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CHINA'S UNDERGROUND RAVES: FROM STREET TECHNO TO QUOTES FROM MAO

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AP PHOTO



China The Chinese People's Liberation Army announced that it conducted combat readiness patrols in the territorial waters and airspace of China's Huangyan Island in the South China Sea and its surrounding areas yesterday. The PLA's Southern Theater Command said in a statement that its naval and air forces had carried out the patrols.

AP PHOTO



Sri Lanka President Anura Kumara Disسانayake seeks parliamentary majority in today's election to push economic reforms. His National People's Power party aims for control of the 225-seat Parliament as Sri Lanka emerges from an economic crisis.

AP PHOTO



South Korea President Yoon Suk Yeol resumed golfing in hopes of building a bond with U.S. President-elect Trump, hoping to bolster U.S.-South Korea ties during Trump's term, amid concerns over Trump's potential policies.

AP PHOTO



Nigeria African leaders welcome Trump's election but expect low priority for the continent in U.S. policy, focused instead on countering China and Russia's influence. Observers anticipate reduced U.S. aid for social programs, affecting health and reproductive services.

More on backpage



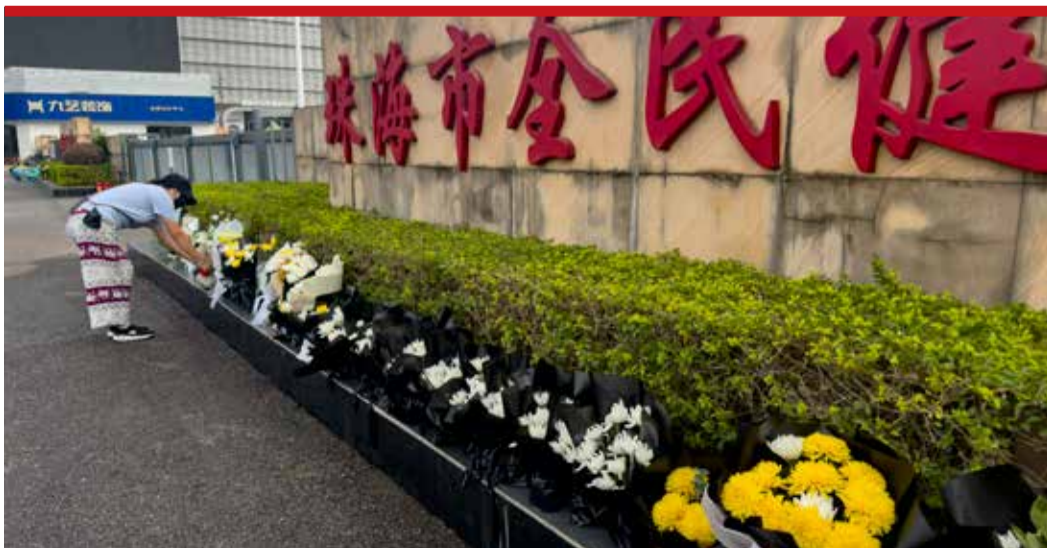
UNDER THE WEATHER

Organizers say GP will proceed under T3, while tourism office monitors hotel occupancy as another off-season typhoon approaches

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AP PHOTO



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Times
FR WORLD CUP
THE START OF A NEW ERA

SUPPLEMENT

RENATO MARQUES

MACAU GP

NICKNAMED "Mr. Macau" due to his numerous victories and great success on the Guia Circuit, Edoardo Mortara will try to reach his 11th win in Macau this year.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of an event presented by the title sponsor of the team SJM VSR Theodore Racing Team, Mortara said that to achieve this result he needs to "keep out of trouble," that is, avoid collisions during the sessions to be able to put the car to the test and improve his performance around the Guia Circuit.

This is the first time Mortara will be driving the Lamborghini Huracán GT3 EVO2 on Macau's streets.

It will be also the first time the Italian brand bids for a win at the FIA GT World Cup.

"We will try to be competitive and we hope that the work pays off. As for expectations, it is very difficult to forecast what will happen over the weekend," he said.

"It will be our first time racing in the Lamborghini here in Macau and my first time in the team. I hope we can have a good racing weekend."

The weather might also play an important role over the

MORTARA WANTS TO 'AVOID PROBLEMS' IN 11TH WIN BID



weekend as the FIA GT World Cup cars are scheduled to go out on track for the first time this morning at 11:05 a.m. for a 30-minute Free Practice 1 session.

However, it is impossible to

know which Tropical Cyclone Warning will be hoisted, which creates uncertainty about what decision Race Direction will make regarding allowing the cars to go out on track.

The Meteorological and

Geophysical Bureau (SMG) hoisted Typhoon Signal No. 3 at 7 p.m. Nov. 13 due to the proximity of tropical storm Toraji to Macau.

According to SMG, there is a medium possibility of the hoisting of Typhoon Signal No. 8, be-

tween midnight and early morning today.

MGPOC SAYS GP WILL PROCEED UNDER T3

The Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee (MGPOC) has been promoting work on the track and surrounding infrastructure to ensure structural safety, announcing the event will continue under Typhoon Signal 3 conditions.

"After consultation with the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the MGPOC has determined the event will continue under Typhoon Signal No.3."

"In case of severe weather conditions, adjustments will be made to the event after evaluation."

"The MGPOC will remain in close communication with the weather bureau and will take corresponding measures to ensure the safety of the event."

"To safeguard participants, spectators, and event staff and to ensure the event proceeds smoothly, the MGPOC is undertaking a series of measures, including reinforcing the track and surrounding infrastructure and securing equipment that could become vulnerable in strong winds."

MGTO monitoring weather and hotel occupancy for Grand Prix

WITH the anticipated Macau Grand Prix starting today, the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) is closely monitoring the weather to ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience for visitors.

According to Cheng Wai Tong, the MGTO's deputy director, the Grand Prix is always a major draw for tourists, and the office is closely watching the weather to keep tourists informed of any changes.

Local weather bureau has hoisted Typhoon Signal No. 3 last night at 7 p.m.

"If the weather changes further, we will inform tourists on all channels and platfor-



ms in a timely manner. If we can get weather information as early as possible, we will publish it so that tourists can be informed

of weather conditions early and arrange their itineraries," Cheng said.

The hotel occupancy rate for the event is

expected to be more than 90%, which Cheng considers to be "ideal."

While the event traditionally attracts many mainland spectators,

the MGTO is also working to attract more tourists from Hong Kong and overseas.

"As for racing, it used to be in Hong Kong or abroad, but in recent years, it has gradually increased in the mainland," said Cheng.

"So, we won't be too excited on either side and will continue to promote it."

The Sports Bureau (ID) has already announced that all racing event tickets are sold out.

The MGTO has been working closely with the tourism industry, hotels, travel agencies, the ID, and the Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee to launch more packages and racing-related products.

Cheng said the office will continue to monitor the situation and make any necessary improvements for future events. **VC**

WEATHER

SMG MULLS HOISTING T8 AS TORAJI NEARS

THE local weather bureau hoisted Typhoon Signal No. 3 last night as Tropical Cyclone Toraji approaches, with the chance of Typhoon Signal No. 8 being hoisted today reported to be "medium."

According to the forecast from Meteorological and Geophysics Bureau (SMG), Toraji is expected to pass within 150 kilometers south of Macau today, during the daytime.

There is a chance Toraji may take a more northerly route, approaching the Pearl River Delta.

Although the cyclone is expected to weaken, the SMG will continuously assess the situation to determine if higher tropical cyclone signals are necessary.

In the meantime, the outer rainbands of Toraji will bring cloudy weather and frequent showers until today.

While the impact of astronomical tides is minimal, there remains a possibility of minor flooding in some areas south of the Inner Harbour tonight.

Neighbouring region Hong Kong hoisted T8 at 11:10 p.m. last night and it will remain in force at least until 10 a.m. today. **LV**

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Macao Foundation funding surges to MOP933 million in 2023

NADIA SHAW

THE Macao Foundation (FM) has announced significant reforms to its funding system aimed at improving social welfare and enhancing resource allocation for citizens.

During yesterday's episode of TDM Macao Forum," chairman Wu Zhiliang emphasized the foundation's commitment to promoting social harmony through a more centralized management approach.

In recent years, the FM has made substantial changes to its funding model, collaborating closely with government departments to streamline operations.

This shift addresses previous inefficiencies caused by overlapping funding initiatives that often resulted in wasted public resources.

In 2023, the foundation's total funding reached MOP933 million (approximately USD116.55 million), a remarkable increase of about 66% from MOP572 million in 2022.

This surge is attributed to adjustments in the grant application timeline, with 2,162 projects applying for funding this year—

RENATO MARQUES



an increase of 235 projects compared to the previous year.

In addition to financial support, the FM said it is dedicated to nurturing talent and promoting cultural development.

A notable initiative is the creation of "Macao Memory," an online interactive multimedia database that preserves the region's history and culture. This project received commendation

from UNESCO in 2024, underscoring its significance.

Wu said the foundation conducts annual reviews to assess the effectiveness of its initiatives and continuously seeks improvements.

King Wong, head of the Sponsorship and Cooperation Department of FM, said a robust monitoring system is in place to oversee grant management.

This year alone, personnel conducted follow-ups on 544 occasions, issuing 280 warnings for late reports and implementing financial penalties for non-compliance. Such measures reflect the foundation's commitment to accountability and transparency.

However, some listeners expressed concerns regarding smaller organizations facing challenges in securing grants.

Wong clarified during the program that all projects are evaluated against uniform standards, which consider factors such as social benefits, budget rationality and execution capability.

Larger organizations that align closely with government policies may receive more substantial funding due to their ability to enhance public services.

With increased funding, the FM pledged that it aims to ensure that resources are effectively used to benefit residents.

The foundation, which operates directly under the Chief Executive, approved over MOP507 million for the first three quarters of 2024, accounting for about 88.6% of its total funding for the year.

EXPERTS PROPOSE COMPREHENSIVE INNER HARBOUR FLOOD MEASURES

Lawmakers and local leaders proposed solutions, including incorporating flood control measures into the light rail's western line, using offshore reclamation projects, and drawing inspiration from the Inner Harbour flood control strategies. The Macao General Union of Neighbourhood Associations (UGAMM) has held a symposium to address persistent flooding at the Inner Harbour. Merchants and businesses expressed concerns about the rainwater pumping station and sewer project, emphasizing the urgent need to complete the work and find a solution to the flooding issue.

TAXI FLEET EXPANDS, ADDS SEVEN NEW COMPANIES

The Transport Bureau has announced a significant expansion of the city's taxi industry, with the addition of seven new taxi companies now in operation. This move comes as the bureau prepares to put 500 new taxi units into service by January. Macao currently has nearly 1,650 taxis in operation. The 10 new eight-year taxi licenses awarded will require these additional 500 units to be put into service by January at the latest. The bureau said it will continue to promote the operation of the 10 awarded companies, while the remaining three new taxi companies are also ramping up preparations.

POLICE WARN OF ONLINE ORDERING SCAMS

Police have reported a surge in fraud cases involving "online ordering" this month, with at least 19 victims losing between MOP400 and MOP1,200 each. Fraudsters have been setting up fake social media pages, posing as local merchants and offering discounted "light and low-fat meals" or "various seafood." Unsuspecting consumers transfer money to the provided MPay wallet, only for the perpetrators to fail delivering the goods and cease all communication. Police are urging the public to exercise caution when conducting transactions with unfamiliar online accounts and recommend ordering food from merchants with physical stores rather than accepting "pay first, delivery later" terms.

VICTORIA CHAN

AS the excitement of the Grand Prix takes over the city, MGM and the Macao Grand Prix Museum have launched the "VR F3 Pit Stop Challenge" - a brand-new digital interactive game at the Museum.

The game allows players to simulate a tire change during a Formula 3 race, wearing VR goggles to experience the thrill and precision required of a pit crew member.

Players must complete two tire change challenges within two minutes, with the fastest time earning the highest ranking.

To encourage more people to experience the new interactive installation, MGM invited all its sponsored racers for the 71st Macao Grand Prix to attend the exhibit yesterday.

MGM-sponsored racers at the event included Christopher Haase from Phantom Global Racing, FHO Racing BMW Motorrad's four top bikers for the 56th Macao Mo-

MGM unveils new VR interactive game at Grand Prix Museum

VICTORIA CHAN



torcycle Grand Prix, Peter Hickman, Michael Rutter, Davey Todd and Craig Neve, and independent biker Sam West. Haase expressed his excitement to be competing in this year's race event in partnership with the

MGM hotel.

"It's just a unique race event to be part of. Obviously it's the first time for me to be with Phantom Global Racing in cooperation with the MGM hotel and I have to say, so far I'm really looking forward to the

race," Haase said.

The team has had a productive lead-up to the event, according to Haase.

"We already had very good preparation, and very good meetings before the events even started, so I'm quite confident."

He is confident in the capabilities of the Audi R8 LMS GT3 car they will be competing with, noting "the Audi R8 LMS GT3 is a wonderful car to compete in, in such a high level of competition."

The event included a signing ceremony between Davey Todd and Faye Ho, the founder of FHO Racing BMW Motorrad from Macau.

Todd will join the FHO Racing squad for the British Superbike Series in 2025, further raising the profile of the Macao Grand Prix Museum and Macau as a tourist destination.

The "VR F3 Pit Stop Challenge" will be available at the Macao Grand Prix Museum until Feb. 17, providing an exciting new way for people to engage with the thrilling world of the Macao Grand Prix.

TOURIST ARRESTED FOR DRUG SMUGGLING

A 38-year-old Malaysian tourist has been arrested in Macau on suspicion of smuggling methamphetamine, police reported yesterday. The arrest occurred after the Judiciary Police analyzed a flight from Kuala Lumpur. Upon arrival around 2 p.m. Tuesday, police noticed the unemployed man appeared panicked while retrieving a large checked bag. After intercepting him, officers discovered two bags containing approximately 2.25 grams of methamphetamine, valued at MOP7,500, along with drug paraphernalia hidden in a compartment of the suitcase. Although the man tested negative for drugs, he faces charges of drug trafficking and possession of drug paraphernalia.

CUSTOMS RAID SEIZES GOODS WORTH MOP300,000

Customs officials raided a ground floor parallel import shop near Toi San, seizing electronic products, pet supplies, snacks, clothing, and undeclared canned food valued at approximately MOP300,000. A 56-year-old man, along with a male shop assistant and two mainland residents holding family visit visas, were taken into custody and will be referred to the Labour Affairs Bureau for further action. The shop, operating since August, allegedly smuggled goods to the mainland via parallel shipping. Customs tracked individuals picking up goods for border transport and reported labor fees ranging from MOP30 to MOP100 per task.

GUANGDONG ANNOUNCES NEW CROSS-BORDER TRAVEL MEASURES

The Guangdong traffic police have announced new measures to streamline vehicle license plate management for Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau. From tomorrow, these measures aim to simplify procedures and enhance cross-border travel, supporting the integrated development of the Greater Bay Area. Key changes include exempting investment-type dual-city vehicles from tax verification during extension applications, eliminating the need for tax certificates. There will also be no time limits for changing drivers or vehicles approved for both regions, allowing more flexibility in vehicle replacement and driver changes after a quota is approved.

GAMING

SJM HOLDINGS RECORDS STRONG THIRD QUARTER FINANCIAL RESULTS

NADIA SHAW

SJM Holdings Limited has announced a significant financial turnaround for the third quarter of this year, reporting a net profit of HKD101 million, a recovery from a loss of HKD410 million during the same period last year.

The company's total net revenue surged 27.8% year-on-year, reaching HKD7.5 billion (approximately USD964 million).

An increase in net gaming revenue drove the growth, which rose 29.2% to HKD7 billion.

Chairman Daisy Ho attributed this success to the Grand Lisboa Palace Resort's performance, stating, "The ramp-up at our flagship resort underscores our strong turnaround from previously challenging times to renewed growth."

The resort's total revenue increased 63.9% year-on-year, bolstered by both gaming and non-gaming segments.

SJM's adjusted earnings before



interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) more than doubled to HKD2.78 billion, marking a substantial increase from HKD1.03 billion in the same period last year.

The adjusted EBITDA margin expanded from 6.7% to 13%, illustrating improved operational efficiency across its properties.

Notably, the Grand Lisboa Palace and Grand Lisboa properties reported significant revenue increases, with the former gene-

rating HKD1.78 billion in total revenue and the latter achieving HKD2.02 billion.

Despite these positive results, SJM faced challenges, including an unrealized fair value loss of HKD16 million in equity securities during the quarter.

However, the overall market share for SJM in gross gaming revenue climbed to 13.9%, up from 12.1% in Q3 of last year. The company also reported an impressive hotel occupancy rate of 97.7%,

reflecting strong recovery in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

SJM Holdings has shared plans to introduce over ten new dining concepts at the Grand Lisboa Palace and expand its meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) facilities by more than 50,000 square feet.

Additionally, SJM is committed to enhancing Macau's cultural landscape through initiatives like the upcoming Kam Pek Market set to open Dec. 20.

CE dubs science and technology as the path to the future

RENATO MARQUES

THE Chief Executive (CE) Ho Iat Seng has said the government will continue to make good use of its special status and unique advantages of "backing the motherland and connecting the world," by continuing to promote industry-university-research cooperation and by transforming academic research into products and services.

Ho was speaking at

yesterday's ordinary meeting of the Science and Technology Committee, which he chairs.

According to Ho, besides the ongoing promotion of science and technology, there will also be improvements in cross-border circulation mechanisms, and high-quality scientific and technological projects, that will build an efficient scientific and technological cooperation platform.

Ho said scientific and technological innovation

are cornerstones of social development.

As the country undergoes comprehensive reforms, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA) will continue to promote and expand the economic openness of China to the world, he said.

Ho said the high-tech industry is one of the four key development industries that comprise the "1+4" strategy for the development of Macau's economy and



diversification.

The SAR government is working hard to improve scientific and technological innovation, optimize the innovation de-

velopment environment, and use the high-tech industry to accelerate the implementation of the diversified economic development plan.

WORLD DIABETES DAY

HEALTH BUREAU URGES RESIDENTS TO MANAGE DIABETES

IN recognition of World Diabetes Day on Nov. 14, the Health Bureau (SSM) is calling on residents to take proactive steps in managing their health.

Established by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and the World Health Organiza-

tion (WHO) in 1991, this year's World Diabetes Day is focused on "Diabetes and Well-Being," emphasizing the need for comprehensive care that supports both physical and mental health for those living with diabetes.

Globally, diabetes af-

fects about 537 million people, with projections estimating this number will rise to 783 million by 2045.

Nearly 20% of residents aged 65 and older have been diagnosed with diabetes, a statistic that highlights the growing

concern as the population ages.

The SSM announced yesterday it has been promoting a range of initiatives aimed at chronic disease management, including standardized diagnostic protocols and treatment guidelines.

Residents are encouraged to undergo regular health screenings. Those over 18 should check their blood pressure and body mass index annually, while individuals over 40 should monitor blood sugar and lipids every three years. NS

LYNZY VALLES

RESIDENTS in Zhuhai are mourning the tragic loss of 35 individuals killed in a tragic car-ramming attack at a local sports complex Monday night.

The assailant, a 62-year-old man identified only by his surname, Fan, reportedly acted out of anger over his divorce settlement.

Following the incident, which also left 43 others injured, Fan was apprehended as he tried to flee the scene.

The attack occurred just before the Zhuhai Airshow, an event organized by the People's Liberation Army that garners significant attention and typically prompts heightened information control by Chinese authorities.

It took almost 24 hours after the attack before information with definite casualty tolls was released.

In the wake of the tragedy, police provided minimal details about Fan and his motives, revealing only that he was dissatisfied with the financial arrangements of his divorce.

Zhuhai residents mourn 35 killed in car-ram attack



Eyewitness accounts indicated many victims were exercising at the time of the attack, when Fan drove his vehicle into a crowd.

In response to the tragedy, re-

sidents began laying flowers outside the Zhuhai People's Fitness Plaza to honor those who had lost their lives, according to the Associated Press.

This act of remembrance started Tuesday evening and continued until yesterday.

"It is very shocking," said one of them, Dong Chilin. "My husband

goes jogging there every night. I called him immediately. ... Fortunately, none of the people I know was there that day."

The report noted that initially, police presence at the site was light but increased as more mourners gathered.

While officials allowed floral tributes to be placed outside the complex, volunteers later moved them inside for safekeeping.

One message found among the bouquets read: "May there be no thugs in heaven," expressing a desire for justice and peace.

This attack is one of the deadliest in recent memory and has drawn significant media attention both domestically and internationally.

Videos from the scene quickly circulated online despite censorship efforts within China, depicting the chaos that ensued as emergency responders rushed to assist those injured.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has called for strict legal repercussions for Fan and urged local governments to enhance measures to prevent similar incidents in the future.

SPORTS

WTT returns in 2025 with USD800,000 prize

VICTORIA CHAN

WORLD Table Tennis (WTT) will return to Macau next September, offering USD800,000 in prize money as part of its highly anticipated 2025 WTT Series calendar.

The 2025 season will feature four Grand Smashes, each promising to redefine the heights of table tennis with their intensity and global reach.

Fans can look forward to more frequent show-

downs between the sport's elite players and rising stars, as WTT brings the thrill of world-class competition to audiences more regularly.

The 2025 WTT Series will deliver an unprecedented season, featuring the debut of new WTT Grand Smashes, the return of iconic host cities, and a power-packed WTT Champions Series.

The season will start with the Singapore Smash, followed by the debut of

the United States Smash in Las Vegas, and the return of China Smash in Beijing.

Additionally, the WTT Champions Series will see six premier events, including the return of WTT Champions Chongqing and WTT Champions Incheon, as well as the debut of a WTT Champions event in Japan.

The season will culminate with the WTT Finals from Nov. 25 to 30, where the top 16 singles players and eight mixed doubles

pairs will converge for one epic showdown.

"This is the moment we have been waiting for since the launch of World Table Tennis, after the challenges of the global pandemic," said Steve Dainton, WTT Chief Executive Officer.

"We are setting a new standard—bringing fans closer to the intensity, talent, and thrill that table tennis is known for, now more than ever in the history of our sport."



CORPORATE BITS

MGM launches 'learning festival'



MGM has partnered with the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) to organize the "MGM Learning Festival."

Featuring a series of events lasting over a month, the festival aims to enhance MGM team members' job skills, service mindset, and commitment to

continuing education and professional certifications.

MGM has said it hopes to create a workplace that supports its team members in becoming well-rounded people.

The "MGM Learning Festival," which runs from late October to early December,

offers a variety of back-of-house roadshows hosted by MGM Academy and several renowned universities in the Greater Bay Area, promoting tourism and hospitality certificate degree courses and training programs.

Government departments from the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin and Macau, local associations, and learning centers will also actively promote their courses on future and professional skills during the roadshows.

In addition, the festival offers culture and art workshops to team members to promote creativity and work-life balance among employees.

Aska Yang to perform at Wynn Macau



Chinese music star Aska Yang is set to perform in "Aska Yang @ Wynn Music Live," which will be held in Wynn Macau's Grand Ballroom on Nov. 30.

Fans can look forward to a performance of classic love songs as well as interactive sessions with the Chinese singer in an audio-visual feast.

Known for his heart-breaking songs, Yang is also recognized for his distinctive singing style, powerful vocals, and ability to connect with his fans. One of the top

contenders on 'One Million Star', the singer released his debut album in 2008 to significant success and has since garnered a fan base in Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan, with a record 571,247 monthly listeners on Spotify.

The singer will be performing his popular tracks "Actually There Is Nothing," "Just Once," "Blank Space," and "Over the Hills," promising to take the audience into the world of love songs, according to the press release.

CHINA'S UNDERGROUND RAVES

From street techno to quotes from Chairman Mao

ELSIE CHEN AND DAKE KANG,
CHANGCHUN

CROUCH through the small metal door and walk down the dark tunnel, and even before you step into the abandoned air raid shelter, the air reverberates with pounding techno beats. Young Chinese holding booze and cigarettes shake and sway in a red-lit passageway, below a big screen rolling through quotations from Chairman Mao.

This is an underground rave in China, part of a subculture growing in hidden corners of the nation's cities, even as its political and cultural mainstream grow increasingly controlled, staid and predictable.

For Chinese ravers, these gatherings — often called “ye di,” or “wild dances” — not only offer a rare space for unfettered fun, but signal resistance to the narrowly prescribed future a rigid society expects for them.

By day, Xing Long works in the office of a state-owned company in Changchun, an industrial city in China's northeastern rust belt region.

By night, he's a DJ and underground rave organizer, a side gig that offers an escape from the humdrum of reviewing corporate contracts.

“My job cannot make me feel I fulfilled my values,” he said. “Going to work is like executing a prewritten program.”

Chinese young people face intense pressure and high expectations from the society around them. In recent years, facing bleak economic prospects, Chinese youth culture has been swept by a series of viral slang terms to describe frustration and hopelessness: “996” — the brutal 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., six



Rave attendees dance in an abandoned air raid shelter in Guangzhou (Summer 2023)

days a week work schedule many companies ask of employees. “Involution” — an endless treadmill of pointless competition that fresh graduates face. “Lying flat” — the growing trend among young people of giving up all ambition and aiming to do as little as possible.

Techno dance parties are an escape from all that for people like Xing. Every time he walks into a rave, the 31-year-old said, his brain “jolts awake like a bang.”

Xing first learned about techno music from a documentary made by the American media company Vice.

“My eyes brightened up when I heard it,” he said. “I should've listened to this kind of music earlier.”

Xing began going to raves in Shenzhen, a southern city with a population of 17 million, but when he moved home in 2021 he realized no one else was organizing them.

“I want this city to have an underground techno music scene,” he said. “I want to listen to it myself, so I want to make it happen.”

Xing said that the underground techno scene fascinated him

because it's “real” even if not perfect, bad, not in the right order, or broken.

“It's not a beautiful thing that was deliberately produced into a mold to present to the mainstream.”

In recent years, space for culture and creativity has been shrinking in China as the authorities have ramped up censorship of concerts, shows, and other cultural events. Comedians have been silenced after joking about topics considered politically sensitive. A growing number of independent bookstores and creative spaces have shut down under pressure, while state-sanctioned media promotes uplifting, often saccharine narratives.

Yet underground raves are free from all those limitations because they sprout in gray zones. Hidden from public view, they skirt formal approval processes, neither supported nor suppressed by the state.

Feng Zhe, 27, a rave organizer in Shenyang, a northeastern city about 400 miles from Beijing, said raves are about “refusing to be dis-

ciplined by society.”

“This is probably not how the world functions nowadays,” he said, adding that societies want to make people follow their rules and be useful but “underground culture is useless.”

“Most people are going to be repressed,” Feng said.

But for most rave organizers, the real meaning of underground rave culture is simply having fun. Loong Wu, a 26-year-old art student, started organizing raves in 2021 during COVID-19 lockdowns out of boredom.

“My original intention was just to break through the boredom,” she said. “When you are truly enjoying it, you don't think about meanings.”

On one recent Saturday night, civil servants, students, an ex-firefighter, girls with dyed hair, and a man with a full face mask and goggles filed into a bar tucked behind a flower shop in downtown Changchun to attend one of Xing's raves.

They danced to fast-paced industrial techno spun by Du Jizhe, a local part-time DJ who works in

HR by day.

He said it's the natural soundtrack of auto manufacturing cities like Changchun and Detroit, which prides itself on being the birthplace of techno. For Du, techno evokes childhood memories of the auto factory where his father worked.

“Techno is basically industrial noise like hammering and mechanical sounds,” Du said. “These noises exert a subtle influence on people's ears in industrial cities.”

Chen Xiangyu, a fashion student in an oversized black t-shirt with hair dyed blond, a black leather choker, a lip piercing, and smoky eye makeup, said raves are a pure release.

“The first time I came, I thought to myself, I don't know anyone, no one knows me, so nobody's paying any attention to how I dance, so long as I'm happy, it's all good,” she said. “I shouldn't care too much about what others think.”

Even at raves, illegal drugs are rarely seen in China, but promoters still face risks from authorities who have little patience for unapproved social gatherings.

Advertisements promoting raves are often cryptic, with only a date, a DJ line-up, and the cost of admission. Sometimes, the location won't be revealed until an hour ahead of the party. Some organizers require guests to cover their phone's camera with a sticker.

Loong Wu said her requirements for a rave spot were no CCTV cameras, no security, and no nearby residents. Even those aren't a guarantee — local police once busted one of her raves in an industrial port.

“It was pathetic how few such places exist in the city,” she said.

Frustrated with how hard to find a good rave spot, she once organized a public party where she put her DJ equipment on a cart and pushed it through city streets as revelers danced alongside.

“Restrictions exist for sure, but that's exactly why we need to create our own scene,” she said. “We always need ‘wild dances.’ We always need to dance outside of set rules.” **MDT/AP**

SOUTH CHINA SEA

China holds combat drills at a disputed shoal west of the Philippines

CHINA held sea and air combat drills yesterday at disputed Scarborough Shoal, an uninhabited area of reefs and rocks it had seized from the Philippines in the South China Sea.

China on Sunday published new baselines for

the shoal including geographic coordinates. A nation's territorial waters and exclusive economic zone are typically defined as the distance from the baselines.

Tensions between China and the Philippines have been building over

their competing claims to Scarborough Shoal and other outcrops in the South China Sea. Clashes have occurred including the Chinese coast guard firing water cannons at Filipino ships.

“This is a patrol and guard activity carried out

by the theater troops in accordance with the law,” the People's Liberation Army's southern command said in a short statement.

China seized the shoal, which lies west of the main Philippine island of Luzon, in 2012, and has since restricted access to

Filipino fishermen there. A 2016 ruling by an international arbitration court found that most Chinese claims in the South China Sea were invalid but Beijing refuses to abide by it.

There was no immediate comment from the Philippine government to China's drills, but it has repeatedly asserted its sovereignty over Scarborough Shoal, which it says lies within its internationally recognized exclusive economic zone, a 200-nautical-mile (370-kilometer)

stretch of waters where it has an exclusive right to tap resources.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed two laws last week reaffirming the extent of his country's maritime territories and right to resources, including in the South China Sea, in a move that angered China.

China's claims to almost the entire sea overlap with claims by the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia and other governments. **MDT/AP**

TRISNADI & NINIEK KARMINI,
SITUBONDO

WAR GAMES

THE Indonesian and Australian militaries began joint combat drills off Indonesia's main island of Java yesterday with about 2,000 troops training in air, maritime, amphibious and land operations.

They'll participate in a live-fire exercise near Banongan beach of East Java's Situbondo district with tanks, artillery, infantry and attack helicopters, a joint landing operation and a non-combat evacuation used for a disaster.

The four-day Keris Woome-ra 2024 exercise highlighted the cooperation between the countries strengthened by the recent signing of the Australia-Indonesia Defense Cooperation Agreement.

Although Indonesia is often presented as one of Australia's most important neighbors and strategic allies, the relationship has fluctuated.

Recent disagreements include allegations that Australia had wiretapped private phone calls of a past Indonesian president, Indonesia's use of capital punishment on Australian drug smugglers, and the smuggling of migrants.

"This joint exercise aimed to strengthening the partnership between Indonesia and Australia as we are building trust and to increase capabilities and interoperability," said Lt. Col. Empri Airudin, who lead the Indonesian delegation. "It can also be regarded

Indonesia and Australia hold joint military drills after signing a new defense agreement



Australian soldiers and Indonesian marines conduct a maneuver during a joint amphibious landing exercise on Banongan Beach, off Java island, yesterday

as a way of maintaining security and stability in the region."

The exercise is also part of Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2024, Australia's largest international engagement activity in the region, taking place in Australia and Indonesia, Commander of the Australian Amphibious Task Force Captain Chris Doherty told reporters.

"This bilateral exercise will test all facets of the Australian Amphibious Task Force, and allow all its components to work effectively together as a cohesive team with our Indonesian partners," he said, adding that the KW24 could provide the troops of the two nations with the ability to rapidly deploy forces in response to a range of missions.

Analysts consider Indonesia's defense a priority of new President Prabowo Subianto. He wants to expand his military by buying submarines, frigates and fighter jets and wants to initiate more defense cooperation with various countries.

Indonesia has held military exercises with other countries, including the Russian navy on

Nov. 4 in Indonesia's East Java seas, as Russia's invasion of Ukraine brought renewed concerns over China's assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific.

Last month, Indonesia said its patrol ships drove away a Chinese coast guard ship that disrupted a survey being undertaken by a state-owned energy company in a part of the South China Sea disputed by both countries.

China has rapidly expanded its military and has become increasingly assertive in pursuing territorial claims in the South China Sea.

However, during Subianto's first overseas visit as Indonesia's new leader to Beijing during last weekend, he called for collaboration rather than confrontation with China after the signing of \$10 billion in new deals at a business forum before departing to the U.S. on Sunday. He and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to hold a first-ever joint meeting of their foreign and defense ministers in 2025. **MDT/AP**

JAPAN'S nuclear watchdog yesterday formally disqualified a reactor in the country's north-central region for a restart, the first rejection under safety standards that were reinforced after the 2011 Fukushima disaster. The decision is a setback for Japan as it seeks to accelerate reactor restarts to maximize nuclear power.

The Nuclear Regulation Authority at a regular meeting yesterday announced the Tsuruga No. 2 reactor is "unfit" as its operator failed to address safety risks stemming from possible active faults underneath it.

Tsuruga No. 2, operated by the Japan Atomic Power Co., is the first reactor to be rejected under the safety standards adopted in 2013 based on lessons from the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi meltdown disaster following a massive earthquake and tsunami.

"We reached our conclusion based on a very strict examination," NRA chairperson Shinsuke Yamanaka told reporters.

The verdict comes after more than eight years of

JAPAN

Regulators disqualify a reactor under post-Fukushima safety standards for the first time

safety reviews that were repeatedly disrupted by data coverups and mistakes by the operator, Yamanaka said. He called the case "abnormal" and urged the utility to take the result seriously.

The decision is a blow to Japan Atomic Power because it virtually ends its hopes for a restart. The operator, which is decommissioning its other reactor, Tsuruga No. 1, had hoped to put No. 2 back online, but it would require an examination of dozens of faults around the reactor to prove their safety.

An NRA safety panel concluded three months ago there's no evidence denying the possibility of active faults about 300 meters (330 yards) north of the No. 2 reactor stretching to right underneath the facility, meaning the reactor can-

not be operated.

Japan's government in 2022 adopted a plan to maximize the use of nuclear energy, pushing to accelerate reactor restarts to secure a stable energy supply and meet its pledge to reach carbon neutrality by 2050.

Concern about the government's revived push for nuclear energy grew after a magnitude 7.5 earthquake hit Japan's Noto Peninsula on Jan. 1, 2024, killing more than 400 people and damaging more than 100,000 structures. The quake caused minor damage to two nearby nuclear facilities, and evacuation plans for the region were found to be inadequate.

Building key nuclear facilities, such as reactors, directly above active faults is prohibited in earthquake-prone Japan.



Yamanaka said the NRA is not immediately ordering a decommissioning because the reactor, which is offline and its spent fuel safely cooled, will not pose a major threat if active faults move.

If the utility decides to reapply, it must address not only the faults issue but it

also must implement adequate safety measures for the entire plant, Yamanaka said. Providing scientific proof of the status of faults underneath key nuclear facilities is difficult, but other operators that obtained restart permits all cleared the requirement, he noted.

The Tsuruga No. 2 reac-

tor first started commercial operation in February 1987 and has been offline since May 2011. The operator denied the NRA panel's 2013 on-site inspection results, which concluded that the faults under the No. 2 reactor were active, and it applied for a restart in 2015. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



APEC SUMMIT | ANALYSIS

A diminished Biden heads to Peru, overshadowed by Xi

ISABEL DEBRE & DAVID BILLER, LIMA

IF things had gone differently last week, U.S. President Joe Biden could have arrived at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Peru today projecting confidence and pledging his successor's cooperation with eager Latin American partners. No longer.

Just as in 2016, the last time that Peru's capital Lima hosted APEC, Donald Trump's election victory has pulled the rug out from under a lame-duck Democrat at the high-profile summit attended by over a dozen world leaders.

The renewed prospect of Trump's "America First" doctrine hampers Biden's ability to reinforce the United States' profile on his first presidential trip to South America, experts say, leaving China and its leader, Xi Jinping, to grab the limelight in America's proverbial backyard.

President Xi's first order of business in Peru is inaugurating a \$1.3 billion megaport that will put China's regional influence on stark display. Total investment is expected to top \$3.5 billion over the next decade.

"This isn't the way the U.S. had hoped to participate in the summit," said Margaret Myers, the director of the China and Latin America program at the Inter-American Dialogue, a Washington policy group. "All eyes are going to be on the port, what Xi says about it and how he articulates relations across the Pacific."

With the U.S. seemingly headed back toward isolationism under Trump, "China will be seen as the alternative," Myers added.

Sitting 60 kilometers northeast of Lima, the Chancay megaport — once a serene fishing village — is perhaps the clearest sign of Latin America's reorientation. The Chinese shipping and logistics giant Cosco holds a 60% stake in the project it developed with Peruvian partner, Volcan.

"With this port, we're looking at the entire Pacific coast, from the United States and Canada all the way to Chile," Peruvian Foreign Minister Elmer Schialer told The Associated Press in his office this week. "The shipping business is being transformed."

Peruvian Economy Minister José Arista said in June during a visit to China that the country's neighbors — Brazil, Colombia, Chile — are "making constant trips to and from to see how they can modify their supply chain to use this port," which will cut shipping time to Beijing by 10 days.

China's trade with the region ballooned 35-fold from 2000 to 2022, reaching nearly \$500 billion, according to data from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Most of the region's exports came from South America, and were concentrated in five products: soybeans, copper and iron ore, oil and copper cathodes.

At the same time, China's diplomatic engagement in the region has become more ef-

fective, with Xi visiting 11 Latin American countries since becoming president, according to Xinhua, China's main state news agency. Brazil, host of the G20 summit, and Peru will bestow the rare honor of a full state visit to Xi this month, but not to Biden.

The misguided notion that Latin America must choose between its two largest trading partners is "a strategic defeat" for the U.S., said Eric Farnsworth, vice president at the Washington-based Council of the Americas.

"The idea that China is somehow a better partner is increasingly being heard around the region and I think Xi wants to solidify that and amplify that," Farnsworth said.

Roughly a decade after China poured billions of dollars into building power plants, roads, airports and other infrastructure that saddled some developing countries with un-serviceable debt, few expect Beijing to direct more massive loans to Latin America through its Belt and Road Initiative. But deeper cooperation on other infrastructure is possible, particularly renewable energy and telecommunications, said the Boston University bulletin.

The U.S. has appealed to Latin American governments to reject telecoms investment, particularly opposing Huawei, the Chinese tech giant that it argues could open the door to Chinese government spying. Similarly, U.S. officials have raised concerns over the Chancay port's possible dual-use by

Beijing's navy in the Pacific — a prospect dismissed by Chinese officials.

China "is working to exploit insecurity in our hemisphere," said U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin at the Southern Command headquarters in Florida this week, adding that the Asian giant is leveraging the need for investment in the Americas to advance its "malign agenda."

Despite its objections to Chinese influence, the U.S. hasn't shown the ability or willingness to build infrastructure like Chancay's megaport, experts note.

Even when the U.S. government has worked to ensure competitive bidding in Latin American massive public works projects, American companies have refrained from participating, said Benjamin Gedan, director of the Wilson Center's Latin America Program.

A Kamala Harris administration wouldn't have changed that, but a Democratic victory would have enabled Biden to speak in Lima with authority about U.S. collaboration to come, such as building regional supply chains, Gedan said.

In sharp contrast to Biden's alliance-building approach, Trump has vowed to protect American interests and promised more of the same unilateralist action the world saw in his first term, when he staked out a combative stance against foreign competitors and deepened the U.S. trade war with China. MDT/AP

this day in history

1981 MILITARY CRACKDOWN ON POLISH PEOPLE



Poland's military rulers have declared a state of emergency after imposing martial law and placing leaders of the Solidarity trade union under arrest.

The country is effectively sealed off from the outside world with the military insisting the action is necessary to prevent the country from descending into civil war.

Borders with East Germany, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia have been closed and air space over Poland has been shut.

It is aimed at curbing the growing influence of the independent trade union Solidarity who reacted to the measures by calling a national strike.

Prime Minister General Wojciech Jaruzelski announced the crackdown on Solidarity on national television.

He warned Poles the country could no longer function under current tensions but pledged no blood would be spilt.

"We have been patient but now our patience has run out," he said.

The army was immediately dispatched to the streets in a massive show of military strength imposing strict censorship and a curfew.

The newly formed Military Council for National Salvation is instructed to shoot anyone breaking the new laws.

Soldiers are patrolling Warsaw in armed personnel carriers with automatic weapons.

Those on foot are patrolling the streets with riot shields and truncheons.

In the sparse reports leaking out of Poland it is understood some angry crowds have formed in Warsaw jeering and shouting "Gestapo" at soldiers.

Solidarity party offices have been raided and its leaders arrested except for Lech Walesa.

He has avoided detention by agreeing to negotiations with the government.

Demonstrations in Austria, staged mainly by Polish refugees seeking asylum there, have erupted against the action in Poland.

The Pope has called for an end to the strife and said no more blood should be shed in his homeland.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Martial law was not lifted until 1983 and in that year Lech Walesa won the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1989, with the economy close to collapse, General Jaruzelski convened talks and allowed free elections open to Solidarity candidates.

Communists were swept from power and Lech Walesa became president of Poland. He turned Poland into a market economy virtually overnight and his reforms, while controversial, were generally successful, sparking rapid growth and major foreign investment.

In 1995 Mr Walesa lost his re-election bid. But the legacy of his vision meant by 2000 Poland enjoyed full membership in Nato and joined the European Union in 2004.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Advance profitable ventures methodically. Simplify and save. Gentle pressure gets farther than force. Guard against technical glitches. Take a break when needed. Walk outside.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20

Don't force a charged issue. Avoid cockiness or arrogance. Arguments could come back to bite. You're in a strong position. Don't step on anyone.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21

Breathe deeply and slow down. Sort things out. Stay in rather than going out. Consider responses before making them. Keep confidences and secrets.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Make sure what you're building is solid. Get feedback from talented friends. Teamwork makes a difference. Only keep the cleanest, simplest, best parts.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Handle professional matters. Don't push a sensitive situation. Wait for developments. Find another way around a roadblock. Patient deliberation reveals multiple options. Manage basics.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Explorations and escapades could face deviations. Obstacles, roadblocks and illusions line the road ... and could get expensive. Find the path of least resistance.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Apply gentle, steady pressure rather than brute force. Finesse your way through financial conversations and transactions. Consider a call to action to support others.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Listening gets you farther than speaking. You and a partner can really make something happen if you can avoid stupid arguments. It could even get romantic.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21

The excellent work you've been doing reflects you well. Don't push things. Hang back and observe. Nurture your physical health and well-being. Bide your time.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Follow your heart. Slow down to avoid accidents. Avoid conflict or controversy and indulge your appetite for fun, romance and deliciousness. Lighten up.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Enjoy household projects. Don't be hasty or pushy. Avoid provoking short tempers. Give your partner exactly what they want. Cook up something tasty together.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Lay low and dig into books and studies. Satisfy a curiosity. Get inquisitive. Learn through another's experience. Research and discover an unexpected bonus.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

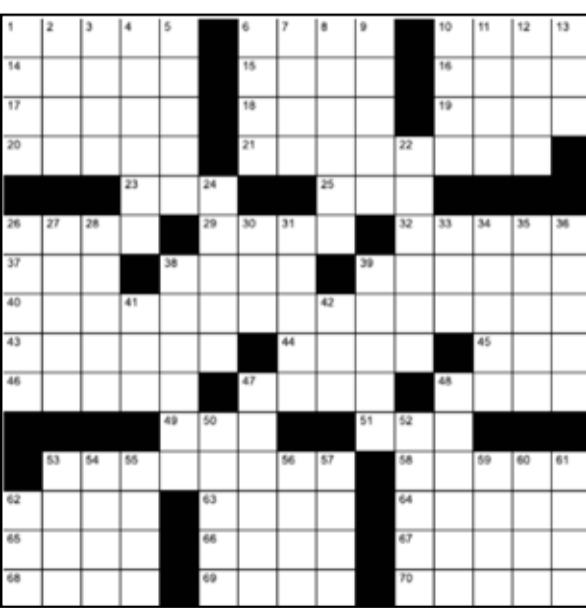
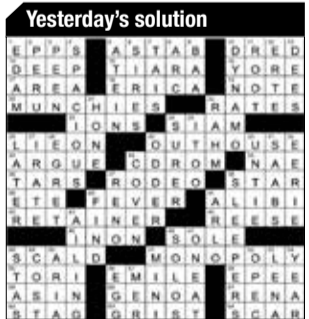
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	9	11	rain
Changchun	-2	14	fine
Chengdu	15	20	overcast
Chongqing	17	19	rain
Fuzhou	21	24	overcast
Guangzhou	20	29	rain
Guiyang	17	26	fine
Haikou	22	30	cloudy
Hangzhou	13	23	cloudy
Harbin	-6	7	fine
Hefei	12	23	cloudy
Nanjing	14	23	cloudy
Shanghai	16	21	fine
Taipei	22	25	overcast
Wuhan	15	26	fine
Hong Kong	24	26	showers
WORLD			
Moscow	-1	1	cloudy
Frankfurt	6	9	cloudy
Paris	7	12	cloudy
London	6	11	cloudy
New York	5	11	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Enamel; 6- Stadium cheers; 10- Salt Lake City collegians; 14- Strictness; 15- Hip bones; 16- Long tale; 17- Reverse; 18- Spot; 19- Pizazz; 20- Gridiron units; 21- Unsymmetrical; 23- Syr. neighbor; 25- Electrically charged particle; 26- After-bath powder; 29- Initial stake; 32- Alabama city; 37- Brian of rock; 38- Not deceived by; 39- Operated by hand; 40- In spite of; 43- Ford flops; 44- ___ kleine Nachtmusik; 45- ___ few rounds; 46- Mock, annoy; 47- Wagers; 48- Put on the payroll; 49- ___ Speedwagon; 51- U-turn from WSW; 53- Continues obstinately; 58- Stan's pal; 62- First name in jeans; 63- And others; Abbr.; 64- Alpha's opposite; 65- Margarine; 66- Very small quantity; 67- Mexican mister; 68- Red coin?; 69- Put a lid ___; 70- Les ___-Unis;

DOWN 1- Ask for divine guidance; 2- Verdi heroine; 3- Helicopter pioneer Sikorsky; 4- Scandinavian; 5- Lock of hair; 6- Monetary unit of Cambodia; 7- Furthermore; 8- Flowerchild; 9- Authority; 10- Secondhand; 11- Yarn; 12- Crikey!; 13- ___ Clemente; 22- Demented; 24- Talks wildly; 26- Doctrine; 27- Battery pole; 28- ___ luck!; 30- ___ degree; 31- We're Off ___ the Wizard; 33- Conclusion; 34- Playwright Pirandello; 35- Big house; 36- Aquarium buildup; 38- Edmonton team; 39- Parsonage; 41- Director Craven; 42- ___ for tat; 47- Capital of Massachusetts; 48- Head armor; 50- Refrain in a children's song; 52- Gallows loop; 53- Soccer great; 54- Not odd; 55- Public disturbance; 56- French actor Jacques; 57- Strip of wood; 59- Musical Horne; 60- ___ Rhythm; 61- Hearing organs; 62- Rapper Tone ___;



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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HKD 11,880,000 4 bed 3 bath

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUTUBER-turned-boxer Jake Paul had to wait an extra four months for his high-profile match with 58-year-old former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson.

The delay from the original plan for July was caused by Tyson having a medical episode on a plane and needing time to recover from a stomach ulcer.

The rescheduled bout is set for Friday night at the \$1.2 billion retractable-roof home of the NFL's Dallas Cowboys in Arlington, Texas. The state has sanctioned it as a pro fight with some modifications.

Here's a guide for watching the fight:

AP PHOTO



WHEN IS THE MIKE TYSON-JAKE PAUL FIGHT?

It's hard to give an exact time for the main event Friday night, but it could approach midnight EST. The telecast starts at 8 p.m. EST.

IS THE TYSON-PAUL FIGHT FREE ON NETFLIX?

While this isn't the more common, and more expensive, pay-per-view format followed by most major boxing events, it does require a Netflix subscription. Netflix reported more than 280 million subscribers worldwide at the end of the third quarter in 2024.

BOXING

MIKE TYSON-JAKE PAUL: HOW TO WATCH THE FIGHT, TIME, ODDS

WHAT ARE THE ODDS ON THE TYSON-PAUL FIGHT?

Paul is a minus-210 betting favorite, according to BetMGM Sportsbook. That means the payout for a Paul victory would be slightly less than half the amount of any bet. The most bet prop is for Tyson to win by KO/TKO or DQ (+275), followed by Tyson to win on points (+1000) and Tyson to win in the

first round (+1400).

WHAT'S THE AGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FIGHTERS?

It's 31 years. Paul is 27.

WHEN WAS TYSON'S LAST SANCTIONED FIGHT?

Tyson retired in 2005 with a record of 50-6, with 44 knockouts, after losing to Kevin McBride. He fought Roy Jones Jr. in an exhibi-

tion four years ago. Paul is 10-1 with seven knockouts against mostly undistinguished opponents. His loss was to Tommy Fury, the less-accomplished half-brother of former heavyweight champion Tyson Fury.

HOW MANY ROUNDS ARE SCHEDULED FOR THE TYSON-PAUL FIGHT?

The fight is scheduled for eight

two-minute rounds, as opposed to the normal three minutes and 10 or 12 rounds for most pro fights. Tyson and Paul also will use heavier gloves with the idea of decreasing the power of punches. The gloves will be 14 ounces instead of 10. The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation has said Tyson's physical condition met the criteria for the fight to proceed. **MDT/AP**

AD

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FOOTBALL

Struggling Australia and Saudi Arabia play a crucial Asian WC qualifier

JOHN DUERDEN

AUSTRALIA hosts Saudi Arabia in a crucial World Cup qualifier at Melbourne today while Japan and South Korea can take a big step towards North America in 2026 when the third round of Asian qualifying reaches the halfway stage.

With only the top two teams from each of the three groups of six progressing automatically to the expanded 48-team tournament, Australia and Saudi Arabia both have only five points from four Group C games, five behind leaders Japan.

The sputtering form of the two teams has already resulted in coaching changes since the third round began. Graham Arnold stepped down as Soccerros head coach in September and was replaced by Tony Popovic while Saudi Arabia fired



Australia's manager Tony Popovic

Roberto Mancini in October after a 0-0 draw with Bahrain in Jeddah.

RENARD RETURNS TO RIYADH

Herve Renard is back in Riyadh to take over the Saudi team for a second spell.

"I believe we can qualify; otherwise, I wouldn't be here," Renard, who left Riyadh in March 2023 to take over the French women's national

team, told local media. "I know the players well. We're not in an ideal situation, but it's far from hopeless. We still have six games remaining, four of them away."

Renard led Saudi Arabia to qualify for the 2022 World Cup, topping a qualification group above Japan and Australia. It then defeated eventual champion Argentina 2-1 in its opening game in Qatar before losing its next two games and

finishing last in its group, failing to qualify for the knockout rounds.

"Many of these players were part of the squad that qualified for the 2022 World Cup," Renard said. "They must draw on that experience, keep their spirit high, and do everything necessary to reach the 2026 World Cup."

Saudi Arabia is hoping that a coaching change can produce the same upturn in results that Popovic delivered for Australia in his first two games in October, with a win over China at home followed by a 1-1 draw in Japan.

JAPAN FAVORED IN TWO AWAY MATCHES

Those were the first points that Japan, which has appeared in every World Cup since 1998, dropped in qualification. The Samurai Blue is expected to beat Indonesia despite playing in front of an expected

78,000 fans in Jakarta, before traveling to China.

"If you look at the FIFA rankings and the games in the World Cup qualifiers so far, you might think that the advantage is with Japan," said coach Hajime Moriyasu. "But we are playing both games away and I think it will be tough."

SOUTH KOREA CAUTIOUS WITH SON HEUNG-MIN

In Group B, leaders South Korea has recovered from a disappointing opening-game draw with the Palestinian team to win three consecutive games. Victory in Kuwait will see the South Koreans go five or six points clear of third place.

Captain and star Son Heung-min missed the victories over Jordan and Iraq due to a hamstring injury and has been short of minutes for English Premier League club Tottenham Hotspur. **MDT/AP**

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OPINION

China Daily
Editorial, China Daily

VISIT CAN HELP ENHANCE SINO-PERUVIAN COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

As President Xi Jinping has said, the development of the Asia-Pacific relies on openness and inclusiveness, learning from each other's strengths and weaknesses, and sharing what we have, rather than confrontational or beggar-thy-neighbor practices.

That's how China and Peru have become close partners in different fields to each other despite their geographical distance. Peru was one of the first batch of countries in Latin America to found diplomatic relations with New China, to establish a comprehensive strategic partnership with the country, and to sign a package of free trade agreements with it.

The two countries have maintained frequent high-level visits, and steady and productive economic and trade ties, and intensive exchanges in such fields as culture, science and technology, education, tourism and so on. In November 2008, China and Peru established a strategic partnership. In April 2013, the bilateral relationship was upgraded to a comprehensive strategic partnership.

At present, the two countries have established cooperation mechanisms such as political consultations between their foreign ministries, a strategic dialogue on economic cooperation, a mixed committee on economy and trade, a joint committee on agriculture, and a mixed committee on science and technology. These exchange channels and mechanisms have proved effective and play important roles in deepening mutual understanding and mutual trust between Beijing and Lima.

Despite the vicissitudes of world affairs, the two sides understand each other and coordinate closely with one another in international affairs.

In China, Peru is regarded as a neighbor across the Pacific Ocean. It is one of the Latin American countries where Chinese people first arrived and where the largest number of Chinese settlers live. Peruvians of Chinese descent currently account for about one-tenth of the total population of Peru. The Peruvian people affectionately call the Chinese "fellow countrymen". In May this year, Peru announced that Feb 1 of each year would be designated as the "Peru-China Fraternity Day" to express its recognition of the special contributions of Chinese immigrants.

That being said, President Xi's five-day visit to Peru starting on Wednesday, the first since his last visit in 2016, looks set to further deepen and expand the practical cross-the-board cooperation between the two countries, bringing more tangible benefits to the two peoples. By injecting fresh impetus into the bilateral relationship, the visit will help raise bilateral relations to a higher level, and also enhance the overall relations between China and Latin America as a whole.

China is Peru's largest trading partner, largest export market and largest source of imports, and Peru is China's fourth-largest trading partner in Latin America. In 2023, the bilateral trade volume reached \$37.69 billion. And China's superlarge market offers huge opportunities to agricultural products and mineral resources from Peru.

China and Peru signed a free trade agreement in 2009 and a memorandum of understanding on cooperation to jointly build the Belt and Road Initiative in 2019.

Both the Peruvian and Chinese people value the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature. President Xi's visit is expected to further strengthen the dialogue between Peru and China on environmental protection. It is also anticipated that the visit will further stimulate the world's thinking on issues such as peace and development, and promote the construction of a community with a shared future between China and Latin America. [Abridged]

TRUMP'S DEFENSE CHOICE STUNS THE PENTAGON AND RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FOX NEWS HOST'S EXPERIENCE

THE BUZZ

President-elect Donald Trump stunned the Pentagon and the broader defense world by nominating Fox News host Pete Hegseth to serve as his defense secretary, tapping someone largely inexperienced and untested on the global stage to take over the world's largest and most powerful military.

The news was met with bewilderment and worry among many in Washington as Trump passed on a number of established national security heavy-hitters and chose an Army National Guard captain well known in conservative circles as a co-host of Fox News Channel's "Fox

& Friends Weekend."

While some Republican lawmakers had a muted response to the announcement, others called his combat experience an asset or said he was "tremendously capable."

Hegseth's choice could bring sweeping changes to the military. He has made it clear on his show and in interviews that, like Trump, he is opposed to "woke" programs that promote equity and inclusion.

He also has questioned the role of women in combat and advocated pardoning service members charged with war crimes.



Passengers look at a flight information board after a number of flights are cancelled at Bali airport, yesterday

INDONESIA'S VOLCANIC ERUPTION GROUNDS INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS ON TOURIST ISLAND OF BALI

FIRDIA LISNAWATI, DENPASAR

SEVERAL international airlines canceled flights to and from Indonesia's tourist island of Bali yesterday as an ongoing volcanic eruption left travelers stranded at airports.

Tourists told The Associated Press that they have been stuck at Bali's airport since Tuesday after their flights were suddenly canceled.

"The airline did not provide accommodation, leaving us stranded at this airport," said Charlie Austin from Perth, Australia, who was on vacation in Bali with his family.

Another Australian tourist, Issabella Butler, opted to find another airline that could fly her home.

"The important thing is that we have to be able to get out of here," she said.

Media reports said that thousands of people were stranded at airports in Indonesia and Australia, but an exact number wasn't given.

Indonesia's Mount Lewotobi Laki Laki volcano on the remote island of Flores in East Nusa Tenggara province spewed towering columns of hot ash high into the air since

its initial huge eruption on Nov. 4 killed nine people and injured dozens of others.

The 1,584-meter (5,197-foot) volcano shot up ash at least 17 times on Tuesday, with the largest column recorded at 9 kilometers (5½ miles) high, the Center for Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation said in a statement.

Authorities on Tuesday expanded the danger zone as the volcano erupted again to 9 kilometers (5½ miles) as volcanic materials, including smoldering rocks, lava, and hot, thumb-size fragments of gravel and ash, were thrown up to 8 kilometers (5 miles) from the crater since Friday.

The activity at the volcano has disturbed flights at Bali's I Gusti Ngurah Rai international airport since the eruption started, airport general manager Ahmad Syaugi Shahab said. Over the past four days, 84 flights, including 36 scheduled to depart and 48 due to arrive, were affected.

Shahab said that at least 26 domestic flights and 64 overseas ones were canceled yesterday alone, including airlines from

Singapore, Hong Kong, Qatar, India and Malaysia. For these cancellations, the airlines were offering travelers a refund, or to reschedule or reroute, he said.

Three Australian airlines have also canceled or delayed a number of flights. Jetstar has paused its flights to Bali until at least Thursday, it said on its website, saying it was "currently not safe" to operate the route.

Virgin Australia's website showed 10 services to and from Bali were canceled yesterday. Qantas said it has delayed three flights. Some airlines are offering fare refunds for upcoming Bali flights to passengers who don't want to travel.

Air New Zealand canceled a flight to Denpasar scheduled for yesterday and a return service to Auckland due to depart Bali on Thursday. Passengers would be rebooked and the airline would continue to monitor the movement of ash in the coming days, Chief Operating Officer Alex Marren said.

Korean Air said two of its flights headed to Bali were forced to turn back because of volcanic ash caused by the eruption. MDT/AP



United States Trump announced tech mogul Elon Musk and ex-candidate Vivek Ramaswamy will lead a non-governmental advisory body, DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency), aimed at identifying cost-cutting measures in federal operations.



Haiti The FAA halted U.S. flights to Haiti for 30 days following recent gang attacks on planes. The U.N. also redirected flights to Cap Haitien, complicating humanitarian aid as gang violence destabilizes Port-au-Prince.



Lebanon/Gaza Israeli airstrikes killed six in Lebanon and three children in Gaza as regional conflict escalates. The Biden administration said U.S. weapons transfers to Israel will continue as humanitarian needs intensify in Gaza.



Ukraine U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken affirmed support for Ukraine until President-elect Trump's term begins, as Russia escalated attacks. North Korea's new military involvement alongside Russian forces is drawing global concern.



United Kingdom British writer Samantha Harvey's novel "Orbital," set aboard the ISS, won the Booker Prize. The novel reflects on Earth's beauty and fragility through the perspectives of astronauts, praised for its succinct, evocative narrative.