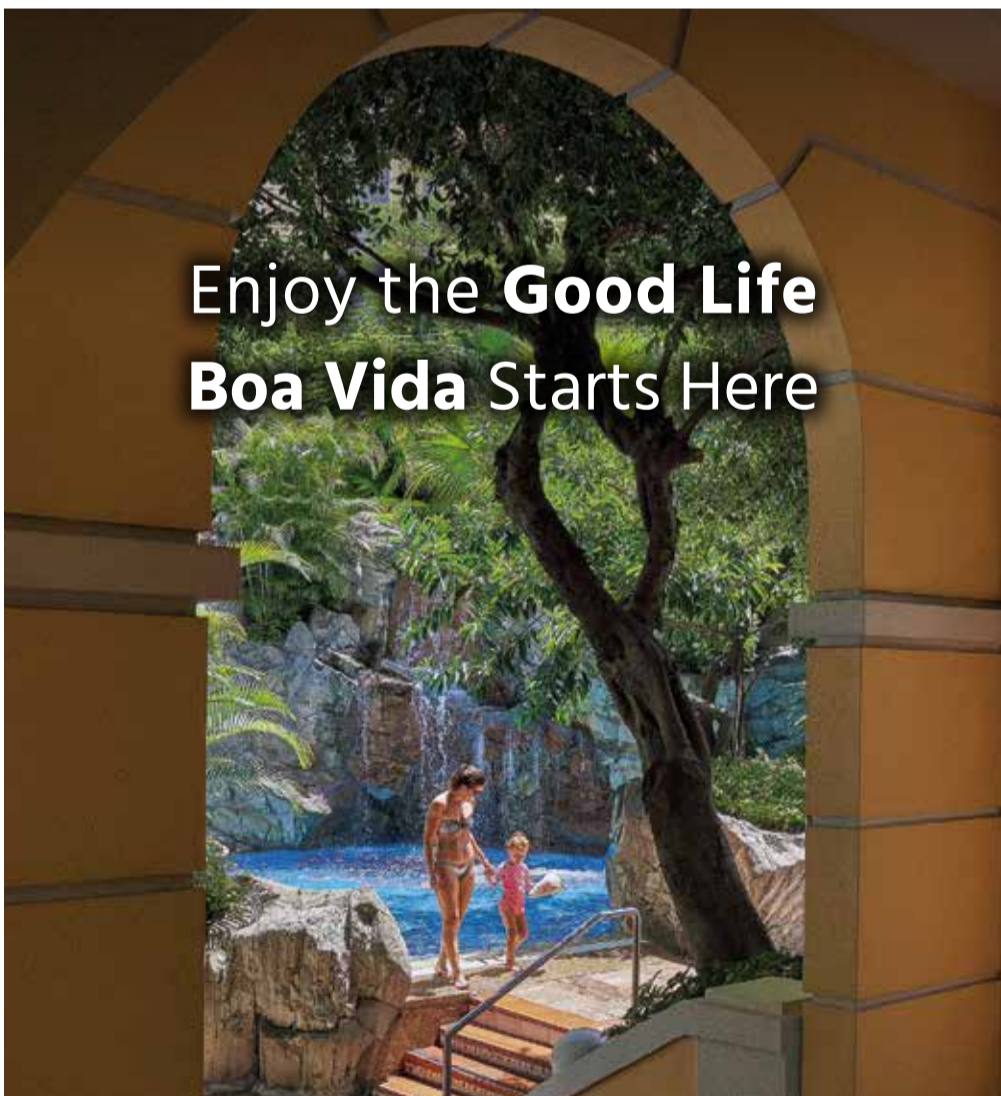
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OPINION

China Daily
Editorial, China Daily

SPY CHIEFS BRAZEN
POTS CALLING THE
KETTLE BLACK

In a joint op-ed published in the Financial Times over the weekend, the heads of the United States and United Kingdom intelligence agencies, CIA director William Burns and MI6 chief Sir Richard Moore, once again pointed fingers of disrespect at China, spuriously alleging it presents an intelligence challenge.

While China naturally has its own intelligence service, their accusations ring hollow given the unsupported nature of their allegations and the extensive well-documented history of the hacking and spying activities orchestrated by their own nations.

In their article, Burns and Moore claimed that the US and UK are currently grappling with an “unprecedented array of threats”, and asserted that the ascent of China is the paramount intelligence and geopolitical challenge of the century. They declared that their agencies were being reorganized to prioritize this perceived threat, signaling an escalation in espionage efforts aimed at China.

The brazenness and self-righteousness displayed in their rhetoric are astounding. The US, in particular, operates a sprawling surveillance empire designed to assert US dominance on the world stage, epitomized by programs such as PRISM, Irritant Horn, Stellar Wind, Bvp47, the Hive, and numerous other clandestine initiatives, the majority of which no doubt remain unknown.

Recent revelations have shed some light on the extent of US espionage activities, including the targeting of world leaders’ communications. A decade after Edward Snowden exposed US spying on numerous global figures, leaked Pentagon documents unveiled a new wave of scandals, revealing espionage operations not only against adversaries but also against allies such as Ukraine, the Republic of Korea, and Israel.

China, like many other nations, has been a victim of US and Western surveillance operations. The uncovering of multiple foreign espionage cases involving operatives working for the CIA and MI6 within and outside China underscores the pervasive nature of these activities.

Despite the tarnished track records of their agencies, the heads of the US and UK intelligence agencies have chosen to publicly champion their questionable practices, perpetuate the outdated “China threat” narrative, and vowed to intensify their spying efforts. Their intentions seem geared toward disseminating disinformation and misleading the global community.

However, the international community remains vigilant. The credibility of the US intelligence apparatus has been marred by a series of scandals, from Snowden to WikiLeaks, exposing the wolves within the sheep’s clothing. The world now sees through their facade, recognizing that those crying wolf are often the wolves themselves.

As a nation steadfast in safeguarding its sovereignty, security, and development interests, China will persist in cracking down on espionage activities. The vows of the CIA and MI6 chiefs to escalate spying efforts will only fortify China’s determination to resist Western coercion, uphold its rights, and protect its interests from unwarranted intrusion.

GIVENCHY NAMES SARAH BURTON NEW
CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Givenchy has named Sarah Burton creative director for women’s and men’s collections, with immediate effect, the fashion house announced yesterday.

Burton, who stepped down from Alexander McQueen last year, said she was excited “to bring to Givenchy my own vision, sensibility and beliefs.”

“It’s a great honor to be joining the beautiful house of Givenchy, it is a jewel,” she said.

Her first collection will be presented during Paris Fashion Week next March.

Givenchy, owned by the LVMH conglomerate, named a new

CEO, Alessandro Valenti, in July.

Burton becomes the eighth designer at the French luxury house founded in 1953 by Hubert de Givenchy, who stayed on until 1995. She is its second female creative director.

Burton’s predecessors at Givenchy include Alexander McQueen, who designed at the Paris fashion house from 1996-2001.

Burton, who created the wedding dress for Kate, the Princess of Wales, stepped down from McQueen after two decades at the brand, and since 2010 as creative director. Owner Kering said upon her exit that she had left “an indelible mark.”

THE
BUZZ

AP PHOTO



JUST HOW RARE IS A RARE-COLORED LOBSTER?

SCIENTISTS SAY
ANSWER COULD BE
UNDER THE SHELL

PATRICK WHITTLE,
BIDDEFORD (MAINE)

ORANGE, blue, calico, two-toned and ... cotton-candy colored?

Those are all the hues of lobsters that have showed up in fishers’ traps, supermarket seafood tanks and scientists’ laboratories over the last year. The funky-colored crustaceans inspire headlines that trumpet their rarity, with particularly uncommon baby blue-tinted critters described by some as “cotton-candy colored” often estimated at 1 in 100 million.

A recent wave of these curious colored lobsters in Maine, New York, Colorado and beyond has scientists asking just how atypical the discolored arthropods really are. As is often the case in science, it’s complicated.

Lobsters’ color can vary due to genetic and dietary differences, and estimates about how rare certain colors are should be taken with a grain of salt, said Andrew Goode, lead administrative scientist for the American Lobster Settlement Index at the University of Maine. There is also no definitive source on the occurrence of lobster coloration abnormalities, scientists said.

“Anecdotally, they don’t taste any different either,”

Goode said.

In the wild, lobsters typically have a mottled brown appearance, and they turn an orange-red color after they are boiled for eating. Lobsters can have color abnormalities due to mutation of genes that affect the proteins that bind to their shell pigments, Goode said.

The best available estimates about lobster coloration abnormalities are based on data from fisheries sources, said marine sciences professor Markus Frederich of the University of New England in Maine. However, he said, “no one really tracks them.”

Frederich and other scientists said that commonly cited estimates such as 1 in 1 million for blue lobsters and 1 in 30 million for orange lobsters should not be treated as rock-solid figures. However, he and his students are working to change that.

Frederich is working on noninvasive ways to extract genetic samples from lobsters to try to better understand the molecular basis for rare shell coloration. Frederich maintains a collection of strange-colored lobsters at the university’s labs and has been documenting the progress of the offspring of an orange lobster named Peaches who is housed at the university.

Peaches had thousands

of offspring this year, which is typical for lobsters. About half were orange, which is not, Frederich said. Of the baby lobsters that survived, a slight majority were regular colored ones, Frederich said.

Studying the DNA of atypically colored lobsters will give scientists a better understanding of their underlying genetics, Frederich said.

“Lobsters are those iconic animals here in Maine, and I find them beautiful. Especially when you see those rare ones, which are just looking spectacular. And then the scientist in me simply says I want to know how that works. What’s the mechanism?” Frederich said.

He does eat lobster but “never any of those colorful ones,” he said.

One of Frederich’s lobsters, Tamarind, is the typical color on one side and orange on the other. That is because two lobster eggs fused and grew as one animal, Frederich said. He said that’s thought to be as rare as 1 in 50 million.

Rare lobsters have been in the news lately, with an orange lobster turning up in a Long Island, New York, Stop & Shop last month, and another appearing in a shipment being delivered to a Red Lobster in Colorado in July. MDT/AP

Oman’s state-run oil company OQ announced an initial public offering of its exploration and production arm, signaling a shift towards privatization. The company plans to offer up to 25% of its shares, potentially valuing the deal at around \$2 billion, aiming to boost growth and the local stock exchange.

AP PHOTO



Switzerland At the opening of the Human Rights Council session in Geneva, U.N. human rights chief Volker Türk urged voters worldwide to be cautious of “strongman” politicians who exploit populist sentiments. He highlighted global concerns including the scapegoating of migrants and minorities, and the suppression of free speech.

AP PHOTO



USA Google faces a new antitrust trial in Virginia over its advertising technology, accused of maintaining a monopoly that harms both publishers and consumers. This follows a recent ruling declaring Google’s search engine a monopoly, part of ongoing legal challenges against the tech giant’s market dominance.

AP PHOTO



Cuba K-pop has surged in popularity in Cuba, overcoming cultural and linguistic barriers. Cuban fans, including teenagers and aspiring choreographers, are embracing the genre, showcasing its influence through dance competitions and social media, despite the country’s historically limited internet access and ongoing political tensions.