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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

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Taiwan A strong earthquake struck off the east coast of Taiwan yesterday, shaking buildings in the capital, Taipei. No serious damage or injuries were reported, and authorities said there was no danger of a tsunami. The magnitude 6.1 quake was centered 27 kilometers deep and about 90 kilometers offshore from the city of Hualien, Taiwan's Central Weather Bureau said.



South Korea Former top prosecutor Yoon Suk Yeol takes office as South Korea's president today, facing a tougher mix of foreign policy and domestic challenges than other recent South Korean leaders encountered at the start of their presidencies. Since winning election in March, Yoon, a conservative who advocates a more hard-line approach toward North Korea, has been denied a honeymoon period. Surveys show less than 60% of respondents expect he will do well in his presidency.



Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa resigned following weeks of protests demanding that he and his brother, the president, step down over the country's worst economic crisis in decades. There was no immediate comment from the president's office. The resignation comes after authorities deployed armed troops in the capital, Colombo, yesterday following an attack earlier in the day by government supporters on protesters who have been camped outside the offices of the president and prime minister.

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# OFFICER AND PATRIOT

AP PHOTO



Former HK chief secretary and career policeman John Lee elected Chief Executive with the vote of 99% of the 1,500-member electoral committee

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**STATEMENT**

Liu Xianfa\*



## GLOBAL SECURITY INITIATIVE: A GOLDEN KEY TO RESOLVING GLOBAL SECURITY CHALLENGES

On 21 April, President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Security Initiative (GSI) in his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2022 held in Boao, Hainan Province. Facing profound changes of the world and challenges of our time, the GSI, while adhering to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, seeks to further promote the building of a balanced, effective and sustainable global and regional security architecture. As a golden key to bridging the peace deficit and tackling security challenges, the GSI contributes Chinese wisdom and solutions to the cause of world peace and security, and wins high appraisal and widespread support from the international community.

The GSI unswervingly conforms to the overriding theme of our time—peace and development. As we see it, instabilities and uncertainties of the international security landscape have risen significantly. Unilateralism, hegemony and power politics become rampant. Geopolitical conflicts caused by bloc politics and Cold War mentality break out time and again around the world. Non-traditional security threats such as terrorism, climate change, energy and food crisis continue to spread. The world is neither stable nor tranquil. In the face of the intertwined impact of major changes in the world and the COVID-19 pandemic, both unseen in a century, as well as the Ukraine crisis, the prevailing trend of peace and development is facing serious challenges. With unforgettable memories of war and poverty, China has been tirelessly pursuing peace and development. The GSI, together with the Global Development Initiative (GDI) unveiled by President Xi Jinping last year, are injecting stability and positive energy into the cause of world peace and development, and preventing the world from slipping into a dangerous abyss.

The GSI gives explicit answers to the question of our time—“What security concept the world needs and how countries can achieve common security”. The Ukraine crisis once again taught the world that conflicts are to occur when one pursues exclusive or absolute security and seeks one's own security at the expense of the others. As a substitution and transcendence of Western geopolitical security theory, the GSI is underpinned by “Six Commitments”, namely, staying committed to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable securi-

ty; staying committed to respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries; staying committed to abiding by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter; staying committed to taking the legitimate security concerns of all countries seriously; staying committed to peacefully resolving differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation; and staying committed to maintaining security in both traditional and non-traditional domains. The Six Commitments, combining top-level design as well as practical pathways, clearly show the humanity a best route to lasting peace and universal security.

The GSI, together with the GDI, offers a persuasive solution to the call of our time—building a community of shared future for mankind. As an ancient Chinese proverb going, “Stability brings a country prosperity while instability leads a country to poverty”. The global ramifications of the pandemic and the Ukraine crisis remind us that countries around the world are like passengers aboard the same ship who share the same destiny. For the ship to navigate the storm and sail toward a bright future, all passengers must pull together. The thought of throwing anyone overboard is simply not acceptable. Building a community of shared future is the only right choice for the humanity to tackle global challenges and achieve lasting peace and sustainable development. President Xi Jinping, bearing in mind the future for mankind, outlines core concepts, fundamental guidelines, important principles, long-range objectives and feasible plans for building a global development and security community envisioned by the GDI and the GSI, offering important ideas for global governance innovation and the building of a community of shared future.

The tide of the times is surging forward. Those who conform to it will prosper, and those who resist will perish. Lasting peace and universal security is the trend of history, the call of our time and the common expectation of the humanity. China will shoulder the historic mission entrusted by the times, join hands with all peace-loving countries and peoples to carry out the GSI, open up a broad path toward lasting peace and universal security, and forge a strong synergy to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

\* Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Macao Special Administrative Region

MACAO NEWS



## APOMAC: ‘MACANESE’ SHOULD BE LISTED AS A CHINESE MINORITY

### RENATO MARQUES

THE Macanese should be included in the list of the Chinese minority ethnic groups, the founder and chairman of the Association for Retirees and Pensioners of Macau (APOMAC), Jorge Fão, said in an interview with TDM Radio.

The idea advocated by Fão was first raised by the director of the Macao Daily newspaper and Macau representative to China's National People's Congress (NPC), Lok Po, at the NPC meeting in March this year.

In the interview, the APOMAC leader expressed regret that there are not enough people defending the classification of Macanese as a Chinese ethnic minority, saying that this is the right path to follow.

“I think it should [be listed as a Chinese minority ethnic group]. It's a shame that we only have one Lok Po in Macau. If we had more people with the mindset of Mr. Lok Po, maybe some 50 or 100 people, pushing forward with this same proposal, I believe that the Chinese government would consider us officially as an ethnic mi-

nority,” Fão said.

In a previous comment to the Portuguese newspaper Hoje Macau, Fão said that after Lok Po's speech in Beijing he phoned him to thank him for the reference.

“I didn't expect that there would be someone with the attention to make such a proposal [highlighting] that the community is important and should be protected, cemented, and even recognized,” the APOMAC leader told Hoje Macau. “It would be good for China to promote the existence of our community in the Mainland. Here everyone knows about our existence, but those who live in the Mainland are not aware of our community”, he added.

### ‘PRESSURE’ FROM THE MACANESE ELITE

According to Carlos Piteira, a Macanese and a professor and investigator at the Portuguese university, Lok Po's speech at the NPC has its origins in the ideas of the Macanese elite, specifically in the new generations.

The anthropologist at Lisbon's Social and Political

Sciences Higher Institute (ISCSP) with a vast research work about Macau said to Hoje Macau that there may have been “some pressure or influence from the Macanese ‘elite’, possibly from the new generation, for the issue to be taken to the NPC meeting. I do not believe that it was strictly an initiative of the Macau representative [Lok Po],” he said. Piteira noted that Lok Po's speech only indicates that there is a current feeling among the Macanese community that the Chinese government has been doing more for them than the Portuguese administration did.

Piteira thinks that there is a risk that this new feeling might “erase part of the history of the Macanese ethnicity that highlights the Portuguese roots.”

Other leaders of the Macanese community such as the lawyer and community associations leader Miguel de Senna Fernandes and lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho have also expressed comments in support of Piteira's opinion, noting that comes with a gradual and normal evolution of the community.

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# Drill simulating large-scale Covid-19 outbreak considered satisfactory

RENATO MARQUES

**S**EVERAL governmental departments held a drill last Saturday simulating a large-scale Covid-19 outbreak in the community.

According to the authorities, the drill delivered satisfactory results and helped the various departments improve their response times in case an emergency response was needed to deal with a potential outbreak.

Speaking to the media after the drill, the director of the Emergency Services at Hospital Conde de São Januário, Lei Wai Seng, described the results of the drill as satisfactory. The drill was designed to test the activation of the Community Center for Covid-19 Treatment in the Macau East Asia Games Dome as well as the transport of potentially infected persons, close contacts and patients to and from the Center, as well as to their final destination after triage.

For Lei, the overall performance in the drill was positive, although he noted that a thorough evaluation will be conducted later with the participation of all those who took part.

Questioned whether more



drills of this kind would be held, Lei did not exclude the possibility, but he noted that these drills require thorough evaluation and assessment as they involve a large number of personnel, particularly from the emergency services.

According to the figures given, 289 volunteers and 25 vehicles participated in this operation.

In the speech before the start of the drill, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Elsie Ao Ieong, explained the drill and its purpose, noting that it is in line with China's overall strategy of

"preventing imported cases and preventing domestic resurgence."

Ao Ieong emphasized that, through the drill, the public will also be able to understand how the Community Center operates and be able to make suggestions regarding pandemic control measures.

The drill tested various requirements, such as the transportation of babies, children, the elderly, and people with reduced mobility to the Community Treatment Center.

A Macau Red Cross ambu-

lance bus also took part in the simulation, being responsible for the transport of diagnosed bedridden elderly people and people with serious medical conditions to the Center.

According to the report, a large number of people simulating close contacts and people with suspicious symptoms were transported to the center for nucleic acid tests in the testing center before triage.

The drill also tested the operation of the makeshift hospital established on the same site, aiming to tackle any flaws in its functioning ahead of any potential Covid-19 outbreak.

## COVID-19 VACCINES FOR CHILDREN 'ON THE WAY'

**T**HE Covid-19 mRNA vaccine doses specifically calibrated for young children aged between 3 to 11 years old, which were ordered by the government, are expected to arrive from the middle of this month, the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center has noted.

Questioned on the matter during the latest Covid-19 weekly press briefing, the coordinator at the

local Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Leong Iek Hou, said that the health authorities have been in communication with the suppliers and they have been informed that these vaccines should arrive near the middle of this month. The final date is still unconfirmed, she said, claiming that adjustments need to be made due to flight allocations.

# Academic: Covid-19 a trendsetter of e-payment methods

ANTHONY LAM

**A**n academic has recently argued that the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the habits of local buyers and sellers when it comes to using electronic and mobile payment methods on a regular basis.

In recent years, various forms of mobile payment have been gradually becoming widespread in the city. With the promotion of the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM) and financial institutions, the relevant infrastructure and services has been gradually refined, transforming the habits of residents in making payments.

During the current pandemic, the two past rounds and the upcoming round of consumption stimulus launched by the Macau government are taking the



form of electronic or mobile payment, which has led to expanded coverage for those payment methods.

The AMCM recently announced mobile payment statistics for the first quarter of this year.

In the said period, the number of transactions for local mobile payment tools

was 63.72 million, up 12.1% quarter-on-quarter. The total transaction volume reached 5.9 billion, up 3% quarter-on-quarter. The average amount transacted was 92.9 patacas.

As of the end of March 2022, the number of locally accepted mobile payment machines and static QR

payment codes was approximately 93,000, a quarter-to-quarter increase of 1.9%.

Agreeing on the situation is Professor Samuel Tong Kai Chung, president of the Macau Institute of Management, who has recently told local newspaper Exmoor that the current pandemic is the trendsetter for payment methods.

He attributed the cause of the transformation to more common and frequent online shopping and takeaway food ordering services. The electronic stimulus for consumption, of course, has also played a critical role.

Another cause of the new trend was that financial institutions that offer mobile payment services had opted to lower their transaction surcharges, giving business operators greater intentions to start accepting mobile payment methods. **AL**

## LIAISON OFFICE IN MACAU ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO 'WORK HARD'

**I**N a letter to Macau students in Beijing, the director of the Central Government's Liaison Office in Macao encourages students to work hard considering the country's rapid development.

Fu Ziyi, director of the Office, earlier received a letter from a group of Macau students currently studying in universities in the Chinese capital of Beijing. On May 4, he replied with a letter to the group of students.

In the letter, Fu expressed his gladness and pride at the students' participation in the latest Winter Olympics in Beijing. He described their participation as "gaining glory for Macau."

While the Winter Olympics were what Fu describes as a "major

platform for exchange, unification and the construction of a community with shared future among youths from various places," the group of Macau students "have made active contributions to telling the Chinese story and the Macau story well."

In addition, Fu reminded the students that Chinese President Xi Jinping, during the latter's field trip to the Renmin University of China, encouraged all young people across the country to "run on the circuit of youth in an unreserved manner to strive for the best results among this generation."

Fu then emphasized that the current generation was born in time of rapid development for the country. **AL**

## REGISTRATION FOR CONSUMPTION SUBSIDY OPENS TODAY

The registration for the third round of the e-voucher scheme will open today, and remain open for eight months. In a joint statement, the Economic and Technological Development Bureau and the Monetary Authority of Macao (AMCM) stated that they have been in close communication with eight financial institutions participating in the scheme.

The bureau has been coordinating the setup of the mobile payment machines to be used in the scheme with these financial institutions.

## GOV'T PROVIDES INFOGRAPHICS FOR DOMESTIC HELPER APPLICANTS

The Macau government has prepared pictorial descriptions to assist applicants in the second phase of the application procedures for the Philippine domestic helper program. The infographics instruct potential applicants in the procedure for submitting their applications to the appropriate government bureau in a stage-by-stage presentation. It is also underlined that Philippine migrant workers under this program will be required to stay at the Treasure Hotel for the duration of their quarantine. The government reminds applicants that should their prospective helper possess a work permit which is valid for less than three months, they should contact the Immigration Department of the police prior to beginning the application process.

## RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY PRICE INDEX DROPS

The overall residential property price index for January - March 2022 fell by 1.4% over the previous period (December 2021 - February 2022) to 259.8, according to the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). The index for existing residential units (276.5) fell by 1.5% from the previous period, with the indices for those in the Macao Peninsula (269.6) and Taipa & Coloane (304.1) dropping by 1.2% and 2.6% respectively. Analyzed by the age of the building, the indices for residential units of buildings between 11 and 20 years old and for those over 20 years old fell by 2.0% and 1.8% respectively, whereas the index for those between six and 10 years old rose by 1.5%.

## PHILIPPINE ELECTIONS

# CONSULATE HITS RECORD-HIGH VOTER TURNOUT AT ABOUT 70%

LYNZY VALLES

**VOTER** turnout for the Philippine election in Macau SAR stood at 67% as of yesterday morning, according to a statement provided by the Philippine Consulate General.

This is the highest voter turnout the consulate in the city has recorded.

The Times has obtained access to the certified list of voters for the Macau jurisdiction, which shows that over 14,630 Macau-based workers are registered: a surge of nearly 200% compared to the number of voters in the last presidential election in 2016.

Back in 2016, only about 5,000 of the workers were registered voters.

Overseas voting closed yesterday at 7 p.m. The ballots will be submitted to the consulate in Hong Kong. A copy of the official election returns will be made public after the tally is compiled by members of the Special Board of Election Inspectors.

The overseas Philippine Presidential Election ran from April 10 to May 9.

According to unofficial polls and surveys held by different communities in the region, Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. is the likely winner.

Late last year, a number of Filipinos in Macau were detained by the Judiciary Police after two large gatherings, wearing red shirts to show support to Marcos Jr. – gatherings that were held without permission from local authorities.

To organize public gatherings in Macau, one must obtain a permit from the Public Security Police Force if the gathering is political, or a permit from the Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) if the assembly is cultural or social.

Social media has become a key battleground in the upcoming

AP PHOTO



Presidential frontrunner Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.

election, and many fear that fake news or disinformation could make the already intense race even more toxic.

As cited in a report issued by the Associated Press, a triumph by

Ferdinand Marcos Jr. would be a stunning reversal of the 1986 pro-democracy uprising that booted his father from office and brought global infamy on the Marcos family. Many Filipinos who are

aware of the human rights atrocities and plunder that unfolded under the elder Marcos' dictatorship would likely push back against any perceived threat to democracy or attempt by Marcos Jr. to recover assets seized from his family as ill-gotten wealth.

Marcos, who has been absent in presidential debates held in the country, is in a battle with another presidential candidate Leni Robredo. She defeated Marcos Jr. by a narrow margin in their first electoral faceoff in the 2016 vice presidential race. Her advocacies center on defending human rights and empowering the poor, partly by educating them about their legal rights.

The daughter of a trial court judge, Robredo does not belong to any of the prominent families that have dominated Philippine politics for generations. She is running as an independent with the support of a network of campaign volunteers.

## WITH MARCOS JR. TIPPED TO WIN, PHILIPPINES AT TENUOUS MOMENT

**T**HE son and namesake of ousted Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos took a commanding lead in an unofficial count of more than 60% of the votes in yesterday's presidential election in the deeply divided Asian democracy.

Marcos Jr. had more than 25 million votes as of 11 p.m. last night, far ahead of his closest challenger, current Vice President Leni Robredo, a champion of human rights, who had 11.9 million votes, according to an unofficial count.

The election winner will take office on June 30 for a single, six-year term as leader of a Southeast Asian nation hit hard by two years of COVID-19 outbreaks and lockdowns.

Still more challenging problems include deeper poverty and unemployment and decades-long Muslim and communist insurgencies. The next president

is also likely to hear demands to prosecute outgoing President Rodrigo Duterte for thousands of killings during his anti-drug crackdown — deaths already under investigation by the International Criminal Court.

Duterte's daughter, southern Davao city Mayor Sara Duterte, is Marcos Jr.'s vice presidential running mate in an alliance of the scions of two authoritarian leaders who concern human rights groups. The tie-up has combined the voting power of their separate northern and southern political strongholds, boosting their chances but compounding worries of human rights activists.

Sara Duterte also had a formidable lead for vice president in the unofficial count from the Commission on Elections server. The president and vice president are elected separately in the Philippines. MDT/AP

# Transport Bureau: 183 heavy vehicle violations in Jan, Feb

A total of 183 violations related to heavy vehicles were recorded in the first two months of the year, Lam Hin San, director of the Transport Bureau (DSAT), revealed in a reply to a written inquiry from lawmaker Ngan Iek Hang.

Citing information from the Office of the Secretary for Security, Lam

highlighted that of the 183 violations, 181 were related to overloading vehicles. Of the other two, one related to exceeding a height clearance and another concerned failure to appropriately cover a powdered cargo.

In Macau, it is required that powdered cargos, such as sand, be covered appropriately during

transport.

Speaking on behalf of the Office of the Secretary for Security, Lam also emphasized that the Public Security Police Force (PSP) has been ordered to strengthen traffic law enforcement, make strategic formation through daily operations and carry out an analysis of data relating to violations, as

well as conduct special inspections, in the hopes of better educating drivers of heavy vehicles.

At the same time, in addition to cooperating with the DSAT in organizing traffic safety promotions, the PSP has also disseminated the same messages through various channels, such as radio broadcasts, pamphlet distribution, as well as holding traffic safety seminars targeting the transportation industry.

Last year, it broadcasted traffic safety information more than 4,300 times on the radio, and from last

year to the first two months of this year, 17 traffic safety seminars were held in cooperation with relevant industry groups, with over 600 participants.

At the same time, Lam also revealed that the second quarter should see the conclusion of height warning installation on Rua do Visconde Paço de Arcos. He added that his bureau is working on introducing height warnings in the traffic app.

Lam stressed that his bureau will continually improve driving conditions where necessary. AL

# GEG Volunteer Team Serving the Community for Another New Decade

**U**pholding its philosophy of “what is taken from the community is to be used for the good of the community”, Galaxy Entertainment Group (GEG) is committed to spreading love, care and positive life values in the community. In 2011, GEG established the GEG Volunteer Team for its team members to engage in volunteer work and to give back to society, which has received tremendous support from the team members. To date, the GEG Volunteer Team has held around 750 meaningful social activities, contributing over 200,000 hours of service to the Macau community.

## BETTER FUTURE

In celebration of the 10th anniversary of the GEG Volunteer Team, last year, GEG joined hands with different social service organizations in organizing a wide array of volunteering activities and launching two pilot programs, the GEG Volunteer Team “Empathy in Action Training Program” and the “Empathy in Action Inclusive Creative Arts Project”. Through providing a series of training and simulation activities, GEG volunteers were given the exposure to solidify their understanding of the daily lives and needs of people from different social groups, nurture their empathy and community engagement, and become advocate for diversity and inclusion.



GEG volunteers experienced the challenges and inconveniences of aging, and learned how to take better care of the elderly.



Over the years, GEG volunteers spare no effort in lending a hand to those in need.



GEG volunteer took pictures for elderly members of the Macau Federation of Trade Unions at a musical concert.



GEG volunteers joined hands with people from all backgrounds to co-create unique art pieces through the “Empathy in Action” Inclusive Creative Arts Project.



GEG volunteers paired up with students from Macau Special Olympics in an inclusive boules activity for the fun and enjoyment.



GEG volunteers learned about local sign language to better understand the daily lives and needs of the deaf and hearing-impaired people.

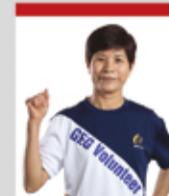
## VOLUNTEERS SHARING

The dedication and commitment of its volunteers are the foundation of the GEG Volunteer Team’s success. Many volunteers have witnessed the growth and advancement of the GEG Volunteer Team in the past decade, and they have all benefited from the happiness, satisfaction and accomplishment brought about from their contribution.



Mr. Lei Pak Lao

“GEG provides strong and unwavering support to the Volunteer Team which allows me to connect with different social groups and listen to the voices of the community.”



Ms. Li Cui Qiong

“My volunteering with GEG has inspired me to encourage my children to serve the community, thereby passing on the spirit of mutual support.”



Mr. Leong Wa Kam

“Volunteering with GEG has given me valuable opportunities to share my photography expertise, capture the memorable moments, and contribute to society.”



Mr. Yu Jun Hua

“Volunteering with GEG has been one of my most rewarding journeys. The cheerful smiles of beneficiaries motivate me to continue serving more people from all walks of life.”

HONG KONG

# Lam says China patriots now firmly in charge after Lee's election

**H**ONG Kong leader Carrie Lam yesterday said Chinese patriots are now firmly in charge of the city following the election of its new leader, who ran unopposed in a process controlled by Beijing.

Lam's comments came a day after a carefully vetted election committee voted overwhelmingly to approve John Lee, a hard-line security chief who oversaw a crackdown on Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement.

The crackdown led to the imposition by Beijing of a sweeping National Security Law and the reorganization of the city's legislature. Political opponents were subsequently jailed, dissenting voices silenced and the organized opposition quashed.

Appearing with Lee, Lam said such changes were necessary to restore order and stability in the Asian financial hub.

"I want to thank the central government again for taking resolute measures when Hong Kong faced unprecedented challenges," said Lam, who is stepping down after a single five-year term as leader.

"It formulated the National Security Law, which helped Hong Kong transform from chaos to order, and also improved Hong Kong's electoral system so that we

AP PHOTO



Hong Kong Chief Executive-elect John Lee (left) and outgoing Chief Executive Carrie Lam

can achieve long-term peace and stability," Lam said.

Lee won more than 99% of the vote cast by the 1,500 members of the election committee.

While China cited the need to restore order as the motivation for political change in Hong Kong, the demand that only patriots — defined as those loyal to the ruling Communist Party — could hold office was a central theme.

The establishment of the political system of "patriots running Hong Kong" is vital for Hong Kong's future, Lam said.

Lee will replace Lam on July 1 and take over a city that has in the past five years been through the tumultuous days of the 2019 pro-democracy protests, the ensuing crackdown and a recent corona-

virus outbreak that overwhelmed Hong Kong's health care system and prompted Beijing to send in medics and build temporary quarantine facilities.

The handover of power will incorporate the formation of a new government, the continuation of epidemic control measures and preparations for the 25th anniversary celebration of Hong Kong's return to Chinese rule after 156 years as a British colony.

Lee said he and Lam exchan-

ged views on forming the new government during their yesterday morning meeting, but gave no indication of any new direction for his administration.

Lee has said he wants to ensure Hong Kong's position as a center for financial deal-making while improving quality of life for the 7.4 million citizens of one of the world's most expensive cities. However, national security concerns are expected to trump all other issues, fueling speculation about a fur-

ther deterioration of civil rights, free speech and the rule of law.

Lam said her government would "render all the necessary assistance and support" for the handover, ensuring Lee "will lead Hong Kong to a greater height in the next five years."

In Beijing, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian fired back at criticism of the election from the European Union, whose foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, said Lee's selection "violates democratic principles and political pluralism in Hong Kong." Borrell said the election furthered the dismantling of the "one country, two systems" principle under which Hong Kong was supposed to retain its own political, legal and economic system for 50 years after the end of British rule.

The election "shows that the new electoral system is a good system in line with the principle of 'one country, two systems' and the reality in Hong Kong, and reflects the mainstream public opinion and consensus of staying in solidarity and striving for prosperity of all walks of life in Hong Kong," Zhao said at a daily briefing.

"It is believed that the new chief executive will lead the new (Hong Kong) government and people to create a new prospect of good governance in Hong Kong," Zhao said. MDT/AP

## COVID-19

## Shanghai tightens lockdown despite falling cases

**A**UTHORITIES in Shanghai have again tightened anti-virus restrictions, just as the city was emerging from a month of strict lockdown due to a COVID-19 outbreak.

Notices issued in several districts said residents were ordered to stay home and are barred from receiving nonessential deliveries as part of a "quiet period" lasting at least until tomorrow. The tightened measures could be extended depending on the results of mass testing, the notices said.

"Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Together we can lift the lockdown at an early date," said one notice issued in the city's Huangpu district and posted online.

It wasn't clear what



Beicai Town in Pudong New Area, Shanghai

prompted the renewed tightening, with numbers of new COVID-19 cases in the city continuing to fall.

Shanghai yesterday reported 3,947 cases over the previous 24 hours, almost all of them asymptomatic, along with 11 deaths.

Authorities have been gradually lifting isolation rules on the city's 25 million residents, but the new orders appear to be returning to conditions at the early stage of the outbreak.

Shanghai originally ordered mass testing along

with a limited lockdown, but extended that as case numbers rose. Thousands of residents have been forced into centralized quarantine centers for showing a positive test result or merely having been in contact with an infected person.

Two Shanghai residents reached through social media said they'd had no prior notice of the new restrictions, which they were told could last for up to a week.

"We're unprepared," said Zhang Chen, a researcher with a technology company. "I packed my luggage thinking it would be my turn next" to be taken to a quarantine facility.

"I don't know what will happen in May, but after the lockdown, I think I'll need psychological help,"

Zhang said.

A marketing professional in the western Pudong district said quality of life has been declining even as living expenses continue to rise under lockdown.

"Every time, they say lockdown will be eased after a few days, but there seems to be no end," said the woman, who asked that she be identified only by her surname, Lu, to avoid repercussions from authorities who have cracked down heavily on dissent.

"All aspects of work are affected. I don't know when it will be time for the lockdown to come to an end," Lu said.

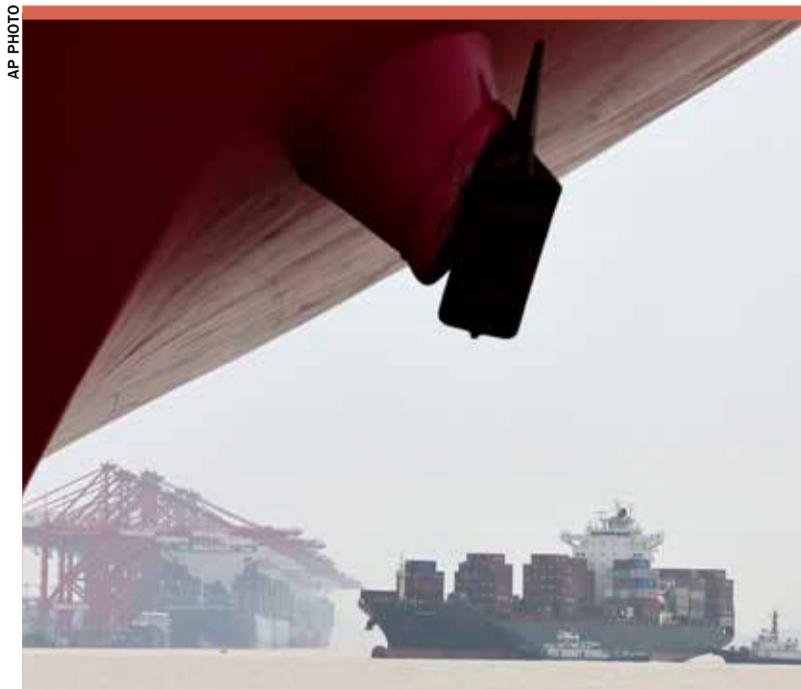
In Beijing, authorities closed down the largest city district, with residents told to stay home and stores

closed. Beijing has ordered daily testing of all residents, closed parks and other leisure venues and limited restaurants to takeout business only.

The usually bustling Sanlitun area crammed with restaurants, boutiques and an Apple store was all but deserted. Despite that, retiree Yang Xiaochang said Beijing appeared to be far better prepared to weather the surge than its southern cousin.

"Even though at the beginning there were some panic buying ... Beijing will not be like that," Yang said, referring to Shanghai.

Still, companies and investors worry the ruling Communist Party's "zero-COVID" strategy that closed most businesses in Shanghai and other industrial centers is disrupting global trade and activity in autos, electronics and other industries. MDT/AP

**ECONOMY**

# TRADE WEAKENS AFTER CITIES SHUT DOWN TO FIGHT VIRUS

**CHINA'S** export growth tumbled in April as global demand weakened, adding to pressure on the world's second-largest economy after Shanghai and other industrial cities were shut down to fight virus outbreaks.

Exports rose 3.7% over a year earlier to \$273.6 billion, down sharply from March's 15.7% growth, customs data showed yesterday. Reflecting weak Chinese demand, imports crept up 0.7% to \$222.5 billion, in line with the previous month's growth below 1%.

Demand for Chinese exports is under pressure from high inflation and interest rate hikes in the United States and other major markets and consumer uncertainty about the economic outlook and job prospects.

Companies and investors worry the ruling Communist Party's "zero-COVID" strategy that temporarily closed most businesses in Shanghai and other industrial centers will disrupt global trade and activity in autos, electronics and other industries.

"Virus disruptions continued to take a toll but the main headwind to exports is weakening foreign demand," said Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics in a report. "We expect export volumes to fall further over the coming quarters."

Forecasters expect Chinese industrial activity to improve this month as infections ease, but President Xi Jinping last week affirmed Beijing's commitment to "zero-COVID," prompting expectations it will weigh on manufacturing, retailing and trade.

Exports to the United States rose 9.5% to \$46 billion despite lingering tariff hikes in a fight over Beijing's technology ambitions. Imports of American goods advanced 0.9% to \$13.8 billion.

China's global trade surplus widened by 19.4% to \$51.1 billion while the politically volatile surplus with the United States contracted by 65% to \$9.8 billion.

China's case numbers in its latest outbreaks are relatively low, but Beijing's insistence on isolating every infected person kept most of Shanghai's 25 million people confined to their homes. Access to Guangzhou, a manufacturing and trading center in the south, and industrial center Changchun in the northeast were suspended.

Authorities have eased controls on Shanghai and allowed millions of people out of their homes, but restrictions have tightened in Beijing and some other cities.

Managers of the Port of Shanghai, the world's busiest, say it is functioning normally, but figures they cite for daily cargo volume it handles are down 30% from normal. Shippers say they are avoiding the port out of concern there aren't enough truck drivers available to carry their goods.

Auto factories and other manufacturers that tried to keep operating by having staff live at their facilities were forced to reduce or stop production because supplies of components were disrupted.

Weak Chinese demand can have global repercussions, depressing imports of oil, iron ore, industrial components and consumer goods. MDT/AP

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## MGM Launches New Community Outreach Craftsmanship Program for Local Students



As MGM believes that the nurturing and passing on of the craftsmanship spirit are crucial to the development cultural tourism, craftsmanship has become an integral part of MGM's talent development programs. With the aim of imparting such spirit to the younger generation, the Company extended its partnership with Guangdong Federation of Trade Union and Macau Federation of Trade Union (FAOM) to launch a community outreach program, namely the "Craftsmanship Series: Young Craftsman Workshop" (the Program).

Supported by Education and Youth Development Bureau and Macau Youth Federation, the Program is designed for local students to explore different skills through fun workshops provided by MGM team members and community partners, which is also set to nurture Macau younger generation with craftsmanship traits. The Program will enable students to learn beyond textbooks in school, while also exploring their interests, talents, and future path.



The Program was first introduced in April, which welcomed a group of over 200 Grade 6 students from Pui Ching Middle School as the first participating school group. The students took part in a lineup of engaging workshops facilitated by MGM Team members, where they got to learn about Chinese tea rituals, western dining table set up and gueridon services, mocktail mixology and garnishing, as well as sugar fondant molding at the Seac Pai Wan Vocational Center. On the same day, they also visited MGM COTAI, where they were offered to watch the "Macao: Back to Common Roots Narrative Film" at MGM Theater to learn about Macau and the nation's 500 years history, followed by an guided art tour to explore MGM's art collection.



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美高梅

AP PHOTO



Russian servicemen march during the Victory Day military parade in Ulan-Ude, the regional capital of Buryatia, a region near the Russia-Mongolia border

## PUTIN'S WAR

# No end in sight for Ukraine war as Russian leader hails Victory Day

ELENA BECATOROS & JON GAMBRELL, ZAPORIZHZHIA

**R**USSIAN President Vladimir Putin used a major patriotic holiday yesterday to again justify his war in Ukraine but did not declare even a limited victory or signal where the conflict was headed, as his forces continued to pummel targets across the country with few signs of significant progress.

The Russian leader oversaw a Victory Day parade on Red Square, with troops marching in formation, military hardware on display, and a brass band blaring to mark the Soviet Union's defeat of Nazi Germany. But his much-anticipated speech offered no new insights to how he intended to salvage the grinding war — and instead stuck to allegations that Ukraine posed a threat to Russia, even though Moscow's nuclear-armed forces are far superior in numbers and firepower.

"The danger was rising by the day," he said as he surveyed the troops. "Russia has given a pre-emptive response to aggression. It was a forced, timely and the only correct decision."

Ukrainian leaders and their Western backers have often rejected claims that Kyiv posed any threat to its giant neighbor.

Many analysts had suggested Putin might use his speech to declare some sort of limited victory — potentially in the besieged strategic port city of Mariupol — as

he looks for an exit from the conflict that has unleashed punishing sanctions from the West and strained Russia's resources. Others suggested he might order a nationwide mobilization to beef up the depleted ranks for an extended conflict.

There was "nothing significant in Putin's speech today, but he will need to make a decision regarding mobilization in the coming weeks," wrote Rob Lee, a senior fellow at the Philadelphia-based Foreign Policy Research Institute, on Twitter.

As Putin laid a wreath in Moscow, air raid sirens echoed again in Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital. But Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy declared in his own Victory Day address that his country would eventually defeat the Russians.

"Very soon there will be two Victory Days in Ukraine," he said in a video released to mark the holiday. "We have never fought against anyone. We always fight for ourselves. ... We are fighting for freedom for our children, and therefore we will win."

An adviser to Zelenskyy also pushed back against the idea that Ukraine and its Western allies posed any threat to Russia.

Mykhailo Podolyak wrote on Twitter that "NATO countries were not going to attack Russia. Ukraine did not plan to attack Crimea," which Russia seized in 2014.

The Ukrainian military's General Staff warned yesterday of a high probability

of missile strikes on the holiday, and Britain's Defense Ministry said in its daily assessment Russian forces could increasingly subject Ukrainian towns and cities to "intense and indiscriminate bombardments with little or no regard for civilian casualties" as they run short of precision-guided munitions.

In fact, more than 60 people were feared dead after a Russian bomb flattened a Ukrainian school being used as a shelter in Bilohorivka, an eastern village, Ukrainian officials said.

With the war now in its 11th week, battles were being waged on multiple fronts, but Russia was perhaps closest to victory in Mariupol, where Ukrainian fighters are making a last stand at a sprawling steel mill in a battle that has highlighted some of the worst suffering of the war.

The complete capture of Mariupol would deprive Ukraine of a vital port, allow Russia to complete a land corridor to the Crimean Peninsula, and free troops up for fighting elsewhere in the Donbas, which is now Putin's stated focus following his failure to seize the capital in the early days of the conflict. The fall of the city would provide a much-needed symbolic victory for Russia.

Russian forces pounded away over the weekend at the plant, where as many as 2,000 Ukrainian fighters are estimated to be holding out.

"We are under constant shelling," said Capt.

Sviatoslav Palamar, deputy commander of the Ukrainian Azov Regiment, which held the mill.

Lt. Illya Samoilenko, another regiment member, said a couple hundred wounded soldiers were inside. He declined to say how many able-bodied fighters remained. He said fighters had to dig by hand to free people from bunkers that collapsed under shelling.

For weeks, hundreds of civilians also took shelter with the fighters at the plant, but the last were evacuated Saturday. In a convoy led by the United Nations and international Red Cross, they arrived Sunday night in Zaporizhzhia, the first major Ukrainian city beyond the frontlines. They spoke of constant shelling, dwindling food, ubiquitous mold — and using hand sanitizer for cooking fuel.

The Ukrainian military warned Russian troops were seizing "personal documents from the local population without good reason" in parts of the Zaporizhzhia region that they controlled — allegedly as a way to force residents to join in Victory Day commemorations.

As a stiffer than expected Ukrainian resistance, bolstered by Western arms, has bogged down Russian forces, Moscow scaled back its war aims. It is now pressing offensives in some areas of southern Ukraine and the Donbas, where Moscow-backed separatists have fought Ukrainian troops for years. But they still have struggled to make significant strides, and Ukrainian and Russian forces have fought village by village in recent weeks.

A Ukrainian counteroffensive in the northeast near Kharkiv, outside of the Donbas but key to offensive there, was making "significant progress," according to the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank.

However, Rodion Miroshnik, a pro-Kremlin official in the Luhansk region of the Donbas, said Moscow-backed separatist forces and Russian troops had captured most of Popasna, an embattled city that saw two months of fierce fighting.

The southern Black Sea port of Odesa has also seen increased fighting recently, and Ukrainian officials said Russia fired four cruise missiles targeting the city from Crimea. It said no civilians were wounded in the attack, but did not elaborate on what was struck. MDT/AP

## this day in history

### 1940 CHURCHILL TAKES HELM AS GERMANS ADVANCE

German forces have invaded Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg by air and land.

The invasion began at dawn with large numbers of aeroplanes attacking the main aerodromes and landing troops. The Dutch High Commission says more than 100 German planes were shot down by its forces.

In London, it has been announced that Winston Churchill will lead a coalition government after Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain said he was stepping aside.

Two days ago his majority plummeted in a vote of confidence in the Commons during a debate on the war and there were calls from the Tory benches for him to go.

In his broadcast tonight Mr Chamberlain said: "Hitler has chosen a moment when, perhaps, it seemed to him that this country was entangled in the throes of a political crisis and he might find it divided against itself.

"If he has counted upon our internal divisions to help him he has miscalculated the mind of this people."

The first news of the German invasion reached London at dawn. Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax received the Belgian Ambassador and Dutch Prime Minister at 0630 when they formally asked for Allied help.

The invasion had been expected for some time. In a proclamation issued to the German armies in the West, Hitler said: "The hour has come for the decisive battle for the future of the German nation."

Reports from Holland said German troops crossed the border during the night. The Dutch destroyed bridges over the Maas and IJssel to prevent the German advance.

There were reports of fierce fighting at Rotterdam where German troops were landed by flying-boat. Other planes landed at Waalhaven aerodrome and troops quickly seized control.

This evening German forces are occupying the Maas and Bourse railway stations in Rotterdam. There are conflicting reports about whether they are still in possession of Waalhaven airport.

German reconnaissance planes have been seen flying overhead all day.

British and French troops have moved across the Belgian frontier in response to appeals for reinforcements.

Reports from Belgium say British troops have been enthusiastically received. Their guns have been festooned with flowers and the soldiers plied with refreshments.

In Washington President Franklin Roosevelt was asked at a news conference whether he thought Germany's invasion of the Low Countries would lead to US involvement in the war. He replied that it would not.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

Neville Chamberlain was forced to resign after the disastrous British campaign in Norway. Attempts to repel the Germans culminated in the loss of about 4,000 British troops and ultimately German occupation of the country. Also, Labour leader Clement Attlee made clear his party would not work with a coalition government under Chamberlain. Lord Halifax was offered the position of prime minister but turned it down and Winston Churchill was chosen as leader.

Mr Chamberlain served briefly in Mr Churchill's war cabinet as Lord President of the Council until he retired through illness in October 1940. He died of cancer the following month.

The German invasion of the Low Countries had been expected. Against 144 Allied divisions, the Germans mustered 141. The German air force had 4,020 operational aircraft, the Allies a little over 3,000. The gap in tank strength favoured the Allies: 3,383 against 2,335.

Yet in six weeks, and at a cost of only 30,000 dead, German forces had conquered the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg and on 21 June forced the capitulation of France.



**YOUR STARS****ARIES****Mar. 21-Apr. 19**

Patience will be of utmost importance. Look before you leap. Chances to express your ideas and beliefs can bring popularity as long as you're not arrogant.

**TAURUS****Apr. 20-May. 20**

Daydreaming will be your downfall. Don't spend too much in order to impress others. Travel for business will be advantageous.

**GEMINI****May. 21-Jun. 21**

Prove your worth; concentrate on getting the job done and steer clear of office politics and gossip. Concentrate on yourself or your work. Empty promises could be likely where work is concerned.

**CANCER****Jun. 22-Jul. 22**

You may find that your anger stems from lending or borrowing money. Don't let your health suffer because of worry. Talk to someone you trust. You could find yourself having problems with coworkers.

**LEO****Jul. 23-Aug. 22**

Keep your cash in your pocket and offer them sound advice rather than your financial assistance. Offer love and affection instead of conflict and rejection. Be careful of the groups you join.

**VIRGO****Aug. 23-Sep. 22**

Don't try to deal with important issues or make changes that will upset the apple cart. You will be able to communicate well today. Get involved in physical activities that will stimulate you.

**SCORPIO****Oct. 23-Nov. 21**

You may find that your plans will cost a little more than you had expected. Today is not the day to try to corner people by giving them ultimatums.

**LIBRA****Sep. 23-Oct. 22**

Do not let your mate annoy you; patience will be the key. Unexpected bills may set you back. Think twice before you volunteer information.

**CAPRICORN****Dec. 22-Jan. 19**

Secret affairs may be tempting, but keep in mind that they will damage your reputation if you decide to indulge. Your mate will appreciate your honesty. Things at home may be somewhat rocky.

**AQUARIUS****Jan. 20-Feb. 18**

Get them to pitch in, if you need help. You can open up to your mate and let them know what you expect out of this relationship. Do not blow situations out of proportion.

**PISCES****Feb. 19-Mar. 20**

Business partnerships should turn out to be quite lucrative. Expect your workload to be heavy. Don't overdo it. You need to enjoy yourself.

**The Born Loser by Chip Sansom****SUDOKU****EASY**

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**EASY+**

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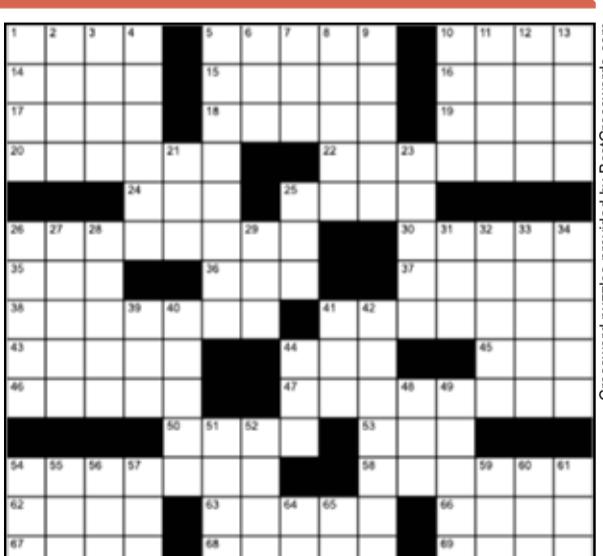
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**CROSSWORDS**

ACROSS 1- Canonized Fr. women; 5- Prize money; 10- Metrical foot; 14- Dry watercourse; 15- Like a ballerina; 16- Cartel; 17- Mosque leader; 18- Inhabitant of Cambodia; 19- Mild oath; 20- Third sign of the zodiac; 22- Prescribe; 24- Acapulco article; 25- Consumer; 26- Polaris, e.g.; 30- Alternative; 35- Friendly introduction?; 36- Richards of Texas; 37- Large marine mammal; 38- Vagabond; 41- Molting; 43- "Pomp and Circumstance" composer; 44- Humphrey's costar in "The Barefoot Contessa"; 45- Small child; 46- Stratum; 47- Falls back; 50- Hammett hound; 53- Actor Linden; 54- Group within a group; 58- Device for applying ocular rinse; 62- Langston Hughes poem; 63- Greek epic poem; 66- Turbine blade; 67- Soft ball brand; 68- Pave over; 69- Radiate; 70- Biblical birthright seller; 71- Newsboy's cry; 72- Takes home;

DOWN 1- Gulp from a flask; 2- Easy to manage; 3- Dutch cheese, wrapped in red wax; 4- Figure of speech with "like" or "as"; 5- Republic in S Asia; 6- Sound of disgust; 7- Outer edge; 8- Snow conveyances; 9- Uncanny; 10- Yeah, right; 11- Pond organism; 12- Zoo barrier; 13- A followers; 21- Refusals; 23- Throng; 25- Samovar; 26- Horizontal; 27- Florida citrus center; 28- Pet term for man's best friend; 29- Hill insect; 31- Biblical possessive; 32- la vista; 33- Prufrock's creator; 34- Reposes; 39- Actress Charlotte; 40- Marshal; 41- 12/24 or 12/31; 42- Throne of a bishop; 44- First name in Notre Dame football; 48- Narrow beam of light; 49- Craps natural; 51- Steeple; 52- Old-style fax; 54- Cosecant's reciprocal; 55- Western Native Americans; 56- Aboriginal rite site; 57- Beancurd; 59- Arrived; 60- Curriculum section; 61- Teachers' favorites; 64- "The Addams Family" cousin; 65- Swiss river;

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**FORMULA ONE**

# Verstappen cruises to win in inaugural Miami Grand Prix

**H**IS first day racing around the new Formula One circuit in Miami was absolutely horrible. Then he made a mistake in qualifying that cost him a spot on the front row.

By the time race day rolled around, Max Verstappen had knocked it all out of his system.

Verstappen was explosive at the start Sunday and used a pair of aggressive passes to get past Ferrari and current championship leader Charles Leclerc. Once out front, the reigning world champion controlled the inaugural Miami Grand Prix for his third win in five races to start the season.

"We still have a few issues we have to solve," Verstappen said. "I mean, we are quick, but my Friday was terrible, which is not great. But there's a lot of potential."

The 23rd win of the Dutchman's career sliced eight points off Leclerc's lead in the standings. Verstappen now trails him by 19 points headed into the Spanish Grand Prix in two weeks. He celebrated

AP PHOTO



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands leads Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc of Monaco

on the podium with Hall of Fame quarterback Dan Marino, who represented the host Miami Dolphins in presenting Verstappen with his winning trophy and an official helmet.

Later, Verstappen, Leclerc and Carlos Sainz Jr. posed for photographs all wearing helmets.

Verstappen started third after

Ferrari locked up the front row with Leclerc and Carlos Sainz Jr. in qualifying. But in the end, Red Bull got the best of its new rival for a second consecutive race.

Verstappen pounced at the start to get ahead of Sainz, then set his sights on Leclerc and used a strong outside pass on the ninth lap to claim the lead.

Leclerc said the tires on his Ferrari struggled on a hot South Florida day in which temperatures reached 90 degrees despite brief intermittent showers.

"We struggled a little bit after five, six laps with the front tires, and then we struggled and basically lost the race in that stage," Leclerc said. "Losing the lead and

then losing quite a bit of race time because of the degradation, we need to look at that and be on top of it for the next race."

Verstappen went unchallenged until a late crash between Lando Norris and Pierre Gasly brought out the safety car and setup a 10-lap sprint to the finish on the 19-turn, 3.36-mile circuit (5.41 kilometers) built around Hard Rock Stadium.

Leclerc got a few looks inside in the closing laps but Verstappen didn't relent and won by 3.7 seconds.

"I think we were very competitive or at least as competitive as Max," Leclerc said. "And after the safety car, I really felt that we had a shot to actually take back the lead."

Verstappen also won two weeks ago at Imola as Red Bull capitalized on a poor Ferrari weekend on Italian home soil with a 1-2 finish for Verstappen and Sergio Perez.

In Miami, Ferrari settled for second and third for Leclerc and Sainz, while Perez was fourth. After the race, Perez said he's started talks on a new contract with Red Bull but neither side is in a hurry to complete a deal.

Mercedes showed much improvement with fifth- and sixth-place finishes for George Russell and Lewis Hamilton. It's the fourth time in five races that first-year Mercedes driver Russell has beaten the seven-time champion.

MDT/AP

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## OPINION

### Multipolar World

Jorge Costa Oliveira



### 'GLOBAL NATO' AND THE LONG-TERM PRECEDENT

From time to time the proposal for a "global NATO" appears on the table: that is, the extension of NATO's "jurisdiction" to the global scale.

According to this idea, NATO and its members would have the mission of ensuring peace and security globally. Indeed, it has been moving in that direction. In recent years, NATO has intervened in Afghanistan, trained security forces in Iraq, provided logistical support to the African Union mission in Darfur, assisted in tsunami relief efforts in Indonesia, transported supplies to victims of Hurricane Katrina in the United States, and to victims of a major earthquake in Pakistan.

NATO already has nine "global partners" with whom the Alliance cooperates on an individual basis - Afghanistan, Australia, Colombia, Iraq, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand, and Pakistan. As stated on NATO's website, "NATO's engagement with global partners is becoming increasingly important in a complex security environment, where many of the challenges the Alliance faces are global and not bound by geography." NATO's practical cooperation with its global partners includes cross-cutting global challenges such as cyber defense, maritime security, humanitarian aid and disaster relief, non-proliferation, and defense science and technology. And there is no doubt that many of today's security challenges are no longer bound by geography, such as challenges in outer space, cyberspace, or relating to climate change.

But it is worth recalling that NATO was created to contain the risk of Soviet military expansion and aggression against Western Europe. What remains of this threat is a country with an economy slightly larger than Spain's but substantial armed forces that can still destabilize Europe and the world, as seen in the recent invasion of Ukraine.

It is still claimed that the legitimacy of an active interventionist role for the leading members of the alliance in other parts of the world far removed from the North Atlantic is based on a preventive posture towards dangers such as global terrorism or so-called "systemic threats." However, this has no basis in the UN Charter. In any case, to meet these threats it would be more appropriate to use new alliances in other parts of the globe.

The world is gradually becoming multipolar. The international competition between powers with strong nationalist political leaderships is fostering a new arms race between the major emerging powers, out of proportion to the real threat to their security. This trend should be reversed and it is important for the US and the EU to exert their influence to that end. Unfortunately, as we have seen during Obama's presidency, even when there seems to be political will to move in that direction, the power of the military-industrial complexes is greater. Their interests prevail even though it is clear that the world does not need so many weapons; on the contrary, it needs fewer.

The willingness of the major Western powers to use their military hard power to coerce other parts of the world is invoked by Russia on its unlawful aggression of Ukraine and sets a dangerous precedent for the future. If in two or three decades we see squadrons in the South Atlantic under the aegis of the Shanghai Organization – or another organization that has been formed in the meantime by new emerging powers, particularly Asian ones – let us remember the precedent set by NATO at the beginning of the 21st century.

## RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR TO POLAND HIT WITH RED PAINT

Protesters threw red paint on the Russian ambassador yesterday as he arrived at a cemetery in Warsaw to pay respects to Red Army soldiers who died during World War II.

Ambassador Sergey Andreev arrived at the Soviet soldiers cemetery to lay flowers, where a group of activists opposed to Russia's war in Ukraine were waiting for him.

Video footage shows red paint being thrown from behind Andreev before a protester standing beside him throws a big blob of it in his face.

The protesters prevented the ambassador and other members of a Russian delegation from laying their flowers at the cemetery.

The protesters carried Ukrainian flags and chanted "fascist" at him, while some were dressed in white sheets smeared with blood, symbolizing the Ukrainian victims of Russia's war. Other men in his entourage were also seen splattered with what appeared to be red paint.

Police arrived at the scene to help the ambassador and other members of his delegation get away.



## JILL BIDEN PAYS SURPRISE VISIT TO UKRAINE, MEETS FIRST LADY

JILL Biden made an unannounced visit to western Ukraine, holding a surprise Mother's Day meeting with first lady Olena Zelenska to show U.S. support for the embattled nation as Russia presses its punishing war in the eastern regions.

She became the latest high-profile American to enter Ukraine during the war, while Zelenska's public appearance was her first since Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

"I wanted to come on Mother's Day," the U.S. first lady told Zelenska. "I thought it was important to show the Ukrainian people that this war has to stop and this war has been brutal and that the people of the United States stand with the people of Ukraine."

Biden spent about two hours in Ukraine, traveling by vehicle to the town of Uzhhorod, about a 10-minute drive from a Slovakian border village where she had toured a border processing facility.

Zelenska thanked Biden for her "courageous act" and said, "We understand what it takes for the U.S. first lady to come here during a war when military actions are taking place every day, where the air sirens are happening every

day -- even today."

The first ladies met at a school being used to temporarily house Ukrainian migrants. Zelenska arrived first and waited in her black SUV until Biden arrived in similar fashion. The women stepped out of their vehicles and embraced, with Biden — who wore a wrist corsage for Mother's Day — handing over a bouquet of flowers before they entered the school.

The women came together in a small classroom, sitting on either side of a wooden table and greeting each other in front of reporters before they met in private. Zelenska and her two children have been staying at an undisclosed location for their safety.

The visit allowed Biden to conduct the kind of personal diplomacy that her husband would like to do himself.

The meeting came about after Jill Biden expressed interest in visiting the region, including the school where she and Zelenska met, and settled on the idea of spending Mother's Day with Ukrainian moms, said Michael LaRosa, the first lady's spokesperson.

He said the Ukrainian government informed the United States that Zelenska would like to

meet, if possible, and that a meeting was finalized in recent days. The first ladies also had recently exchanged correspondence, according to U.S. officials who declined to provide further details because they were not authorized to discuss those private communications.

After meeting privately for about a half hour, the first ladies joined a group of children who live at the school in making tissue-paper bears to give as Mother's Day gifts.

LaRosa described their conversation as "more of a personal mother-to-mother exchange" and said Biden was interested in how Zelenska was coping "through that lens."

He said Zelenska told Biden that she was able to hold her children's hands every night even though she could not be with her husband.

Earlier, in the Slovakian border village of Vysne Nemecke, Biden toured its border processing facility, surveying operations set up by the United Nations and relief organizations to assist Ukrainians seeking refuge. Biden attended a religious service in a tent set up as a chapel, where a priest intoned, "We pray for the people of Ukraine." MDT/AP



**Israel** The government's embattled prime minister was limping yesterday into the opening of parliament's summer session on the verge of collapse. Less than a year after taking office, Naftali Bennett (pictured) has lost his parliamentary majority, his own party is crumbling and a key governing partner has suspended cooperation with the coalition. That has set the stage for a possible attempt by the opposition, led by former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, to topple the government later this week. While Bennett appears to be poised to fend off this immediate challenge, his longer-term prospects are uncertain at a time when the government is deeply divided over major issues.



**Lebanon** The World Bank approved a \$150 million soft loan for food security in crisis-hit Lebanon to stabilize bread prices during the coming months, the economy minister said. Amin Salam (pictured) told reporters that the loan has a very low interest rate but the minister did not make the rate public. He used the term soft loan indicating a below-market rate of interest.



**Italian** Premier Mario Draghi meets with U.S. President Joe Biden this week in Washington as Europe faces another "whatever it takes" moment with Russia's war in Ukraine raging on its eastern flank. Both Rome and Washington will emphasize their historic friendship and shared desire to help Ukraine defend itself from Russia's two-month-old invasion when the leaders meet today. Energy, climate change and promoting global economic prosperity also are on the agenda.