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SAM HOU FAI PRAISES ELDERLY RESIDENTS WHO REMAIN ACTIVE AND SOCIALLY ENGAGED AS SYMBOLS OF MACAU'S VITALITY
P2

DSAT PLEDGES SAFER MANHOLE COVERS AND IMPROVED ROAD SKID RESISTANCE FOLLOWING CRASH
P4

CRYPTO: BINANCE AND BILLIONAIRE FOUNDER CHANGPENG ZHAO TARGETED IN RECORD $6.3 BILLION CRYPTOCURRENCY HEIST LINKED TO HACKERS
P7

OCTOBER SLUMP

Casino revenue plunged 10% year over year to MOP21.7 billion, extending its losing streak to five months despite Golden Week
P6



AP PHOTO



China Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng will address about 280 global bankers by video at Hong Kong's Global Financial Leaders' Investment Summit this week. Senior central bank, securities, foreign exchange and financial regulators will discuss Beijing's policy priorities during a Tuesday panel.

AP PHOTO



India Thousands of Indian opposition supporters rallied yesterday in New Delhi, demanding Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar resign over a disputed voter roll revision. More than 130 million names have been removed since last year. Authorities deny allegations that the exercise targets minorities.

AP PHOTO



Turkey relocated imprisoned Kurdish militant leader Abdullah Ocalan to a newly built section of his island prison, a Kurdish lawmaker said. The move comes amid efforts to end the decadeslong conflict with the PKK, whose fighters agreed to disarm in 2025.

AP PHOTO



Bulgarians voted yesterday in a presidential runoff between acting President Iliana Yotova and opposition candidate Andrey Gyurov. The contest follows record low first-round turnout and comes amid economic hardship and Black Sea security threats. Official results are expected Monday, election officials said.

More on backpage

BORDER PRESSURE

LAWMAKER URGES SEAMLESS CROSSINGS AS HENGQIN TRAFFIC SURGES
P3

MGTO

MACAU'S GASTRONOMIC SUCCESS OFFERS LESSONS FOR OTHER UNESCO CITIES
P2

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Times
MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

TOURISM

GASTRONOMY DECADE OFFERS LESSONS FOR OTHER CITIES, TOURISM CHIEF SAYS

RENATO MARQUES & YUKI LEI

AS the city prepares to mark the milestone anniversary next year, Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes said that Macau's decade as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy offers lessons that could serve as a reference for other cities seeking similar recognition.

"We are working with UNESCO on a research project to examine the results since Macau's designation and how it can further drive sustainable urban development, hoping to provide a reference for cities interested in applying or already designated," she said on the sidelines of the official opening of the 2026 Bocuse d'Or Asia-Pacific culinary competition.

The office is also cooperating with UNESCO, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, and the UN World Tourism Organization on joint projects, including a young chefs program in which two Macau chefs participated and traveled to Rome in October to promote the city's cuisine.

Senna Fernandes also noted that, building on the established "Macanese cuisine database," the office is developing a "Macau Local Cantonese Cuisine Database" set to launch next year. It will feature 24 veteran Cantonese chefs, recommended by various sectors, each contributing three signature dishes and sharing their expertise.

"Although it is not recognized as an intangible cultural heritage, we feel these historical traces need to be preserved," Senna Fernandes said, adding, "Each chef will contribute three dishes they consider relatively unique."

MAK MAK LICENSING RECEIVED 51 APPLICATIONS, 26 APPROVED

On the "Mak Mak" mascot licensing scheme launched in April, she said 51 applications have been received and 26 approved (17 commercial and nine non-commercial), with products including fridge magnets and travel items already on sale.

"We hope products will become more diverse and the IP itself can become a distinctive souvenir people buy when they visit Macau," she said.

COMPETITION ENDS TODAY

Regarding the culinary event taking place these days, she remarked that the Asia-Pacific qualifying round of the World Cooking Competition is being held in Macau for the first time.



In her address during the official opening, the director of MGTO remarked that since its inception in 1987, the Bocuse d'Or has been acclaimed as one of the world's most challenging and spectacular cooking competitions.

"Hosting the Bocuse d'Or Asia-Pacific represents another significant milestone in Macao's journey as a Creative City of Gastronomy. It brings the city's gastronomic culture onto the global stage. It reflects international recognition of Macau's capabilities in hospitality, gastronomy, tourism and MICE, as well as its role as a world center of tourism and leisure."

The Bocuse d'Or Asia-Pacific 2026 pits eight teams from China, India, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam against each other.

Upholding the competition's tradition, the organizing entity held a Jacket Presentation on Saturday.

The competition runs until today and over two consecutive days at the Venetian Macao. Teams from Vietnam (Lead chef Hiep Nguyen), India (Lead chef Avinnash Vishaal), China (Lead chef Chun Kei Wong), and Sri Lanka (Lead chef Nilupul Athauda) took the stage yesterday. In contrast, teams from New Zealand (Lead chef Kenji Yoshitsuka), Malaysia (Lead chef Muhammad Haikal Abdul Ghani), Japan (Lead chef Tetsuya Asano) and Thailand (Lead chef Chutima Srichai) will take the stage today.

Each team consists of a candidate (lead chef), a commis (assistant chef), a coach, a tasting jury member, and a promotion manager.

GOVERNANCE

CE praises elderly workers as a symbol of Macau's vitality

YUKI LEI

CHIEF Executive (CE) Sam Hou Fai has described elderly residents who remain active and socially engaged as embodying the "Vibrant Macau" vision.

He recounted his decades-long relationship with his barber in a shop in an old district as an example of the city's enduring neighborhood character.

In a recent blog post, Sam said he had been going to the same barbershop in an old district for more than 30 years, from his return from studying in Portugal through his time as a judge and as president of the Court of Final Appeal to his current role.

"For decades, his careful work has never been slapdash — that craftsman's spirit is admirable," he wrote.

Sam said the two talked constantly during haircuts, and the barber told him that government welfare for the elderly already covers his living expenses, but he continues working to lead a fuller life and because he is reluctant to leave his long-standing customers.

"Elderly residents remaining active and socially engaged is also the 'Vibrant Macau' we are glad to see," Sam wrote, describing such residents as embodying the "productive aging" the government hopes to promote.

He said that while times keep moving forward and industries evolve, what remains unchanged is the plain, deeply rooted character of neighborhood businesses.

"This is a scene in Macau worth cherishing," he wrote.

"I often visit this familiar old district to experience the warmth of old shops, to recall the past and look to the future."

"Vibrant Macau" is one of four development visions set out in Macau's Third Five-Year Plan for 2026-2030, alongside "Rule of Law," "Cultural Macau" and "Happy Macau," he concluded.



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CROSS BORDER

Lawmaker urges 'seamless' border crossings as Hengqin traffic surges

NADIA SHAW



IN a recent spoken inquiry at the Legislative Assembly (AL), lawmaker Lam Lon Wai has called on the government to assess whether the city's land border crossings can handle rapidly rising vehicle traffic and to coordinate with mainland authorities to achieve fully "contactless" clearance for drivers and passengers.

In the written inquiry submitted on 16 October, Lam said that growing exchanges between Macau and Guangdong, together with the development of the Guangdong-Macao In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, had pushed cross-border vehicle flows to record levels. Lam cited Hengqin Port handling about 1.25 million vehicle crossings in 2022, rising to roughly 3.49 million in 2025 — an increase of nearly 1.8 times in three years.

"With the continued increase in Macau-Hengqin cross-border vehicle traffic and the gradual advancement of the 'Hengqin vehicles going north' policy, can the authorities assess the overall clearance capacity of Macau's cross-border vehicle lanes, including Hengqin Port?" Lam queried.

The inquiry notes that the Hengqin port's "Guangdong-Macau Joint One-Stop" lanes had processed more than 10 million inbound and outbound passenger and cargo vehicles by 13 October.

He also noted that daily volumes had grown from about 5,000 vehicles when the system began to more than 12,000 vehicles now.

Going forward, Lam encouraged the government to develop medium- and long-term plans in coordination with the cooperation zone and mainland departments to improve overall efficiency and capacity. He also called for a pilot scheme allowing eligible drivers and passengers to cross "without getting out of the vehicle" and "without having to present documents one by one."

Lam pointed to Hong Kong's research on AI and facial-recognition technology for private cars, and to Macau's existing driver-free-document smart clearance and new biometric trials at Hengqin.

"Should the authorities, on the existing basis, study with relevant mainland departments the integration of identity checks for drivers and accompanying passengers?" he wrote.

The government has already said it plans to extend "smart clearance" to the joint one-stop vehicle lanes, following its introduction at Hengqin's passenger and vehicle-passenger inspection halls in November 2025.

By March 31 of this year, 259,000 people had registered for the service, which had been used more than 3.7 million times.

AL

Committee backs tougher penalties for collusion in social housing tenders

YUKI LEI

RENATO MARQUES



A new bill under scrutiny at the Legislative Assembly (AL) provides that companies found colluding in tenders for commercial units in social housing buildings would lose their deposits and could have their contracts terminated.

The AL First Standing Committee said it has completed detailed scrutiny of the bill governing the allocation of commercial space in social housing buildings and signed its opinion after four meetings.

The bill, which passed its first reading on June 25, aims to reform a regime in place for more than 30 years, the committee said no longer suits current economic and social conditions.

It seeks to optimize the allocation of commercial units in public housing, support small and medium-sized enterprises, and improve community services.

Under the bill, the Housing Bureau (IH) will select tenants through a public tender on a highest-bid basis, with non-tender allocation permitted under statutory exceptions.

The committee proposed several changes, and the government side accepted them.

Where there are strong indications of collusion among bidders, conduct the AL committee members said would seriously breach fair competition, the bureau director may now not only withhold the award but also confiscate the temporary deposit. If collusion is discovered after the award, the award may be revoked and the contract terminated.

The committee also sought clarification on the consequences of terminating a contract. The revised text states that a tenant whose contract is terminated has no right to compensation or a refund of rent paid, forfeits the deposit, and cannot participate in any unit allocation for three years from the date of termination.

Under the original text, evicted tenants were barred from public tenders for three years. The committee argued this was too lenient given the administrative resources required for evictions, and the revised text extends the bar to any allocation, whether made via a tender or not, for three years from the date the authorities decide on eviction.

The AL president will now schedule the bill for detailed discussion and a vote at an upcoming plenary session. If passed, it will take effect on March 1 of next year.

IAM completes 120-hectare hill forest restoration

The Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) completed the second phase of its hill forest restoration program in 2024, restoring 120 hectares over three years by replacing aging trees with native species to rebuild local forest ecosystems. The bureau has since carried out long-term maintenance to improve seedling survival, and said that patrols by forestry staff are routine. The IAM expects to promote more diverse vegetation in the forest to provide more and better wildlife habitats. It also said it will continue to monitor conditions and educate the public.

First mainland yachts dock in Macau as city counts 220-plus berths

The first four mainland yachts arrived in Macau under the Guangdong-Macau yacht free-travel scheme, in a ceremony marking a new stage of two-way exchanges and connectivity between the two places. The Marine and Water Bureau (DSAMA) said Macau now has more than 220 yacht berths, sufficient to accommodate local and non-local yachts and to support yacht exhibitions and sailing events. The bureau has also established a temporary anchorage area off Hac Sa Beach. Mainland yachts participating in the travel scheme can apply for entry and exit online, with approval completed within 48 hours if documents are complete, and the owner or captain need not apply in person.

New visiting hours take effect at CHCSJ

The Conde de S. Januário Hospital Center (CHCSJ) has extended visiting hours across all wards starting November 1, with visits now allowed from noon to 4 p.m. and from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., according to the Health Bureau (SSM). The measure aims to give families more time to accompany and care for inpatients and to allow residents greater flexibility in scheduling visits. The hospital added that visits outside these hours will not be permitted except in special circumstances, to protect patients' rest time. It also advised against bringing children under five to visit, to safeguard their health, with special cases handled as needed.

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TRANSPORT

SKID RESISTANCE TO IMPROVE ON ROADS FOLLOWING MOTORCYCLE CRASH

NADIA SHAW

RENATO MARQUES



THE Transport Bureau (DSAT) has pledged to improve the anti-slip performance of road markings, manhole covers, and bridge expansion joints following safety concerns raised by lawmaker Leong Pou U after a motorcycle accident near the artificial island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge.

The bureau issued its response after consulting with the Public Works Bureau (DSOP), as noted in the written response.

The inquiry called for a review of road design after a motorcyclist slipped near a bend on the connecting bridge linking Zone A of the New Urban Zone to the bridge's artificial island. Leong said the accident occurred at a metal expansion joint that had become extremely slippery because of standing water.

Leong warned in his inquiry that metal expansion joints, manhole covers, and zebra crossings can become hazardous in wet weather, particularly for motorcyclists. "This traffic accident reminds us that some of Macau's public road designs still contain many hidden dangers," his inquiry said, calling for a comprehensive review and timely improvements to protect road users.

In response, DSAT director Chiang Ngoc Vai said the government "attaches importance to the safety of road users" and is taking multiple measures to improve road surface skid resistance.

The bureau explained that metal expansion joints are necessary because they allow bridges to expand and contract with temperature changes, thereby protecting structural safety. Material selection has generally prioritized durability and load-bearing capacity.

It added that the DSOP will continue assessing new materials and technologies for expansion joints to improve slip resistance "without compromising structural safety."

No timetable for replacing existing joints or for prioritizing the accident site was provided.

On zebra crossings, the bureau said it has worked with the Public Works Bureau on road reconstruction and junction improvement projects to strengthen anti-slip treatment at the points where crossings, carriageways, and footpaths meet. A new thermoplastic paint technique that creates straight-line grooves on the surface has been tested and incorporated into road-marking specifications.

The technique increased measured anti-slip values to between 60 and 80 BPN, exceeding existing guidelines, and will be implemented progressively in road-marking works. Leong asked whether the trials, listed last year among the Transport Bureau's seven priority tasks, had been successful and could be expanded across Macau.

MANHOLE COVERS UNDER REVIEW

The bureau also addressed concerns about manhole covers, noting that the Road Works Coordination and Optimization Working Group has made reducing the number of covers on carriageways a priority this year to improve driving comfort and safety at the source.

Most covers on Macau's carriageways are made of cast iron, selected for durability and ease of maintenance. The bureau said their uneven surface already provides some anti-slip effect, but the working group will collaborate with public utility concessionaires to study safer, more durable materials and designs.

Covers with significant height differences, worn anti-slip textures, or structural damage will be leveled, replaced, or repaired to safeguard pedestrians and drivers. However, the bureau did not commit to a territory-wide replacement program for all existing covers, despite Leong's request for a systematic review of their slip-resistance performance.

RENATO MARQUES

TRANSPORT

LRT hits another record high in Oct.

THE Light Rapid Transit (LRT) system reached a record high last month, averaging 36,900 passengers per day.

This is the second consecutive month the LRT has reported a new high, and the third time this year it has set a record.

In February this year, the LRT averaged 33,100 passengers per day, followed by 35,600 in September and 36,900 in October.

October's figure also brings the year's average close to 30,000 passengers per day (29,490), a level that was first reached or surpassed in September 2025, when the system reported its first month with passenger volumes above 30,000 (30,600).

Analysis of the results by the Times concluded that after the opening of the Seac Pai Van extension line and, above all, the Hengqin Line, the number of passengers using this mass transit system has generally doubled.

October figures also reflect an annual increase of 19.81% and a month-over-month increase of 3.65%.



For the first 10 months of this year, the number of passengers transported by the LRT is about 15% higher than a year ago.

As the Times reported last week, the LRT company has been phasing in, since last month, the installation of new e-payment gates that will finally allow multiple forms of electronic payment, which until now have been limited to Macau Pass and LRT-specific pass cards.

The company has said that it is targeting trial operations for the new multi-payment gates before the end of this year.

New gates have already been installed at Union Hospital Station and Lotus Station on the Hengqin Line, with installations at other stations being carried out in phases, the company added.

CRIME

MAN ARRESTED FOR SELLING CANNABIS-LACED VAPES

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) have arrested a Hong Kong man holding a blue card for allegedly selling cannabis-laced e-cigarettes to at least three people in Macau. They seized six vapes weighing 155.2 grams, with an estimated street value of about MOP8,400.

Acting on a tip, officers intercepted the suspect in the central district at about 1 p.m. on Friday and found six e-cigarettes on his person. Rapid testing confirmed they contained tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

An investigation later seized another four used vapes at his residence in the same district, which are still being tested.

The police found that the non-local worker had a long-standing drug habit and had recently brought vapes from Hong Kong, selling them for MOP1,400 each.

He had completed transactions with at least three people before his arrest, and his urine tested positive for drugs.

Police said the suspect reached customers through referrals among drug users and that further investigation is needed to determine how many vapes were sold and the extent of his buyer network.

His case has been referred to the Public Prosecutions Office on charges of drug trafficking, drug use, and improper possession of drug consumption equipment. **YL**



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GAMING

Analysts: Macau operations are cushioning MGM's US weakness

NADIA SHAW

ANALYSTS said that MGM Resorts International's Macau business is cushioning weaker US operations.

They reached this conclusion after the company released its third-quarter results late last week.

MGM China captured a record 17.1% share of Macau's casino gross gaming revenue in the quarter, according to JPMorgan and Texas Capital Securities. Texas Capital said its share reached 19.2% in September, noting that favorable gaming results helped.

Quarterly net revenue rose about 5% year over year to US$1.14 billion (MOP9.12 billion). However, adjusted property earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, amortization, and rent fell 7% to US$264 million (MOP2.11 billion), according to MGM Resorts.

"While the third quarter of 2026 share partially benefited from high hold (luck factor), MGM market share momentum clearly continues, in our view," Texas Capital wrote Thursday.

Texas Capital said that access to Greater China's premium-mass customers gave MGM China a customer base distinct from the group's US properties, providing a buffer against softer operating trends in the US.

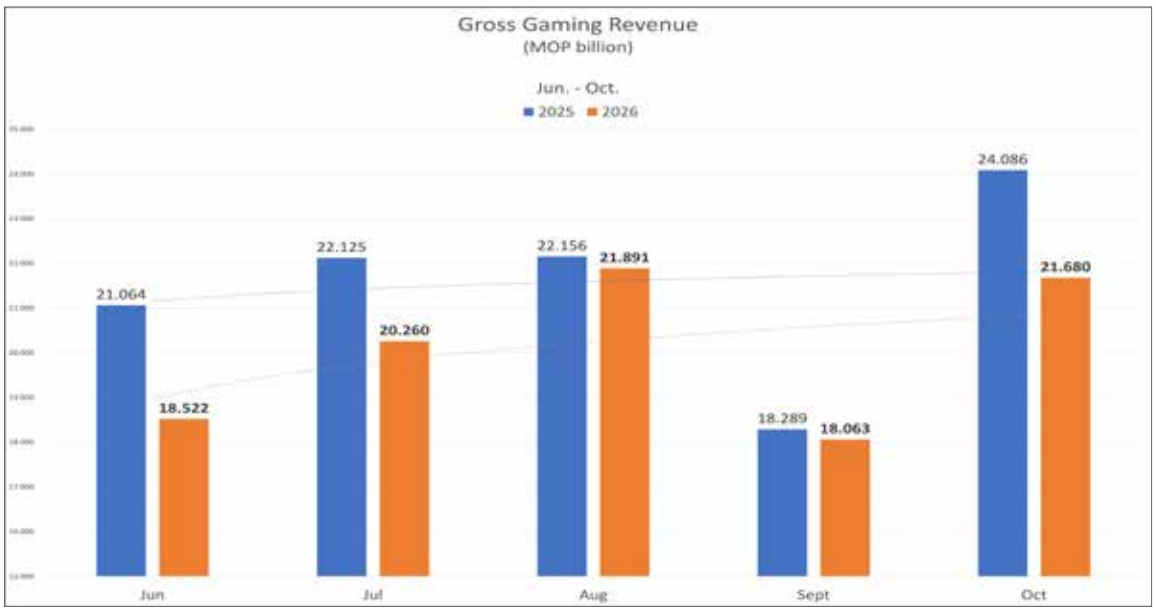
Offering a different perspective, Seaport Research Partners notes that property EBITDA before license fees increased 0.6% year over year. Adjusted for VIP hold, it rose 4.7%, with favorable mass-market hold also supporting performance.

CreditSights highlighted cash generation rather than reported earnings, estimating third-quarter free cash flow between US$230 million (MOP1.84 billion) and US$240 million (MOP1.92 billion). Net leverage declined to 1.36x trailing annual EBITDA, down from 1.44x in June.

On MGM's Japan project, JP Morgan highlighted MGM Osaka as offering considerable long-term value, but its opening remained beyond the investment horizons of many public-equity investors.

Seaport likewise recognized Japan's potential but assigned the project no value within its current MGM Resorts valuation.





GAMING

Disappointing October accounts for the fifth consecutive month in the 'red'

RENATO MARQUES

GROSS gaming revenue (GGR) from local casinos fell sharply in October, continuing the decline since June and marking the fifth straight month of year-over-year declines.

Last month's result (MOP21.68 billion) was 10% lower than the same month last year, when GGR reached MOP24.09 billion.

Usually fueled by high visitation during the National Day Golden Week, October has historically been one of the strongest months for casino revenue.

Compared with September, October still shows a 20% increase, but it adds to the poor second-half results of 2026, bringing those results closer to the government's projection, which, at the time of the forecast around a year ago, seemed hard to believe.

With October's result, the accumulated GGR after 10 months is now MOP208.8 billion, just 1.6% above last year's level at this time.

After June, which posted the year's largest drop so far (-12.1%), October now follows with a 10% decline, adding to the year's low results, including July's (-8.4%).

At the time, the poorer results in June and July were said to be expected and to result from the perceived impacts of the FIFA World Cup that took place over those months; October's result cannot be justified in the same way.

The monthly GGR average is now MOP20.88 billion. If the same trend from last year repeats in November and December, it could result in a final GGR for the whole year of 2026 of around MOP245-245.5 billion, lower than in 2025, when it topped MOP247.4 billion.

Still, the expected final result is, for now, well above the MOP236 billion initially forecast by the government.

As the Times reported, Chief Executive Sam Hou Fai said early last month that October GGR performance was likely to be crucial to whether this year's GGR would meet the government's 2026 prediction of MOP236 billion, noting that he did not expect to revise that forecast.

With the current accumulated MOP208.8 billion, it would need a tragic result in Nov. and Dec. to jeopardize reaching that target.

Still, some market analysts have cautiously addressed October and year-to-date results. In mid-month, China International Capital Corporation Hong Kong Securities Ltd (CICC) noted that there was "no clear near-term inflection point," suggesting that GGR could continue trending downward beyond October.

CORPORATE BITS

Wynn secures 16 honors at China's Wine List Awards



Wynn Macau and Wynn Palace received 16 accolades at the 14th China's Wine List of the Year Awards, and eight signature restaurants earned the highest "3 Glasses" rating.

Chef Tam's Seasons, the two-Michelin-starred Cantonese restaurant at Wynn Palace, won five awards, including "China's Wine List of the Year 2026 – Hong Kong, Macau & Taiwan," "Best Wine List – Macau SAR," and "China's Best Chinese Restaurant Wine List."

Mizumi retained its "China's Best Sake List" title for the second consecutive year. Sushi Mizumi at Wynn Palace and Wing Lei at Wynn Macau advanced from "2 Glasses" to "3 Glasses," joining Chef Tam's Seasons, Lakeview Palace, SW Steakhouse, Sole e Mare at Fontana, and Drunken Fish.

Just Wong, executive director of beverage operations, was named "China's Outstanding F&B Director/Manager/Owner of the Year," while Troy Jiang, sommelier at Chef Tam's Seasons, received the "Outstanding Sommelier" award.

MGM welcomes Bocuse d'Or Asia-Pacific 2026 competition



MGM hosted a Silk Road-themed welcome dinner at Maison Liu Jin in MGM Macau, marking the opening of Bocuse d'Or Asia-Pacific 2026, one of the world's most prestigious culinary competitions.

As the event's hospitality partner, MGM welcomed international chefs, judges, and industry leaders to a cultural program highlighting Chinese heritage.

Guests toured the Luminous Brilliance: The Artistry of Zibo Liuli exhibition at POLY MGM MUSEUM before enjoying a special dinner prepared by four MGM chefs from Macau, Chengdu, and Beijing.

The evening also featured a traditional Sichuan Opera face-changing act.

Held in Macau for the first time, the competition brings together eight national teams, and the top five advance to the 2027 Grand Final in Lyon, France.

The event highlights Macau's growing international culinary profile and MGM's efforts to promote Chinese culture through gastronomy, art, and hospitality.

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OVERSEAS CHINESE

Binance and billionaire founder Zhao victims of largest cryptocurrency heist

BERNARD CONDON, NEW YORK

AP PHOTO



Changpeng Zhao, the founder of Binance, the world's largest cryptocurrency exchange

TARGETED in what looks like the largest cryptocurrency heist in history, Binance and Changpeng Zhao have been front-page news for most of the crypto exchange's short history, often in unflattering ways.

He and his company have been accused of turning a blind eye as the exchange was used by drug traffickers, child abusers, terrorists and money launderers. Zhao himself even went to jail over the charges. On Thursday, a hacking group, possibly from North Korea, turned against the company, allegedly stealing an estimated $6.3 billion in bitcoin and other crypto from its customers.

Here's a look at the fabulously successful online marketplace and its turbulent path to becoming the world's largest crypto exchange.

Founded in 2017 by Zhao, Binance is like the New York Stock Exchange but for cryptocurrency, a meeting place to buy and sell bitcoins, stablecoins, ether and other so-called digital currencies that act like electronic cash. No Greek columns adorn its headquarters— it doesn't even have one — but it exists online where people controlling digital "wallets" buy and sell cryptocurrencies. The ultimate owners, however, are mostly shrouded in secrecy to the public.

A former McDonald's worker in Canada, where he had moved with his family from China, Zhao initially set up Binance in the latter country. Then, after a crypto crackdown, he moved the company to Japan and has since hopscotched a bit around the world, with plans to expand in the island of Jersey and Malta.

Along the way, Binance bought a large cryptocurrency wallet, funded a kind of digital currency called a stablecoin, partnered with an Israeli payments processor, courted the Trump family and surpassed rivals — including Coinbase and FTX — to become the largest exchange in terms of trade volume.

Forbes estimates Zhao is now worth more than $100 billion.

As cryptocurrencies moved from the financial fringes to the mainstream, scandals and market meltdowns mounted, most prominently the 2022 collapse of FTX, founded by now-disgraced crypto mogul Sam Bankman-Fried. Regulators under the Biden administration began targeting Binance and others for allegedly operating unregistered securities exchanges.

Under the Bank Secrecy Act, U.S. financial institutions need to know the identities of their customers, monitor transactions and file reports of suspicious activity. And it was this law that eventually tripped up Zhao, who in 2024 became the first person ever sentenced to prison time after pleading guilty to violating it.

The alleged crimes against Binance included allowing virtual currency trades worth hundreds of millions between U.S. users and users in Iran, in violation of sanctions, and failing to report suspicious transactions involving barred groups including Hamas' Al-Qassam Brigades and al-Qaida.

Zhao stepped down as CEO, expressed contrition, and spent four months in jail.

Then came U.S. President Donald Trump, a onetime cryptocurrency critic turned champion and investor, who was given millions of dollars in campaign donations and funds for his 2025 inauguration. Zhao and Binance have also acted as key supporters of some of the Trump family's crypto enterprises, including World Liberty Financial.

In October last year, Trump pardoned Zhao, saying that he had been unfairly treated by his predecessor in the Oval Office and he would stop attacks on the industry, which he calls a priority for the U.S.

Binance has denied there was a quid pro quo between its help and the pardon.

"Any claim of a quid pro quo by Binance or CZ, or preferential financial treatment by Binance, is a clear misstatement of the public record," attorney Teresa Goody Guillen said in an email to The Associated Press earlier this year, referring to Zhao by his initials.

Asked about the pardon, the White House said federal authorities had unfairly punished Zhao in what it called "The Biden Administration's war on crypto."

U.S.-based TRM, a blockchain intelligence firm, announced Thursday that the $6.3 billion heist was most likely an attack by TraderTraitor, which it described as North Korea's elite hacking unit.

Desperate for foreign currency amid a push to develop nuclear weapons, Pyongyang has repeatedly turned to crypto to get around U.N. sanctions, experts say. A spy agency in South Korea considers crypto hackers north of the DMZ line among the best in the world.

Binance said Friday that it is beginning to recover money for users, working with blockchain partners to freeze roughly $3 billion in affected assets.

Zhao posted earlier on X that "User funds are safe!" **MDT/AP**

ECONOMY

China's factory activity slips as new export orders weaken

AP PHOTO



CHINA'S factory activity contracted in October as new export orders softened, reversing the previous month's rebound.

The world's second-biggest economy has been facing pressure from trading partners to rebalance trade as its trade surplus with many countries balloons.

Data released on Saturday by the National Bureau of Statistics showed that China's official manufacturing purchasing managers' index fell to 49.3 in October, compared with 50.1 in September and 49.8 in August.

The PMI is based on a monthly survey of companies and measured from 0 to 100. Readings below 50 indicate contraction while readings above 50 reflect expansion.

Several key subindexes were also in contraction territory in October, including new export orders, which fell to 48.7 from 50.0 in September. The subindex on production dropped to 49.8, from 51.7.

Chinese companies have been shipping more goods abroad to find buyers at a time of weakened domestic demand, which is being dragged down by China's yearslong property sector downturn.

But an increasing number of China's trading partners are complaining about growing trade deficits with China, arguing that an influx of cheaper Chinese goods has hurt the competitiveness of their domestic industries.

The 27-nation European Union has been highlighting what it says is an unsustainable trade deficit with China that hit $1.1 billion a day in 2025. The EU has taken measures to rebalance trade including striking a deal with Beijing to cap the imports of Chinese hybrid vehicles.

China has been exporting more to trading partners in Europe, Southeast Asia and Latin America since the U.S. imposed higher tariffs last year.

In a speech Thursday at Beijing University, Germany's President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said that while it's "understandable that China wants to protect its economy against external shocks and negative influences," that must not mean making other countries increasingly dependent on China.

Steinmeier, who was on a visit to China, met Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang on Friday. Li told Steinmeier that China is willing to import more high-quality products from Germany.

Some economists have forecast that China's exports are likely to remain robust for the rest of the year and that its overall trade surplus in 2026 could surpass last year's record $1.2 trillion.

Trade is also likely to be on the agenda during U.S. President Donald Trump's expected meeting with Xi in mid-November on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Shenzhen, China. **MDT/AP**

MacauDaily 澳門每日時報 ®
Times
MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

AP PHOTO



Truffles hunter Tino Marolo checks truffle found with his dog Stella in the woods in Vezza d'Alba, near Alba, northern Italy

CLIMATE CHANGE

From Italy to Croatia, warming threatens prized white truffles

NICCOLÒ LUPONE & GIADA ZAMPANO, ALBA

GUIDED by the beam of a flashlight, Tino Marolo follows his dog Stella through the darkness of a Piedmont woodland, searching for one of Italy's most prized culinary treasures hidden beneath the soil.

In the hills around Alba, home to the world's most famous white truffles, hunters known as "trifolau" traditionally begin their season on Oct. 1. But increasingly, they are confronting a challenge above ground: climate change.

Months of heat and drought have raised concerns about the future of the prized white truffle, a fungus that depends on cool, moist soils and a delicate relationship with tree roots.

"The entire month of October was affected by the lack of rain in July and August and the high temperatures, so it was characterized by poor production and poor truffle shelf life," said Antonio Degiacomi, president of Italy's National Centre for Truffle Studies.

According to Degiacomi, dry and compacted soils have also produced smaller truffles this season.

The difficult harvest comes as Alba and the surrounding Langhe hills welcome visitors for the International White Truffle Fair, one of Italy's best-known food events, which opened on Oct. 10 and runs until Dec. 6.

For Axel Iberti, president of the fair, the season began slowly, with smaller truffles emerging after a hot, dry summer. More recent rains have improved conditions, helping larger specimens appear.

Despite tighter supplies, demand remains strong. Prices at Alba's truffle market are running about 20% to 30% higher than last year, Iberti said, while hotels and other accommodations have largely sold out during the fair period.

The concerns extend beyond this year's crop.

"This year certainly stands out from a trend we all know has been going on for five or six years now," Degiacomi said, citing hotter summers and increasingly erratic rainfall patterns.

Back in the woods, Marolo says uncertainty has always been part of the hunt.

"You certainly come home empty-handed more often than you do with a truffle," he said. "It's really the thrill of saying: I don't know what I'm going to find."

Similar concerns are emerging elsewhere in Europe's truffle-producing regions, suggesting a challenge extending beyond any single forest or region.

Across the Adriatic Sea in Croatia, truffle hunters and scientists describe many of the same challenges, from shrinking harvests to declining habitat suitability.

In oak forests outside Zagreb, truffle hunter Petar Alebic says years of drought have made the prized fungi harder to find.

"Each year for the past seven or eight years has been worse than the last," Alebic said. "Due to the drought, unfortunately, truffles are becoming smaller and scarcer."

Alebic estimates this year's harvest is about 30% below normal and increasingly supplements his income with truffle-hunting tours for tourists.

Scientists studying truffles in Croatia report similar findings. Croatia is home to about a dozen truffle species, according to mycologist Armin Mesic of the Rudjer Boskovic Institute. The most prized, the white truffle, can fetch as much as 4,000 euros ($4,500) per kilogram.

"Drought, a lack of rainfall and high temperatures have a significant impact on both the quantity and quality of truffles," Mesic said.

"Quantities are declining, as is the geographical area where white truffles grow," he added.

Yet experts in Piedmont reject the idea that the white truffle is doomed.

"I don't think we're facing extinction; we're facing a challenge," Degiacomi said.

Researchers are studying ways to help truffle habitats adapt, including improved forest management and experimental irrigation during prolonged droughts.

"We're trying to do what nature does, and do it artificially," Degiacomi said.

In Alba, the response increasingly centers on restoring and protecting forests.

Iberti has expanded the fair's focus beyond tourism to include environmental education and conservation efforts.

"The truffle is the sum, but it's also the vector," Iberti said. "People come to Alba and the Langhe to discover everything the territory has to offer."

Working with municipalities, truffle hunters and landowners, communities have begun creating new public truffle grounds and planting trees that could eventually support truffle growth.

"The forest is an act of love and faith for the next two or three generations," Iberti said.

Advocates say reforestation can help lower soil temperatures, retain moisture and reduce erosion, although it can take more than a decade before newly planted trees become suitable hosts for truffles.

Researchers are also investigating the role of soil microorganisms and looking for tree varieties better suited to hotter and drier conditions.

Attempts to cultivate the prized white truffle continue, but reliable commercial production remains elusive. Unlike black truffles, which can be cultivated, white truffles have largely resisted large-scale production.

As autumn progresses, the size of this year's harvest will become clearer, along with its effect on prices and supplies reaching restaurants and markets. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1986 US HOSTAGE FREED IN BEIRUT



An American held hostage in Beirut by Muslim fundamentalists has been released.

David Jacobsen was set free in the west of the Lebanese capital after 17 months of captivity at the hands of Islamic Jihad.

After his release, Mr Jacobsen, 55, was taken to the American embassy compound in east Beirut.

He was kidnapped in May 1985 as he walked the short distance from his home on the American University Hospital campus to the hospital compound.

He is expected to leave Beirut soon with his daughters and sons who have come to the city to greet him.

Mr Jacobsen's release is being credited to the efforts of the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy, Terry Waite.

Soon after the hostage was freed a US helicopter collected Mr Waite from Lanarca in Cyprus where he had been conducting secret negotiations and took him to the US embassy in Beirut.

Mr Waite's intervention in the case of the Beirut hostages comes after success in freeing people held in Iran and Libya.

So far he has helped gain the release of three Beirut hostages after their relatives appealed to him for help.

The US authorities were also involved in the negotiations.

US presidential spokesman Larry Speakes said they could not divulge details because of concerns for the safety of other captives in Lebanon.

"Again we call on the captors of all hostages in Lebanon to release their innocent victims.

"No political goals are or will be achieved by resorting to extortion or terrorism," Mr Speakes said.

The US Government held the kidnappers of the remaining hostages responsible for their safety, he added.

At least two other American hostages are still being held in Beirut as well as several Frenchmen and Briton John McCarthy.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

After David Jacobsen's release it emerged that in spite of earlier declarations, the US Government had been effectively buying hostages' freedom.

The US had been selling arms to Iran in return for its influence over the hostage-takers.

This led to the so-called "Iran Contragate" affair after further revelations that money from the arms sales had then been channelled to fund rebels in Nicaragua.

Hostage negotiator Terry Waite was himself kidnapped in 1987 and not released until November 1991.

The following month saw the release of the last US hostage, Terry Anderson, after seven years in captivity.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Today the Moon is in your sign getting a jolt of energy from Uranus, which makes you impulsive and a bit restless. Nevertheless, a steady energy is also present, which will help you study and finish writing projects.

Taurus
Apr. 20-May. 20

This might be a restless day, especially when dealing with authority figures. However, you can make headway on taxes, debt, inheritances and insurance matters. Clear away some red-tape issues.

Gemini
May. 21-Jun. 21

Avoid disputes today about shared property, inheritances, taxes, debt and insurance issues. Just coast. Parents should be vigilant about their kids. Social plans might suddenly change.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Relations with spouses, partners and close friends might help restore order. Behind-the-scenes homework or research might pave the way for reorganizing something at home.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22

This is a good day to learn, study or teach, as well as to ponder future goals. Pay attention to everything you say and do because it's an accident-prone day. Don't be pushy at work or with pet-related issues.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Keep an eye on your money and possessions today to avoid loss, damage or theft. If shopping, you might buy long-lasting, practical items. Old flames are back in your dreams, thoughts or in person.

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22

You might meet a real character. Be patient with friends and groups, because irksome little disputes might arise. Fortunately, relations with spouses, partners and close friends are practical and mutually supportive.

Scorpio
Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Be respectful and patient when dealing with parents, bosses, teachers, VIPs and the police today to avoid clashes. A minor surprise connected with banking, shared property or shared expenses might occur.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Your ability to teach children, make vacation plans, as well as deal with socializing will be practical and productive. Give yourself a change of scenery today or shake things up a little. You feel a bit adventurous!

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Stay on top of details related to shared property, taxes, debt, insurance issues and inheritances. You snooze, you lose. Discussions with an older relative or a parent might be productive today.

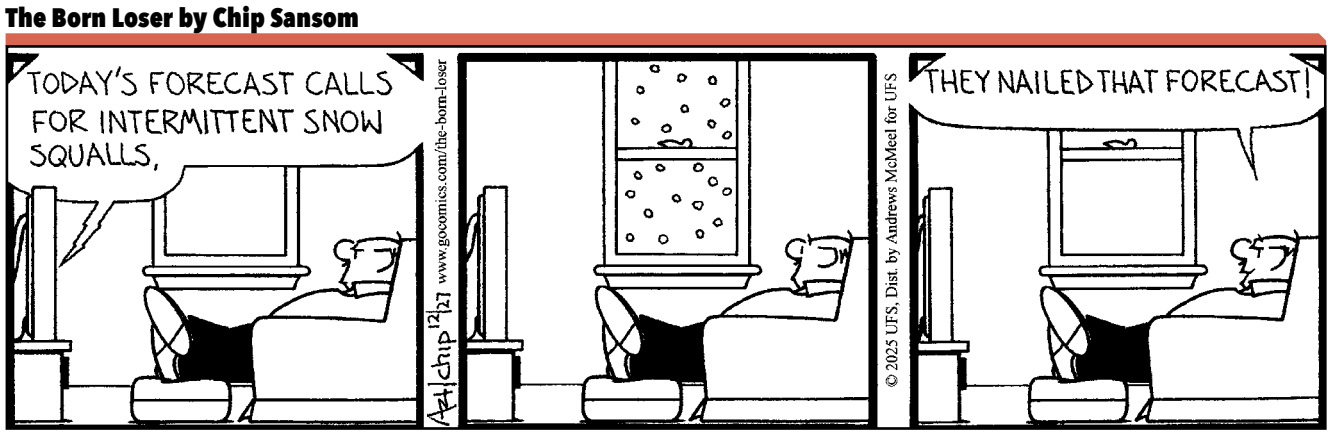
Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18

This is not an ideal day to ask authority figures for permission or approval. Their response might be, "Talk to the hand." However, unexpected social invitations might please you.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20

You can get a lot done today because you're willing to accept duties and obligations. As a result, whatever you do could solidify something for you, financially speaking.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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5				9		3	1	
8		6		2				
2				3		5	9	
		5				3		
6	9		5					8
			7			5		3
7	6		1					2
	5	1	9	2				

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

CHINA	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
Beijing	3	17	fine
Changchun	-6	3	cloudy
Chengdu	13	20	cloudy
Chongqing	16	19	overcast
Fuzhou	22	26	rain
Guangzhou	21	31	cloudy
Guiyang	12	17	overcast
Haikou	25	31	cloudy
Hangzhou	14	21	fine
Harbin	-9	1	cloudy
Hefei	8	20	cloudy
Nanjing	12	20	cloudy
Shanghai	15	21	fine
Taipei	20	24	rain
Wuhan	10	20	cloudy
Hong Hong	26	29	sunny

WORLD			
Moscow	-2	4	sunny
Frankfurt	2	9	sunny
Paris	6	11	cloudy
London	8	12	cloudy
New York	9	18	cloudy

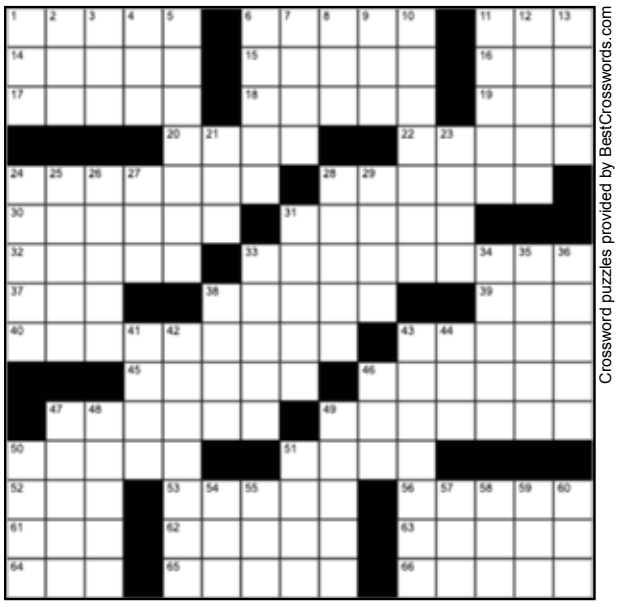
CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Maker of Pong; 6- Exorbitant; 11- Pompous person; 14- Fabric woven from flax yarns; 15- Less diluted; 16- Ballroom dance, when doubled; 17- Frosting; 18- Author Calvino; 19- 007 creator Fleming; 20- Queue after Q; 22- Russian liquor; 24- Place; 28- Deadly fly; 30- Missouri feeder; 31- Graph; 32- Anouk of "La Dolce Vita"; 33- Wind propelled ships; 37- ___ kwon do; 38- Express a viewpoint; 39- ___ King Cole; 40- Yelling; 43- Similar; 45- Machine for lifting heavy loads; 46- ___ Island Ferry; 47- Put back on the payroll; 49- Vent in the earth's crust; 50- Vivarin alternative; 51- Prong; 52- Sapporo sash; 53- Cream-filled cookies; 56- Bellowing; 61- Witticism; 62- Cool!; 63- Perfect Sleeper maker; 64- Biblical verb ending; 65- Thespian; 66- Fortuneteller's card;

DOWN 1- Clay, now; 2- ___-tac-toe; 3- Tropical cuckoo bird; 4- Cartoon Chihuahua; 5- Unappreciative one; 6- Ill will; 7- Ballerina's skirt; 8- Memorable time; 9- Moray, e.g.; 10- Adage; 11- Litmus reddeners; 12- Tremble; 13- Capital of Yemen; 21- Canonized Mlle.; 23- Director Preminger; 24- Tiffs; 25- Of a pelvic bone; 26- Circus performer; 27- Shoshone language member; 28- Inanimate object; 29- Shopaholic's delight; 31- The ___ Mutiny; 33- Backbone; 34- Singer Baker; 35- Spoken for; 36- Shorthand expert; 38- Actor Sharif; 41- Reflected sound; 42- State in SW United States; 43- In any case; 44- Fond du ___; 46- Mama's boy; 47- Android; 48- Archie Bunker's wife; 49- Shield; 50- Iditarod destination; 51- Dorothy's dog; 54- ___ room; 55- Consume; 57- "Michael Collins" actor; 58- Hockey great Bobby; 59- From ___ Z; 60- Long-tailed rodent;

Friday's solution

R	A	B	E				S	I	S			I	S	M	E
U	S	E	R	S		I	T	T	Y			C	L	E	M
D	E	B	I	T		F	E	S	S			E	A	R	P
I	C	E	C	R	E	A	M		T	I	D	B	I	T	
				I	T	T		R	E	L		S	T	Y	
A	W	A	R	D	S		H	E	M	E	N				
M	E	L	E	E			S	O	L	I	T	A	I	R	E
B	A	I	L		A	T	T	I	C		K	N	E	E	
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			T	O	T	A	L		M	E	D	A	L	S	
S	E	A		D	I	P		A	B	A					
T	A	R	G	E	T		I	T	A	L	I	A	N	S	
A	S	T	A		U	N	T	O		M	A	R	E	S	
R	E	O	S		D	O	O	M		S	T	E	E	N	
S	L	O	P		E	R	R			E	S	T	S		



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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Coloane House (Cheoc Van)
3 bed 2 bath | 310.76 m² / 3,345 ft²
HKD 29,500 / mth | MOP 30,385 / mth


Landmark (Macau)
4 bed 3 bath | 329.15 m² / 3,543 ft²
HKD 25,000 / mth | MOP 25,750 / mth


Kok Wui (Near St Paul Macau)
2 bed 1 bath | 48.2 m² / 518 ft²
HKD 6,900 / mth | MOP 7,107 / mth


Taipa Office Space (Old Taipa Village)
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HORSE RACING

Sovereignty regroups to win Breeders' Cup Classic, a year after missing the race

GARY B. GRAVES, LEXINGTON (KY.)

AP PHOTO



Favien Prat, left, rides Further Ado to victory past Luis Saez, right, atop Owen Almighty in the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile horse race Saturday

SOVEREIGNTY surged past Knightsbridge in the stretch and held off The Puma to win the $7 million Breeders' Cup Classic by 1 3/4 lengths on Saturday, one year after missing the marquee race because of a fever.

Ridden by Junior Alvarado, Sovereignty was in the hunt at the final turn and overtook his stablemate on the outside of four horses. He then withstood charges from defending Classic winner Forever Young and The Puma before going on to his second consecutive victory.

"I could feel how fast he was getting to the horses and the lead," Alvarado said after his first Classic victory. "It was right before we turned for home and switched (the) lead. No other horse could have come in faster than the way he was going at the end."

Last year's Kentucky Derby, Belmont and Travers Stakes winner covered 1 1/4 mile in 2 minutes, 0.36 seconds at Keeneland, giving Hall of Fame trainer Bill Mott his third Classic victory and first since 2011. Last year's top overall horse and 3-year-old paid $5.94, $4.16 and $2.94 at the season-ending World Championships.

Sovereignty's return to the Classic and how he'd fare in a loaded seven-horse field including Older Dirt Horse champion Forever Young and Derby winner Golden Tempo was one of the race's biggest storylines.

Knightsbridge almost stole the spotlight by setting the pace with Forever Young close behind. The son of Into Mischief and Crowned soon took over under a cool, overcast sky, adding to his stellar resume and giving breeder Godolphin its first Classic victory.

"He's a magnificent horse," Mott said of Sovereignty. "I've had a couple good ones, but you could almost say he's a once-in-a-lifetime horse.

"I'm not so sure he couldn't have done it last year, but it just wasn't meant to be. Thank goodness we had the opportunity to try again, and the Godolphin team made the decision to keep him in training this year, and that's a huge risk."

The Puma returned $11.22 and $6.10 while Knightsbridge paid $3.76.

Next were Japan-bred T O Password and Forever Young, the 8-5 favorite who sought a second consecutive Classic victory. He faded after running among the leaders. Kentucky Derby and Belmont Stakes winner Golden Tempo was never a factor, running last for much of the race and finishing sixth.

In Saturday's other races at Keeneland, Further Ado came on down the stretch and dueled Owen Almighty side by side before winning the $1 million Dirt Mile at the wire in a photo finish. The favorite started on the rail and was fifth on the backstretch before finding room outside to draw even with Owen Almighty. **MDT/AP**

AD





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Times

OPINION

Our Desk

Renato Marques



Natural stupidity

We live in an extraordinary moment of paradox. On the one hand, never in human history has information been so abundant, so accessible, and so rapidly disseminated.

Yet never has it seemed so difficult to distinguish truth from falsehood, knowledge from ignorance, and credible information from fabricated narratives.

The internet was once celebrated as the gateway to an information society, promising a world where knowledge would empower citizens, strengthen democracy, foster intellectual progress, and bring humanity closer to the truth. But is this really happening?

Fueled by the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, the proliferation of fake news, the manipulation of digital platforms, and the growing influence of individuals who confuse personal opinions with facts, misinformation spreads daily.

In the end, the question is – when did we stop building an information society and start sleepwalking into a disinformation society?

The distinction is not merely semantic. It concerns the intellectual foundations of our civilization. When everyone becomes an expert (or is presented as one), truth becomes a victim of the lie's broader reach.

Misinformation, whether intentional or accidental, is harmful, and that should concern all of us.

It is not about controlling freedom of expression or creation; it is about recognizing that some forms of expression and creation can easily lack intellectual responsibility.

We increasingly encounter publications, or even products, that show an uncanny inability to conduct research, verify facts, or understand much of the subjects they discuss or try to sell.

Recently, I saw an advertisement from a local sports goods chain that "designed" a T-shirt alluding to the Macau Grand Prix.

My first thought was, "Great, finally Macau's larger-scale and higher-impact international event is prompting local companies to partner with multinational companies and brands in sporting goods to produce GP-related merchandise."

But a closer look made me immediately swallow those joyful thoughts like a bitter pill. It was absolutely wrong! The merchandising features, in large print, an outline of a racing circuit that bears no resemblance to the historic (73-year-old) Guia Circuit of Macau. And the worst part – nobody seems to care.

The chain store ignored this fact. Even the multinational brand involved in the alleged partnership seems to care nothing about the huge mistake that spreads misinformation.

How can we let this happen? How can we ignore something that should make all Macau citizens proud?

How hard was it to put the real Guia Circuit outline on the T-shirt instead of an imaginary layout that, as far as I could tell, doesn't even exist (luckily)?

For motorsports fans (potential clients of such a product), the layouts are the fingerprints of each track. They are landmarks and monuments.

I can guarantee that no race fan doesn't recognize the layout of, for example, Monza Circuit in Italy, Nürburgring in Germany, Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium, or Suzuka in Japan, to name a few.

And we? We lost yet another opportunity to showcase our Macau Guia Circuit, and it was entirely self-inflicted.

I am unsure whether an "AI creation" was truly responsible for this flop. But one thing I am sure of. A lack of human intellectual responsibility allowed this to happen, and the greed of those same people, who failed to take responsibility, is keeping the product on sale.

Former British chancellor Rachel Reeves says UK's future should be inside the EU: BBC

THE BUZZ

Former Chancellor Rachel Reeves has argued the UK's future should be inside the EU, and that Brexit has made the country "poorer, weaker and less secure," BBC News reported yesterday.

In her first major intervention since leaving the Treasury, Reeves said she welcomed debate around the UK's relationship with Europe.

At the last election, Labour's manifesto said a Labour government would stay outside the EU and make Brexit work.

But Prime Minister Andy Burnham has said there needs to be an honest discussion about what the future relationship looks like.

According to BBC, Labour's 2024 election manifesto ruled out a return of free movement, single market membership or a customs union.

Burnham has said that any changes would require a mandate at a general election, which is next due by 2029.

In the Sunday Times, Reeves wrote: "No-one in the Treasury ever doubted where my instincts were. I do believe Britain's future lies in the European Union."

She said supporters of rejoining the EU had to "make the argument, demonstrate tangible benefits and to get the next steps right."

AP PHOTO



A man holds a balloon as he walks beside apartment-type tombs at Manila's North Cemetery

Filipino families keep their loved ones close on All Saints' Day

JOEAL CALUPITAN & MARÍA TERESA HERNÁNDEZ, MANILA

HER father may no longer be with her, but Lorita Santos keeps the memories they shared close to her heart.

She was among thousands of Filipinos who flocked to cemeteries across Manila on Sunday to visit the graves of their loved ones, marking All Saints' Day.

For generations, the tradition known locally as Undas has brought families together to remember and honor their dead. The name derives from the Spanish word "honras," meaning "honors."

"Just because they have passed away does not mean we should forget them," said Santos, who visited the resting places of her father and three other relatives.

Her family marks the occasion by offering flowers and candles. Together, they also pray and share snacks.

The visits are an opportunity to share stories about those who have passed away. Santos fondly remembers how her father would give his children and grandchildren small gifts every payday.

"We will never forget that," she added.

Santos grew up visiting the graves of her relatives, even outside All Saints' Day. Now, she is teaching her kids to do the same.

"We pass this on to our children to make sure they are aware of the tradition, so that if something happens to us, they know what to do," Santos said.

Encompassing All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, Nov. 1 and 2, Undas is rooted in Catholic observances but also incorporates beliefs and customs that predate Spanish colonization.

"There is a very long tradition of ancestor worship in the Philippines," said Nestor Castro, an anthropology lecturer at the University of the Philippines Diliman.

Long before the Spanish arrived, Filipinos honored ancestral spirits known as anito by offering food and other gifts to the dead. These practices were not tied to a particular date but formed part of a broader tradition of ancestor veneration, Castro explained.

The tradition evolved after the Spanish arrived in 1565 and introduced Catholicism and new religious practices, some of which may have come from Mexico.

The two countries have historical ties dating back to Spanish colonial rule, when the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade connected them for centuries. Today, they also have similar customs for honoring the dead and remembering loved ones.

In Mexico, many families also honor their departed loved ones by spending a day or night at their graves or setting up altars at home. It is a joyful occasion filled with marigolds, music and food.

Similar customs are observed in other countries with strong Catholic traditions, including Bolivia, Poland and Hungary, where families gather to honor their dead with flowers, candles and prayers.

In Filipino culture, death is not only a time to honor those who have passed away, but also an occasion that brings families together, Castro said.

During funeral wakes, he added, families wait for relatives who live far away to arrive before burying their loved ones. "That's when family reunions occur. It's a binding event."

That sense of togetherness also extends to Undas. Sticky rice cakes are often shared for the occasion, symbolizing the bonds between relatives through their sticky texture.

"These events foster and solidify kinship relationships," Castro said.

MDT/AP

AP PHOTO



Germany Youth-led demonstrators rallied in more than 30 German cities Saturday, demanding greater investment in education, housing and climate protection. Some protests turned violent, with rioters smashing storefronts in Frankfurt and throwing projectiles at police. Officers dispersed crowds in Cologne and Hamburg.

Netherlands Dutch entrepreneurs are expanding vegan options beyond food into condoms, lubricants and adult toys, highlighting animal-derived ingredients sometimes found in everyday products. Rotterdam-based LieLei and Amsterdam-based Aia offer alternatives using plant-based materials, while seeking to reduce plastic packaging and environmental impacts.

AP PHOTO



USA Trump administration social media posts featuring a sombrero-carved pumpkin and a Halloween-themed depiction of an accused food assistance fraud suspect drew criticism as inflammatory ahead of midterm elections. The posts accompanied an intensified federal campaign against immigration violations and alleged benefit fraud.

AP PHOTO



Mexicans marked Day of the Dead with marigolds, candles and family altars honoring deceased relatives. In Michoacan, authorities closed Janitzio island's cemetery to tourists after heavy visitor traffic damaged tombs and walls, allowing only local families and friends of those buried there.

HOLIDAY TIMES

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holiday. The Times will return to the stands on Wednesday, November 4. Meanwhile, the MDT website will be updated with breaking news throughout the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers, and friends the best of times.