



THE CONVERSATION: AS CLASSES START TODAY, WE ARGUE STUDENTS LEARN BETTER WHEN THEY MOVE THEIR BODIES INSTEAD OF SITTING STILL AT THEIR DESKS

P2

JAPAN MINISTRY SEEKS DEFENSE BUDGET HIKE AMID CHINA WORRIES

P6

DESPITE A FEW HIGH-PROFILE CONSERVATION SUCCESS STORIES BIRDS OF PREY ARE IN DECLINE WORLDWIDE

P12



AP PHOTO



Afghanistan The Taliban triumphantly marched into Kabul's international airport yesterday, hours after the final U.S. troop withdrawal that ended America's longest war. Standing on the tarmac, Taliban leaders pledged to secure the country, quickly reopen the airport and grant amnesty to former opponents. In a show of control, turbaned Taliban leaders were flanked by the insurgents' elite Badri unit as they walked across the tarmac. The commandos in camouflage uniforms proudly posed for photos.

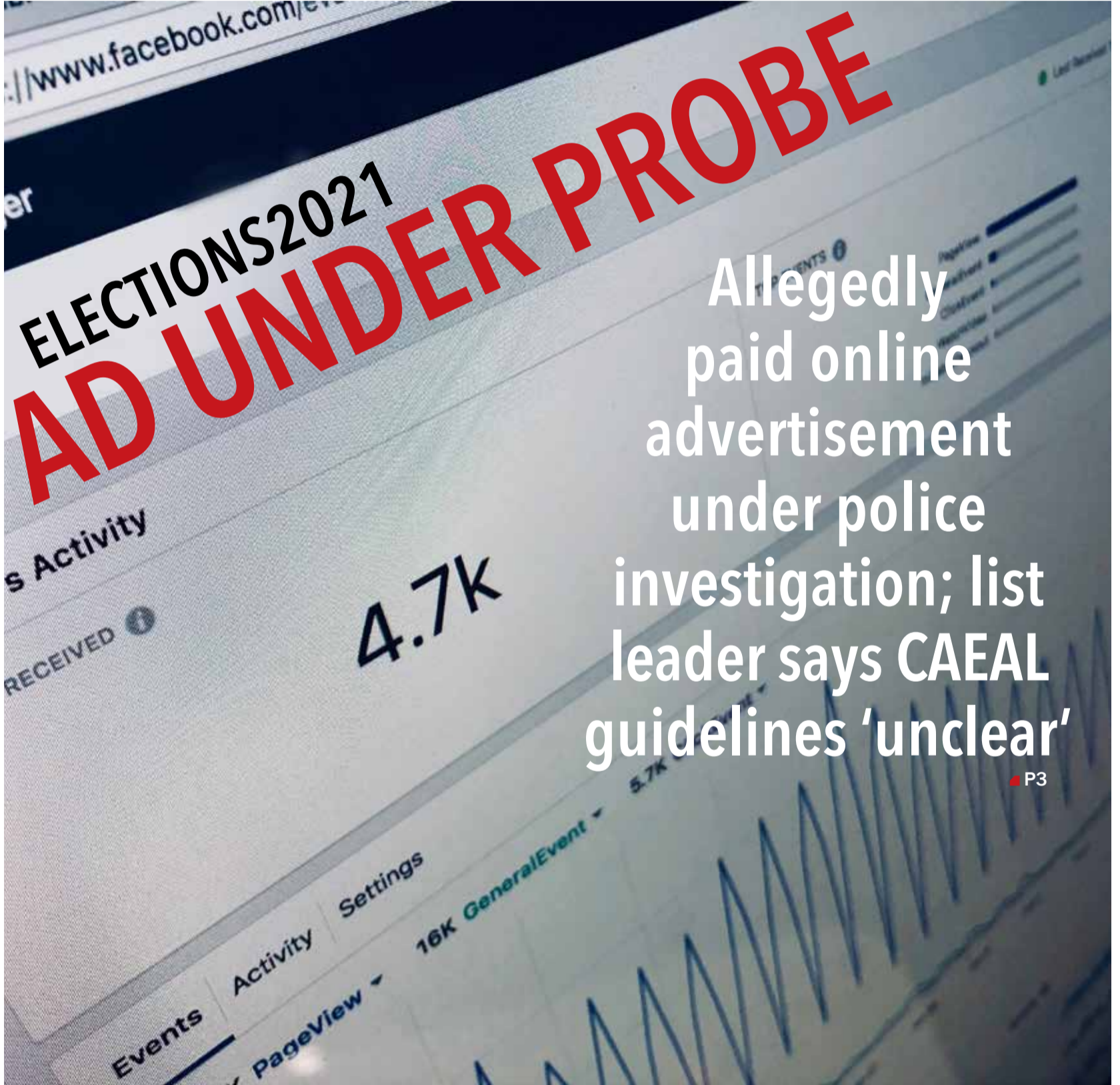
Emirates A bomb-laden drone yesterday targeted an airport in southwestern Saudi Arabia, wounding eight people and damaging a civilian plane, Saudi state television reported, the latest assault on the kingdom amid its grinding war in neighboring Yemen. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, the second such strike on Abha airport in the last 24 hours. The earlier attack, blamed on Yemen's Iran-backed Shiite Houthi rebels, scattered shrapnel across the tarmac but caused no casualties. The Houthi military spokesman did not answer calls seeking comment.

AP PHOTO



Germany Google said yesterday that it is investing 1 billion euros by 2030 to expand its cloud computing infrastructure in Germany and to increase the use of renewable energy. The internet giant said it plans to add new cloud computing centers in the Berlin region and in the town of Hanau, close to the DE-CIX data exchange in Frankfurt.

More on backpage



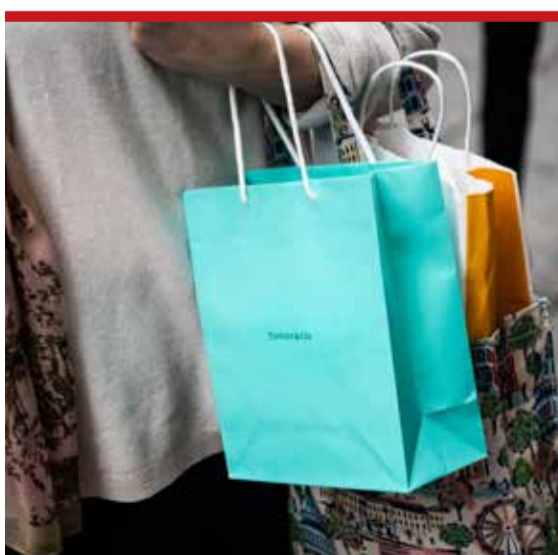
Allegedly paid online advertisement under police investigation; list leader says CAEAL guidelines 'unclear'

P3

LEGISLATURE 2017-21 MAJORITY OF LAWMAKERS IN HIGH ATTENDANCE

P5

PHOTO ARCHIVE



RETAIL AVERAGE EARNINGS UP FROM LOW BASE IN 2020

P3



THE CONVERSATION

WHY STUDENTS LEARN BETTER WHEN THEY MOVE THEIR BODIES – INSTEAD OF SITTING STILL AT THEIR DESKS

KATIE HEADRICK TAYLOR,
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

MY son's kindergarten teachers, holding class on Zoom last year, instructed: "Eyes watching, ears listening, voices quiet, bodies still." However, I noticed my 6-year-old's hands would stay busy with items found around our house, building with Legos, shaping clay or doodling with a crayon.

While some might describe this child as being "off task," research suggests his manipulation of materials actually aroused his mind, allowing it to focus on the required task.

As a parent of two school-aged children and a professor and researcher of learning with technology, I believe current models of remote education are inefficient for learning, teaching and productivity.

That's because sitting in front of a computer screen subdues, or completely detaches people from, many of the sense-making abilities of their bodies. To learn most efficiently, our minds depend on the movement of our

bodies, working with a variety of tools, being in dynamic places and having our collaborators nearby.

THE BODY'S ROLE IN THINKING

Most notably, remote learning assumes that as long as the mind is engaged, it's fine if the body stays still. But this argument is backward.

Research from embodied cognition – the study of the body's role in thinking – shows that the body must first be interacting with the world to activate and open up the mind for learning.

That's why, for example, students working with a variety of tools and materials during a learning activity are better able to grasp abstract concepts, such as gravitational acceleration or fractions.

To ask students to sit still while performing their work actually increases their cognitive load, or the burden on the mind. It requires them to concentrate on quieting their bodies, which are seeking out avenues for sense-making, as well as on the pri-

mary task that fixes them to their desk or digital screen.

As psychologists Christine Langhans and Hermann Müller concluded from studies of people solving math problems, "Sitting quietly is not necessarily the best condition for learning in school."

LEARNING FROM OUR ENVIRONMENT

Humans' internal thoughts are extensions of the world around them. The technologies and tools they use, the people they collaborate with, the walk they take to school or work, all evoke feelings in the body. Their minds then assemble these feelings, making meaning or thoughts that are informed by past experiences.

In this way, thoughts are iterative. People sense their way through current moments while bringing to bear what they have learned over the body's accumulated history. Learning to safely cross the road, for instance, takes practice. Over time, the brain organizes input from the senses to recognize a good time for crossing.

IMPORTANCE OF GESTURE

Gesture is yet another essential use of the body for thinking and learning.

Not only do people's hand movements, head turns and shrugs add nuance and emphasis to words spoken to listeners, gestures help speakers form thoughts into words before speaking them.

In problem-solving scenarios, research shows that for many math learners, their gestures show they understand strategies before they can articulate those solutions through speech. In this way, educators trained to look for and understand gesture can see a learner's process and progress in understanding concepts before a student is able to translate that understanding to speech or a written test.

Additionally, educators and other experts can use gesture to more efficiently explain concepts to students and novices. Gestures make abstractions visible, giving them temporary form.

A view of the whole person, therefore, facilitates learning from one another. But that's a stark contrast to a year spent

seeing only the faces of fellow students and teachers, or just a blank box.

GET READY TO MOVE

Some students will remain online this school year – due to health or other concerns – while others will return to in-person classrooms. I believe both models of school can better incorporate the body to support learning. The following tips are for educators designing remote or in-person classes, though parents and students can also encourage and help sustain an active classroom culture.

Normalize movement during classes, not just during movement breaks. For instance, make a neighborhood walk the mode of inquiry for the day's science lesson. Ask students to bring back their observations to the whole group.

Begin every class with time to assemble different materials to think and work with, such as notebooks and different kinds of paper, various writing and drawing instruments, putty and blocks. Incorporate interaction with these tools throughout the lesson.

Encourage and use gestures. If online, invite camera use, and back away to give students a wider view.

Build in time for students to tune in to how their body is feeling as a window into their emotional state.

Provide opportunities for iteration, practicing a task in different contexts and with different tools and people that engage the body in different ways. The content or big idea stays the same, but how and with whom students engage shifts.

If online, try out videoconferencing platforms like Ohay that try to replicate physical closeness and movement in a virtual space.

Consider the classroom as extending out into the school campus and neighborhood.

Allowing students to experience a familiar location in a different way, with their classmates and teacher, can evoke new perspectives and thoughts.

Teachers, parents and students can all change their expectations of what being "on task" looks like. Walking, running or dancing may not seem related to a particular task at hand, but these activities often help people do their best thinking. Activating the body activates the mind, so "seat time" might better be titled "activity time." **MDT/AP**

www.macaudailytimes.com.mo

REACHING OUT!

+20,500

Like us on facebook.com/mdtimes



MacauDaily 澳門每日時報
Times

DIRECTOR & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR Lynzy Valles
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Leanda Lee, Severo Portela, Sheyla Zandonai

NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Anthony Lam, Emilie Tran, Honey Tsang, Irene Sam, Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Juliet Risdon, Linda Kennedy, Paulo Cordeiro de Sousa, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Viviana Segui
DESIGNERS Eva Bucho, Miguel Bandeira | **ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS** JML Property, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars, Ruan Du Toit Bester | **NEWS AGENCIES** Associated Press, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua
SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

SEND NEWSWORTHY INFORMATION AND PRESS RELEASES TO: NEWSROOM@MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM WEBSITE: WWW.MACAUDAILYTIMES.COM.MO

A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

ADMINISTRATOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com
OFFICE MANAGER Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com
ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR
Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84
Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com
For subscription and general issues: general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

ELECTIONS2021

Alleged paid election ad under investigation

NELSON Kot Man Kam, the first candidate on List 12 – Powers of Political Thought, was found to be connected to a paid election advertisement on a social media platform. The case has been passed to the police for investigation.

Local media outlet Macau Concealers posted an image depicting Kot promoting himself as an election candidate on Facebook. Above the image was the word “sponsored,” which the social media platform uses to distinguish between paid advertisements from unpaid content.

The Legislative Assembly Electoral Affairs Commission (CAEAL) issued a statement yesterday to remind candidates that paid promotions, election advertisements and/

or campaigns are forbidden by the Legislative Assembly Election Law.

“From the date of issuance of the Executive Order announcing the election date, the direct or indirect use of commercial advertising to campaign on social communication media [platforms] or other media is prohibited,” the CAEAL reiterated in the statement.

However, when interviewed by the local news outlet, the election candidate criticized the CAEAL for not being clear on the relevant guidelines.

In fact, the CAEAL had made announcements and reiterated the prohibition of paid campaign advertisements.

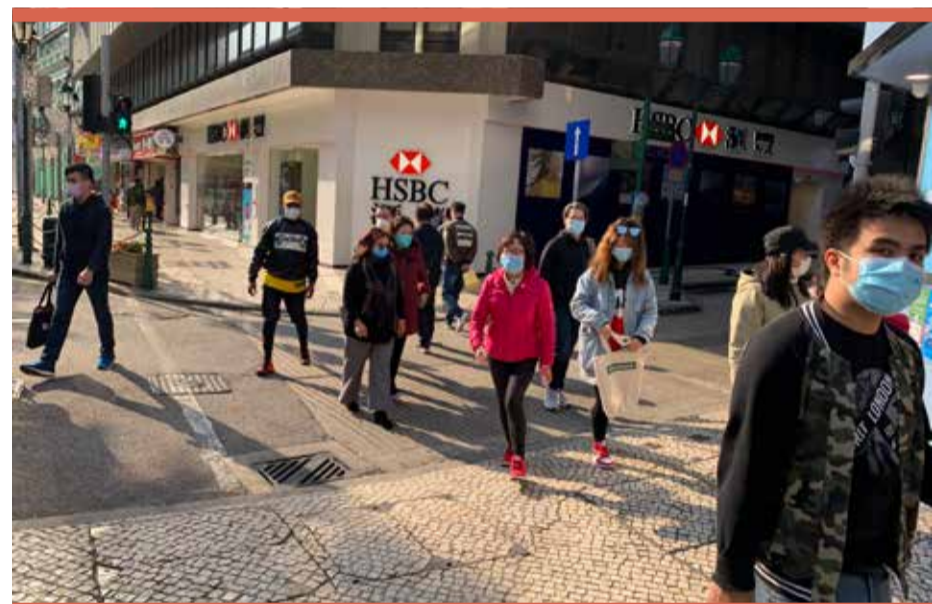
In response, Kot questioned the definition of “commercial advertisement”. He then criticized the CAEAL’s

unclear guidelines.

In another event, the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) said it had “nothing to add” to the statement from the CAEAL regarding allegations of gifts given away during the election campaign by List 1 – Macau-Guangdong Union.

The Jiangmen Communal Society, the affiliated body of the list, held several events to assist with candidates’ campaign efforts. At the end of the events, gift packs were distributed to participants.

In response to media enquiries, the CCAC noted that the event was a pre-declared session and reminded all candidates to not distribute food at campaign events “so as to comply with Covid-19 control guidelines,” but made no reference to potential corruption. **AL**



Average earnings up from low base in 2020

LYNZY VALLES

IN June 2021, the average earnings (excluding bonuses) of full-time employees engaged in wholesale and retail trade were MOP14,490, up by 7.7% compared to December 2020 and 17.9% year-on-year.

Average earnings in June this year generally increased due to the low base of comparison, given that the average earnings of full-time employees in June last year were dragged down by the large number of employees in multiple industries who were on unpaid leave.

At the end of the second quarter of 2021, the number of employees decreased by 2.2% year-on-year to 63,238. Among them, 39,375 were working in retail trade, which was down by 2.0%, according to data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC).

The transport, storage and communications sector had 13,746 persons engaged, an increase of 3.6% year-on-year. Average earnings of full-time employees rose by 5.1% year-on-year to MOP21,050 in June.

Security activities had 13,282 persons en-

gaged, down by 1.8% year-on-year. Average earnings of full-time employees in June went up by 3.8% year-on-year to MOP12,890.

Public sewage and refuse disposal activities had 938 persons engaged, an increase of 1.3% year-on-year. Average earnings of full-time employees in June grew by 3.2% year-on-year to MOP19,040.

This summer, the city saw around 4,300 fresh graduates entering the job market, according to the survey conducted by the General Association of Chinese Students of Macau (AECM).

A research study conducted by the group suggests that the average monthly salary employers can offer a fresh graduate is around MOP10,000, due to the difficult global employment market.

According to the forecast by the Macau Human Resources Association, the local job market is unlikely to stabilize until 2023.

However, there was an increase in job vacancies in different sectors.

Job vacancies in retail trade (1,765), security activities (1,302) and the transport, storage and communications sector (1,085) increased by 252, 272 and 407 respectively year-on-year.

In terms of recruitment prerequisites, most of the vacancies in security activities (96.9%) and in wholesale and retail trade (46.1%) required only junior secondary education levels or lower, while 17.7% of the vacancies in the transport, storage and communications sector required tertiary education.

During the May to July period, the labor force living in Macau totaled 383,900, with a labor force participation rate of 67.9%, 2.6% less than in the previous quarter. In relation to total employment numbers, 372,900 workers were recorded, with residents accounting for 275,000.

GONGBEI BLACKLISTS 51 PARALLEL TRADERS

As of Monday, 51 individuals have been barred from crossing the Border Gate due to allegations of parallel trading, the Gongbei Customs Authority revealed on its website.

The authority stressed that any individual who has been apprehended three times for parallel trading or smuggling goods will be banned from applying for a travel endorsement for a specified period.

A case took place on August 26, when a traveler attempted to smuggle 34 cellphones by car at the Gongbei Border. The case was discovered and the authority pressed charges against the person. It was hinted that restrictions on the ability to make border crossings might be imposed against the person in the future.

On the same day, two Macau travelers attempted to sneak 30 cellphones into Zhuhai using the same me-

thod but were caught by the Gongbei Customs Authority.

Meanwhile, a mainland tourist traveling to Macau on a family-visit endorsement was found smuggling cosmetic and skincare goods from Macau to Zhuhai on August 20, August 26 and October 17 in 2020. Mainland authorities have imposed border crossing restrictions on the violator.

Parallel trading or smuggling has been a problem at the Macau-Gongbei Border. The Gongbei Customs Authority’s attention was drawn to the fact that some syndicate members make false claims to travelers, attesting that they will not be held criminally responsible if they are caught.

The Gongbei Customs Authority reiterated to travelers that parallel trading is considered smuggling, which is a criminal offense in mainland China. **AL**



MERCHANDISE EXPORT UP 29.5%

From January to July this year, total value of merchandise export increased by 29.5% year-on-year to MOP7.83 billion, of which value of re-exports (MOP6.73 billion) and domestic exports (MOP1.09 billion) went up by 29.8% and 27.9% respectively. Total value of merchandise import expanded by 143.6% year-on-year to MOP89.22 billion. Merchandise trade deficit totalled MOP81.39 billion for the first seven months of 2021, up by MOP50.80 billion from MOP30.59 billion a year earlier. Analysed by destination, merchandise export to mainland China from January to July 2021 rose by 23.1% year-on-year to MOP1.17 billion, of which exports to the Nine Provinces of the Pan Pearl River Delta (MOP1.07 billion) increased by 22.8%.

PLA MACAO GARRISON CONCLUDES 22ND ROTATION

The People's Liberation Army's (PLA) Macao Garrison concluded its 22nd rotation in the early morning of August 30, pursuant to the Law of the People's Republic of China on Garrisoning the Macao Special Administrative Region and the Order of the Central Military Commission. According to a statement from the Garrison, the outgoing officers have completed their missions in Macau and presented a "good impression." Meanwhile, incoming officers have studied the basic conditions and laws of Macau prior to their arrival.

ELECTIONS2021

SECOND ELECTION DEBATE SESSION MORE HEATED THAN FIRST

ANTHONY LAM

THE second televised election debate held yesterday saw more heat and confrontation than the first session.

Yesterday's session was the stage for list numbers six to 10. The first two candidates of the last list were previously disqualified by the Legislative Assembly Electoral Affairs Commission (CAEAL). None of the remaining candidates from the last list was present at yesterday's session.

There are three televised debate sessions this year, taking place on August 30, August 31 and today. Unlike previous years, this year's sessions are all pre-recorded and will be aired on TV the same evening.

The first session has been criticized by viewers for lacking discussion and debate on the candidates' proposed policies and laws.

In contrast, yesterday's session saw more dialogue and disagreement between candidates from each of the four lists present.

At the session, List 6 – Power of Synergy confronted List 8 – Union for Promoting Progress and List 9 – Good Home Alliance on the Economic Housing Law. The former criticized the latter two for passing the law that resulted in negative equity within Economic Housing and supporting the price of this housing type. The price of



the Economic Housing was set to MOP5,000 per square foot, to the public's disapproval.

Both respondents said that the price level should be further discussed and eventually lowered.

List 6 further criticized Lists 8 and 9 for switching sides given they initially passed the law during their legislative term but now they have hinted that they will lower the price.

Meanwhile, List 7 – Strength of Dialogue also criticized both Lists 8 and 9 for making no debate proposals during their legislative term, whereas they had stated in their election platform that they

would monitor the government. List 7 questioned how they proposed to achieve that.

List 9 replied that more time was required to provide details of the proposals.

The above exchange of ideas did not happen at the first debate session. Instead, the session was more of a presentation of election platforms, with candidates from List 1 to List 5.

List 2 – Civil Watch criticized List 1 – Macau-Guangdong Union for passing the Urban Construction Law, even with a mandatory building examination absent from the law. However, in 2017

and 2021, List 1 proposed mandatory building examinations. List 2 thus questioned why.

List 1 replied that the proposal was made with the hope that apartment owners will be subsidized for building repairs.

Also present in the first session were List 3 – Macau United Citizens Association, List 4 – Platform for Youth and List 5 – Collective Energy of Macau.

Tonight's session will see List 11 – Union for Development, List 12 – Powers of Political Thought, List 13 – Alliance for the Promotion of the Basic Law of Macau and List 14 – New Hope.

CRIME

Man apprehended for driving on suspension

ANTHONY LAM

THE Public Security Police Force (PSP) has apprehended an individual who drove with a suspended license in a regular traffic inspection operation, the police announced yesterday at a regular press briefing.

It was disclosed at the briefing session that the suspect is a non-resident worker from Hong Kong, surnamed Choi, aged 50 years, who reportedly works as a gambling assistant.

At about 10:20 p.m. on August 25, the PSP was conducting a regular traffic inspection operation with a road block set up on the Avenida do Aeroporto in Taipa, when the team intercepted a car driven by Choi.

When he was stopped,



the police officers requested his drivers license. He was unable to produce it as requested and was thus taken to the police station for further clarification and investigation.

At the police station, following interrogation, the

driver admitted he was on a driving suspension. He confessed to the police that he was sentenced by the Court of First Instance to driving suspension of three months for speeding. The period started in July 3 and should end on October 2.

MAN CRASHES INTO FIVE SAFETY FENCES

Another traffic violation involved a local man who is suspected of drunk-driving and damaging five public safety fences. He was intercepted by the PSP at the Rotunda Ouidor Arriaga in Taipa.

The suspect is a local man of age 33 years who claims to work as an accountant.

Police officers were conducting regular traffic inspection operations when the man drove by. The car had seemingly new scratches on the left side, and was missing parts from the door. During preliminary interrogations, police officers smelt alcohol on the driver. A test revealed a blood alcohol level at 2.24g/L.

When he was questioned about the suspected accident, the driver declined to make any comment. His reaction led the police officers to suspect a hit-and-run.

After viewing surveillance camera footage, the police saw the car crashing into five fences on Rua do Londres in ZAPE District and then driving away.

The PSP have pressed charges against the man.

REAL ESTATE SHAM SALE

A 48-year-old local man surnamed Wong has misappropriated funds from a 66-year-old male victim who, in 2019, wanted to purchase Wong's apartment in Zhongshan for 600,000 Chinese yuan.

To increase his credibility, Wong even showed victim the ownership certificate for the property.

In early January 2020, both parties signed the ownership transfer certificate. For security purposes, the victim made an enquiry to Zhongshan authorities and was told that Wong sold the property to another individual in 2017 for 800,000 Chinese yuan.

The victim thought he had been scammed so he reported the case to the Judiciary Police (PJ). Wong went missing before this time, however.

On August 26, the PJ apprehended Wong in the Patane District. Wong admitted that the ownership certificate he showed the victim was an old one. Wong has been delivered to the Public Prosecutions Office for further investigation.

RENATO MARQUES



Clockwise from top left: Leong Sun Iok, Ella Lei, Lei Chan U, Ng Kuok Cheong and Lao Chi Ngai

Majority of legislators with high attendance to AL work

RENATO MARQUES

OVER the past four legislative years, majority of the local lawmakers have registered a significant high attendance at all Legislative Assembly (AL) meetings, including Plenary Sessions and meetings from the different Standing Committees, AL's annual activities reports show.

Based on the report, only two lawmakers have achieved perfect attendance over the past AL term, attending each of the 173 plenary sessions, as well as the Standing Committees, Follow-up Committees, and Committee on House Rules. Lawmakers Ella Lei and Lao Chi Ngai are the legislators who were highlighted for this reason.

The record is even more impressive as both lawmakers had to attend almost 400 AL meetings over four years in total, including plenary and committee meetings.

Nevertheless, a significant number of other lawmakers had an attendance record very close to 100%, including Lei Chan U, Leong Sun Iok, Ng Kuok Cheong, Ho Ion Sang, Au Kam San, and Vong Hin Fai.

Also included in this group is lawmaker Sulu Sou, whose attendance was close to 100% once absences attributable to his mandate suspension were taken into account. These absences were required for the lawmaker to be present in the Court of First Instance to respond to accusations of disobedience and illegal demonstration for an episode dating back to 2015.

Another group of lawmakers with extremely high attendance at the plenary sessions (98.8%) included the AL president and former lawmaker Kou Hoi In and lawmakers Wong Kit Cheng and Agnes Lam.

THE MOST ABSENT

Conversely, lawmaker Victor Cheung Lup Kwan has the lowest attendance rate by far, having been present at 61.8% of all plenary sessions and attending just 33.7% of committee meetings. This amounts to an absence at 138 occasions out of a total of 208.

Coming second last was lawmaker Angela Leong, who, over the last term, had an attendance rate of 80.7% across all AL work.

Third most absent was Chui Sai Peng, with an overall atten-

dance rate of 89.6%. Chui only managed to surpass Leong as he had a better attendance score at the committees' meetings.

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT 96%

The attendance rate of Macau legislators of the 6th AL session was very high, with the general average attendance at the plenary session reaching 95.9%. This roughly translates to the majority of the lawmakers only missing one to two sessions per year.

The large group where the individual attendance rate was above average included lawmakers Chui Sai Cheong, Chan Hong, Mak Soi Kun, Chan Iek Lap, Zhen Anting, Ma Chi Seng, Ip Sio Kai, Iao Teng Pio, Wu Chou Kit, Davis Fong Ka Chio, Lam Lon Wai, and Chan Wa Keong.

With most of the lawmakers (24) scoring above average, only nine lawmakers scored below 96% for attendance rates to AL plenary sessions.

Among these groups and excluding the already mentioned top three most absent lawmakers, we find names such as Pang Chuan (94.8%), Song Pek Kei (94.2%), Chan Chak Mo (93.6%), José Pereira Coutinho (93.1%) and Si Ka Lon (91.9%).

This analysis does not take into account the attendance rate of lawmaker Wang Sai Man, as he was only inaugurated in December 2019 after an indirect constituency's by-election. The lawmaker was elected to represent the industrial, commercial and financial sector for a seat left vacant by the former president and current Chief Executive, Ho Iat Seng exiting the AL.

THREE 'WORKERS' LAWMAKERS IN TOP FIVE

Besides the perfect attendance score achieved by Ella Lei, another two lawmakers linked with the Macao Federation of Trade Unions (FAOM) have been placed in the top four of those with more attendance to AL work.

In the final ranking, Lei Chan U came second with a 99.8% attendance rate to all AL work, followed immediately by another workers' lawmaker, the direct suffrage elected Leong Sun Iok (99.6%).

The top five closed with pro-democracy lawmaker Ng Kuok Cheong who had an attendance rate of 99.4% for all AL work sessions that he was allowed to participate in.

***Note: Sulu Sou's attendance score was calculated excluding the time that his mandate was suspended, which was approximately six months between December 2017 and late June 2018.**

Consequently, he was forced to leave his plenary seat and the seats he held at the Third Standing Committee and at the Follow-up Committee of Public Administration Affairs. This was taken into consideration during the final calculation.

LAWMAKERS WITH HIGHEST ATTENDANCE

	Attendance to Plenary Sessions	Attendance to Committee meetings	Total (Average)
Ella Lei	100%	100%	100%
Lao Chi Ngai	100%	100%	100%
Lei Chan U	100%	99.5%	99.8%
Leong Sun Iok	100%	99.2%	99.6%
Ng Kuok Cheong	100%	98.8%	99.4%

JAPAN MINISTRY SEEKS 2.6% DEFENSE HIKE AMID CHINA WORRIES

MARI YAMAGUCHI, TOKYO

JAPAN'S Defense Ministry yesterday asked for a 2.6% increase over this year's record budget as it seeks to further strengthen the country's military in the face of China's growing assertiveness in the region.

The ministry's budget sought 5.48 trillion yen (\$49.86 billion) for the year starting April 1, 2022, in what could be a record high if approved by the Finance Ministry and parliament later this year, after a nine-year consecutive increase.

Japan's concerns about China's increasingly assertive military actions in the region, as well as Beijing's growing tension with Taiwan and rivalry with the United States, were specifically noted in this year's defense report adopted in July.

The report said China's increased military capability and the lack of clarity regarding Chinese military spending is "a matter of grave concern" and criticized Chi-



na's maritime activity in and around Japanese-claimed waters.

Japan has been stepping up defense in the country's southwestern regions and islands, including Ishigaki Island, where a new military base with a land-to-sea missile defense system will be opened. Ishigaki is north of the uninhabited but Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands, which are also claimed by China and called Diaoyu.

Japan's military spending and capabilities have grown continuously since former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

took office in December 2012, rising by 17% over the past nine years. Abe's government allowed Japan's self-defense force to play a greater international role by adopting a new interpretation in 2015 of the war-renouncing Article 9 of the constitution.

Critics say Japan, as the world's fastest-aging country with a shrinking population, should allocate more money toward health care and other purposes instead of defense spending.

Costly items in the latest budget request included 130 billion yen (\$1.18 billion) to

acquire a dozen more U.S.-made F-35 stealth fighters from Lockheed Martin, including four F-35Bs capable of short takeoff and vertical landings that can operate on two Japanese helicopter carriers that are being converted.

The Defense Ministry also seeks to increase research and development spending to a record 325.7 billion yen (\$2.96 billion) for "game-changing" technologies such as unmanned aircraft operated by artificial intelligence.

The ministry is seeking nearly 105 billion yen (\$1 billion) for home-developed fighter jets — the first in about 30 years since the Mitsubishi F-2 — by around 2035, a multibillion-dollar project led by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries.

In order to beef up its space forces, Japan wants 84 billion yen (\$765 million) that includes purchasing lasers and satellites to track targets in space, as well as increasing space force personnel. **MDT/AP**

PMI MANUFACTURING SECTOR SLOWS AS EXPORT DEMAND WEAKENS

CHINA'S factory activity decelerated in August as export demand weakened, a survey showed yesterday.

The monthly purchasing managers' index of the Chinese statistics bureau and an official industry group declined to 50.1 from July's 50.4 on a 100-point scale on which numbers above 50 show activity increasing.

A sub-measure of new exports fell by a full point from the previous month to 46.7, according to the National Bureau of Statistics and the China Federation of Logistics & Purchasing.

Officials have warned demand for Chinese exports was likely to weaken in the second half of the year. Factory and consumer activity have been dampened by flooding in July and tighter anti-coronavirus controls.

In a report on the latest manufacturing figures, researchers at the Chinese investment bank CICC said they expected "the slowdown in demand will continue."

"Overall the manufacturing industry will show a steady slowdown," it added. **MDT/AP**

AD

MAKE-UP
FOR ALL OCCASIONS

- BRIDAL / WEDDINGS • PHOTO SHOOTS • PARTY •
- GRADUATION • SPECIAL EVENTS •

MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY!

TEL / WHATSAPP: (853) 6685 3323 | WECHAT: MISSJ_23
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/JULIANAC.MAKEUPARTIST

新 陽 光 清潔服務有限公司
NEW SUNSHINE CLEANING SERVICES LTD.

Portable Chemical Toilet Hiring

- Regular Units, Flush Units
- Units with Sanitizers, Sinks
- Deluxe Units
- Daily, Weekly or Monthly
- Deliver, Pick-Up & Pump Out of Portable Toilets

FREE DELIVERY

Call: 2883 3008

Member of General Association of Macao Cleaning Service Industry

仁德 CENTRO MEDICO PEDDER
◆ 仁德醫療中心 ◆

We bring high quality of medical service to Macau

General Surgery : Dr. Fok Manson, Dr. Lai Cheuck Seen Edward, Dr. Lau Wing Kee Peter, Dr. Kwong Man, Dr. Nie Fu Zhong, Dr. U Chong San, Dr. Lei Chin Chong

Breast Surgery : Dr. Leong Iat Lun

Urology : Dr. Lo Kwong Yin Richard, Dr. Zhao Yun Qiao

Paediatric Surgery : Dr. Yeung Chung Kwong

Paediatrics : Dr. Zhang Zhiqin

Obstetrics & Gynaecology : Dr. Fong Kuan Io

Plastic & Aesthetic Surgery : Dr. Lam U Lin

Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine : Dr. Lam Kun Kuan

ENT : Dr. Cheng Zheng Ang

Cardiology : Dr. Wong Kwok Yiu Chris, Dr. Jin Chun, Dr. Leong Man Kin

General Medicine : Dr. Ng Kam Hong, Dr. Lam Weng Chio

Dietitian : Chan Lai U Joey

Avenida da Praia Grande No 599, Edifício Comercial Rodrigues 14 e 15 Andar, em Macau
T. 2832 2298 / 2832 2229 Website: www.peddermacau.com
Opening Hours: Mon - Fri 10:00 - 19:00 Sat 10:00 - 14:00 Sun & PH closed

THAILAND

Lawmakers' no-confidence debate focuses on pandemic

CHALIDA
EKVITTHAYAVECHNUKUL,
BANGKOK

THAI lawmakers yesterday began a no-confidence debate targeting Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha and five of his Cabinet members, with the opposition focusing on charges the government bungled its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The debate is scheduled to last four days, with voting by the lower house set for Saturday. Organizers of ongoing anti-government street protests have vowed to step up their own separate efforts during the debate to force Prayuth out of office.

His coalition government is generally expected to turn back this week's challenge, even though it has come under intense criticism for failing to secure timely and adequate supplies of COVID-19 vaccines.

Sompong Amornvivat, leader of the main opposition Pheu Thai party, kicked off the debate with a fierce attack, charging that Prayuth is "a power-crazed arrogant person unsuitable to lead the country."

"If we let him continue his leadership, it will lead to more people being infected and losing their lives," said Sompong. "There won't be enough crematoriums in service and there will be no way to stop the spread of the disease."

He drew an objection from a government member of parliament when he said the situation recalled a saying that "A stupid leader will lead us all to death, because a stupid person with power is the worst danger."

This is the third no-confiden-



Thailand's Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha at the parliament in Bangkok yesterday

ce debate faced by Prayuth since he came to power after a 2019 general election. He also served as prime minister in a military government in 2014-2019 after seizing power in a coup as army commander.

A third wave of the coronavirus arrived in April and spread rapidly, accounting for 97% of the more than 1.17 million confirmed cases since the pandemic began, and more than 99% of the 11,495 total deaths.

Prayuth's administration was largely successful at keeping the coronavirus at bay last year, although lockdowns and travel restrictions devastated the economy, particularly the key tourism industry, which virtually collapsed after most foreign visitors were barred entry. The government's handling of the economy also promises to be a hot subject of debate.

"I think everyone can feel the same hopelessness and doubt about how our economy will recover," Pichai Nariphaphan, deputy leader of the opposition

Pheu Thai party, told The Associated Press ahead of the debate. He noted that Thailand's economy is forecast to grow the slowest this year of all Southeast Asian nations. "We hope that this no-confidence motion will lead to some changes — either a Cabinet reshuffle or the coalition parties' withdrawal — later."

Digital Economy Minister Chaivut told reporters ahead of the debate that he is ready to field the opposition's questions.

He said the government is focusing on solving the COVID-19 problems as soon as possible so that people can live their lives normally, and if there is a political change, that effort might falter.

"It is not the time to focus on politics," he said. "If the overall situation improves next year, then we can discuss political changes."

Chaibun Chaipayorn, a political scientist at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University, said he does not believe the debate can break up the ruling coalition and bring down the government. He

suggested that the targeted ministers will be able to successfully defend their handling of the pandemic.

"The debate by the opposition parties may reduce Prayuth's legitimacy among the public, but not among the coalition parties. I think their relationship remains strong," he said.

In addition to Prayuth, the opposition plans to grill government ministers belonging to three main coalition parties. They are Deputy Premier and Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and Transport Minister Saksayam Chidchob from the Bhumjai Thai Party, Labor Minister Suchat Chomklin and Digital Economy Minister Chaivut Thanakamanusorn from the ruling Palang Pracharath, and Agriculture Minister Chalermchai Sri-on from the Democrat Party.

Prayuth and Anutin will likely bear the brunt of the opposition's attack, since they are the ones most closely associated with COVID-19 policy. MDT/AP

PAKISTAN

11 ISLAMIC STATE MILITANTS KILLED IN RAID: POLICE

PAKISTAN'S counter-terrorism units raided a hideout of the Islamic State group in the restive southwestern Baluchistan province before dawn yesterday, setting off a shootout that killed 11 militants, the police said.

The units, acting on intelligence, carried out the raid in the district of Mastung, where IS militants had recently killed two police officers. The police said suicide belts, hand grenades and assault rifles were confiscated in the raid.

The counter-terrorism department provided no further details and the nationality of the slain militants was not immediately known. The counter-terrorism police is a special branch of the police that fights militant groups.

Quetta is the capital of Baluchistan province where IS group has claimed several attacks in recent years. IS has regional affiliates in both Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan.

Baluchistan is also the scene of a low-level insurgency by Baluch separatist groups, which have also targeted non-Baluch laborers. However, unlike IS, they have no history of attacks on the minority Shiite community. MDT/AP



HOLIDAY RENTAL HOUSES

The houses are set in the heart of the World Heritage Site of the Douro Valley and its famous winery landscape where the Ports are produced.

Lugar das Letras Casa de Gouvães

visit us at www.lugardasletras.com
info@lugardasletras.com
Mobile: +351 917921 320

visit us at www.casadegouveas.com
info@casadegouveas.com
Mobile: +351 917921 320

BOOK NOW!

Rainstorm warning signal system

Black rainstorm warning signal - level 3
This warning signal is issued when heavy rain has fallen or is expected to fall over extensive areas, exceeding 80 millimetres in an hour, and is likely to continue.

Red rainstorm warning signal - level 2
This warning signal is issued when heavy rain has fallen or is expected to fall over extensive areas, exceeding 50 millimetres in an hour, and is likely to continue.

Yellow rainstorm warning signal - level 1
This warning signal is issued when heavy rain has fallen or is expected to fall over extensive areas, exceeding 25 millimetres in an hour, and is likely to continue.

For more information scan the QR code

微信 Wechat
澳門城市規劃發展局 GMG

Telegram
<https://t.me/mo20090909>

地球物理暨氣象局
Direcção dos Serviços Meteorológicos e Geofísicos



AP PHOTO

USA

Hurricane Ida traps Louisianans, shatters the power grid

REBECCA SANTANA,
NEW ORLEANS

RESCUERS in boats, helicopters and high-water trucks brought hundreds of people trapped by Hurricane Ida's floodwaters to safety yesterday [Macau time] and utility repair crews rushed in, after the furious storm swamped the Louisiana coast and ravaged the electrical grid in the stifling, late-summer heat.

Residents living amid the maze of rivers and bayous along the state's Gulf Coast retreated desperately to their attics or roofs and posted their addresses on social media with instructions for search-and-rescue teams on where to find them.

More than 1 million homes and businesses in Louisiana and Mississippi — including all of New Orleans — were left without power as Ida, one of the most powerful hurricanes ever to hit the U.S. mainland, pushed through on Sunday.

The damage was so extensive that officials warned it could be weeks before the power grid was repaired.

President Joe Biden met virtually with Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards and Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves along with mayors from cities and parishes most impacted by Hurricane Ida to receive an

update on the storm's impacts, and to discuss how the Federal Government can provide assistance.

"We are closely coordinating with State and local officials every step of the way," Biden said.

The administration said more than 3,600 FEMA employees are deployed to Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. FEMA staged more than 3.4 million meals, millions of liters of water, more than 35,700 tarps, and roughly 200 generators in the region in advance of the storm.

As the storm was downgraded to a tropical depression in the afternoon and continued to make its way inland with torrential rain, it was blamed for at least two deaths — a motorist who drowned in New Orleans and a person hit by a falling tree outside Baton Rouge.

But with many roads impassable and cellphone service out in places, the full extent of its fury was still coming into focus. Christina Stephens, a spokesperson for Gov. John Bel Edwards, said that given the level of destruction, "We're going to have many more confirmed fatalities."

The governor's office said damage to the power grid appeared "catastrophic" — dispiriting news for those

without refrigeration or air conditioning during the dog days of summer, with highs forecast in the mid-80s to near 90 by midweek.

"There are certainly more questions than answers. I can't tell you when the power is going to be restored. I can't tell you when all the debris is going to be cleaned up and repairs made," Edwards told a news conference. "But what I can tell you is we are going to work hard every day to deliver as much assistance as we can."

Local, state and federal rescuers combined to save at least 671 people by yesterday, Edwards said.

In hard-hit LaPlace, squeezed between the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain, rescuers saved people from flooded homes in a near-constant operation.

Debbie Greco, her husband and son rode out the storm in LaPlace with Greco's parents. Water reached a foot up the first-floor windows, then filled the first floor to 4 feet (1.2 meters) deep once the back door was opened. They retreated to the second floor, but then screaming winds collapsed the roof as waves broke in the front yard.

They were finally rescued by boat after waiting in the only dry spot, five people sharing the landing on the

stairs.

"When I rebuild this I'm out of here. I'm done with Louisiana," said Greco's father, 85-year-old Fred Carmouche, a lifelong resident.

Elsewhere in LaPlace, people pulled pieces of chimneys, gutters and other parts of their homes to the curb and residents of a mobile home park waded through floodwaters.

The hurricane blew ashore on the 16th anniversary of Katrina, the 2005 storm that breached New Orleans' levees, devastated the city and was blamed for 1,800 deaths.

This time, New Orleans appeared to escape the catastrophic flooding city officials had feared.

Stephanie Blaise returned to her home with her father in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward after evacuating. The neighborhood suffered devastating flooding in Katrina, but only lost some shingles in Ida. However, with no idea when electricity would be restored, Blaise didn't plan to stay long.

"We don't need to go through that. I'm going to have to convince him to leave. We got to go somewhere. Can't stay in this heat," she said.

The city urged people who evacuated to stay away for at least a couple of days because of the lack of power and fuel. "There's not a lot of reasons to come back," said Collin Arnold, chief of emergency preparedness.

Also, 18 water systems serving about 255,000 customers in Louisiana were knocked out of service, the state Health Department said.

Four Louisiana hospitals were damaged and 39 medical facilities were operating on generator power, the Federal Emergency Management Agency said. Officials said they were evacuating scores of patients to other cities.

The governor's office said over 2,200 evacuees were staying in 41 shelters, a number expected to rise as people were rescued or escaped flooded homes. The governor's spokesperson said the state will work to move people to hotels as soon as possible so they can keep their distance from one another.

"This is a COVID nightmare," Stephens said, adding: "We do anticipate that we could see some COVID spikes related to this."

Forecasters said flash flooding and mudslides were possible along Ida's path before it blows out to sea over New England on Friday. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1976 WATER CRISIS DEEPENS



The first of 11,500 standpipes have been connected in Yorkshire as local reservoirs reach their lowest levels in years.

Yorkshire Water Authority (YWA) have said that current measures to save water have not been adequate and the standpipes could be in use in a fortnight's time.

About 750,000 people will be affected but the YWA have said that no home should be more than 100 yards (91.4 m) from a standpipe.

He urged people to help the old and sick in their communities by collecting their water for them.

This summer has had the longest period without rain for 80 years, and it is feared some reservoirs - already depleted by last year's dry weather - will be only 15% full by early November. Members of the public will be able to take as much water as they need from the standpipes, but YWA spokesman Percy Gadd asked people to be as economical as possible.

"Water that is saved in the home is water that is saved in the reservoirs - and hence the stocks will last longer," he told the BBC.

In Gwent, south-east Wales, one of the most severely affected areas, 70 companies were ordered to halve water consumption. They include coal mines and works owned by British Steel.

In mid Glamorgan, 220 schools have decided to close an hour early after a 17-hour cut-off was imposed. The Education Department is worried about health issues if children are unable to flush toilets during the cut-off period.

And in the Midlands all homes and business have been told to cut water consumption by two fifths or have rationing imposed on them by the end of the month.

The drought has also led to more fires. Today, at a meeting of the committee co-ordinating measures to tackle the crisis, the Prime Minister, James Callaghan, thanked firefighters for their recent efforts.

The committee also heard from the new "Minister of Drought", Denis Howell, who reported on his recent visit around the country and his plans to tackle the situation.

[...] Meanwhile, the message to the public is loud and clear - an advertisement placed in the Times by the National Water Council urges us to "Think before you turn the tap on".

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Several weather records were broken in the summer of 1976.

August concluded what was then the driest 16-month period since records began in 1772.

There were also two six-day periods when the temperature reached 90°F (32.2°C) each day - the first time this had been recorded in the UK.

Although Denis Howell was appointed Labour's "Minister of Drought" at the end of August - just before it began raining again - water restrictions remained in place for many months.

Standpipes did not reappear in Britain's streets until the drought in 1995.

Water shortages returned in 2006 and in May a drought order was granted in England and Wales for the first time since 1995, banning the non-essential use of water.

Under the six-month order, Sutton and East Surrey Water can ban car washing, the filling of swimming pools and watering of parks and sports grounds.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Don't let jealous friends put you down, making you insecure about your capabilities. Someone you work with could have a personal interest in you. Socializing will be more than just entertaining.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Erratic behavior at home may be hard to handle. Partnerships will be successful. You're in the mood to spend time with your lover.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Changes involving your domestic scene may be unpleasant. Don't be too eager to spend what's left over; more unexpected expenses are evident.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Don't get involved in secret affairs or underhanded involvements. A series of misunderstandings may be at fault. Romance will develop if you get involved in social events that deal with children.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Don't push your luck with authority. Relatives may play an important role in your social activities. Travel will entice you; however, a tendency to overspend is quite possible.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Try to visit friends or relatives you don't get to see often. Close deals that have been up in the air and move on to new ones that appear to be profitable.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Emotional situations could bring out your stubborn nature. Emotional up and downs have caused doubts in your personal life. You will find good buys and you will lift your spirits.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Confusion is apparent and you'll need some sound advice if you want to do the right thing. Only bite off what you can chew. Get involved in philosophic groups that will enlighten you.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Avoid conflicts with in-laws or other family members. Enlist coworkers in order to get the job done on time. You will not be able to contain your emotions today.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Older family members may take advantage of you by making you feel guilty. Your main concern will be to spend as little as possible of your own cash in the process.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

You can make a big difference to children if you are understanding of the difficulties they are experiencing. Erratic behavior may confuse others, and mood swings may result in isolation.



PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Make sure that you take time to remember those you love. In-laws or relatives may oppose your personal intentions. Don't sign up for too many extra activities or you'll have trouble fulfilling your obligations.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	17	29	fine
Harbin	16	27	fine
Tianjin	27	37	fine
Urumqi	22	27	showers
Xi'an	24	33	cloudy
Lhasa	20	28	fine
Chengdu	26	34	overcast
Chongqing	24	33	thunderstorms
Kunming	26	35	showers
Nanjing	20	29	cloudy
Shanghai	25	29	thunderstorms
Wuhan	25	35	cloudy
Hangzhou	12	26	fine
Taipei	25	31	rain
Guangzhou	15	26	rain
Hong Kong	20	26	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	9	19	thunderstorms
Frankfurt	11	22	overcast
Paris	12	23	overcast
London	13	18	overcast
New York	18	23	rain

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Helper; Abbr.; 5- Covered with water; 10- Small drink; 14- Portico; 15- Hood-shaped anatomical part; 16- Cosmonaut Gagarin; 17- Seaweed; 18- Met highlights; 19- Branta sandvicensis; 20- Fencer; 22- Burdened; 23- Western Hemisphere org.; 24- St. Louis griddle; 25- Satanic; 29- Reasonable; 33- Upper crust; 34- Iridescent gemstone; 36- Minister to; 37- Small shot; 38- Sticky stuff; 39- Green shade; 40- Throw; 42- Auricular; 43- Female horses; 45- Bantu language; 47- Not friendly; 49- Vessel built by Noah; 50- Yuck!; 51- Gaze fixedly; 54- Razed; 60- Diamond cover; 61- Rodeo horse; 62- Mil. school; 63- Drug-yielding plant; 64- Western; 65- Tabula ___; 66- Stretch wide; 67- Like ancient libraries; 68- Low card;

DOWN 1- Invites; 2- Simmer; 3- Go it alone; 4- Dandelions have a deep one of these; 5- 1992 Wimbledon champ; 6- Friendly; 7- Inter ___; 8- Actor Connery; 9- Suffers from; 10- Energetic; 11- Regretted; 12- "Rule Britannia" composer; 13- Demeanor; 21- Hamlet, e.g.; 22- Fall behind; 24- Portrayal by an actor; 25- Sums owing; 26- Arm joint; 27- Beethoven's "___ Solemnis"; 28- Raccoon-like carnivore; 29- Gate fastener; 30- Island in the Bay of Naples; 31- Staggering; 32- Buy alternative; 35- Trident-shaped letter; 38- Tyler's successor; 41- Stimulate; 43- High-ranking NCO; 44- Deep down; 46- Intense anger; 48- Clamor; 51- Hang around; 52- Currency unit in Western Samoa; 53- Get one's ducks in ___; 54- German Mrs.; 55- A great deal; 56- Work without ___; 57- Tenn. neighbor; 58- Effortlessness; 59- June 6, 1944; 61- Person, slangily;

Yesterday's solution

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



SELL INVEST RENT

hello@jmlproperty.com
www.jmlproperty.com

More info (853) 2835 2699

FOR SALE

Centro Internacional **HKD 4,200,000**
Ref: 2108 6003 800ft² 2 1

FOR RENT

One Central **HKD 16,500/mth**
Ref: 2106 1001 1,292ft² 2 2

Rain Dance Property
"We dance until it's SOLD!"

Traditional apartment **HKD 2,680,000**
Ref: 2103 6001 788ft² 2 1

TECHNOLOGY | ANALYSIS

CHINA EXTENDS CONTROL WITH ONLINE GAMING CRACKDOWN

JOE MCDONALD
& ZEN SOO, BEIJING

HUGELY popular online games and celebrity culture in China are the latest targets in the ruling Communist Party's campaign to encourage the public to fall in line with its vision for a powerful, more wholesome country.

The message? Play less, study and work more.

Rules that take effect today cut the amount of game time children are allowed by more than two-thirds to three hours a week. That coincides with a campaign to curb what the party sees as unhealthy attention to celebrities online.

"Adolescents are the future of the motherland," the Press and Publications Administration said in a statement Monday accompanying the game rules.

The measures add to a drumbeat of initiatives under President Xi Jinping over the past half-decade that are aimed at prodding the public and companies to align with the party's political and economic goals.

"This appears to be part of China's push to ensure that the government is front and center in all aspects of its citizens' lives," said Paul Haswell, who heads law firm Pinsent Masons' technology, media and communications practice for the Asia-Pacific region.

Xi has called for a "national rejuvenation" to restore China to its rightful place as a global leader with the ruling party directing areas from economics and technology to culture, education, religion and society.



"The party is the leader of everything," says a document on "Xi Jinping Theory in the New Era of Chinese Socialism" issued in 2018.

The party is rolling out a system known as Social Credit to track every individual and company in China and punish missteps ranging from dealing with business partners that break environmental rules to littering.

Beijing launched a barrage of anti-monopoly, data security and other enforcements beginning in late 2020. It aims to tighten control over internet giants including games and social media service Tencent Holding Ltd., e-commerce service Alibaba Group and ride-hailing service Didi Global Inc.

Online gaming is seen by re-

gulators as a political danger because users can socialize while they play, and it is harder than other activities to monitor or control, said Haswell. That adds to the risk users might organize and express dissent.

"The irony is that China is home to a growing number of extremely talented game developers."

PAUL HASWELL

An official panel was created in 2018 to review "ethical issues," or make sure games conform to party positions on human rights, foreign relations and other issues.

Monday's announcement

made clear Beijing's concern focuses on the ability of young Chinese to contribute to the economy.

"Protecting the physical and mental health of minors is related to the vital interests of the broad masses of the people and the cultivation of newcomers in the era of national rejuvenation," the publications agency said.

That reflects official unease about the need to ensure China has enough skilled future workers at a time when the workforce has shrunk over the past decade and is forecast to fall further.

Xi's government appears to think China spends too much time and energy on entertainment and consumer services instead of manufacturing and high-tech industry Beijing regards as a strategic priority.

Under party pressure, Tencent, Alibaba and others have promised to spend billions of dollars on its priorities of developing processor chips, robots and other technology instead of on their core businesses.

On Saturday, microblog platform Weibo Corp. suspended thousands of accounts for fan clubs and entertainment news.

Platforms also have been barred from publishing lists of celebrities ranked by popularity.

A popular actress, Zhao Wei, has disappeared from streaming platforms without explanation. Her name has been removed from credits of movies and TV programs.

Another actress, Zheng Shuang, was fined 299 million

yuan (\$46 million) on tax evasion charges in a warning to celebrities to be positive role models for society.

The crackdown has been financially devastating to games operators including Tencent. Investor anxiety about the potential revenue loss has knocked more than \$300 billion off Tencent's stock market value and billions off those of smaller rivals.

"The irony is that China is home to a growing number of extremely talented game developers," said Haswell.

An official newspaper lambasted online games in early August as "spiritual opium," an explosive accusation in a system that associates nineteenth-century opium use with colonial powers seizing Chinese territory.

In 2018, Beijing froze new game approvals, citing concern children's eyesight might suffer. News reports at the time said propaganda officials had taken over a leading role in regulation.

Game developers already were required to submit their latest titles for official approval before they could be released. Regulators also have called on developers to add nationalistic themes.

In 2019, game users under 18 were banned from playing between 10 p.m. and 8 a.m.

Ahead of the new rules, Tencent, also known for its WeChat message service, had already reduced the time children could play popular games to one hour per day, down from 90 minutes. It installed measures including facial recognition to confirm other users were adults.

Businesspeople and economists warn the party might hurt the economy by suppressing thriving games, entertainment and other online industries that has generated jobs and wealth.

So far, that is a price the ruling party appears to be willing to force China to pay. **MDT/AP**

CORPORATE BITS

GEG sets up blood donation drive



This year, Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) collaborated with the Health Bureau's Macao Blood

Transfusion Service to host the 13th annual blood donation drive at Galaxy Macau, attracting nearly

70 team members.

To create a "relaxed and comfortable environment" for the donors, GEG decorated the venue and provided refreshments to help donors replenish themselves after the blood donation.

In addition, GEG provided hand sanitizers for people at the venue and presented donors with one of four specially designed hand sanitizers made by members of the Fuhong Society of Macau, according to a statement.

Since 2008, GEG has been organizing blood donation events each year. To date, these have attracted more than 1,700 blood donations by GEG team members.

CTM undertakes works following damage to underground communications cable



CTM has arranged for a technical team to conduct emergency maintenance work and rapid network diversification following the service interruption at the Central District of Macau

Peninsula at 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

The CTM Network Management Center said that the incident was caused by the disconnection of an underground major com-

munications cable chamber due to drilling work conducted at a building redevelopment construction site at Travessa do Roquete in Central District.

A related communications cable chamber carried several large-capacity optical fibers and copper wires, resulting in different levels of service interruption.

Following onsite inspection, the technical team discovered that the cables were seriously damaged. Since the damaged cables were located at a construction site, under the premise of ensuring the safety of personnel, CTM arranged emergency repairs overnight in order to restore the affected services yesterday.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

PAT GRAHAM

PARALYMPICS

Masters cruises to gold in hand-cycle time trial

A thought recently struck Paralympic gold medalist Oksana Masters: What would young Oksana, the one who shuffled between Ukrainian orphanages, think of this grown-up version?

Young Oksana was always resilient, determined and headstrong—qualities that helped her persevere through years in an orphanage and with birth defects believed to be from the aftermath of Chernobyl, the world's worst nuclear accident. That malnourished orphan eventually was adopted by her American mom.

Now 32, Masters remains just as resilient, determined and headstrong—qualities that helped her rise to the top in multiple Paralympic sports spanning the Winter and Summer Games. She cruised to a gold medal Tuesday in her classification of a hand-cycle time trial in Tokyo. It was her ninth career Paralympic medal and third of the gold variety.

"All the stuff that was ingrained in my younger self, are also the reasons why I've been able to, with the support of so many people behind me, get to where I am today," said Masters, who will compete in a road race Wednesday (late Tuesday in the U.S.) at the Paralympic Games. "I'm hoping that my journey is helping inspire that next young girl."

It's been quite a journey for Masters, who was born in 1989 with legs that were different sizes and missing shinbones. She also had webbed fingers, no thumbs, six toes on each foot, one kidney and only parts of her stomach.

Being from the region near Chernobyl, the connection was made with the nuclear accident that happened in '86. It's thought her birth mom either lived in an area that was contaminated or ingested produce that was riddled with radiation, leading to in utero radiation poisoning.

Masters had her left leg amputated near the knee at 9 and the right one at the same spot five years later.

Fast-forward to the present: There she was a few weeks ago, riding her hand-cycle around Champaign, Illinois, to prepare for Tokyo. All the more remarkable given she had a tumor removed from her fe-



AP PHOTO

Oksana Masters, from USA, sits next to her bike after winning at women's H4-5 Time Trial at the Fuji International Speedway

mur in late May—a surgery that had some wondering if she would be ready.

She would. Not only that, but turned in an impressive performance during a race Tuesday in Tokyo that she won by a 1-minute, 46.48-second margin.

For making it back, she credits resiliency, a word she doesn't throw around lightly.

As a child, she was shuttled between three orphanages. She tried to remain strong but often wondered—would someone rescue her?

That someone would be Gay Masters, who saw a black-and-white photo of a 5-year-old Oksana in a Ukrainian adoption notebook.

Love at first sight. The process, though, took more than two years after the Ukrainian government placed a moratorium on foreign adoptions. Gay sent care packages filled with Teddy bears to young Oksana.

The packages never got to her.

Oksana thought she was on her own again. That is, until one night, with the paperwork finally approved, Gay arrived to take her new daughter home to Buffalo, New York.

They've overcome a lot— together. Malnutrition (she weighed about 35 pounds when her mom took her home, which is healthy for a 3-year-old but not for someone who was nearly 8). Early language barriers

(they worked through it with gestures and pointing at phrases in a book). Walking on tippy-toes (that's how Masters compensated for her differing leg heights). Surgeries (to amputate her legs).

At 13, Masters discovered rowing. The pull of the oars and the push against the water became a release for her, a "healing from my past," she once said.

That started her on a path to where she is now. Her first Paralympic Games medal was in rowing, a bronze in 2012 with partner Rob Jones. She would capture seven more medals in cross-country skiing and biathlon ('14 and '18) and will be a favorite in her classification of the hand-cycling events in Tokyo. She's also training for Beijing, too, which will be in about six months.

"It's not about the medals," said Masters, who went to high school in Kentucky. "It's not about anything else except leaving a legacy, being one example for that young girl to see."

She recently partnered with Secret deodorant as part of a campaign called "Watch Me," which encourages young girls to stay in sports with resources and support. There were murals placed in New York City, Philadelphia and Atlanta that feature Ashleigh Johnson (water polo), Chiney Ogwumike (WNBA), Chelsea Wolfe (BMX), Alex Morgan (women's soccer) and Masters.

"There's so much power when you're able to have something that you can look at and see and be like, 'OK, it's here. It's doable,'" Masters said. "I've always

been about seeing is believing, and when you can see something, you can be it and achieve it."

Determination. Another important word to

Masters.

Because determination got her through this: A few weeks before the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games in Pyeongchang, Masters slipped on the ice in Montana, where she was training, and dislocated her right elbow. She recovered in time to win five medals, including two golds in cross-country skiing events.

Afterward, she underwent a procedure to fix her elbow.

"She's overcome so much," her mom said.

Gay recently moved to Champaign to be closer to Masters and Masters' boyfriend, Aaron Pike, a five-time Paralympian who's competing in track events in Tokyo along with the marathon. With fans not really permitted to attend the Paralympics due to coronavirus restrictions, Gay headed to Colorado Springs, Colorado, for a viewing party sponsored by Toyota.

"Just amazing," Gay said after the race. "Last night, she texted me and said she was very unsure. She thought she couldn't finish the race. She clearly could."

MDT/AP

AD

OPINION

World Views

Kalpana Jain, MDT/The Conversation



WHAT DO MUSLIMS BELIEVE AND DO? UNDERSTANDING THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

When I was growing up in India, my father's Muslim friends would get me new clothes for Eid al-Fitr, a festival that celebrates the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, just as they would for their own children. Later in the day, loads of sewain, a vermicelli dessert filled with nuts, would be sent to our home.

I learned about many cultural rituals in these interactions, but as someone who is not a Muslim, I did not have a deep theological understanding of the Islamic faith until reading the writings of our scholars as an ethics and religion editor.

Today, we will take you through some of the basic tenets of the Islamic faith.

For Muslims, Prophet Muhammad is the most revered of all men. He is the last and most authoritative in a line of prophets that includes Moses and Jesus and is believed to have received direct revelations from God through the archangel Gabriel.

These revelations form the basis of the Muslim holy text, the Quran. The Quran refers to God as Allah, which is the Arabic word for God.

Muslims belong to many different sects – including some you may have heard of, like Sunni and Shiite – but they all share these same fundamental beliefs.

There are five pillars – or basic tenets – of the Islamic faith. These are professing one's faith; praying five times a day; giving zakat, or donating a certain portion of one's wealth; fasting during Ramadan; and making a pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

Muslims pray in the direction of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. Inside mosques, a prayer niche, a recess in the wall, known as the mihrab, indicates the direction of Mecca.

Scholars explain that for many Muslims, the practice of prayer helps them experience God in an intimate way. The 13th-century Persian Sufi poet Rumi spoke of his experience of prayer as a "delight," that opened the "window" of his soul.

For all Muslims who have the "physical and financial ability" to undertake the journey, the five-day pilgrimage to the Great Mosque of Mecca and the surrounding area is an obligation to be undertaken once in their lives. Inside the Great Mosque of Mecca is a black, cube-shaped structure, the Holy Kaaba.

The Kaaba holds a deep religious significance for Muslims. The Quran tells the story of Ibrahim, who, when commanded by God, agreed to sacrifice his son, Ismail. Scholar Ken Chitwood explains that Muslims believe the Kaaba holds the black stone upon which Ibrahim was to sacrifice Ismail.

The pilgrimage ends with Eid al-Adha, the "feast of the sacrifice."

If you have heard about or seen your Muslim neighbors fasting, then what they are observing is Ramadan. Muslims believe that the Quran was first revealed to Prophet Muhammad during the month of Ramadan.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and lasts either 29 or 30 days. During Ramadan, Muslims observe a fast from sunrise to sunset each day, so they wake up early to share food before the sun appears and end it in later in the evening.

In the 12-month Gregorian calendar used in much of the world, the timing of Ramadan can vary from year to year. The dates depend on when the new crescent moon is visible.

The fasting, as scholar Mohammad Hassan Khalil explains, is a way for Muslims to be conscious of God. It is also meant to help them understand what it is like to be poor.

The fasting ends with the celebration of Eid al-Fitr. Muslim communities often organize large feasts for breaking the fast that are known as "Iftaar" (literally, "breakfast") at which people from all religions are welcomed. I've often attended Iftaar feasts in India.

On Eid, Muslims gather in the mosque for prayers, which are followed by celebrations. In many South Asian countries, sewain are distributed around to friends and neighbors. But customs can vary, and Muslims from different countries and cultures will bring their unique food and traditions to the celebrations of this holy day.

LITHIUM FUELS HOPES FOR REVIVAL ON CALIFORNIA'S LARGEST LAKE

Near Southern California's dying Salton Sea, a canopy next to a geothermal power plant covers large containers of salty water left behind after super-hot liquid is drilled from deep underground to run steam turbines.

The containers connect to tubes that spit out what looks like dishwater, but it's lithium, a critical component of rechargeable batteries and the newest hope for economic revival in the depressed region.

Demand for electric vehicles has shifted investments into high gear to extract lithium from geothermal brine, salty water that has been

overlooked and pumped back underground since the region's first geothermal plant opened in 1982. The mineral-rich byproduct may now be more valuable than the steam used to generate electricity.

California's largest but rapidly shrinking lake is at the forefront of efforts to make the U.S. a major global player in the production of lithium. Despite large deposits of the ultralight metal in the U.S., Nevada has the country's only lithium plant, and U.S. production lags far behind Australia, Chile, Argentina and China.

More on macaudailytimes.com

BIRDS OF PREY FACE GLOBAL DECLINE FROM HABITAT LOSS, POISONS

CHRISTINA LARSON, WASHINGTON

DESPITE a few high-profile conservation success stories – like the dramatic comeback of bald eagle populations in North America – birds of prey are in decline worldwide.

A new analysis of data from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and BirdLife International found that 30% of 557 raptor species worldwide are considered near threatened, vulnerable or endangered or critically endangered. Eighteen species are critically endangered, including the Philippine eagle, the hooded vulture and the Annobon scops owl, the researchers found.

Other species are in danger of becoming locally extinct in specific regions, meaning they may no longer play critical roles as top predators in those ecosystems, said Gerardo Ceballos, a bird scientist at the National Autonomous University of Mexico and co-author of the study published Monday in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

"The golden eagle is the national bird of Mexico, but we have very few golden eagles left in Mexico," he said. A 2016 census estimated only about 100 breeding pairs remain in the country.

Harpy eagles were once widespread throughout southern Mexico and Central and South America, but tree cutting and burning has dramatically shrunk their range.

Of threatened birds of prey that are active mostly during the day – including most hawks, eagles and vultures – 54% were falling in population, the study found. The same was true for 47% of threatened nocturnal raptors, such as owls.

That means "the factors causing the decline have not been remedied" and those species need immediate attention, said Jeff Johnson, a biologist at the University of North Texas, who was not involved in the study.

Globally, the biggest threats to these birds are habitat loss, climate change and toxic substances, said Evan Buechley, a research associate at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and a scientist at nonprofit HawkWatch International who was not involved in the study.

The insecticide DDT thinned egg shells and decimated bald eagle populations in North America, leading to its ban in the U.S. in 1972. But Buechley said other threats remain, including rodent pesticides and the lead in hunters' bullets and shot pellets. Many raptors feed on rodents and dead animals.

The Andean condor is declining due to exposure to pesticides, lead and other toxic substances, said Sergio Lambertucci, a biologist at the National University of Comahue in Argentina.

Widespread use of an anti-inflammatory drug in livestock led to the rapid decline of vultures in South Asia. The birds

died after eating carcasses, shrinking the population of some species by 95% in recent decades.

In East Asia, many raptor species are long-distance migrants: They breed in northern China, Mongolia or Russia and travel down the eastern coast of China to spend summers in Southeast Asia or India.

"Certain areas of the coast will see 30 to 40 species during peak migration," said Yang Liu, an ecologist at Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangzhou, who was not involved in the study.

But eastern China is also the most populous and urban part of the country, with steep development pressures. "Sites that are bottlenecks for migration, with thousands of birds passing through, are important to protect," he said.

Of 4,200 sites identified by conservation groups as critical for raptor species globally, most "are unprotected or only partly covered by protected areas," said Stuart Butchart, chief scientist at BirdLife International in the United Kingdom.

A 2018 study in the journal Biological Conservation found that 52% of all raptor species worldwide are decreasing in population. MDT/AP



"Girlie," a 29-year-old Philippine Eagle at the Parks and Wildlife Center at Manila's Quezon City (2010)



Ukraine's leader is traveling to the United States this week in hopes of bolstering security ties with Washington and persuading the administration to ramp up sanctions against a new Russian natural gas pipeline that bypasses his country. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has called Washington's failure to block the construction of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline to Germany a grave political error, and he is expected to again raise the issue during his talks Wednesday with U.S. President Joe Biden.

Estonia's Parliament has elected the chief of a major national museum as the Baltic country's new president in a second round of voting after he was rejected by lawmakers in Monday's first voting round. Lawmakers at the 101-seat Riigikogu legislature yesterday elected Alar Karis, director of the Estonian National Museum with 72 lawmakers supporting him, 8 voting blank and the rest absent or abstaining. He was the only candidate in both rounds, but failed to achieve the necessary two-thirds support, or 68 votes, in Monday's first secret ballot.

Greece's center-right government has replaced ministers in charge of public security and health in the wake of massive wildfires and a resurgence of COVID-19 cases that have caused widespread discontent. In a cabinet reshuffle announced yesterday, retired admiral Evangelos Apostolakis was named as head of a newly created Civil Protection Ministry that will also be in charge of firefighting operations. The 64-year-old had served as minister of defense under a previous government as well as as head of the Greek armed forces.



Puerto Rico's power company warned yesterday that its electric generation will be limited in upcoming days given recent mechanical failures at five of its units. The announcement by the island's Electrical Power Authority comes amid high temperatures and warnings of deteriorated air quality given the presence of Sahara dust that blew across the Atlantic from Africa.