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MELCO LAUNCHES 'SHARE PURCHASE AND AWARD PROGRAM' FOR EMPLOYEES WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE VOLUNTARY LEAVE PROGRAM IN 2020

P4

COVID-19 TEST VALIDITY FOR GUANGDONG EXTENDED TO SEVEN DAYS

P6

THE GOV'T RAKED IN A REVENUE OF MOP49 BILLION IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE YEAR, OF WHICH MOP43.7 BILLION WAS FROM THE GAMING SECTOR

P6

China yesterday criticized what it called the "politicization of sports" after British lawmakers urged a boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics unless China allows an investigation of complaints of human rights abuses in its northwest. A boycott "will not succeed," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said.

Philippines A cargo vessel and a Cyprus-flagged dredger collided in a Manila Bay anchorage area yesterday, resulting in no injuries but causing the cargo vessel to list and lie half-submerged in the busy waters. It was not immediately clear what triggered the pre-dawn accident near Manila's Baseco shoreline, which caused the M/V Palawan Pearl to tilt and take on water and damaged the paint on the dredger's hull, coast guard officials said.



South Korea There is no sign that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has been inoculated against the coronavirus and his country hasn't received any foreign vaccines, South Korea's spy agency said yesterday. The National Intelligence Service told lawmakers in a closed-door briefing that it hasn't detected any information that North Korea has acquired vaccines, according to Ha Tae-keung, one of the legislators who attended the session.

Baghdad Rockets landed in and around the heavily fortified Green Zone in the Iraqi capital Baghdad, which houses the U.S. Embassy, causing material damage yesterday, Iraqi security forces said. Two Katyusha rockets fell near the national security building, and in an open courtyard inside the Green Zone. A third rocket fell in a nearby residential area, damaging a civilian vehicle, the statement by the Iraqi security media cell said.

More on backpage

NEW FACES, LITTLE TO NO RELEVANCE

The change of some faces running in the direct election will not cause any significant changes to this year's AL elections, says political scientist Sérgio de Almeida Correia; academic Eilo Yu said it will be 'unpredictable' P2-3



CARITAS MACAU TO LAUNCH LOCAL-STYLE CAFÉ EMPLOYING SENIOR CITIZENS

XINHUA



P4

GOV'T TO MERGE CARD PACK INTO UNIFIED APP NEXT MONTH

The government has announced that, next month, it will consolidate 12 cards related to local residents into the one-stop government app — the first phase of planned consolidations. These cards include the Health Bureau medical "Gold" card, the vocational health and safety accreditation card, and the Sports Bureau sporting registration card, among others. The government also hinted that the app will see an upgrade next year that will allow the interconnectivity of data, possibly including personal data, but no specifics were provided.

DSEDJ OFFERS TRAINING AND INTERNSHIPS FOR YOUTH

A total of 1,344 youths signed up for a scheme organized by the Education and Youth Development Bureau (DSEDJ) designed to help local young people make good use of their leisure time. The scheme offers short-term training and internships for local youth and students, helping them upskill in their spare time. It is collaboration between 36 public departments and private enterprises. Through a series of online tests and interviews, 471 candidates were selected for the six-week internship program this summer holiday.

IPIIM HELPS SMES TO REFINE E-COMMERCE TACTICS

The Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIIM) organized the "Cross-border E-commerce Promotion and Marketing Strategy Course" on July 6-7 with the participation of over 170 business representatives. The course is intended to help Macau's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) expand their source markets through e-commerce. The IPIIM also organized 20 business matching sessions between businesspeople and cross-border e-commerce marketing firms to allow them to forge ties.

Political scientist says 'turncoat' group

RENATO MARQUES

POLITICAL scientist Sérgio de Almeida Correia believes that the results of the September 12 election for the Legislative Assembly (AL) will be in the hands of just one of three groups of voters. He has identified this group as volatile and easily influenced by the idea of future benefits as a result of the election.

In an exclusive interview with the Times, Correia explained that the change of some faces running in the direct election is of little relevance and will not cause any significant changes to the way the AL works or in the decisions made by the plenary. He claims that the final outcome of whether there will be more pro-democracy or pro-establishment legislators in the next term is in the hands of a group of voters who are more influenced by potential benefits than by political ideology.

"Today we have three groups in Macau. [The first] is composed of the patriots: people close to the Chinese Communist Party, the working class and traditional sectors such as the Kaifong [neighborhood associations] and some more powerful local associations," Correia said. "[In the second group are] the democratic patriots, who support universal suffrage and want to increase the power of residents' voices. [This group comprises] a very significant part of the middle class, merchants, civil servants, mid-range company staff and young university students."

Correia believes that the third group, which he considers to be the most influential in the elections, comprised of "a very volatile, opportunistic electorate, whose only interests are in [potential] business they can profit from. [These are the people that] today claim to be patriotic, but [...] in the past they submissively supported the colonial power. They are capable of changing [sides] easily, and they are heavily dependent on local Mandarins, casinos, restaurants, and real estate deals [as well as] promises of future prosperity made to them."

In Correia's analysis, the three groups approach the elections differently.

"I believe that it will be the

RENATO MARQUES



third group who decide between a more nationalist or more democratic composition of the Legislative Assembly," he said. "These are the ones who will

have the most to lose with changes [to the AL] and those I have the most uncertainty about [regarding] how they will vote on September 12."

HIGH FRAGMENTATION TO CONTINUE

When asked for a prediction of the upcoming composition of the AL after the September elec-

ACADEMIC SEES UPCOMING ELECTION AS 'UNPREDICTABLE'

LOCAL academic Eilo Yu expects the upcoming parliamentary election to be competitive and unpredictable, despite fewer lists participating.

In an interview with local Chinese paper the Macao Daily News, Yu gave his analysis on this year's Legislative Assembly Election. He pointed out that although fewer lists are fighting for the same number of seats, it will be more competitive than in previous elections.

He pointed out that last four to five seats will be the most difficult to determine.

Considering four incumbent lawmakers will either transfer to the indirect election constituency or withdraw from the frontline, the flow of votes is still unpredictable but will be diverted, according to Yu.

Meanwhile, the impact of the departure from the frontline of lawmakers Ng Kuok Cheong and Au Kam San is still unclear. They have garnered established support in the previous two decades. Whether their successors will be able

to retain their advantages is a debatable matter.

On the other hand, a group that split into two lists in the last election choosing to reunite as a single list is running a safe strategy, Yu said. He added that more observation is needed to determine if communal societies are retaining or losing their influence.

Yu also estimated that the effects of the pandemic may have an impact on the resources for promotions that candidates can enjoy. It may be beneficial to a clean election, he said.

He explained that the pandemic has struck the economy hard, which may lead to a reduction in the number of resources available for the elections. With a drop in the promotional efforts, certain lists may experience weaker support.

On the flipside, the academic added that the shortage of resources may help clean up the election. **AL**



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will decide the AL elections

tion, Correia advised expecting that the current high fragmentation of the chamber will continue, as a direct consequence of the electoral system.

"It's a complicated system for converting votes into mandates which was designed to prevent the emergence of strong [political] blocs in the direct election. This is perhaps the reason that, unlike Hong Kong, the Macau government did not feel the need to amend the electoral law in the current legislature," he said.

The high number of lists representing different interests, combined with election of just one of two candidates, in Correia's view, leads to the fragmentation of interests, meaning that candidates elected by different lists seldom join forces on particular topics.

LOSS OF POWER FROM GAMING SECTOR

In addition to the continuing political fragmentation, Correia believes that we may see a potential loss of power from some sectors, especially gaming.

"I believe that the biggest changes will be seen in the loss

of electoral and political relevance of some sectors, namely gaming. There is a lot of discomfort amongst the sector after the previous elections, when Melinda Chan lost her seat. [This] is exacerbated by Angela Leong's move to indirect elections in light of a potential humiliation at the polls by Cloee Chao, who represents the interests of gaming workers," he remarked. Correia

LOCAL INTERESTS, FAMILIES LOSING MOMENTUM

Another important local traditional sector losing momentum is that of 'local interests and families', Correia said. He explained that these people are linked to the business and economic elite of Macau who, during the Portuguese administration and after the handover, managed to secure a substantial portion of

neral interest, generating social conflict, bad governance, wastage of public money and the bad image of institutions, which ends up affecting the Central Government as well."

"In recent years, large portions of the population have been complaining about the high costs and general lack of housing. [They have also identified a lack of] transportation and healthcare, poor environments and bad quality public works, pollution, lack of treatment of sewage and wastewater, excessive construction [density] and lately even the condition of the roads. In other words, everything that concerns the daily lives of the population," he explained.

CE-APPOINTED LAWMAKERS TO BE REPLACED

The political expert notes that one of the bigger changes in the composition of the AL chamber will come from the group of seven lawmakers who are directly appointed by the Chief Executive (CE).

Correia says that the majority of those currently holding the post have been appointed by the previous CE, Chui Sai On, and at "various times they have only embarrassed the current CE and the government with their naive and misinformed interventions, falling on populist and demago-

gic movements."

"The CE needs to have capable and competent people in the chamber who can make a difference and even be the voice of rationality at decisive moments," Correia said, noting the example of the new regime for the hiring of non-resident workers, which, due to this lack of sensible behavior, resulted in legislators calling for amendments to the regime only two months after it had passed.

INFLUENCE OF RECENT POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Correia agreed that the political environment in recent months that led to the cancellation and deauthorization of several public activities and gatherings could influence the election.

"In addition to the economic situation and living conditions of residents, the political environment of the last year, the decisions (and indecision) of the Chief Executive, the pandemic, the increase in police control measures, the internal security requirements imposed by the Central government, the restrictions imposed on the right of assembly, parade and demonstration, the situation of Hong Kong and the international situation — they will all be decisive in the direct election vote," he concluded.



"The CE needs to have capable and competent people in the chamber who can make a difference and even be the voice of rationality at decisive moments"

SÉRGIO DE ALMEIDA CORREIA
POLITICAL SCIENTIST

points to this term ending without any amendments to the gaming law as an "unmistakable sign of changing attitudes and paradigms" in relation to the lobbying power of the gaming sector.

the wealth generated in Macau.

For Correia, this power — that comes from their links to the elite, interlinked monopolies and oligopolies — is also losing potency as "the interests of these people are opposed to the ge-



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CARITAS' ELDERLY-RUN RESTAURANT TO OPEN TO BOOST SENIOR EMPLOYMENT RATE

HONEY TSANG

CARITAS Macau is planning to launch a forward-thinking cha chaan teng (local-style café) staffed 60% by elderly employees in August or September this year, with the aim of helping seniors to re-engage in the local job market.

In an interview with the Times, Secretary-General of Caritas Macau Paul Pun explained that the cha chaan teng is named "Delightful Kitchen," and is located near Mercado Municipal da Horta da Mitra.

"The recruitment feedback so far is very positive. Some elderly [people] even came to me and said they would like to work for us as a volunteer," Pun said.

Caritas aims to hire a total of 10 staff initially for positions such as chef and waitperson. As of yesterday, the association had recruited one staff member already.

Pun said the association would prioritize hiring paid staff, with volunteers playing a backup role.

The project aims to assist Macau's senior citizens in finding re-employment while they are in retirement, providing them a sense of participation and belonging within the community.



XINHUA

After the whole team is recruited, Pun will dedicate most operational responsibilities and business ideas to the employed seniors. That is to say, the restaurant and its products represent the ideas and work of the elderly staff.

Once open, the restaurant will offer dining vouchers which, according to Pun, are intended to be used for charity purposes. He calls on those who would like to support the cause to purchase vouchers and distribute them to others to support the venture.

The project is part of the "Job Creation Subsidy Scheme for Seniors," organized by the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS), with applications launched in April 2019.

Another approved project under this scheme is a separate restaurant run by the Macau Special Olympics.

The Times understands that the two projects involve a public expenditure of around MOP 5.4 million.

Pun told the Times he does not wish to disclose the total grant received by the government, as he prefers the public to focus on the positive social outcomes instead of on the budget.

According to TDM, Choi Sio Un, head of the IAS's Department of Social Solidarity said the authorities will evaluate the outcomes of these two projects so that they can inform later decisions on the

funding scheme for the social alliances.

Choi also said he would not rule out the possibility that the IAS may accept applications from time to time in the future.

He also called on local associations to build sustainable business systems without relying on government subsidies as a long-term approach.

As of now, the IAS has launched three rounds of the Subsidy Scheme for Social Associations. The first two rounds focused on increasing employment rates among the population with disabilities, which led to a total of 50 people with disabilities being hired.

MELCO LAUNCHES SHARE PURCHASE PROGRAM FOR FURLOUGHED EMPLOYEES

LYNZY VALLES

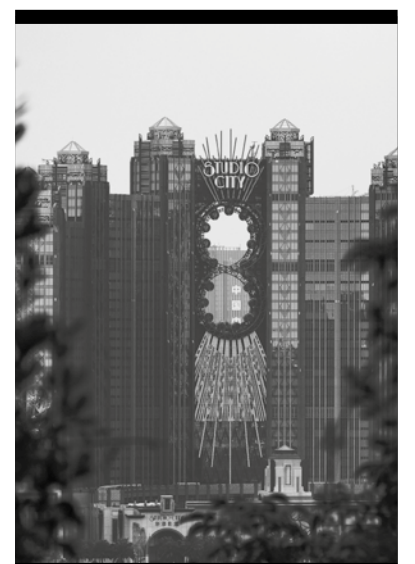
MELCO Resorts & Entertainment Limited announced a Share Purchase and Award Program for employees who agreed to participate in the company's voluntary leave program in 2020.

The newly launched Share Purchase and Award Program allows eligible employees to use a portion of their base salary during the term of the program (July 2021 to June 2022) to purchase and receive a grant of restricted shares under the Melco Resorts 2011 Share Incentive Plan. They will have an aggregate value equal to 200% of the amount of base salary at the grant date.

The gaming operator stated that the maximum number of restricted shares which may be issued under the program represents less than 0.50% of the company's total shares outstanding as of yesterday, July 8, 2021.

Lawrence Ho, chairman and CEO of Melco Resorts & Entertainment, said "The Share Purchase and Award Program demonstrates our recognition of the dedication and commitment our colleagues have demonstrated during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic last year. As the pandemic gradually subsides, we would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to all our colleagues and ensure they have the chance to capitalize on the long-term growth of the company."

At the height of the pandemic last year, the voluntary leave program was one of a series of measures taken by the company to manage its costs amid the economic downturn and drop in gaming revenue.



Driver leaving scratches on Mandarin's House wall takes responsibility

THE driver who caused visible scratches to the wall surrounding the Mandarin's House, part of the World Heritage precinct, has agreed to pay for repairs to the wall.

According to the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), which manages the site, the repairs will cost MOP 14,000.

Last month, the Judiciary Police (PJ) were told by the IC that significant scratches of about 8 meters in length were left on the wall of the Mandarin's House. Using surveillance camera footage, the PJ identified the cement mixer truck which caused the mark on June 22.

The police said that the cement outlet pipe of the truck was not properly retracted when the truck passed the street.

The incident turned



CHAN

from a minor traffic accident to a criminal offence when the driver did not stop the truck and call the Public Security Police Force, which is in charge of law enforcement for traffic-related matters.

Instead, he chose to leave the location and, attempting to avoid res-

ponsibility, did not turn himself in afterwards. The PJ then had to ask him to come to the station to explain the matter.

Although he admitted the incident to the police and promised to pay for the repairs, the PJ charged him with aggravated damage considering

the facts. The suspect is surnamed Lao, aged 64 years, and is a local resident.

In response to the matter, Mok Ian Ian, president of the IC, said that the repair work has commenced. She noted that adding an extra layer of protective wall on the

side of the existing wall is not feasible as it will further narrow the street, making the passage of traffic more difficult.

When asked whether traffic should be restricted at that location, Pinky Ng, supervisor-general of the Macao Cultural Heritage Reinventing Studies Association, told the Times that some flow control is required, but that it would be an extremely difficult task to implement.

The street is filled with residential buildings. She noted that the transportation needs of these residents must be considered. "The street is a main vein on that hill," Ng explained.

She added that education about preservation is just as important in the discussion. **AL**

IN celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, commonly known as the CPC, the Wynn Care Foundation, the Macau Chinese Excellent Traditional Culture Association, and National Conditions Education Association (Macau) jointly organized a study tour for a group of over 50 students from ten local secondary schools and young representatives of Taiwanese enterprises on a study and exchange visit to the nation's capital in Beijing.

The tour was headed by Linda Chen, President of the Macau Chinese Excellent Traditional Culture Association and Chairman of the Wynn Care Foundation. Chen noted that the Association is committed to strengthening understanding of the motherland's history and traditional culture among Macao's youth and Macao-based Taiwanese youths, while also enhancing their national and cultural confidence. As this year marks the centenary since the founding of the CPC, it is hoped that this journey can enable the younger generation to learn more about the Party's history, further cultivate their spirit of patriotism and love of Macao, and promote harmony and inclusion.

EXPERIENCING TRADITIONAL CHINESE CULTURE FIRST-HAND

The students visited the China Soong Ching Ling Foundation where they were cordially welcomed by Yu Qun, Vice Chairman of the Foundation. During the visit, the students experienced China's magnificent history of culture and arts, such as the tea ceremony, traditional costumes, red boats made of bamboo, and guzheng music, absorbing the rich connotations of the country's deep-rooted traditions.

In addition, the students also took some time to appreciate the Party's historic music and enjoy a welcome dinner to personally

PRESERVING AND PASSING ON CHINESE CULTURE; BRINGING CHINA'S ACHIEVEMENTS TO THE WORLD

Wynn and Macao youths celebrate the 100th anniversary of the CPC



The group of students visit China Soong Ching Ling Foundation and are cordially welcomed by Yu Qun, Vice Chairman of the Foundation



The students are invited to attend lectures held by experts and scholars, and experience the traditional Chinese arts and culture

experience the amazing artistic beauty and taste the mystery and charm that can only be found in the motherland. They also visited the National Library of China and famous scenic spots in Beijing to see the country's profound heritage from in person and from multiple perspectives, granting a deeper understanding of Chinese culture.

UNDERSTANDING DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The students also visited the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, where they were warmly received by Xu Yongji, Executive Deputy Director of the Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Affairs Office of the Ministry of Education of the People's

Republic of China. During the meeting, the students seized the opportunity to learn from and discuss with official representatives of the Ministry of Education, actively asking questions to enhance their knowledge. They were further invited to attend lectures held by several experts and scholars, and also exchanged views with Li Qiangmin, former Consul-

General of the People's Republic of China.

The delegates then visited the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Macao SAR in Beijing and the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits, among other departments. At each step along the way, the delegates exchanged views on topics such as cultural tourism, national education, and Macao's diversified development.

STUDYING THE PARTY'S HISTORY AND STRENGTHENING PATRIOTISM

The students are convinced that this unique experience helped them to identify with the motherland and foster a stronger sense of belonging. Through in-person visits to national government departments and face-to-face discussions with government officials, they gained a deeper understanding of the century-long development of the CPC and the history of the country as a whole, granting them a more profound insight into the unique strengths and culture that so defines their motherland. They expressed the sincere hope that the country will continue to prosper and grow in strength, which in turn will also promise a better tomorrow for Macao.



The students meet with Xu Yongji, Executive Deputy Director of the Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Affairs Office of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, as well as Li Qiangmin, former Consul-General of the People's Republic of China



COVID-19

TEST VALIDITY REVERTED TO A WEEK FOR MACAU-GUANGDONG TRAVELS

ANTHONY LAM

FOLLOWING about a month of shortened validity, Covid-19 test validity period will return to seven days for travel between Macau and Guangdong province from tomorrow, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center announced yesterday.

The update was made as conditions in Guangdong have gradually normalized and the "risk of outbreak has significantly decreased," the center said.

About a month ago, the validity period of Nucleic Acid Test (NAT) results for travel between Macau and Guangdong was shortened drastically, from seven days to two. At that time, new cases of Covid-19 infections had been detected in several cities in Guangdong.

As normal validity period resumes, the center reminded travelers of the importance of



bearing valid results. Failure to do so may cause inconvenience at border checkpoints.

Local residents will need to do the test on site and will only be accepted into Macau once a negative result is returned. Non-locals will simply be returned to Guangdong if they fail to produce the required valid result.

The health authorities em-

phasized that, when the new measure is implemented, the specific test date will not affect its use for Macau-Guangdong travel provided it is within the seven-day validity period.

For example, a negative test conducted July 5 will still be valid for Macau-Guangdong travel on July 10 once the new measure is implemented.

MACAU RANKS HONG KONG LESS RISKY

Following a month without a new local case, Hong Kong was ranked by the center yesterday as having low to mid-level risk. However, this is not sufficient to allow free movement between the two Special Administrative Regions.

Dr Leong Iek Hou, a public health official at the center, explained that interactions between low-risk areas, such as Macau and mainland China, see fewer restrictions. For example, travelers only need negative NAT results to facilitate movement.

However, as Hong Kong is still not ranked a low-risk area, certain stricter measures, such as quarantine, still apply, although health self-management has been lifted since April. Further lifting of measures will require more observation, according to the Response and Coordination Center.

In addition, the center confirmed that Macau has sufficient quarantine hotel rooms to host incoming residents and travelers.

GOV'T'S TOTAL REVENUE IN H1 DOWN 27.7% YEAR-ON-YEAR

IN the first six months of this year, the government collected an aggregate revenue of MOP 49.04 billion, down 27.7% year-over-year, according to the latest figures compiled by the Finance Bureau.

Of total revenue in the first half (H1) of 2021, around MOP26.29 billion was from Current Revenue, a 2.17% drop from the same period last year.

The remaining MOP22.75 billion was from Capital Revenue, which plunged by 44.5% year-over-year.

Out of the Current Revenue sub-segments, gaming revenue contributed a total of MOP 19.64 billion, representing 74.7% of the total. This figure is a 9.8% decline from H1 in 2020.

As far as expenditure goes, the government made an aggregate expenditure of MOP43.76 billion, down approximately 1.9% from the same period last year. Among this expenditure, Current and Capital Expenditure accounted for 87.1% and 12.9% of the total, respectively.

In terms of Current Expenditure, spending on the "transfer, funding and subsidies" segment was MOP27.55 billion, down 10.9% from H1 last year.

For Capital Expenditure, the Investment Plan (PIDDA) totaled MOP5.579 billion, up 108.0% year-on-year. **HT**

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TRAVEL COUNCIL PREDICTS UP TO 90% HOTEL OCCUPANCY IN SUMMER HOLIDAY

STAFF REPORTER

THE hotel occupancy rate in Macau is currently between 40% and 50%, and may reach 80% to 90% during the summer holiday as the epidemic situation in Guangdong province stabilizes, according to Andy Wu, chairman of the Travel Industry Council of Macau.

Wu reported an increase in inquiries from citizens about travel packages to destinations such as Zhejiang and Shanghai.

In addition, the government of Zhangjiajie in Hunan province hosted a tourism promotion conference for the city.

Wu said that Zhangjiajie has "abundant natural tourism resources that attract Macau residents to visit," adding that, at the conference,



rence, the two cities will launch more mutually advantageous tourism products.

Ouyang Bin, deputy mayor of Zhangjiajie City, said that as the mainland epidemic stabilizes, he hopes to restart discussions with the Macau government about opening direct flights between the two places in the future.

Meanwhile, at present, the mainland is the only quarantine-free destination for hopeful travelers in Macau.

The city's travel

agencies have recently noted a surge in demand for lesser-known mainland destinations among locals in the coming summer holiday. Locals are now switching to some lesser-known mainland destinations like Qingdao Jiuzhaigou, and Yading in Daocheng County.

The EGL Tours (Macau) said that it received a 30 to 40% spike in inquiries after the firm launched new mainland tours to the aforementioned mainland destinations.

EDITH M. LEDERER,
UNITED NATIONS

A U.N. resolution proposed yesterday (local time) would allow the delivery of humanitarian aid to rebel-held northwest Syria through just one crossing point from Turkey for a year after objections to an initial Security Council draft that would have authorized sending aid through two border crossings.

Last week, Russian Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said the original proposal by Ireland and Norway to reopen the Al-Yaroubiya crossing from Iraq to mainly Kurdish-controlled northeast Syria was "a non-starter." Russia skipped consultations Tuesday on that draft and diplomats said China officially objected to the text with two crossings earlier Wednesday.

The Security Council approved four border crossings when aid deliveries began in 2014, three years after the start of the Syrian conflict. But in January 2020, Russia, which is Syria's closest ally, used its veto threat in the council first to limit aid deliveries to two border crossings in the northwest, and then last July to cut the number to just one crossing at Bab al-Hawa from Turkey to northwest Idlib.

Diplomats said the new draft resolution would keep the Bab al-Hawa crossing open for another year, which the U.N., U.S., many Western countries and humanitarian organizations say is critical.

Acting U.N. humanitarian chief Ramesh Rajasingham told the Security Council in late June that the failure to extend the mandate for Bab al-Hawa "would disrupt lifesaving aid to 3.4 million people in need across the northwest, millions of whom are among the most vulnerable in Syria."

The 15 council members have until today to object to the new draft, council diplomats said, speaking on condition of anonymity because consultations have been private. The

AP PHOTO

New UN proposal: Aid to Syria from one crossing from Turkey



U.N. mandate for using the Bab al-Hawa crossing ends Saturday, and the council is expected to vote on a cross-border resolution Friday, they said.

Two weeks ago, Nebenzia told the Security Council that aid moving across conflict lines within Syria "is the only legitimate option for a humanitarian operation to deliver assistance." He accused Western nations of wasting the past year that could have been used "to find a seamless and constructive solution and an optimal balance of Idlib's procurement through both Bab al-Hawa and domestic channels."

Nebenzia also said U.S. and European Union sanctions put "a heavy burden" on every Syrian, saying: "You blow the whistle regarding humanitarian access while pretending that the problem of Syria's suffocation with sanctions does not exist."

China said Tuesday it wants the Security Council to not only extend humanitarian aid deliveries to Syria from neighboring countries but to tackle the impact of Western sanctions and

"For China, definitely we want to see a solution concerning unilateral sanctions, concerning cross-lines, concerning the transparency of the cross-border."

CHINESE AMBASSADOR ZHANG JUN

the need to expand deliveries across conflict lines, difficult requests with just a few days left before the mandate for Bab al-Hawa ends.

Chinese Ambassador Zhang Jun told reporters after closed council discussions Tuesday that he hopes "with more diplomatic efforts we can find a solution" - not just on cross-border aid.

"For China, definitely we want to see a solution concerning unilateral sanctions, concerning cross-lines, concerning the transparency of the cross-border. Not just talking about cross-border but about the general situation in Syria," Zhang said.

In early July 2020, China and Russia vetoed a U.N. resolution that would have maintained two border crossing points from Turkey to the northwest. Days later, under pressure from both countries, the council authorized the delivery of aid only through Bab al-Hawa.

U.S. Ambassador Linda Tho-

mas-Greenfield warned after Tuesday's council meeting that Bab al-Hawa "is a lifeline to millions of people" in Idlib and if the crossing is closed, "I think the repercussions are obvious: people will starve to death."

The U.S. initially called for three border crossings into Syria, but Thomas-Greenfield told reporters: "We cannot accept less than what we have today, and that's one border crossing for 12 months that's providing support for millions of Syrians."

Whether Russia and China accept keeping Baba al-Hawa open for another year remains to be seen.

French Ambassador Nicolas De Riviere, the current council president, has warned that if humanitarian aid deliveries are allowed only across conflict lines -- and not from neighboring countries -- Western nations that provide 92% of humanitarian relief will stop the funding. **MDT/AP**

One of China's wandering elephants is returned to reserve

A male Asian elephant that had separated from a herd that has been wandering southwest China for more than a year has been anaesthetized and returned to its nature reserve.

The lone elephant was captured in Yuxi city and sent back to the Xishuangbanna National Nature Reserve, about 280 kilometers away, on Wednesday, a command center

monitoring the elephants said.

It appeared healthy and did not have any suffer from any injuries, the Yunnan provincial government said in a social media post.

The remaining 14 elephants have been moving southward recently but are still far from the reserve.

The other elephant had been wandering on

its own for more than a month, and had shown no intention to return to its herd, according to Yunnan Provincial Command Center for the Safety and Monitoring of North Migrating Asian Elephants.

It had relied heavily on food that the command center provided or that it found in villagers' homes, and had stayed in a rural neighborhood very close to a highway and a major

railroad since Monday.

The elephant's frequent activities in populated areas prompted concerns of local authorities, who made the decision to send the elephant back to reduce public safety risk.

More than 200 people, dozens of emergency vehicles and 20 drones have been deployed to monitor the elephants, according to the command center. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO





HAITI

Future uncertain after brazen slaying of president

EVENS SANON & DÁNICA COTO, PORT-AU-PRINCE

AN already struggling and chaotic Haiti stumbled into an uncertain future yesterday, reeling from the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse followed by a reported gunbattle in which authorities said police killed four suspects in the murder, detained two others and freed three officers being held hostage.

Officials pledged to find all those responsible for the predawn raid on Moïse's house early Wednesday that left the president shot to death and his wife, Martine Moïse, critically wounded. She was flown to Miami for treatment.

"The pursuit of the mercenaries continues," Léon Charles, director of Haiti's National Police, said Wednesday night in announcing the arrests of suspects. "Their fate is fixed: They will fall in the fighting or will be arrested."

Officials did not provide any details on the suspects, including their ages, names or nationalities, nor did they address a motive or what led police to the

suspects. They said only that the attack condemned by Haiti's main opposition parties and the international community was carried out by "a highly trained and heavily armed group" whose members spoke Spanish or English.

Prime Minister Claude Joseph assumed leadership of Haiti with help of police and the military and decreed a two-week state of siege following Moïse's killing, which stunned a nation grappling with some of the Western Hemisphere's highest poverty, violence and political instability.

The attack [...] was carried out by "a highly trained and heavily armed group" whose members spoke Spanish or English

Inflation and gang violence are spiraling upward as food and fuel becomes scarcer, while 60% of Haitian workers earn less than \$2 a day. The increasingly dire situation comes as Haiti is still trying to recover from the devastating 2010 earthquake and Hurricane Matthew in 2016 following

a history of dictatorship and political upheaval.

Those in Haiti and family and friends living abroad wondered what is next.

"There is this void now, and they are scared about what will happen to their loved ones," said Marlene Bastien, executive director of Family Action Network Movement, a group that helps people in Miami's Little Haiti community.

She said it was important for the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden to take a much more active role in supporting attempts at national dialogue in Haiti with the aim of holding free, fair and credible elections.

Bastien said she also wants to see participation of the extensive Haitian diaspora: "No more band-aids. The Haitian people have been crying and suffering for too long."

Haiti had grown increasingly unstable under Moïse, who had been ruling by decree for more than a year and faced violent protests as critics accused him of trying to amass more power while the opposition demanded he step down.

According to Haiti's

constitution, Moïse should be replaced by the president of Haiti's Supreme Court, but the chief justice died in recent days from COVID-19, leaving open the question of who might rightfully succeed to the office.

Joseph, meanwhile, was supposed to be replaced by Ariel Henry, who had been named prime minister by Moïse a day before the assassination.

Henry told The Associated Press in a brief interview that he is the prime minister, calling it an exceptional and confusing situation. In another interview with Radio Zenith, he said there was no fight between him and Joseph: "I only disagree with the fact that people have taken hasty decisions [...] when the moment demands a little more serenity and maturity."

Moïse had faced large protests in recent months that turned violent as opposition leaders and their supporters rejected his plans to hold a constitutional referendum with proposals that would strengthen the presidency.

Hours after the assassination, public transportation and street vendors remained largely scarce, an unusual sight for the normally bustling streets of Port-au-Prince. Gunfire rang out intermittently across the city, a grim reminder of the growing power of gangs that displaced more than 14,700 people last month alone as they torched and ransacked homes in a fight over territory.

Robert Fatton, a Haitian politics expert at the University of Virginia, said gangs were a force to contend with and it isn't certain Haiti's security forces can enforce a state of siege.

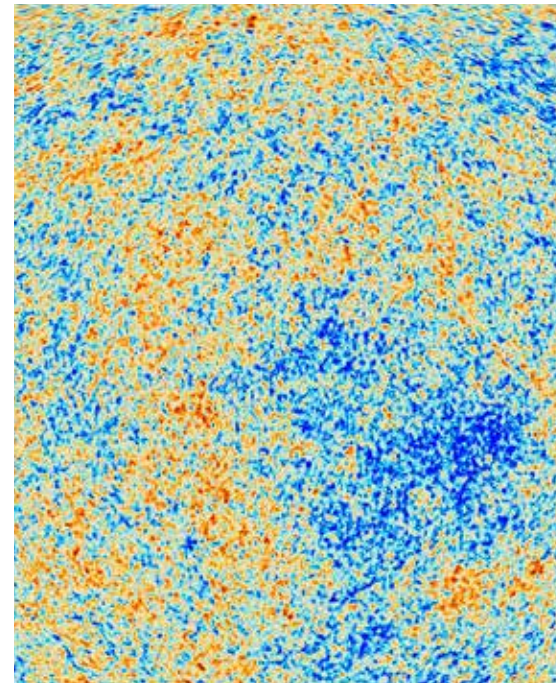
"It's a really explosive situation," he said, adding that foreign intervention with a U.N.-type military presence is a possibility. "Whether Claude Joseph manages to stay in power is a huge question. It will be very difficult to do so if he doesn't create a government of national unity."

Joseph told The Associated Press that he supports an international investigation into the assassination and believes elections scheduled for later this year should be held as he promised to work with Moïse's allies and opponents alike.

"Everything is under control," he said. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

2001 SCIENTISTS DISCOVER WHY WE ARE HERE



A Californian University has thrown more light on why the Big Bang works after nearly 40 years of world-wide research.

Most scientists accept that the universe began with the Big Bang and the existence - in equal amounts - of matter and anti-matter.

The theory has been complicated by the fact that if matter and anti-matter were present in equal amounts they would cancel each other out and there would not be a universe.

Experiments by Stanford University's international team of physicists have provided the most substantial proof yet that matter and anti-matter decay at different rates and this explains the continued predominance of matter.

This process is called charge-parity (CP) violation and derives from research in the 1950s and 1960s by theorists like Andrei Sakharov.

The evidence for CP has rested solely on - increasingly accurate - measurements of the different decay rates of the sub-atomic particle, neutral K meson and its anti-particle.

Now the team working at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (Slac) has observed CP violation in a heavier particle/anti-particle pair related to B meson.

They made their discovery using a 1,200 tonne detector called Babar, designed, built and operated by 600 scientists and engineers, many from the UK.

Babar forces particles to crash into each other and simulate the effects of the Big Bang deep under the Californian landscape.

The findings of the Slac team will be published in the journal Physical Review Letters.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The idea of anti-matter has been around since 1928 when British physicist Paul Dirac suggested the existence of atoms with negatively charged anti-protons at the centre and positively charged electrons - positrons - orbiting them. Ordinary atoms consist of a positively charged nucleus surrounded by negatively charged electrons. It is very difficult to make anti-matter and requires powerful particle accelerators like Babar. Scientists estimate that around 20kg of anti-matter like anti-hydrogen - first produced in Switzerland in 1997 - could power a spaceship across the galaxy. Over the past 10 years particle physicists in Europe, the US and Asia have put together plans for a gigantic, £3bn particle accelerator that they hope to be switched on by 2011.

YOUR STARS

ARIES
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You've been devoting so much energy to exploring your roots in recent weeks, Aries. A brand-new narrative arrives on that front today, as the new moon in homebody Cancer emerges this evening.

TAURUS
Apr. 20-May. 20
In recent weeks, it's been imperative that you improve your communication skills with others, today's skies usher in the arrival of the soulful new moon in Cancer, which continues to deepen this story.

GEMINI
May. 21-Jun. 21
The universe is bringing you some fresh opportunities to take advantage of. The new moon arrives in initiative-taking Cancer today, encouraging you to deepen your connection to your innermost talents and resources.

CANCER
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
One of the most pivotal moments of your year arrives today, as the new moon emerges in your sign. This once-a-year occurrence provides you with a month-long focus devoted to self-exploration and self-betterment.

LEO
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
This time of year isn't the easiest for you, Leo. The universe has been encouraging you to release old baggage in hopes of clearing out a fresh space for you to inhabit emotionally.

VIRGO
Aug. 23-Sep. 22
You've recently been wrestling with defining your long-term goals, Virgo. It's been important for you to discern which of those aspirations are no longer worth pursuing and which still are.

LIBRA
Sep.23-Oct. 22
Today's skies bring you one of the most important moments of your year, Libra. After weeks of course correcting your career path, you're given the chance to bring new aspirational intentions to life.

SCORPIO
Oct. 23-Nov. 21
You've been cleaning house when it comes to your old beliefs about life, Scorpio. So much of what you used to believe about yourself is beginning to dissolve before your eyes.

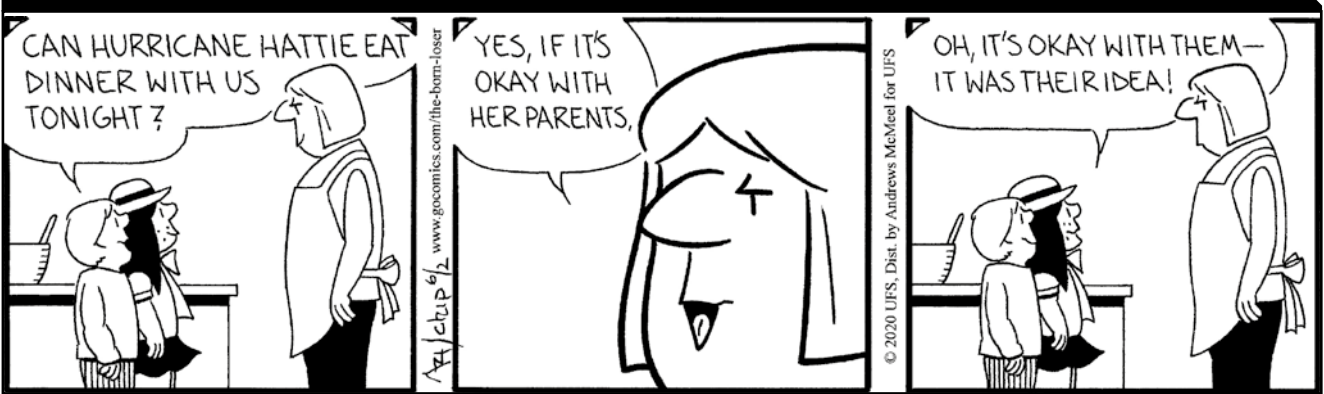
SAGITTARIUS
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Relationship lessons have been incessant this year, Sagittarius. You're making so much progress when it comes to releasing old, self-limiting habits and making way for fresh encounters in that arena.

CAPRICORN
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
This lunation offers you the chance to deepen and develop budding bonds or ongoing partnerships in the month ahead, while also dismantling whatever holds you back from going deeper.

AQUARIUS
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
This time of year has you busier than ever, Aquarius. There's so much to accomplish on the work front that it's easy to get overwhelmed and have your routine become mind-numbing.

PISCES
Feb.19-Mar. 20
The new moon in soulful Cancer emerges today, bringing with it new narratives around activating your creative potential and exploring romantic relations in the month ahead.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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3	6	1				4
6	9					2

EASY+

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MEDIUM

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HARD

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			3	8			
	6						3
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			2				9

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	22	33	cloudy
Harbin	20	26	thunderstorms
Tianjin	28	36	fine
Urumqi	23	27	showers
Xi'an	26	33	cloudy
Lhasa	22	27	thunderstorms
Chengdu	27	38	cloudy
Chongqing	27	35	cloudy
Kunming	27	34	cloudy
Nanjing	21	30	cloudy
Shanghai	25	33	thunderstorms
Wuhan	27	31	rain
Hangzhou	20	26	thunderstorms
Taipei	24	30	rain
Guangzhou	18	34	fine
Hong Kong	24	35	thunderstorms
WORLD			
Moscow	17	31	clear
Frankfurt	8	14	rain
Paris	8	15	rain
London	7	16	cloudy
New York	14	24	cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Applaud; 5- Cupid's counterpart; 9- Moderately cold; 13- Honolulu's island; 14- Simmons rival; 16- Old Dodge model; 17- Lament; 18- Dutch painter Jan; 19- "The Longest Day" city; 20- Fatty part of milk; 22- Sardonic; 24- Gallant in appearance; 27- Solemn assent; 28- Dull; 29- Ambiguous; 33- Wine fruit; 34- Auditorium; 35- Edible corm; 36- Gangster's gun; 37- Wee ones; 38- ____-hool; 39- Prepare a book or film for release; 41- Drops from the sky; 42- Religion of the Muslims; 44- Embellish; 46- Greenish yellow finch; 47- Football kick; 48- Motion picture; 49- Talks back to; 52- 'Droid; 53- Scottish Gaelic; 57- A dish with many ingredients; 58- Muscat native; 60- Starchy staple; 61- Timbuktu's land; 62- A Simpson; 63- Bibliography abbr.; 64- Hydroxyl compound; 65- Periods; 66- Studies;

DOWN: 1- Dot follower; 2- ____-tzu; 3- Eureka!; 4- Fistfight; 5- Ancient Palestinian; 6- Put a new price on; 7- City near Provo; 8- ____-Foy, Quebec; 9- Macaroon flavoring; 10- Arab League member; 11- That's ____ haven't heard; 12- "The Mod Squad" role; 15- Creatures; 21- Stand; 23- VCR button; 24- Persistent in effort; 25- Scrape off; 26- Lacking movement; 27- Senator Specter; 29- Jack of "The Great Dictator"; 30- 1972 Derek and the Dominos hit; 31- Bellowing; 32- Spacious; 34- Hilton competitor; 37- Crosspiece above a door; 40- Garden's necessity; 42- Author Fleming; 43- Scoffed; 45- Regret; 46- Large towns; 48- Line dance; 49- A bit; 50- Lawyer Dershowitz; 51- Farm structure; 52- Roseanne, once; 54- Ceremony; 55- Scrutinize; 56- Electric fish; 59- Fannie ____;

Yesterday's solution

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

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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

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ENGLAND BEATS DENMARK 2-1, REACHES EURO 2020 FINAL

ENGLAND has broken through its semifinal ceiling at major soccer tournaments. A title match awaits for the first time in 55 years.

Harry Kane converted the rebound after his initial penalty was saved in the 104th minute to give England a come-from-behind 2-1 win over Denmark in extra time in the European Championship semifinals.

England will return to its national soccer stadium on Sunday to play Italy and will be competing in its first final since the 1966 World Cup. That remains England's only international title.

After the final whistle, Kane led the jubilant England fans in a crowd of more than 60,000 — the biggest gathering for a sporting event in Britain since the coronavirus outbreak nearly 16 months ago — in a rendition of "Sweet Caroline."

The players and management walked around the perimeter of the field, waving to fans and then their loved ones. England coach Gareth Southgate was serenaded with a song, and he might have appreciated this win more than anyone.



A shootout looked like where England and Denmark were headed until Raheem Sterling wriggled into the area down the right, cut inside and fell under the challenge of Mattias Jensen.

The contact looked minimal, and a video review was needed. After a brief wait that must have felt longer to England's fans, the decision stood.

Denmark goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel guessed the right way to block Kane's penalty but the ball came back to the England captain,

who reacted quickly to put it into the net from six yards out.

"I was fortunate to have it bounce back," Kane said. "That's football — sometimes it falls your way."

Denmark's players, whose emotionally charged run to the semifinals was powered by a resolve to win the title for Christian Eriksen after the midfielder's collapse on the field during the group stage, were almost on their knees by that point.

And Danish hopes of an equalizer were damaged by having to play with only 10 men for the second half of extra time after Jensen was forced off injured. Denmark had already used up its six substitutes by then.

Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand's biggest grievance was with the awarding of the penalty.

"It was a penalty that shouldn't have been a penalty," Hjulmand said, "and it's something that annoys me right now."

England showed another side by rallying for victory after conceding a goal for the first time at Euro 2020 when Mikkel Damsgaard scored with a free kick in the 30th.

It was a shot that Eriksen — Denmark's captain who is recovering at home after suffering cardiac arrest and collapsing on the field against Finland on June 12 — would have been proud of as his replacement in the team whipped the ball over the defensive wall and into the top corner.

At that stage, Denmark was on top, with its pressing and slick passing in midfield causing England

problems and sparking concern among the previously boisterous home fans.

Denmark wasn't ahead for long, though.

Moments after Sterling was denied from point-blank range by Schmeichel, Bukayo Saka was sent free down the right by Kane's pass and the winger's low cross was bundled into the net by Denmark defender Simon Kjaer in the 39th, under pressure from Sterling. It was the 11th own-goal of Euro 2020.

The second half saw England control the game but it still needed a heavily debated penalty call to finish off a tiring Denmark, which retreated into its own half in the closing stages.

Denmark's bid to match its unlikely European title from 1992 — when the team came in as a late replacement for Yugoslavia and wound up winning the whole thing — fell short. But the team gained new fans from around the world for the way it recovered from the near-tragedy of Eriksen, its captain and most famous player.

The team lined up in front of the 8,000 flag-waving Denmark fans at one end of the stadium and saluted them at the end of the game. MDT/AP

LATEST RESULTS

England	2	1	Denmark
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UPCOMING GAMES

	Date	Time	Home	Away	City	ODDS
Wed	Jul 7	3:00	Italy	England	London	H 3.1, D 3.1, A 2.8

ODDSchecker.com

AD

合夥人 PARTNERS:

官樂怡 Rui José da Cunha
山度士 Álvaro Rodrigues
馬天龍 Nuno Sardinha da Mata
趙魯 Zhao Lu
馬傑安 João Nogueira Marques

大律師 ASSOCIATES:

高文軒 Adelino Correia
羅善齡 Zelina Rodrigues
白秀蘭 Susana Batalha
馬潔冰 Maria João Marques
陶義德 António Isó de Azeredo
白穎怡 Iclia Berenguel
冼玲鳳 Mariana Afonso Esteves
薛明恩 Maria Antónia Giestas
飛嘉華 Carlos dos Santos Ferreira
杜力信 Nelson de Azevedo
宋哲言 João Gonçalves Assunção
莫永誠 Rui Velez de Moura
安東尼 António Manuel dos Santos
巴慧雅 Vera Bastos
歐文傑 Miguel Evaristo
陳芷喬 Joana Chan
顏曉蓉 Teresa Xiaorong Yan
諾瑪莉 Maria Noras
康靜雅 Viviana Hong
梁淑嵐 Ana Leon

實習律師 TRAINEE LAWYERS:

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張偉鴻 Cheong Wai Hong
陳健雄 Eurico Chan
吳霆鋒 Ng Teng Fong
戴博晴 Tai Pok Cheng

法律專家 JURISTS:

羅成軒 José J. Rodrigues
斐彥德 Gonçalo Figueiredo
潘卡莉 Candice Pun
陳子健 Kimi Chan
伍福賢 Domingos Ng



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FASHION PUTTING THE PAST BEHIND

STARTING next year, Greubel Forsey will firmly abide by its convictions and no longer use any animal-based product, of any kind or origin, for any of its straps. The Atelier's specifications for the new plant-based straps are exactly the same as those for its leather straps.

Its principle of pursuing exceptional quality is now being pushed to the extreme: aesthetics, durability, wear, resistance to water, ultraviolet rays, etc. It's virtually impossible to differentiate between a plant-based strap and its leather predecessor by look and feel, while also making the sacrifice and suffering of animals a thing of the past.

Several color variations will be available, just like the leather straps used today. The same will apply to buckles: with a folding clasp or pin buckle, depending on the model and on the demand. This is yet another innovation, as high-end plant-based straps with a folding clasp did not yet exist in Fine Watchmaking.

A new chapter is being written for Greubel Forsey and this initiative will not remain isolated, as the Atelier is currently working on new responsible developments, in the short and medium term.



TASTE OF EDESIA

Festive favorites

IRENE SAM, MDT

MID-AUTUMN Festival is a jubilant moment celebrated with joyous reunion and laughter. **JW Marriott Hotel Macau** and **The Ritz-Carlton, Macau** have selected the finest ingredients in crafting delicious mooncakes

for one to enjoy with family and friends.

Spreading love and good fortune during this traditional festival, JW Marriott Hotel Macau proudly presents an exquisite mooncake gift box, artfully curated with Phoenix in the Sky theme in a distinct design. Each set contains six pieces of mini mooncake with three different flavours including the

luscious Lava Custard Mooncake, the enticing Black Sesame Paste Mooncake, and the pleasant Red Bean Paste Mooncake.

The Ritz-Carlton, Macau offers a premium Autumn Moon Treasure Box featuring eight pieces of mini Egg Custard Mooncake curated and prepared by Chef Jackie Ho, the Chinese Executive Chef of Michelin-starred restaurant Lai Heen, who has more than 40 years of culinary experience. The box is decorated with an abundance of artistic floral motifs, symbolising glory and prosperity.

Macau Racing Tips

By Davy Chiu, MDT



THE SOKO ISLAND 1350 METRES SAND 2021-07-09 | Fri | 20:50

THIS Iffraaj NZ gelding from S.H Cheong's yard really caught any track watchers eyes in the morning, then again his trainer gave him a barrier trail 29/6. This barrier trail has been a guiding star that he is fit and ready for his first run. The question to ask is whether **ManImperial** can handle the race tempo in his first run under racing condition. My logic to answer this question is: if **ManImperial** can ran and trail solidly, there is no reason to doubt he cannot run his first big sand race in MJC. Checking over his overseas record he ran 10 races with four seconds and two thirds before exported to MJC. His track work gave me the impression that he really like his new home in Macau. I am keen to invest my money in his first run this Friday night. I reckoned he will come out with good handsome odds for punters.

Race 4 Horse no. 2 MANULMPERIAL Win and Place bets



OPINION

China Daily

Editorial, China Daily

DATA SECURITY VITAL TO NATIONAL SECURITY

The investigations announced by China's Cyber Security Review Office into Yunmanman and Huochebang truck delivery platforms, Boss Zhipin recruitment website, as well as ride-hailing app Didi on Monday send the message that the country is attaching increasing importance to the security of data.

The Cyber Security Review Office said in a statement that the probes are being undertaken to "prevent national data security risks, maintain national security, and protect the public interest".

Yunmanman and Huochebang, China's two major truck-hailing apps, merged in 2017 to create a new company — Full Truck Alliance — which listed on the New York Stock Exchange last month. Kanzhun, the parent company of Boss Zhipin, one of China's largest online job listing platforms, also listed on the exchange last month.

With the rapid development of digital technology, data has become not only an increasingly important resource for the development of the digital economy, but also the protection of data is becoming a matter that means a great deal to the national security of a country.

The more advanced digital technology becomes, the more efficient and extensive the utilization of data will become. At the same time, however, the potential risks to national security from the acquiring, leaking or stealing of data become greater. That explains why the country's Data Security Law was adopted at the 29th session of the Standing Committee of the 13th National People's Congress on June 10. This regulates the processing of data, protects the interest of individuals and organizations as far as their data is concerned, and at the same time promotes the healthy and efficient utilization of data for the development of the digital economy.

The efficient and extensive use of data and the protection of data security are two sides of the same coin. Data will likely be abused and the interests of individuals and organizations concerned will likely be infringed upon or even placed in harm's way if the processing of data is not regulated and data not placed under strict protection. There is also the risk of the acquisition of data by whatever means posing a serious threat to the national security of the country.

As such, the protection of data will be increasingly strengthened. This is what a country should and must do to guarantee that its digital economy develops in a healthy manner. For enterprises that are involved in the digital economy or online networks, compliance with the related security law or regulations on the protection of data is a must.

However profitable a business is, an enterprise must first take into consideration data security risks as far as the utilization of data is concerned.

The investigation of Yunmanman, Huochebang, Boss Zhipin and Didi should serve as a reminder that enterprises concerned need to have a thorough overhaul over network security risks.

LATEST HACK TO TEST BIDEN'S VOW FOR CONSEQUENCES FOR RUSSIA

President Joe Biden said he would "deliver" a message to Russian President Vladimir Putin about the latest ransomware attacks targeting American businesses, setting up a test of Biden's ability to balance his pledge to respond firmly to cyber breaches with his goal of developing a stable relationship with Russia.

The administration faces few easy options for a ransomware threat that in recent months has emerged as a major national security challenge, with attacks from Russia-based gangs that have targeted vital infrastructure and extorted multimillion-dollar payments from victims.

The White House says the damage from the latest attack — affecting

as many as 1,500 businesses worldwide — appeared minimal, though cybersecurity experts said information remained incomplete. The malicious intrusion exploited a powerful remote-management tool run by Miami-based software company Kaseya.

It occurred weeks after Biden made clear to Putin that the U.S. was growing impatient with cyberattacks emanating from Russia.

But Biden finds himself in a difficult position as he seeks to press Putin to crack down on Russian cyber gangs targeting U.S. and international business for financial gain and dial back Kremlin-connected cyber espionage.

AP PHOTO



IOC'S BACH ARRIVES IN TOKYO; GREETED BY STATE OF EMERGENCY

MARI YAMAGUCHI & STEPHEN WADE, TOKYO

IOC President Thomas Bach arrived in Tokyo yesterday just as a ban on spectators at the Tokyo Olympics is likely after Japan Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga announced a state of emergency because of rising coronavirus infections in the capital.

Suga said the state of emergency would go in effect on Monday and last through Aug. 22. This means the Olympics, opening on July 23 and running through Aug. 8, will be held entirely under emergency measures. The Paralympics open on Aug. 24.

"Taking into consideration the impact of the delta strain, and in order to prevent the resurgence of infections from spreading across the country, we need to step up virus prevention measures," Suga said in announcing the emergency measures.

Bach largely avoided cameras at Tokyo's Haneda Airport and, on a rainy afternoon, went to the International Olympic Committee's games headquarters in Tokyo, a five-

-star hotel in the center of the city. He is reported to need to self-isolate for three days.

Bach's arrival comes just two weeks before the postponed Tokyo Games are to open. The IOC and local organizers are attempting to hold the games during a pandemic despite opposition from the Japanese public and medical community.

The main focus of the emergency is a request for bars, restaurants and karaoke parlors serving alcohol to close. A ban on serving alcohol is a key step to tone down Olympic-related festivities and keep people from drinking and partying. Tokyo residents are expected to face stay-home requests and watch the games on TV from home.

"How to stop people enjoying the Olympics from going out for drinks is a main issue," Health Minister Norihisa Tamura said.

The present state of emergency ends Sunday. Tokyo reported 896 new cases on Thursday, up from 673 a week earlier. It's the 19th straight day that cases have topped the mark set seven days prior. New cases on Wednesday hit 920, the highest total since 1,010 were reported on May 13.

Fans from abroad were months ago banned from attending the Olympics. But just two weeks ago, organizers and the IOC decided to allow venues to be filled to 50% of capacity but crowds not to exceed 10,000. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



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Dubai Firefighting boats yesterday poured cascades of water on a container ship that had erupted in a fiery explosion at Dubai's main port the previous night, rocking the commercial hub of the United Arab Emirates. Satellite images captured by Planet Labs Inc. showed that intensive efforts to cool the Ocean Trader were continuing some 12 hours after the blast at Jebel Ali port, as fireboats doused the area with water. Port authorities said they were still investigating the cause of the blast.

AP PHOTO



Belarusian authorities blocked the website of a leading online media outlet, detained several of its journalists and conducted searches involving three other media organizations yesterday, the latest moves in a sweeping crackdown on dissent and independent media in the ex-Soviet nation. Belarus' Information Ministry said it has blocked Nasha Niva's website after the prosecutor general's office had accused it of posting unspecified unlawful information.

Cyprus The European Union's executive chief has pledged "more support" to Cyprus from the bloc's border agency Frontex to stem the flow of migrants to the eastern Mediterranean island nation from neighboring countries including Turkey. Visiting European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen offered no specifics on how Frontex would help but said that the EU's European Asylum Support Office would step up its efforts to help Cyprus expedite asylum applications.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson confirmed yesterday that most British troops have left Afghanistan, almost 20 years after the U.K. and other Western countries sent troops into the country to engage in what they described as a "war on terror." Johnson stressed that the threat posed by al-Qaida to the U.K. has substantially diminished.