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# METRO TO NEAR COLOANE

**Network grows with the opening of the Seac Pai Van line on Friday, linking Taipa to Coloane with a stop at the Union Hospital**

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CHINA DAILY



**Chinese** scientists have extracted a record-long ice core, measuring 324 meters, from Xizang's Purog Kangri Glacier, hoping to analyze regional climate changes, China Daily reported yesterday. This core surpasses previous records and will help scientists understand climate impacts on glaciers in lower latitudes.

AP PHOTO



**Australia** A mother accidentally drove her car through a school fence in Melbourne, killing one child and injuring four others. Police yesterday confirmed the incident appeared accidental, and investigations are ongoing with the driver detained for questioning.

AP PHOTO

**Pakistan** Russia's embassy in Islamabad is investigating reports of a Russian citizen abducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province by a local militant group. While local authorities are informed, no official details about the alleged abduction have been confirmed.

AP PHOTO



**India** Over 150 people sustained injuries from a fireworks explosion near a Kerala temple. The incident occurred at a storage facility that caught fire, affecting attendees of a religious festival. The injured are receiving medical care in local hospitals.

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### CONCLUSION OF MICAF FUN DAY – ARTS CARNIVAL

Macau's first International Children's Arts Festival concluded with the MICAF Fun Day – Arts Carnival, attracting 63,000 attendees over two weekends from Aug. 23 to Sept. 1. Co-organized by Sands China and the Cultural Affairs Bureau, the event featured large art installations, food bazaars, and diverse performances, including street dances and magic shows. The MICAF Fun Day – Art Carnival delivered a limited-time summer hotspot for parents and children, allowing them to spend quality parent-child time together with a variety of fun and artistic activities. The carnival was an opportunity to showcase local talent, and included performances by the Macau Youth Symphonic Band.

### UC AND UM TO LAUNCH JOINT PHD PROGRAM IN HEALTH

The University of Coimbra (UC) and the University of Macau (UM) plan to launch a jointly supervised PhD program in health by 2025 or 2026, according to João Nuno Calvão da Silva, Vice-Rector for External Relations at Coimbra. During his four-day visit to Macau, he highlighted the importance of finalizing scientific and academic details of the collaboration swiftly. This initiative builds on their existing collaboration, which includes a Joint Laboratory for Cognitive Aging and Brain Sciences. The agreement will involve "the exchange of students who will contribute to this collaborative work in the general area of health and specifically in neuroscience," he stated to Lusa news agency.

### FRANCHISE INDUSTRY SEEKS ENHANCED REGULATION

The local franchise sector is advocating for improved regulations to streamline operations and foster growth in the Macau market. The Macau Chain Stores and Franchise Association expects that new laws will clarify franchise operations, enhancing overall efficiency. Chairman Wong Ian Man emphasized the need for clearer positioning, stating, "We all know that we are positioning it as a platform that could serve as a headquarters for replicating the model in the mainland market," he told local broadcaster, TDM.

### LRT

# NETWORK GROWS WITH OPENING OF SEAC PAI VAN LINE ON NOV. 1

VICTORIA CHAN

**M**ACAU'S Light Rapid Transit (LRT) system is set to expand its reach, with the official opening of the Seac Pai Van Line on Nov. 1. This new line will connect the Seac Pai Van community to the existing LRT network, providing residents and visitors with improved access to the Union Hospital and the Barra area.

The Seac Pai Van Line, approximately 1.6 kilometers long, features two stations: Union Hospital Station and Seac Pai Van Station. The first train will depart from Seac Pai Van Station at 1:11 p.m. on its opening day. Passengers are advised to arrive early and follow staff instructions to board the trains in an orderly manner.

With the launch of the Seac Pai Van Line, the Macau LRT network will, for the first time, offer line transfers. The fare calculation will be based on the Chief Executive's Dispatch No. 188/2023, which was published in the Macau Special Administrative Region Official Gazette. Passengers starting or ending their journey at Seac Pai Van Station or Union Hospital Station will have Union Hospital Station



included as a stop when calculating the fare, while those using other stations will not.

The opening of the Seac Pai Van Line is expected to further facilitate public access to the Union Hospital and provide more options for residents and visitors traveling between Taipa, the Seac Pai Van community, and the Barra area. Additionally, the government is anticipating the opening of the Hengqin (extension) line, which will connect the Taipa line to the Hengqin Border Post, to increase LRT passengers

and users.

According to data from the Labor Affairs Bureau, in the second quarter of this year, there are still dozens of non-resident technical employees in the LRT Macau and the LRT companies. Lawmaker Ella Lei has called on the government to continue encouraging locals to pursue careers in the LRT service.

Ella Lei has also called on the government to closely monitor and investigate recent LRT system malfunctions. The government has been urged

to strengthen the LRT's emergency response, improve information transparency, and enhance crowd control plans, especially as the network and passenger numbers continue to grow. According to statistics mentioned by Ella Lei from the "General Planning of Traffic and Land Transport of Macau (2021-2030)," the rail network is expected to increase to 21 stations, spanning a total of 24 kilometers, and the daily flow of passengers is projected to increase to 137,000 by 2030.

# 'Aoqin' travel incentive program accepting applications until March 2025

NADIA SHAW

**T**HE 'Aoqin' Travel Incentive Program is now open for applications, with a deadline set for March 31, 2025. This initiative aims to boost tourism and cross-border collaboration between Macau and Hengqin.

Eligible applicants include enterprises and non-profit organizations legally established outside Macau and Hengqin, provided they are registered for tax purposes in either



region. To qualify, these entities must organize travel incentive activities involving at least 25 participants who are non-residents of Macau or Hengqin. Participants must stay in Macau for a minimum of one night and engage with

the local economy in Hengqin.

The economic development bureau of Hengqin emphasized that this trial program is designed to enhance so-called 'one trip with multiple stops' and 'one convention and exhibition, two places' tourism routes. It aims to deepen the integration of tourism with conventions and exhibitions, which is vital for regional economic growth.

Authorities anticipate that the program will

not only stimulate local economies but also promote a richer cultural exchange between visitors and residents. Interested organizations are encouraged to apply before the deadline to take advantage of the support offered by both Macau and Hengqin authorities.

For more information on the application process and requirements, interested parties should consult the official guidelines provided by the Economic Development Bureau.

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LABOR RIGHTS

# Lei Chan U wants further review of the Labor Law

RENATO MARQUES

**L**AWMAKER Lei Chan U has called on the Chief Executive-elect Sam Hou Fai to prioritize the fulfilment of his political agenda, which includes measures to increase social benefits, maternity leave, and annual leave days to align them more closely with international standards.

"Macau's labor standards lag behind those of neighboring regions and are very far behind those set out in the conventions and recommendations of the International Labor Organization (ILO), as some of them have not been updated for over 10 years," Lei said. "For annual leave, for example, under the provisions of a law that dates back to 1984, permanent workers are entitled to six days of paid annual leave, a rule



that has not been changed for 40 years," he said. He further explained that the number of mandatory public holidays has remained at 10 since 1986 – that is, for more than 35 years.

Lei noted that while recent amendments to the labor law extended maternity leave from 56 to 70 days, this number remains "far behind the statutory entitlement in neighboring regions as well in-

ternational conventions."

Lei noted that the ILO convention dating back to 1970 establishes that "workers who have completed one year of service are entitled to 21 days of paid leave,"

adding that, "In mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, annual leave days increase depending on seniority, to a maximum of 15, 14 and 30 days. This practice increases workers' sense of belonging at work and professional stability, reducing the rate of workers moving to different companies."

The same lawmaker noted that the local laws are so outdated that even most of the companies in Macau are not following them anymore, with the majority of companies offering 12 or more days of paid leave.

"I suggest that the government officially extends paid leave to 12 days, and then, depending on current socioeconomic development, increase this gradually until the number of paid leave days reaches the 21 days provided for in the ILO Convention."

He suggested that Macau gradually increase the number of public holidays, as Hong Kong did over eight years to increase the number of public holidays from 12 to 17. He also recommended that the government take into account the Chinese festive seasons and celebrations in its public holidays, to reflect the "predominance of Chinese culture in Macau."

# Unemployment remains stable; concerns remain for fresh graduates

VICTORIA CHAN

**M**acau's unemployment rate has remained stable in the third quarter of this year, according to data from the Statistics and Census Service. However, some scholars are urging the government to introduce measures to better support young graduates entering the job market.

The total unemployment rate and resident unemployment rate have held steady compared to the previous quarter, while the underemployment rate dropped slightly. The average monthly salary for the general employed population increased by 100 patacas to 18,000 patacas, and the average mortgage of employed residents rose by 500 patacas to 20,500 patacas, indicating a relatively stable job market.

Despite this stability, some residents have expressed concerns about the challenges faced by fresh gradua-



tes. A TDM report highlighted that graduate salaries have dropped from 15,000-16,000 patacas to around 12,000 patacas, and many are still struggling to find employment. Another resident cited their difficulty in changing jobs and advancing their career.

The Macau Human Resources Association attributes the stable labor market to the recovery of the tourism

industry and the implementation of the "concert economy." The association's director, Choi Chin Man, has called on the government to continue organizing job fairs and strictly enforce policies on non-resident workers to support local employment.

Academics, such as Ip Kuai Peng, the director of the Research Centre for Macau Social and Economic De-

velopment at City University, have also voiced concerns about the employment situation of fresh graduates. Ip proposed that the government implement a better transition mechanism during the final year of internships to help students secure employment after graduation. He also encouraged new job seekers to consider opportunities in the Greater Bay Area.



## FAMILY DISPUTES ARBITRATION BILL PASSED ON THE FIRST READING

RENATO MARQUES

**T**HE Legislative Assembly (AL) has passed the first reading of a new bill establishing an arbitration and mediation scheme for family disputes.

The bill aims to introduce family mediators, who will attempt to resolve conflicts related to divorce, parental rights, and other family matters to potentially avoid court litigation.

Under the bill, family mediators (or 'conciliators') can include a range of people including social workers and other public administration workers appointed by the Social Welfare Bureau.

Several lawmakers including Che Sai Wang, José Pereira Coutinho, and Ron Lam have raised concerns about

the qualifications and competence of these mediators, as well as the mandatory nature of the proposed process.

During discussions, Secretary for Administration and Justice André Cheong said that in the government's view, the role of the mediators is to provide the parties an opportunity to address their disputes and seek resolution outside of court. This process does not in any way replace the courts nor restrict individuals' right to legal recourse.

During voting, Che and Pereira Coutinho abstained on the matter, while Lam voted in favor but requested further clarification from the government on the procedures and qualifications for mediators.

The bill will now proceed to the AL Second Standing Committee for detailed review.

## GASTRONOMIC DELIGHTS AWAIT AT BROADWAY FOOD FESTIVAL

NADIA SHAW

**T**HE Broadway Macau Food Festival is showcasing over 30 culinary stalls that blend Macau's rich heritage with modern gastronomic trends. Running every Friday to Sunday until Nov. 10, this festival invites locals and tourists alike to experience a vibrant array of flavors.

Hosted by Galaxy Macau Integrated Resort, the festival transforms Broadway Food Street into a lively hub filled with century-old brands and emerging culinary stars. Attendees can savor iconic dishes like traditional egg waffles and shrimp paste, alongside contemporary bites designed for sharing on social media. The event aims to celebrate Macau's designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy while supporting local small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Dignitaries including Mr. Cheng Wai Tong, Acting Director of the Macao Government Tourism Office, and Mr. Kevin Kelley, Chief Operating Officer of Galaxy Entertainment Group, inaugurated the festival Oct. 25. Kelley emphasized the importance of promoting local businesses, stating, "Championing the sustainable growth of local SMEs has been a cornerstone of GEG's corporate philosophy."

The festival features not only food but also live performances from local musicians and traditional Portuguese dances, creating an enchanting atmosphere for all attendees. Guests can also participate in fun games and capture memories at iconic photo spots adorned with Portuguese tiles.

The Broadway Macau Food Festival promises an unforgettable culinary journey, celebrating Macau's diverse flavors.

RENATO MARQUES

**I**N response to several media reports highlighting the slow rollout of the 500 new taxis from the recent licensing tender held in mid-May, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) announced that approximately 219 taxis will begin operations this month. These taxis are associated with five of the ten companies that received licenses from the tender.

DSAT indicated that the remaining five companies will gradually introduce their taxis, with expectations that over 400 new taxis will be operational by January next year. As reported by the Times, Tony Kuok, director of the Taxis Mutual Aid Association, noted that only half of the 500 new taxis awarded to the ten companies would be in service at this time. He also said that around 400 taxi drivers are currently not employed full-time and that approximately 200 existing taxi licenses will expire by the end of the year.

During the tender process, DSAT acknowledged that while each new license permits

## DSAT CLAIMS NEW TAXIS ARE ON THE WAY



the operation of 50 vehicles, it was uncertain how many new taxis would actually be on the roads due to around 300 licenses nearing expiration. The recent figures indicate that with 219 new taxis now in operation, this mainly serves to replace the expiring licenses rather than increase the total number of taxis available to the public.

The ten new licenses, which are valid for eight years, generated approximately MOP36.5 million for the government. These licenses require owners to accept credit card payments and popular mobile payment methods such as WeChat Pay, MPay, and Alipay. Additionally, license holders must provide training for drivers, including

foreign language instruction.

Kuok also said the transition from old to new licenses has led to demographic changes within the taxi driver workforce, with a growing number of younger drivers entering the profession. According to the Association, young drivers now make up 30 to 40% of the taxi workforce.

## Authorities warn of new phishing scams

**R**ESIDENTS are being warned to remain vigilant against a series of new scams targeting personal and financial information.

The Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP) has discovered that scammers are sending phishing text messages that impersonate government agencies and ask victims to login to fake websites and provide personal details.

Separately, the Judiciary Police (PJ) has issued two warnings about other ongoing scams.



One involves fraudsters sending text messages claiming to be from the "Macao One Account" government service and asking people to click a link to verify their identity, which then steals credit

card information.

Another scam features fake online loan advertisements falsely claiming the government is offering interest-free emergency loans to those over 45. Clicking the link takes

victims to pages with unknown loan offers that may lead to phishing sites.

The Anti-Fraud Coordination Center urges citizens not to click on unknown links or dis-

close financial or personal identification details that could enable fraud. Those with doubts can check website risks using the police's "anti-fraud program" or contact the fraud hotline on 8800 7777, as well as the general hotline on 993.

Authorities said residents should only apply for loans through licensed banking institutions. The government encourages vigilance, as well as the immediate reporting of any suspected scams, so as to prevent theft of personal information. VC

AD

### 登錄 Inscricão

法人商業企業主登記編號 N° de Registo do Empresário Comercial, Pessoa Colectiva : 37058(SO)

申請編號 AP. 92/24092024

**登錄事項 Facto inscrito** : 解散及因完成清算而消滅 dissolução e extinção pelo encerramento de liquidação

**原因 Causa** : 股東決議 deliberação dos sócios

**清算及分割 Liquidação e partilha** : a sociedade não possui mais activos ou passivos

**帳目核准通過日期 Data da aprovação das contas** : 16-08-2024

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# Inbound package tour visitors up 101.2%, outbound travel by residents climbs

VICTORIA CHAN

**M**ACAU'S tourism sector has shown strong signs of recovery in the first three quarters of 2024, with a significant surge in inbound package tour visitors, particularly from the mainland and international markets.

According to the Statistics and Census Service, the number of inbound package tour visitors jumped 101.2% in the January to September period, reaching 1,497,000. Visitors from mainland China, the region's largest source market, surged 91% to 1,332,000, while international tour visitors increased by a remarkable 276% to 142,000. The growth was led by a significant rise in visitors from South Korea (387.1%) and India (929.8%).

The hotel sector in Macau also saw improvements, with the average occupancy rate of guest rooms increasing by 4.8 percentage points to 85.4%. The number of hotel guests rose by 11.2% to 10,889,000,

VICTORIA CHAN



with the average length of stay remaining stable at 1.7 nights.

However, a slight softness emerged in September, with inbound package tour visitors dipping 0.5% year-on-year to 134,000. This decline was primarily driven by a 4.4% decrease in mainland Chinese visitors, while international tourists grew by 51.7%.

Outbound travel by Macau residents also experienced robust growth, with the number of residents purchasing outbound travel services through agencies increasing by 46.2% in the first three quarters to 426,000. Package tour travel by residents surged 106.9% to 151,000, with the majority, 137,000, visiting mainland China.

The hotel sector in Macau saw further expansion, with the number of establishments rising by 7 to 144. However, the total number of available guest rooms declined by 3.3% to 44,000. Occupancy rates improved across all hotel categories, with 5-star hotels seeing the largest gain of 6 percentage points to 87.5%.

International guests accounted for 779,000 visitors, an 86.8% jump, led by the Republic of Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore. In September, the occupancy rate climbed 6.4 percentage points to 84.7%, but the total number of guests declined by 2.1% to 1,112,000, with the average length of stay holding steady at 1.6 nights.

## External merchandise trade down 8.4% over first three quarters

**I**NFORMATION from the Statistics and Census Service indicated that external merchandise trade totaled MOP105.20 billion in the first three quarters of 2024. The sum represents a drop of 8.4% compared to the same period last year

(MOP114.88 billion). The total value of merchandise exports grew by 5% year-on-year to MOP9.99 billion, of which the value of re-exports (MOP8.87 billion) increased by 6.2%. The value of domestic exports

(MOP1.12 billion) decreased by 3.9%. The total value of merchandise imports dropped by 9.6% year-on-year to MOP95.22 billion. The merchandise trade deficit totaled MOP85.23 billion in the first three quarters of

2024, down by MOP10.62 billion from MOP95.85 billion in the same period last year. Analyzed by destination, merchandise exports to Hong Kong (MOP7.00 billion), the Belt and Road Countries

(MOP570 million), and the EU (MOP166 million) expanded by 0.3%, 57.9%, and 39.9%, respectively year-on-year, whereas exports to mainland China (MOP594 million) and the USA (MOP230 million) dropped by 13.5%

and 36.1% respectively. Analyzed by commodity, exports of textiles and garments grew by 13.5% year-on-year to MOP1.17 billion, and exports of non-textiles went up by 4.0% to MOP8.82 billion. **RM**

## CORPORATE BITS

### MGM holds first-ever GBA history competition



"The First MGM Cup: Greater Bay Area Secondary School History Knowledge Competition" was organized by the Macao Association for Historical Education to promote Chinese history and culture. Held at the MGM Cotai ballroom, the com-

petition featured teams from 32 secondary schools from Macau, Hong Kong, and several cities in the Greater Bay Area (GBA).

Participants, divided into junior and senior categories, were tested on Chinese histo-

rical knowledge and traditional culture. In the junior category, Keang Peng School from Macau, Shenzhen Haiyun School, and Hou Kong Middle School from Macau, won first, second, and third place respectively. In the senior category, Macau Baptist College, Ying Wa College from Hong Kong, and Zhuhai No. 1 High School took the top three spots. In addition to sponsoring the event, MGM organized a historical and cultural tour for the participants the day after the competition, which included visits to world heritage sites, the Macao Museum, and the Poly MGM Museum, which featured an exhibition on the historical development of the Maritime Silk Road.

### Lisboeta Macau celebrates 'Team Member of the Quarter' in award ceremony



Lisboeta Macau held its third quarter team member party and "Team Member of the Quarter" award ceremony yesterday.

Held to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of their staff in areas such as "Performance," "Teamwork," and "Professional Skills," the party and award ceremony was attended by company mana-

gement and team members who all gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of the top performers this quarter.

Awardees of the "Best Team Member" for this quarter comprised ten team members in the following five departments: Front Office, Housekeeping, Marketing & Retail Development, Operations Development & Facilities

Management, Sales & Corporate Communications.

Awarded by Lisboeta Macau's General Manager of Hotel Operations, Willie Tay, the awardees were presented with certificates as well as gratitude for their dedication and hard work.

Through a variety of team-building activities, the resort hotel aims to strengthen its company culture, foster communication and collaboration among team members, and boost solidarity.

Lisboeta Macau also aims to increase a sense of belonging and motivate team members by making sure they feel acknowledged and appreciated, contributing to the resort hotel's long-term success, according to their statement.



Zhang Yiming

WEALTH

## BYTEDANCE FOUNDER ZHANG YIMING TOPS CHINA'S RICH LIST

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

**B**YTEDANCE founder Zhang Yiming tops the list of China's richest people, according to the Hurun Research Institute, although many of them have seen their net worth plunge over the past year.

The institute, which publishes the annual Hurun China Rich List, found that the total wealth of entrepreneurs on the list this year was \$3 trillion, down 10% from the previous year.

The number of billionaires based on their net worth in U.S. dollars was also down 142, to 753. Hurun tallied 1,185 billionaires since 2021.

"The Hurun China Rich List has shrunk for an unprecedented third year running, as China's economy and stock markets had a difficult year," said Rupert Hoogewerf, chairman and chief researcher of the Hurun report.

ByteDance's Zhang came in No. 1 for the first time this year, with a net worth of \$49.3 billion, according to Hurun. ByteDance, which is the parent company of popular short-video platforms Douyin and TikTok, saw its revenue grow to \$110 billion last year.

He is also the first individual born in the 1980s to top the Hurun list.

Bottled water magnate Zhong Shanshan fell to second place in 2024 with \$47.9 billion, after his brand Nongfu Spring faced backlash in February when consumers accused it of disloyalty to China due to designs of its bottles.

The backlash wiped out billions in market value for Nongfu Spring.

Coming in third is Tencent founder Pony Ma with a net worth of \$44.4 billion, as the gaming firm saw its revenues rise.

This year's China Rich List had just 54 new names added to the list, the lowest figure in two decades. New additions include Charlwin Mao and Miranda Qu Fang, the founders of Xiaohongshu, a social media and lifestyle platform popular with young users.

China's economy has lagged in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic as the country grapples with a real estate crisis and a volatile stock market. Policymakers are expected to unveil major stimulus measures to encourage consumption and spending, which have declined in recent months. **MDT/AP**

SPACE

## BEIJING'S READY TO LAUNCH THE NEXT CREW TO ITS ORBITING STATION TODAY

**C**HINA said all systems are ready to launch the next crew to its orbiting space station early today, the latest mission to make the country a major space power.

The two men and one woman will replace the astronauts who've lived on the Tiangong space station for the last six months.

The new mission commander, Cai Xuzhe, went to space in the Shenzhou-14 mission in 2022, while the other two, Song Lingdong and Wang Haoze, are first-time space travelers both born in the 1990s.

Song was an air force pilot and Wang an engineer with the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation who will be the crew's payload specialist. Wang will be the third Chinese woman aboard a crewed mission.

The three appeared at a brief news conference yesterday behind protective glass, declaring their intention to carry out their scientific projects on the space station and "bring pride to the fatherland."

The Shenzhou-19 spaceship carrying the trio is due to launch from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China atop a Long March-2F rocket, the backbone of China's crewed space missions. Launch time is set for 4:27 a.m., according to the space agency's spokesperson Lin Xiqiang.

China built its own space



The launch pad for the Shenzhou-19 mission at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center

station after being excluded from the International Space Station, largely due to the United States' concerns over the program's complete control by the People's Liberation Army, the Chinese Communist Party's military arm.

Besides putting a space station into orbit, the space agency has landed an explorer on Mars. It aims to put a person on the moon before 2030, which would make China the second nation after the United States to do so. It also plans to build a research station on the moon.

The moon program is part of a growing rivalry with the U.S. — still the leader in space exploration — and others, including Japan and India. America is planning to land astronauts on the moon for the first time in more than 50 years, though NASA pushed

the target date back to 2026 earlier this year.

During the upcoming mission, the space station will receive resupplies from an uncrewed craft, aiding them in performing space walks and replacing and installing equipment to protect the Tiangong station from space debris, some of which was created by China.

According to NASA, large pieces of debris have been created by "satellite explosions and collisions." China's firing of a rocket to destroy a redundant weather satellite in 2007 and the "accidental collision of American and Russian communications satellites in 2009 greatly increased the amount of large debris in orbit," it said.

The Shenzhou-19 astronauts will complete in-orbit rotation with the Shen-

zhou-18 trio and stay at the space station for approximately six months, witnessing the arrival of the Tianzhou-8 cargo craft and Shenzhou-20 crewed spaceship during the mission.

Many tasks await the new crew: conducting space science and application tests, performing extravehicular activities, installing protective devices against space debris, and installing and recycling extravehicular payloads and equipment. They will also engage in science education, public welfare activities and other payload tests.

The Shenzhou-19 astronauts are scheduled to return to the Dongfeng landing site in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in late April or early May next year, according to the agency.

Lin, the spokesman, said China has measures in place in the event that the astronauts must return earlier.

China launched its first crewed mission in 2003, becoming only the third nation to do so after the former Soviet Union and the United States. The space program is a source of enormous national pride and a hallmark of China's technological advances over the past two decades.

China is looking toward further foreign cooperation in space and is in talks with partners to train astronauts and transport them to Tiangong, Lin said yesterday. **MDT/AP**

## Treasury issues rule to block US investors from helping China develop military tech

**T**HE U.S. Treasury Department, seeking to keep the Chinese military from gaining an edge in advanced technologies, issued a rule yesterday [Macau time] to restrict and monitor American investments in China in artificial intelligence, computer chips and quantum computing.

The finalized rule arises from an executive order issued in August 2023 by President Joe

Biden. The order sought to limit the access that "countries of concern" — specifically China including Hong Kong and Macao — have to American dollars to fund technologies that could be used, for example, to break codes or develop next-generation fighter jets. It will take effect Jan. 2.

"U.S. investments ... must not be used to help countries of concern develop their mi-

litary, intelligence and cyber capabilities" said Paul Rosen, assistant Treasury secretary for investment security. He noted the investments can mean more than just money: they can deliver "intangible benefits," including managerial help and assistance finding top talent and tapping other sources of financing.

Blocking China's high-tech ambitions is one of the few issues

that enjoys broad support in Washington from both Republicans and Democrats.

Biden in May slapped a stiff tariff on electric vehicles from China. He also has imposed export controls to keep the Chinese from acquiring advanced computer chips and the equipment to produce them. Former President Donald Trump has vowed to dramatically increase taxes on

all imports from China if voters send him back to the White House.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said yesterday that the government had lodged a protest with the U.S. over the latest action.

"China strongly deplores and firmly opposes the U.S. rolling out restrictions on investment in China," Lin Jian said at a daily briefing in Beijing. **MDT/AP**

INDIA

# River and air pollution in Delhi pose a severe health threat to residents

MANISH SWARUP,  
NEW DELHI

ONE of India's most sacred rivers, the Yamuna in New Delhi, is covered with white toxic foam, with vast sections frothing as a result of pollutants discharged from industries around the city. The pollution poses a severe health threat to residents since the river provides more than half of the Indian capital's water.

New Delhi also has some of the world's most polluted air every year, and the current festival season is exacerbating the situation. On Tuesday, the air-quality index deteriorated to "a very poor" reading of 273, 18 times higher than the World Health Organization's recommended levels. The tiny PM 2.5 particulate matter can enter deep into the lungs and cause diseases.

Still, Hindu devotees have not given up their religious practices at the Yamuna. On Tuesday morning, a young couple was among a group that visited the river bank, had a dip, and then left.

Jasraj, a 70-year-old retired government clerk, said he has been visiting the river for a bathing ritual since 1980.

"I worship the river as a mother, and there is no ques-



Birds fly over toxic foams floating in the river Yamuna in New Delhi

tion of its being clean or dirty. It's dirty on the surface but clean below the top," said Jasraj, who uses one name.

Imran Khan, a student, said one can't breathe properly in Delhi's polluted air.

"People are here for jogging, and they are facing problems, too. Our environment should be cleaner," he said.

Shishupal Kumar, a contract worker, said people visit the river from far-off places to perform religious rituals.

"The river has become

completely dirty. It is full of chemicals. It looks like snowfall has happened here, like it happens on mountains," Kumar said.

The 1,376-kilometer (855-mile) Yamuna is one of the holiest rivers for Hindus. It is also among the most polluted in the world. Dangerously unhealthy waterways are a concern for many, especially with pollution expected to worsen during the upcoming Chhath Puja, a Hindu festival.

The river has become dir-

tier over the years as sewage, farm pesticides and industrial effluents flow into the waterway despite laws against polluting and authorities setting up dozens of sewage treatment plants.

The New Delhi government said officials were using defoamers to tackle the problem. Authorities have deployed dozens of motorboats to disperse the toxic foam and erected bamboo barricades to keep people away from the river banks.

The officials worry that thousands of Hindu devotees next month will stand knee-deep in its frothy, toxic waters, sometimes even immersing themselves in a holy dip to mark Chhath Puja.

Winters, in particular, have become a time of health woes in India's capital, which is home to more than 20 million people. The city during winter is covered with a toxic haze that obscures the sky. Pollution levels soar as millions of Hindus celebrate "Diwali," the festival of light, amid emissions from massive firecrackers. Diwali will be celebrated on Thursday.

Farmers in neighboring agricultural regions also set fire to their land after harvests to clear it for the next crop season.

India's Supreme Court earlier this month slammed northern Indian states for not taking stricter action against people burning crop residues ahead of the winter season and aggravating the region's air pollution.

Authorities each year shut construction sites, restrict diesel-run vehicles and deploy water sprinklers and anti-smog guns to control the haze and smog enveloping the skyline of the capital region. **MDT/AP**

AUSTRALIA

# Albanese defends himself from an accusation that he asked for free flight upgrades

ROD MCGUIRK,  
MELBOURNE

AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister Anthony Albanese yesterday said he had always "acted in a transparent and appropriate way" after a new book claimed that he had repeatedly requested free upgrades for personal flights on Qantas Airways.

Albanese, who was transport minister in a previous government, was accused in a book released Monday of developing an inappropriately close relationship with Alan Joyce, who was Qantas chief executive for

15 years until 2023.

Qantas is Australia's largest airline and was state-owned until the 1990s. The Sydney-based airline is the country's flag carrier and must by law remain at least 51% Australian owned.

"According to Qantas insiders, Albanese would liaise with Joyce directly about his personal travel," a published extract of the book said. The insiders were not named.

Albanese said he had declared 22 free Qantas upgrades in a register of gifts to lawmakers valued at more than 300 Australian dollars (\$197). He noted



opposition lawmaker Paul Fletcher had declared 69.

"I've declared everything in accordance with all of the rules," Albanese told reporters.

"I have, at all times — at all times — acted in a trans-

parent and appropriate way," he added.

Albanese said he only recalled two conversations with Joyce about promotional flights. Those flights did not involve personal travel.

"There's no accusation

being made with any specifics at all about any of this. None. None," Albanese said.

Albanese noted the book's author, Joe Aston, was a former opposition party staffer and former Qantas employee. The book is titled "The Chairman's Lounge: The Inside Story of How Qantas Sold Us Out."

Joyce could not be immediately contacted for comment. Qantas did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Opposition leader Peter Dutton later accused Albanese of breaching the then-government's code of

ministerial conduct when he was transport minister from 2007 until 2013.

The code explicitly banned ministers from seeking or encouraging any form of gift in their personal capacity.

Dutton challenged Albanese to refer the allegations to the National Anti-Corruption Commission, the public sector watchdog that Albanese's center-left government established last year.

"Australians are now starting to question the integrity and the truthfulness of their prime minister," Dutton told reporters yesterday.

Albanese said Dutton needed to explain why he had accepted free flights from mining magnate Gina Rinehart in a private jet. Dutton declared three flights in Rinehart's jet in 2022. **MDT/AP**



Putin and Kim smile during their meeting at the Pyongyang Sunan International Airport outside Pyongyang, last June

PUTIN'S WAR

# N.Korea sends FM to Russia as its troops train to fight in Ukraine

KIM TONG-HYUNG, SEOUL

**N**ORTH Korea said yesterday its top diplomat is visiting Russia, in another sign of their deepening relations as rival South Korea and Western nations say the North has sent thousands of troops to support Russia's war in Ukraine.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said a delegation led by Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui departed for Russia on Monday, but didn't specify the purpose of the visit. In a closed-door hearing at South Korea's parliament, the South's spy agency said Choe may be involved in high-level discussions on sending additional troops to Russia and negotiating what the North would get in return, according to Lee Seong-kweun, a lawmaker who attended the meeting.

The announcement of Choe's visit came hours after the Pentagon said North Korea has sent about 10,000 troops to Russia, who are expected to arrive in battlefields in Ukraine within "the next several weeks."

South Korean and Western leaders have expressed concern that North Korean involvement could help

prolong Russia's aggression in Ukraine, and that Russia may offer technology in return that could advance the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile program.

Pentagon spokesperson Sabrina Singh told reporters Monday that some of the North Korean soldiers have already moved closer to Ukraine and were believed to be heading for the Kursk border region, where Russia has been struggling to push back a Ukrainian incursion.

South Korea's National Intelligence Service told lawmakers it's examining the possibility that some groups of North Korea's military personnel in Russia, including generals or other high-ranking officials, may have already moved to frontline areas. The spy agency also said the two sides appear to be struggling to resolve communication issues although the Russian military is training North Korean troops on Russian military terminology, Lee said.

The agency said space-based reconnaissance is an area where North Korea is likely receiving Russian help. It said North Korea may be acquiring advanced components from Russia as it prepares to launch ano-

ther military reconnaissance satellite following a failed attempt in May, said Park Sun-won, another lawmaker who attended the hearing.

North Korea first placed a spy satellite in orbit last November. Its leader Kim Jong Un has described those assets as crucial for monitoring South Korean and U.S. military activities and enhancing the threat of his nuclear-capable missiles.

In a telephone conversation with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said deepening military cooperation between North Korea and Russia could pose a "major security threat" to Seoul if the North gains access to Russian technology and its troops get combat experience.

The leaders confirmed plans to exchange government delegations as part of efforts to strengthen communication and coordinate their responses over the conflict, Yoon's office said.

In earlier calls with European Union Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, Yoon called for closer coordination with European governments aimed at "monitoring and blocking illegal exchan-

ges" between Pyongyang and Moscow.

After initially denying the claims about North Korean troop deployments, Pyongyang and Moscow have adopted a vaguer stance, asserting that their military cooperation conforms with international law without directly admitting the presence of North Korean forces in Russia.

North Korea has also been accused of providing millions of artillery shells and other military equipment to Russia to fuel its war in Ukraine. The United States and its partners have described Russia's procurement of North Korean personnel and supplies as a violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions, and raised suspicions that Moscow is helping Pyongyang to evade sanctions and unlawfully finance its weapons program.

Russia, along with China, has blocked U.S.-led efforts at the Security Council to tighten sanctions on North Korea over its recent missile testing activities, which intensified after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Russia also vetoed a U.N. resolution to extend the mandate of a panel of monitors in March in a move that effectively abolished oversight by U.N. experts of Security Council sanctions against North Korea. It prompted Western accusations that Moscow was acting to shield its arms purchases from Pyongyang.

"The illegal military collusion between Russia and North Korea poses a significant security threat to the international community and a serious matter that could potentially harm our security. We must thoroughly examine all possibilities and prepare countermeasures," Yoon said in a Cabinet meeting in Seoul yesterday.

Yoon last week raised the possibility of supplying Ukraine with weapons while saying Seoul is preparing countermeasures that could be rolled out in stages depending on the degree of military cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow.

South Korea, a growing arms exporter, has provided humanitarian aid and other non-lethal support to Ukraine and joined U.S.-led economic sanctions against Moscow. It has so far resisted calls by Kyiv and NATO to directly supply Ukraine with weapons, citing a longstanding policy of not providing arms to countries engaged in active conflict. **MDT/AP**

## this day in history

### 1957 LORDS TO ADMIT FIRST WOMEN PEERS



The Government has unveiled plans to reform the House of Lords which include admitting women for the first time.

Under the scheme, male and female life peerages will be created to ensure a balanced representation of the different political parties. Expenses are also to be paid to peers.

The idea behind the creation of life peers is to enable distinguished and experienced people, who may not feel able to accept hereditary titles, to enter the House. Appointments will be made at the discretion of the prime minister.

The Conservative Leader of the House, Lord Home, announced the proposals to the Lords this afternoon.

There were cheers when he said admitting women would simply be recognising the place they had commanded for themselves as a right in modern society.

He raised a laugh when he added: "Taking women into parliamentary embrace is, after all, only an extension of the normal privileges of a peer."

Labour's Lord Alexander of Hillsborough rose to complain that his party had not been given any warning of the content of today's debate and he therefore felt unwilling to participate.

However, he thought it likely his party would support the admission of women to the House.

The Government has ruled out - for the time being - any discussion on the alteration in the powers of the House and any discussion of abolition or reduction of the right of hereditary peers to legislate.

Lord Samuel for the Liberals welcomed any reform. He said: "House of Lords reform has been rather like a slow motion film of a prima ballerina, not marked by agility or grace, but by languid exhibition and elephantine deliberations." [...]

Talks have been continuing on and off for years about possible reform of the House of Lords.

The last attempt was in 1953 when Conservative Lord Simon introduced a Life Peers Bill.

The Conservative Government invited the leaders of the Liberal and Labour parties to attend talks but Clement Attlee refused to take part on Labour's behalf and the discussions did not take place.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The Life Peerages Act was passed in 1958. It empowered the Crown to create life peers, both men and for the first time, women, who would be entitled to sit and vote in the House of Lords and whose peerages would expire on their death.

The Peerage Act of 1963 allowed hereditary peeresses to sit in the House of Lords for the first time.

In 1969 further plans to reform the House of Lords had to be abandoned after delaying tactics by MPs.

Following Labour's election victory in 1997, plans for Lords' reform were once again put forward. As a first stage, the number of hereditary peers was reduced to 92 or roughly 10% of the total.

Plans for the second stage of reform hit the buffers in 2003. After MPs failed to agree a plan on a way forward, the Government agreed to delay pending further consultation.



MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

**YOUR STARS**

**ARIES**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Strategize with your partner. Find a perfect compromise that includes elements for each. Charm and be charmed. Enjoy delightful company.

**TAURUS**  
Apr. 20-May. 20  
You're growing stronger. Set realistic goals, practice and prepare. Keep showing up. Maintain healthy routines. Discuss the vision. Your work is gaining respect.

**GEMINI**  
May. 21-Jun. 21  
Romance and fun sparks in conversation. Discuss matters of the heart. Share passions. Someone's crazy idea might even work. Express support, love and affection.

**CANCER**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Home and family draw you in. Invent fun possibilities and share them. Cook up something delicious. Discover unexpected good fortune. Share sweet moments together.

**LEO**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
Creative ideas percolate and bubble. Write and communicate. Make and renew connections with people you love, admire and respect. Invent something brilliant together.

**VIRGO**  
Aug. 23-Sep. 22  
Money-making ideas abound; follow those with greatest potential. Practice your arts and services. Keep costs down. Generate fabulous results, under budget and on time.

**LIBRA**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
Take charge of your destiny. What do you want to create? Explore options. Speculate with people you love on what could be possible.

**SCORPIO**  
Oct. 23-Nov. 21  
Enjoy peaceful privacy. Get productive behind closed doors. Evaluate potential. Speculate on different options for upcoming plans.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
Discuss brilliant ideas with friends and family. Adapt to unexpected circumstances together. Communication reveals new possibilities and solutions.

**CAPRICORN**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
A professional opportunity presents a challenge. Follow an elder's advice. Let others know what's needed and what's at stake. Innovation provides long-term benefits.

**AQUARIUS**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
Romantic dreams of travel and adventure entice you to explore new terrain. Study fascinating subjects up close. Follow a brilliant hunch. Everything seems possible.

**PISCES**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
Collaborate on foundations for future growth. Contribute to shared ventures and profit together. Rising tides float all boats. All for one and one for all.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

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

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

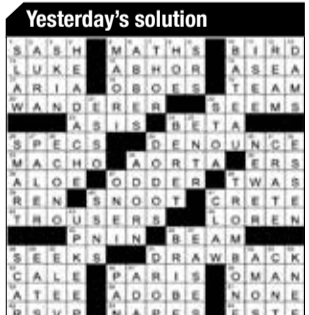
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	7	17	cloudy
Changchun	2	12	cloudy
Chengdu	15	19	rain
Chongqing	17	23	cloudy
Fuzhou	18	26	overcast
Guangzhou	19	29	cloudy
Guiyang	10	23	cloudy
Haikou	22	26	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	11	20	rain
Harbin	4	10	cloudy
Hefei	7	21	fine
Nanjing	10	20	fine
Shanghai	15	22	overcast
Taipei	21	25	rain
Wuhan	11	24	fine
Hong Kong	23	28	overcast
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	3	8	rain
Frankfurt	10	14	cloudy
Paris	9	16	cloudy
London	9	15	overcast
New York	16	25	overcast

**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS** 1- Child's bed; 5- Month of showers; 10- Bustles; 14- Rime; 15- Authority; 16- Pinta's sister ship; 17- \_\_\_ mater; 18- Examines closely; 19- Doctrines; 20- Flexible; 22- Show host; 23- Journey segment; 24- Mineral spring; 25- Like some triangles; 29- Railroad; 33- Faucet stuff; 34- Contender; 36- Rational; 37- Brian of rock; 38- Hajj destination; 39- Eur. carrier; 40- Ages and ages; 42- Draft rating; 43- "Socrate" composer Erik; 45- Kitchen gadgets; 47- Emily Dickinson, e.g.; 49- Legal add-on; 50- Stumblebum; 51- Barely enough; 54- Taxi owner; 60- Put \_\_\_ on it; 61- Pesto ingredient; 62- Rub the wrong way; 63- Chaplin prop; 64- Line in a play directed to the audience; 65- Actress Ward; 66- Cowboy boot attachment; 67- French beans?; 68- Boris Godunov, for one;

**DOWN** 1- Blacken; 2- Play part; 3- Alpo alternative; 4- Blind system of writing; 5- Give, as homework; 6- Step; 7- Tatum's dad; 8- "\_\_\_ She Lovely?"; 9- \_\_\_ Alamos; 10- Creatures; 11- Kind of jockey; 12- Treater's words; 13- Freelancer's encl.; 21- Lascivious look; 22- Prefix with center; 24- Franklin D.'s mother; 25- Remove dirt with a broom; 26- Summer camp transport; 27- Do penance; 28- 2, 4, 6, 8, etc.; 29- Summary; 30- Squander; 31- "Delta of Venus" author Nin; 32- Affirmatives; 35- Diamonds, in slang; 38- Oliver Twist's request; 41- Thin; 43- Scorch; 44- Initially; 46- Cornerstone abbr.; 48- Large quantity; 51- Pouches; 52- Applaud; 53- Hokkaido native; 54- What you do to a joint, prior to a heist; 55- Be that \_\_\_ may...; 56- Wait; 57- Contends; 58- First name in scat; 59- Caboose; 61- Dracula form;



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<b>PJ (Open line)</b> 993	<b>Telephone - Report</b> 1000
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<b>PSP</b> 28 573 333	<b>Macau Daily Times</b> 28 716 081
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FOOTBALL

# SPANIARDS RODRI AND BONMATÍ WIN BALLON D'OR AWARD, REAL MADRID SNUBS EVENT

JEROME PUGMIRE, PARIS

**S**PANISH midfielders Rodri and Aitana Bonmatí won the men's and women's Ballon d'Or award yesterday [Macau time] as the world's best soccer players, while Real Madrid snubbed the star-studded ceremony in Paris in apparent protest.

The 28-year-old Rodri won the prestigious award for the first time after helping Manchester City win the Premier League and being a key player in Spain's European Championship triumph.

He succeeded eight-time winner Lionel Messi of Argentina and beat Real Madrid's Vinicius Júnior into second place, a result which greatly displeased the Spanish club. Madrid and its players stayed away from the ceremony, then vented their feelings on social media.

Rodri showed his emotion when his name was read out by former winner George Weah, putting his hands over his face.

"Incredible night for me," said Rodri, who is out for the season after injuring his ACL last month and arrived on crutches to the ceremony. "One of my key things is I always try to improve every game."

Known as a hard-working and unselfish player despite his abilities, Rodri was quick to deflect praise onto others.



Barcelona's Spanish player Aitana Bonmatí (left) and Manchester City's Spanish player Rodri at the 68th Ballon d'Or (Golden Ball) award ceremony in Paris

"I just want to say thank you again to the people who recognize my value in the game," he said. "When I was a kid I never thought of winning the Ballon d'Or, but in the last years I've been playing the highest level."

The 26-year-old Bonmatí retained her award after helping Barcelona win the Spanish league, the Spanish cup and the Champions League. Bonmatí joined Barca teammate Alexia Putellas in winning two titles since the women's trophy was first awarded in 2018. She beat her teammates Ca-

roline Graham Hansen of Norway and Salma Paralluelo of Spain as Barcelona completed a 1-2-3.

"It's a pleasure to be here again," said Bonmatí, who received the award from Oscar winner Natalie Portman. "Thanks to my teammates and the clubs who make me a better football player every year."

Even though attacking midfielder Jude Bellingham was third and Dani Carvajal finished fourth in the voting, and coach Carlo Ancelotti won the coach of the year award, no one from Madrid attended the gala in central Paris.

Ancelotti posted a message on X instead as did Vinicius, who was considered by many to be the favorite for the award, even though Rodri also had an outstanding season.

"I'll do it 10x if needed," Vinicius wrote in Portuguese. "They are not ready."

Madrid midfielder Eduardo Camavinga made it clear what he thought of the vote, calling it "football politics."

"My brother you are the best player in the world and no award can say otherwise," the France in-

ternational wrote on X along with a photo of him and Vinicius celebrating together. "Love you my bro."

Former Madrid star Karim Benzema, who won the Ballon d'Or in 2022, posted a supportive message in French on Instagram, along with the words "Trop Fort" ("Too Strong").

Neither Messi nor Cristiano Ronaldo — winners of the prestigious individual award a combined 13 times — were in the running for this year's prize — the first time that's happened since 2003.

While Rodri is not a flamboyant player or a prolific scorer like Messi and Ronaldo, he had a huge influence on City's team with his ability to protect the defense and distribute passes cleanly from the back.

"I try to be a leader and try to improve every day from the best," Rodri said.

City looked unbeatable at times with him in the side, while his excellent technical ability enabled him to slot smoothly into the quick-passing style made so effective by Spain at Euro 2024. He is the first City player to win the award.

"He is a player completely without ego, whose performance level over a very long period of time has been exceptional," City's director of football Txiki Begiristain said. **MDT/AP**

AD

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FOOTBALL | THE SPECIAL WORST

# The statistics show how badly Manchester United struggled under ten Hag

**M**ANCHESTER United, the record 20-time English champion, is searching for a sixth permanent manager since the retirement of Alex Ferguson in 2013 following the firing of Erik ten Hag.

### WORST START

The break for international matches this month offered a chance to assess each Premier League team's start to the season, and it didn't make good reading for United. After seven games, United had collected eight points — its fewest in the Premier League era (since 1992) by that stage of a season and its lowest tally since the team had seven points from seven games in the 1989-90 season. Ten Hag's team was in 14th place in the 20-team top division at that point. With a win and a loss since then, United remains in 14th — already 12 points off first-place Manchester City.

### WORST FINISH

Last season, Ten Hag led United to its worst finish — eighth place — in the Premier League era. United had to go back to that 1989-90 season for a lower finish, and that was 13th place under Alex Ferguson in the year he reportedly came close to losing his job.

### EUROPEAN FAILURE

It didn't get any better in Europe for Ten Hag. United finished in last place in its Champions League group last season even though it contained outsiders like FC Copenhagen and Galatasaray. United conceded 15 goals in that group, the most goals it has ever conceded in a single Champions League group stage. It was also a record for an English club.

### WHERE ARE THE GOALS?

"Attack, attack, attack" is the chant that has often been heard swirling around Old Trafford down the years but goals were



Erik ten Hag  
AP PHOTO

hard to come by under Ten Hag. With eight goals from its opening nine games, United is currently the third-lowest scorer in the Premier League, with only Crystal Palace and Southampton having fewer. Last season, United was tied in ninth place in the list of top scorers in the Premier League with 57 goals. Since the start of the 2023-24 season, United has a goal difference of minus 4, having sco-

red 65 goals and conceded 69.

### POROUS DEFENSE

United conceded 58 goals in the league last season — its most in the Premier League era — and there are more stats to highlight Ten Hag's inability to bring defensive shape to his team. Since Ten Hag's arrival midway through 2022, United conceded three goals in a game on 24 occasions

— more than any manager since Ferguson's retirement. According to Opta, the Premier League's stats supplier, United has faced 1,739 shots in their 128 games under Erik ten Hag. Man City has faced 717 fewer shots despite playing six more games in that time.

### LATE GOALS

According to Opta, seven of Ten Hag's 27 losses came via a winner in the 90th minute or later. The last of those came in what proved to be Ten Hag's final game in charge, when Jarrod Bowen converted a penalty in second minute of stoppage time to earn West Ham a 2-1 victory.

### EMBARRASSING LOSS

The 4-0 loss at Brentford was arguably the worst under Ten Hag until United arrived at Anfield for a match against its fiercest rival, Liverpool, last season. United lost 7-0 for its heaviest defeat to Liverpool and its worst competitive defeat in more than 90 years. **MDT/AP**

AD

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**OPINION**

**The Correspondents**

Jim Gomez, MDT/AP



**DUTERTE'S JARRING TESTIMONY INTO DRUG KILLINGS RELIVES A NIGHTMARE FOR MANY**

The cockiness, expletives and threats unleashed by former President Rodrigo Duterte in a Senate inquiry brought back the nightmare of the bloody "war on drugs" for many families of the thousands of victims who were gunned down under his rule.

Speaking under oath in Monday's televised hearing into the killings, a defiantly combative Duterte returned to the national spotlight for the first time since leaving office in 2022 with little show of remorse.

He got away with it again, critics say.

"If I'm given another chance, I'll wipe all of you," Duterte, 79, who is seeking a new term as mayor of his southern home city of Davao next year, said of drug dealers and criminals.

Duterte again denied that he authorized extrajudicial killings of drug suspects, saying there were no "state-sponsored killings." But he acknowledged that as mayor of Davao, before becoming president, he kept a small "death squad" of gangsters whom he had ordered to eliminate other criminals.

Duterte's profanity-laced outbursts scared Randy delos Santos, who was invited by the Senate to speak about the killing of his nephew, Kian, by police under Duterte's "war on drugs." It felt, he said, like a nightmare had returned.

"I had this frightening feeling that thousands of innocent people may be gunned down again," delos Santos told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "I was wondering why he was allowed to speak with disrespect and given a stage to vent his past excuses."

Duterte has upended politics in Philippines. The thousands of killings — which human rights groups estimate could exceed 20,000 — under Duterte's administration 2016-2022 were unprecedented in recent Philippine history and triggered an International Criminal Court investigation as a possible crime against humanity.

They have also become a delicate fault line in the increasingly hostile rivalry between Duterte and his children, including Vice President Sara Duterte, and President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. They had a bitter political fallout over key issues. While Duterte had nurtured cozy ties with President Xi and Russia's Putin, Marcos has broadened defense and military relations with the United States and its Western allies.

"It's unfortunate that drug-related crimes are on the rise again.

Duterte has previously accused Marcos of being a drug addict and weak leader. Marcos had retorted that Duterte was a user of fentanyl, a painkiller and powerful opioid.

Looking frail and misstating his age as 73 at one point, the daylong Senate hearing also served as the latest reality check on the political restraints that Duterte and his family face after he relinquished his grip on power.

Duterte once called the pope a "son of a bitch" for setting off a monstrous traffic jam during a Manila visit and told then-President Barack Obama to "go to hell" for criticizing his brutal anti-drugs crackdown.

Duterte's profanities became a trademark of his political persona and some regarded him as Asia's Trump.

During a heated exchange on Monday, Duterte raised his voice at Sen. Risa Hontiveros, a staunch human rights activist, who said that his campaign had killed 122 children, including a baby. Hontiveros asked the chairman overseeing the hearing to restrain the increasingly volatile Duterte, who rambled on as she spoke. He later stopped and apologized. [Abridged]

**MCDONALD'S VALUE MEALS TURN AROUND US SALES IN THIRD QUARTER WITH CUSTOMERS HUNGRY FOR DEALS**

**THE BUZZ**

Value meals helped turn around McDonald's U.S. sales in the third quarter with customers smarting from higher prices all over, but that recovery could be dented in the final months of the year by an E. coli outbreak tied to the company's Quarter Pounder hamburgers.

U.S. same-store sales — or sales at stores open at least a year — rose 0.3% in the July-September period, the company said yesterday.

McDonald's launched a \$5 value meal in late June after a disappointing second quarter, and it said the value message resonated

with consumers.

The \$5 deal was so successful that McDonald's recently extended it to December at most of its U.S. stores.

But last week, a crisis hit. McDonald's pulled Quarter Pounders off the menu at 900 stores after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration determined that the burger's sliced raw onions were the likely cause of E. coli contamination.

The outbreak has killed one person and sickened at least 75 others across 13 states.

AP PHOTO



Visitors enter the Lizzie Borden House, site of an 1892 double axe murder, Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024, in Fall River, Massachusetts

**AS HALLOWEEN APPROACHES, TOURISTS VISIT A HOME WITH A GRUESOME PAST**

**RODRIQUE NGOWI, FALL RIVER (MASS.)**

**L**IZZIE Borden took an axe, and gave her mother 40 whacks. When she saw what she had done, she gave her father 41."

That rhyme has been passed down through the generations to describe the horror that took place at the Borden household in 1892. While it's not entirely accurate, the rhyme does reflect the ongoing fascination some people have with the double murder in Fall River, Massachusetts, as they line up to take a tour or even stay overnight at the crime scene now known as Lizzie Borden House.

October has long been considered the spookiest month, and as Halloween approaches, many tourists find it the ideal time to visit a home with a gruesome past or descend into a darkened basement clutching a lantern. While there is no scientific evidence that homes can be haunted or ghosts exist, polls indicate that one-third or more of Americans believe in such phenomena. For many others, the tours represent nothing more than a bit of spine-tin-gling fun.

And there are plenty

of savvy business owners who know how to capitalize on the fear, mystery and wonder that has surrounded death since the dawn of humankind.

"I believe Lizzie did this," tour guide Richard Sheridan tells a group of spellbound tourists as he shows them a mannequin on a bedroom floor spattered in fake blood, placed there to represent Borden's slain stepmother.

In fact, Borden was tried and acquitted of killing her father, a wealthy investor, and her stepmother, despite the strong evidence against her. That left the murders officially unsolved, and the outcome only added to people's fascination with the case.

Sheridan said he thinks the murders left behind an eeriness that remains today.

"I firmly believe they imprinted on the house. I think it's what you would call a haunting," he said.

On the other side of the U.S. in Portland, Oregon, tourists walk down steep steps into a cavernous basement in Old Town Chinatown. Once the site of a hotel, these days it's home to a pizzeria and brewery. The tourists are promised a lesson in Portland's dark

history and to hear tales about Nina, who supposedly is the resident underground ghost.

Portland's history certainly is disturbing: Men were kidnapped to work on ships, or were tricked into working as sailors by unscrupulous operators who got them drunk or ensnared them in debt. The practice came to be known as "Shanghaiing," named after the Chinese port city where some of the ships were headed. Women were also trafficked for prostitution, and criminals smuggled opium and alcohol.

But whether any of those activities actually took place in the underground "Shanghai Tunnels" that are central to the tour is less clear.

One local history buff, Joe Streckert, said nobody's found any artifacts to support the theory. Rather more mundanely, he said, some of the interconnected basements were used for storing merchandise.

"We don't have any evidence that underground structures were part of the whole Shanghaiing infrastructure," said Streckert, who wrote a book on the history of Portland and once gave tours in Old Town. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



**Germany** yesterday [Macau time] recalled its ambassador from Iran to protest Iran's execution of Jamshid Sharmahd, a dual German-Iranian citizen. Germany condemned the execution and summoned Iran's charge d'affaires for an official protest, warning of further potential diplomatic actions.

AP PHOTO



**Israel's** parliament yesterday passed two laws restricting the UN agency UNRWA's operations in Gaza, risking disruptions to humanitarian aid for Palestinians. The measures, criticized internationally, target UNRWA's links to Hamas, although UNRWA denies any ties with militants.

AP PHOTO



**Ukraine** Russia launched a new barrage against Ukraine's largest cities, Kyiv and Kharkiv, killing four people and injuring several others. The attacks continue Russia's focus on civilian areas as Ukraine condemns these strikes and reports growing civilian casualties.

AP PHOTO



**France** A criminal court in Paris postponed French actor Gérard Depardieu's trial on charges of sexually assaulting two women on a film set because of concerns about his health, shifting the start of the proceedings to March. Depardieu, who has denied any wrongdoing, is accused of using "violence, coercion, surprise or threat" in the alleged sexual assaults that took place in 2021 on the set of "Les Volets verts".