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CHINA'S TRADE GROWTH REBOUNDED IN MAY AFTER ANTI-VIRUS RESTRICTIONS THAT SHUT DOWN SHANGHAI AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL CENTERS BEGAN TO EASE

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AUSSIE POLICE LINK DIRTY CASH TO CHINESE SYNDICATE WITH MACAU TIES

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DRIVE IN ADAM SANDLER BASKETBALL DRAMA, 'HUSTLE,' HAS GAME

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AP PHOTO



South Korea A fire caused by suspected arson spread through an office building yesterday in South Korea's Daegu city, killing at least seven people and injuring dozens, fire and police officials said. Dozens of firefighters and vehicles quickly put out the blaze, which began in the late morning on the second of a seven-floor office building near the city's district court.

AP PHOTO



Myanmar A court ruled yesterday that prosecutors presented sufficient evidence against ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi, Australian economist Sean Turnell (pictured) and three other defendants to continue their trial on charges of violating the official secrets law. Turnell had served as an adviser to Suu Kyi, who was arrested when her elected government was ousted by the army on Feb. 1, 2021.

AP PHOTO



US A top State Department official met yesterday with Philippine President-elect Ferdinand Marcos Jr. (pictured) in Manila, part of an ongoing diplomatic outreach in the Asia-Pacific region by Washington to try and blunt growing Chinese influence. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman tweeted after meeting Marcos that the two discussed a range of issues, including the Philippines-U.S. alliance, deepening economic ties, advancing human rights and "preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific."

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TIS EXPANDS INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION:
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STATEMENT

Liu Xianfa*



ONE-CHINA PRINCIPLE HAS ZERO ROOM FOR COMPROMISE

The Taiwan question is the most important and sensitive issue in China-US relations. The core of the Taiwan question is "one China". There is but one China in the world and Taiwan is part of China. The government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole of China. This is the core concept of the one-China principle and has become a consensus of the international community and basic norm governing international relations. A total of 181 countries, the US included, have established diplomatic relations with China on the basis of recognizing the one-China principle.

But the US government, while claiming that its one-China policy has not changed, and that it does not support "Taiwan independence" has become increasingly rash and mischievous in playing the "Taiwan card" in its effort to contain China. It is the US who has been constantly reneging on its own commitments, bilateral consensus and its original position. Such moves are aimed at historical backpedaling, obstructing China's peaceful reunification by using the Taiwan question, undermining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, and building Taiwan into "an unsinkable aircraft carrier" to contain China with the Taiwan question. In recent years, the US has doubled down on its efforts to mislead the public in order to hollow out the one-China principle. For example, the US is using more descriptions to modify its one-China policy, including its unilaterally-concocted Taiwan Relations Act and Six Assurances which have never been recognized and are firmly opposed by China from the very beginning. In its latest move, the US launched a so-called "initiative on 21st-century trade" with Taiwan, which undoubtedly bears sovereign connotations and an official nature, running counter to the one-China principle. It will certainly embolden the separatists on the island and disrupt peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits.

The China-US relationship, as that between two states, can only be guided by mutual political consensus, rather than being established on policy unilaterally formulated by the US side.

In history, the Taiwan question was once the biggest obstacle in the normalization of China-US relations. China decided to establish diplomatic ties with the US only when three preconditions had been met, namely, the US severed "diplomatic relations" and abrogated the "mutual defense treaty" with the Taiwan authorities and withdrew US military forces from Taiwan.

The US side explicitly declared in the Shanghai Communiqué released in 1972 that "the United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does

not challenge that position." In the Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China released in 1978, the US "recognizes the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal Government of China" and "acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China". In the August 17 Communiqué released in 1982, the US explicitly stated, "In the Joint communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations on January 1, 1979, issued by the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the United States of America, the United States of America recognized the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal Government of China, and it acknowledged the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China." It also "reiterates that it has no intention of infringing on Chinese sovereignty and territorial integrity, or interfering in China's internal affairs, or pursuing a policy of 'two Chinas' or 'one China, one Taiwan.'" These commitments are historical facts that cannot be wiped off or denied.

Facts cannot be denied. History shall not be falsified. Truth must not be distorted. Be it the one-China principle or the one-China policy, their essence is both about "one China". This is a political consensus reached between China and the US. Without this consensus, China and the US couldn't have engaged with each other and established diplomatic ties and the bilateral relationship couldn't have achieved development. The US needs to abide by the one-China principle, the provisions in the three China-US joint communiqués, and its political commitment to China on the Taiwan question, and act on President Biden's statement that the US does not support "Taiwan independence". It needs to stop using Taiwan-related issues to engage in political manipulation or to contain China, and avoid causing further severe damage to China-US relations and peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

The Taiwan question is purely China's internal affair and realizing China's complete reunification is the shared aspiration of all the Chinese people. China is firmly resolved in defending its sovereignty and security interests. There is zero room for compromise and not an inch to give in on the Taiwan question. I hope all the foreign friends in the Macao SAR can view the Taiwan question objectively and correctly, and respect the Chinese people's aspiration for peace and national reunification.

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

COVID-19

ALL FOREIGN WORKERS TO BE ALLOWED IN FROM MONDAY

ANTHONY LAM

NON-RESIDENT workers of all nationalities will be accepted into the city from next Monday, a public health official told a press conference yesterday.

Currently, non-local workers who are allowed to enter Macau may only undertake domestic work, and a prior application for a waiver of entry restrictions with the Health Bureau (SSM) is required.

At the regular health press conference yesterday, public health doctor Leong Iek Hou, division head for infectious disease control and prevention at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), announced that the lifting of entry restrictions would benefit three groups of non-local workers.

The first group comprises those already in possession of valid non-resident worker IDs, colloquially referred to as the "blue card," or in possession of valid permits to enter Macau for work.

The second group comprises skilled professionals with employment permits issued by the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL) or with preliminarily approved applications issued by the Public Security Police Force (PSP).

The third group comprises the family members of the second group of non-resident workers.

Prospective entrants will need to obtain a certificate from the PSP and present the certificate to PSP officers at border control when they first enter Macau under the scheme.

Leong announced that the health measures imposed upon workers in these categories will be based on their point of origin prior to entering Macau.

Those who arrive from mainland China will not need to make any other prior application to the local government



as they enter Macau. However, other health restrictions currently in effect, such as quarantine-upon-arrival for entrants from areas of higher risk, will be imposed upon them if they enter from such areas.

They will be the first group of non-local workers allowed to enter Macau as early as from midnight on Monday, when the entry ban is lifted.

Workers arriving from other places, including but not limited to Hong Kong and Taiwan, will require a prior application to the SSM. Entry applications for these workers need to be initiated by their employer, while applications for related family members need to be made by the skilled professional entrant themselves. There will be no quota.

Applicants entering from outside mainland China must be fully vaccinated, with booster shots required if the primary doses were received more than six months before the entry date.

Those below 12 years of age are not required to be vaccinated to obtain permission to enter.

Furthermore, employers must promise to settle any relevant quarantine bill or medical bill should employees or prospective employees fail to do so.

More details on entry from outside mainland China will be released on June 17, and applications will

open on June 24.

Leong explained that the loosening of the restrictions had been implemented in consideration of the city's conditions in controlling and preventing Covid-19, as well as the needs of society.

In addition to the aforementioned details, Lei Tak Fai, division head for public relations for the Public Security Police Force (PSP), revealed that entrants from outside mainland China will need to obtain an entry visa from Chinese embassies or consulates if they hold the nationalities of Bangladesh, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka or Vietnam.

Lei added that if workers want to travel between mainland China and Macau while they are in Macau, they will need to comply with the regulations stipulated in Executive Order No 43/2021.

This order requires such people to possess a Chinese visa issued by the Chinese Foreign Ministry Commissioner's Office in Macau and return to Macau during the validity of the visa.

They should not travel to places other than Macau and mainland China in the 21 days preceding their attempted entry to Macau.

As the government has discretion over each application, it is recommended that prospective applicants enquire with the relevant authorities for full information.

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Advertisement advertising@macaudailytimes.com
For subscription and general issues: general@macaudailytimes.com | Printed at Welfare Printing Ltd

INTERVIEW | LORNE SCHMIDT

TIS to expand its international dimension with IB primary diploma in 2023

RENATO MARQUES

THE International School of Macau (TIS), currently celebrating its 20th anniversary, is looking to the future, with concrete plans for expanding its international dimension, the new head of school Lorne Schmidt has told the Times in an exclusive interview.

Schmidt, who has been working at the school since 2018 as a secondary school principal, is now assuming a new role at the helm. He will bring his vast experience in International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, which he wants to implement not only for secondary school students but also at the primary years.

"We are celebrating the excellence of the school and I feel very fortunate to be able to walk into a leadership role at such an established school. How I can move it forward is a very good question, because we are already very strong. One of the ways that we do



RENATO MARQUES

plan to expand our international dimension is via bringing in the [IB] PYP (International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program) to TIS in 2023," Schmidt said.

He says the PYP "will allow us to hone in and expand our international dimension to the school, preparing students eventually for the IB diploma which will again be another focus on the campus of our school and moving more students to take the IB diploma."

The school will continue to pursue the goal of promoting the "idea experience," along with the Alberta curriculum, to inspire students to achieve excellence; not just in the IB diploma but also in their university studies and future career paths. TIS, like most institutions and enterprises in Macau, has been battling the Covid-19 pandemic with some difficulty, as it caused some students and staff to leave Macau.

Questioned on the matter, Schmidt said, "I'm seeing a bit of light at the end of the tunnel. It has been darker in the past two years but in recent months we are seeing many countries relaxing their restrictions and we are hearing that even Macau is relaxing [some measures]. We are now able to bring new teachers into Macau with more facility than we did before, so we are very happy about that."

While acknowledging the difficulties of the past two years, the head of school nonetheless remarked that the school had always been able to provide enough support for students and operate at full capacity without compromising the delivery of its regular programming. Looking to the future, he can "only see it getting better ... in terms of bringing in international teaching staff."

In light of the anniversary celebrations, Schmidt noted some major milestones over the 20-year history of the school, starting with the first group to graduate from the

school in 2009.

"In the last few years, we have been designated as the top international school that offers Alberta curriculum (Tier 4), so we are a flagship for Alberta in terms of international schools offering that curriculum," he said, adding that another important milestone came with the school's introduction of the IB diploma.

"It was a big step for the school. We did that five years ago," Schmidt said, noting that these were the milestones representing a clear shift.

In celebrating its 20th anniversary, the school yesterday organized an event at which the TIS Alumni Awards, a token to celebrate school alumni that have in one way or another achieved "excellence," were awarded for the first time.

The inaugural laureate was Charles Leong, an alumnus of TIS who won the Macau Grand Prix Formula 4 racing event over two consecutive years (2020 and 2021).

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LOTUS FESTIVAL RUNNING TILL NEXT WEEKEND

The 22nd Macau Lotus Festival will launch at Taipa Houses today and will run until next Sunday. The Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) will hold multiple exhibitions and ecotourism activities during the festival. The ecotourism awareness activities include visiting the lotus wetlands and learning about the flora and fauna of the wetlands, allowing citizens to observe and understand the growth habits of lotuses. IAM has also placed more than 5,000 lotus pots on the main streets of Macau, at tourist attractions and in green belts, and will hold various activities related to the lotus, such as a lotus festival photography contest and a lotus-themed workshop.

ANIMA ACCUMULATING DEBT FOR TWO MONTHS

Anima, the Society for the Protection of Animals, has not yet received grants from the Macao Foundation, while its bills have been accumulating for two months. Zoe Tang, chairman of Anima's executive committee, said in an interview with Jornal Tribuna that the organization's financial situation "has never been so bad." She explained that "as of January this year, our liabilities amounted to approximately MOP1.6 million. For two months we have not been able to pay food providers, veterinary clinics and even the salaries of our staff." Tang said that they had recently contacted the Macao Foundation, which said that the grants had been approved but that it would take a week or two for the payment procedures to be completed.

LOANS TO PRIVATE SECTOR DOWN IN APRIL

Domestic loans to the private sector in April, totaling MOP554.2 billion, have decreased by 0.7% compared to the previous month, while external loans have dropped 3.1% to MOP769.8 billion, according to data published by the Monetary Authority. In total, loans to the private sector fell by 2.1% from March to MOP1,324 billion. During the same period, resident deposits dropped 1.9% to MOP653.1 billion while non-resident deposits went down by 3.9% to MOP365.8 billion. Public sector deposits within the banking sector fell 0.9% to MOP260.8 billion, with total deposits in the banking sector dropping 2.3% month-on-month to MOP1,279.8 billion.

AL PLENARY

LAW REVIEW AIMING TO BAN E-CIGARETTES PASSES FIRST READING

ANTHONY LAM

WITH 29 lawmakers voting "yes," the law review proposal aiming at banning e-cigarettes in the city passed in a first reading yesterday in the parliament.

It will now go before committee meetings to have its provisions scrutinized before returning to the plenary for a vote on the details.

Lawmaker Becky Song was absent yesterday and president of the parliament Kou Hoi In traditionally refrains from voting, except in rare situations.

In her introduction, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture Elsie Ao Ieong emphasized that the law still has plenty of room for improvement, despite the ban on sales, advertising and promotion of e-cigarettes. The use of e-cigarettes in non-smoking locations and venues was also prohibited in 2018.

She supported her motion with statistical data. Ao Ieong presented figures showing that the number of tobacco smokers has consistently dropped in the past decade since the smoking law, officially referred to as the Legal System Preventing and Controlling Smoking, was promulgated in 2012.

The proportion of tobacco smokers over 15 years of age, she added, had dropped from 16.6% before the law was enacted to 10.7% in 2019. "Macau has been on par with the goal set by the WHO," Ao Ieong said.

However, she continued, there have been new challenges for the task of smoking reduction.

"We need to be continuously concerned and proactively responsive," she stressed, citing a survey result showing that, in 2021, 4% of young people between the age of 13 and 15 years



used e-cigarettes, in contrast to 2.6% in 2015. It was also higher than the proportion of traditional cigarette users in the age group (2.1%).

The secretary also emphasized that tobacco products inhaled through the mouth or the nose are as hazardous to health as e-cigarettes.

Nonetheless, members of the public questioned the ban on e-cigarettes, but not cigarette smoking in general, when the draft of the law review was first presented at an Executive Council press conference.

The confusion seems especially understandable, with the senior official comparing the hazards from smoking e-cigarettes with those from smoking traditional cigarettes.

At yesterday's parliamentary plenary, lawmakers apparently

found the proposed ban debatable.

Several lawmakers, such as Ip Sio Kai and Wang Sai Man, hinted in this direction. For example, Ip questioned why a general ban was not proposed when smoking e-cigarettes is more hazardous than traditional tobacco.

Separately, lawmaker Ron Lam questioned why there has not been any data on the importation of e-cigarettes.

In response, Ao Ieong admitted that she was aware of "stocks" of e-cigarettes and related products in private hands. Her plan is to start with controlling imports and move on to banning the use of the product.

Advertising will also be used to expand public awareness on the hazards of e-cigarette smoking. Ao Ieong said that some dishonest businesspeople would instill

toxins or narcotics in e-cigarette liquids.

Besides the confusion stemming from banning one type of product and not the other, lawmaker Leong Sun Iok also questioned why banning smoking while driving was not proposed in the current draft.

Ao Ieong responded that the government would use anti-smoking education and advertising as a means of discouraging people from smoking while walking or driving.

Speaking about controlling the import and export of e-cigarettes, the senior official promised to work with the security forces to tighten control over the product. She announced that the government is planning to raise import and export taxes on e-cigarettes and related products to discourage private imports.

CRIME

Aussie police link dirty cash to Chinese syndicate

AN exclusive from the Age newspaper yesterday revealed that Australian police have uncovered a suspected Chinese money laundering syndicate headquartered in Victoria and NSW that is moving hundreds of millions of dollars annually to China and across the globe.

Australian law enforcement agencies, in partnership with officials from the United States and Canada, have also compiled intelligence that suggests Chinese companies and brokers are supplying the vast majority of precursor chemicals used to make illicit drugs on the Aus-

tralian market.

According to the report, the suspected syndicate, known as the "Chen Organization", counts as its customers "Asian triads and bikies," according to briefings from officials.

Macau's Sun City casino high-roller business - which has been repea-

tly implicated in organized crime and whose founder, Alvin Chau, has been charged with money laundering, illegal gambling and criminal association - used the Chen Organization to move tens of millions of dollars from Australia to China, The Age reported.

Australian Federal Po-

lice Commissioner Reece Kershaw told his counterparts on Tuesday night that some "countries ... [are] producing precursors at an eye-watering scale", and governments were "turning a blind eye to the proceeds of crime washing through their economies."

MDT

Macau to host first-ever luxury goods expo in partnership with Hengqin

RENATO MARQUES

MACAU will host its first-ever exhibition dedicated to premium quality and luxury goods in September this year. The event was unveiled yesterday at a press conference held at the Venetian Macao.

During the press conference, organizers revealed that the event will also include a series of discussions titled Hengqin Global Bay Areas Forum, which aim to continue to reinforce the partnership between Macau and Hengqin according to the plans outlined by the Central Government of the People's Republic of China in the Master Plan of the Development of the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin.

As drafted, goals have been set for the "holding of an international premium-quality consumer goods expo and a world bay area forum," as well as to "establish a convention and exhibition platform with influence across the globe."

Another of the goals outlined in the plan aims to "support cooperation between Guangdong and Macau to establish a quality imported consumer product trading center and create an industrial ecosystem for trading quality consumer goods."

According to Zhang Jingsong, Director-General of the Department of Commerce of Guangdong Province, these aims highlight a new set of opportunities for Macau to play a role in hosting or co-hosting the type of events that aim to attract clientele from China and other parts of the world.

Addressing the establishment of the first China-Macau High-quality Consumption Exhibition (CHCE) via a recorded video, Zhang said that "there is good reason to believe that, with the advantages of Macau's opening up to the world, the huge consumer population



and market advantages of Guangdong and [all of] China, as well as giving full play to the synergistic effect brought about by the Greater Bay Area and the China (Guangdong) Pilot Free Trade Zone, the first CHCE will achieve complete success," opening the door to the possibility of international visitors being received from September this year.

Previously, Song Xiaodong, vice president of event organizer Nam Kwong Group, had noted the company's role as a state-owned enterprise in Macau in adhering to its mission of organizing the event for the first time by "cooperating with the Trade Development Bureau of the Ministry of Commerce and the Department of Commerce of Guangdong Province."

The event will take place from September 7 to 11 in two parts, with the forum to run on September 7 and 8 and the CHCE to run from September 9 to 11.

While the latter will be hosted at the Venetian Macao Cotai Expo and Shoppes at Four Seasons, the forum will be held in Hengqin, at the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone. This forum will focus on a range of topics, including high-quality li-

festyle in the Greater Bay Area, consumer trends, cross-border e-commerce, political benefits of the cooperation zone, as well as economic development in the post-pandemic era. Scientific and technological innovation, finance, accommodation, "big health," sports and leisure, and the development of cultural tourism and the MICE industry are also part of the extensive program of debates, Q&A sessions, and keynote speeches.

THREE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF CHCE

Explaining the three main characteristics or features of the CHCE, Wu Zhengping, Director-General of the Trade Development Bureau of the Ministry of Commerce said in a pre-recorded speech that the CHCE will follow a model that includes an innovative mode (adopting the "one exhibition, two places" model to combine the advantages of Macau's system, software and hardware facilities, and provision of international services with the advantages of the Guangdong-Macau In-Depth Cooperation Zone in Hengqin), high-end positioning (establishing an international expo based in the Greater Bay Area

and geared to the world) and being environmentally diverse (connecting upstream and downstream industry chains and creating a "business + consumption + industry" ecosystem and creating an exhibition and sales platform to promote both the domestic and international consumption cycles).

Also speaking on the topic, Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd, said that the first CHCE would be different from other large-scale expos by integrating both "B2C" (business-to-customer) and "B2B" (business-to-business) marketing models, allowing consumers to conduct transactions directly on site.

Wong also noted that the CHCE will be held on a significant date, celebrating the first anniversary of the establishment of the cooperation zone, and expressed his hopes that it will contribute "to help Macau better integrate into the overall national development and lay a solid foundation for its economic recovery after the pandemic."

It's no coincidence that the event also falls in the week of the mid-autumn festival, one of the most important celebrations in the annual Chinese traditional events calendar.

ADVERTORIAL

GREAT TIMES

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ECONOMY

TRADE REBOUNDS IN MAY AS ANTI-VIRUS CURBS EASE

JOE MCDONALD, BEIJING

CHINA'S trade growth rebounded in May after anti-virus restrictions that shut down Shanghai and other industrial centers began to ease.

Exports surged 16.9% over a year ago to \$308.3 billion, up from April's 3.7% growth, a customs agency statement said yesterday. Imports rose 4.1% to \$229.5 billion, accelerating from the previous month's 0.7%.

China's trade has been dampened this year by weak export demand and curbs imposed to fight outbreaks in Shanghai, site of the world's busiest port, and other cities. Consumer demand for imports was crushed by rules that confined millions of families to their homes.

Forecasters have cut estimates for China's economic growth to as low as 2% this year due to the Shanghai shutdown, well below the ruling Communist Party's target of 5.5%. Some expect activity to shrink in the quarter ending in June before a gradual recovery begins.

Most factories, shops and other businesses in Shanghai, Beijing and other cities have been allowed to reopen but are expected to need weeks or months to return to normal activity levels.

"Exports showed considerable resilience in May despite the impact of the protracted lockdown in Shanghai," said Rajiv Biswas of S&P Global Market Intelligence in a report. "The outlook for the second half of 2022 is for a stronger rebound in imports as domestic demand recovers."

China's politically sensitive global trade surplus widened by 82.3% over a year earlier to \$78.8 billion. That was among the highest monthly trade gaps but below December's record \$94.4 billion.

China's "zero-COVID" strategy that confined Shanghai's 25 million people to their homes starting in late March helped to keep case numbers low but disrupted manufacturing and trade and crushed consumer demand.

The Port of Shanghai says the number of cargo containers handled each day returned to 95% of

normal by late May. However, a backlog of tens of thousands of containers is likely to cause delays that will be felt around the world.

Import figures got a boost from higher global prices for oil and other commodities while the volume of foreign goods bought grew less strongly.

Authorities responded to complaints about the soaring cost of "zero-COVID" by switching to a more targeted approach of isolating buildings or neighborhoods with cases instead of cities. But some areas covered by restrictions that have closed shops, factories and offices for weeks at a time have millions of inhabitants.

China's economy grew by a weak 4.8% over a year earlier in the quarter ending in March. That was an improvement over the 4% rate in the final three months of 2021, but the current quarter's economic indicators in the current quarter are dismal.

Auto sales in April fell by almost half from a year earlier. Retail spending was off by a worse-than-forecast 11%.



AP PHOTO

The ruling party is trying to shore up growth with tax refunds to entrepreneurs, easier credit and spending on building public works. The World Bank warned this week that the "old playbook" policies might delay efforts to encourage growth based on consumption instead of debt-fueled investment.

High debts "store up further risks down the line," the bank's chief China economist, Ibrahim Chowdhury, said in a statement.

As Shanghai reopens, many factories plan to split workforces into two groups, with only one on the job at any time, to limit disruptions if there are more outbreaks and quarantines, according to foreign business groups.

"It will be months at least, and possibly years, before all the people who were working get back to work," Carl B. Weinberg of High-Frequency Economics said in a report this week. **MDT/AP**

AD

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SOCIADADE PROTECTORA DOS ANIMAIS DE MACAU
SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS (MACAU)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Notice

In accordance with articles 24 and 25 of the Charter of Anima - Society for the Protection of Animals (Macau), the **Annual General Meeting will take place on Sunday, 26 June 2022, at 4:00 p.m. in Anima Cats' Paradise, at Estrada do Campo, N.16, ground floor, Coloane**, with the following agenda:

1. Discussing and passing of the Report and the Statement of Accounts and the Written Opinion of the Supervisory Body for 2021;
2. Elections;
3. Any other subjects.

In case it is not present in the first call at least half of the members of the Association, the General Assembly will meet in the same place half an hour later on second call with any number of members.

All members attending the meeting should sign the attendance members list and produce evidence of their identity (through Anima ID card or any ID card or passport).

The Chairman of the Board of General Assembly (Ana Soares)

Virus testing the new normal as China sticks to 'zero-Covid'

KEN MORITSUGU

THOUSANDS of COVID-19 testing sites have popped up on sidewalks across Beijing and other Chinese cities in the latest twist to the country's "zero-COVID" strategy.

Lines form every day, rain or shine, even when the spread of the virus has largely stopped. Some people need to go to work. Others want to shop. All are effectively compelled to get tested by a requirement to show a negative test result to enter office buildings, malls and other public places.

Liu Lele, who works for a live-streaming company, has no problem getting tested regularly but said the daytime operating hours don't always fit his schedule.

"Sometimes I get held up at work," he said after finishing a test yesterday near Beijing's historic Bell and Drum towers. "I wish there were sites open 24 hours or not closing until 7 or 8 p.m."

Regular testing of residents is becoming the new normal in many parts of China as the ruling Communist Party sticks steadfastly to a "zero-COVID" approach that is increasingly at odds with the rest of the world.

Major cities have been told to set up testing stations within a 15-minute walk for all residents. Beijing and Shanghai alone have put up 10,000 or more each. Some are made up of folding tables and chairs under a temporary canopy. Others are enclosed square booths from which gloved workers reach out through openings to take a quick throat swab from the next person in line.

Many cities including Beijing are requiring a negative test result



within the last three days to enter a public place or take the bus or subway. Some have made it a week or 10 days. The tests are free, with the result reflected on the person's smartphone health app roughly 12 hours later.

"This is something we should do," said Beijing retiree Wang Shiyuan, who gets tested every three days in case he needs to go to the supermarket or take a bus. "Only when everyone obeys the requirements can we reduce the risk of transmission."

The move follows a recent outbreak in Shanghai that spread so widely that authorities locked down the entire city for two months to end it, trapping millions of people and dealing a blow to the national economy.

China kept the virus largely at bay for a year and a half by locking down buildings and neighborhoods and quarantining infected people, but the rapidly spreading omicron variant proved more difficult to stop. More than 580 people died in Shanghai — a large number in a country that had reported only a handful of deaths after an initial deadly outbreak in Wuhan in early 2020.

Guo Yanhong, an official with the National Health Commission, said that testing has become more important because omicron is both more contagious and spread by people without symptoms.

"We must adhere to the strategy of expanding prevention centered on nucleic acid testing, so as to control the epidemic earlier and faster," she said yesterday at a news conference.

Andy Chen, a senior analyst with the Trivium China consultancy, said the proliferation of testing sites is a reaction to the failure of existing measures to control omicron in Shanghai, though officials have not explicitly said so.

Authorities have decided that early detection is needed to control omicron outbreaks without extreme measures that cause major economic disruption.

"The regular testing requirements are meant to improve the zero-COVID strategy," Chen said in an email response. "The end goal is to keep the virus under control while avoiding another Shanghai-like lockdown."

Many other countries, their populations weary of pandemic restrictions and eager to move on, are

betting that rising vaccination rates and the development of treatments for COVID-19 mean they can avoid lockdowns and other disruptive steps and live with the virus instead.

China's leaders have repeatedly signaled that they believe the "zero-COVID" approach remains the right one for China, even as they try to boost a flagging economy with business tax refunds, easier credit and spending on infrastructure projects.

Entry to the country remains restricted, with visas difficult to get and few international flights, making it costly and hard to get a seat. Anyone who does enter must quarantine in a hotel, usually for two weeks. Chinese generally can't leave the country unless it is for work or study.

Most analysts expect the zero-COVID policies to remain in place at least until after a major Communist Party congress this fall at which leader Xi Jinping is expected to get a third five-year term. The party touted its approach as a success when COVID-19 was ravaging other countries, and it doesn't want a major outbreak in the run-up to its meeting. **MDT/AP**

THREE US COMPANIES SANCTIONED OVER BLUEPRINTS SENT TO CHINA

THE Biden administration yesterday [Macau time] accused three U.S. companies of sending to China blueprints and technical drawings for satellite and rocket technology and other defense prototypes.

The Commerce Department leveled the allegations as it blocked the three companies from exporting items to foreign countries for 180 days. That punishment, known as a temporary denial order, is regarded as among the most severe civil sanctions available to the department.

The companies — Quicksilver Manufacturing Inc., Rapid Cut LLC, and U.S. Prototype Inc. — provide 3-D printing services to customers that include manufacturers of space and defense technology. The Commerce Department says the customers would send blueprints and drawings to the companies that they wanted printed — and that the companies in turn would send that work to China, presumably as a way to cut costs.

That transaction would have required U.S. government approval, but no permission was requested, the Commerce Department said.

"Outsourcing 3-D printing of space and defense prototypes to China harms U.S. national security," Matthew Axelrod, an assistant secretary of commerce for export enforcement, said in a statement. "By sending their customers' technical drawings and blueprints to China, these companies may have saved a few bucks — but they did so at the collective expense of protecting U.S. military technology."

The 11-page Commerce Department order does not allege that the blueprints wound up being exploited by the Chinese military, but it does say the actions present "serious national security concerns." U.S. officials have warned in the past about blurred lines between the military and private industry. **MDT/AP**

WEATHER

17 killed, four missing in Hunan flooding

AT least 17 people have been killed and four are missing in flooding in the central Chinese province of Hunan, while a landslide buried parts of a village in the southern Guangxi region, state media reported.

Storms have pummeled Hunan since the beginning of the month, with some monitoring stations reporting historic levels of rainfall, the Xinhua News Agency said.

Around 1.8 million people have been affected in the largely rural, mountainous province — 286,000 of whom have been evacuated to safety while more than 2,700 houses have been damaged or collapsed entirely, Xinhua said.

In Guangxi, rescue crews yesterday were still looking for survivors in Xinfeng township, where days of rain have left hillsides waterlogged and

prone to slippages, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

One woman was confirmed killed in the landslide and another was pulled out alive, CCTV said.

Authorities have issued warnings for continued heavy downpours in Guangxi and the nearby provinces of Jiangxi, Fujian, Guangdong, Hainan, Sichuan, Chongqing and Yunnan, Xinhua said.

Drivers and school ad-

ministrators have been alerted to take safety precautions, Xinhua said.

China regularly experiences flooding during the summer months, most frequently in central and southern areas that tend to receive the most rainfall.

China's worst floods in recent years were in 1998, when more than 2,000 people died and almost 3 million homes were destroyed, mostly along the

Yangtze, China's mightiest river.

The government has invested heavily in flood control and hydroelectric projects such as the gargantuan Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze.

Globally, more intense tropical storms are on the rise as a result of climate change, leading to increased flooding that threatens human lives, crops and groundwater quality. **MDT/AP**

OUTSIDE THE GUIA CIRCUIT

Le Mans: keeping the tradition, rejuvenating

SÉRGIO DE ALMEIDA CORREIA
MDT, LE MANS

THERE are cities in which it is possible to run car races on streets and roads, whether nearby or distant from the city center: from Daytona Beach to Marrakech, from Pau to Bucharest, from recent Baku to Vila Real or Hong Kong.

There are few that manage, considering their size, to balance a relevant historical past with hospitable offerings, delivering at the same time cultural events of excellence, from gastronomy to tourism, from music to scenic arts and movies, keeping a built-in tradition in motor sports,

bringing together the world elite, from teams to pilots, from builders to engineers - not forgetting royalty, jet-set figures and movie stars.

In this last group we could perhaps choose just three places: La Sarthe (internationally known by the name of the town of Le Mans), Monaco and Macau.

Monaco is an all-city track just over 3 km long in a tiny town (2.02 km²). La Sarthe is the largest circuit of all, and although it has varied over the years, due to the changes that have been introduced, it is approximately 13.626 km long, just over twice the length of Macau (6.276 km).

If, due to the growth of the city, Macau is currently a totally urban

circuit, La Sarthe cannot truly be considered as such, since the circuit is semi-permanent, not passing through central areas of the town. Evidence for this lies in the fact that to reach the circuit, one rides to the stations at end of only two lines, blue and red, of the Tramway (the most modern public transport) - to Gueteloupe-Pôle Sainé Sud and Antares-MMArena. Known internationally as La Sarthe, the track uses private and public roads, part of the Bugatti Circuit and national roads.

The nature of the events held at each of these tracks is different, corresponding to different categories of motorsport (Monaco with F1, F2, F3 and promo-

tion single-seaters and some GT cars, Touring and Classics races; Macau with F3, the GTs and the Touring cars, and the French track with the cream of World Endurance and GTs from all over the world.

Despite all these differences, there are certain similarities and dissimilarities between La Sarthe and Macau to underline; some elements that have cut through the doldrums of the last decade, helping project toward the future.

In both cities, we find an important religious heritage, each with its own scale and in its own place — Cathedral of Saint Julien/ Ruins of Saint Paul, Notre-Dame de La Couture, L'Église Sainte-Jeanne-d'Arc, Notre Dame du Pré, Saint-Benoît, La Visitation or the Chapelle de L'Oratoire, on the one hand, and on the other multiple Catholic and Chinese temples (Sé, São Domingos, Santo António, Santo Agostinho, São Lourenço, São Lázaro, Madre de Deus or the Ermida da Guia next to the Temple of A-Má, Kun Iam Tong, Pao Kong, and I Leng). It is possible to find evidence of a secular coexistence between different peoples over centuries as these were lands of passage and settlement of people from the most diverse areas, which continued for one reason or another throughout the 20th century.

They were places of encounter in realms from literature to poetry, from cinema to painting, music and theater.

**MANS AND MACAU:
SOME 20 YEARS APART**

The city of Le Mans celebrates its 90th-race edition this weekend. Over the years Le Mans has become no longer just the 24-hour race, now including other events. A small permanent circuit has been established where it is possible to see the Motorcycling World Championship, truck races or to take car racing driving courses. While for many years Macau welcomed track marshals from Portugal and Hong Kong, even recently at Le Mans there have been volunteers from the Estoril Motor Sports Commissioners Club, and from other parts of the world, working together towards a car race that has gained worldwide recognition and branched out far beyond the racing weekend.

Le Mans became a two-week extended festival that brings cars and drivers into the city and its historic center, in the biggest car show of all.

Residents and thousands of visitors who flock here annually engage with the fabulous machines. The women and men who 'fly' through the Haunaudières at more than 300km/hour, bend



g it daily

to the limit in places as mythical as Mulsanne, Indianapolis or Ar-nage, dive in Dunlop towards La Chapelle, and pit all their driving skills passing the Ford chicanes or Terre Rouge.

Unlike Macau, where there is also a museum, in Le Mans it is possible to visit the circuit at night, during the 24-hour race: the city center is full of visitors, persons nourished by world and culture, members of the numerous clubs venerating motorsport coming from all over, who are in the city to remember past races, see old and new friends, revisit memories of other times when many of them were participants. They taste the best delicacies and wines of the Loire Valley, drive their showy cars, offering them for the driver's parade, while sculptured women meander all their prestige and charm. The summer aromas of their tanned skins brought on by the hours spent on the track or walking around the historic center. Multiple musical performances, both publicly organized and spontaneous, take to stages.

A GALAXY OF STAR AMBASSADORS

Le Mans also has at its service a choir of ambassadors coming from the most diverse areas. These are the people who help build and design the city, its diversity, its industry, its arts, its hospitality. Best proof that the city does not rely only on motor racing events, lies in managing to have people such as Chinese Qi Jianhong (CEO of Spark Roll Group) and Jackie Chan, footballer Didier Drogba, photographer Yann Arthus-Bertrand, conductor Claire Gibault, pilots Derek Bell, Jacky Ickx and Sébastien Bourdais, singer-songwriter Emmanuel Moire, trumpeter Lucienne Renaudin-Vary, Diana Higbee or world-renowned physician and researcher Bénédicte Haettich.

Forever immortalized on the screen by names like Steve McQueen, Paul Newman, Patrick Dempsey or Michael Fassbender, the city of Le Mans and Macau share much more than the pages of Jean Graton's books.

But here, where the city without casinos is used for the world famous driver's parade, and city center serves to welcome all those who arrive, weighing and technical checks of the vehicles in the days before the big event are done in the city center, among thousands of fans. Here, we find a sporting and historical heritage that is permanently renewed and cared for, and where private accommodation for foreigners is freely available and encouraged for those



for whom there would never be enough hotels. Camping around the circuit is another solution.

Le Mans is an organized, clean and welcoming city in the smallest details, offering friendliness, gardens and green spaces to serve the wellbeing of residents and visitors; where the air is pure and calm and squirrels and different birds walk happily among the visitors. At the same time you can taste a Gamay Saint-Romain without fearing the visit of rodents, cockroaches or mosquitoes. Here, there is no onslaught of any nauseating smell of garbage containers or highly polluted river water, nor are the mermaids at risk of splattering their luminous dresses on the city's filthy and greasy sidewalks.

Here is proof, after all, that to build and maintain a friendly and glamorous city, you don't need casinos and astronomical funds disbursing commissions to third parties. Nor is there a requirement to guarantee safety on the streets by inundating them with video cameras and multiple regulations, prohibitions, and blue lines.



To have a healthy and organized city, just some enlightened and well prepared people are needed, from anywhere in the world and speaking as many lan-

guages as possible, along with some common sense, intelligence and organizational skills. These are the talented individuals who know how to receive visitors

without absurdities, and who are able to offer a lot of freedom of access, privacy, peace, quiet and, above all, well-being to their residents.

SERGIO DE ALMEIDA CORREIA

NORTH KOREA

RULING WORKERS' PARTY MEETS AMID EXPECTATION OF NUCLEAR TEST

KIM TONG-HYUNG

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un has convened a political conference where he's expected to review state affairs, including a COVID-19 outbreak, and possibly address relations with Washington and Seoul amid his revived nuclear brinkmanship.

The plenary meeting of the ruling Workers' Party's Central Committee began Wednesday in the capital, Pyongyang, the official Korean Central News Agency said yesterday, and may last several days.

The meeting comes amid signs North Korea is preparing for its first nuclear test explosion in nearly five years, which would further escalate a provocative streak in weapons demonstrations this year that has included multiple tests of intercontinental ballistic missiles.

KCNA published photos of the meeting's participants walking into a party building and said they approved of the agenda that would be discussed, which wasn't specified.

State media previously said the meeting would review state affairs and make decisions on a "series of important issues." The meeting is likely to address the country's COVID-19 outbreak. Officials at the World Health Organization said Wednesday they believed the outbreak was worsening and requested more information be shared with the U.N. health agency.

South Korean officials and experts have said Kim may address relations with the United States and rival South Korea amid long-stalled diplomacy and double down on his ambitions to build a nuclear arsenal that could threaten U.S. allies and the American

AP PHOTO



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, participants arrive at the headquarters of the ruling Workers' Party's Central Committee in Pyongyang

homeland.

During the party's previous plenary meeting in December, Kim repeated his vow to boost his military nuclear program and order the production of more powerful and sophisticated weapons systems during discussions that lasted a record five days.

The North Korean meeting took place as U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman met with her counterparts from South Korea and Japan on Wednesday in Seoul, emphasizing trilateral security cooperation in the face of the accelerating North Korean threat. She warned a "swift and forceful response" if the North proceeds with a nuclear test but didn't elaborate.

Sherman's visit to Asia came after North Korea launched a single-day record of eight ballistic missiles into the sea from multiple locations across its territory on Sunday, prompting the U.S. and its Asian allies to respond with

tit-for-tat missile launches and aerial demonstrations involving dozens of fighter jets.

In a speech to the U.N. General Assembly, North Korean envoy Kim Song berated those pushing for strengthened sanctions against the North over its weapons tests. He said his country was exercising its rights to self-defense by modernizing its weapons while facing "direct threats" by the United States, which is "hell bent on reinforcing" its military might in the Korean Peninsula and northern Asia.

His comments were backed by envoys from China and Russia, who questioned the effectiveness of sanctions in slowing North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs. China's envoy urged the United States to make significant concessions, such as lifting sanctions in certain areas and halting its joint military exercises with Asian allies that North Korea portrays as invasion rehearsals.

Jolting an old pattern of brinkmanship, North Korea has already set an annual record in ballistic launches through the first half of 2022, firing 31 missiles over 18 different launch events, including its first demonstrations of ICBMs since 2017.

The unusually fast pace in testing activity underscores Kim Jong Un's dual intent to advance his arsenal and pressure the Biden administration over long-stalled negotiations aimed at leveraging its nukes for badly needed economic benefits and security concessions, experts say.

Kim may up the ante soon as U.S. and South Korean officials say North Korea has all but finished preparations to detonate a nuclear device at its testing ground in the northeastern town of Punggye-ri. The site had been inactive since hosting the North's sixth nuclear test in September 2017, when it claimed to have detonated a thermonuclear bomb

designed for its ICBMs.

Kim Jun-rak, a spokesperson for South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the South Korean and U.S. militaries were closely monitoring North Korean activities at nuclear-related facilities and sites but didn't make specific predictions about the timing of the possible nuclear test.

With a new test, North Korea may claim it has acquired an ability to build a bomb small enough to be clustered on a multiwarhead ICBM or on its widening array of short-range missiles threatening South Korea and Japan, analysts say.

Kim Jong Un's pressure campaign hasn't been slowed by the COVID-19 outbreak, despite fears it may be severe in a country that has poor public health care and was largely unvaccinated. GAVI, the nonprofit that runs the U.N.-backed COVAX distribution program for vaccines, believes North Korea has begun administering doses given by its ally China. But the number of doses and how they were being distributed wasn't known.

Some experts say North Korea would prioritize inoculating groups based on the country's economic needs, including workers and soldiers involved in trade or major construction projects Kim considers crucial to his rule. North Korea was believed to have shunned COVAX vaccines because they came with monitoring requirements, such as ensuring fair distribution.

While the Biden administration has said it would push for additional sanctions if North Korea conducts another nuclear test, the divisions between permanent members of the U.N. Security Council make the prospects for meaningful punitive measures unclear.

Russia and China this year vetoed U.S.-sponsored resolutions that would have increased sanctions, insisting Washington should focus on reviving dialogue. **MDT/AP**

AFGHANISTAN

Taliban arrest fashion model, say he 'insulted' Islam

THE Taliban have arrested a well-known Afghan fashion model and three of his colleagues, accusing them of disrespecting Islam and the Quran, the Muslim holy book, according to videos released by Afghanistan's new rulers.

Ajmal Haqiqi — known for his fashion shows, YouTube clips and modeling events — appeared handcuffed in videos posted on Twitter by the Taliban inte-

lligence agency this week.

In one widely circulated and contentious video, Haqiqi is seen laughing as his colleague Ghulam Sakhi — who is known to have a speech impediment that he uses for humor — recites verses of the Quran in Arabic, in a comical voice.

After the arrests, the Taliban released a video of Haqiqi and his colleagues, seen standing in light brown jail uniforms and

apologizing to the Taliban government and religious scholars.

The video was accompanied by a tweet in the Dari language, saying: "No one is allowed to insult Quranic verses or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad."

Yesterday (Macau time), Amnesty International released a statement, urging the Taliban to "immediately and unconditionally" release Haqiqi and his colleagues.

Amnesty has documented several arbitrary detentions by the Taliban in Afghanistan, often accompanied by coerced statements in an attempt to stifle dissent in the country and deter others from expressing their views.

Samira Hamidi, Amnesty's South Asia campaigner, denounced the arrests and said that by detaining "Haqiqi and his colleagues and coercing them into apologizing," the Taliban

have undertaken "a blatant attack on the right to freedom of expression." Her statement also condemned the Taliban's "continued censorship of those who wish to freely express their ideas."

In Kabul, Taliban officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment and it was not clear what measures the model and his colleagues face under the Taliban-run judiciary.

The families of the arrested models could also not immediately be reached for comment.

Since they seized power last August in Afghanistan during the final weeks of the U.S. troop pullout from the country, the Taliban have imposed strict measures and edicts according to their harsh interpretation of Islamic law, particularly curbing the rights of women and minorities. **MDT/AP**

AP PHOTO



PUTIN'S WAR

More bodies found in Mariupol as global food crisis looms

BERNAT ARMANGUÉ & YURAS KARMANAU, BAKHMUT

WORKERS pulled scores of bodies from smashed buildings in an “endless caravan of death” inside the devastated city of Mariupol, authorities said yesterday [Macau time], while fears of a global food crisis escalated over Ukraine’s inability to export millions of tons of grain through its blockaded ports.

At the same time, Ukrainian and Russian forces battled fiercely for control of Sievierodonetsk, a city that has emerged as central to Moscow’s grinding campaign to capture Ukraine’s eastern industrial heartland, known as the Donbas.

As the fighting dragged on, the human cost of the war continued to mount. In many of Mariupol’s buildings, workers are finding 50 to 100 bodies each, according to a mayoral aide in the Russian-held port city in the south.

Petro Andryushchenko said on the Telegram app that the bodies are being taken in an “endless caravan of death” to a morgue, landfills and other places. At least 21,000 Mariupol civilians were killed during the weeks-long Russian siege, Ukrainian authorities have estimated.

The consequences of the war are being felt far beyond Eastern Europe because shipments of Ukrainian grain are bottled up

inside the country, driving up the price of food.

Ukraine, long known as the “bread basket of Europe,” is one of the world’s biggest exporters of wheat, corn and sunflower oil, but much of that flow has been halted by the war and a Russian blockade of Ukraine’s Black Sea coast. An estimated 22 million tons of grain remains in Ukraine. The failure to ship it out is endangering the food supply in many developing countries, especially in Africa.

Russia expressed support for a U.N. plan to create a safe corridor at sea that would allow Ukraine to resume grain shipments. The plan, among other things, calls for Ukraine to remove mines from the waters near the Black Sea port of Odesa.

But Russia is insisting that it be allowed to check incoming vessels for weapons. And Ukraine has expressed fear that clearing the mines could enable Russia to attack the coast. Ukrainian officials said the Kremlin’s assurances that it wouldn’t do that cannot be trusted.

European Council President Charles Michel yesterday accused the Kremlin of “weaponizing food supplies and surrounding their actions with a web of lies, Soviet-style.”

While Russia, which is also a major supplier of grain to the rest of the world, has blamed the looming food crisis on Western sanctions against Moscow,

the European Union heatedly denied that and said the blame rests with Russia itself for waging war against Ukraine.

“These are Russian ships and Russian missiles that are blocking the export of crops and grain,” Michel said. “Russian tanks, bombs and mines are preventing Ukraine from planting and harvesting.”

The West has exempted grain and other food from its sanctions against Russia, but the U.S. and the EU have imposed sweeping punitive measures against Russian ships. Moscow argues that those restrictions make it impossible to use its ships to export grain, and also make other shipping companies reluctant to carry its product.

Turkey has sought to play a role in negotiating an end to the war and in brokering the resumption of grain shipments. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu met on yesterday with his Russian counterpart, Sergey Lavrov. Ukraine was not invited to the talks.

Meanwhile, Moscow’s troops continued their painstaking, inch-by-inch campaign for the Donbas region with heavy fighting in and around Sievierodonetsk, which had a prewar population of 100,000. It is one of the last cities yet to be taken by the Russians in Luhansk, one of the two provinces that make up the Donbas.

Ukrainian President Volo-

dymyr Zelenskyy called Sievierodonetsk the “epicenter” of the battle for the Donbas and perhaps one of the most difficult battles of the war.

He said the Ukrainian army is defending its positions and inflicting real losses on the Russian forces.

“In many ways, it is there that the fate of our Donbas is being decided,” Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address, which was recorded in the street outside his office in Kyiv.

An adviser to Zelenskyy’s office said Russian forces have changed their tactics in the battle, retreating from the city while pounding it with artillery and airstrikes.

As a result, Oleksiy Arestovych said, the city center is deserted, and the artillery hits an empty place.

“They are hitting hard without any particular success,” he said in his daily online interview.

Luhansk Gov. Serhiy Haidai acknowledged the difficulties of battling Russian forces, saying, “Maybe we will have to retreat, but right now battles are ongoing in the city.”

“Everything the Russian army has — artillery, mortars, tanks, aviation — all of that, they’re using in Sievierodonetsk in order to wipe the city off the face of the Earth and capture it completely,” he said.

The city of Lysychansk, like Sievierodonetsk, is also wed-

ged between Russian forces in Luhansk province. Valentyna Tsonkan, an elderly resident of Lysychansk, described the moment when her house came under attack.

“I was lying on my bed. The shrapnel hit the wall and went through my shoulder,” she said as she received treatment for her wounds.

Russia’s continuing encroachment could open up the possibility of a negotiated settlement between the two nations more than three months into the war, analysts said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin “has the option of declaring his objectives met at more or less any time in order to consolidate Russia’s territorial gains,” said Keir Giles, a Russia expert at the London think tank Chatham House. At that point, Giles said, Western leaders may “pressure Ukraine to accept their losses in order to bring an end to the fighting.”

Zelenskyy said Russia is unwilling to negotiate because it still feels strong.

Speaking by video link to U.S. corporate leaders, he called for even tougher sanctions to weaken Russia economically, including getting it “off the global financial system completely.”

Zelenskyy said Ukraine is willing to negotiate “to find a way out.” But a settlement cannot come “at the expense of our independence.”

Meanwhile, to the north, Russian shelling of the Kharkiv region killed five people and wounded 12 over the past 24 hours, Ukrainian authorities said.

The Russian military said it used high-precision missiles to hit an armor repair plant near Kharkiv. There was no confirmation from Ukraine of such a plant being hit. **MDT/AP**

SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

Biden lauds democratic unity despite no-shows at summit

ELLIOT SPAGAT & CHRIS MEGERIAN, LOS ANGELES

PRESIDENT Joe Biden said yesterday [Macau time] that democracy is an “essential ingredient” for the Western Hemisphere’s future as he welcomed leaders to the Summit of the Americas, an implicit rebuttal to those who boycotted the gathering because authoritarians were not invited.

He also drew sharp contrasts around one of the issues central to the summit, immigration, saying “safe and orderly migration is good for all of our economies” but “unlawful” forms are unacceptable.

“We will enforce our borders through innovative, coordinated action with our regional partners,” Biden said at the opening ceremony of events that run through Friday in Los Angeles.

Biden has tried to ease many of the hardline immigration policies instituted by his predecessor, Donald Trump, and used his first days in office to propose a sweeping immigration proposal that would have created a pathway to U.S. citizenship for millions of people in the U.S. illegally. But it has stalled in Congress and the president’s attention has largely turned to other issues, including spiking inflation and Russia’s war with Ukraine.

His administration insists the summit can be successful despite the absence of several key leaders, as officials sought to highlight efforts on food security, climate and other areas of common interest.

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador and other leaders are staying away because the U.S. excluded Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua — all countries that send large numbers of migrants to the U.S. and neighboring countries — because they are led by authoritarians.

“Our region is large and diverse. We don’t always agree on everything,” Biden said. “But because we’re democracies, we work through our disagreements with mutual respect and dialogue.”

He also promised that the gathering would involve



“bold ideas, ambitious actions” that would “demonstrate to our people the incredible power of democracies to deliver concrete benefits and make life better for everyone.”

Despite that call for unity, a stark reminder of the boycotts came when the president and first lady Jill Biden stood on the red carpet to greet foreign leaders attending, and few of the arrivals were heads of state. Instead of Guatemala’s president, Biden shook hands with the foreign minister. He next greeted the minister of public affairs for El Salvador, the foreign minister for Honduras and the Mexico’s secretary of foreign affairs.

With migrants increasingly coming from Colombia, Ecuador and other countries outside Mexico and northern Central America, Biden was appealing directly to leaders whose support is critical to any regional strategy on a complicated problem with no clear or immediate solutions.

His broad appeal to other leaders to work together on migration marked a contrast with Trump, whose unilateral demands for cooperation included a threat to Mexico to close the border and raise tariffs. Many top Republicans are eager to make an election issue of Biden’s failure to meaningfully address large numbers of people fleeing violence and poverty by entering the U.S. through Mexico, even though Trump offered few lasting fixes either.

Biden also told those assembled that “all of our nations have a responsibility to

step up and ease the pressure people are feeling today.”

Among the new programs he is expected to unveil in the coming days are a \$300 million food security financing initiative, a new Caribbean climate partnership that will help Caribbean countries access low-carbon energy sources, and a program to train 500,000 health workers in the Americas over the next five years.

The “Los Angeles Declaration,” to be announced while Biden meets with his counterparts from North, Central and South America, is a brief call to action that supporters hope will guide countries on one of the most pressing issues surrounding migration — hosting people fleeing violence and persecution and searching for more economic stability.

“We regard this as an unprecedented set of statements and actions ... to deal with a hemispheric crisis,” Sullivan said.

The United States has been the most popular destination for asylum-seekers since 2017, posing a challenge that has stumped Biden and his immediate predecessors, Trump and Barack Obama.

But the U.S. is far from alone. Colombia and neighboring South American countries host millions who have fled Venezuela. Mexico fielded more than 130,000 asylum applications last year, many of them Haitians, which was triple from 2020. Many Nicaraguans escape to Costa Rica, while displaced Venezuelans account for about one-sixth the popula-

tion of tiny Aruba.

“Countries are already having to do this, so rather than each country trying to sort this out and figure it out for themselves, what we’re doing is saying, ‘Let’s come together in a coherent way and construct a framework so we can all work together to make this situation more humane and more manageable,’” said Brian Nichols, assistant U.S. secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs.

Biden arrived trailed by questions about how much progress he can make on migration and other issues when some of his counterparts from the region are staying home. The controversy has undermined the start of the summit, which is being hosted by the U.S. for the first time since the inaugural event in 1994, at a time when China has been trying to make inroads in the region.

Some concrete measures may be announced, such as possible funding for development banks. Nichols said in an interview that discussing any specific initiatives would be premature, but officials have made clear that the agreement will be largely aspirational.

There is widespread agreement that relief must target growth and stability for entire communities in which migrants live, not just migrants.

The agreement may call for more pathways to legal status, mechanisms to reunite families, more efficient and humane border controls and improved information sharing, according to experts who have seen early drafts. **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1986 MAGEE CONVICTED OF BRIGHTON BOMBING



A man has been found guilty of planting the Brighton bomb which killed five people and nearly wiped out most of Margaret Thatcher’s cabinet two years ago.

Patrick Joseph Magee, 35, is in prison awaiting sentence after a jury at the Old Bailey convicted him on all charges relating to the explosion that ripped through the Grand Hotel during the 1984 Conservative Party conference.

As the unanimous guilty verdicts were read out, Magee sat in the dock looking straight ahead, showing no sign of emotion.

The prosecution said the 30 lb time bomb “came within an inch from being the IRA’s most devastating explosion”.

It had been planted behind a bath in a room on the sixth floor more than three weeks earlier, timed to go off on the final day of the conference.

At the Conservatives’ request security at the Grand Hotel had been low key. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s first floor suite was one of only two rooms in the building that had been searched for bombs.

The blast, in the early hours of October 12, left a gaping hole in the hotel’s façade.

It sent a chimney crashing down through a column of rooms, killing five prominent Conservatives, including Sir Anthony Berry MP, and injuring 34.

Trade Secretary Norman Tebbit was among those who had to be rescued from under tons of masonry.

The prime minister had a narrow escape as the explosion destroyed the bathroom she had used just moments before. The bedroom in which she had been working on her conference speech was badly damaged.

Belfast-born Magee was charged with the bombing when forensic officers found his palm print on a hotel registration card in the aftermath of the blast. He had checked in under the fictitious name of Roy Walsh and given a false address.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Magee was given eight life sentences, seven of them relating to the Brighton bombing. Recommending he serve a minimum of 35 years in prison, Mr Justice Boreham said: “You intended to wipe out a large part of the government and you nearly did.”

In June 1999 Magee was freed as part of the Good Friday Agreement’s early release scheme. He had served 14 years.

Following his release Magee was reported to have told the Dublin-based Sunday Business Post that he regretted the deaths and often thought of his victims.

Those who died were Sir Anthony Berry MP; Eric Taylor, north-west party chairman; and three wives of party officials, Roberta Wakeham; Muriel Maclean; and Jeanne Shattock.

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Overindulgent people will cause disruptions in your life. Do not invest in joint ventures. Avoid scandals of any sort. One sided attractions are likely.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Your need to obtain additional details will lead you into strange topics of conversation. Channel your energy wisely and you can score points with the boss. Don't fall into the trap.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Dinner with clients or business associates should be successful. You may find that your anger stems from lending or borrowing money. You will find that you can work progressively at improving yourself today.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Changes could be overwhelming. Don't hesitate to go ahead with any plans for entertainment. Get involved in sports events that will benefit your physical appearance.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You can make personal changes that will enhance your appearance and bring you greater popularity. Your ability to add a sophisticated touch will help you capture the look you're after.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Ask others to help, or you may feel that a burden is weighing you down. You will easily charm members of the opposite sex. Pleasure trips will be favorable and bring about romance.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Keep on your toes when dealing with others. It might be time to pick up the slack and do your share. Don't be too eager to spend money that you really don't have.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

You have to believe in yourself and your talents. You may be frustrated by the way situations are being handled in your personal life. This is not the day to be extravagant.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Changes in your home may be disruptive and upsetting. Luck is with you, regardless of the financial venture. You may need a physical outlet that will help you relieve your tension.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Arguments will flare up if you get backed into an emotional corner. Be careful not to lead someone on if you truly have no interest. Cutbacks at work will be a cause for worry.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Romance can surface if you get into some of those fitness programs you've been putting off. Use your obvious talent to work with detail and you can come up with something great.

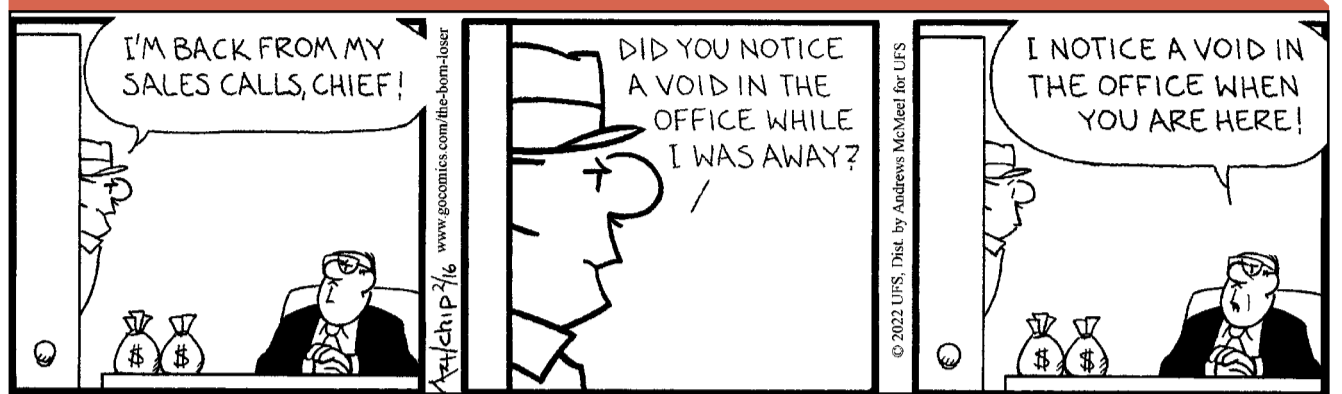


PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

You will be able to make financial gains. You need to mingle with people who can spark enthusiasm and confidence in you. Do your own thing.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

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

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

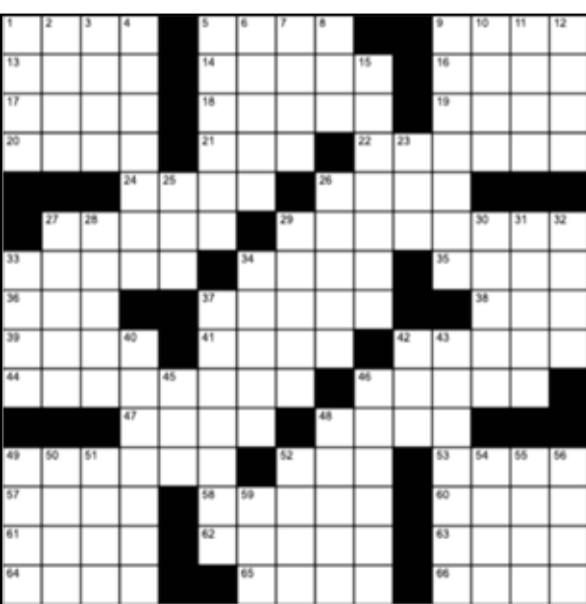
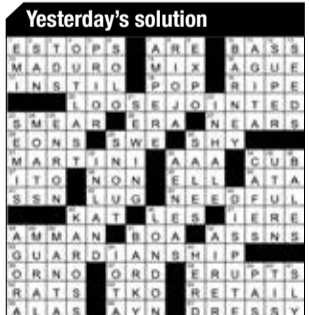
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	15	27	cloudy
Changchun	13	22	thunderstorms
Chengdu	21	24	showers
Chongqing	24	26	rain
Fuzhou	20	24	rain
Guangzhou	24	30	rain
Guiyang	19	23	showers
Haikou	25	32	thunderstorms
Hangzhou	21	30	overcast
Harbin	13	24	cloudy
Hefei	20	31	cloudy
Nanjing	20	32	cloudy
Shanghai	21	27	fine
Taipei	21	25	rain
Wuhan	24	33	cloudy
Hong Kong	27	28	thunderstorms
WORLD			
Moscow	18	28	overcast
Frankfurt	9	20	showers
Paris	16	21	overcast
London	15	20	overcast
New York	17	27	showers

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Grad; 5- Mower brand; 9- Code word for A; 13- Vamp Theda; 14- Wrong; 16- Legal wrong; 17- Islamic ruler; 18- Center; 19- Dundee denizen; 20- Lucie's father; 21- Aliens, briefly; 22- Nissan model; 24- Scottish loch, home to a monster; 26- Thought; 27- Red as ___; 29- Foul-smelling; 33- I don't give ___!; 34- Bridges of Hollywood; 35- "Orinoco Flow" singer; 36- Univ. aides; 37- Kingdom; 38- 100%; 39- Doozy; 41- Not tricked by; 42- Boat often made of birchbark, canvas, or fiberglass; 44- What senators play?; 46- Devoured; 47- Wild party; 48- 11th letter of the Hebrew alphabet; 49- Evoke; 52- Cheerios grain; 53- Airline to Tel Aviv; 57- Old Italian money; 58- ___ nous; 60- Prefix with -drome; 61- Designer Cassini; 62- Pave over; 63- Hindu music; 64- Wall St. letters; 65- Specks; 66- Stepped;

DOWN 1- In the sack; 2- Like some excuses; 3- "Trinity" author; 4- Sailor; 5- Least feral; 6- Drops; 7- Frees; 8- Old spy org.; 9- On the line; 10- Centers of activity; 11- Whence; 12- Kofi ___ Annan; 15- Sports arena; 23- Sportscaster Bertram; 25- Poetic time; 26- Author Calvino; 27- Hersey's bell town; 28- Swiss city on the Rhine; 29- Chairs; 30- Mindlessly stupid; 31- Thermoplastic yarn; 32- Strong wind; 33- Perched on; 34- Long hard seat; 37- Revel noisily; 40- Enclosure formed by the chest bones; 42- Upper limit; 43- Deep down; 45- Skater Babilonia; 46- Diners; 48- Gold measurement; 49- North Carolina college; 50- Bell-shaped flower; 51- Ticks off; 52- Director Preminger; 54- Regan's dad; 55- Golden Fleece ship; 56- Mutual fund fee; 59- Aussie outlaw Kelly;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IAM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
- Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
- Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



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TAIPA STUDIO WITH BALCONY	HKD 3,780,000
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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

JAKE COYLE, MDT/AP
FILM WRITER

DRIVE IN

ADAM SANDLER BASKETBALL DRAMA, 'HUSTLE,' HAS GAME

BY now you'd think you know what you're getting with an Adam Sandler sports movie. "Happy Gilmore" and "The Waterboy" have conditioned us to expect silly voices and left hooks from irritated game show hosts.

But in "Hustle," Sandler's new basketball movie on Netflix, he pulls a crossover. The film, directed by Jeremiah Zagar, isn't the farce you might expect. Rather, it's one of the most textured and affectionate films about basketball that's come along in a long time. Starring Sandler as a road-weary NBA scout and with several teams' worth of all-stars in cameos, "Hustle" has a surprisingly good handle and feel for the game.

A longtime Knicks fan and pick-up player, it's probably inevitable that Sandler would eventually find his way to a hoops movie. "Uncut Gems," one of his most recent leading roles, as a gambling-addicted jeweler

AP PHOTO



From left: Ainhoa Pillet, Maria Botto, Juancho Hernangomez and Adam Sandler in a scene from "Hustle"

sense of detail that will delight NBA fans. There is even a reference to a woebegone Andrea Bargnani trade that will make Knicks fans chuckle (and cringe). The cameos keep coming, including most of the current Sixers roster, Allen Iverson, Boban Marjanovi, Luka Dovic, Trae Young and some more fleshed-out characters, like Bo's rival draft pick Kermit Wilts, played charismatically by Timberwolves guard Anthony Edwards.

With each appearance, the distance between "Hustle" and the actual NBA grows increasingly small. Stanley's great fear is being left outside "the game," and "Hustle" is often intoxicatingly close to it. This is a movie where you get to see Sandler call Nowitzki "Schnitzel" on FaceTime and marvel at Julius "Dr. J" Erving (a still extremely potent presence) showing up to a playground court.

Some might say "Hustle" verges close to NBA advertisement, but Zagar, a South Philly native who emerged with the 2018 indie "We the Animals," frames the pros who populate his film like people and players, rather than stars. And Sandler imbues Sugarman with not just genuine basketball obsession but the common mid-life struggle of finding only ingratitude from an employer after half a life of tireless service. After some less strenuous workouts for Netflix, Sandler works hard to give "Hustle" the full-court press — even if his wardrobe of jerseys and mesh shorts might have come right out of his closet.

Sandler's film would make a solid double-header with another Netflix film, Steven Soderbergh's "High Flying Bird," the -penned 2019 drama with Andre Holland as a sports agent hustling during an NBA lockout. "Hustle" is a more amiable film, less interested in prying into the underpinnings of the league. But for a sport that has only occasionally been captured authentically by the movies, "Hustle" has genuine flow.

"Hustle," a Netflix release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for language. Running time: 117 minutes. ★★★★★

with a big bet on a Boston Celtics game, veered closer to the sport and co-starred Kevin Garnett. The LeBron James-produced "Hustle," which debuts Friday, isn't as distinctive or (thankfully) as stress-inducing as Josh and Benny Safdie's film, but it's likewise rich in atmosphere and finds Sandler in fine dramatic form.

Sandler plays Stanley Sugarman, a talent scout for the Philadelphia 76ers, who spends his days circling the globe looking for the next Dirk Nowitzki. Life on the road has beaten him down — his wife, Teresa (Queen Latifah) and daughter (Jordan Hull) are accustomed to his absences — and Stanley harbors dreams of transitioning to the coaching ranks. Or not dreams, exactly.

"Guys in their 50s don't have dreams," he says. "They have nightmares and eczema."

Stanley's opportunity finally comes when the team's longtime owner, Rex Merrick (Robert Duvall), promotes him to assistant coach. But after Merrick dies, the team is taken over by the owner's brash son Vince (Ben Foster), who has feuded

before with Stanley over the potential of a German prospect. Vince puts Stanley back on the road. "You're valuable as a coach," he tells him. "You're indispensable as a scout."

Back on the road, Stanley is in Spain when he notices a crowd gathering outside a gym, on the blacktop. There he sees a construction worker named Bo Cruz (played by NBAer Juancho Hernangómez) whose talent is off the charts, even playing in Timberlands. Stanley, agog Bo's defensive and shooting prowess, trails Bo to his home to recruit him to the Sixers. After a fallout with Vince, Stanley devotes himself to getting Bo into the NBA draft. Along the way, Sandler gets to put his own spin on that fabled sports movie type, the hard-training coach. "Hustle" doesn't veer wildly from the "Rocky" formula, but it does capture something fresh about the bond between player and coach. It's also a clever twist that Bo's greatest talent is his defense, and his biggest hurdle to success is keeping his cool.

All of this plays out in Taylor Materne and Will Fetters' script with a keen

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MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

LIFESTYLE SPOIL THE MAN OF YOUR LIFE

THIS Father's Day, make the most of summer and embark on an outdoor adventure with dad. The new North Face Summer Exploration Collection has the perfect gear for your next trip out camping or hanging out by the water. This season sees the new Valley

Easy S/S Shirt and Printed Sniktau S/S Sun Shirt featuring a laid-back loose fit with playful patterns. Complete the look with the unisex, street-style EQBC Slides designed with upper ripstop nylon strips in an open mesh blend for maximum comfort.



TASTE OF EDESIA

Father's day celebration

IRENE SAM, MDT

THINKING of where to take your dad on father's day? For a sumptuous dining experience and a great celebration to thank your father for his love and support in your life, **Mesa**, a contemporary Portuguese restaurant at **The Karl Lagerfeld hotel tower**, might be a good option. The Karl Lagerfeld is the only tower in the world with its interior fully designed by the eponymous designer, and its signature restaurant is indeed extremely stylish and chic. Moreover, Mesa is offering an exceptional Father's Day special treat for the lunch and dinner periods. Culinary delights include Roasted Duck Rilette with Black Pudding Sausage, Bolo do Caco with Tenderloin Steak and Garlic Butter.

In addition to dining, we can also spoil dads with a spa treatment. To enjoy a rejuvenating getaway from the heavy daily work and duties of life, one can book the "Comforting Retreat" at The Spa at Grand Lisboa Palace. The package includes a bespoke full body 90-minute Deep Tissue Massage for complete relaxation,



a fresh haircut expertly styled at the world renowned Gentlemen's Tonic hair salon whilst imbibing in a glass of whisky, and a dining

voucher for any of Grand Lisboa Palace's trendsetting restaurants, a perfect combination to reward fathers.

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SINCE 1996

OPINION

China Daily
 Editorial, China Daily

**BIDEN ADMINISTRATION
 SHOULD SHOW
 IT'S SINCERE ABOUT
 TALKING WITH DPRK**

In accordance with new rules requiring the United Nations General Assembly to examine any veto wielded in the Security Council by any of its five permanent members, China and Russia defended their vetoes of a resolution that would have imposed new sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on Wednesday.

China and Russia oppose the imposition of more sanctions on the DPRK, insisting that it is dialogue between Pyongyang and Washington that is needed to resolve the Korean Peninsula issues, not more sanctions.

At the first-of-its-kind meeting, which has been hailed as a history-making advance for the UN, Chinese, Russian, DPRK and US representatives each tried to clarify their countries' respective positions on the proposed resolution and regional security.

Such clarification meetings are well-intentioned as they have been introduced as a way to hold the five permanent members of the UN's most important decision-making body accountable for wielding their veto privilege.

But just as the May 26 vote exposed the de facto divide in the Security Council, the Wednesday session showed how difficult it is to bridge that divide, as the two opposing sides simply blamed each other for the current situation.

The United States' representative claimed that the Joe Biden administration is "more than prepared" to discuss easing sanctions to achieve the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and that it had passed on this message to the DPRK, which had responded with "destabilizing (missile) launches that threaten not only the region but the world".

But in chanting empty slogans for dialogue while increasing sanctions against the DPRK, Washington has brought the situation "to a complete deadlock", China's representative said.

Such an exchange of accusations shows why meaningful crisis control is needed, as any trust that was built between Pyongyang and Washington after the momentous face-to-face meetings between Biden's predecessor and the DPRK's top leader has been quickly dissipated thanks to Washington's failure to follow through on the headway that was made.

With the new government in the Republic of Korea also adopting a tougher tone toward Pyongyang than its predecessor — which initiated the flurry of meetings that produced the precious detente that seemed to herald reconciliation was on the cards — tensions on the Korean Peninsula are once again simmering.

It would be positive and productive, not only to the matter in hand but to global governance in general, if the unprecedented meeting proved to be more than just another talking shop.

All the parties involved should put aside their preconceived positions, reflect on what was said with open minds, and seek to find ways to reengage.

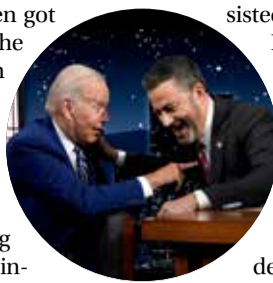
And with the Biden administration having aggravated the DPRK's security concerns with its engineering of the conflict in Ukraine, it should take the initiative to demonstrate the sincerity of its claim that it is willing to engage in dialogue without preconditions by easing some of the sanctions on the DPRK.

That the detente between the US and the DPRK generated high hopes of their reconciliation shows that it had substance despite being short-lived. It is those hopes that should be rekindled rather than the embers of war.

There weren't a lot of laughs, but President Joe Biden got some unsolicited advice from Jimmy Kimmel when the president sat down for his first in-person interview with a late-night host since taking office.

The host of ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" expressed frustration on Wednesday about the intractable problems in Washington, and he advised the president, "I think you need to start yelling at people."

Biden demurred, saying the country is still suffering from the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, but he in-



sisted he's "never been more optimistic in my life."

Kimmel swiftly interjected: "Why are you so optimistic? It makes no sense!"

Biden said he was pinning his hopes on young people, the "best educated, least prejudiced, most giving generation in American history."

"This generation is going to change everything," Biden said. "We just have to make sure we don't give up." First lady Jill Biden was in the audience, along with Biden's granddaughter Naomi and her fiancé.

CHINA SKY EYE

**FAST TELESCOPE DETECTS
 WEIRD REPEATING
 FAST RADIO BURST**

SCIENTISTS have found a highly active, repeating Fast Radio Burst (FRB), only the second example of its kind, which is hinting at the evolutionary picture of those mysterious cosmic events.

FRBs are the brightest millisecond-duration astronomical transients in radio bands with yet unknown origins. Less than 5% of them ever detected have been seen to repeat and only a few are persistently active.

Using the Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Radio Telescope (FAST), also dubbed "China Sky Eye," an international team led by astronomers from the National Astronomical Observatories under the Chinese Academy of Sciences (NAOC) has discovered and localized an active repeating fast radio burst called FRB20190520B in a metal-poor dwarf galaxy nearly three billion light-years from Earth.

Then, telescopes including the Very Large Array,

the Palomar telescope, the Keck Telescope, Subaru Telescope and Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope continued the observations, respectively, to confirm the FRB20190520B.

The scientists said that FRB20190520B seems to reside in a complex plasma environment resembling that in a super luminous supernova, suggesting that it may be a "newborn."

It is the second example of a highly active FRB with repeating bursts and persistent radio emission between bursts coming from a compact region, after the discovery of the first repeater FRB20121102A in 2016, according to the study published on Wednesday in the journal Nature.

The differences between the two FRBs and all the others have hinted at a possibility that there may be two different kinds of FRBs, said the researchers.

Now, candidates for the FRB sources are the super dense neutron stars left

over after a massive star explodes as a supernova, or neutron stars with ultra-strong magnetic fields, called magnetars.

The astronomers said that there may be either two different mechanisms or that the objects producing them act differently at different stages of their evolution.

"We further postulate that FRB20121102A and FRB20190520B represent the initial stage of an evolving FRB population," said the paper's co-corresponding author Li Di with NAOC.

"A coherent picture of the origin and evolution of FRBs is likely to emerge in just a few years," said Li.

Located in a naturally deep and round karst depression in southwest China's Guizhou Province, FAST started formal operation in January 2020 and officially opened to the world on March 31, 2021. It is believed to be the world's most sensitive radio telescope. XINHUA



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday warned Greece to demilitarize islands in the Aegean Sea, saying he was "not joking" with the admonition. Turkey says Greece has been building a military presence in violation of treaties that guarantee the unarmed status of the Aegean islands. It argues the islands were ceded to Greece on the condition they remained demilitarized.



Greece A court has overturned a ruling that authorized the confiscation of crude oil from an Iranian-flagged tanker at the center of a volatile dispute over international sanctions. Greek and Iranian officials confirmed yesterday that an appeals court in the port city of Halkida reversed a lower court's decision to allow the removal of the Lana's cargo. Greek authorities temporarily seized the tanker in mid-April.

European Central Bank said yesterday that it would carry out its first interest rate increase in 11 years next month, followed by another hike in September, as it catches up with other central banks worldwide in pivoting from supporting the economy during the pandemic to squelching soaring inflation. The surprise announcement came after the bank's 25-member monetary policy council met in Amsterdam, saying inflation had become a "major challenge" and that those forces had "broadened and intensified" in the 19 countries that use the euro currency.

France A parliamentary delegation pledged support for Taiwan during a meeting yesterday with the leader of the self-governing island democracy that China claims as its own territory with no right to diplomatic recognition. Senator Joel Guerriau, vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense and the Armed Forces, told Tsai Ing-wen he would "help Taiwan oppose its oppressors and promote Taiwan's freedom."



Aerial panoramic photo taken on March 28, 2021 shows China's Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Radio Telescope (FAST) in Guizhou Province