

'MONUMENTAL MACAO,' A WB DISCOVERY DOCUMENTARY EXPLORING THE CITY'S RICH HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL TAPESTRY, IS SET TO PREMIERE NEXT WEEK

PORTUGAL'S NEW CYBERSECURITY BILL MAY IMPACT MACAU, CHINA BUSINESSES

FORMER CHAIRMAN OF CHINA EVERBRIGHT SENTENCED TO 12 YEARS FOR CORRUPTION



Philippines Vice president Sara Duterte yesterday skipped an investigation into alleged threats against President Marcos Jr, claiming bias. She faces impeachment complaints and scrutiny over fund misuse as tensions rise between top officials elected separately, underscoring ongoing political strife in the country.



Japan U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin expressed confidence about enhanced military capabilities among the United States, Australia and Japan as he observed joint exercises yesterday showcasing their closer cooperation as tensions grow in the region. Austin is in Japan to reaffirm the importance of their alliance.



Myanmar An economic report highlighted the impacts of severe flooding and ongoing conflict, predicting a contraction in growth. Infrastructure damage, displaced populations, and disrupted industries continue to worsen conditions, with high inflation and currency devaluation compounding the crisis.

Belgium A report revealed over 100 journalists killed globally this year, with a conflict zone accounting for more than half. Imprisonments of media professionals also increased, reflecting heightened risks and challenges to press freedom amid escalating global tensions and authoritarianism.

SMALL BUSINESSES, BIG TROUBLES

Small businesses seek more and more diversified support amid economic recovery P3



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HO IAT SENG
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PORTUGAL'S NEW CYBERSECURITY BILL MAY IMPACT GREATER CHINA BUSINESSES

NADIA SHAW

THE proposed provisions of Portugal's cybersecurity bill draft could disproportionately affect technology suppliers from specific regions, including Macau, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and mainland China, according to Bernardo Mendia, secretary general of the Portugal-China Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCILC).

Portugal is currently holding a public consultation on the new Cybersecurity Legal Framework (NIS2), which has been extended until December 31 due to increasing vulnerabilities and a proactive government stance. This extension, which delays the deadline 22 days, aims to enhance the regulatory environment and better protect the nation's digital assets and infrastructure.

Concerns over the cybersecurity bill draft have been voiced by Mendia.

In an interview with the Times, he said, "We would like to express the Portugal-China Chamber of Commerce and Industry's concerns over the Portuguese government cybersecurity bill draft, noting that the provisions could unfairly restrict technology suppliers based on their country of origin, including from Macau, but also Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China."

Mendia said this approach does not align with Portuguese legal traditions or the principles of an open-market economy. He urged companies and individuals to share their views during the consultation process.

Article 18 of the draft bill suggests security assessments may be influenced by a manufacturer's region of origin, potentially distorting competition and limiting supplier diversity.

Mendia said such non-technical criteria do not enhance cybersecurity but instead create barriers to foreign investment.

"We strongly recommend removing non-technical criteria from the assessments, focusing solely on technical evidence and international standards," Mendia added.



Mendia also highlighted the detrimental effects of protectionism on competition and innovation.

"Protectionism weakens competition, slows or arrests innovation, reduces quality, and increases prices," he said.

He said cooperation with Macau presents a unique opportunity for both Portugal and China and should be prioritized in discussions surrounding the bill.

"Over the years and centuries, Portugal and China have shown the world the benefits of international cooperation," he added.

Mendia expressed hope that common sense and Portuguese interests would prevail over other considerations. He called upon the Macanese business community to actively participate in the consultation process by sharing their perspectives.

António Leitão Amaro, Portugal's Minister of the Presidency, said at a recent conference that "security in cyberspace is a priority."

He envisions Portugal as one of the "most interesting and attractive" countries for cyberse-

curity investments. This vision aligns with government efforts to create a robust cybersecurity framework that prioritizes risk prevention while accommodating various sizes.

Echoing this sentiment, António Trindade, CEO of local firm CESL Asia, highlighted complexities surrounding data management and cybersecurity. He said "when you deal with big data, you have a lot of issues." He pointed out concerns about data ownership and the implications of artificial intelligence on content generation, highlighting that growing importance of data governance as businesses and governments face escalating cyber threats.

In its letter, CCILC raised concerns about the potential discriminatory nature of the draft bill's provisions, stating, "In our view, these provisions do not contribute to enhancing cybersecurity. On the contrary, using non-technical criteria such as suppliers' country of origin introduces a discriminatory factor that distorts competition."

The CCILC's letter notes Article 18 allows for security assessments influenced by manu-

facturers' nationalities, which could lead to discrimination against foreign companies. This approach risks distorting competition and limiting supplier diversity while hindering innovation and increasing costs for businesses.

The proposed NIS2 directive aims to ensure a high common level of cybersecurity across the European Union.

It expands the scope of entities covered under cybersecurity regulations and introduces measures for assessing risks associated with information technology systems. As Trindade noted, addressing these challenges is essential for Macau and similar jurisdictions navigating complex data protection landscapes.

Meanwhile, Carlos Alvares, CEO of Banco Nacional Ultramarino, remarked on Macau's position, stating, "I don't see any significant impact in Macau. We do not have those kind of manufacturing companies in Macau." Noting that while global cybersecurity is critical, Macau's specific industrial landscape may mitigate some immediate impacts from regulatory changes affecting other regions.

The urgency for enhanced cybersecurity measures in Portugal is underscored by a rising number of cyberattacks.

Reports indicate the Portuguese cybersecurity market is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.7% through 2029, driven by increased digitization across industries and an expanding attack surface from Internet of Things (IoT) devices. As Trindade remarked, "We need to find solutions about how to deploy these solutions to collect data. It's a very complex matter."

Moreover, the shift toward cloud computing has intensified demand for robust cybersecurity solutions. As organizations migrate their operations online, they face heightened risks from cybercriminals exploiting vulnerabilities in cloud environments.

The market for cloud security in Portugal is expected to see significant growth, with estimates suggesting an annual increase of 18.7% until 2027.

Trindade said "big data and cybersecurity challenges create an urgent need for countries like Portugal to develop effective strategies that balance national security concerns with economic opportunities."

Despite these promising developments, challenges remain. A shortage of skilled cybersecurity professionals poses a significant hurdle against increasingly sophisticated attacks. Trindade highlighted this issue, noting, "We cannot store data without risking compromising security," emphasizing the need for qualified experts and resources to navigate these complexities.

Public-private partnerships are emerging as vital components in strengthening Portugal's cybersecurity posture. Collaborations between government agencies and private firms are fostering innovation and enhancing incident response capabilities.

Initiatives like the Portugal Cybersecurity Cluster aim to promote cooperation among industry stakeholders, academia, and government bodies to drive economic growth within this sector.

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

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

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ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

OFFICE MANAGER_Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS_Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C,

MACAU SAR Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

Advertisement_advertising@macaudailytimes.com

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Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre reopens with revitalized space for cultural tourism

VICTORIA CHAN

THE Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre officially reopened yesterday, offering a revitalized space for cultural tourism and experiences.

The reopening ceremony was officiated by government officials and renowned Portuguese architect and sculptor Cristina Maria de Faria Rocha Leiria, the center's designer.

The Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre has been transformed into a multi-functional cultural tourism space, featuring exhibitions, shops selling cultural and creative products, as well as snacks and takeaway refreshments.

This renovation aims to facilitate the development of cultural tourism in the community and diversify the public's cultural experiences.

A key aspect is the exhibition "Moments of Light with Kun Iam – Solo Exhibition of Cristina Rocha Leiria," which invites the public to appreciate the Kun Iam statue through the interplay of light and materials such as jade, crystal, wood and brushed steel. Visitors can also learn about the planning, construction, and inauguration of the Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre, which serves as "a testament to the connection between China and Portugal."

Leong Wai Man, the director of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), welcomed the attendees to the reopening ceremony and the opening of the exhibition.

In her remarks, Leong highlighted the bureau's efforts in optimizing public cultural services and supporting the growth of the cultural industry in recent years.

"Through the organic integration of various cultural activities, cultural and museum facilities and cultural and creative industries, we have promoted the in-depth integration of culture and tourism, and guided the demand for cultural consumption, which has contributed to the diversified development of Macau's economy," Leong stated.

Leong noted the Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre, which was planned in 1997 and opened in 1999, is a symbol of Sino-Portuguese friendship. Against this backdrop, Macau has cultivated a multicultural and open environment that has allowed cultural and creative enterprises to produce unique projects blending Chinese and Western elements.

Leong said the bureau has transformed the Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre into a cultural and tourism event space, offering exhibitions, concerts, and information on local attractions and cultural activities to promote the development of Macau's arts, culture and creative enterprises.

Leong expressed gratitude to the Portuguese architect and sculptor, Cristina Rocha Leiria, for organizing the "Moments of Light with Kun Iam" exhibition, which showcases the construction process of the Kun Iam statue and its related works, which are "a testament to the fruitfulness of the joint efforts made by the Chinese and Portuguese, as well as the various sectors of Macau."

The "Moments of Light with Kun Iam – Solo Exhibition of Cristina Rocha Leiria" will be open to the public until March 13, 2025, with free admission. The Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., including on public holidays, but will be closed Fridays.



SMEs

Small businesses seek more support amid economic recovery

VICTORIA CHAN

AS Macau's economy gradually recovers, local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in smaller community districts are still experiencing considerable operational challenges, with many shops remaining vacant.

Despite tourist numbers rebounding to 85% of pre-pandemic levels, SMEs in these areas continue to struggle.

Lawmakers and think tank experts are calling on the government to enhance its support measures to help these businesses regain their competitiveness and improve the overall economic landscape of the community.



In recent months, the government has launched several initiatives to support SMEs, including

measures to reduce operating costs, promote digital transformation, and stimulate com-

munity consumption. However, lawmakers and think tank experts believe more can be done.

As cited in a Macao Daily News report, lawmaker and deputy executive director of local think tank Collective Wisdom Policy Centre, Ngan Iek Hang, and think tank president, Choi Chi Seng, suggested the government establish a tracking mechanism to investigate the operating conditions of SMEs in each district and introduce more targeted policies based on their actual needs.

This could include supporting SMEs to enter emerging industries, such as cultural creativity, the digital economy, and tourism experiences.

To further stimulate market vitality, Ngan proposed extending the validity period of coupons in the city-wide Consumption Reward Scheme, as well as exploring more diversified financial support methods to ease the financial pressure on

SMEs. Choi emphasized the importance of improving infrastructure, such as pedestrian facilities and regional transportation connections, to attract more tourists to the community and bring more opportunities to local merchants. He also suggested combining historical, cultural, and artistic activities to revitalize old areas and create more favorable operating conditions for SMEs.

Both experts believe short-term support policies are crucial, but stressed that a greater focus is needed on supporting SMEs to undergo industrial upgrading and transformation.

They called on the government to adopt innovative and creative approaches to increase participation opportunities for local businesses and promote sustainable economic development in the community.

LAWYERS ASSOCIATION RE-ELECTS VONG HIN FAI

Lawmaker Vong Hin Fai was re-elected for a second two-year term as president of the Macau Lawyers Association (AAM), securing 269 of 287 votes cast. The board retained most of its officers, with Oriana Inácio Pun continuing as Secretary-General. Veteran lawyer Leonel Alves will also serve another term as chairman of the General Assembly Board. In a separate election, António Dias Azedo was appointed president of the Superior Council of Macau Lawyers, replacing Paulino Comandante, who now leads the AAM's Supervisory Board.

SUBSIDIZED MEDICAL SERVICES QUOTA TO INCREASE

The Health Bureau said that there will be no reduction in the quota for subsidized medical services this year, with plans to increase the quota in 2025. Speaking at a TDM radio program yesterday, director Alvis Lo reiterated that the agreement with subsidized medical institutions establishes annual caps on the number of subsidy places and budgets, allowing for reasonable monthly or daily allocations based on demand. Last year, 800,000 people were served.

PJ WARNS AGAINST TOY SYRINGES

The Judiciary Police (PJ) has strongly advised parents to take precautions with toy syringes amidst recent reports of the toy being sold on neighboring online shopping platforms and toy stores. The toy syringe, also known as a "squishy" or "pimple popping" toy, allows owners to use the syringe to inject air or liquid into a silicone doll which swells afterwards and can be popped. Since the syringe needle is sharp and resembles a medical syringe, the PJ raised concerns over adolescents causing bodily harm or even death while using the toy syringe.

MFOOD ADDS FEES FOR HANDOVER DAY HOLIDAY

mFood has announced additional fees for deliveries on Dec. 20, the public holiday commemorating the handover of Macau. According to the statement, an extra MOP10 will be charged for mFood deliveries, while MOP40 will be charged for long-distance deliveries. Additionally, a platform service fee of MOP10 and MOP20 will be charged to mFood and long-distance deliveries respectively.

MACAU EYES EXPANDED ROLE IN GBA DEVELOPMENT

VICTORIA CHAN

CHIEF Executive Ho Iat Seng has outlined Macau's plans to enhance its role in the Greater Bay Area's economic development and broader opening-up strategy during the second edition of the Industrial and Commercial Conference for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-

Macao Greater Bay Area.

Speaking in a virtual format, Ho stated that the Greater Bay Area initiative is a pioneering effort under the 'One country, two systems' framework."

Recent decisions from the 20th CPC Central Committee have provided strategic guidance to deepen reforms and advance Chinese-style modernization in the

region.

According to Ho, cooperation in the Greater Bay Area provides important guidance by strengthening the alignment of rules and mechanisms that will allow Macau to better contribute to the nation's high-level opening-up to the world.

As one of the four central cities in the Greater Bay Area, Macau

boasts a unique fusion of Chinese and Western cultures, as well as its distinctive status as a Sino-Portuguese platform and a free port.

The Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Co-operation Zone in Hengqin, Ho noted, offers Macau a broader hinterland and development space.

Macau has focused on implementing a "1+4" moderately diversified development strategy, promoting the growth of comprehensive tourism and leisure industries, traditional Chinese medicine and health, modern finance, high-tech, exhibitions, trade, culture and sports.

Ho said that standing at a new historical starting point, Macau will seize the opportunities presented by China's modernization. By adhering to the principle of 'one center, one platform, one base,' Macau aims to better integrate into the country's overall development, serve the Greater Bay Area, and build the Greater Bay Area District.

This will allow the region to write a new chapter in what constitutes the successful practice of 'One country, two systems' with Macau characteristics.

The two-day conference, themed "China's Bay Area, Opportunities for the World," aimed to explore ways to leverage economic synergies and accelerate market integration within the Greater Bay Area.



AL aims to improve judicial integration: Kou Hoi In

STAFF REPORTER

THE president of the Legislative Assembly (AL), Kou Hoi In, is focused on enhancing judicial integration between Macau, Guangdong, and the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin.

While the development of the Greater Bay Area and the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin has provided Macau plenty of room for development, Kou said there are still important coordination and integration efforts required, especially within the judicial sector.

In a recent interview with media outlets as part of the 25th anniversary of the Macau Special Administrative Region (SAR), which will be celebrated Dec. 20, he remarked, "Many of the measures introduced are quite innova-



tive, but they lack a solid legal framework. We need to achieve integration in key areas such as legislation, customs duties, and currency."

He added that "both Guangdong and Macau must continue collaborating on this front, managing the process together, and establishing appropriate systems and methods for the development of the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin."

Kou also said the

legislative body would persist in crafting laws that address social needs, particularly in the realm of national security.

He said that, according to the Basic Law of the Macau SAR, the region operates under a political system led by the Chief Executive, and that the AL is not an opposition entity to the SAR government, regarding the exclusion of non-patriotic candidates in the 2021 elections.

WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY AND MGTO TO UNVEIL 'MONUMENTAL MACAO'

MONUMENTAL Macao," a documentary exploring the region's rich historical and cultural tapestry, was announced earlier this week.

The documentary, produced by Warner Bros. Discovery in collaboration with the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), is set to captivate audiences worldwide.

It will air on various Discovery channels across the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

The documentary is said to employ a unique storytelling approach that highlights the significance of Macau's iconic buildings while narrating the region's evolution over the centuries.

Viewers will journey through architectural marvels, culinary deli-

ghts, technological advancements, and a vibrant arts scene.

By bridging past and present, "Monumental Macao" showcases contemporary narratives from those leading the cultural renaissance in Macau.

"Monumental Macao" weaves together stories of the region's monuments to uncover its centuries-old history.

Using architecture as a lens, the documentary explores Macau's transformation from a Portuguese colony to a dynamic cultural hub in Asia.

The documentary will premiere on several Discovery channels, including Discovery Channel Japan Dec. 18, Discovery Channel SEA Dec. 19, and Discovery Channel India Dec. 21. **NS**

EDUCATION

MPU inaugurates new academic building

STAFF REPORTER

THE Macau Polytechnic University (MPU) officially inaugurated its new academic building Tuesday, with the new facility expected to enhance its research and teaching capacity as well as provide a better environment in the fields of high-end technology, health, science, and language translation.

Located on the Macau campus, the newly unveiled academic building features 13 stories and is equipped with a wide range of facilities including an auditorium, multi-purpose function rooms, laboratories, research center, and a library.

According to MPU, the total budget for the new academic building is an estimated MOP620 million and is expected to accommodate an additional 1,000 students when the facilities are put into use.

An open day is also scheduled for Jan. 4 for the public to explore the facilities.

MPU rector Marcus Im's speech noted the building marks a new stage in the university's development.

"The MPU is committed to nurturing ta-



lents who love the country and Macau, and has strived to improve its scientific research level, thus contributing to the socio-economic development of the country and Macau."

The university pledged to promote cooperation with local research institutes to enhance the level and achievements of science and innovation in Macau, and further promote the development of higher education in the region.

ROTARY CLUB OF MACAU

'Joy to the World' event celebrates talents of special needs community

STAFF REPORTER

NEARLY 400 individuals from five local associations supporting people with special needs recently gathered at the Macau Tower Convention and Entertainment Centre for the 25th edition of the "Joy to the World" event. Organized by the Rotary Club of Macau and co-hosted with the Fuhong Society of Macau, Macau Special Olympics, Association of Parents of the Mentally Handicapped, Macau Down Syndrome Association, and the Concordia School for Special Education, this year's theme was "Magic Xmas Garden," with Sands China as the event sponsor.

The celebration provided a vibrant platform for young talent, allowing



service users to showcase their artistic abilities through energetic dance performances and acrobatics.

"This signature community service project aims to provide a stage for young people with special needs to showcase their talents, affirm their potential, and contribute to their integration into society," the Rotary Club said in a statement.

Dressed as magicians and wizards, VIP guests ad-

ded a festive touch to the occasion. The venue was adorned with Christmas decorations, including life-size Santa Clauses who distributed gifts to all participants.

President Calvin Kuang expressed hope that the event would enhance inclusivity and self-worth among individuals with special needs, emphasizing the Rotary Club's commitment to service and community upliftment.

AD

Lei n.º 14/2022 (Regime jurídico de segurança dos ascensores) e respectiva regulamentação

Estão em pleno vigor

Inspecção anual de ascensores para a não suspensão da sua utilização e um funcionamento seguro

O Regime jurídico de segurança dos ascensores já entrou plenamente em vigor em 1 de Abril deste ano e prevê-se que entre o final deste ano e o início do próximo seja o período de maior movimento em que o prazo de validade de um grande número de "Certificados de segurança de funcionamento" chega ao fim. A Direcção dos Serviços de Solos e Construção Urbana **alerta os responsáveis para organizarem o mais rapidamente possível a inspecção dos ascensores, porque é preciso reservar tempo suficiente para proceder a eventuais reparações e poderem depois obter a "Declaração de aprovação de inspecção", a fim de evitar a suspensão da sua utilização e garantir um funcionamento seguro.**

Antigo

Novo

Certificado de segurança de funcionamento

Caducam em 1 de Abril de 2025

Atenção para a data de expiração do prazo

Passa a ser

Declaração de aprovação de inspecção

Com vista a tornar mais conveniente ao sector a mobilização flexível de recursos humanos e o agendamento da inspecção, os responsáveis devem tratar do assunto o mais cedo possível.

Para mais informações, queira aceder à "Rede de informações sobre os ascensores" da DSSCU www.dsscu.gov.mo

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FORTUNE BRAINSTORM DESIGN 2024

MORE THAN FUNCTIONALITY, EXPERTS ADVOCATE FOR LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL VALUE

NADIA SHAW

INDUSTRY experts have emphasized that while many products serve their intended purposes effectively, great design goes beyond mere functionality.

Robert Brunner, founder of Ammunition and lead designer for Beats by Dre has offered insights about what distinguishes great design from merely good design.

He was speaking with Clay Chandler, executive editor for Asia at Fortune, before an audience of industry professionals and aspiring designers at last week's Fortune Brainstorm Design conference 2024.

Brunner began by reflecting on the origins of Beats by Dre, a brand that revolutionized the audio industry by targeting a younger audience.

"We were really able to collectively come up with this idea for a product that was the first high-performance audio brand for a younger audience," he said.

This initiative arose from Jimmy Iovine's observation that there was a lack of quality audio products resonating with young music listeners.

Dr. Dre famously stated during their initial meetings, "People aren't hearing my music," highlighting the need for headphones that accurately represented his sound.

The design philosophy behind Beats headphones emphasizes functionality, comfort, and aesthetic appeal.

"If you're going to put something on your head, it really should be speaking a language that you identify with and feel good about," Brunner said. This focus on cultural relevance and engineering



alongside aesthetics helped propel Beats to success after an initially slow launch.

Brunner elaborated on what differentiates good design from great design.

He said that while many products can be deemed "good" for performing their intended functions, great design transcends this by being inspiring, empowering, and transformative.

He said great design often challenges norms and creates social value beyond mere monetary gain.

"Great' is actually an entire thing that goes to another level when you start to think about great design," he said.

Leadership emerged as a critical theme in achieving great design.

Brunner said successful projects often hinge on a small number

of individuals who possess a clear vision and unwavering commitment.

"When you work with a leader who wants to make something great, the purpose is not something that's up for debate," he said.

He shared his experience working with Jack Dorsey at Square, where the mission was clear: "We are going to democratize credit card payments." They had a non-negotiable purpose.

Brunner also highlighted craftsmanship and attention to detail as essential components in maintaining the integrity of a product's original concept during development.

"There is a sort of level of commitment and tenacity that it requires," he said.

In discussing the distinction between good and great design,

Brunner said good design is not just about functionality but also about aesthetics and market competitiveness.

He concluded by stressing the importance of purpose in design.

"There is always purpose to it. Many times, the purpose has to sit above financials."

This perspective underscores the vital role of leadership and commitment in achieving exceptional design outcomes.

Brunner also addressed a common issue among designers known as the "maturity complex."

This complex often arises from early career experiences where designers feel subordinate to engineering or marketing departments due to a lack of business education.

"I learned this lesson largely at

Apple," he recalled. "I would sit in executive meetings and think, 'That's not good work,' but it's not my place to say."

This realization empowered him to engage in discussions about making products great rather than relegating himself to a purely creative role.

The importance of communication skills for designers was another key topic in their discussion.

Brunner said designers should engage in public speaking or even comedy classes to enhance their ability to articulate ideas clearly and persuasively.

"Almost as important as your creative ability is your ability to communicate," he said.

He said successful product development is not an isolated effort but requires collaboration across various teams.

CORPORATE BITS

Galaxy sponsors national gold medalists' visit to Macau



Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) has served as the title sponsor for the "National Gold Medalists Visit to Macau - Vitality Walk 2024," held from December 6 to December 8.

The walk featured 13 national gold medalists, including Olympic stars Su Bingtian and Zhang Yufei, who participated in the "41st Walk for A Million" charity event alongside local resi-

dents. During their visit to Macau, the gold medalists also toured the Macao University of Tourism and Lou Hau High School, where they interacted with local youth.

The athletes shared their experiences in their sports careers and encouraged young people to actively participate in sports activities. Additionally, GEG organized the "Go for Gold" treasure hunt at Galaxy Macau, promoting interaction between the athletes and approximately 300 local participants.

Through these initiatives, GEG aims to foster community engagement and inspire youth participation in sports.

Four Seasons Hotel Macao unveils winter offerings



Four Seasons Hotel Macao has announced a series of festive experiences designed for guests this winter season. Highlights include the Winter Truffle Afternoon Tea at Xiao

Ting and the Ohte Truffle Delights, featuring Truffle Chicken Tsukune. The Belcação Festive Buffet will offer traditional dishes such as roasted Christmas turkey and Wagyu

Beef Wellington, along with a selection of homemade pies.

At Zi Yat Heen, Michelin-starred Chef Ho Yam To Anthony will present Cantonese dishes infused with truffles. A portion of proceeds from the hotel's Signature Gateau, a Chocolate Raspberry Cake, will support cancer research at local hospitals.

Guests can also indulge in a 60-minute massage, complemented by a free 30-minute treatment. The hotel is partnering with Bank of China for the 'Gift of Winter' campaign, offering various dining and spa promotions.

PHILANTHROPY

Soros' Open Society Foundations say they remain focused on human rights

THALIA BEATY,
NEW YORK

AP PHOTO

DESPITE years of internal turmoil and changes, Open Society Foundations wants those in the human rights sector to know their movements will still receive support from the organization, its president Binaifer Nowrojee said yesterday [Macau time].

The foundations, founded by billionaire investor George Soros and now led by one of his sons, Alex Soros, have historically been one of the largest funders of human rights groups. But since 2021, they closed some of their programs and reduced their staff as part of a major internal reorganization.

In the process, many grantees and others in the human rights movement have waited anxiously to see where the chips would fall.

"A reimagination has taken place under the leadership of the new board chair at Open Society Foundations," Nowrojee said, referring to Alex Soros.

"One of the reasons that we wanted to really reiterate in a large way, with balloons, et cetera, that we are still committed to human rights, is because of this fear that's permeated with the changes that somehow Open Society Foundations is no longer going to be working on rights or equity or justice," she said in advance of Human Rights Day, which the United Nations observes on Dec. 10.

Nowrojee offered few new details about OSF's specific funding priorities, though earlier this year, the foundations committed \$400 million toward green jobs and economic development.

Another new program focuses on protecting environmental defenders that will work in a few countries, like Colombia and the Democratic Republic of Congo and end after five years,



George Soros

said Sharan Srinivas, a director of programs at OSF.

"We did a survey of what other donors are supporting and in general, we saw that this is where the gap is," he said of people who come under attack for defending land, water or other resources. "Especially bilateral donors find it much easier to support global organizations, who in turn are able to support prominent rights defenders in capital cities who are well known."

One benefit of the limited time horizon, Srinivas said, is his team will mostly make grants of three or five years — longer than OSF's typical grants — and offer grantees more flexibility. It will also have some funds to respond to emergencies for human rights defenders all over the world.

In 2020, OSF was the largest global human rights funder, giving out the most money overall and making the largest number of grants. That's according to the Human Rights Funders Network, a membership organization of grantmakers that tracks philanthropic funding for human rights groups.

"When major funders adjust their priorities, it can have a ripple effect. Their decisions can dramatically impact the human rights movements they once supported, especially in regions where they've been a long-time champion," HRFN wrote in its most

recent Advancing Human Rights report from September.

To add to the atmosphere of uncertainty, another major human rights funder, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, announced earlier this year that it would end its work by 2028.

OSF's board aims to employ 600 people in total around the world, Nowrojee said, which is down from a reported 800 in 2021.

Some of the changes OSF made in the last three years include winding down its global public health program and significantly diminishing its programs in the European Union. It spun off its area of work focused on Roma communities into a new organization and issued final grants to many of its partners.

"You never want philanthropy to just be doing the same thing. You want philanthropy to be getting out of stuff," Nowrojee said. "And so there's large areas of work where huge achievements were made, which we have retreated from, not because we don't think that there's value in them, but the movements themselves have strengthened."

People who worked for OSF's public health program and some of their grantees have spoken about its impacts over almost three decades through an oral history project led by University of Southern California Institute on Inequa-

lities in Global Health and funded by OSF.

Jonathan Cohen, who led the OSF public health program and now holds positions at USC, told an interviewer with the oral history project about a decision in 2020 by OSF's leadership to take funding from its programs and reallocate it to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"That claw-back in April should have been a sign, I think, to all of us that we were not long for this world," Cohen said, of the public health program. "But of course, you don't accept that. You fight. You resist. You try to keep your program, which is what we did until we couldn't."

Among the movements that OSF had supported under its public health program was the Network of Sex Work Projects, a global coalition of sex worker groups. It formed in 1992 in part in response to the killing of sex workers living with HIV, said Ruth Morgan Thomas, who was NSWP's global coordinator for many years, as part of the oral history project. She said she was saddened to see the closure of OSF's public health work.

"I hope as it reemerges and its global strategy reemerges, it will retain its stance and support for promoting the realization of sex workers' rights and inclusion in our societies," she said. **MDT/AP**

ADVERTORIAL

GREAT TIMES

Macau 2049 – a performance showcases 8 wonders of Chinese culture!



Following Director Zhang Yimou, step into Asia's first dynamic high-tech theater and witness firsthand how director Zhang merge stage-of-the-art technology to interpret the essence of Chinese culture in a captivating 80-minute journey at MGM Theater.

MGM Theater proudly delivers a world-class stage to push the boundaries of theatre and expands the possibilities of performing art; every seat offers a unique central view. The 180-degree panoramic view ensures a visual feast without blind spots; while L-ISA's hyper-realistic dynamic sound effects immerse you in one sci-fi wonder, the seamless 900-square-meter world's largest indoor LED screen creates a flawless stage effect like no other.



To fully embrace Zhang Yimou's technological aesthetics and integrate them with world-class technology, "Macau 2049" presents 8 traditional intangible cultural treasures such as ancient Drumming, Khoomei, Miao Songs, The Crossroads Inn, Yangge, Yi Song, Lion Dance, and Shaanxi traditional Storytelling with cutting-edge technology such as 6-joint robotic arm, 108 kinetic mirrors, humanoid robot, bionic flying devices, and laser beams. "MACAU 2049" overturns the impressions of intangible cultural heritage, heralding a new entertainment era.

Get your tickets now at macau2049.mgm.mo to see how pioneers a futuristic and tech-savvy aesthetic for the stage in MGM Theater.





National gold medalists and distinguished guests joined the annual "Walk for a Million" charity event.

"National Gold Medalists Visit to Macau - Vitality Walk 2024" Presented by Galaxy Entertainment Group Successfully Concluded

To celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China and the 25th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Macau SAR Government, Galaxy

Entertainment Group (GEG) held and supported a series of celebratory activities. One highlight was the recently concluded "National Gold Medalists Visit to Macau - Vitality Walk 2024" Presented by Galaxy En-

tertainment Group. Organized by the Sports and Olympic Committee of Macau, China, co-organized by Associação de Amizade de Membros da Conferência Consultiva Política do Povo Chinês na Instância de

Província de Macau, and title sponsored by GEG, the event brought together 13 national gold medalists for an extravaganza in Macau. During their visit, the gold medalists not only supported the "41st Walk for a

Million" charity event, but also participated in various community activities that united Macau's different community groups through sports and celebrated the year of "Double Celebrations".



GEG and the event organizers invited members from different associations and community groups to team up with the national gold medalists for the "Go for Gold" treasure hunt game at Galaxy Macau.



The winners of the "Go for Gold" treasure hunt game posed for a heartwarming photo with the national gold medalists.



The "Go for Gold" treasure hunt game unfolded across multiple iconic locations at Galaxy Macau, elevating the atmosphere with the presence of the national gold medalists.



In the "Go for Gold", the athletes enthusiastically participated in a quiz game integrating national and Macau elements, testing their knowledge related to national celebrations and Macau.



Since 2013, GEG has supported the "National Gold Medalists Visit to Macau" series and became the title sponsor of the event for the first time this year, continuing to provide accommodation and catering for the athletes.



GEG hosted a welcome reception and presented bouquets to the national gold medalists at the Galaxy Hotel of Galaxy Macau.



As a key highlight, the national gold medalists attended the annual "Walk for a Million" charity event in support of this community-wide initiative.



The national gold medalists enthusiastically interacted with "Walk for a Million" participants, waving and cheering them on.

GEG curated an array of activities to promote sports engagement within the community

As the title sponsor of this year's visit, GEG specially curated an exhilarating "Go for Gold" treasure hunt game hosted at several iconic locations across Galaxy Macau, including the Grand Resort Deck, Banyan Tree Macau, Terrazza Italian Restaurant, and the "Love Between Fairy and Devil" VR Experience Center. There, 300 members from various associations and community groups were invited to team up with the national gold

medalists for an interactive treasure hunt game that included questions about national conditions and Macau in the final round, to celebrate the year of "Double Celebrations". Moreover, GEG invited the national gold medalists for an exploration of the Lai Chi Vun Shipyards, which was revitalized through GEG's partnership with the Macau SAR Government. This initiative allowed the national gold medalists to experience the unique

historic charm of Macau while learning about its shipbuilding history and enjoying the area's cultural and creative bazaar setup. By connecting Macau's different communities throughout the national gold medalists' visit, GEG hopes to share the joy of the "Double Celebrations", promote the integrated development of sports and tourism, facilitate local community exchanges through sports, and advocate the importance of sports for all.



Accompanied by GEG representatives and the organizers, the national gold medalists visited the Lai Chi Vun Shipyards.



The national gold medalists experienced the Lai Chi Vun Shipyards' technology and leisure enriched facilities.



The national gold medalists tried traditional fishing net weaving during the Lai Chi Vun Shipyards visit.



CORRUPTION

Former chairman of China Everbright jailed for 12 years

A former chairman of the state-owned bank China Everbright Group was jailed 12 years for embezzlement and bribery, official broadcaster CCTV said this week.

Tang Shuangning, who had also held senior posts at the People's Bank of China and the China Banking Regulatory Commission, was arrested in January, part of a wider wave of prosecutions of senior officials accused of financial crimes.

A court in the city of Tangshan, about 100 miles east of Beijing, found him guilty of taking advantage of his position at the state-owned bank in "seeking convenience for others" in jobs and loans, in exchange for illegal payments. The court said he had accepted illegal property with a total value of more than 11 million yuan (about \$1.5 million).

Tang, who retired in 2017, was expelled from the ruling Communist Party in January. His successor at Everbright, Li Xiaopeng, was also suspected of graft, expelled from the party and removed from public office.

They are among many officials caught up in President Xi Jinping's decade-long anti-corruption campaign, which critics say is also designed to remove his political rivals.

Other former officials caught up in the crackdown include Liu Liange, a former chairman of the Bank of China; former Chinese central bank senior official Sun Guofeng; former president of state-owned China CITIC Bank Sun Deshun; and Zhang Hongli, a former senior executive of the state-owned Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. **MDT/AP**

US-CHINA

Biden approves national security memo aimed at helping Trump on China

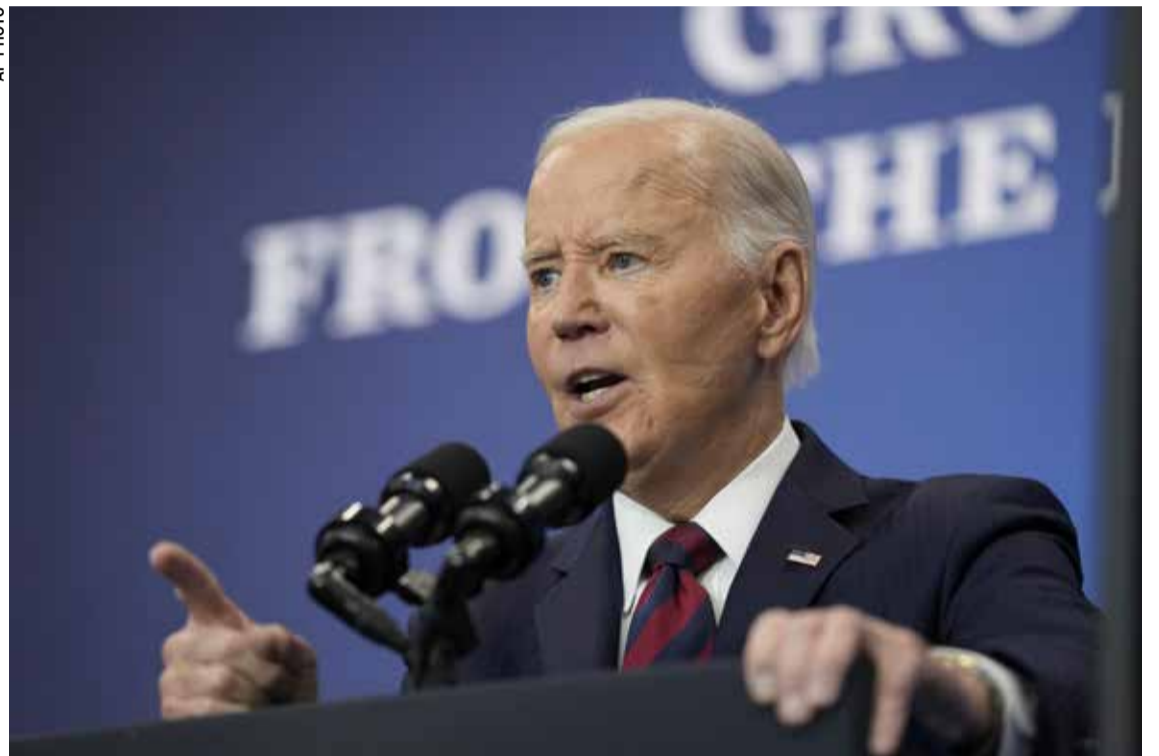
AAMER MADHANI,
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Joe Biden has approved a new national security memorandum that is meant to serve as a roadmap for the incoming Trump administration as it looks to counter growing cooperation among China, Iran, North Korea and Russia, the White House said yesterday.

Biden administration officials began developing the guidance this summer. It was shaped to be a document that could help the next administration build its approach from day one on how it will go about dealing with the tightening relationships between the United States' most prominent adversaries and competitors, according to two senior administration officials.

The officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the White House, said the classified memorandum would not be made public because of the sensitivity of some of its findings.

The document includes four broad recommendations: improving U.S. government interagency cooperation, speeding up the sharing of information with allies about the four adversaries, calibrating the U.S. govern-



ment's use of sanctions and other economic tools for maximum effectiveness, and bolstering preparation to manage simultaneous crises involving the adversaries.

The U.S. for many years has been concerned about cooperation among the four countries. Coordination has accelerated between the countries in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

The officials noted that as Russia has become more isolated by much of the world, Moscow has turned to Iran for drones and missiles. From North Korea, the Rus-

sians have received artillery, missiles and even thousands of troops that have traveled to help the Russians try to repel Ukrainian forces from the Kursk region. China, meanwhile, has supported Russia with dual use components that help keep its military industrial base afloat.

In return, Russia has sent fighter jets to Iran and assisted Tehran as it looks to bolster its missile defense and space technology.

North Korea has received from Russia much-needed fuel and funding to help build out its manufacturing and military capabilities. The offi-

cial added that Russia has "de facto accepted North Korea as a nuclear weapon state."

China, meanwhile, is benefiting from Russian know-how, with the two countries working together to deepen their military technical cooperation. The two nations are also conducting joint patrols in the Arctic region.

Biden and President-elect Donald Trump have sharply different worldviews, but officials in both the incoming and outgoing administrations said they have sought to coordinate on national security issues during the transition. **MDT/AP**

DIRE STRAIT

TAIWAN WANTS CHINA TO END ITS MILITARY ACTIVITY IN NEARBY WATERS

Taiwan demanded yesterday that China end its ongoing military activity in nearby waters, which it said is unilaterally undermining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and disrupting international shipping and trade.

The Foreign Ministry, in a statement posted on its website, said it was responding in part to the activities

of a "large number" of Chinese naval and coast guard ships in the first-island chain, the Pacific archipelago off the Asian continental mainland that includes Japan, Taiwan and part of the Philippines.

Taiwan defense officials say they have detected Chinese ships since Monday, both off Taiwan and farther out along the first-island chain. They described

the formations as two walls designed to demonstrate that the waters belong to China.

China restricted airspace off its southeast coast from Monday to Wednesday, an indication that it was planning to hold drills, but the country's People's Liberation Army has not confirmed whether it is doing so.

Taiwan has been expecting drills following

stops by its leader, Lai Ching-te, in Hawaii and the U.S. territory of Guam during an overseas trip last week. China claims self-governing Taiwan as its territory and opposes any official contact with America and other foreign governments.

A Chinese spokesperson didn't comment directly on any military exercises but said in a statement posted

online yesterday that the government would not let provocations by Taiwan in collusion with external forces go unchecked.

"We will take necessary measures to resolutely defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity, maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and safeguard the fundamental interests of compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait," said Zhu Fenglian, a spokesperson for the central government's Taiwan Affairs Office. **MDT/AP**

SOUTH KOREA

Ex-defense chief tried to kill himself after being arrested over martial law

KIM TONG-HYUNG &
HYUNG-JIN KIM, SEOUL

SOUTH Korea's previous defense minister was stopped from attempting suicide while in detention over last week's martial law declaration, officials said yesterday, as President Yoon Suk Yeol's office resisted a police attempt to search the compound.

The main liberal opposition Democratic Party is pushing for a new motion to impeach Yoon for his Dec. 3 decree that imposed martial law in South Korea for the first time in more than four decades. Its first impeachment attempt against Yoon last Saturday failed after ruling party lawmakers boycotted the vote. The party said it plans to submit the new motion today to set up a vote on Saturday.

Yoon's ill-conceived power grab has paralyzed South Korean politics, frozen its foreign policy and rattled financial markets. Yesterday, rival North Korea's state media for the first time reported about the turmoil across the border, but the country hasn't shown any suspicious activities.

Shin Yong Hae, commissioner general of the Korea Correctional Service, told lawmakers that former Defense Minister Kim Yong Hyun tried to kill himself the previous night at a detention center in Seoul. He said correctional officers stopped him and that he was in stable condition.

Kim was arrested by prosecutors early yesterday on allegations of playing a key role in a rebellion and committing abuse of power. He became the first person formally arrested over the martial law decree.

Kim, one of Yoon's close associates, has been accused of recommending martial law to Yoon and sending troops to the National Assembly to block lawmakers from voting on it. Enough lawmakers eventually managed to enter a parliament chamber and they unanimously rejected Yoon's decree, forcing the Cabinet to lift it before daybreak on Dec. 4.

Kim said in a statement on Tuesday that he "deeply apologizes for causing significant anxiety" to the public. He said all responsibility for the martial law imposition rests with him and pleaded for leniency for soldiers deployed to enforce it.

AP PHOTO



South Korea's Defense Minister Kim Yong Hyun speaks during a news conference in Ottawa, last November

Prosecutors have up to 20 days to determine whether to indict Kim.

Yoon's office blocks search of presidential compound

Later yesterday, police detained National Police Agency Commissioner General Cho Ji Ho and Kim Bong-sik, head of Seoul's metropolitan police. They were accused of deploying police forces to parliament to block lawmakers from voting.

The main focus of the investigation is finding whether Yoon, Kim and others involved in imposing martial law committed rebellion. A conviction for rebellion carries a maximum penalty of death.

South Korean police said they sent officers to search Yoon's office to look for any evidence related to the martial law introduction. But investigators failed to enter the office as of yesterday evening, about six hours after their arrival, senior police officer Lee Ho-young told the parliament.

Some observers earlier said that the presidential security service won't likely permit searches of Yoon's office, citing a law that prohibits searches of sites with state secrets without

approval from those in charge of those areas.

Yoon on Saturday apologized over the martial law decree, saying that he won't avoid legal or political responsibility for it. He said he would leave it to his party to chart a course through the country's political turmoil, "including matters related to my term in office."

The leader of Yoon's ruling party later vowed to arrange the president's stable exit from of-

Kim was arrested by prosecutors on allegations of playing a key role in a rebellion and committing abuse of power

ice, saying the party will coordinate with Cabinet members over state affairs and that Yoon will be sidelined from duties.

The comments were criticized as unrealistic and unconstitutional, and caused widespread questions about who is in charge of South Korea and its military at a time of heightened tensions with North Korea. The Justice Ministry on Tuesday banned Yoon from leaving the country as he faces investigations.

Vice Defense Minister Kim

Seon Ho reiterated yesterday that Yoon remains in charge of the military. But Yoon hasn't been involved in any major official activities since lifting martial law, except for accepting resignation offers by officials involved in the martial law case and appointing the head for the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

A view from North Korea

A yesterday article from the North's state news agency reported about the South Korean political chaos and protests triggered by Yoon's martial law decree. The report mostly attempted to explain the South Korean events, though it called Yoon "a traitor" and his military "gangsters."

Many experts say North Korea is sensitive to the domestic spread of news on major anti-government protests in foreign countries, because its own people have no official access to international news and could be affected by such events. The U.S. State Department said Monday that the U.S.-South Korean alliance remains "iron-clad" and that Washington is committed to the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula.

In his martial law announcement, the conservative Yoon stressed a need to rebuild the country by eliminating "shameless North Korea followers and anti-state forces," a reference to his liberal rivals who control parliament. Since taking office in 2022, Yoon has had near-constant friction with the Democratic Party, which introduced motions to impeach some of his top officials and launched a political offensive over scandals involving Yoon and his wife.

Opposition parties and many experts say the martial law decree was unconstitutional. They say a president is by law allowed to declare martial law only during wartime or similar emergency situations, but South Korea wasn't in such a predicament. They argue that deploying troops to seal the National Assembly to suspend its political activities amounted to rebellion because the constitution doesn't allow a president to use the military to suspend parliament in any situation.

If Yoon is impeached, his presidential powers would be suspended until the Constitutional Court decides whether to restore his powers or remove him from office. If he is dismissed from office, a new presidential election would be required. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



MIDDLE EAST

Israeli strikes on Gaza kill at least 29, Palestinian medics say

SAMY MAGDY & WAFAA SHURAF, DEIR AL-BALAH

ISRaeli strikes on the Gaza Strip killed at least 29 people overnight and into yesterday, including one that hit a home where displaced people were sheltering in the isolated north, killing 19, according to Palestinian medical officials.

The Israel-Hamas war has raged on with no end in sight, even after Israel reached a ceasefire with Lebanon's Hezbollah and attention shifted to the overthrow of Syrian President Bashar Assad. Both the outgoing and incoming U.S. administrations have said they hope to end the war before the inauguration but months of ceasefire talks have repeatedly stalled.

The strike that killed 19 occurred in the northern town of Beit Lahiya near the border with Israel, according to the nearby Kamal Adwan Hospital, which received the bodies. Hospital records show that a family of eight was among those killed, including four children, their parents and two grandparents.

The hospital said another strike near its entrance on Wednesday killed a woman and her two children.

Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya, the hospital director, said Israeli drones struck nearby residen-

tial blocks overnight, causing explosions that sparked panic among the more than 120 sick and wounded patients inside the facility.

"We have received distress calls from neighbors and trapped people, but we're not able to leave the hospital because of the continued risk," he said. "We are witnessing a massive loss of life, with many martyrs in the targeted areas."

Another strike in the built-up Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza killed at least seven people, according to the Awda Hospital. The dead included two children, their parents and three relatives, it said.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military. The military says it tries to avoid harming civilians and accuses militants of hiding among them, putting their lives in danger.

Militants in central Gaza meanwhile fired four projectiles into Israel yesterday, two of which were intercepted, the military said. The other two fell in open areas, and there were no reports of casualties.

The military ordered the evacuation of a five-block area of the built-up Maghazi refugee camp in central Gaza, saying the rockets had been fired from there. The orders indicated that Israel would soon carry out strikes in the area.

The war began when Ha-

mas-led militants stormed into Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting around 250 people, including children and older adults. Around 100 hostages are still inside Gaza, at least a third of whom are believed to be dead.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 44,000 Palestinians in Gaza, according to local health officials. They say women and children make up more than half the dead but do not distinguish between fighters and civilians in their count. Israel says it has killed over 17,000 militants, without providing evidence.

Thousands more Palestinians have gone missing during the war, some after encounters with Israeli troops.

Israel has been waging a renewed offensive against Hamas in Gaza's isolated and heavily destroyed north since early October. Troops have surrounded Beit Lahiya, Beit Hanoun and the urban Jabaliya refugee camp, allowing in almost no humanitarian aid and ordering tens of thousands to flee to nearby Gaza City.

Israeli officials have said the three communities are mostly deserted, but the United Nations humanitarian office said Tuesday that it believes around 65,000 to 75,000 people are still there, with little access to food, water, electricity or health care.

Experts have warned that the north may be experiencing famine.

Sigrid Kaag, the senior U.N. humanitarian and reconstruction coordinator for Gaza, told reporters at the U.N. on Tuesday that civilians trying to survive all across Gaza face an "utterly devastating situation."

She pointed to the breakdown in law and order and looting that has left the U.N. and many aid organizations unable to deliver food and other humanitarian essentials to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in need.

Kaag said she and other U.N. officials keep repeatedly asking Israel for access for convoys to northern Gaza and elsewhere, to allow in commercial goods, to reopen the Rafah crossing from Egypt in the south, and to approve dual-use items.

The Israeli military says it allows in enough humanitarian aid and blames U.N. agencies for not distributing it, saying large amounts of aid have accumulated just inside Gaza's borders. U.N. officials say Israeli restrictions, the breakdown of law and order and ongoing fighting make it difficult to access the aid and distribute it, and have repeatedly called for a ceasefire.

The United States, Egypt and Qatar have been mediating talks between Israel and Hamas for nearly a year, and diplomats say those efforts have recently gained momentum.

But Hamas has said it will not release the remaining hostages without an end to the war and a full withdrawal of Israeli troops. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has pledged to continue the war until Hamas is destroyed and all the hostages are returned and has said Israel will maintain a lasting military presence in some areas. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1967 STONES GUITARIST ESCAPES JAIL FOR DRUGS



Rolling Stones guitarist Brian Jones has had a nine-month jail sentence overturned at the Court of Appeal in London.

He has been ordered instead to pay a £1,000 fine and has been put on probation for three years. An order to pay 250 guineas in costs still stands from his earlier hearing.

Jones, aged 25, has also promised to continue medical treatment with a psychiatrist.

On 30 October the guitarist pleaded guilty to two drugs offences, possession of cannabis and permitting his home to be used by others smoking cannabis.

The judge handed down a nine-month jail term - but Jones was released on bail a day later pending his appeal.

The drugs - enough to make up to 10 reefer cigarettes - were found during a police raid of his Kensington flat in May after a party.

James Comyn QC told the Appeal court his client had since "cut out drugs, soft, hard or what you will for the future".

He said Jones was a highly intelligent and extremely sensitive young man who had been catapulted to fame.

He added: "It may sound trite but Jones has suffered every single day since sentence was passed upon him - a suffering which cannot be removed and may be regarded as penalty enough.

"This man is at the very crossroads of life and if you uphold the sentence it is liable to break him and his career.

"Brian Jones is at your mercy and it is mercy that he seeks."

Dr Anthony Flood, a consultant psychiatrist who treated Jones for three weeks while he was on bail, also spoke on his behalf.

He said waiting for the appeal had had "an astounding effect" on the young musician.

"I think if one put a reefer within half a mile of Brian Jones he would start running," Dr Flood said.

The court also heard from Dr Leonard Henry, a Harley Street psychiatrist, who described Jones as emotionally unstable. [...]

Stones' lead singer Mick Jagger was in court to hear the judges' decision. He and fellow band member Keith Richards had been in court earlier in the year following a different drugs raid. They had also had their jail terms overturned.

As Jones left the court, he said: "I am very happy to have my freedom."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Brian Jones drove straight from the Appeal Court to the dentist to have treatment for a toothache.

In 1969 he split with the Rolling Stones quoting musical differences with the rest of the band.

He wanted to pursue his love for rhythm 'n' blues. It was at this time he also bought the 15th century Sussex farmhouse where AA Milne is said to have written Winnie the Pooh.

In July 1969 Jones was found dead in the swimming pool of his home near Hartfield.

A coroner recorded a verdict of death by misadventure. He had died from drowning under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

At his funeral, Canon Evan Hopkins read a telegramme Brian Jones had sent to his parents during his drugs trial. It said: "Don't judge me too harshly."

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Finances come into the spotlight. Pay expenses before splurging. Do the work now and play later. Set up infrastructure. Get deals in writing.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
Slow down to finish faster. Discover a structural problem with a personal project. Stick to reliable routines. Handle responsibilities on time. Resolve practical details.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
Finish what you've promised. Follow through on details. Release outworn assumptions. Go over old photos. Conditions are unstable. Listen, without reacting.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Make sure what you build is solid. Get feedback from experienced friends. Share what you're learning with your team. Their views broaden your own.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You may need to make a spontaneous professional decision. Listen to your angels. Prioritize local options. Weigh the pros and cons. Measure carefully.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
You'd rather play than work. Can you mix business with pleasure? A trip or research investigation offers a welcome escape. Revisit beloved scenery.

LIBRA
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Study financial growth strategies. Draw up plans with your partner. Don't rush into anything but don't neglect action, either. Consider and then move.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
Hunt for solutions with a partner. Stay receptive to new ideas. Consider abandoning old assumptions. Your view isn't the only one. Listen and learn.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Strengthen foundational support for your work and health. Your workload may seem intense; and a workout energizes. Pace yourself, rest and eat well.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Simplify romantic plans to reduce expense and energy. Pool resources and come up with shared efficiencies. It's more fun to cook together. Get sizzling.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Prioritize family needs. Make home upgrades and repairs. Keep systems functional. Tend and water your garden. Relax and reconnect as you share something delicious.

PISCES
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
There's a conflict with the status quo. Clarify the message. Resolve misunderstandings before issuing statements. Otherwise, risk confusion and corrections.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY					EASY+				
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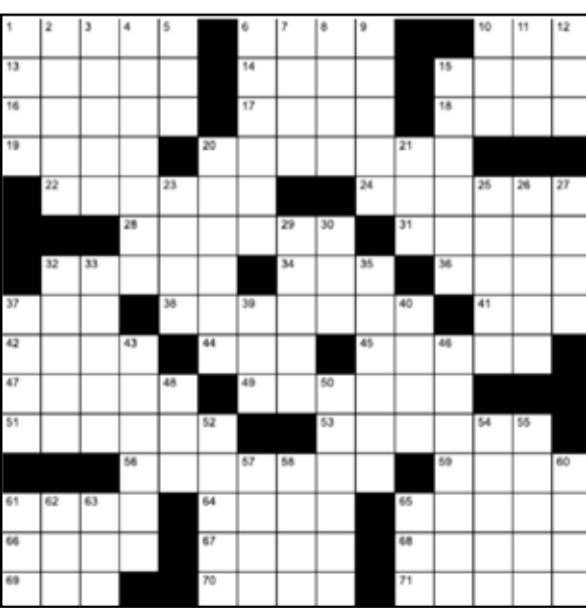
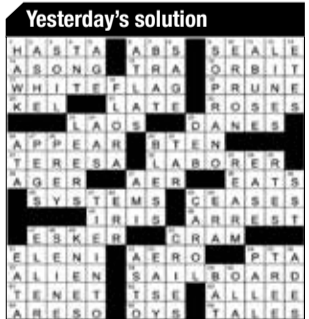
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-3	3	cloudy
Changchun	-15	-7	fine
Chengdu	6	9	rain
Chongqing	8	10	rain
Fuzhou	13	16	cloudy
Guangzhou	11	21	cloudy
Guiyang	1	3	rain
Haikou	19	21	overcast
Hangzhou	5	9	cloudy
Harbin	-21	-10	fine
Hefei	-1	8	cloudy
Nanjing	1	9	overcast
Shanghai	6	11	overcast
Taipei	16	18	rain
Wuhan	1	8	fine
Hong Kong	17	21	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-7	-3	snow
Frankfurt	-2	2	fine
Paris	0	3	overcast
London	6	8	rain
New York	-3	4	fine

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- 1980 Dom DeLuise film; 6- ___ well...; 10- Corrida cheer; 13- ___ Kick Out of You; 14- Hammer or sickle; 15- Bad day for Caesar; 16- Charged; 17- "Chicken of the sea"; 18- Golf pegs, northern English river; 19- Fog; 20- Legendary king of Thebes; 22- Equine sounds; 24- Shorthand pros; 28- Speaks publicly; 31- Put into office; 32- Pertaining to the moon; 34- "Michael Collins" actor; 36- Greek salad ingredient; 37- Put on; 38- Sorrow; 41- Lair; 42- Meat-grading org.; 44- ___ Lanka; 45- March honoree, briefly; 47- Considers; 49- More strange; 51- List of corrections; 53- Donny or Marie; 56- Village near the Matterhorn; 59- Read 'em and ___!; 61- Female choir voice; 64- I could ___ horse!; 65- Olds model; 66- Bank transaction; 67- Wither; 68- Chest or closet material; 69- B and B; 70- Gen. Robt. ___; 71- Hackneyed;

DOWN 1- Stiff; 2- One more time; 3- Upright; 4- Stopping place; 5- Bran source; 6- Bear witness; 7- Noisy; 8- Anderson of "WKRP in Cincinnati"; 9- High-fives; 10- Yeats offering; 11- Majors in acting; 12- Double curve; 15- In and of ___; 20- Tara family; 21- Shoshone language member; 23- Mardi ___; 25- ___ lift?; 26- Eight singers; 27- Ollie's pal; 29- Bert's roomie; 30- Get the picture; 32- One in second, say; 33- Below; 35- Help; 37- Type of ranch; 39- Dr. of rap; 40- Wine glass feature; 43- River in N South America; 46- Thief; 48- Canonized Mlle.; 50- Revolve; 52- ___ having fun yet?; 54- ___ say more?; 55- Clear of vermin; 57- Letters, e.g.; 58- Salt tree; 60- Skin opening; 61- Boxing legend; 62- Chilling Chaney; 63- Convert into leather; 65- Do one's part?;



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
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RUGGER ACADEMY

GBA RUGBY TOURNAMENT MARKS SAR 25TH ANNIVERSARY

DONALD SHAW, MDT

THE International School (TIS) and Macau Rugby organised the first Greater Bay Junior Touch Rugby Competition at the weekend, which was held at the TIS playing field and featured 20 junior clubs and school teams from China, Hong Kong and Macau. The tournament was held to mark

the upcoming 25th anniversary of the Macau SAR establishment and proved to be a big success. Several hundred spectators saw the event kick off with a lion dance before the real action began. Saint Joseph's school performed well in the U7 age group. Hong Kong Football Club emerged as winners of the U9 and USRC Tigers from Hong Kong won the U12

category. There was a strong showing from Macau teams, with Escola ZhengGuanying being finalists in the U12s.

In the U17 category, Macau Bats took the Cup despite good performances from The International School (TIS); Saint Joseph's 3 and 6 schools. The tournament was very well received and it is hoped that it will be held again next year.



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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER



AP PHOTO

FOOTBALL

Pep Guardiola hints he could become a national team coach

JAMES ROBSON, MANCHESTER

PEP Guardiola has given a clear indication of his plans after Manchester City, saying he would not want to start again at another club.

The Catalan has just signed a two-year extension to his City contract through to 2027 and said international management is a possibility when he leaves the four-time defending Premier League champion.

"I'm not going to manage another team. I'm not talking about the long-term future, but what I'm not going to do is leave Man City, go to another country, and do the same thing as now," Guardiola told celebrity chef Dani Garcia in an interview broadcast this week.

"I wouldn't have the energy. The thought of starting somewhere else, all the process of training



AP PHOTO

and so on. No, no, no! Maybe a national team, but that's different."

Guardiola is widely considered one of the greatest soccer coaches of all time after a trophy-laden career with Barcelona, Bayern Munich and City.

He has won 15 major trophies with City, including six league titles in seven years and the Champions League.

By the time his contract expires, he will have spent 11 years at

the Etihad Stadium.

He has won 32 major trophies during his coaching career, including league titles in Spain and Germany and a total of three Champions League trophies.

He has not ruled out leaving coaching entirely when his time at City is up.

"I want to leave it and go and play golf but I can't. I think stopping would do me good," he said. MDT/AP

RUGBY Former England player Voyce feared dead after car went into a river

FORMER England rugby international Tom Voyce is missing and feared dead after his car was recovered from a flood-swollen river, police said yesterday [Macau time].

Northumbria Police believe the 43-year-old Voyce attempted to drive across a section of the River Aln near Alnwick, a town about 30 miles north of Newcastle, when his car was caught in the current.

"Officers have since recovered his car, but sadly Tom is yet to be found," police said in statement on X.

Police received a report Sunday morning that Voyce had not returned to his home from the previous

evening, when he was out with friends.

Police said it had carried out extensive enquiries.

Voyce, who played wing and fullback, won nine caps for England from 2001 to 2006. He played for Wasps from 2003 to 2009, winning European and domestic titles. He also played for Bath and Gloucester, making 220 Premiership appearances before retiring in May 2013.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Tom Voyce at this extremely challenging time," England Rugby posted on X. MDT/AP



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AD

OPINION

The Conversation

Jonathan G. Hakun, Penn State



LIGHT EXERCISE CAN YIELD SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE BENEFITS, NEW RESEARCH SHOWS

Everyday physical activity, like going for a short walk or playing with the kids, may provide short-term benefits for cognitive health, equivalent to reversing four years of cognitive aging. That was a key finding for my colleagues and me in our new study, which was published in the journal *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*.

Prior to enrollment into a study of diet and dementia risk, we asked a diverse sample of 204 middle-aged adults to check in five times per day for a period of nine days, via a smartphone application.

My team found that performance on our measure of cognitive processing speed improved during check-ins when participants reported being physically active in the time leading up to the survey. While we didn't see improvements in our measure of working memory, the time taken to complete the memory task mirrored what we saw for the measure of processing speed.

We observed these improvements in speed regardless of whether the activity was lighter intensity or moderate-to-vigorous intensity. This led us to conclude that movement, whether it took the form of intentional exercise or part of a daily routine, was the essential ingredient for achieving this benefit.

As a rule, we get slower, both physically and mentally, as we age. While research on exercise and living a healthy lifestyle has demonstrated the long-term cognitive and brain health benefits of remaining physically active, much of this work has focused on the moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity – or what most of us think of as exercise – recommended by the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.

Still, these guidelines and other experts recommend that adults move more and sit less.

My colleagues and I are interested in understanding how moving more can improve our cognitive health or reduce our risk of dementia as we age, at what timescale these benefits show up, and what types of movement qualify.

Our study relied on participants to report whether they had been physically active during the time between each check-in. Even though participants were provided training on how to think about the intensity levels, it's possible that each participant had a slightly different perception of their activities.

For example, a participant may not have believed their recent walk actually qualified as a moderate-intensity activity. Physical activity monitors that can dissociate time and intensity might help future research unravel these associations more clearly.

It isn't yet clear whether these short-term benefits accumulate over time to result in long-term improvements in brain health and dementia risk reduction. Research efforts are underway by our team to better understand these associations over broader timescales.

My research involves data collection via smartphones and wearable devices to help us better understand how health-promoting behaviors and cognitive health interact as we age. This type of digital approach allows my team to pursue questions about how everyday behavior and experience influence cognition in daily life and represents a significant methodological advancement in the dementia risk and prevention research space.

Using these tools, we aim to better identify individuals at risk for negative cognitive outcomes and new targets for dementia prevention. [Abridged]

ANG LEE TO RECEIVE DGA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Ang Lee, the protean filmmaker of "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" and "Brokeback Mountain," will receive the Directors Guild of America's lifetime achievement award.

The guild announced yesterday [Macau time] that Lee, 70, will be given the award at the 77th DGA Awards on Feb. 8. The DGA, which considers the award its highest honor, has given it to 36 filmmakers over its 88-year history. The last director to receive it was Spike Lee in 2022.

"Ang Lee is truly a master filmmaker," said Lesli Linka Glatter, DGA president, in a statement. "For over 30 years, he has direc-

ted a dynamic body of work that boldly cuts across genres – from period drama to comedy, adventure to western, superhero to martial arts – always fearlessly taking on new challenges."

"I am honored to be recognized in such an incredible way by my beloved guild," said Lee. "To be given the DGA Lifetime Achievement Award is a momentous achievement for me personally, and an opportunity to reflect on what my work has meant to this amazing community of my fellow filmmakers."

The Taiwan-born filmmaker has twice won the Oscar for best director, for "Brokeback Mountain" and for "Life of Pi."

THE BUZZ

HE DOESN'T SPEAK SPANISH!

A NEW ZEALANDER STUDIED FOR A YEAR TO WIN THE SPANISH WORLD SCRABBLE TITLE

CHARLOTTE GRAHAM-MCLAY, WELLINGTON

A New Zealand man playing his first-ever competitive Scrabble game in Spanish, a language he doesn't speak, has won the board game's Spanish-language world title – despite the language barrier that stopped him from chatting with his opponents.

Nigel Richards, a professional player who holds five English-language world titles, won the Spanish world Scrabble championships in Granada, Spain, in November, losing only one game out of 24. Richards speaks no Spanish and started memorizing the language's Scrabble word list a year ago, his friend Liz Fagerlund -- a New Zealand Scrabble official -- told The Associated Press.

"He can't understand why other people can't just do the same thing," she said. "He can look at a block of words together and once they go into his brain as a picture he can just recall that very easily."

In second place was defending champion Benjamín Olaizola of Argentina, who won 18 of his games -- and does speak Spanish.

Richards has done this before. In 2015, he became the French language Scrabble world champion, despite not speaking French, after studying the word list for nine weeks. He took the French title again in 2018.

Recognized in international Scrabble over his three-decade career as the greatest player of all time, Richards' Spanish language victory was notable even by his standards, other players said. Forced to adjust his gameplay to compensate for different tile values in



Tournament favorite and five-time English-language scrabble world champion Nigel Richards

English and Spanish Scrabble, Richards also had to contend with thousands of additional seven, eight and nine letter words in the Spanish language -- which demand a different strategy.

But what challenge remains for a player who has dominated the game in his native tongue? Richards in 2008 was the first player ever to hold the world, U.S. and British titles simultaneously -- despite having to "forget" 40,000 English words that do not appear in the American Scrabble word list to triumph in the U.S.

His victories are legendary in the Scrabble community and his games analyzed in YouTube videos watched by tens of thousands. Scrabble does not require players to know the definitions of words, only what combinations of letters are allowed in a country's version of the game, but native speakers have "a huge leg up," American Scrabble player Will Anderson said in a video summarizing Richards' Spanish win.

His mother, Adrienne Fischer, told a New Zealand newspaper in 2010 that Richards did not excel at English in school, never attended university and took a mathematical approach to the game rather than a linguistic one.

"I don't think he's ever read a book, apart from the dictionary," she said.

Fagerlund said Richards impressed her when he arrived at his first Scrabble club meeting in Christchurch, New Zealand, aged 28. Two years later, in 1997, he cycled 220 miles from Christchurch to the city of Dunedin, won the New Zealand title on his first attempt and cycled home again.

What motivates Richards, who now lives in Malaysia, is a mystery because he never speaks to reporters.

"I get lots of requests from journalists wanting to interview him and he's not interested," Fagerlund said. "He doesn't understand what all the hoo-ha is about."

MDT/AP



Australia Authorities launched an investigation into escalating antisemitic incidents amid a rise in hate crimes. Incidents include arson, graffiti, and targeted vandalism in major cities. Police are pursuing suspects, some in custody, as leaders express concerns over unprecedented prejudice levels against the community.



India A new central bank governor assumed office amid slowing growth and rising inflation. He emphasized stability and responsiveness to global and domestic uncertainties, with policy focus on fostering economic resilience and balancing challenges such as inflation and structural weaknesses.



Serbia President Aleksandar Vučić accused yesterday [Macau time] foreign intelligence services of trying to unseat him in the wake of spreading protests in the Balkan state and that he wouldn't flee the country like the ousted Syrian leader Bashar Assad.



US-Nicaragua The Biden administration is opening an investigation into labor and human rights abuses in Nicaragua, impacting relations with a country the U.S. has a free trade deal with amid growing concerns over President Daniel Ortega's increasingly authoritarian rule. The investigation being opened by the U.S. Trade Representative must be completed within a year.