



LAWMAKERS CALLED FOR CLEARER GUIDELINES FOR CASINO EMPLOYEES REGARDING WHO IS TO BEAR THE COSTS OF NATS AND KN95 MASKS

P2

CHINA REDUCES QUARANTINE FOR PEOPLE ARRIVING FROM ABROAD

P6

HONG KONG GOV'T CONFIRMS PRESIDENT XI'S VISIT FOR THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS RETURN TO THE MOTHERLAND

P6



North Koreans were working intensively to protect crops, factory equipment and other assets from potential damage from days of heavy rainfall, state media said yesterday, as outside observers worry any flooding could aggravate the country's economic hardships amid its Covid-19 outbreak. Summer floods in North Korea, one of the poorest countries in Asia, often cause serious damage to its agricultural and other sectors because of its troubled drainage and deforestation.



South Korean prosecutors granted ex-President Lee Myung-bak a three-month release from prison over health concerns yesterday after he served less than three years of a 17-year sentence for corruption. Lee, 80, could be sent back to prison at the end of that period, barring further health setbacks, but there is also the possibility that he might be pardoned before then by President Yoon Suk Yeol, a fellow conservative who recently expressed a reluctance to keep him behind bars.



New Zealand NASA wants to experiment with a new orbit around the moon that it hopes to use in the coming years to once again land astronauts on the lunar surface. So it is sending up a test satellite from New Zealand. The initial stages of the launch went according to plan yesterday, with the rocket carrying the satellite reaching space.

More on backpage

NOT SO VIABLE

Real estate developer suggests 'more practical' transportation system amid the ongoing public consultation on cable car proposal in the city P4

NAT OR NOT GOV'T AWAITS FINAL RESULTS TO DECIDE ON MORE ROUNDS

P3



SME CRISIS RESTAURANT OWNERS LOSE HOPE AS END OF RESTRICTIONS REMAINS UNCERTAIN

P5

**SMG EXPECTS
TYPHOON THIS
WEEK**

The Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) says that there is a high chance that a typhoon will form in the vast low-pressure area in the Philippines, affecting Macau later this week. In an update, the bureau said that low pressure abroad over the central part of the South China Sea may develop into a tropical depression in the next two days. It will move towards the Guangdong coast and Hainan Island. However, its intensity and movements remain uncertain at present. Under the influence of the broad circulation of the low pressure area, its rainband will bring unsettled weather to Macau.

**HUSH 2022
POSTPONED**

The "hush! Summer Concert," originally scheduled to be held from July 9 to 19, has been postponed. The submission period for the short video competition "hush! 300 Seconds" will also be extended accordingly. The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) announced in a statement that the dates of both the concert and competition submission deadline will be rescheduled and announced in due course. The postponement comes after the IC closed its cultural facilities and suspended all cultural activities and external services.

**IAM CALLS ON
PUBLIC NOT TO
DISCHARGE WASTE
INTO DRAINS**

The Municipal Affairs Bureau (IAM) has called on residents to avoid discharging domestic waste into drains to prevent blockages of internal drains and public sewers of buildings. In a statement, the bureau said that large amounts of domestic waste such as towels and masks had been found in public sewers. The presence of waste seriously affects the operation of the sewers and also causes sewage backflow to easily occur, "increasing the risk of transmission in the community."

COVID-19 OUTBREAK

**AUTHORITIES TO SEND
'NATMOBILE' TO YELLOW ZONES**

RENATO MARQUES

Local health authorities will dispatch a new nucleic acid test (NAT) vehicle to assist with administering tests to those under close control of the authorities in the Yellow Zones of confinement, the coordinator at the local Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Leong Iek Hou, said during yesterday's press briefing from the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center.

The "NATmobile" is a modified bus containing the equipment and materials needed to perform the NAT. Access to testing resources has been strained over the past several days during the latest round of citywide mass testing.

According to Leong, the idea of using a motorized vehicle as a mobile station was intended to assist with servicing certain specific groups, while also reducing the need for these people to travel from their homes to go to a specific NAT post to comply with the measures imposed by the same authorities on frequent testing.

"The NAT mobile station started



operations yesterday [Monday] and we are pleased with the results. From tomorrow, we will send it to the different areas classified as Yellow Zones so people can do the test, facilitating sampling without the need to move far from their homes and avoiding cross-district movements," Leong said.

The mobile station was tested in the Coloane Island district in locations such as Hac Sa Beach, Ka Ho, and Coloane Village during the latest round of mass testing.

According to a statement from the Center, in the first four hours of use, 534 people had samples collected by the NATmobile, in an operation that the Center said was run in a "smooth and orderly" manner.

**COVID-19 MAP
AVAILABLE ONLINE**

Leong announced at the same briefing that a complete map of Macau, identifying all areas designated as Red or Yellow Zones, has

been added to the Special Webpage Against Epidemics from the Health Bureau (SSM).

According to the official, the map includes information about every area designated for confinement, as well as a clear demarcation of the areas. The map will be continually updated as soon as changes are enforced, including information on the addition of new areas of confinement or the lifting of restrictions in the previously designated areas of confinement.

**Trade union federation calls for clearer
guidelines for casino employees**

LYNZY VALLES

LAWMAKERS representing the workers' association have called for clearer guidelines for casino employees regarding who is to bear the costs of mandatory nucleic acid tests (NATs) and KN95 masks.

In a statement, members of the Macao Federation of Trade Unions (FAOM) said that casino employees have confirmed that they will have to undergo a NAT every 48 hours and a mandatory rapid antigen test (RAT) every day, as well using KN95 masks in their workplace.

The stringent measure comes after the surge of



cases recorded in the city and the fact that casinos are open amid this outbreak.

Although the lawmakers agree with the

need to ensure safety and prevent the spread of Covid-19, Ella Lei and Leong Sun Iok expressed worry that employees would suffer increased financial burden by having to shoulder these expenses.

Employees in integrated resorts informed the Times that many of them have been encouraged to take unpaid leave, while others have been forced to do so. Some already have confirmed schedules showing that they are on unpaid leave from July 1 to July 15.

The lawmakers called for further regulations regarding these extra expenses, slamming the lack

of clear guidelines for employees to follow.

According to the association, many workers rushed to pharmacies to acquire these resources due to concerns that they would be out of stock.

"Even though the workers asked supervisors for clarification, they were unable to obtain an unequivocal response," the lawmakers claimed in the statement.

The government has limited its public services, prohibited entertainment venues from operating, and banned restaurants from providing dine-in services.

Casinos, meanwhile, remain open.

During the last round of mass testing, the government handed out five antigen kits and a set of 10-piece KN95 masks to the public.

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FLORA TANG



MASS TESTING

Authorities await final results to decide on more rounds

RENATO MARQUES

LOCAL health authorities will soon decide whether more community testing is needed to tackle the recent Covid-19 outbreak.

Such a decision could include additional rounds of citywide mass testing or other forms of community testing including the

administration of rapid antigen tests (RATs) or nucleic acid tests (NATs) to specific groups, the coordinator at the local Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Leong Iek Hou, said during yesterday's press briefing from the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center.

"We don't know yet if we will need to continue to do mass tes-

ting or if we will decide on RATs or other options that we have been using. This decision will be dependent on the final results of the mass testing, which has not yet finished [at the time of the press briefing] and on the final results of the analysis of all the samples collected," she said in response to media inquiries.

According to the information

available last night, a total of 24 groups of 10-in-1 test analyses had come back positive, indicating that there are more positive cases within the community.

The same official also noted that the final decision on whether to continue testing depended on more than just the number of cases or the incidence of new cases. She explained that it was necessary to conduct an epidemiological investigation to identify the

source of these positive cases and their links, if any, to those that had been previously found and reported.

"This is the most important part. If the cases we find through RAT or NAT tests are linked to the previous cases, it is easier to control. But if the cases are new and from an unknown source, this might indicate that other sources exist that are not under control," Leong remarked.

Concerning the mass testing that took place from 9 a.m. on June 27 until 6 p.m. on June 28, as well as the RATs requested during the same period, authorities have found several positive cases that are currently being confirmed.

HALF OF THE POSITIVE RATs TURNED OUT TO BE FALSE

Addressing the possibility of replacing the high quantity of NATs with rapid antigen self-tests, the coordinator at the local Center for Disease Control and Prevention explained that while RATs are helping to triage and raise red flags in advance, they cannot be completely trusted as many of the positive reports submitted to the authorities turned out to be inaccurate.

"We have received some 62 positive results reports from over 651,000 RATs (until 3 p.m. on June 28) from people but, after a follow-up analysis, we realized that only around 36 of these people had positive results," she said. Other false positives resulted from duplicate submissions and misinterpretations of the results delivered by the kit.

Leong defended the method being used by the health authorities based on a combination of NATs and RATs to reap the benefit of advantages of both systems (accuracy and speed).

"Both systems have advantages and disadvantages. We are afraid that only doing RATs might deliver a high number of inaccurate results and that, from those, a new outbreak might emerge," she concluded.

Further, all residents must take a RAT today and tomorrow.

STAY AT HOME: NOT MANDATORY BUT CITIZENS SHOULD COMPLY

THERE is no law or mandate from the government that can enforce the use of facemasks in outdoor spaces or prohibit citizens from leaving their homes, the coordinator at the local Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Leong Iek Hou, said to a media inquiry during yesterday's press briefing from the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Center.

"There is no such a law or mandate from the government that can force this [wearing a face-mask outdoors]. We do not use such a system to [require] people to wear a mask properly. But we do know and constantly advise people that the use of facemasks and the reduction of activity outdoors are important factors in preventing infections and the spread of the virus," Leong said. "We know that this strain of the Covid-19 virus (BA.5.1) in particular is very transmissible and passes quickly from one person to another. We also know

that damage caused by this virus can be significant, especially at the level of the lower respiratory system (trachea, bronchi and bronchioles, and the alveoli, which make up the lungs). It can cause severe clinical situations."

The representative of the Public Security Police Force (PSP), Lei Tak Fai, added that the government has been urging people to refrain from outdoor activities and, in light of that, "PSP officers have been advising people engaged in activities [that are considered non-essential] to go back home. It is a responsible attitude toward society. When we are out of our homes, we should use a mask at all times too," Lei remarked.

These responses came after a media inquiry questioning the legality of the police officers ordering citizens walking on the streets, sitting on street benches, or riding bicycles, to return to their homes. **RM**

TALLY RAISED TO 414 CASES, ANOTHER 37 PRELIMINARILY POSITIVE

PROVIDING an update on the number of positive cases found in the current outbreak, Leong said that the tally of positive cases, after the June 27 results were fully analyzed, amounts to 414 positive cases. Of these, 309 cases are asymptomatic, and 105 are symptomatic.

Leong added that there were 37 new positives cases as of 3 p.m. yesterday. While this number is only preliminary and requires confirmation, the number of positive cases is estimated to be at least 451 cases by the end of the day on June 28. The Health Bureau continues to report only one case that is cur-

rently considered to be severe. The case was reported on Monday, but the person is in a stable condition and responding well to medication, according to Leong.

The number of clusters has increased to 11, with the inclusion of a new group that now includes seven people.

This 11th cluster is related to a dim sum eatery (San Kam Wa) located in the Areia Preta district. According to Leong, this cluster is linked to the first cluster, which mainly comprises residents of the Yim Lai building at Rua Manuel de Arriaga. Forty-eight cases are still undergoing investigation.

ECHO LEONG



View from a cable car in Chongqing

DEVELOPER SUGGESTS 'MORE PRACTICAL' TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AMID CABLE CAR PROPOSAL

ANTHONY LAM

THE proposed cable car between New Urban Zone A and ZAPE District will not be a feasible means of diverting traffic, according to a Macau architect who is currently in the U.S.

A month or so ago, the government announced that the prototype plan for the next 10 years of land transport in Macau was open for public consultation. In the document, it proposes that a cable car system be built to connect the southernmost end of Zone A with the tip of ZAPE District, where the Macao Science Center now sits.

The public consultation period will end on July 22. Opinions can be submitted online at <https://www.dsat.gov.mo/planning/survey.aspx> or by email to comment-planning@dsat.gov.mo.

While commenting on the proposal to the Times, Zakarie Man, an architect and real estate developer, suggested that the project might be viable for tourism but less so for daily commuting.

Man is originally from Macau and is now operating real estate developments in the U.S.

He pointed out that cable car systems running on quick rotations – such as those in skiing resorts – typically have low capacity and the systems are often also small-scale.

These small-scale systems will not be able handle a large number of passengers in each carriage. Taking the cable car systems at Guia Hill or the Wynn Palace

resort as examples, each carriage can only accommodate four to eight passengers.

In contrast, larger systems, such as the Changjiang River crossing system in Chongqing, China, and the Air Tram in New York City, U.S., are able to take more passengers in a carriage – up to 50 – but the rotation time is longer than systems of a smaller scale.

“Each trip on the Chongqing system takes 3.6 minutes, for instance,” Man pointed out.

The Chongqing system handles a daily passenger count of 30,000 and operates at a maximum speed of 36 km/h.

He concluded that low circulation is the reason why such systems could not be popular in cities with high commuting requirements.

Man added that, according to the Urban Master Plan, the population of Zone A will eventually reach 96,000 people. Given this, the developer suggests that more practical transportation systems be prioritized to meet the city's needs.

He also mentioned the need to ensure that new facilities would not exert extra pressure on existing traffic, noting that in pre-Covid times, the road network around the Science Center was already congested for almost the entire day. He worries that driving more tourists from Zone A directly to ZAPE would place further pressure on the traffic through the reclaimed land.

An earlier announcement from the government appeared to lean towards the larger-scale systems previously mentioned. The prototype plan, meanwhile, was conducted by a team from Chongqing.

Echoing popular public opinion, Man also pointed out that climate and weather-related factors will also weigh heavily on the system's feasibility.

The Chongqing system is able to operate safely at a maximum wind speed of 54 km/h. The criteria for typhoon signal No 3 in Macau includes sustained winds of 41 to 62 km/h and gusts of 110 km/h. Forty-one kilometers per hour is also the threshold for the issuance of the strong monsoon signal, which is also referred to as the “black ball.”

Despite acknowledging that the proposed cable car system may be attractive to tourists, the real estate developer foresees that additional supports would be needed to improve the proposed cable car system.

UNCLEAR PLANS

For the time being, the overall planning of the cable car system and its peripherals is unclear and requires further explanation from the government, according to Man.

“Where will the station on Zone A be built? What will be built around the station?” Man asked. “Only with attractions on Zone A will passengers want to travel in both directions. Otherwise, the

incentive to move from ZAPE to Zone A will be low,” Man said.

Moreover, he said that attractions on Zone A would help retain people on the new reclamation area after taking a cable car ride.

On alternative proposals to suggest to the government, Man said that it may be worth considering short bridges. “Construction is fast and easy,” he said. “Now the construction industry relies greatly on prefabrication techniques in building large-scale infrastructures. The body of the bridge can be built in parts and assembled on-site.”

He said that similar construction projects outside of Macau have been completed in as little time as two weeks. “It is also adjustable,” he said. “When detours or higher capacities are needed, it can easily be expanded.”

A CALL FOR FEASIBLE TRAFFIC CONNECTION

Prefabricated construction is not a new concept in Macau. High-end residential complex One Central and the current government housing projects on Zone A have used, or are already using, these techniques.

“Embracing a traditional cable car program for transportation by investigating opportunities to modernize and innovate is a way to diversify different points of attractions in Macau. However, the priority should always be focused on providing a feasible traffic connection to Zone A,” Man concluded.

Once announced, the proposal stirred up heated debate across the city, both online and offline. Social media platforms were filled with comments mocking the proposal, alongside some in support of it.

In fact, attitudes towards the proposal varied both online and offline. Comments that supported the suggestion were mainly from the tourism sector and certain members in government advisory bodies.

For example, Andy Wu, president of the Travel Industry Council of Macau, told local media outlet Exmoo that the industry would welcome any proposals or projects that would attract tourists. As such, the industry was in support of the cable car proposal.

Giving existing information, Wu expected that the cable car system, if built, would allow passengers to view the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge during the ride. Judging from the popularity of the bridge before Covid-19, Wu believed that the cable car would be attractive to tourists.

At the same time, lawmaker Ella Lei spoke to the same media outlet and questioned the rationale behind the proposal. She noted that after 30 years, the Chongqing system has transformed into a tourist-oriented means of transport. “With Zone A being [mainly] a residential district, it is unclear if the cable car would be able to help cater to residential commuting needs,” Lei said.

When questioned on the sidelines of a government event, Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng encouraged the public to make their voices heard, as the government would evaluate the feasibility of the project. “If it is not worthy, we will not do it,” the head of the government said.

SME CRISIS

Restaurant owners lose hope as end of restrictions remains uncertain

STAFF REPORTER

RESTAURANT owners have expressed their dismay over the current pandemic situation in the SAR, as they are required to close their dine-in services to deter the spread of Covid-19.

As of yesterday, the city has recorded a total of 414 cases, leading to mass testing and daily rapid antigen test (RAT) requirements for employees in certain sectors.

For the restaurant owners interviewed by the Times, the situation in the food and beverage (F&B) sector is worsening.

Late last week, the government announced that all restaurants are prohibited from providing dine-in services, and ordered the shutdown of all entertainment venues. The order came as the city recorded 110 cases on Thursday.

According to a restaurant owner in the northern district who refused to be identified, "the business of those restaurants has



deteriorated. This ongoing pandemic has a big impact on restaurants. The majority of restaurants here in Macau face this problem and the consequences of this outbreak."

Another owner, whose restaurant is located in close proximity to areas that have been locked down, said, "There are not many guests currently. Some of the ingredients in the storehouse become rapidly inedible, because those

ingredients cannot be stored for a long time."

He further stated that, despite encouraging people to order food online and providing discounts, revenue is not as high, as the restaurants that are most severely impacted by the restrictions tend to be Chinese restaurants with regular customers.

Last week, a local catering association said that most restaurants have complied with the govern-

ment's call to discourage patrons from dining in even without the government making an order to that effect.

Aeson Lei, president of the Macau Catering Industry Association, previously stated that residents have mainly been using online food platforms, which have had little impact on business for restaurants that only provide a takeaway service.

Food delivery company Mfood

reported a surge last week of up to 20% in the number of delivery orders made since Sunday. A further increase is expected in light of the new decree.

However, not only has restaurant revenue been affected, but their staff as well, with employees being forced to take unpaid leave.

"Since the outbreak of the pandemic, [the amount of leave we have taken] has increased, but our salary has decreased," the employee said.

Another issue faced by the sector is that they do not know when the partial lockdown will end, making it more difficult to maintain their restaurants, as income may not cover one month of rent.

The latest data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) indicated that receipts for the interviewed restaurants and similar establishments have already dropped by 15.5% year-on-year in April, with Western Restaurants and Chinese Restaurants recording falls of 24.0% and 23.9%, respectively.

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COVID-19

CHINA REDUCES QUARANTINE FOR PEOPLE ARRIVING FROM ABROAD

CHINA yesterday announced an easing of its quarantine requirement for people arriving from abroad but stopped short of lifting what remains a stringent COVID-19 policy compared to most other countries.

Anyone coming from outside the country will be required to stay in a quarantine hotel for seven days, followed by three days of home quarantine, the National Health Commission said in its latest pandemic response plan.

The previous plan called for 14 days in a hotel plus seven days of home quarantine. Some cities, including Beijing, have already reduced the hotel requirement to seven or 10 days in recent weeks, according to Chinese media reports.

China has kept tight restrictions on international travel under a "zero-COVID" strategy that seeks to keep the virus out and stop any infections from spreading through lockdowns and mass testing.



Other countries including the United States and Japan have opened their borders at least somewhat as vaccination has reduced the risk of serious cases and death. In Europe, passengers are facing long lines and delays

as a surge in summer travel has overwhelmed airlines and airports.

Mi Feng, a spokesperson for China's National Health Commission, described the new plan as not a relaxation of the coun-

try's approach but an optimization to make it more scientific and precise.

Wang Liping, an infectious disease researcher for China's Center for Disease Control, said the change reflects the relatively

short two- to four-day incubation period for the omicron variant, which means most cases can be detected within a week.

Recent outbreaks in mainland China have largely eased. Just under 100 new cases were recorded on Monday, most among people who had arrived recently from overseas. None of the new cases were in Shanghai or Beijing.

The Shanghai Disney Resort announced that its Disneyland theme park will reopen on Thursday after a closure of more than three months because of the virus.

The number of visitors will be limited and a few attractions will remain closed, but most of the park will be open, Shanghai Disney said in a social media post. All guests will be required to show proof of a negative virus test taken within the previous 72 hours.

Shanghai Disneyland closed on March 21 ahead of a citywide lockdown that would paralyze what is China's largest city and a major manufacturing, shipping and financial hub for two months.

Beijing's Universal Studios theme park reopened last weekend after being closed for nearly two months because of an outbreak in the Chinese capital. **MDT/AP**

Hong Kong confirms Chinese leader Xi's visit for anniversary

ZEN SOO, HONG KONG

HONG Kong police confirmed yesterday that Chinese President Xi Jinping will visit the city this week for the 25th anniversary of the former British colony's return to Chinese rule.

Xi will attend a number of official events including the inauguration of Hong Kong's next leader on Friday, Assistant Police Commissioner Lui Kam-ho said at a news conference.

Xi's visit will be his first trip outside of mainland China since the coronavirus pandemic took hold about 2 1/2 years ago. It comes as Hong Kong is facing a new spike in infections following what was by far its worst and deadliest COVID-19 outbreak earlier this year.

The United Kingdom returned Hong Kong to China on July 1, 1997. The anniversary is highly symbolic for Xi, who wants to be seen as propelling a "national rejuvenation" as he prepares to start an expected third 5-year term as head of China's ruling Communist Party this fall.

Part of that rejuvenation is erasing the legacy of colonialism and what the party regards



Chinese President Xi Jinping, right, and Hong Kong Chief Executive-elect John Lee pose for photo before their meeting in Beijing, on May 30, 2022

as unequal treaties that granted territorial concessions to Britain and other foreign nations during the waning years of the Qing Dynasty, which ended in 1911.

A series of security measures will be put in place to protect Xi, including security zones and road closures around the venue for the ceremony, police said.

Barriers have already been erected in the area.

"We will not tolerate anything that may interfere and undermine the security operation," Lui said. "In the event that any person behaves in a manner that threatens life or property and undermines public order or endangers public safety, we will take resolute action." **MDT/AP**

BIDEN AIMS AT CHINA IN NEW ILLEGAL FISHING POLICY FRAMEWORK

BARRY HATTON & JOSHUA GOODMAN, LISBON

THE Biden administration is stepping up efforts to combat illegal fishing by China, ordering federal agencies to better coordinate among themselves as well as with foreign partners in a bid to promote sustainable exploitation of the world's oceans.

On Monday, the White House released its first ever National Security memo on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, or IUU, to coincide with the start of a United Nations Ocean Conference in Lisbon, Portugal.

Nearly 11% of total U.S. seafood imports in 2019 worth \$2.4 billion came from illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, according to the U.S. International Trade Com-

mission, a federal agency.

While China isn't named in the lengthy policy framework, language in it left little doubt where it was aimed. The memo is bound to irritate Beijing at a time of growing geopolitical competition between the two countries. China is a dominant seafood processor and through state loans and fuel subsidies has built the world's largest distant water fishing fleet, with thousands of floating fish factories spread across Asia, Africa and the Americas.

Specifically, the memo directs 21 federal departments and agencies to better share information, coordinate enforcement actions such as sanctions and visa restrictions and promote best practices among international allies. **MDT/AP**





G-7 leaders end summit pledging to hurt Russia economically

ZEKE MILLER & GEIR MOULSON, ELMAU

LEADERS of the world's wealthiest democracies struck a united stance to support Ukraine for "as long as it takes" as Russia's invasion grinds on, and said they would explore far-reaching steps to cap Kremlin income from oil sales that are financing the war.

The final statement yesterday from the Group of Seven summit in Germany underlined their intent to impose "severe and immediate economic costs" on Russia. It left out key details on how the fossil fuel price caps would work in practice, setting up more discussion in the weeks ahead to "explore" measures to bar imports of Russian oil above a certain level.

That would hit a key Russian source of income and, in theory, help relieve the energy price spikes and inflation afflicting the global economy as a result of the war.

"We remain steadfast in our commitment to our unprecedented coordination on sanctions for as long as necessary, acting in unison at every stage," the leaders said.

Leaders also agreed on a ban on imports of Russian gold and to step up aid to countries hit with food shortages by the

blockade on Ukraine grain shipments through the Black Sea.

The price cap would in theory work by barring service providers such as shippers or insurers from dealing with oil priced above a fixed level. That could work because the service providers are mostly located in the European Union or the U.K. and thus within reach of sanctions. To be effective, however, it would have to involve as many consuming countries as possible, in particular India, where refiners have been snapping up cheap Russian oil shunned by Western traders. Details on how the proposal would be implemented were left for continuing talks in coming weeks.

The U.S. has already blocked Russian oil imports, which were small in any case. The European Union has decided to impose a ban on the 90% of Russian oil that comes by sea, but that does not take effect until the end of the year, meaning Europe continues to send money to Russia for energy even while condemning the war. Meanwhile, higher global oil prices have softened the blow to Russia's income, even as Western traders shun Rus-

sian oil.

Energy themes were front and center at the summit throughout. Europe is scrambling to find new sources of oil and fresh supplies of gas as Russia dials back gas supplies in what leaders say is a political move. Meanwhile high energy prices are a headache for G-7 countries' consumers.

"We remain steadfast in our commitment to our unprecedented coordination on sanctions for as long as necessary"

G7 LEADERS

The summit host, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz defended the G-7's decision to soften commitments to end public support for fossil fuel investments, saying the war in Ukraine means time-limited support for new natural gas extraction projects may be necessary.

The G-7 nations said in a statement at the end of their three-day summit that "in these exceptional circumstances, publicly supported investment in the gas sector can be appropriate as a temporary response."

Before the summit's close, leaders joined in condemning what they called the "abominable" Russian attack on a shopping mall in the town of Kremenchuk, calling it a war crime and vowing that President Vladimir Putin and others involved "will be held to account."

The leaders of the U.S., Germany, France, Italy, the U.K., Canada and Japan on Monday pledged to support Ukraine "for as long as it takes" after conferring by video link with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The summit host, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, said he "once again very emphatically set out the situation as Ukraine currently sees it." Zelenskyy's address came hours before Ukrainian officials reported a deadly Russian missile strike on a crowded shopping mall in the central city of Kremenchuk.

From the secluded Schloss Elmau hotel in the Bavarian Alps, the G-7 leaders will move to Madrid for a summit of NATO leaders, where fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine will again dominate the agenda. All G-7 members other than Japan are NATO members, and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has been invited

to Madrid.

Zelenskyy has openly worried that the West has become fatigued by the cost of a war that is contributing to soaring energy costs and price hikes on essential goods around the globe. The G-7 has sought to assuage those concerns.

While the group's annual gathering has been dominated by Ukraine and by the war's knock-on effects, such as the challenge to food supplies in parts of the world caused by the interruption of Ukrainian grain exports, Scholz has been keen to show that the G-7 also can move ahead on pre-war priorities.

Members of the Group of Seven major economies pledged to create a new 'climate club' for nations that want to take more ambitious action to tackle global warming.

The move, championed by Scholz, will see countries that join the club agree on tougher measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with the aim of keeping global temperatures from rising more than 1.5 Celsius this century compared with pre-industrial times.

Countries that are part of the club will try to harmonize their measures in such a way that they are comparable and avoid members imposing climate-related tariffs on each others' imports.

Speaking at the end of the three-day summit in Elmau, Germany, Scholz said the aim was to "ensure that protecting the climate is a competitive advantage, not a disadvantage."

He said details of the planned climate club would be finalized this year. **MDT/AP**

PUTIN'S WAR

Russian missile strike hits crowded shopping mall in Ukraine

YURAS KARMANAU
& FRANCESCA EBEL,
KREMENCHUK

RUSSIAN long-range bombers struck a crowded shopping mall in Ukraine's central city of Kremenchuk with a missile on Monday, raising fears of what President Volodymyr Zelensky called an "unimaginable" number of victims in "one of the most daring terrorist attacks in European history."

Zelensky said that many of the more than 1,000 afternoon shoppers and staff inside the mall managed to escape. Giant plumes of black smoke, dust and orange flames emanated from the wreckage, with emergency crews rushing in to search broken metal and concrete for victims and put out fires. Onlookers watched in distress at the sight of how an everyday activity such as shopping could turn into a horror.

The casualty figures were changing as rescuers searched the smoldering rubble yesterday. Ukraine's emergency services reported late



Monday that at least 16 people were dead and about 60 wounded.

Soldiers worked into the night to lug sheets of twisted metal and broken concrete, as one drilled into what remained of the shopping center's roof. Drones whirred above, clouds of dark smoke still emanating from the ruins several hours after the fire had been put out.

At Ukraine's request, the U.N. Security Council sche-

duled an emergency meeting in New York yesterday to discuss the attack.

In the first Russian government comment on the missile strike, the country's first deputy permanent representative to the United Nations, Dmitry Polyansky, alleged multiple inconsistencies that he didn't specify, claiming on Twitter that the incident was a provocation by Ukraine. Russia has repeatedly denied it targets civilian infrastructure,

even though Russian attacks have hit other shopping malls, theaters, hospitals, kindergartens and apartment buildings.

The missile strike unfolded as Western leaders pledged continued support for Ukraine, and the world's major economies prepared new sanctions against Russia, including a price cap on oil and higher tariffs on goods. Meanwhile, the U.S. appeared ready to respond to Zelensky's call for more air defense systems, and NATO planned to increase the size of its rapid-reaction forces nearly eightfold — to 300,000 troops.

Zelensky said the mall presented "no threat to the Russian army" and had "no strategic value."

In his nightly address, he said it appeared Russian forces had intentionally targeted the shopping center and added, "Today's Russian strike at a shopping mall in Kremenchuk is one of the most daring terrorist attacks in European history." He said Russia "has become the largest terrorist organization in the world." **MDT/AP**

this day in history

1995 US SHUTTLE DOCKS WITH RUSSIAN SPACE STATION



American and Russian spacecraft have successfully docked in orbit for the first time in 20 years.

The US shuttle Atlantis delivered a relief crew of two cosmonauts to the Russian Mir space station, signalling a new era of space co-operation between the two former Cold War rivals.

The operation to link the craft was led by the commander of the Atlantis, Robert Gibson. Flying over the Mediterranean at 17,500mph, he lined up the Mir in his sights and with barely a shudder the two craft touched.

"We have capture," he said. After the safety of the spacecraft was confirmed with the pressure between them equalised, Gibson opened the hatch separating them.

Propelling himself through to the Russian craft he stretched out his arm to shake hands with his counterpart.

The symbolic gesture was watched live from Moscow by US Vice President Al Gore, and by the head of NASA Dan Goldin at the Russian control centre.

The crew of the US shuttle moved into the Mir for group photos, before presenting the cosmonauts with gifts of chocolate, fruit and flowers. The Russians gave the Americans gifts of bread and salt, the traditional symbols of welcome.

Mr Gibson said: "After all the training and the preparation it seems hard to believe we're actually there but indeed we are."

The two spacecraft will remain attached for five days, giving the Mir crew time to stock up on fresh water, oxygen and nitrogen. The crews will carry out a range of scientific experiments.

A further six link-ups between the shuttle and Mir are planned, before work on the assembly of an international space station begins in orbit in two years' time.

Courtesy BBC News

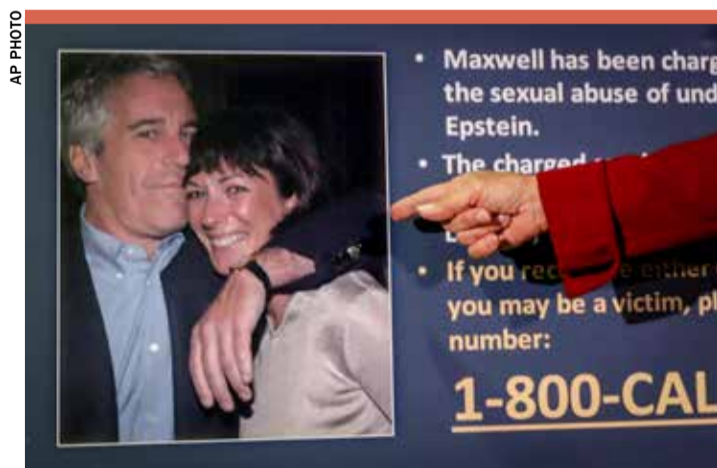
Ghislaine Maxwell to be sentenced in Epstein sex abuse case

LARRY NEUMEISTER
& TOM HAYS, NEW YORK

GHISLAINE Maxwell, the jet-setting socialite who once consorted with royals, presidents and billionaires, is set to be sentenced yesterday for helping the wealthy financier Jeffrey Epstein sexually abuse underage girls.

The 11 a.m. sentencing in New York is the culmination of a prosecution that detailed how the power couple flaunted their riches and prominent connections to lure vulnerable girls as young as 14, and then exploit them.

Prosecutors said Epstein, who killed himself in 2019 while awaiting trial, sexually abused children hundreds of times over more than a decade, and couldn't have done so without the help of Maxwell, his longtime companion and onetime girlfriend.



Audrey Strauss, acting U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, points to a photo of Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell, during a news conference in New York, July 2, 2020

"Maxwell's conduct was shockingly predatory. She was a calculating, sophisticated, and dangerous criminal who preyed on vulnerable young girls and groomed them for sexual abuse," prosecutors wrote in a court filing.

In December, a jury convicted Maxwell of sex trafficking, transporting a minor to participate in illegal sex acts and two conspiracy charges. Prosecutors say she deserves 30 to 55 years in prison.

Maxwell, 60, has de-

nied abusing anyone. Her lawyers have asked U.S. District Judge Alison J. Nathan to impose a sentence of no more than five years.

"The witnesses at trial testified about Ms. Maxwell's facilitation of Epstein's abuse, but Epstein was always the central figure: Epstein was the mastermind, Epstein was the principal abuser, and Epstein orchestrated the crimes for his personal gratification," they wrote in a court filing.

Epstein and Maxwell's associations with some of the world's most famous people were not a prominent part of the trial, but mentions of friends like Bill Clinton, Donald Trump and Britain's Prince Andrew showed how the pair exploited their connections to impress their prey. **MDT/AP**

IN CONTEXT

After 15 years in space, the Mir space station returned to Earth in March 2001. Over the years, Mir has circled the Earth about 88,000 times, travelling 3.6bn km (2.2bn miles). In many ways, the platform has been humankind's first real home in space, as well as being the pride of the Russian space programme.

YOUR STARS



ARIES

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Unfortunately, your personal life may suffer from a lack spare time. You can continue to forge ahead if you make a few long distance calls pertinent to closing pending deals.



TAURUS

Apr. 20-May. 20

Disharmony will result in a lowered vitality. Stress may result in minor illness. Opportunities will unfold; however, you must be willing to pay the price.



GEMINI

May. 21-Jun. 21

Business and emotional partnerships will run smoothly. Opportunities to pamper yourself may unfold. Be diplomatic and honest, and that person will only be made to look bad.



CANCER

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

You need to make your lover feel wanted, not like a piece of the furniture. Try not to overspend on friends or family. You may find that doing odd jobs around the house will be successful.



LEO

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Don't let your work and your personal life interfere with each other. Be willing to listen, but don't be fooled. It might be time for you to take a quantum leap from one career to another.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sep. 22

Avoid friction with your mate. Fitness or weight loss programs will help your self esteem. New romantic relationships will develop through group activity related to sports events.



LIBRA

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

You will be extremely sensual; take precautions and don't take any risks. You may be somewhat emotional concerning a rather private matter. Chances are they are jealous.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Your irritability may drive your loved ones crazy. You will back yourself into a corner if you are baited and your stubbornness will only make matters worse.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Partnerships could prove to be lucrative. Generosity will put you in the poorhouse. Interaction with colleagues will only be upsetting. It's time to get yourself back on track.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Focus, and concentrate on yourself and your future. Minor accidents could cause trauma and major setbacks. Be confident in your endeavors and others will believe in your efforts.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Your diplomatic approach and rather outgoing nature will enhance your reputation and bring you the support you need. You may find that romance will unfold through business connections.



PISCES

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Your high energy should be spent pleasing your mate. You can make changes that will enhance your appearance. You will be able to talk about emotional problems with your partner.

The Born Loser by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

EASY

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9	1	7	2		
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EASY+

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8		9			1
9		4	3	5	
3	5				
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MEDIUM

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HARD

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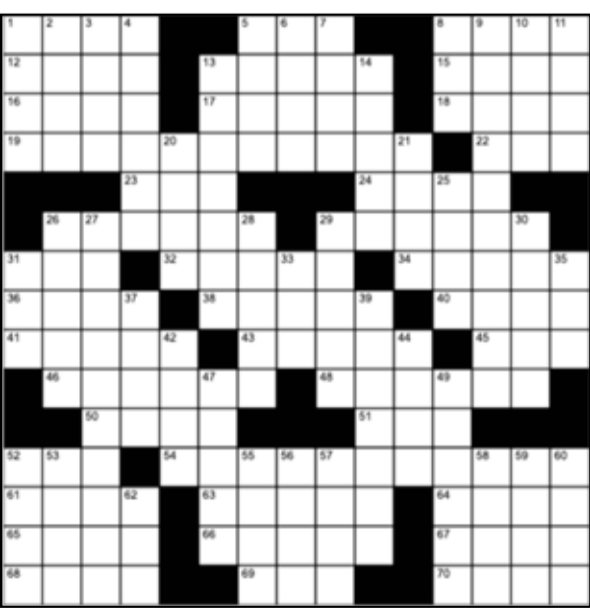
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	22	29	RAIN
Changchun	20	25	RAIN
Chengdu	23	34	CLOUDY
Chongqing	24	35	FINE
Fuzhou	25	36	CLOUDY
Guangzhou	25	35	THUNDERSTORMS
Guiyang	19	28	CLOUDY
Haikou	26	36	CLOUDY
Hangzhou	27	37	OVERCAST
Harbin	21	26	RAIN
Hefei	25	31	RAIN
Nanjing	28	33	RAIN
Shanghai	28	35	OVERCAST
Taipei	25	30	RAIN
Wuhan	25	33	RAIN
Hong Hong	29	32	RAIN
WORLD			
Moscow	13	25	clear
Frankfurt	16	27	showers
Paris	14	27	overcast
London	13	22	showers
New York	20	29	clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS 1- Beginning; 5- Dashboard abbr.; 8- Fully qualified; 12- Where heroes are made; 13- Breakfast fruit; 15- Career golfers; 16- Big name in PCs; 17- Grenoble's river; 18- Duds; 19- Coins; 22- Heartache; 23- Organ of hearing; 24- Tied up; 26- Gasoline; 29- Disinclined; 31- Prince Valiant's son; 32- Dry as ___; 34- Noise; 36- Old German helmet; 38- Rub out or remove from memory; 40- Cpls.' superiors; 41- Milo of "Barbarella"; 43- Deadly virus; 45- Illustrative craft; 46- Small quick bread; 48- Sweet baked food made of dough; 50- Sports figure?; 51- Compass pt.; 52- Singer DiFranco; 54- Unfortunate; 61- The back end of something; 63- New Zealand aboriginal; 64- Travel on water; 65- Canadian gas brand; 66- ___ boom; 67- Catchall abbr.; 68- Look ___. I'm Sandra Dee; 69- PC linkup; 70- Parched;

DOWN 1- Increases; 2- Appear; 3- Earthen pot; 4- Boneless slice of meat; 5- Engage, as gears; 6- This can be guilty or not guilty; 7- Word with French or English; 8- Liable; 9- Molasses; 10- Trademark; 11- "___ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 13- Single-celled critter; 14- Israeli desert; 20- Pasternak heroine; 21- Holiday lead-ins; 25- Love deity; 26- Rainbow maker; 27- Eager involvement; 28- Sophia of the screen; 29- Man of morals; 30- Diary bit; 31- Mil. address; 33- Arrest; 35- Summer hrs.; 37- Weight; 39- Flexible; 42- Yonder; 44- No. 2; 47- Units; 49- Tantalizes; 52- Extent of space; 53- Treehouse used by birds; 55- London jail; 56- Author Jaffe; 57- The Emerald Isle; 58- Soak leather in base solution; 59- Yarn spinner; 60- Fashion mag; 62- Caviar;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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



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AD

MACAU'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

EUROPE'S CENTRAL BANK READY TO 'STAMP OUT' SURGING INFLATION

THE head of the European Central Bank said yesterday that it will move gradually to combat soaring consumer prices with interest rate hikes in July and September but will keep its options open to "stamp out" inflation if it surges faster than expected.

In a speech opening an ECB forum on central banking in Sintra, Portugal, bank President Christine Lagarde used strong terms as policymakers target inflation running at a record 8.1% in the 19 countries using the euro.

With new inflation figures due out Friday, Lagarde said the bank is using the dual approach to be able to respond to economic uncertainty.

Russia's war in Ukraine has led to surging energy and food prices that are higher than those seen in the 1970s and '80s, and "given its energy dependence, the euro area is experiencing these shocks acutely," Lagarde said.

"The size and complexity of these shocks are also creating

AP PHOTO



European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde, left, speaks with Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban, last week

uncertainty about how persistent this inflation is likely to be," she said.

The bank has already announced it will end asset purchases that worked to boost the eco-

nomy on Friday, and follow with its first interest rates hikes in 11 years at its meeting next month. It will also raise rates in September but is leaving the option open for a bigger hike than the

quarter-point increase in July, in case inflation keeps spiking.

The ECB also is trying to avoid further hurting economic growth by acting too aggressively, having "revised markedly

down our forecast for growth in the next two years," Lagarde said.

But "there are obviously conditions in which gradualism would not be appropriate. If, for example, we were to see higher inflation threatening to de-anchor inflation expectations or signs of a more permanent loss of economic potential," she said, "we would need to withdraw accommodation more promptly to stamp out the risk of a self-fulfilling spiral."

Other central banks around the world, including the U.S. Federal Reserve, have moved quicker than the ECB to combat runaway inflation. But they face the threat of spurring a recession as they make borrowing more expensive, with Fed Chair Jerome Powell acknowledging last week that "it's certainly a possibility."

The Fed has raised rates three times this year, including an increase of three-quarters of a point that marked its biggest hike in nearly three decades, and has more planned. The Bank of England has raised rates five times since December.

Powell and Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey will join Lagarde for a policy panel discussion at the ECB forum today. **MDT/AP**

AD



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FORMULA ONE

Hamilton says 'archaic mindsets' about color must change

JEROME PUGMIRE, PARIS

FORMULA One great Lewis Hamilton said "archaic mindsets" have to change after retired champion Nelson Piquet reportedly used a racial slur against him.

Hamilton's comments came after F1 and FIA condemned racist language.

"It's more than language. These archaic mindsets need to change and have no place in our sport. I've been surrounded by these attitudes and targeted my whole life," Hamilton tweeted on Tuesday. "There has been plenty of time to learn. Time has come for action."

The only Black driver in F1, Hamilton is a seven-time world champion.

He also wrote in Portuguese, "Vamos focar em mudar a mentalidade" (Let's focus on changing the mindset), and responded to another tweet which used an expletive about Piquet, a 69-year-old Brazilian who won three F1 titles.

Piquet was discussing a crash between Hamilton and Max Verstappen during last year's British Grand Prix when Piquet used the word "neguinho" — which means "little Black guy" — in November on a YouTube podcast



Mercedes Team driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain

named Enerto.

The word is not necessarily a racist slur in Brazil, but it is an expression that has been increasingly seen as distasteful, and its phrasing can also emphasize that.

Piquet's comment didn't go viral at the time, but suddenly did on Monday, although it is unclear why it was so long after the interview.

Piquet is a staunch supporter of Brazil President Jair Bolsonaro, the far-right politician running for re-election in 100 days. Piquet previously drove Bolsonaro around Brasilia, which went viral.

"Discriminatory or racist language is unacceptable in any form and has no part in society. Lewis is an incredible ambassador for our sport and deserves

respect," F1 said in a statement. "His tireless efforts to increase diversity and inclusion are a lesson to many and something we are committed to at F1."

Hamilton has campaigned tirelessly to fight racism and has been outspoken on human rights abuses in countries where F1 goes racing.

Motorsport governing body

FIA also defended Hamilton.

"The FIA strongly condemns any racist or discriminatory language and behaviour, which have no place in sport or wider society," the FIA said. "We express our solidarity with @LewisHamilton and fully support his commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in motor sport."

Hamilton's Mercedes team — known as the Silver Arrows — switched from silver to an all-black car in 2020 to support Hamilton's efforts to combat racism. Hamilton and most drivers took a knee before races in 2020 and 2021 as an anti-racism gesture. Hamilton also set up The Hamilton Commission to improve F1's diversity.

"We condemn in the strongest terms any use of racist or discriminatory language of any kind. Lewis has spearheaded our sport's efforts to combat racism, and he is a true champion of diversity on and off track," Mercedes said on Twitter. "Together, we share a vision for a diverse and inclusive motorsport, and this incident underlines the fundamental importance of continuing to strive for a brighter future."

Two years ago, Hamilton criticized "ignorant and uneducated" comments by former F1 boss Bernie Ecclestone. Hamilton was shocked by Ecclestone's claim during an interview with broadcaster CNN that "in lots of cases, Black people are more racist" than white people.

Piquet won F1 three times in the 1980s and 23 races. His daughter Kelly Piquet is Verstappen's girlfriend.

The British GP is this weekend. **MDT/AP**

TENNIS

Swiatek wins 36th match in a row in 1st round at Wimbledon

CHRIS LEHOURITES, WIMBLEDON

FROM the red clay of the French Open to the green grass of Wimbledon, the wins keep coming for Iga Swiatek.

The top-seeded Pole won her opening match on Centre Court on yesterday, beating Croatian qualifier Jana Fett 6-0, 6-3.

The victory was Swiatek's 36th in row and includes all seven matches she played at this year's French Open in winning her second title at Roland Garros. It's the longest winning streak on the women's tour since 1997, when Martina Hingis won 37.

"It's my first match on grass this season, so I knew



Poland's Iga Swiatek

it's going to be tricky," Swiatek said on court. "I'm just figuring out how to play here and trying to implement all the stuff that

we were practicing on." Even with seven-time champion Serena Williams in the draw at the All England Club, Swiatek is the

woman to beat. She won five tournaments before heading to Paris in May, earning consecutive titles in Doha, Indian Wells, Mia-

mi, Stuttgart and Rome.

Swiatek, again wearing a pin with the colors of Ukraine on her hat, started out like she left off in her last match at the French Open. But she went down 3-1 in the second set before recovering.

"The second set, at the beginning I lost my focus a little bit and she used that pretty well," Swiatek said.

Barbora Krejckova, who won the French Open in 2021 to split Swiatek's two titles there, also advanced to the second round. The 13th-seeded Czech defeated Maryna Zanevska of Belgium 7-6 (4), 6-3.

No. 4 Paula Badosa, No. 5 Maria Sakkari, No. 12 Jelena Ostapenko and No. 33 Shuai Zhang of China also advanced.

Among the seeded player to lose was Olympic champion Belinda Bencic. The 14th-seeded Swiss player lost to Qiang Wang of China 6-4, 5-7, 6-2.

No. 18 Jil Teichmann of Switzerland, No. 20 Amanda Anisimova of the United States and No. 27 Yulia Putintseva of Kazakhstan also lost.

In the men's draw, No. 18 Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria retired from his match with an apparent injury. He was leading Steve Johnson of the United States 6-4, 2-5 when he stopped.

No. 15 Reilly Opelka of the United States, No. 19 Alex De Minaur of Australia, No. 29 Jenson Brooksby of the United States and No. 31 Sebastian Baez of Argentina also won. **MDT/AP**

OPINION

China Daily

Pierre Picquar, China Daily

CAN G7 MEET THE
GLOBAL CHALLENGES?

Before the G7 Summit in the Bavarian Alps, being held from Sunday to Tuesday, and the NATO Summit scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday in Madrid, many diplomatic meetings followed one another.

In Brussels, the European Summit on June 23-24 validated the symbolic status of a "candidate" for Ukraine to oppose Russia. And in China, Beijing hosted the 14th Summit of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) on the theme of cooperation and economic openness to fight against crises, especially food crisis.

With the desire to set up a foreign exchange reserve fund to fight against the current monetary disorders, the BRICS Summit emphasized the need to promote deeper and broader global cooperation, to open a new era of progress for globalization and development, to more actively oppose wars, poverty and famine, and to end the abuse of unilateral sanctions and enlargement of military alliances.

Faced with new environmental, geopolitical and economic threats, which include Western sanctions against Russia in response to the Ukraine conflict that has disrupted global supply chains, the shadow of a new Cold War, and continuing COVID-19 pandemic, humankind must respond appropriately to build a better future.

It is to discuss these issues that the Group of Seven leaders have gathered at the Castle of Elmau. With snow-capped mountains, lush green meadows and blue river valleys, the stunning panorama in southern Bavaria is like something out of a fairy tale. This place chosen for the G7 also offers appropriate logistical and security conditions for these meetings.

This is where German Chancellor Olaf Scholz is hosting the leaders from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Japan and Canada.

The agenda of the current G7 summit includes the war in Ukraine, climate change, the global economy, inflation, the fight against hunger and poverty and health policy, in addition to partnerships in infrastructure and investments, security policy and energy crisis.

The high-level meeting, carefully prepared for a year, is focusing on various international issues. The global health situation, which has not yet stabilized, is for obvious reasons high on the G7's agenda, as are climate change and the challenge of protecting the environment.

In view of the problem of global inflation, given the rising energy prices for example with inflation reaching 9.1 percent in the UK in May, what are the solutions the G7 Summit has come up with? Lower taxes? A rise in key taxes? The clear answer to this economic, political and social question seems not easy or obvious now. But, according to Washington, the determination of the Federal Reserve, the US' central bank, to control inflation is unconditional.

In the European Union, in the context of soaring inflation and tightening sovereign debt financing in the eurozone, we can expect a change in European monetary policy. But it is also important for the EU to avoid recession and take measures to ensure economic growth is not disrupted.

Sanctions against Russia and continued long-term aid to Ukraine were discussed.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz had told the German parliament in a speech on June 22, 2022: "We will continue to massively support Ukraine, financially, economically, politically, and above all by delivering weapons, and we will do so as long as Ukraine needs our support." He had also proposed a reconstruction plan for Ukraine.

Financial assistance for Ukraine, too, was discussed by the G7 leaders. And earlier, Scholz had said that he wants a high-ranking expert conference on Ukraine to be convened.

Following the grain blockade in Ukraine, the United Nations has warned of the biggest famine in decades, as many countries of the Global South continue to grapple with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Abridged]

A 101-year-old man was convicted in Germany of 3,518 counts of accessory to murder yesterday for serving at the Nazis' Sachsenhausen concentration camp during World War II.

The Neuruppin Regional Court sentenced him to five years in prison.

The man, who was not identified, had denied working as an SS guard at the camp and aiding and abetting the murder of thousands of prisoners.

In the trial, which opened in October, the man said that he had worked as a farm laborer near Pasewalk in northeastern Ger-

many during the period in question.

However, the court considered it proven that he worked at the camp on the outskirts of Berlin between 1942 and 1945 as an enlisted member of the Nazi Party's paramilitary wing, the German news agency dpa reported.

"The court has come to the conclusion that, contrary to what you claim, you worked in the concentration camp as a guard for about three years," presiding Judge Udo Lechtermann said, according to dpa, adding that in doing so, the defendant had assisted in the terror and murder machinery of the Nazis.



46 MIGRANTS ABANDONED
IN TRAILER IN SAN
ANTONIO FOUND DEAD

ERIC GAY & ELLIOT
SPAGAT, SAN ANTONIO

FORTY-SIX people were found dead after being abandoned in a tractor-trailer on a remote back road in San Antonio in the latest tragedy to claim the lives of migrants smuggled across the border from Mexico to the U.S. Sixteen people were hospitalized, including four children.

A city worker heard a cry for help from the truck shortly before 6 p.m. Monday and discovered the gruesome scene, Police Chief William McManus said. Hours later, body bags lay spread on the ground near the trailer as a grim symbol of the calamity.

San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg said the 46 who died had "families who were likely trying to find a better life."

"This is nothing short of a horrific human tragedy," Nirenberg said.

It's among the deadliest tragedies to have claimed thousands of lives of people attempting to cross the U.S. border from Mexico in recent decades. Ten migrants died in 2017 after being trapped inside a truck that was parked at a Walmart in San Antonio. In 2003, 19 migrants were

found in a sweltering truck southeast of San Antonio.

The home countries of the immigrants and how long they were abandoned on the side of the road was not immediately known.

South Texas has long been the busiest area for illegal border crossings. Migrants ride in vehicles through Border Patrol checkpoints to San Antonio, the closest major city, from which point they disperse across the United States.

A city worker at the scene on a remote back road in southwest San Antonio was alerted to the situation by a cry for help shortly before 6 p.m. Monday, Police Chief William McManus said. Officers arrived to find a body on the ground outside the trailer and a partially opened gate to the trailer, he said.

Hours later, body bags lay spread on the ground near the trailer as a grim symbol of the calamity. Bodies still remained inside.

Of the 16 taken to hospitals with heat-related illnesses, 12 were adults and four were children, said Fire Chief Charles Hood. The patients were hot to the touch and dehydrated,

and no water was found in the trailer, he said.

"They were suffering from heat stroke and exhaustion," Hood said. "It was a refrigerated tractor-trailer, but there was no visible working AC unit on that rig."

Those in the trailer were part of a presumed migrant smuggling attempt into the United States, and the investigation was being led by U.S. Homeland Security Investigations, McManus said.

Three people were taken into custody, but it was unclear if they were definitively connected with human trafficking, McManus said.

Big rigs emerged as a popular smuggling method in the early 1990s amid a surge in U.S. border enforcement in San Diego and El Paso, Texas, which were then the busiest corridors for illegal crossings.

Before that, people paid small fees to mom-and-pop operators to get them across a largely unguarded border. As crossing became exponentially more difficult after the 2001 terror attacks in the U.S., migrants were led through more perilous terrain and paid thousands of dollars more. **MDT/AP**



Russia A court has rejected an appeal by imprisoned opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who contended that prison authorities illegally prevented his lawyers from bringing necessary equipment including voice recorders and laptop computers to a court session held in a prison. Navalny testified at yesterday's session by video, the first time he has been seen since being moved to a maximum-security prison. A lower court had previously rejected his complaint about the recording devices ban.

UK The European Medicines Agency says it will begin reviewing data to decide if a smallpox vaccine made by the pharmaceutical company Bavarian Nordic might also be authorized for monkeypox, amid a growing outbreak of the disease across the continent. In a statement yesterday, the EU drug regulator noted that the vaccine, known as Imvanex in Europe but sold as Jynneos in the U.S., is already cleared for use against monkeypox by American regulators.



France's lower house of parliament yesterday opened its first session since President Emmanuel Macron's party lost its majority, and is expected to elect a woman as speaker for the first time. Legislative elections earlier this month shook up France's political landscape. Macron's centrist alliance Ensemble (Together) still has the most seats but no longer enough to comfortably adopt laws.

Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon told lawmakers in Edinburgh yesterday that she plans to hold a fresh referendum on Scotland's independence on Oct. 19, 2023. Sturgeon said the question to be asked will be the same as that in Scotland's first independence vote in 2014: "Should Scotland be an independent country?" Scottish voters rejected independence in 2014, with 55% saying they wanted to remain part of the United Kingdom.