



**COORDINATE AND SIMPLIFY TO UPHOLD THE 'ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS' PRINCIPLE**

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**MELCO HOPES TO ATTRACT MORE KOREAN TOURISTS TO MACAU**

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**PARTY ON WEEKEND: LUSOFONIA & OKTOBERFEST**

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XINHUA



**China** The Tianlai Experiment, aimed at detecting dark energy, was granted "pathfinder" status by the Square Kilometer Array Observatory. The project enhances global scientific collaboration, positioning China as a leader in the exploration of dark energy and the universe's expansion properties.

**Sri Lanka** yesterday arrested three locals suspected of planning an attack on Israeli tourists at Arugam Bay. Security was heightened after receiving intelligence of a potential threat. The arrests come amidst concerns about targeting locations frequented by Israeli travelers in the region.

AP PHOTO



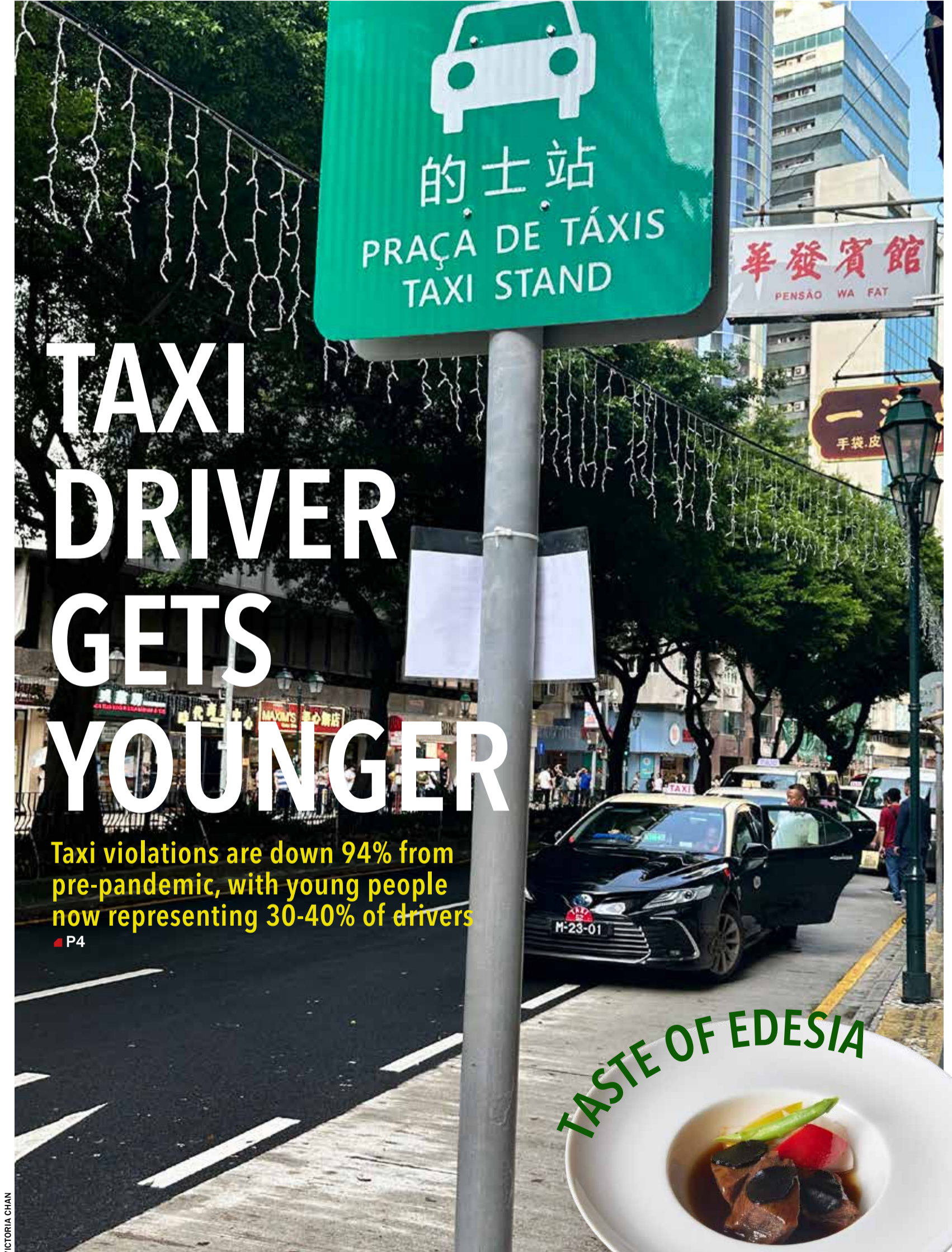
**South Korea** President Yoon Suk Yeol raised the possibility of supplying Ukraine with weapons amid concerns about North Korea's troop deployment to Russia. Yoon discussed yesterday defense cooperation with Polish President Andrzej Duda, marking a potential policy shift for South Korea in aiding Ukraine.

AP PHOTO



**Russia** Lawmakers yesterday ratified a military pact with North Korea, committing to mutual assistance if attacked. This move aligns with U.S. reports confirming that 3,000 North Korean troops were sent to Russia. The agreement strengthens ties between Pyongyang and Moscow amid escalating global tensions.

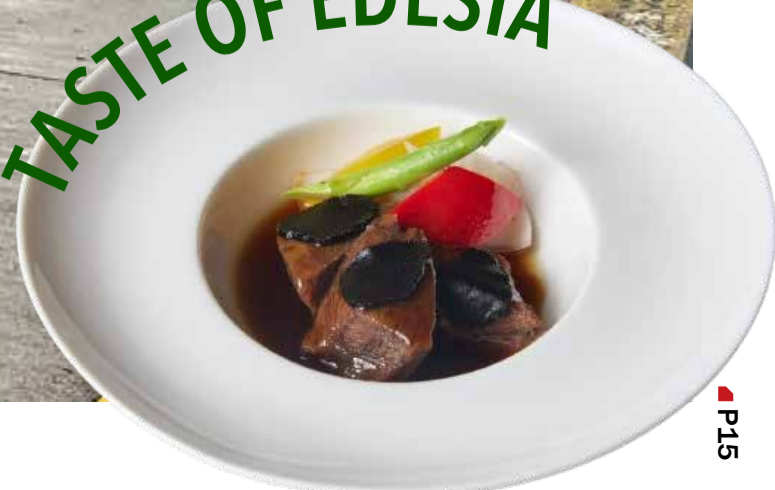
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**Taxi violations are down 94% from pre-pandemic, with young people now representing 30-40% of drivers**

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**TASTE OF EDESIA**



VICTORIA CHAN

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# MELCO HOPES TO ATTRACT MORE KOREAN TOURISTS TO MACAU

STAFF REPORTER

MELCO Resorts & Entertainment is making Korean tourists a top priority, according to a report from Korea JoongAng Daily.

In a press event at Josun Palace in Gangnam, Seoul, Melco's di-

rector of public relations, Jennifer Lai, said, "Korea is actually one of the top five international tourist markets for Macau, and now, the flights between the two locations have normalized to around four to five per day, so we expect the number of Korean travelers to

grow even more."

According to official statistics, more than 341,000 Korean tourists visited Macau in the first nine months of this year.

Additionally, Korea ranked among the top three countries for spending per capita in Macau in

2023, with an average spending of MOP3,634.

The Korean newspaper further reported recent travel trends indicate that Koreans prefer to stay in integrated resort hotels rather than sightsee, prompting Melco to focus on high-income families

and luxury travelers looking to shop and relax.

A recent survey from Marriott supports this phenomenon, with 54% of the respondents prioritizing hotel stays over engaging with locals and exploring local attractions.

Currently, Melco operates three properties in Taipa - City of Dreams (COD), Studio City Macau, and Altira Macau.

COD Macau is considered the company's most upscale resort, featuring four hotels and Michelin-star dining with the likes of Alain Ducasse at Morpheus and Jade Dragon.

Family-friendly Studio City offers a variety of water attractions, among other family-oriented attractions, with the resort currently planning to collaborate with brands for the Christmas season.

Altira Macau, the smallest of the three resorts, provides panoramic views and occasional firework displays which can be enjoyed from all guest rooms. Its spa is Forbes-approved and has consistently won the five-star award.

Korean JoongAng Daily also reported the famed water show "House of Dancing Water" is to return next year, with guests also looking forward to a new skate park and global action sports festival "FISE: Battle of the Champions 2025" hosted by Melco.

## 2023 PROFESSIONAL TAX REFUNDS BEGIN MID-NOVEMBER

THE Financial Services Bureau (DSF) has announced it will begin partially refunding professional tax for the 2023 fiscal year starting Nov. 15.

Taxpayers who have subscribed to the bank transfer service will have refunds deposited directly into their bank accounts on Nov. 15. Those receiving refunds by other methods will receive a "Professional Tax Refund Notice" from the bureau, with instructions on how to collect their refunds in the following days.

According to DSF, about 64,000 taxpayers are registered to receive automatic tax refunds directly to their bank accounts this year.

Starting Nov. 1, taxpayers can check their refund status through the DSF "Macau Tax" mobile application, the "Macau One Account," or the "Online Platform for Companies and Associations." The service will also be available at DSF's "Electronic Service" platform and at self-service kiosks located at DSF headquarters and the Identification Services Bureau service centers.

The DSF also urged taxpayers who use the bank transfer service to ensure the validity of their accounts to avoid issues with the refunds. RM

VICTORIA CHAN

SANDS China has denied ever charging any entry fees to its integrated resorts in the region, according to a report by Inside Asian Gaming.

The clarification comes amid calls for a crackdown on illegal tour group operators who have been reportedly charging customers to enter Sands China's properties.

Sands China has told Inside Asian Gaming, "Since its roots in Macau, Sands China has never charged any entrance fees at any of its resorts. We will continue to welcome visitors from all over the world to experience the charms of a world center of tourism and leisure."

The issue came to light after a report on

# Sands China denies charging entry fees at integrated resorts

the mainland social platform "Little Red Book" (Xiaohongshu), which alleged a mainland tour group had charged its guests RMB200 each to enter Venetian Macao.

However, Sands China was not implicated in the incident and has now firmly denied the practice.

The Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) has noted the allegations and warned any licensed tour group operator found engaging in such practices would be fined and could potentially lose its license.

Macau Travel In-



dustry Council president Andy noted that many such instances often involve unlicensed operators.

"Travel agencies must not give wrong information to mainland tourists and

should not deceive them," Wu said, adding that tour group operators must list all expenses when customers sign up for their services.

The tourism industry has called on the

MGTO to strengthen its crackdown on illegal tour group operators, as these incidents have the potential to tarnish the reputation of the region as a world-class tourism and leisure destination.

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# Las Vegas Sands reports mixed Q3 results

NADIA SHAW

**L**AS Vegas Sands Corp. (LVS) released its third-quarter financial results for 2024 yesterday, revealing a complex picture of revenue performance amid a recovering gaming market in Macau. The company reported a total revenue of USD2.68 billion (MOP 21.4 billion), a decline of 4% year-on-year, falling short of analysts' expectations by nearly 4%. These results underscore the challenges LVS faces as it navigates post-pandemic recovery while making significant investments in its properties.

The company's net income for the quarter was USD353 million (MOP2.82 billion), down 21.4% from the previous year. Earnings per share (EPS) also fell to USD0.44, compared to USD0.55 in Q3 2023. Consolidated adjusted property EBITDA was reported at USD991 million (MOP7.92 billion), reflecting an 11.5% decline from the prior year.

## MIXED RESULTS IN MACAU OPERATIONS

LVS's Macau operations generated net revenues of USD1.77 billion (MOP14.2 billion), a slight decrease of 1% from the same period last year. This figure highlights the ongoing recovery in the region, which has seen a 13% increase in overall market revenue compared to Q3 2023. The Parisian Macao reported net revenues of USD250 million (MOP2

RENATO MARQUES



billion), a year-over-year increase of 2.5% but slightly below expectations. Conversely, The Londoner Macao experienced a more substantial decline of 11.2%, with revenues hitting USD460 million (MOP3.68 billion).

LVS's ferry operations and other segments surpassed expectations, generating USD31 million against an average estimate of USD21 million (MOP167 million).

Robert G. Goldstein, chairman and CEO of LVS, emphasized the company's commitment to strategic investments despite current challenges. He

noted that ongoing renovations at The Londoner have temporarily disrupted operations but are expected to enhance LVS's competitive position once completed.

"The Macau market continues to grow. Total gain in revenue for the market grew 13% in the third quarter of 2024 when compared to the third quarter of 2023," Goldstein said.

He acknowledged that "although our reported financial results reflected lower-than-expected hold on rolling play in Singapore and disruptions from our ongoing development work at The Londoner in Ma-

cau, we continued to execute our strategic objectives during the quarter."

Looking ahead, LVS remains optimistic about growth prospects in Macau and Singapore. The company has committed to significant capital investments to enhance its properties and attract high-value tourists. Alongside operational improvements, LVS repurchased USD450 million (MOP3.6 billion) worth of its stock during the quarter and raised its annual dividend to USD1 per share for 2025, signaling confidence in future cash flows.

Despite these positive indicators, LVS faces ongoing challenges. The company reported that low hold on rolling play negatively impacted adjusted property EBITDA by approximately USD2 million (MOP16 million) during the quarter. Additionally, renovation disruptions have temporarily reduced room availability and affected overall margins across its properties.

Patrick Dumont, president and chief operating officer of LVS, said, "Macau EBITDA was USD585 million (MOP4.7 billion). If we had held as expected in our rolling program, our EBITDA would have been higher by USD2 million (MOP16 million). When adjusted for lower-than-expected hold in the rolling segment, our EBITDA margin from Macau portfolio properties, excluding The Londoner, would have been 35.1%, down 110 basis points compared to Q3 2023."

While Las Vegas Sands' third-quarter results reflect some setbacks amid ongoing recovery efforts in Macau and Singapore, the company's commitment to strategic growth initiatives positions it favorably for future opportunities as tourism rebounds.

## GOV'T OPENS 24-HOUR SELF-SERVICE CENTER IN HENGQIN

The Macau government and the Executive Committee of the Hengqin Guangdong-Macao In-depth Cooperation Zone launched a 24-hour self-service government affairs center yesterday. Located in the Macau New Neighborhood, the facility aims to improve cross-border services for Macau residents involved in work, study, and daily life in Hengqin. Wu Zijian, Deputy Director of the Cooperation Zone, said the center marks a significant step in implementing the Cooperation Zone's master plan and improving public services. The initiative is expected to streamline access to social security and other essential services for residents, fostering a more integrated community.

## CULINARY WORKSHOP CELEBRATES CULTURAL TIES

The Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management at Macau University of Science and Technology hosted the 16th Cultural Week of China and Portuguese-Speaking Countries Culinary Workshop on Oct. 21. Featuring renowned Chefs Nário Tala from Angola and Marina de Senna Fernandes from Macau, the event attracted over 80 students eager to explore culinary traditions. Dean Ben K. Goh emphasized the significance of culinary culture in fostering understanding among diverse ethnicities. The workshop highlighted traditional dishes, including Tala's Smoked Catfish and Fernandes' Minchi Mosca, enriching students' appreciation of cultural heritage.

## JOB FAIR TO OFFER NEARLY 2,500 POSITIONS FOR LOCALS

Residents seeking employment will have a significant opportunity at a large-scale recruitment event taking place on Nov. 8 and 9 at the Macau Tower Convention and Entertainment Center. Organized by the Labor Affairs Bureau and the Federation of Trade Unions, the event will feature nearly 2,500 job vacancies across various sectors, including hospitality, IT and retail. Online reservations open Oct. 25 and will remain available until Nov. 7. Besides on-site interviews, attendees can participate in workshops covering essential skills such as resume writing and interview techniques.

# Nobel laureate to deliver AI lecture at UM

**P**ROFESSOR Thomas Sargent, the 2011 Nobel laureate in economics, will deliver a lecture at the University of Macau (UM) early next month, the Faculty of Business Administration of the UM has announced.

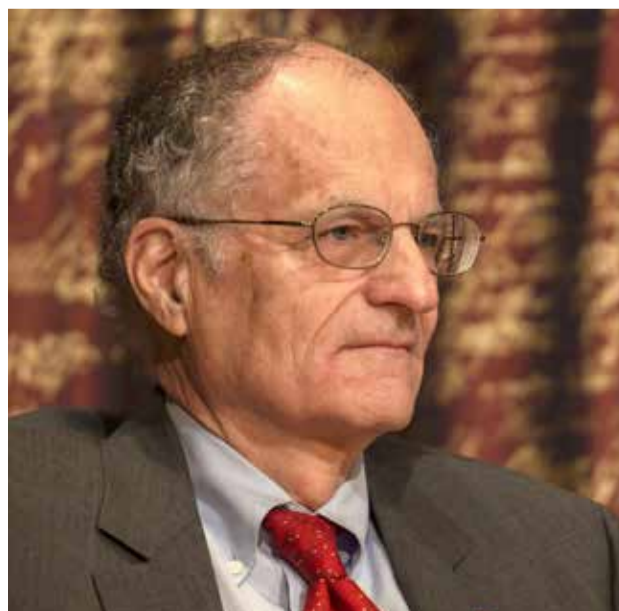
Titled "Sources of Artificial Intelligence," the lecture will discuss the origins and development of artificial intelligence (AI). Prof. Sargent will introduce AI concepts by explaining the pattern recognition and decision-making processes demonstrated by

intelligent individuals. Using examples of how Galileo Galilei and Charles Darwin combined their innate talents with acquired knowledge to create scientific breakthroughs, Prof. Sargent will illustrate how modern researchers design computer programs capable of similar tasks. He will also share his insights into the transformations and challenges brought about by artificial intelligence.

The lecture is scheduled for 4 p.m. in the Multi-function Hall on the ground floor of the UM

Guest House (N1-G014). It will be conducted in English.

Prof. Sargent currently serves as a Professor of Economics and Business at New York University's Leonard N. Stern School of Business, an honorary professor at Peking University, and the honorary director of the Sargent Institute of Quantitative Economics and Finance at Peking University HSBC Business School. His areas of expertise include macroeconomics, monetary economics, and time series econometrics. **RM**



Professor Thomas Sargent





## TAXI VIOLATIONS ARE DOWN 94% FROM PRE-PANDEMIC

VICTORIA CHAN

A recent report from the Transport Bureau (DSAT) reveals that the number of

infractions practiced by taxi drivers has significantly when compared to 2019.

According to the report, since the new taxi law implemen-

tation (in mid-2019), the number of recorded taxi violations and accusations has decreased by 94%.

The report shows that in

the first half of this year, only 354 taxi violations and charges were recorded, a stark contrast to the 6,279 cases reported from January to May 2019, before the enactment of the new law. The DSAT points out that the reduction demonstrates the effectiveness of the legal regime for the transport of passengers in hired vehicles, introduced by the government to streamline taxi operations and combat taxi-related offenses.

However, other reasons might have contributed to these results as pointed out Tony Kuok, director of the Mutual Aid Association in an interview with the newspaper Tribuna de Macau.

Kuok noted that around 400 taxi drivers are left without full-time employment, as only half of the 500 new taxis awarded to 10 companies in the latest tender have begun operating. According to the representative of the taxi industry, the remaining 250 new taxis could start service by the end of this year.

With nearly 200 existing taxi licenses expiring this year, the association has conveyed these concerns to Edmund Ho, vice-president of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). Kuok

noted that while the new taxis have helped ease passenger demand, the sector is also grappling with significant traffic congestion, particularly from the Macau Border Checkpoint and other parts of the peninsula.

The association also highlighted a significant change in the demographics within the taxi driver workforce, with young people now representing 30-40% of drivers. Many of these younger individuals previously worked in the casino or food delivery industries.

Kuok said the association plans to recruit more young drivers into its "youth committee" to help them adapt to new technologies, such as the association's Macau Taxi mobile app.

During the meeting with Ho, the association discussed plans to cooperate with the government on English language training for taxi drivers to improve service quality for visitors. Kuok noted that the vice-chairman of the CPPCC expressed support for the association's efforts to promote the "Love for the Motherland and Macau" spirit and its initiatives aimed at the sustainable development of Macau's tourism industry.

## Bidding opens for Taipa Tunnel Southern Link construction

VICTORIA CHAN

ACCORDING to the Public Construction Bureau (DSOP), the tender for the design and construction of the Grand Taipa Tunnel and its southern link is now open to bids. Interested construction firms have until Dec. 11 to submit proposals.

The construction of the Taipa Grande Tunnel project is divided into two parts. The first tender covers the main tunnel and the southern connection, which has completed the initial qualification stage and is now in the proposal submission phase. The second tender focuses on the northern connection, which will include an 890-meter viaduct linking the tunnel to the Macau Bridge.

For the first tender, five pre-qualified companies were invited to submit bids. The DSOP



emphasized the need for a detailed execution plan from bidders, as the proposal must convince officials the project can be completed safely and with minimal disruption to surrounding traffic.

The second tender involves constructing a new vehicular flyover connecting the border-crossing Macau Bridge to the northern entrance of the Taipa Grande Tunnel. Spanning approximately 890 meters with four lanes in

each direction, the elevated roadway will soar over parklands and reach up to 23 meters above the light rail line at its highest point.

Due to the project's technical complexity and potential for disruption, bidders have been asked to provide detailed execution plans to guarantee construction accuracy and safety while minimizing impact on traffic. Officials are requesting extraordinarily detailed execution

plans from bidders, as the lofty viaduct poses complex engineering challenges and any errors can seriously impact traffic and safety.

With these two major tenders underway, the Taipa Grande Tunnel project is progressing steadily towards its next phase of development. Bidders must prove they have the expertise, experience and vision to pull off this ambitious project without delays or disruptions to daily commutes.



## TAIPA CENTRAL PARK SWIMMING POOL CLOSED TEMPORARILY DUE TO E. COLI CONTAMINATION

TAIPA'S Central Park Swimming Pool has been closed by the Sports Bureau (ID), after tests revealed excessive concentrations of Escherichia coli (E. coli) bacterium, according to a bureau press statement.

The closure will remain in effect for an unspecified period to allow for cleaning and disinfection works.

"The Sports Bureau regrets any inconvenience caused by the temporary closure of the swimming pool and appreciates the public's understanding," the statement said.

Tickets purchased for Taipa Central Park Swimming Pool through the online booking system will be refun-

ded to the buyer's online account via the same electronic payment method.

Experts say E. coli can enter swimming pools via people's shoes or by being blown in with leaf debris. Once the bacteria contaminates the water, it can multiply under suitable conditions, posing an infection risk to swimmers.

However, experts emphasized that thorough cleaning and disinfection of the pool water system can effectively eliminate the bacteria. They noted that even if a water test identifies the presence of E. coli in the water, that does not necessarily indicate fecal contamination. **RM**





## Join the Two-Day Wellness Extravaganza with Celebrity Instructors at **"hush! Beach Concerts x Yo~ga Wellfest 2024"**

Experience a weekend like no other as the highly-anticipated "hush! Beach Concerts x Yo~ga Wellfest 2024" returns to the Hac Sa Beach. Mark your calendars for the second weekend of November for two unforgettable days filled with the perfect blend of pop music, invigorating yoga and fitness sessions that will leave you revitalized and inspired.

Over 30 celebrated yoga and fitness instructors from across Asia will converge at the "Yo~ga Wellfest 2024" to offer a diverse range of training sessions along Macau's longest beach coastline. Among the stellar instructors of this year's lineup are Coffee Lam, Hong Kong's beloved yoga instructor and influencer, who will guide participants through a rejuvenating "Power Yoga" session on the beach. Emi Wong, the Asian fitness sensation, will lead a high-intensity interval training session that promises to torch fat and build muscle amidst the ocean breeze. Get ready to groove with Gun Gun, the acclaimed Thai fitness coach, as he leads a dynamic "Dance Party" class infused with infectious pop and Latin music rhythms. Dive into a world of wellness and fitness with more big names including Singapore's flow yoga expert Jyan, Taiwan's Zumba master J-Lin, the experienced yogi duo Ankie and Rosemary, vinyasa flow yoga instructors Tee, Cherry, and Jay of the "Thai Trio", and Martha Collard, gong master and founder of the renowned wellness and sound healing studio Red Doors.



Beyond the star-studded lineup, the diversity of activities is another highlight. Most training sessions are designed to cater to all levels. From the "Wellfest Stage" offering diverse fitness, yoga and wellness classes to the "Ocean Yoga" zone for holistic mind-body relaxation and the dynamic "Fit District" for vibrant fitness and dance workouts, there's something for everyone. Don't miss the unique stand-up paddleboard yoga experience at the "SUP Yoga" zone, where you can find balance and harmony on the water. Families with kids are in for a treat at the "hush! Kids Yo~ga Playground" featuring music-infused workouts, alongside Macau's first-ever DJ party for kids, creative workshops, markets, and photogenic art installations. With ample outdoor space to explore and unwind, the event promises a healthy and revitalizing weekend escape for participants of all ages.

Music fans will delight in the "hush! Beach Concerts" with free entry, a music marathon that celebrates diverse genres. From rock to electronic, hip-hop to jazz, the lineup promises a feast for enthusiasts of all tastes.

Secure your tickets now at [mgm.mo](http://mgm.mo) for an enthralling celebration of music, wellness, yoga and fitness at the "hush! Beach Concerts x Yo~ga Wellfest 2024".



**Dates:**  
November 9 - 10, 2024

**Location:**  
Hac Sa Beach

**Ticket Price:**  
From MOP240\*

Purchase with Macau ID to enjoy up to 25% discount on price

\*Free admission for "hush! Beach Concerts"



Learn more



BASKETBALL

# MACAU BLACK BEARS BEAT NEW TAIPEI KINGS IN FIRST EASL GAME

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE Macau Black Bears won their first East Asia Super League (EASL) game, beating the early-season favorites, the New Taipei Kings, in Taiwan.

The match, which was part of Gameday 3: Group B, saw the Bears win 109-97 at Xinzhuang Gymnasium, New Taipei City, home court of the Kings.

The Macau side took the lead early in the game, jumping to an 11-point advantage after the first quarter. They maintained control throughout the game, eventually pulling away late in the fourth quarter for the win.

Bears captain Jeantal Cylla led the team with a game-high 32 points, shooting 12-of-18 from the field, including five 3-pointers.

Both teams fielded a short rotation as the Kings and the Bears each had just nine active players on their rosters.

Kings Head Coach Ryan



Marchand addressed the limited roster during halftime, saying, "We have a lot of injuries. Our bench depth is really small right now, so we just make sure we stay healthy."

The Kings mostly played a six-man rotation, with Jeremy Lin, Joseph Lin, Lee Kai-Yan, Sani Sakakini, Jason Washburn, and Kenny Manigault each playing over 28 minutes.

The Bears also brought just nine players to New Taipei. However, they used a more balanced rotation, with seven players logging over 13 minutes and all scoring.

Their success was boosted by an efficiency rate of 51.5%, with 17 of 33 three-pointers contributing to their good score.

Jenning Leung was another standout for Macau, making five out of 8 attempts from beyond the arc.

In contrast, the Kings struggled from the 3-point line, only managing to hit seven of 3's attempts all game for a 20% score rate.

Star player Jeremy Lin was just 2-for-10 from deep, finishing with a team-high of 21 points.

With four games to go, including three home games in Studio City Macau, the Black Bears have shown they have the potential to be a dark horse in Group B, with the firepower to beat favorites like New Taipei. They aim to secure a spot in the 2025 Final Four, scheduled for March 2025. The Bears will face the Ryukyu Golden Kings on Oct. 30 in the first of their upcoming home matches.

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





MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



## Oktoberfest returns to MGM Cotai from today

**T**HE “Cheers, Macau! Oktoberfest Macau at MGM” opens today. Set to run from Oct. 25 to Nov. 5, this year marks the 14th edition of the festival, which has welcomed over 180,000 guests since its inception in 2009, according to MGM.

Held on the roof terrace of MGM COTAI, this festival aims to capture the vibrant atmosphere and essence of Bavarian festivities. Supported by the Macao Government Tourism Office and the German Macau Business Association, Oktoberfest Macau promises an exciting lineup of activities. Guests can enjoy live performances by the popular Högl

Fun Band from Munich, who will bring back the iconic theme song “Nei Hou, Macau!”

Attendees can indulge in authentic German cuisine, traditional Löwenbräu beer, alongside a variety of non-alcoholic options, traditional German food and beverages, carnival booth games, and cheer with our waitresses in traditional dirndl costumes. Admission is MOP150 on weekdays and MOP180 on weekends, with free entry for children aged under nine years old.

Join in as Macau celebrates its unique blend of culture and gastronomy at this year's Oktoberfest. Cheers to an unforgettable experience! NS

### WEEKEND

## 'Lusofonia Festival' starts today

RENATO MARQUES

**O**RGANIZED by the Cultural Affairs Bureau and Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG), the 2024 edition of the “Lusofonia Festival” begins today, stretching across two weekends.

The event will take place at the usual location at Taipa Houses-Museum. It aims to offer local residents and tourists a deeper knowledge of the traditions, customs, and unique culture of Portuguese-

se-speaking countries and regions.

This year, the festival places a special focus on the culture of Goa, Daman, and Diu, with Chef Vasco Alvares, showcasing traditional dishes from these regions during dinner.

Featured dishes include grilled pork ribs, Goan-style octopus stew, grilled cafreal chicken, stuffed prawns, grilled pork kebabs, and chicken xacuti at Largo do Carmo.

The renowned temporary tattoo artist from Goa, Hari-

chandra Anand Pokle, will also present her art to the public at the Cultural Exhibition booth of Goa, Daman and Diu.

For the 27th edition of the Lusofonia Festival, a diverse lineup of music and dance artists from 10 Portuguese-speaking countries and regions will entertain attendees. Among the featured artists are Portuguese singer Fernando Daniel, Angolan singer Yuri da Cunha, Mozambican singer Selma Uamusse, Brazilian singer Filipe Toca, Cape Verdean musical group Ferro Gaita, Guinean singer Nené Pereira, the music and dance group from Goa, Daman and Diu, Daman Darshan, Timorese dance group Le-Ziaval, Equatorial Guinea dance group GE Dancers, and the 100% Santola Cultural Group from São Tomé and Príncipe who will perform over the six days of the festival.



AD

Principal Supporting Partner: Supporting Partner: **EEEAGER at Cardiff University** Collaborating Partners: Sponsored by: Event Coordinator:

### Event Date and Time 活動日期及時間:

25 October 2024 (Friday), 2:00pm  
2024年10月25日下午二時

### Event Venue 活動地點:

Grand Hall, Inspiration Building,  
Mong-Há Campus, Macao University of Tourism  
澳門旅遊大學望廈校區啟思樓大禮堂

### Event details link:

活動詳情連結:



**MICSARGC International Forum: Innovative & Sustainable Finance & ESG**  
**MICSARGC國際論壇：創新及可持續金融與ESG**





Tourists take the sight-seeing cable car in Chongqing

## US firms continue to seek investment opps in Chinese market

### IN THE NEWS

**M**ANY U.S. companies are seeking investment opportunities in the Chinese market amid China's introduction of a host of incremental policies to support economic growth.

This week, a roundtable meeting between the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and U.S. multinationals was held in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality, Xinhua has reported.

Representatives from about 60 U.S. companies and chambers of commerce participated in the meeting.

Several U.S. companies have recently announced increases in their investments in China, viewing it as a long-term, high-growth market, said Michael Hart, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, while adding that he hopes China's opening-up policies rolled out this year will inject vitality into the Chinese economy.

China's recent incremental policies have reinforced enterprises' confidence in the Chinese market, encouraging them to expand research and development, production and recruitment, said Tao Lin, vice

president of Tesla.

A number of foreign enterprises have participated in China's national program of large-scale equipment renewals and trade-in of durable consumer goods, according to NDRC official Wen Hua.

The program, which targets green and digital transformation, is open to foreign companies, including American firms, that can leverage their own strengths and offer competitive products and technologies, Wen said.

The NDRC is revising the Catalog of Encouraged Industries for Foreign Investment, and efforts will be made to enhance the transparency of policy formulation and improve services for foreign-funded enterprises, said Hua Zhong, an official of the NDRC.

The NDRC established the roundtable meeting mechanism in 2021 and nine related activities have taken place thus far.

The aim of this mechanism is to encourage U.S. enterprises to participate deeply in building a higher-level open economy, while also sharing in the dividends resulting from the development of China's economy – namely in Greater Bay Area. **MDT/XINHUA**

## COORDINATE AND SIMPLIFY TO UPHOLD THE 'ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS' PRINCIPLE

ANALYSIS  
BY SÉRGIO ALMEIDA CORREIA  
LAWYER, POLITICAL SCIENTIST

**O**N December 10, 2023, the State Council of the People's Republic of China approved the General Development Plan for the Construction of the Deepened Cooperation Zone between Guangdong and Macau in Hengqin. This document includes several provisions, outlined in Articles 56 to 65, which aim to gradually build an institutional system for civil and commercial rules that link Macau with international standards (Art. 56). It also mentions creating an integrated law enforcement system (Art. 59),

developing mechanisms for resolving commercial disputes—such as litigation, arbitration, and mediation in international commercial matters—through internationally accepted commercial arbitration mechanisms (Art. 61). Additionally, it emphasizes the integrated development of legal services between Guangdong and Macau, including legal advocacy, notarization, and legal assistance, which is a reasonable and solid principle.

However, during the opening session of the 2024/2025 judicial year, Song Man Lei, the acting president of the Court of Final Appeal and its presumable future head, mentioned the visits made to nine



courts in the Greater Bay Area. These visits focused on deepening judicial cooperation between Macau and Guang-

## Guangzhou building biopharma hub

### ON THE AGENDA

**G**UANGZHOU, capital of Guangdong province, is sparing no effort to build a global hub for innovation and development of its biopharmaceutical industry, a city official said.

This is expected to inject strong momentum into the sector in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and across the country.

The development of the biopharmaceutical industry will bring more hope and benefit a vast number of patients, said Meng Hao, deputy secretary general of the Guangzhou municipal government.

To this end, the city government will establish a 150 billion yuan (\$21.5 billion) industrial investment fund to promote cooperation between major financial

investment companies and local investment institutions, with a focus on investing in the biomedicine sector, Meng said.

Meng made the remarks at a news conference on promoting Guangzhou's biopharmaceutical industry this.

Guangzhou has a population of nearly 24 million. It is the most populous city in the GBA, which includes nine Guangdong cities as well as Hong Kong and Macao.

The southern metropolis has about 6,800 registered medical and health institutions, including 47 major hospitals and eight national and regional medical centers.

"In the first half of this year, more than 93 million patient visits had been recorded in the city's medical institutions, and the abundant



medical resources provide broad space for the transformation of achievements and market

application of biopharmaceutical enterprises," she said.

Guangzhou's biophar-



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



dong, as well as efforts to establish a "People's Court of the Deepened Cooperation Zone (...)" to carry out a pilot project

of appointing non-permanent Macau judges, forming a joint court with mainland China judges to handle civil and com-

mercial cases."

These are commendable efforts with good intentions that do not go unnoticed by residents. However, they also highlight the weight of bureaucratic decision-making mechanisms and the complexities required to achieve something concrete and beneficial.

There seems to be, although I may be mistaken, a sense of disjointed actions without clear coordination or understanding of how this cooperation between Macau and Guangdong will also align with Hong Kong. If these three regions are working toward the same goals and are part of the same geographic area, it would be vital for their efforts to be coordinated and for there to be full collaboration.

First and foremost, the distinct legal systems of these three regions must be harmonized, which seems to be lacking. The legal development in Macau and Hong Kong differs from that in mainland China, reflecting different legal traditions. Addressing this would be a crucial first step, rather than prematurely creating courts and judicial teams to handle cases without establishing such harmony.

Ideally, there should be, secondly, some uniformity in

commercial, administrative, and judicial procedures, with an approach that considers the different realities of these regions. Leveraging the legal and international experience of the Special Administrative Regions (SARs) of Macau and Hong Kong could help in developing Guangdong's legal system, giving it both domestic and international credibility.

Otherwise, these efforts may prove as ineffective as previous attempts, such as arbitration and mediation initiatives in Macau, whose only centers are underutilized. In fact, they were barely mentioned in a recent conference held at the University of Saint Joseph, which included representatives from Portuguese-speaking countries.

Engagement and the exchange of ideas are valuable, but if these initiatives do not yield results and fail to attract foreign investment or promote the internationalization of the entire Pearl River Delta region, we may see another failure similar to the Macau Forum. For over twenty years, it has tried to achieve something without significant results, as evidenced by the near-zero utilization of a credit line created by the Central People's Government for credible projects.

Thus, I believe a tripartite working group should be established, involving all three parties—Macau, Guangdong, and Hong Kong—along with a qualified representative appointed by the Central Government to coordinate efforts. This group should be given the freedom to prepare a credible, common legal framework that could gain international acceptance in the shortest possible time. Such a compilation of regulations would greatly contribute to the international standing of the region, simplifying bureaucracy, and reducing uncertainties about the future.

Macau and Hong Kong SARs are well-prepared, with significant international legal experience, to provide a decisive push for the development of the Greater Bay Area (Guangdong/HK/Macau). This could then serve as an example and a catalyst for the rest of the country. However, for this to happen, it is essential to allow freedom in planning, creation, and coordination, leaving the centralism of democratic processes to other areas where it may be less detrimental to the long-term economic development of the People's Republic of China. Here too, a wise, informed, and commanding voice is needed.



Employees work at a biopharmaceutical production facility in Guangzhou

maceutical industry is in the top tier in the country, and the city has more than 6,500 bio-

pharmaceutical and related enterprises, including 12 Fortune Global 500 companies, 23 listed

companies and over 1,000 high-tech enterprises. These have formed biopharmaceutical

industrial clusters that are playing an increasingly important role in the development of Guan-

zhou's pillar industry, said Meng.

The city will accord priority to the development of four major industries — biopharmaceutical, medicine, traditional Chinese medicine and high-end medical apparatus and instruments. It will also try to construct a number of key State laboratories, industrial innovation centers, manufacturing innovation centers and national engineering technology centers in the next five years, said Meng.

Guangzhou will accelerate the construction of industrial parks and zones for biopharmaceutical and related industries in the following months, she added.

Zhang Yi, deputy director and spokeswoman of the Guangzhou health commission, said the commission unveiled a series of measures in September to promote the high-quality development of innovative medical devices and support their clinical

application.

"The new measures aim to promote and accelerate innovation in the biopharmaceutical industry and help develop new quality productive forces," she said.

"Meanwhile, the commission encourages research and development personnel from pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers to connect with clinical experts in medical institutions to further improve the mechanism of medical engineering integration, collaborative innovation and information exchange through establishing clinical research beds in medical institutions and conducting medicine clinical trials," she said.

The commission will further promote the application of innovative medicines and medical devices in hospital admissions, said Zhang.

Zhao Huie, a representative from Guangzhou Medprin Regenerative Medical Techno-

logies Co Ltd, said the new measures will help enterprises accelerate clinical applications and enhance production.

"All companies hope that their medical products can be clinically applied as soon as possible," she said.

Guangdong province is planning to boost annual revenue from its biopharmaceutical and health sector to more than 1 trillion yuan by 2027, from 663.8 billion yuan in 2023, according to an action plan issued by the provincial government earlier this month.

The action plan aims to promote high-quality development of the biopharmaceutical sector in Guangdong

According to the action plan, Guangdong is planning to lift the total annual revenue of biopharmaceutical enterprises above a designated size — which has grown by 10 percent on average since 2018 — to 500 billion yuan by 2027.

**MDT/CNS**



SOUTH CHINA SEA

# Indonesia says its coast guard drove away Chinese ship that interrupted survey

EDNA TARIGAN, JAKARTA

**I**NDONESIAN patrol ships drove a Chinese coast guard vessel away from a survey vessel in a disputed area of the South China Sea for the second time in three days, Indonesian authorities said yesterday.

Indonesia's Maritime Security Agency said a Chinese ship approached the MV Geo Coral on Monday and Wednesday, interrupting a seismic data survey being conducted by the state energy company PT Pertamina in a part of the South China Sea claimed by both countries.

Asked about the Indonesian statement, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said the Coast Guard vessel had carried out routine patrols in waters under Chinese jurisdiction. "China is ready to enhance communication and consultation with Indonesia through diplomatic channels and properly handle maritime differences between the two countries," he added.



In this photo released by Indonesian Maritime Security Agency, a guard uses binoculars to monitor the movement of a Chinese coast guard vessel in North Natuna Sea

China's "nine-dash line," which it uses to roughly demarcate its claim to most of the South China Sea, overlaps with a section of Indonesia's exclusive economic zone that extends from the Natuna Islands.

Indonesia does not have a formal territorial dispute with China over the South China Sea but has become increasingly protective of its rights in the re-

gion, while Chinese ships have regularly entered the area Indonesia calls the North Natuna Sea, fueling tensions between the countries.

Indonesian authorities said the Chinese coast guard ship CCG 5402 was first detected near MV Geo Coral on Monday. An Indonesian patrol ship contacted the ship, whose crew insisted that the area was under China's

jurisdiction before Indonesian coast guard and navy ships drove the Chinese ship away.

On Wednesday morning, the Chinese ship again approached the site of the seismic survey and was driven away, according to the Maritime Security Agency.

Earlier, the agency had said the second encounter took place yesterday morning.

A video distributed by the agency showed Indonesian coast guard officers speaking to their Chinese counterparts by radio and the China's coast guard officials.

"This is China Coast Guard 5402. China has indisputable authority over Nansha islands and the adjacent waters," says the Chinese officer. "Chinese Coast Guard regular patrol in and above these domestic jurisdictional waters is unquestionable."

The Indonesian coast guard officer replies that the China's vessel was in Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone.

"Indonesia's Maritime Security

Agency will continue to conduct intensive patrols and monitoring in the waters of North Natuna to ensure that seismic survey activities run smoothly and maintain Indonesia's sovereignty and sovereign rights," said the statement.

Clashes at sea between China and its maritime rivals have become increasingly common in recent years, driving tensions especially with the Philippines and Vietnam. Chinese ships also regularly patrol off the island of Borneo and near James Shoal east of the Natuna islands, China's southernmost territorial claim which Malaysia says belongs to it.

A 2016 international arbitration ruling involving the Philippines invalidated most of China's sweeping claims in the sea, but China has ignored the ruling and called it a sham.

China has in the past explained its presence in the waters on the basis of "traditional fishing rights." **MDT/AP**

HONG KONG

# Dinosaur fossils discovered for the first time

**O**FFICIALS in Hong Kong said they have discovered dinosaur fossils in the city for the first time on a remote, uninhabited island that's part of a geopark.

Experts have initially confirmed the fossils were part of a large dinosaur from the Cretaceous period, about 145 million to 66 million years ago, the government said in a statement. They will need to conduct further studies to confirm the species of the dinosaur.

Experts speculate that the dinosaur was likely buried by sand and gravel after its death before it was later washed to the surface by a large flood, and subsequently buried again at the discovery site, it said.

The government said



The fossil discovered in Hong Kong's Port Island

the conservation department in March informed its Antiquities and Monuments Office about a sedimentary rock containing substances suspected to be vertebrate fossils. The rock was found on Port Island in the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark in the city's northeastern waters.

The government said it commissioned mainland Chinese experts to conduct field investigations.

Port Island is closed to the public from Wednesday until further notice to facilitate future investigations and excavations.

The fossils will be on display at the Hong

Kong Heritage Discovery Centre in Tsim Sha Tsui, one of the city's popular shopping districts, starting on Friday. The government is also planning to open a temporary workshop for the public to observe experts' preparation of fossil specimens by the end of 2024. **MDT/AP**

XIAMEN-FORTALEZA

# CHINESE, BRAZILIAN TWIN CITIES BOLSTER TIES

**XIAMEN**, a coastal city in East China's Fujian province, will continue sharing expertise in health and governance with Fortaleza, a port city in northeastern Brazil, following the establishment of a sisterly relationship in May last year, local authorities said.

The sister cities are also known as "BRICS Twin Cities", because both have hosted summits for BRICS, an acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, the original members of the group of emerging economies, China Daily reported yesterday.

The cities will intensify cooperation, particularly through exchanges of medical expertise between the Xiamen Cardiovascular Hospital affiliated with Xiamen University and Hospital de Messejana, a leading cardiovascular institution in Fortaleza, according to the Xiamen city government.

Furthermore, Xiamen officials will continue to invite their Fortaleza counterparts

to participate in training sessions at an innovation base for BRICS partners in Fujian, the city government said in a written response to China Daily.

The collaboration between the two cities to combat cardiovascular diseases — the leading cause of deaths globally according to the World Health Organization — intensified in March, when Hospital de Messejana sent a doctor to Xiamen Cardiovascular Hospital for a six-month research and study program.

The following month, the two hospitals formalized their partnership by signing an agreement to cooperate in areas such as cardiovascular diagnosis, talent training and health information technologies.

According to China Daily, the signing ceremony was attended by Cui Yonghui, the Party secretary of Xiamen, and Elmano de Freitas, governor of Ceara, the Brazilian state where Fortaleza is located. **MDT/CHINA DAILY**



PHILIPPINES

# Tropical storm leaves at least 24 dead in flooding and landslides

JIM GOMEZ, MANILA

**W**IDESPREAD flooding and landslides set off by a tropical storm in the northeastern Philippines yesterday left at least 24 people dead, swept away cars and prompted authorities to scramble for motorboats to rescue trapped villagers, some on roofs.

The government shut down schools and offices — except those urgently needed for disaster response — for the second day on the entire main island of Luzon to protect millions of people after Tropical Storm Trami slammed into the country's northeastern province of Isabela after midnight.

The storm began to move away



from the coast of the northwestern Philippine province of Ilocos Sur toward the South China Sea yesterday afternoon with sustained winds of up to 95 kph (59 mph) and gusts up to 115 kph (71 mph). It was blowing southwest-

ward and could strengthen into a typhoon over the South China Sea, according to state forecasters.

At least 24 people died, mostly due to drowning in the hard-hit Bicol region and nearby Quezon province but the toll was expected to rise as towns and villages isolated by flooding and roads blocked by landslides and toppled trees manage to send out reports, police and provincial officials said.

Most of the storm deaths were reported in the six-province Bicol region, southeast of Manila, where at least 21 people died, including 8 residents in Naga city, which was inundated by flash floods as Trami was approaching Tuesday, dumping more than two months' worth of rainfall in just 24 hours at high tide, regional police chief Brig. Gen. Andre Dizon and

other officials said.

While thousands of villagers, who were trapped in floodwaters, have been rescued by government forces, many more needed to be saved yesterday in the Bicol region, including some on roofs. About 1,500 police officers have been deployed for disaster-mitigation work, Dizon said.

"We can't rescue them all at once because there are so many and we need additional motorboats," Dizon told The Associated Press by telephone. "We're looking for ways to deliver food and water to those who were trapped but could not be evacuated right away."

Flash floods swept away and submerged cars in some parts of Naga city while mudflows from Mayon, one of the country's 24

active volcanoes, in nearby Albay province, engulfed several vehicles, Dizon said.

Stormy weather remained in the region, hampering relief efforts, officials said.

The government's disaster-mitigation agency said more than 2 million people were affected by the storm, including 75,400 villagers who were displaced from their homes and are sheltering on safer ground.

More than 1,000 houses were damaged, mostly in the Bicol region, and nearly 300 roads and bridges were not passable due to flooding, landslides or toppled trees, the government's disaster-mitigation agency said.

The storm prompted the suspension of inter-island ferry services in more than 120 seaports, stranding nearly 7,000 passengers and cargo workers, the Philippine coast guard said.

About 20 storms and typhoons batter the Philippines each year. In 2013, Typhoon Haiyan, one of the strongest recorded tropical cyclones in the world, left more than 7,300 people dead or missing and flattened entire villages. **MDT/AP**

SAMOA

# Climate-threatened Pacific Islands criticize Australia at Commonwealth meeting

**S**EVERAL Pacific island nations singled out Australia to do more to phase out fossil fuel exports during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting which opened in Samoa on Thursday.

Tuvalu's Prime Minister, Feleti Teo, alongside senior officials from Vanuatu and Fiji, backed a new report from the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, which highlights the significant role Australia, Canada and the U.K. play in global emissions.

The report said that fossil fuels extracted in the three nations were responsible for 60% of emissions generated by such extraction across Commonwealth countries since 1990, even though they represent only 6% of the Commonwealth's population.

The report's findings also point to a "stark imbalance in fossil fuel

extraction" and criticize the contradictions between the climate pledges made by these countries and their ongoing efforts to expand fossil fuel production, especially in Australia and Canada.

Pacific leaders have long warned that continued fossil fuel reliance threatens the very existence of their nations, many of which consist of low-lying islands that could be partly or wholly submerged by rising sea levels.

Teo, who earlier this year ratified a treaty with Australia to strengthen migration and security ties between the two countries as well as climate change mitigation, intensified his calls for Australia to phase out fossil fuel production, warning that current policies by major polluters amount to a "death sentence" for his nation.

"My view of that com-

mitment is that Australia ... is highly morally obliged to ensure that whatever action it does will not compromise the commitment it has provided in terms of climate impact," Teo said at a press conference in Apia, the capital of Samoa.

"On that platform I'm hoping we'll be able to leverage Australia's support and hopefully that will translate into reducing emission levels."

Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, who is also in Samoa, said Australia is tackling the "big task" of transitioning its economy to net zero emissions, but cannot be held responsible for emissions from coal and gas exported to other countries.

Wong said that the "vast majority" of new coal-fired power plants are being built in China and other developing nations. **MDT/AP**

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AP PHOTO



Xi and Putin: the enactors of the BRICS, along Modi and Lula

RUSSIA

# Putin presides over BRICS summit seeking to expand Russia's clout

**R**USSIAN President Vladimir Putin yesterday presided at the closing session of a summit of the BRICS bloc of developing economies, praising its role as a counterbalance to what he called the West's "perverse methods."

The three-day summit in the city of Kazan covered the deepening of financial cooperation, including the development of alternatives to Western-dominated payment systems, efforts to settle regional conflicts and expansion of the BRICS group of nations.

The alliance that initially included Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa when it was founded in 2009 has expanded to embrace Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. Turkey, Azerbaijan and Malaysia have formally applied to become members, and several other countries have expressed interest in joining.

The summit was attended by leaders or representatives of 36 countries, highlighting the failure of U.S.-led efforts to isolate Russia over its actions in Ukraine. The Kremlin touted the summit as "the largest foreign policy event ever held" by Russia.

Speaking at what was dubbed the "BRICS Plus" session,

which included countries that are considering joining the bloc, Putin accused the West of trying to stem the growing power of the Global South with "illegal unilateral sanctions, blatant protectionism, manipulation of currency and stock markets, and relentless foreign influence ostensibly promoting democracy, human rights, and the climate change agenda."

"Such perverse methods and approaches — to put it bluntly — lead to the emergence of new conflicts and the aggravation of old disagreements," Putin said. "One example of this is Ukraine, which is being used to create critical threats to Russia's security, while ignoring our vital interests, our just concerns, and the infringement of the rights of Russian-speaking people."

Russia has specifically pushed for the creation of a new payment system that would offer an alternative to the global bank messaging network SWIFT and allow Moscow to dodge Western sanctions and trade with partners.

In a joint declaration Wednesday, participants voiced concern about "the disruptive effect of unlawful unilateral coercive measures, including illegal sanctions" and reiterated their commitment to enhancing financial cooperation within BRICS. They noted

the benefits of "faster, low-cost, more efficient, transparent, safe and inclusive cross-border payment instruments built upon the principle of minimizing trade barriers and non-discriminatory access."

China's President Xi Jinping has emphasized the bloc's role in ensuring global security. Xi noted that China and Brazil have put forward a peace plan for Ukraine and sought to rally broader international support for it. Ukraine has rejected the proposal.

"We should promote the de-escalation of the situation as soon as possible and pave the way for a political settlement," Xi said Thursday.

Putin and Xi had announced a "no-limits" partnership weeks before Russia sent troops into Ukraine in 2022. They already met twice earlier this year, in Beijing in May and at a Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Kazakhstan in July.

Russia's cooperation with India also has flourished as New Delhi sees Moscow as a time-tested partner since the Cold War despite Russia's close ties with India's rival, China. While Western allies want New Delhi to be more active in persuading Moscow to end the fighting in Ukraine, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has avoided condemning Russia while

emphasizing a peaceful settlement.

Putin, who held a series of bilateral meetings on the summit's sidelines, was set to meet Thursday with U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who is making his first visit to Russia in more than two years. Guterres's trip to Kazan drew an angry reaction from Kyiv.

Addressing the BRICS Plus session, Guterres urged an immediate end to the fighting in Gaza, Lebanon, Ukraine and Sudan. "We need peace in Ukraine, a just peace in line with the U.N. Charter, international law and General Assembly resolutions," he said.

Russia's Kremlin-controlled media touted the summit as a massive policy coup that left the West fearing the loss of its global clout. State TV shows and news bulletins underscored that BRICS countries account for about half the world's population comprising the "global majority" and challenging Western "hegemony."

TV hosts elaborately quoted Western media reports saying that the summit highlighted the failure to isolate Moscow. "The West, the U.S., Washington, Brussels, London ended up isolating themselves," said Yevgeny Popov, host of a popular political talk show on state channel Rossiya 1. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1984 EUROPE GRANTS EMERGENCY AID FOR ETHIOPIA



The EEC is donating £1.8 million to help combat the famine in Ethiopia.

Officials from Oxfam, Save the Children, Christian Aid and the Red Cross believe that up to 10 million people are facing starvation unless the flow of aid is increased.

Aid agencies lobbied EEC ministers in Brussels in response to the latest drought to hit the country.

Hugh McKay from the Save the Children Fund said: "This is an excellent start and will buy us a little time to develop a long term strategy to deal with this tragedy."

The Community has also ordered the immediate shipment of 5,000 tons of food with more to be delivered soon.

The worst affected areas are the northern provinces of Tigre, Wollo and Eritrea, where a 10-year drought and a succession of wars have produced the worst famine in Ethiopia's modern history.

As the announcement was made the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission said it would hold an emergency meeting with Western governments to discuss ways to improve airlifting food to the region.

Local officials are said to be trying to clear congestion at ports to get more food to the rest of the country. Up to 1,000 tons of food a day are now being handled, up from 500 a few weeks ago.

A recent report shown on the BBC highlighted the harrowing problems being faced in Ethiopia and led to an overwhelming public response.

Overseas director of Oxfam Michael Harris said: "On one day alone we received 1,000 calls from people offering help, including three who offered transport aircraft."

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

One million people are thought to have died in the famine of 1984 despite money from around the world helping to improve the situation.

In December 1984 rock stars joined together to record "Do they know it's Christmas?". The single raised more than £12 million for famine victims in Africa.

Live Aid in July 1985, organised by Bob Geldof, raised more than £70 million for the cause. Two massive concerts were staged in London and Philadelphia. Artists including Paul McCartney, U2 and Madonna performed on the day.

Many Ethiopians continue to rely on food aid from abroad. In 2004 the government began a drive to move more than two million people away from the arid highlands of the east.

It said the programme was a lasting solution to food shortages.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Follow your heart. You won't defer gratification forever. Have fun without spending a fortune. Take advantage of perfect conditions to advance a passion project.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20  
Make structural repairs or improvements. Resolve a domestic breakdown. Discover unexpected inexpensive solutions upon investigation. Collaborate with family.

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21  
Express your creativity or risk an explosion. Write, paint and share. Request to be heard. Prepare promotions. Act quickly to grab a lucky break.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Unexpected expenses or a financial challenge could raise the stakes. Keep doing what you know works. Generate positive cash flow. Energize actions.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
Your actions and words could conflict with feelings. Pamper yourself. Avoid crowds or noise. Lay low and take it easy. Grab a lucky break.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
A formidable barrier blocks the path. Take care. Find a private spot to recharge and consider plans. You can see what wasn't working. Make adjustments.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
Collaborate around a team challenge. Review plans. An unexpected opportunity is worth pursuing. Discuss options and align on solutions.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
Monitor professional developments for opportunities. Talk about what you want. Determine what skills you lack. Plan your moves. Set aside excess baggage.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
Expect delays with travel and exploration. Slow down and smell the roses. Make unexpected discoveries. Uncover buried treasure where least imagined.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
Collaborate to maintain positive cash flow. Keep generating income. Avoid silly arguments. A challenge or delay could block an objective. Patiently adapt. Walk outside.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
Focus on shared commitments. Prioritize relationships over winning an argument. Go for clarity, simplicity and compassion. You could get lucky.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
The excellent work you've been doing reflects you well. Slow for a tricky turn. Sometimes the best move is rest. Don't force anything. Prioritize health.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

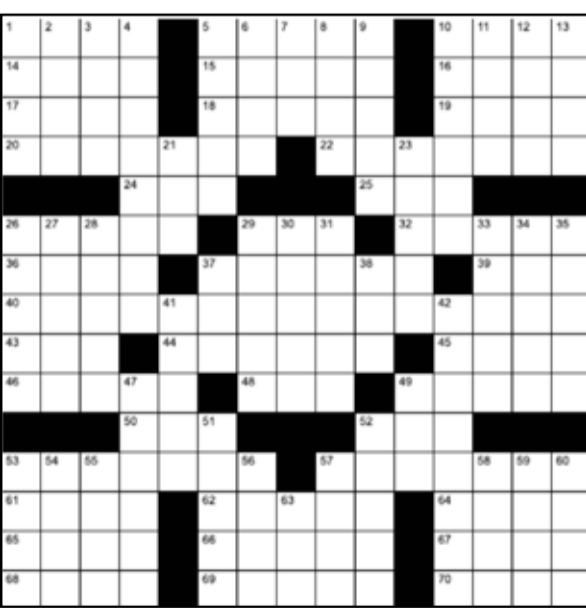
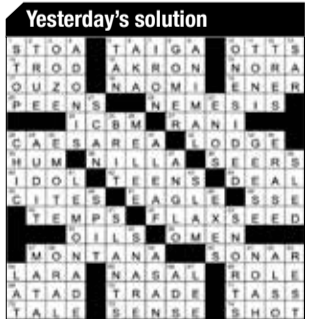
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	7	20	fine
Changchun	5	17	fine
Chengdu	16	21	overcast
Chongqing	18	24	cloudy
Fuzhou	19	25	overcast
Guangzhou	18	29	cloudy
Guiyang	10	20	cloudy
Haikou	20	28	cloudy
Hangzhou	15	22	rain
Harbin	5	13	cloudy
Hefei	9	21	cloudy
Nanjing	12	23	cloudy
Shanghai	17	23	rain
Taipei	22	27	rain
Wuhan	11	23	fine
Hong Kong	26	31	overcast
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	-1	7	cloudy
Frankfurt	9	18	overcast
Paris	13	19	cloudy
London	11	17	cloudy
New York	13	19	fine

**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Large-scale; 5- Secret supply; 10- Quote; 14- "All The Way To \_\_\_", song by REM; 15- Large artery; 16- Take \_\_\_ view of; 17- Dirty; 18- Sheep cry; 19- Get together; 20- Went in; 22- Decapitates; 24- Sun. speech; 25- Big \_\_\_ Calif.; 26- Picasso or Casals; 29- Chat room chuckle; 32- Course with pluses and minuses; 36- "On the Waterfront" director Kazan; 37- Capital of the Philippines; 39- "Michael Collins" actor; 40- In spite of; 43- Small child; 44- Spuds; 45- Contest, ethnicity; 46- End of \_\_\_; 48- Suffix with meteor; 49- Some locks; 50- Links luminary Ernie; 52- Pro \_\_\_; 53- Peeved; 57- Governing bodies; 61- Poultry enclosure; 62- Wipe out; 64- Shipping deduction; 65- French 101 verb; 66- Brewer's need; 67- Hip bones; 68- Actor Penn; 69- Covered with water; 70- Penny;

DOWN 1- Celtic language; 2- Unskilled laborer; 3- What's \_\_\_ for me?; 4- Cabbage salad; 5- Cavalry sword; 6- Tattled; 7- Live and breathe; 8- Thrust with a knife; 9- Loathes; 10- Photographic device; 11- The very \_\_\_; 12- Headed for overtime; 13- CPR experts; 21- Rock's \_\_\_ Speedwagon; 23- Pertaining to people; 26- Five; Prefix; 27- Crazy as \_\_\_; 28- Please, in Potsdam; 29- Actress Christine; 30- Inception; 31- Petrol unit; 33- Experiment; 34- Therefore; 35- Wise ones; 37- 1959 Kingston Trio hit; 38- Vegas opening; 41- Pisa place; 42- Theatrical; 47- Go back into business; 49- Hunger; 51- Later, dud!; 52- Molars, e.g.; 53- High cards; 54- Short letter; 55- Asta's mistress; 56- Sketched; 57- Flat sound; 58- Yarn; 59- \_\_\_ go brag; 60- Senate position; 63- Towing org.;



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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AD



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



Ralph Fiennes in a scene from "Conclave." (Focus Features)

DRIVE IN

# IT'S ALL POLITICS AT THE VATICAN IN 'CONCLAVE'

LINDSEY BAHR,  
MDT/AP FILM WRITER

**I**N Edward Berger's "Conclave," the selection of the pope is no holy affair. Instead, it's a petty, political campaign carried out in secrecy, where gossip flows, agendas are malleable and loyalties are fleeting. All are there to serve God, they say. But we all know how helpful that has been in conflicts throughout history. "Conclave" might not have much

new or interesting to say about the Catholic Church, but it is a deliriously fun watch in the way that tense, smart thrillers with an ensemble of great actors can be.

It's fitting that Peter Straughan, who co-wrote the script for "Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy," was the one to adapt Robert Harris' 2016 novel, taking audiences inside the secretive halls of the Vatican in the immediate aftermath of the pope's death. The film opens abruptly and effectively

on Ralph Fiennes' back, walking somewhere briskly. Nothing is said. You don't even see his face. But between Volker Bertelmann's heightened score and Fiennes' pace and tensed shoulders, the mood is set. This, it is clear, is not going to be a straightforward affair. Plus, something seems a little fishy about this death.

Fiennes plays Cardinal Thomas Lawrence, the dean of the College of Cardinals, whose duty is to oversee the election of the

next pope. That means gathering a group of 100-some clergymen in Rome to vote. With many dreaming of ascending to the position, they're secluded from the outside world and left to their own devices to lobby for support.

There are some formidable forces at play following the death of a more liberal-minded pope. Stanley Tucci's Aldo Bellini is a progressive hoping to evolve the church dramatically. Sergio Castellitto's Goffredo Tedesco thinks they've gone astray and wants to bring it back to the days of Latin Mass and Italian leadership. There's also Lucian Msamati's Joshua Adeyemi, from Nigeria, who stands to make history as the first Black pope but whose views on homosexuality worry the progressives. And finally, John Lithgow's slick but earnest Joseph Tremblay, who, unlike Bellini, wears his ambition on his sleeve. He also happened to be the last official meeting on the pope's schedule before he died and delayed before calling Lawrence with the news.

In a film business where youth still reigns supreme, "Conclave" is a symphony of lovely aging faces. Fiennes gets the majority of the close-ups, as a man who is having to manage this increasingly unwieldy proceeding while also grappling with his own internal crisis. He reveals to Bellini, who he hopes will be selected, that he recently attempted to resign. His request, he said, was denied.

And now he's left dealing with a bunch of babies in a conclave that is stretching on longer than

anyone would like. There are rumors of a withdrawn report of gross misconduct, a sabotage plot and the surprise arrival of a cardinal no one knew existed: Carlos Diez's Vincent Benitez, who was secretly appointed archbishop of Kabul. With turmoil both on the streets and inside their claustrophobic and gossip-ridden surroundings, everyone is going a little mad wondering if they'll have to simply settle for the least worst choice. Even Isabella Rossellini's head nun, who is supposed to be a silent participant, gets involved (thank goodness for us).

Berger, a German-Austrian filmmaker who last made the stunning adaptation of "All Quiet on the Western Front," keeps the audience on the edge of their seats for the duration as you try to piece together the clues to figure out who is holding the strings. The specific setting of the Vatican adds mystery and dramatic flair — the filmmaker seems to take great pleasure in the elaborate and frequent costume changes and ceremony of it all — but this is also a classic story that could have easily been set near any seat of power. "Conclave" is sure to ruffle some Catholic feathers — provocation is in its DNA. But for the rest of us, this juicy, smartly crafted thriller, is simply a great watch.

**"Conclave," a Focus Features release in theaters Friday, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association for "thematic material and smoking." Running time: 120 minutes. ★★★★★**

AD

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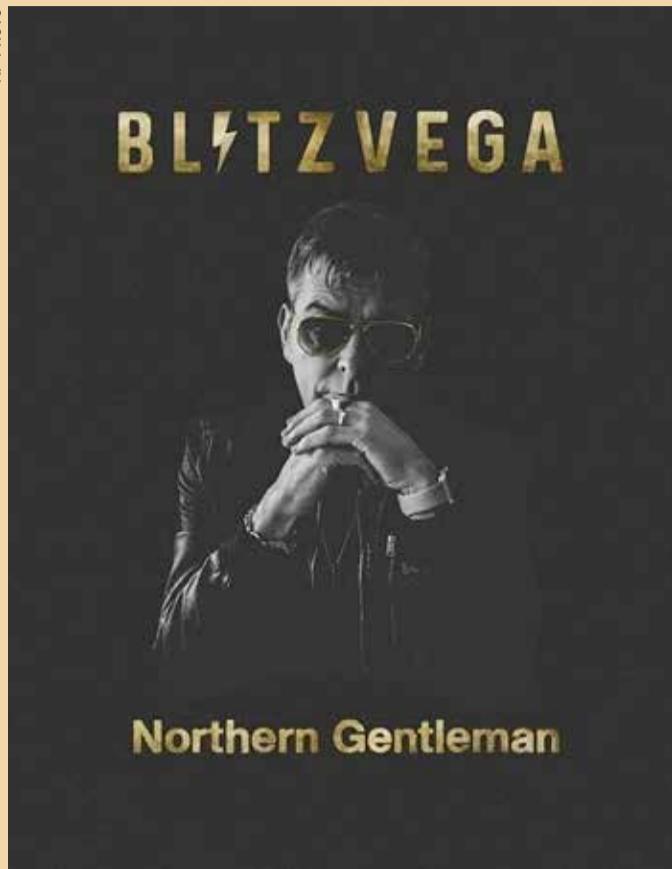


**MACAU  
BATS  
RUGBY**



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

AP PHOTO



"Northern Gentleman" by Blitz Vega (FutureSonic Records)

tTUNES

## Andy Rourke's posthumous album is a soft swan song

**B**LITZ Vega, the band helmed by The Smiths' bassist Andy Rourke and Kav Sandhu of Happy Mondays, formed in 2016 and ended when Rourke died from pancreatic cancer in 2023. He was 59. The band's lone album, "Northern Gentleman," has finally been released — 10 tracks largely written and recorded before Rourke's death, the swan song to his impressive career.

For all of the duo's efforts, however, this is really staid stuff. It borrows some elements from each man's musical heyday but breathes no new life into their craft. These are arid, rock-by-numbers songs with very little personal illumination to fuel them.

The first three tracks have the zeal of an album that could come pre-installed on the newest iPhone. A non-threatening, formless wall of guitar, delivered at medium pace as Sandhu sings "I wanna spend my time with you/Oh baby, oh baby," on the song "Disconnected." It's soft rock, and undemanding.

Nothing gets terribly good until "Love City." For all its repetitiveness, the song quickens the pulse and introduces a rhythmic intensity as Sandhu sings of the desire for love and Rourke tears through bass lines. "Pass the Gun" throws in a few retro vinyl scratches to kick things off, but sputters from there despite Rourke's punchy bass work.

In a press release for the album, Sandhu remembers Rourke fondly. "Every song tells a story and personally takes me back to a memory recording that song, the drive to the studio. That conversation or whatever happened surrounding the recording session," the singer wrote. "I hear his voice in my head, replaying everything we talked about when we were recording the song. I see his face smiling at me."

The duo was technically capable of an album far more compelling than "Northern Gentleman." The mix is on point and the sonic power is there. Perhaps Rourke and Sandhu just weren't wild enough anymore and unpredictability is the lifeblood of their rock.

Rourke will be remembered fondly for his work with The Smiths, but hardly at all for this posthumous release. **RON HARRIS, MDT/AP**

### TASTE OF EDESIA

# Masters of Cantonese Cuisine

IRENE SAM, MDT

**T**HIS autumn, Four Seasons Hotel Macao's award-winning Cantonese restaurant **Zi Yat Heen** presents a unique collaboration between its Executive Chinese Chef, Anthony Ho, and Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong's Executive Chinese Chef, Chan Yan Tak from Lung King Heen. Together, they create an extraordinary four-hands dinner, offering discerning diners a diverse and exceptional culinary experience that highlights the wonders of Cantonese cuisine.

Representing Chinese gastronomy at its finest, Lung King Heen at the Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong, led by Chef Tak, the Godfather of Cantonese cuisine, is the world's first Chinese restaurant to be awarded three Michelin stars. With a detailed menu of local dim sum and seafood delights, Lung King Heen's

dishes offer a range of classic and contemporary takes on the city's beloved Cantonese cuisine.

Zi Yat Heen at Four Seasons Hotel Macao has been the crown jewel of the establishment since its inception, having garnered Michelin stars for an impressive 15 consecutive years. In the kitchen, Chef Anthony Ho, with over two decades of culinary expertise, crafts his culinary masterpieces. Guests are treated to exquisite cuisine and exceptional service in an elegant and comfortable setting, ensuring a truly memorable dining experience.

The delightful four-hands dinner begins with Amuse Bouche: Snow crab in two ways from Zi Yat Heen's Chef Ho. The first offering features Japanese snow crab meat and seasonal black truffle served with crispy nest which refreshes the palate. Next, crab stick with sea urchin's umami characteristics awaken the sen-

ses for an unforgettable journey ahead. Suckling pig stuffed with fried rice, preserved meat and Kristal Caviar is a traditional Cantonese delight that requires meticulous attention to detail. Preserved meat is added for autumn to induce a comforting and warming experience.

Lung King Heen's Chef Tak brings the delicateteamed egg white with lobster, and white truffle to the menu. Velvety steamed egg whites form a silky base that cradles succulent pieces of lobster. The luxurious dish is elevated with the earthy aroma of white truffle, creating a harmonious blend of textures and tastes that seduce the palate.

Slowly braised until it reaches melt-in-your-mouth perfection, braised Australian Wagyu beef cheek in gravy introduces tender and succulent pieces of meat swimming in a rich, savoury sauce, exuding depth and layers of flavours in the mouth.



Chef Chan Yan Tak



Chef Anthony Ho



OPINION

The Conversation

Haoran Chu, U. Florida



YOUR NEXT FAVORITE STORY WON'T BE WRITTEN BY AI - BUT IT COULD BE SOMEDAY

Stories define people – they shape our relationships, cultures and societies. Unlike other skills replaced by technology, storytelling has remained uniquely human, setting people apart from machines. But now, even storytelling is being challenged. Artificial intelligence, powered by vast datasets, can generate stories that sometimes rival, or even surpass, those written by humans.

Creative professionals have been among the first to feel the threat of AI. Last year, Hollywood screenwriters protested, demanding – and winning – protections against AI replacing their jobs. As university professors, we've seen student work that seems suspiciously AI-generated, which can be frustrating.

Beyond the threat to livelihoods, AI's ability to craft compelling, humanlike stories also poses a societal risk: the spread of misinformation. Fake news, which once required significant effort, can now be produced with ease.

How do stories influence people? Their power often lies in transportation – the feeling of being transported to and fully immersed in an imagined world. You've likely experienced this while losing yourself in the wizarding world of Harry Potter or 19th-century English society in "Pride and Prejudice."

Given the power of stories, can AI tell a good one? This question matters not only to those in creative industries but to everyone. A good story can change lives, as evidenced by mythical and nationalist narratives that have influenced wars and peace.

Studying whether AI can tell compelling stories also helps researchers like us understand what makes narratives effective. Unlike human writers, AI provides a controlled way to experiment with storytelling techniques.

In our experiments, we explored whether AI could tell compelling stories. We used descriptions from published studies to prompt ChatGPT to generate three narratives, then asked over 2,000 participants to read and rate their engagement with these stories. We labeled half as AI-written and half as human-written.

Our results were mixed. In three experiments, participants found human-written stories to be generally more "transporting" than AI-generated ones, regardless of how the source was labeled. However, they were not more likely to raise questions about AI-generated stories. In multiple cases, they even challenged them less than human-written ones. The one clear finding was that labeling a story as AI-written made it less appealing to participants and led to more skepticism, no matter the actual author.

Why is this the case? Linguistic analysis of the stories showed that AI-generated stories tended to have longer paragraphs and sentences, while human writers showed more stylistic diversity. AI writes coherently, with strong links between sentences and ideas, but human writers vary more, creating a richer experience. This also points to the possibility that prompting AI models to write in more diverse tones and styles may improve their storytelling.

These findings provide an early look at AI's potential for storytelling. But creativity and real-life experiences are where AI falls short. Creativity means coming up with new ideas, while AI is designed to predict the most likely outcome. And although AI can sound human, it lacks the real-life experiences that often make stories truly compelling.

For now, screenwriters and novelists aren't at risk of losing their jobs. AI can tell stories, but they aren't quite on par with the best human storytellers. Still, as AI continues to evolve, we may see more compelling stories generated by machines, which could pose serious challenges, especially when they're used to spread misinformation. [Abridged]

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT REPORTS MONGOLIA TO ITS OVERSIGHT BODY FOR FAILING TO ARREST PUTIN

THE BUZZ

A panel of judges at the International Criminal Court reported Mongolia to the court's oversight organization yesterday for failing to arrest Russian President Vladimir Putin when he visited the Asian nation last month.

Putin's visit was his first to a member state of the court since it issued an arrest warrant for him last year on war crimes charges, accusing him of personal responsibility for the abductions of children from Ukraine.

"States Parties and those accepting the Court's jurisdiction are duty-bound to arrest and surrender individuals subject to ICC warrants, re-

gardless of official position or nationality," the court said in a statement.

Putin is wanted by the court for his alleged personal responsibility for the war crime of unlawful deportation of children and unlawful transfer of children from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation.

Instead of arresting Putin, Mongolian authorities rolled out the red carpet. The Russian leader was welcomed in the main square of Ulaanbaatar by an honor guard dressed in vivid red and blue uniforms styled on those of the personal guard of 13th century ruler Genghis Khan, the founder of the Mongol Empire.



IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva (right) speaks during a news conference in Washington yesterday

IMF CHIEF WARNS THAT WORLD RISKS FALLING INTO SLOW-GROWTH RUT

PAUL WISEMAN, WASHINGTON

THE world economy, buffeted by conflict and growing geopolitical rivalries, is in danger of getting stuck in a slow-growth, high-debt rut, the head of the International Monetary Fund warned yesterday. She also urged Chinese leaders to take more decisive action to jump-start their country's sluggish economy or risk seeing economic growth plummet.

"These are anxious times," the fund's managing director, Kristalina Georgieva, told reporters during the fall meetings of the IMF and its sister agency, the World Bank.

The IMF forecasts that the global economy will expand this year at what Georgieva called an "anemic" 3.2%.

Global trade is lackluster at a time of conflict and growing geopolitical tension — including frosty relations the world's two largest economies, the United States and China.

"Trade is no more a powerful engine of growth," she said. "We live in a more fragmented global economy."

At the same time, many countries are struggling with debts they

took on to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The IMF expects government debts worldwide to top \$100 trillion this year. That would equal to 93% of global economic output — a share that is expected to approach 100% by 2030.

"The global economy is in danger of getting stuck on a low growth, high debt path," Georgieva said. "That means lower income and fewer jobs."

Still, the economic backdrop isn't entirely bleak.

The IMF says the world has made considerable progress to rein in inflation that surged in 2021 and 2022 as economies roared back with unexpected strength from pandemic lockdowns. She credited higher interest rates engineered by the Federal Reserve and other central banks and the easing of backlogs at factories, ports and freight yards that had caused shortages, delays and higher prices.

In wealthy countries, the fund expects inflation to drop next year to the 2% sought by central banks. And price pressures have eased without sending the world into a recession. "For most of the world, a soft landing

is in sight," Georgieva said.

But many people are still struggling with high prices and economic uncertainty. World leaders are telling her that their economies are relatively healthy — but ordinary "people are not feeling good about their economic prospects."

The IMF, a 190-nation lending organization, works to promote economic growth and financial stability and reduce global poverty.

In its latest World Economic Outlook report, issued Tuesday, the fund forecast that the once high-flying Chinese economy would grow just 4.8% this year and 4.5% in 2025, down from 5.2% in 2023.

Georgieva urged the Chinese government to shift away from dependence on exports and toward more reliance on spending by consumers, which she called a "more reliable" engine of growth. Taking "decisive action" to reverse a collapse in the Chinese property market, she said, would boost consumers' confidence and willingness to spend.

"If China doesn't move, potential growth can slow down to way below 4%," she said. MDT/AP



**Australia** Alan Yazbek, a restaurateur, pleaded guilty to displaying a Nazi symbol during a pro-Palestinian rally in Sydney. He was photographed holding a sign with a swastika, in violation of Australia's law against displaying Nazi symbols, facing potential jail time and a fine.



**India** India evacuated hundreds of thousands and closed schools as Tropical Storm Dana approached the eastern coast. With winds of up to 120 kph, the storm is expected to impact Odisha and West Bengal, prompting large-scale evacuations and suspensions of train services and flights.



**Ukraine** The G7 allies will provide Ukraine with a \$50 billion loan, frozen by profits from frozen Russian assets. U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen announced that this assistance will help Ukraine rebuild and defend itself against Russia without burdening taxpayers.



**USA** The Biden administration announced new rules for U.S. national security and spy agencies regarding AI use. These rules aim to balance AI's potential with safeguards against risks, including prohibiting its use for automating nuclear weapons or violating civil rights protections.



**United Kingdom** PM Keir Starmer has rejected a claim by Trump's campaign that his Labour Party is illegally interfering in the U.S. presidential election. A statement on Trump's website this week said an official complaint had been filed with the Federal Election Commission against the Labour Party and the campaign of Kamala Harris alleging "illegal foreign campaign contributions and interference in our elections."